

REPLACEMENT AGENDA

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE AGENDA



Thursday 13 August, 2020

at 10.00 am

in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

PLEASE NOTE: this will be a 'remote meeting', a web-link to the public stream will be available on the Hartlepool Borough Council website at least 24 hours before the meeting.

MEMBERS: FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Councillors C Akers-Belcher, Brewer, Brown, Harrison, Lindridge, Little, Marshall, Moore, Smith, Tennant and Young.

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 30 June 2020.

3.2 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 9 March 2020.

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

4.1 Financial Position Update 2020/21 to 2023/24 – *Director of Finance and Policy*

5. KEY DECISIONS

5.1 COVID19 Recovery and Renewal Plan – *Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone. The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 Home to School Transport - Concessionary Seats – *Director of Children and Joint Commissioning Services and Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*
- 6.2 Proposed Appointment of an Assistant Coroner – *Chief Solicitor*

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Provision of Accommodation for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping During COVID-19 Response – *Director, Children and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.2 Provision of Food during the COVID19 Response – *Director of Adult and Community Based Services*
- 7.3 Corporate Procurement Quarterly Report on Contracts – *Director of Finance and Policy*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

For Information:

Dates and times of forthcoming meetings of the Finance and Policy Committee –

Monday 21 September, 2020 at 10.00 am
Monday 19 October, 2020 at 10.00 am
Monday 30 November, 2020 at 10.00 am
Monday 18 January, 2021 at 10.00 am
Monday 15 February, 2021 at 10.00 am
Monday 15 March, 2021 at 10.00 am



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

29 JUNE 2020

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

Present:

Councillor Shane Moore (In the Chair)

Councillors: Christopher Akers-Belcher, James Brewer, Paddy Brown, Jim Lindridge, Sue Little, Ann Marshall, Leisa Smith, John Tennant, and Mike Young.

Officers: Gill Alexander, Chief Executive
Hayley Martin, Chief Solicitor
Chris Little, Director of Finance and Policy
Sally Robinson, Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning
Jill Harrison, Director of Adult and Community Based Services
Gemma Ptak, Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services
Denise McGuckin, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Denise Wimpenny and David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

1. Minutes silence

The meeting observed a minutes silence for those that had lost their lives during the Corona Virus pandemic.

2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Dave Hunter.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Christopher Akers-Belcher, Shane Moore and Leisa Smith declared personal interests as members of the Town Fund Board.

Councillors Sue Little and Paddy Brown declared personal interests as their business(es) had been in receipt of grants from Central Government during the Coronavirus emergency measures.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2020

Confirmed.

5. Minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 2 December 2019

Received.

6. Minutes of the meeting of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership held on 10 January 2020

Received.

7. SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) Special Free School *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Director, Children and Joint Commissioning Services)***Type of decision**

Key Decision (test (i) and (ii)) Forward Plan Reference CJCS97/19.
General Exception Notice applies.

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the grant of a lease for a new Special Free School and to seek delegated powers to agree a capital contribution to the construction costs as required following a Department for Education (DfE) feasibility study.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning reported that Hartlepool BC had been notified on 11th March 2019 that the Secretary of State had approved our bid to develop a new Special Free School and could move to the next stage of the process which was the Trust competition stage. Subsequently bids were invited to and two were received from academy trusts interested in running the school.

DfE representatives together with local authority officers interviewed two providers and subsequently recommended one of them as the preferred provider for the Hartlepool Free School. The Secretary of State has accepted this recommendation and the provider had been informed that they had been successful on 18th May 2020. There is still an embargo on this information and the council will be notified when the embargo had been lifted.

The Assistant Director highlighted that discussions had been held with DfE representatives regarding the details of the site, the lease terms, procurement issues and construction process. The provision of the school was based on the grant of a long lease to the DfE who would construct the building and assign the lease to the selected academy trust so that on completion the trust would take occupation and open the school. The DfE would fund the construction of the school but the Council would have to pay for the access to it and potentially for some abnormal costs as described in the report. The costs for access to the school site was agreed at Finance and Policy Committee on 30th January 2020 in the Capital and Indigenous Growth Investment Programme report. Because a decision regarding abnormal costs may need to be made more quickly than the usual committee reporting process allows, delegated authority was being sought for the Director of Finance and Policy in consultation with the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee to approve the level of the Council contribution if required.

The Assistant Director indicated that there was a timetable for the construction and opening of the school set out in the report and despite the delays the recent Covid-19 emergency had caused it was still hoped the school would be open in September 2022.

Members welcomed the approval of the new school and congratulated officers on the work that had gone into the successful bid to the DfE. Members referred to the costs savings highlighted within the report and the Assistant Director confirmed that in some cases, the saving to the local authority in not having to place children in out of town schools with the related fees and travelling costs could be in the region of £60,000 per pupil per annum. The Assistant Director stated that Hartlepool had identified a need for around 30 placements at the school. The capacity of the school would be 50 placements which could mean that some placements could be sold to neighbouring authorities. These fees would, however, be paid to the provider.

Members queried the potential abnormal costs and how this would be provided for within the Council's budget. The Assistant Director stated that there was currently no provision for these costs should they arise. The DfE had indicated that they did not see the site as a risk but abnormal costs could potentially arise. Members sought assurance that these costs could be met within the constraints of the Constitutions Financial Procedure Rules and if not they should be reported back to this Committee.

The following decisions were supported without dissent.

Decision

1. That approval be given to officers concluding an agreement for lease on the basis of the Heads of Terms set out in the Confidential Appendix to the report which 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) subject to the agreement of any capped contribution amount.

2. That delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Policy in consultation with the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee to agree the amount of the capped contribution if any additional costs are identified, subject to those costs being within the limits permitted within the Council's Constitution and should they exceed that amount, a report would be submitted to this Committee seeking approval to the costs together with details of how the costs had arisen..

8. COVID19 Recovery: A Sustainable Solution to Food Poverty *(Director of Adult and Community Based Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision tests (i)/(ii) apply. General Exception Notice applies.

Purpose of report

To present options for addressing food poverty and hardship during the COVID19 recovery phase, linking to the developing role of Community Hubs.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Adult and Community Based Services reported that existing services that tackle food poverty within Hartlepool had been maintained throughout the COVID19 response, and the Council had worked in partnership with the Food Network, Hartlepool Foodbank and other voluntary and community sector organisations to provide a crisis response to those in urgent need of food.

The COVID19 response had identified issues relating to longer term food poverty, particularly among the working poor and the over 65s, which need a sustainable solution that does not create a dependency. People report that they do not want to accept what they perceive to be charity, such as food parcels via a food bank, but acknowledge that they are struggling to buy sufficient, high quality nutritious food due to having a limited income.

It is proposed that a sustainable solution be developed that could be delivered through the Council's Community Hubs. This would enable people accessing the service to benefit from the wide range of other services delivered in the Hubs, including Adult Education, welfare benefits advice, health and wellbeing services, Community Connectors, the library offer, internet access via The People's Network and Community Kitchens.

There is a model which is utilised in other areas of the country which has been very successful, and it is proposed that this is used as the basis for a local procurement exercise to deliver a similar model for Hartlepool. A community-led membership model was used to provide access to low cost, nutritious food whereby families and individuals with very little disposable income were offered the provision of a deeply discounted food service to help their income go further. Members receive a week's worth of fresh food and other essentials in return for a nominal membership fee. The model developed in Manchester typically provides three bags of food (chilled produce, fruit and vegetables and store cupboard items) with a normal retail value of at least £30 for £7.

The cost of implementing this model in a neighbouring Local Authority was £125,000 for the first year. After 12 months the model was entirely self-sustaining with no further investment required from the Council. The Government announced on 11 June 2020 that a further £63m had been identified nationally for councils to assist households struggling to afford food and other essentials. Guidance indicated that this was a one-off boost to councils and they will have discretion on how best to help those facing severe hardship. Depending on the allocation formula, the Council may receive sufficient funding from this grant to fund the above costs.

Members warmly welcomed the proposal, though through discussion it was clear that Members were very keen to ensure local voluntary sector groups were involved in the project. Members also sought assurances around the initial capital input to the project. The Director gave assurances around the capital investment involved for purchasing the vehicle and also that local voluntary groups would be involved. The Director also indicated that progress reports during the first year and, thereafter, an annual update would be supplied to the Committee.

The following decisions were agreed without dissent.

Decision

1. That approval be given to the development of a sustainable model that will support people experiencing long term food poverty and that the funding strategy detailed in the report be approved.
2. That an evaluation report be submitted after 6 months of operation of the scheme and thereafter annual updates to this Committee.

9. Tall Ships 2023 (*Director of Adult and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

Key Decision tests (i) and (ii) apply. General Exception Notice applies.

Purpose of report

To seek approval to host the Tall Ships 2023 should application submission be successful, and to seek approval to enter into a funding agreement with Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) if successful in being a host location for Tall Ships 2023.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services reported that Hartlepool has previously hosted the Tall Ships in 2010 attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors. The event demonstrated that Hartlepool has the ability to host an event of this magnitude, successfully celebrating the maritime heritage.

Hartlepool had applied to host the Tall Ships event in August 2023 providing high quality hospitality to ships, crews and visitors. The event would provide a milestone for Hartlepool to reanimate its cultural and heritage offer for residents and tourists. This was more important now due to the impact COVID-19 has had on this sector. Tall Ships will give Hartlepool a focus to work towards and bring much needed investment into the local economy.

The Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) Mayor has written a letter expressing TVCA's commitment to supporting the return of the Tall Ships to Hartlepool and we are progressing a bid to the TVCA for £3m to meet the cost, which combined with income, will fully fund the event. If we were successful then any agreement to hosting the event would be subject to this funding being approved.

The Chair commented that the submission of the initial, late, bid had made some months earlier to Sail Training International to host the race in 2023. No decision had yet been made. The Chair stated that lessons would be learned from the 2010 experience and the intention was that the funding from TVCA and any income would cover the costs in their entirety. Members welcomed the bid but were also keen that the Council did not repeat the mistakes of 2010 and sought assurance that local businesses would benefit this time.

Following debate it was agreed that the costs envelope of the funding must be the funding by TVCA grant so that there was no risk to the Council's own funds. This was to ensure that Hartlepool residents could be assured they would only be beneficiaries of the event. The Chair also suggested a cross-party working group of Elected Members should be formed to plan the event should the bid be successful.

The following recommendations were agreed without dissent.

Decision

1. That approval be given to Hartlepool hosting Tall Ships 2023 pending approval from the event organisers.

2. That approval be given to enter into a legal agreement with TVCA for the £3m funding offer, pending a successful decision from the event organisers.
3. That should the bid to host the event be successful, the cost envelope for the event should be the funding package approved by TVCA and that a cross-party working group of Elected Members and Officers provide oversight from the Council's perspective during the organisation of the event.

10. Covid-19 Financial Position Update (*Chief Executive*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide details of decisions taken in relation to the delivery of the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Finance and Policy reported that the Council had played a key role in responding to the pandemic and it has been necessary to make decisions at speed and then implement those decisions. This has been the case across the Local Government sector and principally related to the grants received from Government to support the Covid 19 response.

The decisions had been made in accordance with part 3 of the Constitution (Chief Executive delegated power CE15) which delegates authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader (or in his absence the Deputy Leader), Chair of the relevant Committee (or in his absence Vice Chair) and Monitoring Officer, The Chief Executive (or in his/her absence the Director of Finance and Policy) may take a decision normally reserved to a Committee where (a) Failure to take the decision quickly would, or would be likely to, harm the interests of the Council and the public; and (b) The decision is so urgent that it cannot wait until the next meeting of the Committee at which the decision would normally be taken.

The Director highlighted the decisions around the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS) and some of the delays around business grants caused by delays in receiving guidance from central government. The Director also specifically highlighted the current financial situation and the impact of the pandemic and identified a current shortfall in funding of £2.906m.

Members acknowledged the huge amount of work undertaken by Officers during the emergency period and commended them on the speed of decisions and their implementation. There was some committee debate around the choice of one commercial organisation to provide food parcels

and how that decision was reached and why the voluntary sector had not been utilised. Members also asked for further details on the decision to provide funding to an organisation delivering accommodation for rough sleepers and those who are homeless. There was also some concern expressed that there had been insufficient consultation with Members on some of the decisions that were made. A further report on the decision for the supply of food parcels and provision of homelessness accommodation was requested by Members. The Chair acknowledged that some things could have been done better and that lessons had been learned through the emergency period while acknowledging the unprecedented and extremely challenging context in which decisions had been made.

The meeting also discussed issues around the awarding of discretionary grants to businesses that sublet. The Director stated that some had applied for assistance and they were being assessed. The Director stated in response to Member questions and comments that the Tees Valley authorities had adopted a unified approach to the awarding of the grant monies directed by central government. This was to ensure businesses in neighbouring towns weren't treated differently and to ensure a 'level playing field'. The criteria set by central government were limited and there may be businesses that received support that had not suffered great detriment because of the pandemic. Conversely, some business not meeting the Government set criteria had suffered financially.

The following recommendations were agreed without dissent.

Decision

1. That the report and associated Chief Executive Decision Records be noted.
2. The Committee noted that, as requested by full Council on 10th June, any additional Decision Records would be circulated to all Members, and reported to Finance and Policy Committee and published in line with the Committee process;
3. The Committee noted the position in relation to the Hardship Decision Record and that a further report would be presented to a future Finance and Policy Committee to update Members on the actual commitments against this one off funding and options for using any residual uncommitted funding.
4. That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee on the issues raised by Members around the selection of one commercial supplier for the supply of food parcels.
5. That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee providing details of the support delivered by the homeless accommodation provider.

11. Towns Fund, Town Centre Masterplan and High Street Taskforce *(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)*

Type of decision

Non-key decision.

Purpose of report

The report informed the Finance and Policy Committee of the invitation for Hartlepool to develop proposals for a £25m Town Deal, the creation of a Town Centre Masterplan and Hartlepool's involvement in the Pilot of the High Street Task Force.

It also provided details of the £173,000 capacity funding allocated to Hartlepool to support the development of a Town Investment Plan and will seek approval for the governance arrangements and membership of a new Town Deal Board.

Approval was sought for the Council to take on the role of "Lead Council" for the Towns Fund which will involve being the accountable body for the capacity funding and future Town Deal, setting out and publishing how the capacity funding will be spent, convening the Town Deal Board and ensuring robust governance arrangements and compliance with the Towns Fund Prospectus and any subsequent Government guidance.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods reported that Hartlepool had been identified as one of 100 places that had been invited to develop proposals for a Town Deal, as part of the Government's £3.6bn Towns Fund programme. The Director outlined the main aspects of the Town Deal and the Towns Fund Programme including the Town Deal Board, which would include a number of Members of the Committee by virtue of position.

The Director reported that a town centre masterplan had been commissioned to renew and reshape Hartlepool Town Centre in a way that improves experience, drives growth and ensures future sustainability. The Town Centre Masterplan would be developed in consultation with local residents, businesses and stakeholders so it would become locally owned and adopted and would be used to inform a bid to the Government's Future High Street Fund which provided funding for transformational change in town centres. A strong strategic vision and evidence base would be a key requirement of the fund.

The Director also highlighted that Hartlepool had been invited to take part in the Pilot of the High Street Taskforce programme and was the only North East Local Authority to be included at this stage being one of the initial twenty locations in the country to be announced.

The Chair welcomed the report and commented that the Masterplan had the potential to unlock some of the problem areas around the town centre. Members welcomed the proposals in the report but also emphasised that

while £25m was a lot of money, with some of the problem sites and buildings that already existed, people would need to be realistic as to what could be achieved as it may not go as far as some may desire.

In debate there were some concerns around increased pedestrianisation and the impact of that on some sectors of the community. It was also suggested that the views and experiences of other towns that had gone through similar regeneration should be sought to inform Hartlepool's plans.

The following recommendations were agreed without dissent.

Decision

1. That the Town Deal Board Terms of Reference be endorsed as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
2. That approval be given to the taking on the role of "Lead Council" for the Towns Fund which will involve being the accountable body for the capacity funding and future Town Deal, setting out and publishing how the capacity funding will be spent, convening the Town Deal Board and ensuring robust governance arrangements and compliance with the Towns Fund Prospectus and any subsequent Government guidance.
3. The Committee noted the £173,000 capacity funding allocated to Hartlepool and the commission for a multi-disciplinary team to develop a Town Investment Plan and Town Centre Masterplan.
4. The Committee noted Hartlepool's involvement in the High Street Taskforce.

12. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None.

13. 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 14 – Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility – 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. Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility** (*Director for Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*) 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).

Type of decision

Key decision Reference RN14/19. Key test (i) and (ii) apply.

Purpose of report

The report sought a series of actions relating to the Inter Authority Agreement relating to the Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility and seeking authorisation for delegation to the incoming Managing Director in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Chief Solicitor to finalise and conclude the appropriate agreements. A series of updates for Members information were also detailed.

Issue(s) for consideration

Details of the Committee's considerations are set out in the Exempt section of the minutes.

Decision

Details of the Committee's decisions are set out in the Exempt section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 12.50 pm.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 21 JULY 2020

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

9 March 2020

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Moore, Leader of Council (In the Chair)

Prescribed Members:

Elected Members, Hartlepool Borough Council – Councillors Buchan and Thomas

Representatives of Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group – Dr Nick Timlin and David Gallagher

Director of Public Health, Hartlepool Borough Council – Dr Pat Riordan

Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services, Hartlepool Borough Council – Sally Robinson

Director of Adult and Community Based Services, Hartlepool Borough Council, Jill Harrison

Representatives of Healthwatch - Margaret Wrenn and Ruby Marshall

Other Members:

Assistant Director of Joint Commissioning, Hartlepool Borough Council – Danielle Swainston

Representative of Cleveland Police – Superintendent Sharon Cooney

Representative of Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust – Dominic Gardner

Representative of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust – Deepak Dwarakanath

Representative of Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector – Karen Gibson (as substitute for Tracy Woodall)

Statutory Scrutiny Representative, Hartlepool Borough Council - Councillor Hall

Also in attendance:-

Lynn Allison, Healthwatch

Hilton Heslop, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust

Michael Houghton, Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group

Alex Sinclair, Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group

Officers: Craig Blundred, Deputy Director of Public Health
 Catherine Grimwood, Performance and Partnerships Manager
 Joan Stevens, Statutory Scrutiny Manager
 Denise Wimpenny, Democratic Services Team

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chair welcomed new representatives to the Board and apologised that it had been necessary to change the time of the meeting.

26. Apologies for Absence

Representative of the NHS England – Dr Tim Butler
Representative of GP Federation – Fiona Adamson

27. Declarations of interest by Members

Councillor Thomas – as an employee of Healthwatch.

28. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2019 were confirmed, subject to minute 20 being changed to refer to Councillor Thomas as employee of Healthwatch, not employer of Healthwatch.

29. Local Community Wealth Building – Director of Finance and Policy

The report advised the Board that Hartlepool Borough Council had been working with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and the Wharton Trust to explore what a community wealth building strategy could look like in Hartlepool. An Appendix to the report set out the findings from an early exploratory piece of work with a selection of anchor institutions in Hartlepool. Following the production of the report a workshop and a number of briefings had been held with a wider set of institutions to discuss the potential for rolling out a community wealth building approach across Hartlepool. Following these sessions it had been agreed that CLES and the Wharton Trust would be invited to attend the Health and Wellbeing Board to deliver a presentation on Local Community Wealth Building and explore how other partners can get involved in the development of a Hartlepool approach. However, the Board was advised that due to the time of the Board being changed, the representatives of those organisations had been unable to attend the meeting.

Board Members welcomed the proposals and the Chair placed emphasis upon partner organisations being involved in the development of a Hartlepool approach to local community wealth building and encouraged partner organisations to attend a future workshop scheduled for 25th March.

Decision

Board Members noted the report and expressed support of how they can get involved in the development of a Hartlepool approach to Local Community Wealth Building.

30. **“A Health Care System That Works for All Children” – Policy Paper from ADCS** - *Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*

The report outlined a summary of the policy paper “A health care system that works for all children” which had been produced by the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) in November 2019. The paper outlined those areas where the ADCS considered that there was greatest need in the population. Given the high numbers of children facing mental ill health and emotional distress, this had been the main focus of the paper.

The Board was advised that the paper suggested that the NHS Long Term Plan had not placed the needs of children at the heart of health service transformation and in particular integrating services with education and social care. This was considered to be a missed opportunity given that investing in children’s health and wellbeing would reduce the demand on health and social care services in the future. They also stated that modern life was having an impact on children with increased and varied risks (such as knife crime, digital dangers and sexual exploitation). Increased mental health problems among 5-19 year olds are a challenge. It was concluded that the NHS needed to ensure that children were placed at the forefront of future plans and that services should work more closely with education and social care to meet the needs of children.

Board Members were requested to consider the following questions:

- What should the Health and Wellbeing board be prioritising to support this agenda?
- What do the board believe the way forward should be to address the questions raised by this paper?
- What should the role of the Children’s Strategic Partnership be?
- How will the board hold stakeholders to account to ensure changes are made to address these issues?

The Board received a presentation in support of the report.

A member of the public who was in attendance at the meeting addressed the Board and informed Board Members of a number of issues and concerns in relation to autism research. The Chair highlighted that the issues raised did not relate to the agenda item and advised that this issue would be discussed under a separate agenda item later in the meeting.

In response to clarification sought, Members were advised of the challenges around the impact of adverse childhood experiences in terms of life chances and the limited research available to address such issues were highlighted. Board Members considered the questions raised and commented on the need to think more broadly in terms of responding to the needs of young people and the importance of working together to better manage resources

to facilitate investment within psychological wellbeing. A number of views were expressed regarding future priorities which included the need to focus on breastfeeding, obesity and the links to diabetes, the need to support young people before a crisis situation developed, the importance of focussing upon the transition period from children to adulthood as well as the importance of a cross-agency approach to address the needs of young people.

In relation to the role of the Children's Strategic Partnership, the CCG Representative commented that the NHS was currently working on future plans which provided an opportunity for the Partnership to work with the NHS in relation to taking this issue forward. The importance of the commitment required of all Board Members in terms of support for the Children's Strategic Partnership was emphasised.

Decision

- (i) The Board considered the paper and the implementation of partnership based work programmes to address some of the issues in Hartlepool.
- (ii) That the comments of Board Members, as outlined above be noted and actioned as appropriate.

31. Verbal Update - Development of Neurodevelopmental Pathway

Further to minute 7 of the Board meeting held on 1 July 2019, the Board received an update on the development of a neurodevelopmental pathway which would replace the existing ASD pathway. The Board was advised that work was currently underway with multi-agency partners to develop the referral process and detailed partnership discussions had also taken place in relation to resources required to develop the pathway. A trial process had been undertaken, the outcome of which was provided.

In the discussion that followed a number of questions were raised in relation to the information presented. Clarification was provided regarding the support available to families, training provision as well as the number of families who had participated in drop-ins/training sessions.

Comments were raised regarding the importance of there being a better understanding of the definition "early help" and concerns were expressed around the potential impact on local authority resources which were currently operating at maximum capacity. The need for more clarity around what the pathway would provide was emphasised. The Board was advised that in order to test the pathway process, the next steps was to roll out the pathway to 20 schools prior to roll out to all schools. It was noted that a project plan

was currently being developed, further details of which would be reported to a future meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Board Members and members of the public shared personal family experiences in relation to the needs of children with challenging behaviour and the reliance on specialist organisations for support.

Decision

That the information given and comments of Members be noted.

32. Update following the Health and Wellbeing Board Workshop on 6 November 2019 – Director of Public Health

The report provided the Health and Wellbeing Board with a progress update following the Health and Wellbeing Board Workshop held on the 6th November 2019 and advice was sought on the way forward. Discussions at the workshop had resulted in the identification of a number of proposals for reviewed priorities and two potential options for their delivery going forward. Of the options presented, those present at the workshop had expressed a clear preference for a targeted (place based) approach. Based on this, a further meeting had been held on the 23rd January 2020 with partner organisations from across the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board. During the course of discussions with partners at the meeting on the 23rd January 2020, there was continued support for a place based approach, with a strategic focus on neighbourhoods where data suggests there is the most significant need. Emphasis was placed upon the importance of achieving clear outcomes in the identified area and it was suggested that rather than starting something completely new, a plan to widen the work currently being undertaken by the Council's Children's Services Department (focusing actions on 85 streets in the Victoria Ward) should be developed. As a starting point for the development of the 'place based' plan, a data gathering exercise had been initiated with all partners, based on the 85 streets identified as part of the Children's Services piece of work. A deadline of 13th February 2020 had been set for the provision of this initial data. The Board was requested to discuss the proposed priorities and make recommendations for the immediate development of a 'place based' plan.

Board Members expressed support for the proposals and commented on the benefits of this approach. The Chair placed emphasis upon the importance of partner organisations providing the necessary data in accordance with prescribed timescales.

Decision

The Board discussed and agreed the proposed priorities and made recommendations for the immediate development of a 'place based' plan and the setting up of a Partnership Group of senior leaders to oversee the implementation of 'Hartlepool 85 Streets'

33. Corporate Strategy 2020-2025 – *North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust*

The report and accompanying presentation set out the recent refresh of the corporate strategy for North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. The previous corporate strategy for the Trust had been developed during 2016/17. However, it was highlighted that many changes had taken place nationally, regionally and locally during the last three years and the Trust had subsequently refreshed its strategic vision and aims in order to acknowledge the extent of the changes within the healthcare system.

Board Members debated issues arising from the report and presentation and the representative of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust responded to issues raised. Clarification was provided in response to a member of the public's issues and concerns in relation to the quality of the research available around autism and the impact as a result. The Chair referred to the limited resources available and the reliance on a national approach to undertake research of this type. A Member placed emphasis upon the importance of relationships and trust being rebuilt between hospital trusts and the local community and suggested that this be reflected in the workforce strategy.

Decision

The Board expressed support of the Trust's overall vision for the next five years.

34. NHS Five Year Operational Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24 – South Integrated Care Partnership – *Head of Planning and Assurance, Tees Valley CCGs*

The Board was requested to note the report and accompanying presentation with regard to the contents of the Southern Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) level submissions made as part of the wider Integrated Care System (ICS) level submission in relation to the NHS Long Term Plan. The submissions had been made in Nov-19 in line with National timescales. The Board was advised that in the response to the NHS Long Term Plan there was a requirement to develop system (ICS) plans for delivery through to 2023/24, as set out in the report. As a South ICP and one of four ICP's within the ICS it was a requirement to work with partner organisations within the ICP to complete an ICP level submission for the 3 areas above.

Decision

The Board noted the contents of the Southern ICP level submissions made as part of the wider ICS level submission in relation to the NHS Long Term Plan.

35. SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Improvement Plan Progress and Send Strategy - *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group*

Board Members were advised that the improvement plan had been updated and had been circulated. The balance scorecard had been updated with Autumn Term data which had also been circulated. In addition an annual report covering March 2019 – March 2020 had been completed and the SEND Strategy, which included the approach to joint commissioning, attached as appendices to the report, had been circulated.

In order to contribute to a continuous improvement journey the SEND Strategic Group had requested an LGA Peer Review. This had been negotiated through the LGA and would take place week beginning 30th March. The peer review would be reviewing how the local area had implemented the SEND reforms across education, health and social care.

The Assistant Director of Joint Commissioning clarified that this was a multi-agency strategy and not a Local Authority strategy which required approval and sign-off of Board Members.

Decision

- (i) The Board noted the progress achieved in implementing the SEND improvement plan.
- (ii) The Board reflected on their duties for children under the Children and Families Act 2014 to ensure that children with SEND are supported as appropriate.
- (iii) The SEND Annual Report 2019 – 2020 was noted.
- (iv) The SEND Strategy was approved and the Board reflected on ways they can contribute to the strategy's priorities.

36. Better Care Fund Update – *Director of Adult and Community Based Services*

The report provided the background to the Better Care Fund reporting arrangements and summarised the national conditions and performance measures. Performance reports were submitted to NHS England on a quarterly basis. The Quarter 3 return covering the period October-December 2019 had been submitted in late January 2020 and had confirmed that all national conditions continued to be achieved. An analysis of performance data had also been provided which was summarised in the report.

Decision

The Board retrospectively approved the Hartlepool Better Care Fund Q3 return and noted the current position in relation to performance which is extremely positive, with all four key indicators on target to be achieved at the year end.

37. Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) 2018 – Supplementary Statements – *Director of Public Health*

The report sought ratification of Supplementary Statements issued since publication of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2018. The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) had published its Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment in March 2018 and on the 5 March 2018 had approved the continued delegation of authority to the Director of Public Health (in conjunction with the Chair of the HWB) to approve specific functions set out in the report, as required. In accordance with the agreed process for the periodic ratification of Supplementary Statements, the Board was advised that five Statements had been issued since publication of the PNA in March 2018. A copy of the Statements was appended to the report.

Decision

The Board noted and ratified the Supplementary Statements issued since publication of the PNA 2018.

38. Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Review - *Director of Public Health*

The report updated the Board on responsibilities and actions related to the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) for Hartlepool. The Board had published its second PNA on the 23rd March 2018, in accordance with statutory requirements. The National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013 (“the Regulations”), as amended, set out the legislative basis for the updating of PNA’s, including the duty of Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWB’s) to ‘publish a statement of its revised assessment within 3 years of its previous publication of a PNA. It was therefore recommended that the Board now acknowledge initiation of the process towards publication of its next revised assessment. As the PNA is used by providers and others (including NHS England), a Statement of Intent reporting this needs to been published on the Hartlepool Borough Council website as set out in the report. A provisional plan for this substantial re-assessment was also detailed in the report.

Decision

- i) The Board acknowledged the content of the report including the outline plan and timetable towards the review of the PNA of the Hartlepool HWB, commencing immediately.
- ii) The Board delegated authority to the current/or acting Director of Public Health (DPH), in conjunction with the Chair of the HWB, for approval of the draft PNA 2021 for release to formal 60 day consultation.
- iii) The Board approved the continued delegation of authority to the current, or acting, Director of Public Health (DPH), in conjunction with the Chair of the HWB, for elements of the maintenance and use of the PNA, and for the DPH to approve, as required:
 - Publication of minor errata/ service updates as on-going notifications that fall short of formal Supplementary Statements to the PNA (for example changes of ownership, minor relocations of pharmacies, minor adjustments to opening hours and service contracts that do not impact on need);
 - Any response on behalf of the Hartlepool HWB to NHS England (42 day) consultation on applications to provide new or amended pharmaceutical services, based on the PNA; and
 - Any initial determination with respect to the potential for either a Supplementary Statement or need for full review. Publication of Supplementary Statements to be ratified by the HWB at suitable periodic intervals (e.g., annually) as required.
- iv) In accordance with the NHS Pharmaceutical Services regulations, now that the HWB is in the course of making its revised assessment for 2021, the HWB will monitor any changes to availability for pharmaceutical services in its area in the intervening period. The HWB will publish a Supplementary Statement on any changes (to availability) where (if) it is satisfied that immediate modification of its pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (2018) is essential in order to prevent significant detriment to the provision of pharmaceutical services in the town.
- v) Agenda items related to consultation, review, maintenance (including Supplementary Statements) and future publication of the Hartlepool PNA be received as required at future HWB meetings.

39. Verbal Update - Coronavirus – *Director of Public Health*

The Board received a verbal update on the outbreak of coronavirus. The country was currently in the containment phase and current advice should be maintained in terms of frequent handwashing etc. It was anticipated that the country would rapidly move to the delay phase to mitigate the impact on an overstretched NHS, details of which were provided. A number of recommendations were being worked through which may include social distancing, voluntary isolation of whole households should there be a positive case within the family, postponement of mass gatherings and advice was expected around the use of public transport and school closures. It was not envisaged that school and college closures would be considered in the first phase of the delay phase as this was not considered as effective as social distancing and self isolation. It was anticipated that the epidemic would be around for at least five months, with the late spring being the period of intensity and that cases may reduce then reappear in the autumn/early winter.

In response to clarification sought, the Board was advised of the arrangements in the event of coronavirus symptoms.

Meeting concluded at 4.05 p.m.

CHAIR

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13th August 2020



Report of: Director of Finance and Policy

Subject: FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE 2020/21 TO 2023/24

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Budget and Policy Framework.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide updates on:

- i) the forecast 2020/21 General Fund outturn;
- ii) the financial impact of Covid-19;
- iii) General Fund budget 2021/22 and futures years outlook;
- iv) the Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22;
- v) the Housing Revenue Account 2021/22 and future years.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The main focus of this report is the General Fund budget position – which covers all services provided by the Council other than the direct provision of housing, which by law is accounted for within a separate Housing Revenue Account (HRA). As previously requested by Council this report also enables Members to consider the linkages between the General Fund, Local Council Tax Support scheme and the impact of HRA rent decisions on households.

3.2 The General Fund budget had faced nine consecutive years of cuts in Government funding up to 2019/20. Consequently, significant efficiencies and cuts have been made, including reducing the workforce by **20% (500 posts)**.

3.3 Since 2013/14, when the current funding system was introduced, Government core funding reduced from **£62.3m** in 2013/14 to **£36.6m** in 2019/20 – this is a cash reduction of **£25.7m**, a **41%** cut. This highlights the significant reduction in funding for local services and the increasing challenge of balancing the annual budget.

- 3.4 Additional Government funding was provided in 2020/21 for Social Care. However, these services, particularly Looked after Children, have experienced significant annual increases in demand and the Council has had to manage this position within a reduced overall annual budget.
- 3.5 Previous budget strategies enabled the Council to manage the impact of Government funding cuts and the budget for 2020/21 was set using a reduced level of reserves of £0.547m. A net 2021/22 budget deficit of £1.3m was forecast in February.
- 3.6 As outlined later in the report the Covid pandemic will have an adverse impact on the financial position and future financial resilience of all councils. The scale of the impact in 2020/21 and 2021/22 and the measures that will need to be adopted to address these financial challenges will depend on the financial support measures provided by the Government, which continue to evolve and will not be finalised until later in the year.

4. 2020/21 FORECAST GENERAL FUND OUTTURN

- 4.1 Forecasting the outturn at this early stage of the financial year is always challenging as significant elements of the budget are seasonal and expenditure can vary significantly over the winter period. The position for 2020/21 is significantly more challenging owing to the impact of Covid on costs and income streams.
- 4.2 To enable the forecast General Fund outturn to be assessed the financial impact of Covid has been separated out and is covered in the next section. In relation to the adjusted General Fund forecast outturn it is currently anticipated that the Council will face increased demand in relation to Looked after Children and this trend is likely to continue into 2021/22, as detailed later in the report. It is anticipated that current year overspend can be offset from managed underspends on other service budgets and the achievement of lower borrowing costs from actions taken to secure long term borrowing for the approved capital programme.
- 4.3 The Corporate Management Team will continue to monitor the General Fund budget and updated forecasts will be reported to a future meeting.
- 4.4 Collection levels in relation to Council Tax and Business Rates will also continue to be monitored closely. At the end of June 2020:
- 26.2% of Council Tax had been collected, this compares to 27.6% at the end June 2019; and
 - 22.7% of Business Rates had been collected, this compares to 28.8% at the end June 2019.

5. FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

- 5.1 The pandemic has had a profound impact on the daily lives of people. While the economic and social impacts of the pandemic are significant, the

principal impacts are on the health and well-being of those directly and indirectly affected. The Covid pandemic has also had an unprecedented financial impact on councils and this is driven by five key factors:

- **Increased expenditure** - this has been incurred across a range of services and predominantly relates to increased financial support of the care sector, PPE and support for vulnerable households;
- **Reduced service income** – the closure of services and the lock down has reduced income for a range of council services in exactly the same way as businesses have lost income;
- **Increased cost of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)** – as household income has reduced and unemployed increased the number of households eligible for LCTS has increased. At the end of June 2020 LCTS eligible households had increased by **8%** from the pre-Covid level, which underlines the speed of the initial economic downturn.

Further increases in eligible households are expected when the furloughing schemes ends and businesses make decision regarding redundancies and / or the hours they will require people to work. The position is being monitored closely.

- **Reduced Business Rates income** – not all businesses will survive the economic impact of the pandemic and this will reduce business rates income;
- **Reduced Council Tax income from housing growth** – housing growth will be lower than forecast for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

5.2 The Local Government Association (LGA) has estimated that councils will need additional funding of £9.2 billion to address the financial impact of Covid. The Council has worked with the other North East councils to lobby the Government for additional funding and to provide evidence of the financial issues facing councils. Additionally, Hartlepool has been one of fifteen LGA 'case study councils' used to provide more detailed evidence of the impact of the pandemic for submission to the Government.

5.3 On the 16th March the Local Government Secretary, Robert Jenrick MP stated - "the Government stands ready to do whatever is necessary to support councils in their response to coronavirus". On the 31st March the Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government, Simon Clark MP stated - "Whatever you worry about it should not be costs as you will be compensated". The Government has so far provided three tranches of financial support to help councils meet the financial impact of Covid totalling £3.7 billion, plus additional funding for income losses, which is still to be determined.

Summary of £3.7 billion

- **Tranche 1** (announced 16.03.20) – national un-ringfenced grant funding of **£1.6 billion**. Hartlepool was allocated **£3.404m**;
- **Tranche 2** (announced 18.04.20) – national un-ringfenced grant funding of a further **£1.6 billion**. Hartlepool was allocated **£2.559m**;
- **Tranche 3** (announced 02.07.20) – national un-ringfenced grant funding of **£500 million**. Hartlepool was allocated **£1.013m**. The initial national funding announcement was made on 2nd July 2020 and detailed allocations for individual councils, and initial arrangements for income losses and Collection Fund deficits were issued on 17th July 2020. Further details are provided in **Appendix A** - letter from Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government and **Appendix B** - assessment of impact on the Council.

5.4 On the basis of the funding announcements made by the Government it is anticipated the Council faces a Covid funding deficit of **£2.154m**. This forecast is predicated on the Government approving the claim for funding for income losses. However, this position is not guaranteed as councils face risks in relation to:

- The detailed technical arrangements for providing grant funding to offset income losses, including which income streams are eligible for support.
- The revised deficit is based on current forecast costs and income losses for the remainder of 2020/21, which may increase if there is a local outbreak, or a further national lockdown.

Summary of Financial Impact of Covid

	Covid Costs	Irrecoverable Sales, Fees and Charges income	Collection Fund Deficit	Total
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Cost / Income loss ##	4.658	4.587	3.000	12.245
Less – Tranche 1, 2 and 3 Government Grant	(4.658)	(1.472)	(0.846)	(6.976)
Less Forecast Government Grant (71% eligible income loss)	0.000	(3.115)	0.000	(3.115)
Funding Shortfall / (Surplus)	0.000	0.000	2.154	2.154

The Covid costs include approved 2020/21 budget savings of £0.287m which will be deferred until 2021/22 owing to the impact of Covid. All other elements of the approved 2020/21 budget savings, total value £1.802m, will

be delivered in the current years as implementation has not been affected by Covid.

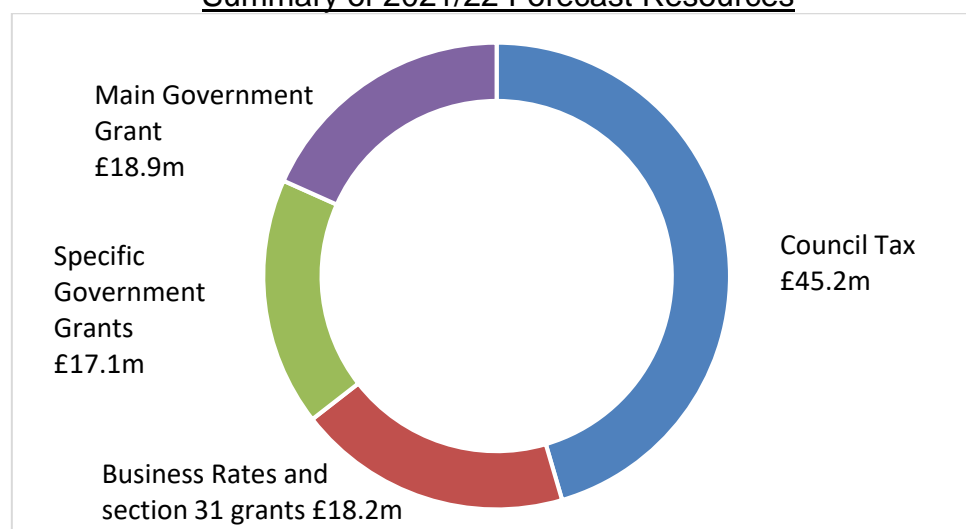
- 5.5 This position will continue to be monitored closely and updated as the Government provides greater certainty in relation to the financial support package.
- 5.6 To address the forecast Covid funding shortfall and avoid this position impacting on the 2020/21 and 2021/22 budgets it is recommended that the shortfall is capitalised. This will enable the cost to be spread over a number of years. The resulting loan repayment costs will be funded from the senior management structure recurring saving (£46,000) and the net uncommitted saving in borrowing costs achieved in relation to the approved capital programme (£54,000). In total the recurring revenue saving is £100,000.
- 5.7 As the Covid shortfall is a revenue cost this proposals will need to be implemented through a funding swap where prudential borrowing will be used to meet approved capital expenditure commitments, which it was planned to fund from the Capital Funding Reserves. This strategy releases the Capital Funding Reserve which is revenue funding and can therefore be reallocated to address the Covid funding shortfall.
- 5.9 If the pandemic had not occurred this financial flexibility would have been available to support the General Fund budget position for 2021/22 and future years. The loss of this flexibility makes managing the 2021/22 budget position more challenging and highlights the detrimental impact the pandemic is having on the Council's financial position and resilience.

6. GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2021/22 AND FUTURE YEAR OUTLOOK

6.1 Context

- 6.2 To provide context to the 2021/22 budget the following table summarises the key forecast resources available to fund services.

Summary of 2021/22 Forecast Resources



- 6.3 Details of Government funding for 2021/22 will be determined by the planned 2020 Spending Review and 2021/22 Local Government Finance Settlement. It is unlikely that detailed 2021/22 Government grant allocations for individual councils will be known until December 2020 – this makes financial planning challenging.
- 6.4 On the basis of decisions made by Government in relation to 2020/21 funding it is not unreasonable to assume that 2021/22 funding will be maintained at this level. However, this cannot be guaranteed and on 21st July 2020 when launching the 2020 Spending Review the Chancellor said:
- ‘it is clear there will be “tough choices” in other areas of spending at the review, and departments have been asked to identify opportunities to reprioritise and deliver savings”.

In view of the large amounts already promised for priority areas like the NHS, schools and police, the Chancellor’s emphasis on the need for ‘tough choices’ means another round of budget cuts for other lower priority departments is a potential possibility. The deadline for submitting representation to the Spending Review is 24th September, which means that funding announcements for council are likely to be made in late December 2020.

The Chancellor also indicated that after one-off above inflation pay awards for 2020/21 for many public sector workers that “we must exercise restraint in future public sector pay awards”.

- 6.5 The other key context is the Government’s recent Council Tax Policy covering the period 2016/17 to 2020/21, which has shift the burden of funding local services from Government grant on to Council Tax. Over this period this has resulted in:
- An increase in core Council Tax income (excluding the Adult Social Care precept) from £34.3m in 2016/17 to £39.8m in 2020/21;
 - The introduction in 2016/17 of the Adult Social Care precept, which in 2020/21 raises £3.8m – this equates to 11p of every £1 spent on Adult Social Care.

In 2013/14 the Adult Social Care Council Tax precept did not exist, which underlines the reliance now placed on the precept for funding these services, rather than Government grant funding.

6.6 Forecast of 2021/22 Budget Deficit

- 6.7 The following table summarises the deficit agreed by Council in February 2020 and assumed that 2020/21 Government Funding, with the exception of the phasing out of New Homes Bonus, will continue in 2021/22.

	£'m
Deficit deferred from 2020/21	0.547
Add - 2% Provision for pay award and inflation	1.625
Add – Reduction in New Homes Bonus income	0.749
Less – Forecast housing growth	(0.760)
Less – Forecast 2% Council Tax increase	(0.860)
Forecast Deficit	1.301

- 6.8 The initial forecasts for 2021/22 have been updated to reflect the following changes:

- **National Pay Award** - The additional recurring cost of the April 2020 national pay award being settled at the current employers offer of 2.75%, which is higher than the 2% provision included in the base budget. The additional 0.75% equates to £0.4m. A 2% provision has been included for the April 2021 national pay award on the basis of continued low inflation and the downward pressure higher unemployment will have on cost of living wage increases;
- **Council Tax base** - Over the period 2014/15 to 2019/20 the Council Tax base increased by 2,510 Band D equivalent properties. 38% of this increase reflected a reduction in the number of households eligible for LCTS owing to improving economic conditions and 62% from new house building.

The previous forecasts for 2020/21 and 2021/22 expected these trends to continue and by April 2021 another 871 Band D equivalent properties were expected to be added to the Council Tax base. By 2021/22 the forecast housing growth equates to additional forecast recurring Council Tax income of £1.556m.

The economic impact of the pandemic means that the downward trend in LCTS eligibility is being reversed and housing growth will be lower. Therefore, for planning purposes it would be prudent to expect half of this increase. There is a risk that the actual reduction may be higher if more households than forecast become eligible for LCTS.

The position will be reviewed when the 2021/22 Council Tax statutory calculation is presented to this Committee. At that time we will know the actual level of new LCTS eligible households, have details of housing

completions for the first 7/8 months and details of measures included in the Spending Review for Council Tax losses.

- **Budget Pressures** – the following additional budget pressures have been identified:
 - **Increase in Looked after Children** - Covid 19 has impacted upon the number of children in care and there has been a net increase as children have continued to become looked after where they are assessed as being at risk of significant harm, however fewer children have left care during this period. The reasons for this are multiple, including the closure of the Family Court leading to delays and a backlog of cases and the need for young people ready to leave care to remain in their placements. In 2020/21 part of these cost (£0.7m) can be funded from the Covid grant and the remaining cost (£0.4m) managed within the overall General fund budget.

Further work needs to be completed to determine the extent to which this caseload is permanent or temporary, including the time it will then take for the Family Court to clear the backlog of cases for Hartlepool and other councils. At this stage it would be prudent to make provision of £1.35m for these costs continuing in 2021/22, whilst noting further work needs to be completed and will be reported to a future meeting.

 - **National Living Wage (NLW)** - this will continue to impact on the cost of commissioned Adult Care and provision of £0.375m has previously been made in the budget forecast for 2021/22. Based on the Government's commitment to phase increases in the NLW and increasing focus on low pay, particularly in the care sector an additional pressures of £0.125m is forecast.
- **Continuing Income shortfalls** – it is anticipated that 2020/21 Covid income shortfalls will continue into 2021/22 as a result of actively not returning to pre Covid levels. As we are only slowly coming out of lock down and beginning to reopen services it is too early to assess the impact in 2021/22. For many service areas there will be a prolonged period of reduced operational capacity owing to the continued need for social distancing.

As detailed earlier in the report an overall 2020/21 income shortfall of £4.6m is forecast. A detailed assessment of how quickly this income will recover will need to be completed. For planning purposes an average recovery of 75% is a reasonable planning assumption for 2021/22 at this stage. This will still leave an income shortfall of £1.150m. There is a risk that this shortfall may be higher and this position will be reviewed latter in the year when services have reopened.

- **Potential Additional Social Care funding** – the Government has announced a further delay to the Fair Funding Review and introduction of 75% Business Rates Retention until 2022/23. Additionally, proposals for a long term solution of Social Care funding are still to be issued by the Government, after many years of delay. Over the last two years the Government provided additional Social Care funding to partly mitigate these issues and the continued financial pressures facing both Adult and Children's social care. The announcement for 2020/21 was extremely late and allocated £2.3m to Hartlepool. The 2021/22 forecasts assume this funding will be sustained.

No provision has been included in the current forecast for a potential additional new social care grant allocation in 2021/22. It is hoped that the pandemic has highlight the critical importance of the Adult Social care and the financial pressures facing these services and a new additional funding allocation may be provided. However, this cannot be guaranteed and will depend on the outcome of the 2020 Spending Review.

- 6.9 The following table summarises the above factors and shows a total forecast 2021/22 funding shortfall of between **£2.886m** and **£5.086m**. The lower figure will only be achieved if the Government provide additional funding for Social care.

Update 2021/22 Forecast Deficit – Based on 2% Council Tax increase

	Deficit with additional 2021/22 Social Care Government Funding £'m	Deficit without additional 2021/22 Social Care Government Funding £'m
Forecast Deficit Reported February	1.301	1.301
Add - Recurring impact of April 2020 National Pay Award	0.400	0.400
Add- Reduction in Forecast Housing Growth	0.760	0.760
Add- Budget Pressures	1.475	1.475
Forecast 2021/22 Income Shortfalls	1.150	1.150
Less – Potential 2021/22 New Social Care Government Grant	(2.200)	0.000
Revised Forecast Deficit	2.886	5.086

6.10 Strategy for Managing Forecast Deficit

- 6.11 In normal circumstances it would be recommended that a savings strategy is developed to address the recurring budget deficit and identify the services cuts which need to be implemented from 1st April 2021. However, the deficit includes forecast income shortfalls which may be temporary for 2021/22 if

activity returns to normal levels over the next 18 months, although this will depend how peoples' behaviours may have changed as a result of the pandemic and whether there are further outbreaks.

- 6.12 Achieving permanent savings of this magnitude would undermine capacity of the Council to support the town recover from the pandemic and consume a significant amount of management capacity. In addition, the delayed implementation of major reform of the Local Government until 2022/23 means there is significant uncertainty regarding funding levels beyond 2021/22 – particularly in relation to Social Care.
- 6.13 Therefore, against this background, it would not be inappropriate to fund the above shortfall from one off resources. **However, in adopting this strategy the Council needs to recognise that this is not a permanent solution. If reforms of the Local Government funding system do not result in a significant increase in funding in 2022/23, the strategy simply defers the budget deficit and resulting budget cuts until 2022/23.**
- 6.14 To support the adoption of this strategy the Council would need to commit the majority of the remaining uncommitted reserves (i.e. Budget Support Fund and Strategic One off costs reserve). This would significantly reduce one off resources available to support the 2022/23 budget and manage financial risks, as summarised below:

Actual Balance 31.03.20 £'m		Forecast Balance 31.03.21 with additional 2021/22 Social Care Government Funding £'m	Forecast Balance 31.03.21 without additional 2021/22 Social Care Government Funding £'m
4.513	Budget Support Fund	3.029	3.029
2.692	Strategic One off costs reserve	2.599	2.599
7.205	Total	5.628	5.628
	Less Best / Worst care 2021/22 Funding Shortfall	(2.886)	(5.086)
	Forecast uncommitted one of resources available to support 2022/23 budget & financial risks	2.742	0.542

6.15 Council Tax 2021/22

- 6.16 As reported in February the 2021/22 budget forecast are based on a 2% Council Tax increase, which equates to additional recurring resources of **£0.860m**. This increase reflected the previous Government Spending Review which anticipates increasing annual Council Tax revenue from annual

increases being part of the Government's funding strategy for council services.

- 6.17 If Council Tax is frozen this income is lost permanently as the Council Tax referendum regime sets annual limits and it is unlikely that this system will change. This means freezing Council Tax in one year cannot be caught up with a higher increase in a future years as referendum limits do not operate on a cumulative basis.
- 6.18 Since 2016/17 the Government's funding system, including the introduction of the Adult Social Care Council Tax precept, has effectively "nationalised" annual Council Tax increases as this increased income has been built into national spending plans. As a result of previous Government funding cuts and the Government's Council Tax regime the majority of authorities have increased Council Tax in line with Government Council Tax referendum limits to partly mitigate cuts in services.
- 6.19 Legally the responsibility for Council Tax increases remains with individual authorities. However, the Government's recent Council Tax policy has meant that councils have faced the choice of either:
- Increasing Council Tax to protect recurring income and protect services;
 - OR
 - Freeze Council Tax and accept that the resulting permanent income loss has to be replaced by making service cuts.
- 6.20 The shift in the percentage of local services now funded from Council Tax means that the above 'choice' is now a continuing annual issues for councils. This position will not change until the Government provides additional recurring grant income to meet inflation pressures / increased service demand, as they do for the NHS.
- 6.21 Members have expressed a desire to explore freezing Council Tax owing to the increasing impact this tax has on household budgets. In practice the recurring income foregone from freezing Council Tax needs to be replaced and the only effective option for achieving this is to lobby the Government to implement a fully funded Council Tax freeze for 2021/22.
- 6.22 The previous Government funded Council Tax regime only provided funding for 50% of the income foregone from freezing Council Tax. At the time this was a less significant issue as the Council Tax referendum limit was set at 2% and Council Tax income made up a lower share of overall funding. The Council Tax freeze grant was provided as a specific grant for one year and then rolled into the main Revenue Support Grant in future years.

Given service pressures a 2021/22 nationally funded Council Tax freeze regime would need to be supported with a specific grant equal to the income that would have been raised from a 2% increase. This grant would then need

to be provided separately in future years to ensure transparency around the sustainability of this funding on a permanent basis.

- 6.23 Over recent years the Government's Council Tax policy has shifted the funding burden for local services from grant on to Council Tax. This has reflected annual cuts in Government grants and national Council Tax referendum limits set by the Government. As a result of these changes the previous alternatives to increasing Council Tax i.e. identifying services cuts and / or increasing other income streams are no longer viable options, for the following reasons:

- **Identify additional service cuts.**

As detailed in the previous section the Council will have to make further budget cuts even with a Council Tax increase of 2%. A Council Tax freeze would reduce recurring income and therefore exacerbate the budget cuts required, which would be extremely challenging in view of the cuts implemented over the last nine years.

- **Increase other income streams**

The 2020/21 budget forecast already assume that income from existing fees and charges will increase by 2% and provide recurring additional income of **£0.896m**.

The base budget forecast also assume that activity in 2021/22 will return to the pre Covid level. This will not happen in all areas and an initial assessment of the forecast shortfall is detailed earlier in the report.

It would therefore be unrealistic to anticipate any further additional income in 2021/22 from existing charges.

As reported last year scope for new charges is extremely limited and introducing new charges in a recovery period would be more challenging than in normal circumstances.

- 6.24 In summary the level of Council Tax increase for 2021/22 cannot be determined until the Government set the proposed Council Tax referendum limits. As detailed in the next section a Government funded 2021/22 Council Tax freeze may be an issue that Members wish to include in a submission to the 2020 Spending Review and the Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government.

6.25 **Issues for Spending Review Submission and Letter to Simon Clark MP – Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government**

- 6.26 Members views on the following suggested submission are requested:

- The Council has increasing concerns on the ability of residents in deprived areas to pay increasing council tax bills. This position has been

exacerbated by the introduction of the Adult Social Care precept, which for Hartlepool residents now accounts for nearly 9 pence of every £1 of Council Tax paid for Council services.

- Additionally, the funding raised from council tax is inequitable across the country – with the same percentage increases in wealthier areas raising significantly more than increases in lower tax-base areas like the north east and Hartlepool.
- To address these issues the Council would ask the Government to fully fund a Council Tax freeze for 2021/22 with a specific grant equal to the amount a 2% Council Tax increase would generate and continue to pay this grant in future years to permanently back councils freezing Council Tax to support residents during the recovery period.
- Request that the Government provides a two year financial settlement for 2021/22 and 2022/23 to provide financial certainty during the recovery period. This needs as a minimum to guarantee all 2020/21 funding streams for two years and provide additional funding for adult and children's social care pressures based on need.
- Commit to developing a sustainable funding system for 2022/23 onwards, which allocates funding on the basis of need and ability to raise resources locally. The suggested lead time will provide time for full consultation and implementation of a fairer funding regime. The Adult Care green paper remains unpublished and there also needs to be full recognition of the significant cost pressures arising from increases in demand in providing children's social care services in the north east.
- Abandon plans to increase Business Rates retention and commit to review the Business Rates system which, the current pandemic and need for significant reliefs has demonstrated, is not a robust basis for funding local services – particularly adult and children's social care, or taxing high street businesses and online businesses fairly.

6.27 Other Lobbying arrangements

- 6.28 The LGA has successfully lobbied the Government for Covid financial support. The pandemic has identified that there is not a special interest group for unitary councils within the LGA to provide a forum for sharing experiences and promoting the financial issues facing unitary councils. A number of councils have expressed an interest in establishing a special interest group for unitary councils and Members views on whether Hartlepool should join this group are requested.

6.29 Future Years Outlook – 2022/23 and 2023/24

- 6.30 It is widely recognised that the national funding system is effectively ‘broken’ and significant planned national reforms have been put back to 2022/23. A new system for funding local services needs to recognise that for many councils, including Hartlepool, that Government funding will continue to be critical as Council Tax income is not sufficient to fund local services without there becoming a post code lottery for service provision.
- 6.31 For Hartlepool Government funding and Business Rates income currently account for **55%** of resources and Council Tax the remaining **45%**. If future Government funding is not increased in line with inflation each year the Council will face annual deficits in 2022/23 and 2023/24 of **£2m** per year. This is the amount needed just to stand still and provides no additional resources for service pressures.
- 6.32 To address a deficit of £2m the Council would either:
- Need to achieve trend housing growth of £0.7m and a 2.9% Council Tax increase (£1.3m); or
 - Need to achieve trend housing growth of £0.7m and a 2% Council Tax increase (£0.9m) and make service cuts of £0.4m; or
 - Need to achieve trend housing growth of £0.7m and make service cuts of £1.3m to have a Council Tax freeze.
- 6.33 Decisions regarding the budgets for 2022/23 and 2023/24 will be subject to future reports and reflect decisions the Government makes regarding future level of funding for councils and future national Council Tax referendum limits.

7. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT (LCTS) SCHEME 2021/22

- 7.1 As reported to Finance and Policy Committee on 9 December 2019 the Council had consulted on the options of retaining a 12% scheme, or introducing 14%, 16%, 18% or 20% schemes.
- 7.2 The consultation undertaken last year received 333 responses and 66% (220) of responses were from individual who had never been in receipt of LCTS. In response to the first consultation question over two thirds of respondents thought the Council should maintain the existing 12% scheme. In response to the second consultation question – ‘if you feel the Council should increase the minimum contribution that working age households make, what do you think should be the minimum contribution in the 2020/21 scheme’ – responses were:
- 49% said a 14% contribution;
 - 17% said a 16% contribution;
 - 10% said a 18% contribution;
 - 24% said a 20% contribution
- 7.3 Based on the outcome of the consultation members determined to retain a 12% scheme for 2020/21.

7.4 In response to a proposal from a Member it was also agreed by Finance and Policy Committee on 9 December 2019 that:

- consultation on the Local Council Tax Support for 2021/22 include the potential option of a 10% scheme and the potential use of the Local Welfare Support budget to fund the additional 2%.

7.5 As outlined earlier in the report the Covid pandemic has increased the number of working age households eligible for LCTS in 2020/21, owing to the impact of higher unemployment and / or reduced contracted hours of work.

7.6 The increase in households eligible for LCTS is expected to continue into 2021/22 and the reduction in eligibility will be driven by the strength of the economic recovery.

7.7 In view of the financial challenges facing the Council and residents Members need to adopt one of following options:

- **Option 1** - recommended to Council to maintain the existing LCTS scheme at 12% and the Local Welfare Support budget for 2021/22 to provides financial certainty and stability;
- **Option 2** - to consult on alternative options, including the options detailed in paragraph 7.2, over the summer with a view to bring a further report back to Finance and Policy Committee to determine the LCTS and Local Welfare Support budget to be recommended to Council in December.

8. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

8.1 The HRA is separate ring fenced account and there can be no subsidy from General Fund and vice versa. Notwithstanding this legal distinction Members previously requested that HRA rent proposals be brought forward as part of the budget process.

8.2 The key issue in relation to the HRA is the level of rent as this determines the level of prudential borrowing to match fund Homes England capital grant funding. The Government has set a maximum annual rent increase level for the HRA of the annual September CPI plus 1% for the period 2020/21 to 2024/25.

8.3 Members are requested to determine which of the following options they wish to recommend to full Council. In considering these options Members are advised that both options increase the number of HRA properties which helps address housing need and make the HRA financially more resilient. If option 2 is adopted the increase in additional properties may be phased over two financial years and a detailed delivery plan will be submitted to a future meeting is this option is adopted.

	Rent Increase 2021/22	Prudential Borrowing £'m	Forecast Home England Grant £'m	Forecast Total Capital Investment £'m	Additional Properties
Option 1	Rent freeze	2.074	1.064	3.138	28
Option 2	1.8% #	3.925	2.014	5.939	53

Estimate based on June CPI of 0.8% plus 1%. Actual increase will be September CPI plus 1%.

9. BUDGET TIMETABLE

- 9.1 In view of the significant uncertainty regarding the timing of national funding announcements the following draft budget timetable is designed to keep Members updated during the remainder of the year. Member briefings will also be scheduled within this timetable.

Committee	Issues to be considered
Finance and Policy Committee September to November 2020	Regular updates will be provide as national funding announcements are made and work on local forecasts is completed.
Finance and Policy Committee December 2020 #	MTFS update to reflect provisional 2020/21 Local Government Finance Settlement announcement and determine budget proposals to be referred to full Council. If Members adopt option 2 to consult on alternative 2021/22 LCTS options details of the consultation outcome will be reported in December to enable Finance and Policy committee to approve the proposed to be referred to Council.
Council December 2020 #	Consider detailed budget proposals referred by Finance and Policy Committee.
Finance and Policy Committee January 2020 ##	Approval statutory Council Tax calculations, including precepts set by other bodies, to be referred to full Council.
Council February 2020 ##	Consider statutory Council Tax calculations, including precepts set by other bodies, referred from Finance and Policy Committee

These reports are scheduled in line with the timetable adopted in previous years. However, there is a significant risk around the impact and timing of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement announcement by the Government, which may not be made until very late in December.

These reports will be subject to the timing of the final Local Government Finance Settlement announcement by the Government and if this is delayed an additional Finance and Policy Committee and Council meeting may be

required to set the budget and council tax before the 11th March statutory deadline.

10. COMMUNITY POT

- 10.1 To support the recovery process Members may wish to establish a Community Pot and the following one off resources have been identified:

	£'000
New Burdens funding	130
Release of Family Poverty Reserve #	48
Ward Member Budget underspend at 31.03.2020	25
Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for food and essential suppliers	22
Total One-off funding	225

Current balance is reserve is £90k and releasing £48k will leave £42k to support ongoing Family Poverty initiatives, including potential Christmas 2020 holiday hunger initiatives.

- 10.2 If Members support this proposal it is suggested that £25,000 is allocated to support a programme of activities for Young People and authority delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee to approve the use of this funding.
- 10.3 Proposal for allocating the remaining £200,000 would be made by Finance and Policy Committee.

11. CONSULTATION AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 Section 9 details the formal budget timetable, including arrangements for Member briefings. Details for public consultation will be developed as the budget process progresses and this will be aligned with consultation on the Recovery Plan.
- 11.2 The following areas will be addressed in future MTFS reports and will reflect the development of detailed budget proposals:
- Risk Implications
 - Legal Considerations
 - Child and Family Poverty Considerations
 - Staff Consideration
 - Asset Management Considerations
 - Robustness advice from the Director of Finance and Policy - Local Government Act 2003 requirements
 - Equality and Diversity Considerations

12. CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1 Prior to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic the Council had successfully managed the impact of nine years of austerity and a significant cut in Government funding, which in 2020/21 was **£25.7m (41%)** less than in 2013/14 (the year the current funding system was introduced). The Council set a balanced budget for 2020/21 which minimised the use of reserves to approximately £0.5m and therefore provided a robust financial base for 2021/22.
- 12.2 The pandemic has had a profound impact on the daily lives of people. While the economic and social impacts of the pandemic are significant, the principal impacts are on the health and well-being of those directly and indirectly affected.
- 12.3 From a financial perspective the pandemic has had a significant negative impact on the financial position of all councils in the current year (2020/21). In response the Government has provided additional un-ringfenced grant of £3.7 billion in the current year to meet additional costs incurred by councils responding to the pandemic. The Council has been allocated £6.976m. The Government will be providing financial support to mitigate losses in sales, fees and charges income suffered by councils, which covers 71% of these losses. Additionally, councils will be able to repay 2020/21 Collection Fund deficits over three years, rather than one year. It is currently forecast that the Council will face a net shortfall in funding in relation to the Collection Fund deficit arising from the economic impact of Covid of **£2.154m**. This will need to be funded from the Council's own resources.
- 12.4 The pandemic will continue to impact on the Council's financial position in 2021/22 as housing growth will be lower than previously forecast, which will reduce forecast Council Tax income. The April 2020 national pay award is expected to exceed the forecast increase and this will increase recurring costs. The Council will also face increased budget pressures in relation to Looked after Children. In total these factors increase the 2020/21 deficit to between **£2.886m and £5.086m**. The lower figures assume a further additional Government grant allocation for Social Care costs, although this cannot be guaranteed and will depend on the outcome of the Spending Review. It is also hoped that the deficit will be reduced once a detailed assessment of the current increase in Looked after Children caseloads has been completed.
- 12.5 The Government has also announced a further delay in the planned implementation of the Fair Funding Review and increase in Business Rates Retention from 50% to 75% until 2022/23. Proposals for a long term reform of Adult Social Care have also been delayed. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) published a Fiscal Sustainability report on 14th July 2020 and highlighted:
- Adult social care represents a source of fiscal risk, with demographic and other cost pressures raising demands for spending and governments

announcing periodic top-ups to strained budgets. The funding system itself is a source of fiscal uncertainty as governments have recognised that reform is necessary but have been unwilling to decide how.

- Local Authorities' finance could come under greater pressure than we have assumed, leaving them unable to meet statutory obligations without additional funding from central government.

12.6 The Government is also undertaking a Spending Review which will need to address how the unprecedented peace time increase in Government debt arising from the pandemic is managed. The Chancellor has indicated that “tough choices” will need to be made, which given the large amounts already promised for Government priorities (NHS, schools and police), may mean further cuts for other lower priority Government spending.

12.7 The pandemic has highlighted that:

- the funding system for councils is no longer fit for purpose;
- magnified the impact of delaying reforms to the national funding system and highlighted the fragility of the funding system for social care, particularly Adult Social Care;
- highlighted that after many years of austerity the sector is not financially sustainable and has relied on emergency one off Government funding to deal with the impact of Covid and avoid high numbers of councils having to issue section 114 notices.

12.8 In summary, the pandemic has increased financial uncertainty for councils. The Government has provided significant additional grant funding and financial flexibility to support councils. However, the pandemic means that councils, including Hartlepool, will be in a significantly weaker financial position than before the pandemic. Decisions the Government makes in relation to future funding arrangements for councils, particularly in relation to social care, will be critical to the financial viability of councils and the range of services that can be provided.

12.9 In the short-term of 2021/22 the financial position of councils will depend on the level of Government grant funding and the Government's national Council Tax policy. The recommendations propose lobbying the Government to address these issues in advance of the planned Spending Review.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 It is recommended that Members:

2020/21 General Fund Forecast Outturn

- i) Note that it is anticipated that increase Looked after Children costs can be funded from underspend in other budgets.

Financial Impact of Covid-19

- ii) Note that it is currently anticipated that Government grant funding should cover forecast Covid costs and irrecoverable sales, fees and charges income, although the position may change if there is a local lock down or second wave outbreak.
- iii) Note that the forecast Collection Fund deficit will not be funded from Government grant and based on current forecasts Council resources of £2.154m will need to be allocated to address this funding shortfall, as detailed in paragraph 5.6.

General Fund Budget 2021/22 and future years

- iv) Note the pandemic has had an adverse impact on the Council's financial position and the forecast funding shortfall for 2021/22 is between £2.886m and £5.086m, including a forecast recurring income shortfall of £1.150m arising from the continued impact of Covid 19 in 2021/22.
- v) Endorse the proposed strategy to fund this shortfall from reserves, whilst noting this is not a permanent strategy and defers a deficit until 2022/23 to provide a longer lead time to identify budget cuts and clarity over recurring national funding.
- vi) Approve the suggested submission to the Spending Review Submission and Letter to Simon Clark MP – Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government detailed in paragraph 6.25, including lobbying for a fully funded 2021/22 Council Tax freeze grant and noting that if this is not provided Council Tax will need to increase in line with Government set referendum limit to protect services.
- vii) Determine if the Council should support the establishment of a special interest group for unitary councils within the LGA to provide a forum for sharing experiences and promoting the financial issues facing unitary councils.

Local Council Tax Support scheme 2021/22

- viii) Note the increase in households eligible for LCTS in 2020/21 and 2021/22;
- ix) Determine which of the following 2021/22 LCTS scheme options should be recommended for referral to Council:
 - **Option 1** - recommended to Council to maintain the existing LCTS scheme at 12% and the Local Welfare Support budget for 2021/22 to provides financial certainty and stability;
 - **Option 2** - to consult on alternative options over the summer with a view to bring a further report back to Finance and Policy Committee to

determine the LCTS and Local Welfare Support budget to be recommended to Council in December.

Housing Revenue Account

- x) Determine whether to freeze HRA rents for 2021/22, or increase up to the Government limit should be recommended to Council and note the additional forecast capital investment for each of these options detailed in paragraph 8.3.

Community Pot

- xi) Recommend to Council the establishment of a Community Pot of £225,000 to be funded from the one off resources detailed in paragraph 10 and:
- Earmark £25,000 to support a programme of activities for Young People and delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee to approve the use of this fund;
 - Note that proposal for allocating the remaining £200,000 would be made by Finance and Policy Committee.

14. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 To update the Finance and Policy Committee on the financial challenges facing the Council and enable Members to make an early Policy decision in relation to the 2021/22 LCTS scheme and HRA rents to be referred to full Council.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

Council - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2019/20 to 2021/22 – 19th December 2019

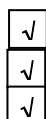
Council - MTFS 2019/20 to 2021/22 – 20th February 2020

16. CONTACT OFFICER

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Telephone: 01429 523003

Sign Off:-

Chief Executive
Director of Finance and Policy
Chief Solicitor





**Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government**

To all Leaders and Chief Executives in England

Simon Clarke MP

Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

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17 July 2020

Dear Colleague,

SUPPORT PACKAGE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES – COVID-19

The Government has committed to helping councils face the continuing pressures of the pandemic. We therefore provided £3.8 billion of grant funding, including a £600m Infection Control Fund, and over £5 billion of cashflow support. On 2 July, the Secretary of State announced a new set of support measures, including:

- A new scheme to reimburse councils for lost income from sales, fees, and charges;
- Changes enabling local authorities to spread their tax deficits over three years rather than the usual one;
- A further £500m of un-ringfenced funding to respond to spending pressures.

We have now set out more detail about these measures and have confirmed the distribution for the £500 million of new funding, including individual local authority allocations. The Director of Local Government Finance, Alex Skinner, will also be writing to Finance Directors shortly with further technical details.

Recognising the impact the pandemic has had on income from sales, fees and charges, we have introduced a co-payment scheme to compensate councils for relevant unforeseen losses that are irrecoverable. Councils will absorb the first 5% of all relevant irrecoverable losses compared to their original plans, with the Government compensating councils for 75 pence in every pound of loss thereafter. By introducing a 5% deductible, the Government is accounting for an acceptable level of volatility, whilst shielding councils from significant losses.

We have also confirmed that we will extend the period over which councils must manage shortfalls in local tax income relating to 2020-21, from 1 to 3 years. This will ease immediate pressures on councils when budget setting for 2021-22, protecting their ability to deliver essential local services. The details of this will be set out in regulations which we expect to lay later this year.

The additional funding of £500 million for expenditure demonstrates Government's continued commitment to make sure councils have the resources they need. This award follows two previous rounds of grant allocations, the first primarily focused on getting emergency support into Adult Social Care and the second on addressing both expenditure pressures and income shortfalls. Our scheme to compensate for income losses means that the original £3.2bn grant funding, and this new £500m, can now predominantly be used to cover the majority of your expenditure pressures.

The department has been asking local authorities to complete another monthly financial monitoring exercise and we have received an excellent response from councils so far. We are extremely grateful for your collaboration and this has enabled us to understand pressures at a national and local level.

The first tranche of funding was primarily focussed on getting emergency support into Adult Social Care. The second round, distributed on a per capita basis, addressed both expenditure pressures and income shortfalls across all councils. Our income guarantee scheme will compensate councils for relevant irrecoverable losses over and above what they could have reasonably planned for, and so with the benefit of data from our monitoring returns, we have now created a new formula to distribute the additional funding to meet expenditure pressures. This formula reflects the factors which the data returns have told us correlate most closely with front-line expenditure - population, deprivation and the way that service costs vary across the country - and ensures funding is targeted to where it's most needed.

Individual allocations can now be found online. We have also published a technical note on the methodology for allocating the additional £500m, as well as further details on the income guarantee scheme and collection fund deficit repayments. These can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-emergency-funding-for-local-government>

In recognition of the acute cost pressures that a small number of local authorities are facing with regard to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, DfE will use £6 million of the £500 million to provide targeted support to a small number of councils. Further details will follow in due course.

These new allocations, combined with the income scheme and cashflow support, show how this Government will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with councils and communities as we recover from this pandemic and renew our commitment to unite and level up the country.

I recognise this is a fast-evolving landscape and as we progress through the next phase of recovery I look forward to continuing to work with you to support our communities.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Simon Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

SIMON CLARKE MP

APPENDIX B**Tranche 3 – Government Support for income losses and
Collection Fund deficits – Impact on Hartlepool**

<u>Government Proposal</u>	<u>Impact on Hartlepool</u>
<p>Co-payment mechanism for irrecoverable Sales, Fees and Charges income, with the Government covering 75% of losses beyond 5% of planned income. The scheme is based on three principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transactional income from customer and client receipts (excluding rents and investment income) which is generated from the delivery of services which was budgeted for in 20/21. 2. As a result of COVID-19, and consequent reductions in economic activity, these income sources have been unavoidably lost and won't be recovered in this financial year. 3. Compensation should be based on net losses, where a local authority has been able to reduce expenditure, or has received over compensation, only the residual loss would be compensated for. 	<p>At the time this report was prepared final details of how this scheme will operate and arrangements for submitting claims had not been issued.</p> <p>The scheme effectively means the Government will cover 71% of income losses (i.e. 75% of 95%) and Councils 29%.</p> <p>If expenditure commitments are less than the grant funding allocated under tranches 1 to 3 it is my current understanding that any uncommitted grant can be used toward the 29% income shortfalls.</p>
<p>Phased repayment of Collection Fund deficits over the next 3 years</p>	<p>Collection Fund deficits will arise as a result of Council Tax income and Business Rates income in 2020/21 being less than forecast.</p> <p>As report previously a £2 million Council Tax deficit is forecast for 2020/21 and a £1m deficit forecast for 2021/22. These deficits reflect the forecast impact of an increase in households eligible for LCTS owing to an increase in unemployment, or reduced hours of</p>

	<p>work. At the end of June 2020 LCTS claimant numbers were 8% higher than the pre-Covid level. A further increase is anticipated as the furloughing scheme ends.</p> <p>The position in relation to Business Rates is more difficult to assess as Government Business Rates Relief Initiatives for 2020/21 have been provided. This has removed the 2020/21 Business Rates liability for 70% of Hartlepool businesses. A Government grant of £11.134m has been provided to fully cover this lost income. It is not yet clear if this initiative will continue in 2021/22 and if it does not the impact withdrawal of this support will have on the viability of businesses (particularly retail premises) and the collectability of 2021/22 Business Rates income.</p> <p>In normal circumstances 2020/21 Collection Fund deficits would have to be repaid in 2021/22, either from the 2021/22 revenue budget (i.e. by making budget cuts) or one off resources if these are available.</p> <p>The Government's proposal to spread the 2020/21 Collection Fund deficit over three years is helpful from a cash flow perspective. However, the deficit still has to be repaid and this will impact on funding available for services.</p> <p>Based on information issued by the Government a co-payment mechanism will not apply to Collection Fund deficits. Therefore, the whole of this loss will fall on individual councils and the only support is the concession to spread deficits over three financial years.</p>
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<p>A commitment to determine what support is needed to help councils meet the pressures of irrecoverable tax income at the Spending Review.</p>	<p>As reported previously the economic impact of the pandemic is unlikely to reverse quickly and this will result in a higher level of households eligible for LCTS, which will reduce Council Tax income, in 2020/21, 2021/22 and potentially into 2022/23.</p> <p>To put this into context LCTS claimants numbers are already 8% higher than pre-Covid. A further increase to 15% later in the year when furlough ends would mean that eligible households would increase to the same level as 2013/14. This would mean that seven years of reducing LCTS eligible households would have been reversed in around six months – which underlines the severity of the economic impact of the pandemic.</p> <p>If additional Government funding is not provided in the Spending Review this will adversely impact on the Council's budget position for 2021/22.</p>
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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 August 2020



Report of: Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services

Subject: COVID-19 RECOVERY AND RENEWAL PLAN

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Key Decision (tests (i) and (ii) apply). General exception applied.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To consider the Council's COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Plan and operating framework and initial investment priorities

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared that Covid-19, a Coronavirus, was a Global Pandemic. As it spread across Europe and the UK, the impact on those infected and death rates as a result was felt across society.
- 3.2 On 20 March 2020, the Cleveland Local Resilience Forum (LRF), which the Council is part of, declared a Major Incident under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Up until 20 March, Corporate Management Team (CMT) were meeting daily to manage the impact on our communities and Council services. From the major incident being declared, this then became the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) with a number of workstreams feeding in to SCG enacting the Council's response phase. Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 Hartlepool Borough Council has a responsibility to develop a Recovery Plan and multi-agency and cross sector engagement framework and operating structure to harness resources towards addressing the humanitarian, economic and environmental impact of the crisis and brings together partners to work together to deliver shared goals.
- 3.3 The COVID-19 emergency is like no other; the impact is far reaching and long lasting. It is important that we develop a long term plan which drives the renewal and regeneration of the Borough towards the new normal.

- 3.4 Hartlepool Borough Council has already has in place important strategies that are focused on the renewal and growth of our Borough. Our Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy are focused on reducing social, economic and health inequalities and growing the economy. The overall direction of these strategies is to tackle inequalities and poverty by improving health, care, education, housing and economic outcomes and ensuring that our diverse communities can access services and opportunities to live fulfilling lives.
- 3.5 The social and economic impact of COVID19 has highlighted the extent and impact of social, economic and racial inequalities across the country and in particular our Borough and demonstrated that the strategic direction of the Council to build a thriving, inclusive and healthy community is critical in ensuring we can protect those vulnerable to the devastating impact of the pandemic and enable our communities and economy to recover.
- 3.6 It is therefore important that the overarching goal of our COVID19 Recovery and Renewal Plan is to work towards achieving our ambition to grow a healthy, prosperous and inclusive Borough. Our Recovery Plan is, therefore, also a plan to renew our economy and build a better future for the Borough.
- 3.7 Given the wide ranging impact of the virus on our economy and our communities and people it has been important to undertake an extensive consultation with those who have been affected by the crisis and involved in the response. This has involved on online survey and 'Teams' consultation meetings with key stakeholders including Elected Members, our staff, partner agencies, schools and colleges, the voluntary and community sector, faith communities and the business community (see **Annex 1 to Appendix A**). In addition account research on the forecast impact of the virus on the national, regional and local economy.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Hartlepool COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Plan is attached at **Appendix A**. The plan takes account of the issues raised during consultation and the forecast longer term social and economic impact of the virus in Hartlepool.
- 4.2 The Plan sets out strategic objectives and a framework for engaging partner agencies across the following themes:
1. Health and Social Care
 2. Business Economy, Skills & Jobs
 3. Community Wellbeing and Financial Inclusion
 4. Education and Vulnerable Children
 5. Environment and Infrastructure
 6. Organisational Change and Resilience
 7. Communications
 8. Financial Recovery

- 4.3 Working groups will be established involving partner agencies, representatives of the voluntary and community sector and faith communities and business leaders as appropriate and will report through to appropriate Council committees and Boards. A summary of the Recovery Governance Framework is attached at **Chart 1 in Appendix A**.

4.4 Phased Recovery and Renewal

- 4.5 Each working group will develop and deliver dynamic action plans which will adapt to changing circumstances. As we develop more detail around our recovery and renewal plans, we will do so in recognition of different phases that are likely to be experienced over the next few months to two years and beyond. We will be responsive to changes but the following phases will guide our planning:

- **Short-term (1-6 months)** - adapting, planning and early action: we have shown in this document that by putting in place the right arrangements to enable effective decision making, using the best intelligence and good governance we have been able to get early plans and actions in place.
- **Medium-term (6-24 months)** - managing transition & phased exit from lockdown: recognising that recovery will be phased, uneven, and multi-sector. This phase is about action to alleviate post-crisis jobs, business & social impact.
- **Long-term (24 months +)** - rebuilding & growing: rebuilding a strong economy, thriving places, communities and public services.

4.6 Investing in Recovery and Renewal

Hartlepool Borough Council entered the COVID19 crisis from a position of relative strength. We had agreed a budget for 2020-2021 which reduced reliance on reserves and protected essential frontline services. We have a significant capital plan directed towards revitalising important economic sectors and we have strong, high performing services. However tackling the social and economic impact of COVID19 and addressing the significant social, economic and health inequalities in the Borough will require a major fiscal stimulus. We will need to focus our efforts on attracting investment from the Town Deal and High Street Funds alongside other national programmes. In addition we will need to work hard with the Tees Valley Combined Authority to attract further devolved funds so that we can properly address the priorities set out in this Recovery Plan over a three year period.

4.7 Immediate Investment Opportunities

Two immediate opportunities have been identified to re-purpose existing Council funds to start the process of supporting businesses re-purpose and re-build and to invest in the Voluntary and Community Sector to support

community-led initiatives which address food, fuel and digital poverty, build routes to work and provide positive opportunities for vulnerable children and young people.

- **Business Support Fund:** The Council has earmarked £500,000 of the devolved TVCA Indigenous Growth fund toward a local business investment scheme. The opportunity is there to accelerate this and focus it towards supporting businesses to adapt to the changing economic environment and to re-animating key sectors including culture, tourism and the visitor economy. It was originally intended that the scheme would operate as a 'revolving' loan. However, given the fragility of businesses and the worry about taking on more loans it is proposed that the scheme should now operate as a grant programme. It is therefore proposed that £200,000 of the earmarked funds is allocated to creating a business support fund to assist businesses meet the costs of business plans, skill development and the purchase of equipment to help them adapt to changing circumstances, and £300,000 is allocated to the re-animation of our visitor and tourism economy and assets. Specific criteria and an application process will be developed in consultation with the business community and the Chair of Regeneration Committee and the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee.
- **Community Fund:** The voluntary, community and faith sectors have played a critical role in co-ordinating local capacity to meet local need during the crisis. Going forward it will be important to develop strong and co-ordinated relationship with the VCS and faith sectors to in supporting community-led initiatives to tackling the root causes and impact of poverty and social isolation within our communities by investing in new approaches to addressing food, fuel and digital poverty, creating routes to work and providing new out-of-school and holiday programmes for children and young people. It is therefore proposed to bring together a range of funding streams earmarked to tackle poverty and hardship into a single community fund of £225,000. £200,000 will be allocated to supporting community-led initiatives aimed at tackling poverty and hardship and £25,000 towards providing new out-of-school opportunities for vulnerable children and young people. Specific criteria will be developed in consultation with the VCS and faith sector and in consultation with the Chair of Adult and Community-based Services, the Chair of Children's Services and the Chair of Finance and Policy.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is a high level of risk that the social and economic impact of COVID-19 will be deep and far reaching and will hit the poorest communities the hardest. The Recovery and Renewal Plan sets out an approach to engage stakeholders in mitigating the impact of the virus. However this will require a significant fiscal stimulus beyond the resources available to the Council. It will therefore be important to harness the resources of all agencies and influence regional and

national Government to ensure the Council can access the necessary level of intervention.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The proposed £0.5m Business Support Fund is already earmarked as part of the TVCA Indigenous Growth Allocation and will be re-purposed towards COVID-19 recovery. The proposed £225,000 Community Fund comprises;

	£'000
New Burdens funding	130
Release of Family Poverty Reserve	48
Ward Member Budget underspend at 31.03.2020	25
Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for food and essential suppliers	22
Total One-off funding	225

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Under the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004 the Council has a statutory duty to establish a Recovery Plan in response to an emergency.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Wide ranging consultation has been undertaken, the details of which are provided in **Annex 1** (to appendix A) to the COVID-19 Plan.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 9.1 The COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Plan is directed towards addressing the impact of poverty and tackling root causes. The Community Fund will help build community capacity to address the root causes and impact of poverty. (**Appendix B**).

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 The Plan is directed towards meeting the needs of the diverse communities in Hartlepool and building an inclusive Borough.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 The Plan sets out the arrangements for supporting and building the resilience of staff.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 An asset strategy will be progressed to deliver fit for purpose premises that are COVID-19 secure and enable the council to operate fit for purpose and efficient office accommodation and services.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Members are recommended to:

- Note the feedback from the wide-ranging consultation that has been undertaken with partner agencies, the voluntary and community sector and faith communities, our staff and elected members
- Consider and endorse the Hartlepool COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Plan and operating framework
- Approve the creation of a single community fund up to £225,000 to support community-led initiatives aimed at tackling the social and economic impact of COVID-19 and providing new out-of-school and holiday opportunities for vulnerable children and young people.
- Approve the re-framing of the £500,000 business revolving loan fund to provide a grant scheme to assist local businesses adapt to the new economic environment and to invest in re-animating the visitor and tourist economy and assets.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 The Renewal and Recovery Plan and initial recovery investment priorities will enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty to provide strong community leadership in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 Extraordinary Council Report of June 10th 2020 – CEX Business Report – COVID-19 Update and Next Steps.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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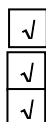
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Sign Off:-

Chief Executive

Director of Finance and Policy

Chief Solicitor



A COVID-19 RECOVERY AND RENEWAL PLAN FOR HARTLEPOOL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared that COVID-19, a Coronavirus, was a Global Pandemic. As it spread across Europe and the UK, the impact on those infected and death rates as a result was felt across society.
- 1.2 On 20 March 2020, the Cleveland Local Resilience Forum (LRF), which the Council is part of, declared a Major Incident under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Up until 20 March, Corporate Management Team (CMT) were meeting daily to manage the impact on our communities and Council services. From the major incident being declared, this then became the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) with a number of workstreams feeding in to SCG enacting the Council's response phase.
- 1.3 As we transition from responding to the crisis to recovery, we need to develop a plan for recovery and renewal and establish an operating structure that facilitates a multi-agency and cross sector approach to delivering shared goals.
- 1.4 Hartlepool Borough Council has the responsibility to work with agencies and local people to provide strong community leadership to build a thriving, healthy and inclusive community. We already have in place important strategies that are focussed on the renewal and growth of our Borough. Our Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy are focussed on reducing social, economic and health inequalities and growing the economy. The overall direction of these strategies is to tackle inequalities and poverty by improving health, care, education, housing and economic outcomes and ensuring that our diverse communities can access services and opportunities to live fulfilling lives.
- 1.5 The social and economic impact of COVID-19 has highlighted the extent and impact of social, economic and racial inequalities across the country and in particular our Borough and demonstrated that the strategic direction of the Council to build a thriving, inclusive and healthy community is critical in ensuring we can protect those vulnerable to the devastating impact of the pandemic and enable our communities and economy to recover.
- 1.6 It is therefore important that the overarching goal of our COVID-19 Recovery Plan is to work towards achieving our ambition to grow a healthy, prosperous and inclusive Borough. Our Recovery Plan is, therefore, also a plan to renew our economy and build a better future for the Borough.

2.0 WHAT IS A RECOVERY PLAN?

- 2.1 Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 Councils have a responsibility to co-ordinate a Recovery Plan to enable communities to move towards a 'new normal.'
- 2.2 Recovery is a complex and long running process that involves many agencies and participants from across the Borough of Hartlepool. It will be costly in terms of resources, and it will undoubtedly be subject to scrutiny from the community, the media

and politicians alike. It is therefore, essential the planning process is based on well thought out effective engagement and planning arrangements involving partner agencies and those affected by the virus. To this end substantial and wide reaching consultation has taken place to inform this recovery plan.

2.3 Recovery is defined as the process of **rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating** the community following an emergency.

2.4 The broad, interlinked categories of impact that individuals and communities will need to recover from include:

- Humanitarian (including Health);
- Economic;
- Environment and Infrastructure.

2.5 Aim and objectives of the recovery plan

The **aim** of the plan is provide a formal and integrated structure for recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic within the Borough of Hartlepool.

2.6 The **objectives** of the plan are:

- To meet the statutory requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 placed upon Hartlepool Borough Council and all category 1 and 2 partners;
- To implement and manage an effective multi-agency recovery process;
- To ensure a coordinated recovery process;
- To identify representation, partners and stakeholders to assist in the delivery of the recovery process;
- To ensure effective partnership working between the relevant organisations and agencies;
- To address the short, medium and long-term requirements of those affected.

2.7 Scope of the plan

This document outlines the multi-agency structure to facilitate the recovery and renewal of the Hartlepool community during and following the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan outlines and describes the multi-agency response structure to be used to ensure identification of the all stakeholders and their role in ensuring successful recovery of the whole Hartlepool community

2.8 Why recovery from COVID-19 is different

The COVID-19 emergency is unlike any other and will require a wide ranging, dynamic and long term response. In particular:

- **The scale is different.** The intangible and transferable damage to health, economies and social structures are on a scale which has been rarely accounted for in current emergency preparedness plans, often focused on natural disasters.
- **The effects are different.** Recovery can include actions to reinstate the built environment and help rebuild the economy. But COVID-19 recovery needs also to address the social impact: families have been rocked by the loss of loved ones,

people have been deprived of the routines and relationships that collectively form their everyday normal life. Isolation and the sudden lack of social integration will reverberate on many, if not all, people's mental health and wellbeing.

- **The length of time is different.** Other emergencies in the past have impacted across various elements of infrastructure, bringing transport networks to a standstill, causing the closure of various welfare institutions, producing incredible strain on healthcare and causing major disruption to economies. But with COVID-19 we have seen a total shutdown of many of these services for an amount of time that is unprecedented.
- **The knock-on effects are vast.** The impact on one area of society produces knock-on effects on another. For example, the closure of non-essential workplaces has produced new levels of burden on WiFi infrastructure. The magnitude of the impacts of COVID-19 are indicators of the nature and the scale of the required change during recovery.
- **The impacts are not yet clear.** We cannot yet predict the impact of the pandemic virus, which may re-emerge in future waves, and which will again require organisations to regroup and respond, despite calls for future scenario modelling.
- **It will overlap with response.** There may not be a clear separation between response and recovery as there is for natural disasters, given the scale and nature of the challenge. Both response and recovery require multi-agency working however, and learning from response is important in recovery.
- **It will require agility and flexibility.** Until we have a vaccine we will have to learn to live with the virus. This Recovery Plan is set within the context of the Outbreak Control Plan which sets out our arrangements for preventing and responding to future waves and local spikes. There will be a need to assess the impacts of COVID-19, adapt to the resulting changes, before we stabilise to a new normal.

3.0 THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RECOVERY AND RENEWAL PLAN FOR HARTLEPOOL

- 3.1 The nature of this crisis means that there will be no clean transition from response to recovery, and with the on-going possibility of future 'waves' our response and preparedness means we must be in a position to know and understand the signs and be ready to stand up response services quickly when triggers are reached. This Recovery and Renewal Plan therefore will have to be managed within the context of the Council's Outbreak Control Plan.
- 3.2 The pace at which we have needed to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a number of actions being undertaken and new ways of services being delivered to protect the community and our staff.
- 3.3 Details of the Council's response to the COVID-19 crisis were presented to Council at the Extraordinary Meeting held on June 10th 2020. The report also set out an approach to developing a Recovery Plan which recognised it was important to engage with those directly affected by and involved in the COVID-19 crisis to help us reflect on our response to date and identify issues to address in leading the recovery.

- 3.4 A wide ranging consultation exercise including 'Teams' discussions and an online survey has been undertaken with key stakeholders including Elected Members, Staff, Partner agencies, Schools & Colleges, the Voluntary and Community Sector, faith communities and the business community to learn from our experiences and to enable us to shape a three year Recovery and Renewal plan. Full details of the feedback which has informed this Recovery Plan and Framework are contained in Annex 1.
- 3.5 The issues and challenges identified through consultation and wider research are deep and far reaching and are summarised below.

3.6 Economic Impact

- 3.7 The Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy "Our Plan to Rebuild" states a strong economy is the best way to protect people's jobs and ensure that the Government can fund the country's vital public services including the healthcare response.
- 3.8 Moving into the COVID-19 crisis, Hartlepool had a growing economy. Key areas of strength include tourism, health and social care, advanced manufacturing, and offshore. Tourism in particular has seen significant growth in recent years, supported by continually improving attractions. Pre-COVID-19, we already had ambitious plans in place to build on our recent economic successes through a capital programme aimed at investing in infrastructure, supporting business growth and skills development.
- 3.9 However it is clear that the economy nationally and locally has experienced a seismic shock as a result of the lockdown restrictions.
- 3.10 Bank of England¹ and OECD² forecasts indicate that there is a high risk that COVID-19 will trigger a deep recession that will significantly impact the UK economy. In addition a recent report from the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS)³ has highlighted that the economic impact of COVID-19 will affect some areas of England more adversely than others and that areas like Hartlepool with high levels of existing social and economic inequalities are likely to be the hardest hit.
- 3.11 Stimulating the economic growth and enabling people to acquire the skills they will need to progress into growth sectors will be more important than ever.

3.12 Local Impact Assessment

- 3.13 To help identify the impact of COVID-19 on businesses Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) in partnership with Teesside University sent out a business survey to understand in detail the effects the COVID-19 pandemic has had and may continue to have businesses across the Tees Valley and the short, medium and long-term support they may require over the coming months and years. The survey was live for just under 3 weeks from 5th May to 22nd May 2020 and gathered a total of 1,108 responses, a response rate of 6% of the total business base in Tees Valley.

¹ Bank of England Monetary Policy Report, May 2020

² OECD Economic Outlook, June 2020

³ The geography of the COVID-19 crisis in England, IFS

3.14 The key findings of the business survey are listed below:

- Over a third of businesses (36%) have taken to smarter working practices to lessen the impact of COVID-19, including staff working from home, moving services online and providing delivery, reducing staff hours and applying social distancing procedures. 20% are using PPE equipment and undertaking extra safety measures, and 18% adapting their business practices or workspace.
- 83% of all businesses stated that they require financial support and advice, with 58% needing to find new/alternative customers or market. 47% require support adapting products or services and 42% require assistance in reviewing or changing their assistance model.
- 31% stated they would cease trading if lockdown was extended.
- A quarter of businesses stated that they planned to make redundancies, with a further 22% still unsure.
- 22% of businesses currently employ an apprentice, with 69% of businesses stating that their apprentices have now been furloughed, and almost half 49% reporting that they no longer have the capacity to recruit an apprentice, with 23% no longer requiring an apprentice.

3.15 The TVCA summarises the immediate and medium longer term impacts of the COVID-19 as follows.

- 13% of Tees Valley workers may lose their jobs by the end of 2020
- Tees Valley saw nearly 10,000 new unemployment related claimants by mid-April
- 32% of the regions workforce has been furloughed and 16% made redundant
- The TV Claimant count has risen by 2.3%, a rise of 9690 claimants. Middlesbrough and Hartlepool have experienced the largest percentage increase and men have been disproportionately affected.
- Retail, arts and leisure services will struggle to survive, leading to significant unemployment
- Construction and manufacturing will suffer lost investment and a recession-based hit to demand.

3.16 The Hartlepool specific findings discussed in the report were very similar to the Tees Valley averages on most responses with only a few differences in percentages either way. The most significant differences in responses was the optimism prior to the COVID-19 outbreak for growth over the next 12 months with Tees Valley 89% against 70% for Hartlepool. Similarly in regards to the workforce questions across the Tees Valley businesses stated a 10% higher expectation to recruit apprentices before COVID-19 than Hartlepool businesses, and finally Hartlepool businesses stated a higher anticipated future financial impact on business (91%) than the TV region average of 82%.

3.17 Hartlepool Borough Council undertook a business consultation workshop in a special meeting of the Economic Regeneration & Tourism Forum. The main suggestions for consideration within the Recovery and Renewal Plan were:

- The shift to on-line shopping and the use of contactless payments has been accelerated due to COVID-19. Businesses need to change and adapt but many

are in need of investment, support and training so that they can shift to delivering online and are able to go contactless

- Promotion of the support that is available and the schemes that local employers can access e.g. apprenticeships and traineeships and for the need for schemes to be longer than 6 months
- There are community safety concerns around the impact of begging on the town centre area
- Role for the Totally Locally group and that there is a need for the wider promotion of local businesses and how they can support each other
- Potential to develop a shared platform to promote local spending to enable independent traders and small retailers to advertise and sell their products on line without having to have their own website
- An anticipated increase in the number of unemployed once the Furlough scheme ceases in October
- Community safety concerns around the impact of begging on the town centre area
- Role for the Totally Locally group and that there is a need for the wider promotion of local businesses and how they can support each other
- Changing shopping habit is resulting in continuing increase in empty retail units in the town centre and there is a need to create a heart to the town centre and to re-shape the offer.

3.18 Overall common themes are emerging through our local, regional and national research relate to:

- Cash flow pressures;
- Uncertainty, inhibiting business planning, forecasting cash flow and halting investment;
- Reluctance to take loans, particularly given uncertainty on recovery and if the business already carries debt;
- Inability to invest in the skill development and infrastructure to enable businesses to adapt to trading digitally
- Concern over staff; their immediate wellbeing and how future workforces and business operations may look

3.19 Hartlepool Borough Council worked swiftly to pass on funding from the Government funded Small Business Grant Fund and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant. This saw 96.8% of eligible businesses receiving grants totally £17.440m. In addition, the Government provided Councils with funding to support a “Discretionary Grant Fund”, aimed at small businesses and charities i.e. with less than 50 employees. A maximum of £10,000 was set to ensure we supported as many businesses as possible and as of 1st August £876,500 has been allocated to 81 number of local businesses.

3.20 However it is clear that whilst this fiscal stimulus may have helped with cash flow pressures for some businesses, there is a need to secure investment to help grow local economies and enable businesses to adapt to the new normal.

3.21 There are clear differences being felt across the sectors of the local economy:

- **Manufacturing** - many manufacturers have been able to carry on to some degree but report supply and distribution chain issues, as well as a difficulty in operating within social distancing circumstances. And, those manufacturers who supply sectors which have all but shut down, such as retail, leisure and hospitality, have seen huge impacts on their orders and sales. Despite this, we have seen some manufacturing companies diversify to respond to the Government's requirement for medical equipment and supplies.
- **Retail, hospitality, food and drink** - there has been a significant impact with the closure of businesses and concerns that some may not be able to reopen as viable concerns whilst social distancing measures remain in place.
- **Tourism & culture** - there are concerns about the viability of businesses in the tourism and events sector given the unprecedented shock to their operations occurring at a time which would ordinarily be the run-up to the peak tourist and event season. As with many seasonal businesses, this is a time that allows businesses to build up reserves to see them through the rest of the year. In addition, many self-employed workers in the cultural sector have part time jobs to supplement income. These jobs are often in the retail, hospitality and leisure industries and have been most affected by COVID-19, so there is likely to be a section of the workforce that has been particularly hard hit.
- **Health /Life Sciences** - as with the wider manufacturing sector there are reports of issues with supply and distribution chains and a slow-down in investments.
- **Energy** - Implementation of social distancing has meant limiting activities for some mobilisation and demobilisation of projects for the offshore energy sector. In addition, falling demand globally due to the COVID-19 slowdown recently pushed oil prices to a negative position which is expected to have a short and medium term impact on operations with companies looking to manage operational costs.
- **Digital, Software, Technology** - Businesses are starting to explore and increase their capacity online in order to sustain business moving forward, which presents an opportunity for growth in this sector.
- **Business, Professional and Financial Services** - mostly impacted because of client operations being on hold, the sector is therefore experiencing reduced income.

3.22 Going forward it will be important to make sure that we can attract and target investment to meet the needs of our local economic sectors and stimulate jobs growth. Importantly, we will need to maintain our momentum to deliver our ambitious capital programme to drive economic growth across Hartlepool. It will also be important to develop new and innovative approaches to enabling local people acquire the skills they need to access jobs in growth sectors.

3.23 Stimulating the level of economic recovery that is required will take effective partnership working with businesses and learning and skills providers, Tees Valley Combined Authority and National Government if we are to make sure we can access the right interventions and attract the scale of investment that is required.

3.24 During the lockdown, whilst supporting businesses survive, we have also continued to move ahead with schemes and programmes of activity so these are ready to go once the restrictions are lifted and investment is secured. Our plans include:

- **Delivering on the Council's capital plan** - we know our programme of capital investments provide opportunities for local businesses, employment and apprenticeships. Inevitably, there will be some delays to our capital work due to COVID-19 related health and safety measures. But, where it is safe to do so, we will get going on these projects, helping businesses get back to work, building new Council houses, delivering new cultural and leisure facilities as well as improving the infrastructure to support economic growth.
- **Reanimating our culture, heritage and tourism sector** - the small businesses and tourist attractions at the heart of our visitor economy have arguably been hardest hit by COVID-19. We need to be ready to boost the sector through a package of measures. We had already planned significant capital investment in developing with the National Museum of the Royal Navy a visitor attraction of national significance alongside an exciting new leisure development and events space on the former Jackson's Landing site. We are actively progressing our bid to host the Tall Ships in 2023 with funding recently approved through TVCA to finance the event if we are successful. The build up to a major maritime festival such as this will be an excellent opportunity to make sure the Hartlepool Culture and Heritage sector attracts national and lo
- **Jobs and Skills Taskforce** – we will establish a Jobs and Skills taskforce to help our residents access training opportunities and innovative pathways to work jobs. Government has already committed funding for us to work up plans for the line and we will push hard for the Government to fully fund both phases of development through the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review.
- **Regenerating our town centre** - we are continuing our plans to make our town centre an attractive place for people to visit, shop, live and enjoy. Initially, we will play our part in getting our high streets open for business again. Moving forward, we will continue to work with the Government to secure a Town Deal and Future High Street Funding.
- **Supporting Businesses to manage and adapt to operating within a new environment:** we will consider where we can quickly make small changes to unlock business opportunities - as we move out of restrictions we will look at how we can use our regulatory powers to support and encourage small businesses to recover or get established. We will boost and re-purpose our small business grants scheme to link business advice with financial support as we enable businesses to adapt to changing circumstances. We will work with and encourage our partners to use public sector purchasing power to invest in the local economy.

3.25 As a member of the Tees Valley Combined Authority we will have an important role in shaping recovery plans at the regional level. The significant TVCA investment programmes, focused on our key growth sectors, will need to be reframed to ensure actions and projects support our economy to recover.

3.26 Our own recovery work and those we are involved in at the regional level will focus on:

- **Innovation** and how challenges businesses face might be solved with smart solutions with broader application;

- The **international** agenda with potential changes to trade and investment and business travel;
- Opportunities to invest in the local economy and more **localised supply chains**;
- The **behavioural changes** we will see and the currently unknown impact this might have on the way we live and work;
- **Strategic evidence** to give the proper economic context and support for interventions and planning decisions on new inward investment, infrastructure or business expansions.

3.27 Delivering our economic recovery plans must go hand-in-hand with measures to ensure continued safety of residents and employees. We will continue to follow ongoing Government guidance as restrictions are gradually eased. In particular, we will follow recent Government guidance on identifying issues associated with the use of public places in light of the need for social distancing. This focuses on areas likely to be busy (such as town centres and retail spaces for example) and includes temporary, practical interventions for adapting and managing public places. As these public spaces become more 'open for business', the Council will continue to work with businesses to ensure the right safety measures are in place so that businesses can reopen whilst people stay safe.

3.28 Communities and People

Community wellbeing and financial inclusion

Families, individuals and whole communities have been profoundly impacted by the COVID-19 lockdown. There has been incredible positivity in the response from people coming forward to volunteer and help others. There has also been a sense of communities coming together and becoming stronger, despite having to remain physically distanced. But, undoubtedly there have been challenges and, of course, personal tragedies. First and foremost people have, sadly, lost loved ones and are dealing with personal grief in the most difficult circumstances and restrictions on funerals.

3.29 The impact of COVID-19 has affected more seriously those who are also impacted by poor health outcomes as result of obesity, smoking and substance misuse and underlying health conditions. This means we need to intensify our efforts on supporting people to protect themselves from the virus by helping them live healthier lives.

3.30 The restrictions have been difficult for people of all ages, but particularly so for those people who are vulnerable and have been isolated from friends and family. Vulnerable families have suffered increased pressure. Many children and young people have, almost overnight, had to adapt to home-schooling, with many young people anxious about their future routes into further & higher education, employment and training. There is also the broader impact on health and wellbeing from the restrictions to daily lives all people have experienced.

3.31 Added to this, it is impossible to separate the economic harm from COVID-19 from our people and communities who have suffered financial hardship through loss of earnings and restrictions on trade. This will inevitably have impacted on the wellbeing

of our residents. There are particular concerns about the impact on food and fuel poverty and the exclusion of those experiencing digital poverty.

- 3.32 Much has been written already in the media about the long-term impacts of the lockdown even after restrictions are lifted. It is possible people will be less likely to travel as frequently and will want to live and work 'more locally' within their communities. Having adapted almost entirely to remote and digital services in recent weeks, people may in future wish to continue to interact differently with public services and the wider economy. Whilst much of this remains speculative, recent research indicates people are increasingly considering living their lives differently post-COVID-19. So, we must be ready to adapt our old approaches and how we work with communities moving forward as part of recovery.
- 3.34 Critically, it is likely people will want even greater control over what happens in their communities. We must rethink how we support communities to recover and become more resilient to future challenges. A key part of that will need to support capacity within the voluntary and community sector to work with communities and ensure the sector is engaged and supported to help shape new approaches to tackling the root causes and impact of poverty and social isolation within our communities.

3.35 Education and Vulnerable Children

Whilst our teachers, schools, parents and young people have worked hard to adapt to and support home-schooling, it is accepted that there is a high likelihood that there will have been a negative impact on the educational attainment and progress of some children and, in particular, the most vulnerable who have had unequal access to digital resources and support from parents. Of particular concern is the mental health and wellbeing of young people generally during this time as their scope to participate in positive activities and interact with friends has been curtailed. This is likely to be a particularly challenging time for young people already coping with mental ill-health. We will need to strengthen and co-ordinate arrangements across the Borough to provide an out-of-school and holiday programme that gives children and young people places to go and things to do.

- 3.36 The challenges involved in successfully reopening all of our schools to all age groups cannot be underestimated. We will need to work with our schools to support the introduction of COVID-19 guidelines alongside the introduction of a recovery curriculum and catch up programme to support children and young people emotionally and academically and to support effective transition. Critically we will need to press ahead with our proposals for working with schools and early years providers to improve the education achievement of disadvantaged children. We will also need to work with our NHS partners to improve access to child and adolescent mental health services and deliver improved education provision through our new special school for children experiencing social, emotional and mental health problems.
- 3.37 There has been increased pressure on demand for children's social care and placements for looked after children as the numbers in care have risen since lockdown exacerbated by difficulties in exiting children from care at this time resulting in significant financial pressures in children's services. We will need to strengthen multi agency working to tackle the drivers of demand in terms of mental health,

substance misuse and domestic violence. We will also need to continue to develop in-borough placement capacity.

3.38 Health and Social Care

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted some significant pressures on adult social care services, not least in terms of care homes and providers of home care, raising questions about future demand for care home provision and the financial viability of more personalised services that meet needs differently. Pressure on informal carers has increased due to temporary suspension of day services and difficulties accessing short breaks, and people who use Direct Payments have been faced with a more limited range of options. There are some very practical issues that Councils need to address as they move into the recovery phase, while the response phase still feels very real and present, including backdated financial assessment of those who have been discharged from hospital during lockdown, supporting carers to prevent carer breakdown and developing new ways of working that allow for social distancing and make better use of technology.

3.39 There is undoubtedly a lot to learn from the COVID-19 response as well and some real opportunities to deliver services differently. Arrangements that have supported people who were shielding have highlighted the value of a different approach to how people when they first make contact requesting some assistance and, while there is a risk that dependency has been created for some people, there are many examples of people being supported safely and effectively through existing community assets. There are major opportunities for different conversations and relationships with providers, maximising use of digital solutions, different approaches to commissioning that are genuinely focused on outcomes and potential for closer working with the voluntary and community sector to build on those things that have worked so well.

3.40 Environment and Infrastructure

The environment is perhaps one of the few areas, where the lockdown has led to some short-term gains. Far fewer car journeys and much-reduced consumption generally have led to lower CO2 emissions and improved air quality nationally and globally. Although it is too early to see in data trends, anecdotally, we have all witnessed increased numbers of people walking and cycling as people have sought to make the most of their leisure time. Of course, these environmental gains have come at costs to the economy on which we depend for our livelihoods not to mention the impact of temporary curbs on civil liberties. And, as we move into recovery and the economy gets going we could quickly see these trends reversed. The opportunity then, as we move into recovery, is to hold onto at least some of the environmental gains we have managed to achieve whilst recognising that the economy needs to get going too. And, there are indications that people generally, having experienced quieter roads, more cycling and walking and improved air quality, will want to retain at least some of these benefits into the long-term. This is borne out in recent, national survey work which shows people have enjoyed the environmental benefits and also figures indicating increased homeworking is likely to become a permanent.

3.41 In the recovery phase, we will develop an action plan for the environment to facilitate greater use of cycling, walking and physical distancing in pedestrianised areas and enabling people to enjoy and exercise within the neighbourhoods in which they live. We will also progress plans for improving road connectivity, road safety and reducing congestion in hot spot areas. As an organisation, we will need to do our bit to contribute directly to this; for example new ways of working and continuing with remote meetings wherever possible post-COVID-19 should lead to reduced mileage as more people work from home, more often.

3.42 Organisational change and resilience

Whilst Council services have adapted and responded well to the immediate impact of the COVID-19 crisis, we must consider how our organisation will recover post-COVID-19.

3.43 As we look to recovery, we anticipate, there are likely to be some long-term and profound changes resulting from the unprecedented challenges that people and communities have faced. We see the potential for people to interact with public services and the wider economy in radically different ways post-COVID-19 and that may well have a significant impact on the structure, outcomes and operational requirements of each of our services.

3.44 The restrictions on movement have helped people to re-discover the value of local services and we expect that this will continue beyond the current crisis and so we need to consider how we manage and support that going forward. Our teams have embraced new methods of working to deliver services in much more creative and responsive ways. Some activities have stopped, some continued and some may recommence with a new focus, vigour or different operational approach going forward.

3.45 Our service recovery must be informed and shaped by what has changed and the things which may never return to the pre-COVID-19 'business as usual' position. As our services recover they must reflect the 'new normal' and that must be something all services consider both in terms of service planning, as well as whether new models of operational delivery and technology can play a bigger part in what we aim to achieve.

3.46 In particular during the crisis all staff who could work from home did so. We increased our ICT capacity swiftly to achieve this. We have undertaken a staff survey and review of the arrangements with the intention of normalising a working from home model as far as possible. This will require some short to medium term improvements and a remodelling of accommodation to allow staff to come into an office when necessary for example to assist in complex multi-disciplinary project management and training. In the longer term the opportunity is there to reduce the level of office accommodation required for back office functions and bring community-facing services together to provide community access in a co-ordinated and local level.

3.47 Financial Impact

In agreeing the revenue and capital budget for 20/21 -21/22 the Council had reached the point where it had significantly reduced reliance upon use of one-off reserves and had successfully steered a route through the nine years of austerity. However local

government finance has suffered a seismic shock as a result of COVID-19, and whilst national government has provided some significant compensation the sector faces significant challenges over the next few years and a high level of uncertainty. Delivering a budget for recovery will require the council to continue to deliver efficiencies through service innovation and re-purpose and target resources on tackling recovery priorities. However critically it will also require continued dialogue and lobbying of national government to ensure the needs of the sector are appropriately addressed in the Comprehensive Spending Review.

3.48 Communication and engagement

The speed of recovery will be critically dependent on the extent to which we can keep the virus under control in Hartlepool. We know that physical distancing and good hygiene works, however keeping the public on board and informed as we progress from response to recovery will take a significant multi agency effort. We will therefore need to work with partners to deliver a shared communication strategy that provides effective and timely information through a range of different channels and reaches those with specific learning difficulties.

4.0 OUR FRAMEWORK FOR RECOVERY AND RENEWAL

As we move from the response phase into recovery the SCG will be re-purposed and become a Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG) which will develop actions plans. It will be critical to establish a governance arrangement which promotes a multi-agency and cross sector approach to building recovery. Taking account of the issues and challenges we face the following working groups will be established which will enable key agencies and sectors to work together with the Council to lead recovery.

1. Health and Social Care
2. Business Economy, Skills & Jobs
3. Community Wellbeing and Financial Inclusion
4. Education and Vulnerable Children
5. Environment and Infrastructure
6. Organisational Change and Resilience
7. Communications
8. Financial Recovery

4.1 Phased Recovery and Renewal

Each working group will develop and deliver dynamic action plans which will adapt to changing circumstances. As we develop more detail around our recovery and renewal plans, we will do so in recognition of different phases that are likely to be experienced over the next few months to two years and beyond. We will be responsive to changes but the following phases will guide our planning:

- **Short-term (1-6 months)** - adapting, planning and early action: we have shown in this document that by putting in place the right arrangements to enable effective decision making, using the best intelligence and good governance we have been able to get early plans and actions in place.

- **Medium-term (6-24 months)** - managing transition & phased exit from lockdown: recognising that recovery will be phased, uneven, and multi-sector. This phase is about action to alleviate post-crisis jobs, business & social impact.
- **Long-term (24 months +)** - rebuilding & growing: rebuilding a strong economy, thriving places, communities and public services.

4.2 Taking account of the key challenges we face and the feedback from consultation the Recovery and Renewal working groups will deliver the strategic objectives set out below:

4.3 Organisational Change and Resilience

- Restart council services within COVID-19 secure premises and operating procedures
- Improve infrastructure and support for those working from home
- Develop an agile, resilient and healthy workforce
- Progress an office accommodation strategy to create more efficient, carbon-neutral, accessible and flexible workspace

4.4 Health and Social care

- Build a resilient and community-based health and social care system
- Review and strengthen arrangements for managing the safe discharge of patients into the community
- Develop new community-based approaches to tackling social isolation and access to support for the elderly and vulnerable adults
- Help people protect themselves from the virus by living healthy lives
- Increase community based access to treatment services and remote consultations
- Improve community access to mental health services, advice and support

4.5 Business, economy, jobs and skills

- Protect and support Hartlepool Businesses to re-start and adapt to operating digitally within COVID-19 secure guidelines
- Establish a jobs and skills taskforce to develop new skill pathways into growth sectors, maximise apprenticeships and provide joined up support to those experiencing complex barriers to entering employment
- Re-animate the Borough's culture, heritage and tourism sector
- Establish a task force to maximise opportunities to use public sector purchasing power to build the local economy.
- Attract inward investment to grow new jobs
- Attract investment into creating a connected and vibrant town centre

4.6 Community wellbeing and financial inclusion

- Establish a partnership and community-based approach to addressing the root causes and impact of food, fuel and digital poverty and to facilitate routes to work.
- Re-purpose our approach to providing financial advice and access to hardship support to meet changing and growing demand.
- Mark the way our communities and public services responded during the COVID-19 crisis by gathering the stories of how Hartlepool came together.
- Develop a new and co-ordinated approach to the provision of supported and independent accommodation for those at risk of rough sleeping and homelessness that provide integrated mental health, substance misuse and employment support.
- Increase the availability of quality affordable housing that meets diverse needs by building more council houses and establishing a partnership with social housing providers

4.7 Education and Vulnerable Children

- Support the re-opening of schools through the provision of health and safety advice and the development of a recovery curriculum, catch up programme and 'blended learning'.
- Implement a new model between the local authority, schools and health to support children in their early years.
- Strengthen transition between schools at all stages to support children and young people emotionally and academically
- Refocus, re-organise and improve arrangements for children's social care delivery to protect children from harm and safely reduce numbers of children in care by addressing the drivers of demand
- Improve the multi-agency arrangements and education provision for meeting the emotional and mental health needs of children and young people
- Co-ordinate an out-of-school and holiday programme for children and young people that offers places to go and things to do.

4.8 Environment and Infrastructure

- Introduce a team of street ambassadors to promote and advise people on maintaining physical distancing in key areas
- Develop a climate change strategy and action plan
- Create safer streets, cycle ways and footpaths
- Improve connectivity by investing in our transport and local road network
- Invest in the physical environment and public realm in our neighbourhoods to strengthen the retail offer and improve opportunities for leisure and play.
- Build the capacity of the integrated community safety team to tackle anti-social behaviour and enable people to feel safe on our streets and public spaces.
- Strengthen our approach to enforcement action on litter, dog fouling and illegal car parking.

4.9 Finance: develop and deliver a recovery budget for the Council and ensure the capital programme is delivered on time and on budget

- 4.10 **Communications:** work with partners to deliver a shared communication strategy which provides effective and timely public information through a diverse range of channels and reaches those with specific communication needs.
- 4.11 A Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG) will be established to lead the recovery and renewal process working with key Council Committees and the Health and wellbeing Board.
- 4.12 The recovery and renewal working groups will provide a framework for engaging with partner agencies, the voluntary and community and faith sectors and local businesses as appropriate will help shape and deliver action plans that contribute to shared goals.
- 4.13 This Recovery Governance Framework is summarised in Chart 2.

5.0 INVESTING IN RECOVERY AND RENEWAL

- 5.1 Hartlepool Borough Council entered the COVID-19 crisis from a position of relative strength. We had agreed a budget for 2020-2021 which reduced reliance on reserves and protected essential frontline services. We have a significant capital plan directed towards revitalising important economic sectors and we have strong, high performing services. However tackling the social and economic impact of COVID-19 and addressing the significant social, economic and health inequalities in the Borough will require a major fiscal stimulus. We will need to focus our efforts on attracting investment from the Town Deal and High Street Funds alongside other national programmes. In addition we will need to work hard with the Tees Valley Combined Authority to attract further devolved funds so that we can properly address the priorities set out in this Recovery Plan over a three year period.

5.2 Immediate Investment Opportunities

Two immediate opportunities have been identified to re-purpose existing Council funds to start the process of supporting businesses re-purpose and re-build and to invest in the Voluntary and Community Sector to support community-led initiatives which address food, fuel and digital poverty, build routes to work and provide positive opportunities for vulnerable children and young people.

- **Business Support Fund:** The Council has earmarked £500,000 of the devolved TVCA Indigenous Growth fund toward a local business investment scheme. The opportunity is there to accelerate this and focus it towards supporting businesses to adapt to the changing economic environment and to re-animating key sectors including culture, tourism and the visitor economy. It was originally intended that the scheme would operate as a 'revolving' loan. However, given the fragility of businesses and the worry about taking on more loans it is proposed that the scheme should now operate as a grant programme. It is therefore proposed that £200,000 of the earmarked funds is allocated to creating a business support fund to assist businesses meet the costs of business plans, skill development and the purchase of equipment to help them adapt to changing circumstances, and £300,000 is allocated to the re-animation of our visitor and tourism economy and

assets. Specific criteria and an application process will be developed in consultation with the business community and the Chair of Regeneration Committee and the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee.

- **Community Fund:** The voluntary, community and faith sectors have played a critical role in co-ordinating local capacity to meet local need during the crisis. Going forward it will be important to develop strong and co-ordinated relationship with the VCS and faith sectors to in supporting community-led initiatives to tackling the root causes and impact of poverty and social isolation within our communities by investing in new approaches to addressing food, fuel and digital poverty, creating routes to work and providing new out-of-school and holiday programmes for children and young people. It is therefore proposed to bring together a range of funding streams earmarked to tackle poverty and hardship into a single community fund of £225,000. £200,000 will be allocated to supporting community-led initiatives aimed at tackling poverty and hardship and £25,000 towards providing new out-of-school opportunities for vulnerable children and young people. Specific criteria will be developed in consultation with the VCS and faith sector and in consultation with the Chair of Adult and Community-based Services, the Chair of Children's Services and the Chair of Finance and Policy.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

HARTLEPOOL RECOVERY CO-ORDINATING GROUP

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES



Organisational Change and Resilience

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- Increase the availability of quality affordable social housing that meets diverse needs by building more council houses and working in partnership with Hartlepool based social housing providers



Education and Vulnerable Children

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- Strengthen our approach to enforcement action on litter, dog fouling and illegal car parking.



Finance

Develop and deliver a recovery budget for the Council and ensure the capital programme is delivered on time and on budget



Communications

Work with partners to deliver a shared communication strategy which provides effective and timely public information through a diverse range of channels and reaches those with specific communication needs



**HARTLEPOOL
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Covid-19 Recovery Plan Engagement Exercise Findings Report

26th June – 28th July 2020

Background

As agreed by Council on the 10th June 2020 a programme of discussion sessions with stakeholders were held during June / July in order to inform the preparation of the recovery plan and budget for the next 3 years.

Stakeholders included:

- Elected Members
- Our Workforce
- Partner agencies including the CCG, NHS and social care providers and TVCA
- Voluntary and community sector providers
- Faith communities
- Business community

A range of opportunities were made available for people to get involved:

- Members Seminar
- Online survey for employees
- 3 virtual discussions with employees held on Skype
- Virtual discussion with a range of public sector partner organisations held on MS Teams
- Virtual discussion with Primary School Head Teachers held on MS Teams
- Virtual discussion with Secondary School Head Teachers held on Zoom
- Virtual discussion with the Economic Regeneration and Tourism Forum held on MS Teams
- Virtual discussion with representatives of the faith community held on MS Teams
- Virtual discussion with the VCS held on Zoom
- In addition, a number of partners expressed their views by email or through other meetings and phone calls.

This report provides a summary of the views expressed through this engagement exercise and identifies a number of key themes to be considered and taken forward in the development of the recovery plan and budget.

Findings

This section of the report sets out emerging themes from each of the discussion sessions and the results of employee survey.

Members Seminar

10 Members took part in the seminar via MS Teams and the following points were raised.

- Response from the community has been generally positive – people felt looked after by the Council. Need to keep working at this and keep the public on side and staying positive.
- Need robust plans in place ready for a second wave which recognise the lessons that have already been learnt.

Decision-making:

- Speed of response - Council has been unshackled and able to do stuff quickly reacting to emerging situations. Support Hub up and running in a week. We've been quick to establish new services and new ways of delivering existing services.
- Some concern from a Member about not feeling as involved as they would have liked to have been due to speed of response needed.
- Remote meetings for Council are very good and need to continue. Thanks expressed to the technical support officers that got this up and running and are continuing to support members to access.

Communication:

- Communication has been very good – leaflets to every household were clear and informative. This is something we should retain.
- Queries raised about the use of masks and how this will be enforced. It was agreed that this could be picked up in the Council's communications including how to safely use a mask.

Education:

- Support for the local decision not to reopen schools.
- Recognised that schools were preparing for September but safety is paramount. Issues of school transport need to be resolved.
- Schools working together as a whole to ensure the best outcome was seen as a positive.

Health and Wellbeing:

- Big concern raised about the health inequalities that already existed in Hartlepool being exacerbated by the covid-19 crisis. Recognised the need to work closely with health colleagues on this and the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board in it.
- The impact on mental health and wellbeing across the town was also identified as a key priority for the future.
- Children have missed socialising and the importance of supporting this to happen safely was highlighted.
- Council has done well in supporting socially isolated and vulnerable people – Support Hub activity is something we should keep and build on.
- Need to get the message out that services are still available to people who need them and can be accessed remotely e.g. memory tests or home aides.
- Recognised that Care Homes have done well and noted the Council's support in this.
- Some concern raised about a shortage of trained staff in care homes and whether we could train and redeploy staff to support basic care needs.

Environment / Community Safety:

- Many of the public appreciated the fact that we've done the best we can under the circumstances to maintain services e.g. grass cutting, bin collections etc.
- Concern raised about car parking in Seaton and the need to support small, local businesses.
- Issue raised about Ward Jackson Park and anti-social behaviour. Use of nitrous oxide (little silver canisters of laughing gas). Also being found on the Headland beaches and the Marina.
- Query raised about when brown bins would go back to regular collection cycle.
- Biggest areas of resident complaint identified as fly-tipping, litter and dog fouling. Littering particularly identified as an issue around fast food outlets such as MacDonald's and KFC since they have reopened. MacDonald's staff collect litter around their site but KFC don't. Identified that enforcement action could and would be taken on this. Need also to restart recruitment of additional environmental focussed enforcement officers that were planned before the pandemic.
- Cyclists who weren't being responsible were raised as a concern.

Workforce Survey

In total 714 employees responded to the survey which is a 36.2% response rate. Overall, the workforce responded positively to questions about their health and wellbeing, equipment and resources and feeling connected. However, there are some areas that provide some concern and may need further investigation particularly around healthy work – life balance, feeling mentally well and having meaningful check ins with managers.

Health and wellbeing	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel I am maintaining a healthy work – life balance	17.4%	53.2%	13.8%	13.9%	1.7%
	70.6% positive			15.6% negative	
I feel mentally well at the moment	16.3%	53.8%	15.9%	12.2%	1.7%
	70.1% positive			13.9% negative	
I know actions I can take to help me stay mentally well	20.6%	67.5%	9.2%	2.6%	0.1%
	88.1% positive			2.7% negative	

Equipment and resources	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I have the necessary equipment and resources required for my role, including PPE (if required)	24.3%	54.3%	10.4%	9.5%	1.4%
	78.6% positive			10.9% negative	
I feel safe carrying out my role daily	30.0%	53.7%	11.9%	4.1%	0.3%
	83.7% positive			4.4% negative	

Feeling connected	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am having meaningful check ins with my manager	28.3%	46.6%	13.2%	8.5%	3.4%
	74.9% positive			11.9% negative	
I fully understand what is expected of me at work during this time	34.5%	55.2%	6.4%	3.4%	0.6%
	89.7% positive			4.0% negative	

The survey included 3 questions where employees could provide open responses. The responses are summarised below:

What do you think has gone well?

- Working from home – quick to get people home, flexibility that has provided and the IT, although not perfect, has been generally good.
- Keeping in touch and communications in general with all staff communications and communication within teams including the use of conference calls highlighted.
- Working together and supporting each other during this challenging time – recognised as a strength of the organisation.
- IT support and provision of equipment – having network access from home, access to all necessary systems and support readily available.
- Safety measures have been quickly put in place and done well so that staff feel safe where they have had to come in to work.
- Adapted well to the quick changes we've needed to make.
- Management support – senior and line management – has been positive with regular, clear communication, check in's and wellbeing support.
- Council response overall – quick, responsive to community needs and doing what's best for Hartlepool rather than just following what the government has said.
- The Council's response was well organised.
- Support Hub – highlighted as a specific example of success.
- Some felt like they or the Council were making a difference and feeling valued.
- Able to work from workplace – sometimes due to service need but also for staff mental wellbeing.

What do you think hasn't gone so well?

- IT issues including problems with kit, not having systems that other partners and LAs have including MS Teams for example and server problems.
- Communication has not always been good, mixed messages, poor communications from managers etc.
- Inequality in work arrangements – not all areas are seen to be consistent in sharing out or taking on work. Also, issues with other agencies not doing the work that they need to do.
- Home / work life balance problems – difficult to switch off
- Social distancing and lockdown problems – concern about rules not being adhered to and working in office with different people rather than being part of a bubble.
- Issues raised with access to PPE and health and safety advice and support.
- Some identified issues with feeling isolated.
- Some felt that there had been a lack of contact with managers.
- Some raised concerns for the future if they needed to work from home for prolonged periods. Concerns included staff learning and development, suitability of home working set up (muscular-skeletal issues) and what would happen around new people joining the team.

What do you think we should learn from this situation and take forward into our recovery plan and future ways of working?

- Different ways of working should be retained - working from home/anywhere, agile working and flexibility for staff – all need to be available but we need to be conscious of concerns raised including the need for appropriate workstations at home, concerns about isolation and the reduction in support and learning from other team members. Also, need to recognise that WFH is not for everyone.
- We need our CICT hardware and software to support different ways of working with employees highlighting laptops, MS Teams, zoom, Office 365, server upgrades, phone system and home broadband improvements.
- We need to be prepared in case we get a 2nd wave or something else happens – learn our lessons, retain procedures and be prepared to respond quickly. There is need for risk assessments and business continuity plans to be reviewed and updated with what has been learnt recently. In addition the need for clear guidelines / procedures and access to appropriate PPE.
- The mental and physical wellbeing of our staff is important and there will be people who are struggling and need access to support quickly and easily.
- The ability to make decisions quickly and respond flexibly has been really positive and we should try to retain this approach where possible. Listening and working across boundaries has helped with this.
- Some voiced concerns about returning to an office environment whilst the pandemic was still ongoing. Plans need to be well thought through and team bubbles / rotas were suggested as a potential way forward with people combining working from home and in the office.
- Our staff are adaptable and will pull together as a team. They have also shown great resilience.
- We need to be consistent in our approach across the organisational and treat all staff equally whilst recognising their differences.
- Communication from senior managers has been beneficial and generally communication across the organisation and with partners has been good. However, there are some areas for improvement.
- Some raised the need for financial support to contribute towards working from home costs and for those who have lost out on additional shifts / overtime.
- Some raised issues with managers in relation to poor communication and a lack of support or check in's.

Workforce Discussion Sessions

Three discussion sessions were held with 33 employees in total taking part. The following points were raised:

- Our workforce have adapted well. They are committed, flexible and creative, thinking outside the box to get things done. Trust in our staff is high and this has been recognised.
- Working from home has generally been positive. People have been able work well and for many who hadn't experienced it before they would welcome the opportunity to make it a regular thing although only for part of the week.
- Some negatives with working from home though – concerns around feeling isolated not being able to see or meet up with colleagues (video conferencing facility may help with this). Also concerns for new and inexperienced staff or those on development schemes not having the opportunity to learn 'by osmosis'. There are concerns about having the appropriate space and IT kit to work from and it was highlighted that it can be difficult to 'switch off' from work if your computer is out on the kitchen table all the time. The issue of dealing with difficult calls in your own home was also identified, 'invasion of space'.
- There is still a need for 'the office' but this could be different in the future with space for people to meet up and discuss work, video meeting space (MS Teams available in a meeting room for example) and space to make difficult phone calls.
- CICT – great work in getting people home and set up quickly. Recognition that we need to review / update our infrastructure but understand that what we have was agreed in different circumstances and produced a significant cost saving at the time. Need new systems to fit with partners and enable us to hold virtual meetings and training which would cut down on travel time and cost in the future.
- Regular contact and communication from line managers, wider team contact and also updates from senior managers was welcomed. The use of the Our People app was highlighted as a particular success.
- Social media and communications work throughout has been clear and understandable. The weekly updates have been welcomed – 'nice to know hard work was recognised'.
- Concern about how to deal with customers returning to the Civic Centre – particularly the difficult ones.
- Concern also about the safety and wellbeing of staff in partner buildings where we have no control over procedures e.g. police station and hospital.

- The following areas of concern for our services and our community were highlighted:
 - Increased need for primary care and preventative work – encourage physical activity;
 - Mental health needs in our communities;
 - Ongoing support for the vulnerable in our community – role for community hubs;
 - Homelessness – this will increase once the ban on evictions is lifted and we'll have a new group of people who will be vulnerable (young people in low paid jobs with rent arrears/evictions). Issues likely to kick in at the end of the furlough scheme;
 - Need to harness the community activism we've seen recently and build on it;
 - Economic impact – need to encourage people to use the town centre and stop businesses closing;
 - Support for independent traders – getting set up online for example;
 - Need to promote and encourage people to stay safe using facemasks and social distancing still. Might make people feel safer to access shopping / town centre. Role for communications team in this.
 - Fly tipping has increased;
 - Drug use and reoffending rates are a concern.

Partners

11 individuals from the following partner agencies came together for a discussion on MS Teams:

- Cleveland Fire Brigade
- Love Hartlepool
- McKenzie Group Practice / Primary Care Network
- National Probation Service
- North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust
- Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group
- The Koh Practice / Primary Care Network
- Thirteen Group

The following points were raised:

- The way organisations have worked collaboratively, across agency boundaries for the good of the population was highlighted. Also, that this work was done from a local perspective rather than following the national approach. It was recognised that this must be retained and built upon for the future.
- Also the speed and flexibility of the response were identified as positives to be retained.
- Question raised about how partners can work together to make changes and lock in some of the benefits that the situation has brought about. We need to move forward together, remove organisational barriers and do what's right for people.
- Recognition that although Hartlepool has a low level of BAME residents there are still a large number of higher risk patients when it comes to covid-19 and we need to work to improve the general health of the population.
- Video/phone (remote) consultations were highlighted as a success and identified as something that should be retained. However, it was recognised that there are many in Hartlepool that don't have smart phones that can access this service. The potential role for Community Hubs in Hartlepool in offering confidential space for the public to access these services remotely was identified.
- A reduction in the physical locations from which GPs were delivering (3 out of 5 sites remained open) combined with remote consultations had enabled a 20% increase in capacity for the McKenzie Group.
- The take up of electronic prescriptions and people accessing GP / Urgent Care / Pharmacy support and advice rather than going straight to the hospital were also highlighted as positive changes.
- Concern about capacity in workforce to face what is ahead – winter flu season and possibly a second spike of covid-19.

- It was recognised that it was highly likely that unemployment will increase following the covid-19 pandemic and that as a large, local employer the Hospital Trust needs to offer the right training and employment opportunities – more and better careers advice and information.
- Thirteen have recognised the benefits of staff working remotely and are keen to maintain this approach. They will be looking to develop collaboration space rather than a traditional office working space.
- Recognition of the significant financial challenges facing partners and the need to capture some of the efficiencies shown through new and different ways of working.
- Cleveland Fire Brigade have seen a spike in risk taking behaviour in the building sector and their prevention role has had to be delivered differently.
- Core role of firefighters has been extended to include things like providing training on the use of PPE in care homes, driving ambulances, etc. Cleveland Fire Brigade have the capacity to provide additional support for partners but the LRF have not requested this.
- Question raised about whether partners were carrying out Business Impact Assessments to identify where they will be returning to normal (new normal), re-inventing i.e. doing things differently or rescaling – slowing down or stopping. Cleveland Fire are currently undertaking this exercise.
- TEWV are modelling demand over the next 3-5 years and want to engage with system partners for a whole system response – Directors of Adults, Directors of Children's and Director of Public Health being contacted. Expecting a significant increase in demand on pre-covid levels. Urgent care services have been very busy and seeing evidence of new risky behaviours becoming apparent.
- Some new services have been fast-forwarded e.g. the single number crisis line, relationships with the third sector and Primary Care Network.
- The wellbeing of staff was highlighted by all partners and TEWV mentioned working to develop resilience hubs similar to the Manchester model.
- The level of community mobilisation was highlighted as a real positive and it was recognised that this needs to be retained and embedded. There is a need for citizen and resident engagement and the Council, Hartlepool Action Lab and Community Organisers were highlighted as having a role to play in this. This also needs to engage with the seldom heard and harder to reach of our population.
- Issues highlighted by the pandemic for Probation include homelessness (for those coming out of prison) and domestic abuse.

- Queries were raised about local lockdowns and the role of partners in this.
- Probation have recognised that going forward they need a physical presence in Hartlepool again, possibly a shared office location with other partners.
- Concern raised about vulnerable children and the role of all organisations in this.

Primary School Head Teachers

6 Primary School Head Teachers came together for a discussion on MS Teams.

The main points for the recovery plan were:

- The need for back office support for maintained schools – there has been a lot of things that have had to fall to the Head Teacher and Business Manager on their own e.g. ordering free school meal vouchers, risk assessments etc. Look at the potential for a shared back office function across clusters.
- Collaboration and sharing across primary schools has been really positive and the weekly sessions and role played by cluster leads has been really good and should be built on.
- Training for Governors is needed around their role in situations like this. Also, concern about local governance from the move to virtual meetings which might disenfranchise some parent or community governors – having the confidence to ask a question in a virtual environment.
- Some concern about the relationship between schools and some social care staff – need to understand and appreciate each other's positions. Social care eager to get vulnerable children back to school but schools keen to ensure the safety of pupils when they return.
- Concerns around the move to having curriculum available online and the need to have digital strategies in place for September. Issues raised included digital poverty, safeguarding, workload pressure and monitoring of pupils who were not able to submit work online.
- Support / promotion to parents who either don't want or don't think they should be doing school work at home and also those who can't / don't know how to support their children to do it.
- Support needs to be for all children not just those classed as disadvantaged.
- Clear messages for schools about local lockdowns are needed. Who will make the decision to close and what is the agreed process / protocol. Also, need support for schools to be prepared for this – demands for paperwork on Head Teachers from Public Health in the event that an outbreak happens related to their school.
- Need to work together to reassure parents ahead of schools returning in September – a collective, Hartlepool response. Also need shared messages to go out if / when a local lockdown happens.

- It was felt that getting the Education Board up and running and focussing on improving educational outcomes were important.
- Mental health and wellbeing of pupils and also staff were highlighted as areas of concern.

Secondary School Head Teachers

4 Secondary School Head Teachers came together for a discussion on Zoom.

The main points for the recovery plan were:

- Concern about high levels of anxiety in pupils and not enough staff knowledge in how to support them – would be useful to provide training to a cohort of staff across all schools in Hartlepool.
- Mental health and wellbeing of staff also needs to be supported.
- Concern about getting pupils back into routine particularly those who have spent time in bedrooms, online and had their sleep patterns disrupted or are suffering from sleep deprivation.
- Digital learning - some pupils who struggle to engage traditionally (e.g. those who are poorly) have benefited from online learning but hard to replicate when get back into classroom setting.
- Opportunity to review curriculum and educational settings, clear out the old and look to develop new ways of delivering e.g. forest school and gardening for the PRU.
- Information / communication with parents – some don't believe it's real, also clear information about face masks. It's confusing that pupils need to wear on public transport and in shops but not in school. Also, concern that the frequency of government guidance changing has impacted negatively on parents trust in schools as they've had to change their position in response. Need clear and consistent messaging across all schools.
- New ways of engaging with parents – online parents evenings using MS Teams / phone consultations will be retained.
- Concern about pupils moving into secondary schools from Y6 to Y7 and also from school to college – transition arrangements have been disrupted so potential for unsettled pupils/students in Y7 and also a potential impact on low NEET figures at the older end if we get higher drop-out rates.
- Not being able to offer pastoral care and support may also impact on exclusions in the new school year. Outreach support from PRU may be limited if there is a spike in exclusions.
- Collaboration across schools has never been stronger – need to maintain and develop. Weekly Zoom catch ups have been particularly useful and demonstrated that they can get together quickly to discuss concerns etc.
- Working together with other agencies has been positive, less them and us with social care for example.
- Concern about statements made nationally that aren't acceptable – 'disadvantaged pupils will just remain disadvantaged'.

- Some practical concerns too - need clarity about school transport for September urgently; how will autumn exams work; will supply teachers be limited in when/where they can work; will we see a spike in home schooling?

Voluntary and Community Sector

20 people from the voluntary and community sector joined the VCS Sector Connector meeting on Zoom arranged and supported by Hartlepower. In addition comments were received from 2 others who were unable to take part in the online session.

The main points for the recovery plan were:

- Children and young people who have had their education disrupted – particularly those already at an educational disadvantage including Looked After Children. Need to discuss the contribution the VCS can make in supporting this.
- Digital inclusion/exclusion issues impacting on access to education. Struggle to access hardware (laptops, tablets etc) but cost of broadband is also an issue. Recognise that access to a smart phone doesn't make them able to access to school work etc. A scheme to provide affordable community broadband is being developed for roll out from September.
- Also, many families have educational issues and don't understand how to support their children and home educate.
- Concern about school leavers and the big leap to being in work. Need support to help them understand how to be job ready.
- Issue of poverty - it's wider than just those on Universal Credit, we have in-work poverty so need a focus on a real living wage for Hartlepool and support to help people reduce bills. Also, the end of the furloughing scheme, potential redundancies as business close and the build-up of personal debt there are real concerns in the near future. We need to focus on the causes of poverty not just the symptoms and get the 'voice of lived experience' involved in shaping our policies and services. Also, recognise that many don't regard themselves as in poverty as that would mean that they have failed themselves and their families. Need to be careful about language and how we approach it.
- Mental health – impact of shielding and isolation
- Need for clear communication about services and what's available – concern that when local VCS centres like Kilmarnock Road close that the people accessing them don't know where to go or how to get support.
- Language and language barriers for those for who English is not their first language and those who are deaf or hard of hearing – understanding where to access support when usual support not available or not linked in to arrangements. Overreliance on phone at national and local level and lack of information provided in alternative languages / formats. Specific issue raised around a lack of access to GP services in Hartlepool for deaf people. VCS open to working

collaboratively to implement some simple measures that would have a very large impact.

- Energy to keep going – great to see range of support mobilised across the town but need to keep this going and reinvigorate people. Worry that momentum we've got now could be lost.
- Seen families and communities supporting each other and there is huge potential to build on this. A lot of services do to people but there is strength in communities and potential in individuals that we need to build on.
- Unemployment concerns – role of VCS in supporting people to start up on their own e.g. Hartlepower Hubs.
- Joint working across the VCS and with public sector agencies has been really positive and needs to be maintained. Need to go forward together with shared objectives.
- Potential for developing the Community Wealth Building model in Hartlepool – encouraging local spend by organisations.
- Need to recognise the negative impact that the pandemic has had on disabled people in Hartlepool and ensure that we recognise the important role our VCS organisations, including Incontrol-able, have to play in supporting them.

Business

29 people from the business sector joined in to a special meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Tourism Forum using MS Teams.

The main points for the recovery plan were:

- Businesses need to change and adapt but many need investment, support and training to do this. Changes where this is needed include delivering online (live streaming demonstrations, online workshops, internet shops, websites etc), being able to go contactless (taking payments or moving to providing deliveries to those shielding or self-isolating). Could this be support provided from within the business community – mentoring / advising each other about how to do these things?
- Need promotion of the support that is available and the schemes that local employers can access e.g. Kickstart or apprenticeships. Also, need for schemes to be longer than 6 months – is there a role for TVCA in this?
- Concern about reduced footfall on businesses being able to remain open and on lettings of empty units. Recognise that some people don't feel safe to return to shopping centre or access buses to get into town. Could the Council do something to promote mask wearing?
- Community safety concerns raised about the impact of begging and the drug rehabilitation centre on the town centre area. Also, concern that use of facemasks will make identification harder.
- Offer of support from Middleton Grange Shopping Centre – empty shop windows and hoarding offered to be used to promote key messages and services.

- Recognised that there is a role for the Totally Locally group and that there needs to be wider promotion to local businesses of what they do and the support members of the group provide to each other.
- Concerns about car parking raised including parking charges in the town centre, parking at the Marina and also the Rocket House car park at Seaton Carew.
- Potential to develop a shared platform to promote local spending and to enable small retailers to advertise and sell their products without having to have their own website.

Faith Groups

3 people from local faith groups joined in a discussion using MS Teams. Additional comments were received from 1 other person who was unable to attend the meeting.

The main points for the recovery plan were:

- Increased use of online platforms to engage with worship and to keep in touch with the community.
- However, concerns around digital exclusion, particularly for school children from low income families and elderly people.
- Lots of support and collaboration within the faith community – even between different faiths, particularly around food security, combating social isolation and boosting wellbeing.
- Offer of support from the mosque to help in any way they can. They have a committee which organises volunteers but need clear direction from HBC of what help is required so the committee can make the best arrangements.
- Finding the constantly changing guidance of what they can and cannot do is a challenge, especially with regard to face coverings. Looking to increase the range of activities that can restart in the coming 6 months.
- Have seen a significant social impact to the pandemic at first hand e.g. St Aidan's kitchen currently supporting around 200 people. Estimate 40-50% of these are people who would not normally use the kitchen, in fact some were previous contributors.
- Suggestion that people who cannot work due to e.g. refugee status or lack of English would benefit from volunteering. This would improve their English and other skills as well as help out charities who have seen volunteer numbers fall.
- Asylum Seeker group needs help with finding a suitable venue so they can restart activities – perhaps an audit of suitable buildings / large halls in the town could be carried out?
- A lot of people who have been shielding are very fearful about going back out. There may be some people (particularly) elderly who never come back either to worship or volunteering. Also need to remember the carers of those who were shielding are also fearful of going out.
- Increased fear from restricted health care and the possibility of contracting Covid 19 has increased tendency to become self-reliant, insular and even institutionalised in people's homes.

- A lack of social interaction has increased dementias through lack of stimulation.
- A number of smaller churches and charities are vulnerable due to financial pressures in the next 6-12 months.
- Impacts have led to an increase in signs of agoraphobia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, anxiety and depression, a sense of grief from losses on many levels ranging from not being able to holiday through to the ultimate grief in the loss of life in a relative or friend.
- There is a need for greater collaboration and co-ordination around the provision of holiday hunger and summer activities.

Summary of key themes

The main points from the Covid-19 Recovery Plan engagement exercise can be summarised under the following themes:

Collaboration – working together, across organisational boundaries for the needs of our community has been positive and needs to be retained and built upon. The speed of decision making has also been welcomed.

Digital inclusion / exclusion – concern about moving services digital when not everyone has access. Work needed to improve access and affordability particularly for access to education and health.

Mental health and wellbeing – concern about the impact of the pandemic on our community and employees and recognition that we need a shared approach to support across organisations and sectors. Concern that health inequalities that already existed have been exacerbated.

Communication and engagement – really positive during the pandemic and needs to be maintained.

Community supporting and looking after each other - need to harness and support this to grow.

Economic impact – supporting businesses to adapt and grow and encourage spending locally. Also, respond to anticipated unemployment increase supporting people into work, self-employment or training.

Educational attainment – supporting our children and young people who have had their education disrupted – particularly those already at a disadvantage. Recognising the role that the VCS can play in this. Also, need to focus on transition from primary to secondary and secondary to further education / work.

Poverty – recognising the impact the pandemic has had on this and that within the town we have a lot of in work poverty. Work with those with lived experience to improve understanding and work to tackle the causes rather than just treat the symptoms.

Homelessness – concern about the impact once the ban on evictions is lifted and the furlough scheme ends.

Local Lockdown arrangements / Preparation for 2nd wave - need clarity of roles and procedures for partners and the community. Partners to remain prepared to respond together to future issues.

Organisational / internal – various areas need consideration including arrangements for working from home / flexible working, ICT, accommodation etc.

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POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 APPENDIX B

1. Is this decision a Budget & Policy Framework or Key Decision?				YES
If YES please answer question 2 below				
2. Will there be an impact of the decision requested in respect of Child and Family Poverty?				YES
If YES please complete the matrix below				
GROUP	POSITIVE IMPACT	NEGATIVE IMPACT	NO IMPACT	REASON & EVIDENCE
Young working people aged 18 - 21	✓			Full detail is included within the report and appendices
Those who are disabled or suffer from illness / mental illness	✓			
Those with low educational attainment	✓			
Those who are unemployed	✓			
Those who are underemployed	✓			
Children born into families in poverty	✓			
Those who find difficulty in managing their finances	✓			
Lone parents	✓			
Those from minority ethnic backgrounds	✓			
Poverty is measured in different ways. Will the policy / decision have an impact on child and family poverty and in what way?				
Poverty Measure (examples of poverty measures appended overleaf)	POSITIVE IMPACT	NEGATIVE IMPACT	NO IMPACT	REASON & EVIDENCE
Children in Low Income Families (%)	✓			The COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Plan is directed towards addressing the impact of poverty and tackling root causes. The Community Fund will help build community capacity to address the root causes and impact of poverty.
Children in Working Households (%)	✓			
Local business economy (%)	✓			The Business Support Fund will focus on supporting businesses to adapt to the changing economic environment
Overall employment rate (%)	✓			

POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 APPENDIX B

				and to re-animating key sectors including culture, tourism and the visitor economy.
Overall impact of Policy / Decision				
POSITIVE IMPACT	✓	ADJUST / CHANGE POLICY / SERVICE		
NO IMPACT / NO CHANGE		STOP / REMOVE POLICY / SERVICE		
ADVERSE IMPACT BUT CONTINUE				
Examples of Indicators that impact of Child and Family Poverty.				
Economic				
Children in Low Income Families (%)				
Children in Working Households (%)				
Overall employment rate (%)				
Proportion of young people who are NEET				
Adults with Learning difficulties in employment				
Education				
Free School meals attainment gap (key stage 2 and key stage 4)				
Gap in progression to higher education FSM / Non FSM				
Achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and all pupils (key stage 2 and key stage 4)				
Housing				
Average time taken to process Housing Benefit / Council tax benefit claims				
Number of affordable homes built				
Health				
Prevalence of underweight children in reception year				
Prevalence of obese children in reception year				
Prevalence of underweight children in year 6				
Prevalence of obese children in reception year 6				
Life expectancy				

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 August 2020



Report of: Director of Children and Joint Commissioning Services and Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT – CONCESSIONARY SEATS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide Finance and Policy Committee with further information in relation to the provision of concessionary seats on home to school transport, as requested at the meeting of Council on 30 July 2020 and to outline proposals for autumn term 2020.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council has a duty to provide free Home to School travel assistance to students who are eligible under the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspection Act 2006. The Education Act 1996 provides a statutory obligation on local authorities to provide home to school travel assistance free of charge to all eligible students of compulsory school age, resident in their area and the categories for eligibility are defined as:
- Those who live over the statutory walking distance from their nearest suitable school, two miles for primary students and three miles for secondary students;
 - Those who are attending their nearest suitable school and they cannot reasonably be expected to walk there because the nature of route would be unsafe for them to do so; and there is no reasonable alternative route, within the statutory walking distance that it would be safe for them to walk;

- Extended rights – those eligible for free school meals or a parent with whom they live is receiving maximum working tax credits and they live more than two miles from one of their three nearest schools or they are attending a school that is between two and 15 miles from their home that their parents have chosen on the grounds of religion or belief; or
 - A student is attending a school to meet their special education needs, disability or mobility problem.
- 3.2 The obligation on the Council to provide home to school travel assistance is limited to the child attending their nearest suitable school. The Council has no obligation to make arrangements to transport non-entitled children to school. Practice within the Council has been that home to school transport is arranged for entitled pupils, and any spare seats on buses are then made available to non-entitled students for a charge, under a concessionary seat arrangement. Concessionary seats are not always available, are not guaranteed and may be removed if an eligible child makes application.
- 3.3 However, in January 2020 the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) came into force and meant that where a fare was being charged for travel and there were more than 22 seated passengers, the vehicle would need to be wheelchair accessible as well as meeting more general accessibility requirements including, among other things, specifications for seats, steps, floors/gangways and handrails. When these regulations came into force, not all of the vehicles being utilised for home to school transport were accessible, so the Council provided places for those travelling on concessionary permits free of charge from January to July 2020. The changes to these Regulations have been challenged by Councils nationally due to the impact on the provision of concessionary places on home to school transport, however the Department for Transport has not rescinded these regulations and therefore the Council must comply. Other local councils ceased to offer concessionary seats once the PSVA Regulations came into force and therefore Hartlepool Borough Council is offering an enhanced service when compared with neighbouring authorities.
- 3.4 In order to become fully compliant with PSVAR from September 2020, the Council purchased two replacement vehicles that would be converted and these were due to be delivered in August 2020. Unfortunately due to the pandemic, the company carrying out the conversion had to cease working and furloughed staff and therefore the anticipated delivery date is significantly delayed. In these circumstances, the Council continues to be unable to charge for concessionary seats on the home to school buses. The Council is currently seeking clarification on whether it can apply for a recently announced exemption to the Regulations.
- 3.5 Due to the anticipated challenges that may arise in relation to the availability of concessionary seats on home to school transport from September 2020, a letter was sent to all parents and carers who have previously accessed or requested this arrangement on 16 July 2020. This letter gave parents and carers advanced notice that the Council was uncertain as to whether there would be an opportunity to offer concessionary travel for the 2020/21

academic year due the potential need for social distancing on school transport, the anticipated increase in the number pupils of eligible for travel assistance arising from the impact of COVID 19 and PSVAR issues as outlined in paragraphs 3.3/3.4 above. The letter informed parents and carers that the Council would be monitoring the situation carefully over the coming weeks and write to parents and carers again if there is an opportunity to purchase a Concessionary Travel Permit. Parents and carers were encouraged to consider alternative travel options for their child(ren) to travel to and from school and links were provided to bus timetables and a journey planner.

- 3.6 The current position is that it is likely the Council will be able to provide some concessionary travel permits on the home to school buses, although indications are that capacity will be lower than in previous years.
- 3.7 Concessionary seats for non-eligible pupils are not guaranteed and can be withdrawn at any time if an eligible child requires the seat. Parents are made aware of this when requesting and being provided with a concessionary travel permit. The table below provides details of the current arrangements for the provision of home to school transport for eligible and non-eligible students by school.

School	Procured by the school	Statutory Provision by HBC	Eligible students	Non- eligible students
Dyke House	6 buses	-	17	268
English Martyrs	-	3 buses	48	107
St Hilds	1 bus	1 bus	29	36
High Tunstall	-	2 buses	69	6
Manor	1 bus (private)	Stagecoach bus pass	5	0

- 3.8 As the table shows there is a mixed economy of provision to support non-eligible pupils to travel to and from school which is down to the individual school. Some schools commission providers (including HBC) to deliver transport for non-eligible children whilst others rely on the availability of concessionary seats on transport for eligible pupils to their schools. The current anticipated reduced availability of concessionary seats is therefore causing significant challenges for both parents and schools who are dependent upon this arrangement to support their child's travel to and from school. In particular this is affecting The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College.
- 3.9 There are three buses that transport eligible pupils to The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College from different starting locations around the town. From September 2020, indications are that there are likely to be some concessionary seats available on these buses but potentially not sufficient to meet the level of demand. In the 2019/20 academic year, concessionary travel permits were issued to 107 pupils attending The

English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College; the anticipated capacity is currently estimated to be approximately 90 seats. It is unlikely that the Council will have an accurate indication of actual numbers until the start of the new school term when all eligible children are known. This number can fluctuate during the school year as children become eligible for home to school transport arising from a change in their family circumstances. The Council operates a first come first served arrangement for the provision of concessionary bus passes and a last on, first off when an eligible pupil requires a seat.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Council has been in discussion with The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College to seek to work together to resolve the challenges posed by the current situation for parents and pupils. The school has undertaken a survey of parents and received 169 expressions of interest for school transport; this number is significantly greater than the number of non-eligible pupils issued with a concessionary travel permit in the 2019/20 academic year (107). The school is contacting coach companies to provide bus routes for non-eligible pupils, the indicative daily costs for parents are significantly higher than the Council currently charges as there is an economy of scale associated with transporting both eligible and non-eligible pupils together.
- 4.2 The Council will continue to work with The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College to seek to resolve these challenges. The current challenges are temporary in nature and there are two ways that this can be resolved from the Council's perspective. If the Council is eligible for the recently announced exemptions to PSVAR, then this will be applied for as a matter of urgency. Alternatively, as soon as the PSVAR compliant buses are delivered this will increase our fleet and therefore capacity to offer concessionary seats on the home to school transport.
- 4.3 In the meantime, as the PSVAR compliant vehicles are unlikely to be delivered in readiness for the new academic year, the Council is unable to charge for concessionary travel permits and therefore is experiencing a loss of income associated with this charge. Nevertheless, the Council is proposing to continue to provide concessionary travel permits, to the available capacity, free of charge until such time as the compliant vehicles are received, at which time, the charge will recommence.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The issues and challenges outlined in this report are a significant cause for concern for parents and carers who rely on the provision of concessionary school transport to enable their children to travel safely to and from school. Both the Council and the schools affected are keen to work collaboratively to resolve this matter to ensure that children and young people are able to get

to school safely and on time. To this end, all options are being explored to achieve a resolution for the start of the new academic year.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide home to school transport for eligible pupils and the cost of this is met by the Council. Currently the Council cannot charge for pupils to travel under concessionary travel permits as its fleet is not PSVAR compliant resulting in a loss of income to the Council.
- 6.2 The Council does not have the resources to provide home to school transport for non-eligible children, this has significant financial implications and would require substantial cuts to other service areas in order to identify funding.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The information provided in this report is compliant with the statutory responsibilities of the Council under the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspection Act 2006 as well as the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken to inform the preparation of this report.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)

- 9.1 There are no child and family poverty implications arising from this report. Children and families experiencing poverty will be eligible for free home to school travel assistance under the extended rights.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)

- 10.1 There are no equality and diversity considerations arising from this report, the council is operating within the statutory framework for the provision of home to school transport.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no staffing consideration arising from this report. It should be noted however that the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact upon the Council's staffing capacity in terms of drivers and passenger assistants.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 Adaptations are still awaited to the Council's fleet to ensure they are PSVAR compliant. This work has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and requirement of the factory making the adaptations to close. There is currently no delivery date on the adapted buses as the factory remains closed.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 Members of Finance and Policy Committee are asked to consider the contents of this report as requested by the meeting of council on 30 July 2020.
- 13.2 Members are asked to approve the proposal that the Council continue to provide concessionary travel permits, to the available capacity, free of charge until such time as the compliant vehicles are received, at which time, the charge will recommence.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 At the meeting of Council on 30 July 2020 a report was requested to be prepared for Finance and Policy Committee on this issue.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Chief Executive ☒

Director of Finance and Policy ☒

Chief Solicitor ☒

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 August 2020



Report of: Chief Solicitor

Subject: Proposed Appointment of an Assistant Coroner

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To seek agreement to the proposed appointment of an Assistant Coroner by Middlesbrough Council (as the Relevant Authority) for the Teesside and Hartlepool Coroner Service area.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Teesside & Hartlepool Coroner's Service is the busiest Coronial Service in the North East of England with 3013 deaths being reported and 395 inquests being opened in 2019 (the number of deaths representing a 5% rise on 2018). This year that number will be significantly higher, largely due to Covid-19.
- 3.2 As a direct result of the lockdown, inquest hearings have had to be suspended and, therefore, there is now a backlog of inquests waiting to be heard. As the country enters its recovery phase, the Senior Coroner has indicated the necessity of addressing this backlog.
- 3.3 The Chief Coroner suggests that most Coronial Services require four to six Assistant Coroners. The Tees and Hartlepool Coroner Service currently has only two active Assistant Coroners. The Senior Coroner for the Tees and Hartlepool Service has therefore identified the need to appoint at least one additional Assistant to deal with the extra work and to ensure resilience for the Service.
- 3.4 The appointment of all coroners must be made by the "relevant local authority" for the coroner area. For the Teesside and Hartlepool area this

means that Middlesbrough Borough Council will be the authority making the appointment.

- 3.5 Where the coroner area consists of more than one local authority, the relevant authority (formerly known as the lead authority) must consult the other authorities. Middlesbrough Borough Council have therefore written to Redcar & Cleveland Council, and Stockton and ourselves to request their support for the appointment of an additional Assistant Coroner. The Chief Coroner must then also consent to the appointment of all coroners, as must the Lord Chancellor.
- 3.6 Ordinarily it would be necessary to hold an open competition for an Assistant Coroner, however, the Chief Coroner has recently made provision for local authorities to appoint Assistant Coroners without the need for an open competition (Chief Coroner's guidance 26.03.20). This decision has been made to assist Coroner's Services deal with all of the extra work that the Covid-19 pandemic has, understandably, brought.
- 3.7 That being the case, and in order to avoid any delay in addressing the current backlog, the Senior Coroner has recommended an appointment of a local solicitor and Assistant Coroner for a neighboring authority, to be directly appointed as the new Assistant Coroner for the Teesside and Hartlepool Coroner area due to his experience and familiarity with the role. Middlesbrough Borough Council as the Relevant Authority have indicated their approval to the appointment and both Stockton and Redcar Council are in agreement.
- 3.8 The cost of the coroner's service is shared between the Middlesbrough, Redcar, Stockton and Hartlepool authorities. In the event that we approve the above appointment, the Hartlepool share of the current cost would be in the region of £3000 per annum.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 That Members agree to the proposed appointment of an additional assistant coroner.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In the event that Member do not approve the appointment of an additional Assistant Coroner, the risk is that there will be a delay in dealing with the backlog and the efficiency of the coroner's service will be affected. As stated above, Middlesbrough's intention to make a direct appointment of an experienced Assistant Coroner is to avoid the delay that would be involved in recruitment by way of open competition and subsequent approval by all of the relevant local authorities for the coronial area - a process which can take a number of months and which, in current circumstances, would cause

issues in terms of the Coroner's Service's ability to address the current Covid-19 backlog.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Hartlepool Borough Council's share of the cost is in the region of £3000 and may be chargeable as a COVID-19 cost in the current year and will then be a budget pressure in 2021/22.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Middlesbrough Council is obliged to consult with the other relevant local authorities in order to seek their views on the appointment. The Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor must subsequently consent to any such appointment.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation has been undertaken by Middlesbrough Borough Council with the other relevant local authorities - Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)

- 9.1 N/A

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 An efficient coroners service will benefit all individuals in the area equally.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 No impact – the appointment would be made by Middlesbrough Council as the 'Relevant Authority.'

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 N/A

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 That Members confirms agreement with the proposal that Middlesbrough Borough Council is to appoint an additional Assistant Coroner for the Teesside and Hartlepool Coroner Service area.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 To ensure an efficient Coroner Service for the Teesside and Hartlepool Coroner service area.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

Hayley Martin
Chief Solicitor
01429 523002

Sign Off:-

Chief Executive



Director of Finance and Policy



Chief Solicitor



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 August 2020



Report of: Director, Children and Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING DURING COVID-19 RESPONSE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide the Finance and Policy Committee with further information regarding the provision of accommodation for those who were homeless and rough sleeping during the COVID19 response, as requested at the meeting of Finance and Policy Committee on 29 June 2020.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 26 March 2020, the Minister for Local Government and Homelessness, Luke Hall, M.P. wrote to all local authority Chief Executives announcing the appointment of Dame Louise Casey to lead the Government's response to COVID-19 and rough sleeping to help make sure that everyone was brought in off the streets to protect their health and stop wider transmission of the virus. The letter proposed that this should be done by taking the following programme of actions:

- Convening a local coordination cell to plan and manage the response to COVID and rough sleeping involving the local authority (housing, social care and public health) and local NHS partners together;
- Seeking to stop homeless people from congregating in facilities such as day centres and street encampments where there is a higher risk of transmission;
- Urgently procuring accommodation for people on the streets;
- Triaging people where possible into three cohorts driven by medical advice:

- Those with symptoms of COVID19;
- Those with pre-existing conditions but without symptoms; and
- Those without any of the above;
- Getting the social care basics such as food, and clinician care to people who need it in the self-contained accommodation and work with the commissioned and non-commissioned sector to make sure there are adequate levels of support provided.

The letter advised that ‘Given the Prime Minister’s announcement on Monday night [23rd March] that the public should be staying in their homes wherever possible, it is now imperative that rough sleepers and other vulnerable homeless are supported into appropriate accommodation by the end of the week.’

- 3.2 The letter from the Minister was discussed at the Council's Strategic Coordinating Group and it was agreed that action was urgently required to mobilise accommodation for those who are identified as rough sleeping and/or homeless both in the short and medium term. In light of the communication from the Minister and the timescales set, there was no time to test the market or tender for accommodation providers. Bed and Breakfast (B&B) and hotel accommodation were closed under Government guidance and several premises in the town do not accept referrals from Hartlepool Borough Council. In addition to this, B&B and hotel accommodation is not suitable for vulnerable people and wherever possible, provision is made that includes aspects of care, support and advice. In March 2020, there was limited capacity in our commissioned providers of supported accommodation and therefore it was necessary to identify additional provision that would support those who were homeless or rough sleeping.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Following the Ministerial announcement, an approach was made to Families First North East, an organisation that was in the process of developing supported accommodation for young adults at Melbourne Hotel. At that time, the accommodation was vacant and could be mobilised to provide accommodation, staffing and support within 24-48 hours. Over the next couple of days, officers from the Housing Advice Team worked with Families First North East to prepare the premises to provide accommodation for those who were rough sleeping and/or homeless and the accommodation was ready in accordance with the deadline set by the Minister.
- 4.2 The arrangement with the Melbourne Hotel was for six rooms available 24 hours per day for the provision of supported accommodation for vulnerable people or families who were homeless or found rough sleeping. A one off set up cost of £1213 was made for bed linen, household items etc. The weekly fee for seven days of support for clients using the six rooms, 24 hours a day with concierge/ door security and three meals a day (to prevent the need for clients to go out) was £732.50 per room (i.e. £104.64 per day).

- 4.3 The Melbourne Hotel accepted referrals of clients with low to medium level support needs. There was no age limit on referrals, both genders were accepted as well as single people, couples and families. The Melbourne Hotel provided the following support services:
- Staff on site 24 hours a day for security and on call for the Housing Duty Officer on evenings and weekends;
 - All meals ensuring that the clients complied with lockdown and only went out for their 30 min daily exercise;
 - Help with organising prescriptions/ health advice / doctor's appointments etc;
 - Help with online claims for benefit and use of digital devices.
 - Accompanied clients on walks to ensure clients went out but also that they returned;
 - Recreational activities set up with provision of equipment to help entertain clients; and
 - Time to talk with staff to promote mental health and well being.
- 4.4 During the period 27 March to 8th June 2020, a total of 73 homeless people were recorded by the Housing Advice Team. Over the same period four single males, one single female and one family were accommodated at the Melbourne Hotel. Other individuals were considered for referral to the Melbourne Hotel but not moved in due to the outcome of the risk assessment for example, individuals would not mix well with existing clients and/or their needs were assessed as too great for the staff to be able to meet effectively.
- 4.5 Of the remaining clients who sought advice from the Housing Advice Team, the majority were supported into short term leases through either the private or social rented sector with advice, guidance and support from housing officers. Some of the remaining clients were provided with accommodation through the commissioned provision in Hartlepool such as Sanctuary, Scott Grange or Rose House where they met the criteria for the provision and space was available and the remainder were supported to stay with family or friends.
- 4.6 The provision of the accommodation at the Melbourne Hotel ensured that for those people who required this type of accommodation, provision was swiftly put in place that would meet their needs. There was very little time to respond to and plan for the Minister's request for all homeless and/or rough sleeping individuals to be provided with suitable accommodation within three days to ensure that the risk to themselves and others of COVID19 was minimised. It was fortuitous that the Melbourne Hotel was vacant and these arrangements were able to be mobilised so swiftly, without this provision those Hartlepool individuals who accessed this support would have been in much greater need and danger.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no ongoing risks associated with this report. The decisions taken in relation to the provision of accommodation at the Melbourne Hotel as part of the COVID19 response ensured that those who were homeless or rough sleeping in Hartlepool were brought in off the streets, had their health protected and avoided the wider transmission of the virus.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The cost of the provision of temporary supported accommodation at the Melbourne Hotel was £57,613. The vast majority of this cost arose from the provision of 24 hour staffing arrangements which enabled those referred to receive an appropriate level of support and guidance and the service to receive referrals on evenings and weekends to immediately respond to those found to be homeless or rough sleeping.
- 6.2 All costs have been covered from Government grant funding provided to the Council specifically to cover costs associated with the COVID19 response. As detailed in the MTFS report elsewhere on the agenda the Government Covid19 grant covers all expenditure incurred by the Council responding to the pandemic. There are no ongoing costs associated with provision at the Melbourne Hotel.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There was no requirement to carry out a procurement exercise and a direct award was made due to the urgency of the situation under Regulation 32 (2) (c) of the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
- 7.2 Decisions to provide funding to external organisations were made in accordance with the Council's delegation scheme, specifically CE15 which allows the Chief Executive to make urgent decisions that would ordinarily go to a committee. These decision were then reported to Finance and Policy Committee on 29 June 2020.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Decisions were taken in consultation with the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee through the Council's Strategic Command Group, which led the COVID19 response.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)

- 9.1 The decision to provide accommodation for those experiencing homelessness improves their life chances and builds pathways out of poverty.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)

- 10.1 The provision of accommodation was available to all who needed this support including those with protected characteristics.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no staffing considerations arising from this report

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no asset management considerations arising from this report

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 Members of Finance and Policy Committee are asked to note the contents of this report which provides additional information on the urgent decision taken in response to COVID19 to fund accommodation to support those who were rough sleeping and/or homeless.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 Further information regarding the provision of accommodation during the COVID19 response was requested at the meeting of Finance and Policy Committee on 29 June 2020.

15. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Chief Executive



Director of Finance and Policy



Chief Solicitor



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 August 2020



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Based Services

Subject: PROVISION OF FOOD DURING THE COVID19 RESPONSE

1. TYPE OF DECISION / APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 No decision required; for information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide the Finance and Policy Committee with further information regarding the provision of food during the COVID19 response, as requested at the meeting of Finance and Policy Committee on 29 June 2020.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In the early stages of the Council's COVID19 response, access to food household essentials was a significant challenge with shortages in supermarkets and organisations experiencing difficulties accessing goods through established supply chains, such as providers of school meals.

3.2 These difficulties were particularly significant for those who were extremely clinically vulnerable and following government guidance in relation to shielding, and also those who did not fall under the shielding guidance but who were self-isolating due to health conditions and other vulnerabilities. Lengthy queues at supermarkets, panic buying and a shortage of online delivery slots exacerbated the situation further and meant that many people (particularly those who were particularly vulnerable due to age, frailty, long term health conditions or disabilities) were unable to access food and other essentials.

3.3 Local Authorities were directed to establishing 'shielding hubs' to support those covered by the shielding guidance, and it was also recognised that there were people who did not fall under this guidance who would require substantial support to access food, household essentials and medication.

4. PROVISION IN HARTLEPOOL

4.1 Hartlepool Support Hub was established at very short notice in the early weeks of the COVID19 response in order to support the local population, including those who were shielding. As well as providing access to food, the Support Hub has enabled people to access advice and information, emotional support and befriending services, prescriptions, continence products, hearing aid batteries, pet food, newspapers, books and much more.

4.2 Emergency Food Parcels

4.2.1 Access to food was the immediate and urgent priority for the Support Hub and the initial response was to make emergency food parcels available to all of those identified as shielding, and other vulnerable individuals and families who had no other way to access food in the short term. Emergency food parcels were predominantly made up of dried and canned goods, supplemented with fresh bread and milk, and were designed to support an individual, couple or family for 2-3 days while longer term options were explored. The Council worked closely in partnership with Hartlepool Foodbank, which supplied an initial stock of emergency food parcels, and established a distribution network in order to get the parcels to where they were needed.

4.3 Weekly Food Boxes

4.3.1 It soon became apparent that a more sustainable offer was needed which would support an individual, couple or family for a week and include a wider variety of foods, including more fresh produce. Another Council in the region was using a local restaurant to provide weekly food parcels, and reported that this was a successful model, supporting a local business and local suppliers while also meeting the need in the community. A similar model was developed for Hartlepool through a service specification that set out the required contents of a weekly food parcel and included a weekly review of the service to address any issues and inform an assessment of future demand. A quick piece of work was undertaken by Economic Development to identify potential providers operating café or restaurant businesses. A number of providers were unable to deliver the service as staff had been furloughed or insurance claims were being progressed, but three businesses were identified who would be able to meet the Council's requirements. Only one of the three was contactable and able to meet the service specification within the required timeframe (responding within 48 hours), and an urgent decision was taken to progress with this provider, initially for four weeks and subject to review. The decision was made in accordance with the Council's delegation scheme, specifically CE15 which allows the Chief Executive to make urgent decisions that would ordinarily go to a committee. There was no requirement to carry out a formal procurement exercise and a direct award was made due to the urgency of the situation under Regulation 32 (2) (c) of the Public Contract Regulations 2015. This decision was reported to Finance and Policy Committee on 29 June 2020.

- 4.3.2 The cost of the service compared favourably to the costs in another Council within the region and the feedback from those who received the weekly food boxes was very positive.
- 4.3.3 The provision of food boxes was extended for a further four weeks (at a reduced level) after the initial four week period on the basis of successful delivery and then for a further period of up to four weeks. The service ended after two weeks of the final agreement as lockdown arrangements were easing and the need for weekly food parcels had decreased.
- 4.3.4 A total of 1,900 weekly food boxes were purchased at an average cost of £38.40 per box. 887 individuals / families benefitted from this initiative via the Support Hub and 442 of the food boxes distributed were to people aged over 60. Food boxes were also used to support families in crisis that were identified through schools and social care workers.

4.4 Hot Food Deliveries

- 4.4.1 Provision of hot food was not a priority initially. A number of voluntary and community sector and commercial organisations were offering hot food delivery to individuals and these were actively being promoted by the Support Hub should people request this information, but demand was low.
- 4.4.2 As the lockdown progressed it became apparent that some people, particularly those who would usually attend a day service or lunch clubs, would benefit from the provision of a hot meal on one or more occasion throughout the week.
- 4.4.3 Opportunities for hot food distribution from a number of kitchens including the Centre for Independent Living, CETL, Community Hub South and Summerhill were explored, and the Council was then approached by MECCA bingo offering to provide free hot meals for those in need. MECCA bingo did not have capability to deliver, so a shared initiative was agreed with the hub providing the delivery element.
- 4.4.4 The provision of hot meals was specifically linked to social care needs, ensuring that hot meals were prioritised for individuals who would have usually accessed support through another route, ensuring that efforts were made to avoid creating dependency. Over 2,800 hot meals were delivered.

4.5 National Food Box Scheme

- 4.5.1 A national scheme was developed by central government to provide weekly food boxes to people on the national shielding list. The shielding list for Hartlepool includes approximately 3,350 people with a maximum of 895 of those registered to receive food boxes through the national scheme.
- 4.5.2 The Support Hub was able to supplement these food boxes with fresh produce and also made arrangements to support people with specific dietary

requirements, developing gluten free, vegetarian, vegan, diabetic and halal options.

5. FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The feedback from people who have been supported by the Hub, and their families / carers has been overwhelmingly positive.
- 5.2 Some examples of the comments received relating to food provision include:

Thanks very much for the milk, bread and butter that you delivered to my house today - it restored my faith in humanity. Bless you all for your help.

Your help has been amazing, I cannot thank you enough! I just received the parcel, and I'm amazed at the quantity. Thank you so so much!

I want to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the help, support and advice. It has been amazing, checking up on me, calling, delivering food parcels. Knowing that support was there has helped me so, so much and made me so happy! So thank you!"

Just wanted to say a HUGE thank you for the food parcel which arrived today. It contained all the items we can make use of and we are very grateful. Thank you so much!

Can I first say a big big THANK YOU for the surprise box of essential groceries you delivered yesterday, it was greatly appreciated and brought an emotional tear to my wife's eyes.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no ongoing risks associated with this report. The decisions taken in relation to food provision as part of the COVID19 response ensured that nobody in Hartlepool who accessed the Support Hub was at risk of going without food.
- 6.2 All external food providers were visited by Environmental Health Officers to ensure that the relevant standards were adhered to in relation to food safety.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The cost to the Council of the various aspects of food provision during the COVID19 response is as follows:

• Financial support to Hartlepool Foodbank	£15,000
• Purchase of weekly food boxes	£72,960
• Provision of hot meals	No cost
• National Food Box Scheme	No cost

- 7.2 All costs have been covered from funding provided to the Council specifically to cover costs associated with the COVID19 response. There are no ongoing costs associated with any elements of the response relating to food provision.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Decisions to provide funding to external organisations were made in accordance with the Council's delegation scheme, specifically CE15 which allows the Chief Executive to make urgent decisions that would ordinarily go to a committee. There was no requirement to carry out procurement exercises and direct awards were made due to the urgency of the situation under Regulation 32 (2) (c) of the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Decisions were taken in consultation with the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee through the Council's Strategic Command Group, which led the COVID19 response.

10. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 10.1 The decisions taken in relation to provision of food supported individuals and families experiencing difficulty accessing food, whether through poverty or other reasons.

11. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 The decisions taken in relation to provision of food supported individuals and families experiencing difficulty accessing food, including those who were vulnerable due to age or disability. Consideration was given to those with particular dietary needs due to race or religion and arrangements made to accommodate specific requirements.

12. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no staffing considerations associated with this report.

13. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 There are no asset management considerations associated with this report.

14. RECOMMENDATION

- 14.1 It is recommended that the Finance and Policy Committee note the information provided in this report.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 15.1 Further information regarding the provision of food during the COVID19 response was requested at the meeting of Finance and Policy Committee on 29 June 2020.

16. CONTACT OFFICER

Jill Harrison
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Sign Off:-

Chief Executive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Director of Finance and Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Chief Solicitor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 August 2020



Report of: Director of Finance and Policy

Subject: CORPORATE PROCUREMENT QUARTERLY
REPORT ON CONTRACTS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information only.

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 in respect of the Council's 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:

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

- 3.2 In addition to tender related information, details of exemptions granted to the Contract Procedure Rules are also reportable quarterly.

4. INFORMATION FOR REVIEW

4.1 Tender information

Appendix A details the required information for each procurement tender awarded since the last quarterly report.

4.2 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.

4.3 Commercial / Confidential information

Appendix C includes the commercial information in respect of the tenders received and any confidential information relating to Contract Procedure Rule exemptions or contract extensions.

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. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information only. There are no risk implications attached to this report.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 This report is for information only. There are no financial considerations attached to this report.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 This report is for information only. There are no legal considerations attached to this report.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 No consultation required. Report for information only.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 9.1 This report is for information only. There are no child and family poverty implications attached to this report.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 This report is for information only. There are no equality and diversity considerations attached to this report.

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

- 11.1 This report is for information only. There are no Section 17 considerations attached to this report.

12. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 This report is for information only. There are no staff considerations attached to this report.

13. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 This report is for information only. There are no asset management considerations attached to this report.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 That the Committee note and comment on the contents of the report,

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 The Committee is required to review the information supplied to ensure that monitoring in the award of contracts is carried out and evidenced.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 There are no background papers.

17. CONTACT OFFICER

- 17.1 Hayley Martin
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Sign Off:-

Chief Executive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Director of Policy and Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Chief Solicitor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Tender Information

Date of Contract Award	Contract Name and Reference Number	Description of Goods / Services being procured	Duration of Contract (optional extensions in brackets)	Department / Service area procuring the goods / services	Details of Companies invited including location	Details of Bids received	Basis of award decision if not lowest/highest price payable / receivable	Outcome of contract letting procedures	Previous Provider / Location
06 12 19	Supported Accommodation and Floating Support for Individuals who are Homeless or at Risk of Becoming Homeless LOT 1 – Supported Accommodation – 24/7 support to clients with mental health and/or drug/alcohol misuse issues LOT 2 – Floating Support – to provide support to	The aim of the following Services is to give Service Users who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, access to supported accommodation or support in order to stabilise their lives and gain independent living skills. In addition, the Service will provide stable, quality accommodation which enables tenants to sustain their own tenancy, access appropriate services, receive support and move on into permanent housing.	36 Months (24 Months)	C&A	Open Invitation – OJEU, HBC Website, Contracts Finder & ProContract.	<u>Lot 1</u> Home Group Limited, Newcastle <u>Lot 2</u> Cornerstone, Durham Home Group Limited, Newcastle The Cyrenians, Gateshead <u>Lot 3</u> No submissions received	80% Quality 20% Price	<u>Lot 1</u> Home Group Limited, Newcastle <u>Lot 2</u> Home Group Limited, Newcastle <u>Lot 3</u> No submissions received	<u>Lot 1</u> Home Group Limited, Newcastle <u>Lot 2</u> Home Group Limited, Newcastle <u>Lot 3</u> No supplier current provides service

	develop a service users capacity to live independently LOT 3 – Supported Accommodation – 24/7 support to rough sleepers, amputees, those at risk of death by misadventure and substance misuse related chronic ill health.								
20 02 20	7500Kg Refuse Compaction Vehicles	2 No. 7500kg Refuse Compaction Vehicles for Litter Bin Emptying	N/A	R&N	Invited 28 companies from the NEPO 224 HGV & Specialist Vehicle Procurement Framework – Lot 2 Vehicle Conversions up to 44 tonne	C P Davidson & Son, Lancashire Dennis Eagle Ltd, Warwickshire Farid Hillend Engineering Ltd. Fife Geesink Norba, Mid Glamorgan NTM-GB Limited, Worcestershire	50% Price 50% Quality	NTM-GB Limited, Worcestershire	N/A

02 03 20	Rehabilitation, Reablement and Transitional Care in a Care Home	Hartlepool Borough Council, in collaboration with the Stockton & Hartlepool CCG, seeks to commission a rehabilitation, reablement and transitional care service through the block purchase of 20 beds in a designated unit within a registered care home in Hartlepool. The service will be available to all adults over the age of 18 and be inclusive of older people with a dementia. It will target people who would otherwise face unnecessarily prolonged hospital stays, inappropriate hospital admission or long term residential care	36 Months	C&A	Open Invitation – OJEU, HBC Website, Contracts Finder & ProContract. Only 1 submission received	Marton Care Homes Limited East Yorkshire	30% Price 70% Quality	Marton Care Homes Limited, East Yorkshire	Four Seasons HealthCare (taken over by Marton Care Homes Limited)
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09 03 20	Masterplan for Hartlepool Town Centre & Investment Plan DN 459999	6 companies invited to bid to produce a Masterplan for Hartlepool Town Centre & an Investment Plan 4 submissions received	5 months	R&N	Arcadis LLP, London ARUP, Newcastle Cushman & Wakefield, Leeds Genecon, Leeds Jacobs, Stockton Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners, Newcastle	Arcadis LLP, London ARUP, Newcastle Cushman & Wakefield, Leeds Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners, Newcastle	30% Price 70% Quality	Arcadis LLP, London	N/A
20 03 20	Extended Activities, 11 week Play Scheme & Toy Loan Service for Families of Children with Disabilities and Additional Needs ('Short Break' Services) DN 465225	Service to provide families of disabled children a short break from their caring responsibilities	11 months (plus 1 x 12 month extension)	C & A	Open Invitation – HBC Website, Contracts Finder & ProContract. Only 1 submission received from Families First North East, Hartlepool	Families First North East, Hartlepool	100% Quality	Families First North East, Hartlepool	Families First North East, Hartlepool
14 04 20	Grayfields Pitch Refurbishment DN 470233	6 companies invited to price for the refurbishment of the existing artificial turf sports pitch. 5 submissions were received	12 weeks	R&N	Brambledown Landscape Services Ltd, Brandon, Durham Charles Lawrence Surfaces, Nottinghamshire Cleveland Land Services, Guisborough	Brambledown Landscape Services Ltd, Brandon, Durham Charles Lawrence Surfaces, Nottinghamshire Cleveland Land Services, Guisborough	100% Price & Passing Selection Questionnaire	Cleveland Land Services, Guisborough	N/A

					John Hellens Contracts Ltd, Tyne & Wear SIS Pitches Support In Sport Ltd, Cumbria Sports Maintenance Services Ltd, London	John Hellens Contracts Ltd, Tyne & Wear SIS Pitches Support In Sport Ltd, Cumbria			
22 05 20	Toro Mowers & Tractor Mount Flail Mower	4 No. Toro Mowers 1 No. Tractor Mount Flail Mower	N/A	R&N	Lloyd Limited	Lloyd Limited, Newcastle	100% Price	Lloyd Limited, Newcastle	Lloyd Limited, Newcastle
16 06 20	Roof Works at Springwell School, Hartlepool DN 479067	6 companies were invited to bid for these works. The Contract is for an insulated overlay waterproofing roof system to the Main Roof to Springwell School, Hartlepool. 5 submissions were received	6 weeks	R&N	Barclays Roofing Ltd, Stockton Dufell Roofing Co Ltd Darlington DVC Roofing Washington Group Tegula, East Boldon Hodgson Sayers Stanley O'Connor Roofing Hartlepool	Barclays Roofing Ltd, Stockton Dufell Roofing Co Ltd Darlington DVC Roofing Washington Hodgson Sayers Stanley O'Connor Roofing Hartlepool	100% Price & Passing Selection Questionnaire	O'Connor Roofing Hartlepool	N/A
29 06 20	High Tunstall College of Science Car Park Remodelling DN 479335	Companies on the Select List for HBCs Civil Engineering and Highways Works Framework were invited to submit a price for these works. 5 submissions were received	3 months	R&N	BAM Glasgow Esh Construction Ltd Bowburn Durham Hall Construction Services Ltd. Rushyford Durham	Esh Construction Ltd Bowburn Durham Hall Construction Services Ltd. Rushyford Durham	100% Price	Rainton Construction Ltd Durham	N/A

					Highway Construction Services Ltd Stockton Rainton Construction Ltd Durham Seymour Civil Engineering Contractors Ltd Hartlepool	Highway Construction Services Ltd Stockton Rainton Construction Ltd Durham Seymour Civil Engineering Contractors Ltd Hartlepool			
08 07 20	Supplies of Equipment for the A689 Wynyard Roundabout Signalisation Scheme DN 484102	3 Companies were invited to provide prices for various items including lighting columns, lanterns and re-wired feeder pillars etc. for the A689 Signalisation Scheme. 2 Submissions were received	2 months	R&N	Exterior Lighting Solutions (UK) Ltd Newcastle Marwood Electrical Company Ltd Kent Smith Bros (Caer Conan) Wholesalers Ltd	Exterior Lighting Solutions (UK) Ltd Newcastle Marwood Electrical Company Ltd Kent	100% Price and passing Selection Questionnaire	Exterior Lighting Solutions (UK) Ltd Newcastle	N/A

Procurements Exempted from Council Contract Procedure Rules**Exemption Information**

Dept.	Service Unit	Company Name	Company based at	Duration	Description	Approval
Children's & Joint Commissioning	Children's Commissioning	Protocol Education Limited	London	01.06.2020 – 30.11.2020	Provision of teachers with the appropriate skills and experience to tutor our most vulnerable children and young people, including those children who are in care for the Virtual School	Request Approved by Sally Robinson, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 06.05.2020
Adults & Community Based Services	Heritage and Countryside	Gray's Ecology	Saltburn	01.04.2020 - TBC	To provide the authority with ecological advice when required, when discharging it's planning function and carrying out works	Request Approved by Jill Harrison, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 01.06.2020
Chief Solicitor	Legal	Venn Group Ltd	London	08 06 2020 – 08 12 2020	Requirement for Expert Legal Advice in Planning Law	Approved by Chris Little, and Hayley Martin on 08.06.2020
R&N	Transport Infrastructure	Capita Business Ltd	Darlington	01.07.2020 – 01 07.2021.	Senior Planning Officer for complex applications including 'Garden Village' Proposal	Approved by Chris Little, Denise McGuckin and Hayley Martin on 08.06.2020

Extension Information

Dept.	Service Unit	Company Name	Company based at	Duration	Description	Approval
R&N	Building Design & Construction	Durham County Council Direct Services	Durham	01.04.20 – 31.03.22	Lift Maintenance & Call-out for 2 years	Request Approved by Denise McGuckin, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 20.02.2020
Children's & Joint Commissioning	Youth Justice Service	Alliance Psychological Services Limited (Mindful North East CIC)	Stockton	01.04.2020 – 31.03.2021	To continue to deliver an emotional wellbeing support to all parents involved with children's services.	Request Approved by Sally Robinson, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 09.03.2020
Children's & Joint Commissioning	Youth Justice Service	Alliance Psychological Services Ltd	Stockton	20.05.2020 – 19.05.2021	To continue to deliver evidence based psychological therapies to vulnerable children and young people and/or families who were at risk of, or who were involved in criminal activity (as victims and/or perpetrators).	Request Approved by Sally Robinson, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 17.03.2020
Children's & Joint Commissioning	Joint Commissioning	Addaction	London	01.06.2020 – 31.08.2020	To extend the Clinical Services of the drug and alcohol treatment system	Request Approved by Sally Robinson, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 09.04.2020
Children's & Joint Commissioning	Children's Commissioning	Changing Futures North East	Hartlepool	01.07.2020 – 30.06.2021	To continue the delivery of the mentoring service adapted in 2019 to incorporate signs of safety, offering a family based intervention model,	Request Approved by Sally Robinson, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 01.05.2020

					designed to support both parents and children due to COVID 19.	
Children's & Joint Commissioning	Children's Commissioning	Safe Families for Children	Newcastle	01.09.2020 – 31.08.2021	To continue to provide support and wraparound care to vulnerable families, in order to reduce the numbers of children becoming looked after.	Request Approved by Sally Robinson, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 06.05.2020
Children's & Joint Commissioning	Children's Commissioning	School Improvement Partners - Various Individual Consultants	Various	31.08.2020 – 01.09.2021	School Improvement Partners provide professional challenge and support to schools,	Request Approved by Sally Robinson, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 06.05.2020