

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Monday 13 September 2021

at 10.00 am

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

A limited number of members of the public will be able to attend the meeting with spaces being available on a first come, first served basis. Those wishing to attend the meeting should phone (01429) 523568 or (01429) 523019 by midday on Friday 10 September 2021 and name and address details will be taken for NHS Test and Trace purposes.

MEMBERS: FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Councillors Brash, Brown, Fleming, Harrison, Lindridge, Little, Moore, D Nicholson, Prince, Stokell and Young.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To receive the Minutes and Decision Record in respect of the meeting held on 12 July 2021 (*for information as previously circulated*).
- 3.2 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership held on 24 February 2021
- 3.3 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 1 March 2021

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

- 4.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022/23 to 2024/25 – *Director of Resources and Development*
- 4.2 Local Council Tax Support 2022/23 – *Director of Resources and Development*

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.

- 4.3 Youth Justice Strategic Plan – *Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 4.4 Draft Community Safety Plan 2021-24 – *Director of Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services*

5. KEY DECISIONS

- 5.1 COVID Recovery Support for Adult Social Care Providers – *Director of Adult and Community Based Services*
- 5.2 Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy – *Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 5.3 Development of Domestic Abuse Strategy and re-procurement of recommissioning of Domestic Abuse Service including new accommodation duties – *Director of Children’s and Joint Commissioning Services*

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

No items

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Corporate Procurement Quarterly Report on Contracts – *Chief Solicitor*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

For Information:

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

Monday 11 October, 2021 at 10.00 am
Monday 15 November, 2021 at 10.00 am
Monday 13 December, 2021 at 10.00 am
Monday 17 January, 2022 at 10.00 am
Monday 14 February, 2022 at 10.00 am
Monday 14 March, 2022 at 10.00 am



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

12 JULY 2021

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

Present:

Councillor Shane Moore (In the Chair)

Councillors: Jonathan Brash, Paddy Brown, Brenda Harrison, Jim Lindridge, Sue Little, David Nicholson, Amy Prince, Cameron Stokell and Mike Young.

Officers: Denise McGuckin, Managing Director
Neil Wilson, Assistant Chief Solicitor
James Magog, Assistant Director, Finance
Claire McLaren, Assistant Director, Corporate Services
Sally Robinson, Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
Craig Blundred, Director of Public Health
Tony Hanson, Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

14. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Tim Fleming.

15. Declarations of Interest

None.

16. Proposed Route to Award ICT Contract from 2023 *(Director of Resources and Development)*

Type of decision

Non Key Decision.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to request Finance and Policy Committee consider and approve the proposed procurement route for the Council's ICT contract 2023-2028.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Corporate Services reported that the Council's current ICT contract with Northgate will terminate in October 2023 and a new contract needed to be in place by that date to meet the Council's ICT needs.

The Assistant Director highlighted that the new contract would need to be responsive to the new ways of working that were now more common place across the authority following the Covid-19 pandemic. The report also highlighted the economic and technological benefits have been realised in the Borough by working in partnership with Northgate since the start of the ICT contract in 2013.

As the cost of a traditional procurement exercise or a competitive dialogue process (adopted for the current contract) were significant for both the Council and potential providers it was proposed that the Council follow a Direct Award process using the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) procurement framework for Technology Services. The process will match the Council's contract specification with a range of providers on the framework that are able meet our specification. This will be a transparent process and evaluated using a set criteria. The managed service provider who fits the specification (including cost of service) most closely will be awarded the contract under a Direct Award. The Council's criteria will be drawn up after consultation with all appropriate parties but will include the requirement to deliver against the Council's ICT requirements as well as continued economic investment in Hartlepool as key components.

It was also proposed that an independent assessment of the current Northgate/HBC contract is undertaken by the Society of Innovation, Technology and Modernisation (SOCITM) to ensure that HBC are achieving value for money from the existing contract. This review, coupled with the recommended procurement process, will ensure the Council achieves continuing value for money from the new contract.

A proposed timetable for undertaking the lengthy process leading towards the awarding and commencement of the new contract were outlined in the report.

Members supported the proposal and the Vice-Chair commented that the ability to live stream future Council meetings should be part of the specification. Members acknowledged the social benefit that the Northgate contract had brought to the town with the creation of new jobs and wished to see a significant similar social benefit within the specifications of the new contract. It was suggested that the potential of involving local businesses in parts of the contract through direct letting or sub-contracting should be considered.

Members also wished to see some greater future proofing of the systems utilised as the pandemic and working from home directive had highlighted some clear shortcomings in the current arrangements. Members also

expressed concern at the current telephony system and wished to see this significantly improved.

There was no dissent to the following decisions.

Decision

1. That the proposed procurement route to award the ICT contract for the period 2023-2028 as reported, be approved, through a Direct Award process using the Crown Commercial Services Framework for Technology Services.
2. That approval be given to a Value for Money review being undertaken by the Society of Innovation, Technology and Modernisation.

17. Corporate Procurement Quarterly Report on Contracts *(Chief Solicitor)*

Type of decision

For information only.

Purpose of report

To satisfy the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules with regard to the Finance and 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 and receiving and examining reports on any exemptions granted in respect of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Chief Solicitor reported on the Contracts awarded by the Council in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules for the period March to April 2021.

Members discussed and questioned several of the contracts listed in the report which were responded to, where possible, by officers. It was noted by Members that many of the contracts listed had been awarded to companies/businesses outside Hartlepool and commented that more should be done to do encourage and assist local companies in tendering for council business wherever possible. It was suggested that contract procedure rules should be reviewed to make the process easier for local businesses to bid for contracts. It was highlighted that Manchester had put greater focus on the benefits of social value and procuring local businesses and were piloting a 30% social value target.

The Chair supported the comments but did highlight the significant difference in scale between Hartlepool and Manchester though considered

that more business should be kept within the Tees Valley and this was reflected in the report with 75% of the value of the contracts reported being awarded to businesses within the Tees Valley. The Managing Director also stated that while some contracts appeared to have been awarded to companies outside the North East, they were delivered in Hartlepool.

The Managing Director stated that the Council had undertaken workshops with local businesses in the past and would look to holding such events again once the Covid restrictions permitted. The Managing Director also undertook to look at ways the information in future reports could be presented to reflect where contracts were being delivered locally or involved local sub-contractors.

Decision

That the report be noted.

18. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None.

The Chair highlighted that, as Members had been informed prior to the meeting, the listed confidential report “Approval for Compulsory Redundancy” had been formally withdrawn from the agenda.

The meeting concluded at 10.30 am.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 19 JULY 2021

SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

24 February 2021

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

Present:

Responsible Authority Members:

Councillor: Councillor Shane Moore (In the Chair)
Councillor John Tennant
Tony Hanson, Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
Sylvia Pinkney, Assistant Director, Regulatory Services
Karen Hawkins, NHS Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees and Darlington CCG

Other Members:

Craig Blundred, Deputy Director of Public Health
Sally Robinson, Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

Also Present:

Councillor Tony Richardson, Hartlepool Borough Council

John Lovatt was in attendance as substitute for Jill Harrison, Hartlepool Borough Council, Mark Haworth as substitute for Sharon Cooney, Cleveland Police, Simon Smart as substitute for Lisa Oldroyd, Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland and Darren Lane as substitute for Nick Jones, Cleveland Fire Authority

Officers: Phil Hepburn, Community Safety Operations Manager
Rachel Parker, Community Safety Team Leader
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

28. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Jill Harrison, Director of Adult and Community Based Services, Hartlepool Borough Council, Superintendent Sharon Cooney, Cleveland Police, Peter Graham, Chair of Youth Offending Board, Lisa Oldroyd, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland and Nick Jones, Cleveland Fire Authority.

29. Declarations of Interest

None.

30. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2021

Confirmed.

31. Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Serious Violence Strategy 2020-21 (Serious Violence Lead, OPCC)

Purpose of report

To brief Members on the Draft Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Serious Violence Strategy 202/21 (Appendix 1 refers)

Issue(s) for consideration

A representative from the OPCC, who was in attendance at the meeting, presented the report which provided background information to the launch of the Serious Violence Strategy in 2018. Feedback/input from the Partnership was sought in relation to the draft OPCC Serious Violence Strategy, a copy of which was appended to the report which identified key strands listed in the Government's Strategy including early intervention and prevention, supporting communities and local partnerships, tackling county lines and misuse of drugs and effective law enforcement. Partnership Members were referred to statistical data, as set out in the draft strategy in terms of the local picture as a comparator with the national picture.

It was intended to instigate bi-monthly violence reduction partnership meetings, details of which were provided as well as include analysis information in terms of serious and violence crime in strategic assessments.

In the discussion that followed, the Partnership commented on issues arising from the report. Clarification was provided in response to queries raised in relation to resources and priorities of PCC's around tackling serious violence issues as well as reporting/recording of crime arrangements which would include the use of secure digital platforms. The Chair requested that Partnership Members feedback further comments direct to Simon Smart at the OPCC following the meeting.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted and Partnership Members provide feedback/comments on the draft (OPCC) Serious Violence Strategy 2020-21 to the OPCC following the meeting.

32. Offer of Funding from Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group *(Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services)*

Purpose of report

To seek agreement from Partners on the proposed use of a one-off grant contribution made available to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership from the Tees Valley CCG.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided the background to the proposals to utilise a one-off grant funding offer of up to £5,000 from the CCG to develop and deliver a project to provide “Grab Bags” for victims of domestic abuse. The concept was to provide anyone who had been forced to flee an abusive situation with basic essentials when they arrived at a refuge or other safe accommodation. Each “Grab Bag” would cost an estimated £85 to £95 and would include toiletries, underwear, pyjamas and a pay as you go mobile phone with £10 credit.

As Hartlepool’s provider of specialist domestic abuse services, it was proposed that funding for this initiative be forwarded to Harbour to co-ordinate and distribute as necessary.

The Partnership welcomed the proposals given that domestic violence remained one of the three key priorities for 2021 and would contribute towards delivery of the Partnership’s current priorities. The Director took the opportunity to thank the CCG for this contribution.

The following recommendation was agreed with no dissent.

Decision

That the proposals to utilise the funding to provide “Grab Bags” as set out above be agreed.

33. Hartlepool Community Safety Team - Neighbourhood Policing *(Chief Inspector Pete Graham, Cleveland Police)*

Purpose of report

To provide an update on Neighbourhood Policing to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership for information purposes.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Partnership was provided with an update in relation to the positive contributions of the Neighbourhood Policing Team in terms of the work of the Community Safety Team. Inspector Mark Haworth, who was in attendance at the meeting on behalf of Chief Inspector Peter Graham was pleased to report proposals to increase Neighbourhood Police Officers, details of which were provided following the decision of the Chief Constable to re-establish Neighbourhood Policing and to make Neighbourhood Policing a core function.

In the discussion that followed Members welcomed the return of Neighbourhood Policing and commented on the benefits as a result. In response to issues raised arising from the report, the Police representative provided clarification regarding future priorities to help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the town and help reinvigorate community engagement which included plans to provide additional support to victims, targeted intervention and engagement with schools and youth centres as well as details around how resources would be allocated by ward.

Decision

That the contents of the report and comments of Members be noted and a further update report be received once Neighbourhood Police Officers were in post.

34. Operation Grantham – Update *(Assistant Director, Regulatory Services)***Purpose of report**

To provide an update on Operation Grantham for information purposes. .

Issue(s) for consideration

It was reported that Operation Grantham began on 4 November 2019 and it was designed to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and drugs misuse that was occurring from a large and ever increasing number of aggressive people who were begging daily around the town centre. Involving a large number of partners, the operation had three strands, details of which were set out in the report. Before court papers could be served, the Covid 19 outbreak commenced and courts closed, the implications of which were provided as detailed in the report.

At the time of writing the report a number of the 11 individuals who had been served with Community Protection Notices and were scheduled to be taken to Court were still begging. Begging in some locations was continuing and the Council's Enforcement Officers, police and PCSO's were moving beggars on. However, this was having little impact as they simply moved to another location. Details of the options available were outlined in the report which included beginning the Operation Grantham process again, move beggars on, or alternatively, it was possible to criminalise begging through the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

In the discussion that followed some concerns were raised in relation to continuing complaints received in relation to car parks around Middleton Grange Shopping Centre where beggars were sitting close to car parking payment machines impacting on access and resulting in individuals feeling unsafe. Comments were raised regarding the misconception that all beggars were homeless and the need to address, via a partnership approach, the underlying issues contributing to begging such as drug and alcohol misuse were highlighted.

In concluding the debate the Chair took the opportunity to thank everyone who had been involved in the operation.

Decision

That the contents of the report and comments of Members be noted.

35. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The Chair advised that this was the last meeting of the current municipal year and thanked all partners for their input and contributions.

The meeting concluded at 11.00 am.

CHAIR

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

1 March 2021

The meeting commenced at 11.00 a.m. and was an online remote meeting in compliance with the Council Procedure Rules Relating to the holding of Remote Meetings and the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Present:

Councillor Moore, Leader of Council (In the Chair)

Prescribed Members:

Elected Members, Hartlepool Borough Council – Councillors Buchan, Thomas and Ward

Representatives of NHS Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group

– Dr Nick Timlin and Karen Hawkins (as substitute for David Gallagher)

Director of Public Health, Hartlepool Borough Council – Craig Blundred

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

Other Members:

Managing Director, Hartlepool Borough Council – Denise McGuckin

Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services, Hartlepool Borough Council – Tony Hanson

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

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 – Sandra Britton (as substitute for Tracy Woodall)

Representative of GP Federation – Fiona Adamson

Representative of Headteachers – Sonya Black

Also in attendance:-

Elected Members, Hartlepool Borough Council – Councillors Brenda Harrison and Tony Richardson

Chair Hartlepool Mental Health Forum – Zoe Sherry
Representative of Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust – Sharon Pickering
Representative of Healthwatch – Christopher Akers-Belcher.

Officers: Dean Langstaff, Public Health Intelligence Analyst
Joan Stevens, Statutory Scrutiny Manager
Amanda Whitaker, Democratic Services Team

26. Apologies for Absence

Representative of Cleveland Police – Chief Inspector Peter Graham
Representatives of NHS Tees Valley - David Gallagher
Representative of Hartlepool Voluntary and Community Sector – Tracy Woodall

27. Declarations of interest by Members

Declarations of interest were declared as follows:-

Councillor Thomas – employee of Healthwatch Hartlepool.
Councillor Ward – employee of Alice House Hospice.

28. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2020 were confirmed

The minutes of the meeting of the Outbreak Control Engagement Working Group held on 10 November 2020 and 11 December 2020 were received.

29. Face the Public Event 2021 *(Director of Public Health)*

The report set out initial proposals for the Board's Face the Public Event in 2021 as required by Hartlepool Borough Council's Constitution. Whilst the response to the pandemic is still ongoing and restrictions remain in place, the Board was asked to approve initial proposals for a Face the Public Event. It was proposed that the Event be held in September 2021 and be conducted remotely with the potential to incorporate socially distanced activities (should the Covid position change).

In terms of the proposed structure / purpose of the event, the re-examination of the JHWS priorities, undertaken in 2019, had resulted in approval by the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 9th March 2020 of the following priority areas:-

- i) Impact of violence (Inc. domestic violence) and drugs and alcohol;
- ii) Maintenance of a universal offer for the whole population; and

- iii) Development of a targeted 'place based' approach, widening the work being undertaken by the Council's Children's Services Department around 85 streets in the Victoria Ward.

Progression of the identified priorities, and development of the 'place based' approach, had been intended for 2020/21, however, this has been interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Face the Public Event provided an opportunity to restart the process for the implementation of the priorities, whilst also fulfilling the requirements of the Constitution.

During the debate following presentation of the report, Board Members expressed support for the proposals. It was highlighted that consideration needed to be given also to the long term effects of Covid-19 with particular reference to the long term mental health implications for individuals and communities. It was proposed that the Mental Health Forum would be appropriate to consider the issues highlighted and for the Forum to provide regular updates to meetings of this Board.

Decision

The Board approved:

- i) Initial arrangements for the 2021 Face the Public Event, as outlined in the report.
- ii) Delegation of approval of finalised arrangements for the event to the Director of Public Health in conjunction with the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

30. Covid-19 Updates

- (i) Director of Public Health – *Presentation*

The Director of Public Health provided an updated presentation on the ongoing coronavirus position in Hartlepool. The presentation focussed on the following:-

- Hartlepool and UK Covid 19 case rates per 100,000 population
- Weekly Covid cases as a comparator with the England average
- Hartlepool and England Covid 19 related death rates per 100,000 population
- Geographical locations of Covid cases in Hartlepool

In the discussion that followed, the Director of Public Health responded to issues raised arising from the presentation. Concerns were expressed regarding anti-vaccine stickers which had appeared in the town which the Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services undertook to continue to remove when reports were received. It was considered also that social media should continue to highlight the benefits of the vaccine.

(ii) GP Federation – *Verbal Update*

The Board received an update by Fiona Adamson which detailed the following that were being focused on:-

- Designing and running new services:
- Ensuring existing services are fit for purpose:
- Pausing and reintroducing services:
- Supporting Primary Care Networks

The update addressed also the successes and the challenges.

Following the update appreciation was expressed for the support and collaborative work which had been undertaken by the Federation. It was recognised that support for residents would continue to be required and it was agreed to circulate updates to Board Members in due course. Board Members were further assured by the Director of Adult and Community Based Services that the support hub model would continue to operate and the Department would continue to work with social prescribers.

(iii) NHS Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group

Karen Hawkins highlighted the salient issues included in a report which had been circulated including some key messages as the Clinical Commissioning Group reflected on actions and learning during Phases 1 and 2 of the Covid-19 response. Changes to governance arrangements were highlighted to ensure the CCG was able to adapt and respond appropriately and effectively. New ways of working within primary care had been detailed. Key priorities had been identified as follows:-

- Continuing to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic
- Progressing the Covid-19 vaccination programme
- Maximising capacity in all settings to treat non-covid 19 patients
- Responding to other emergency demand and managing winter pressures
- Supporting the health and wellbeing of workforce

Board members expressed their appreciation with regard to the progress of the vaccination programme and requested that their appreciation be conveyed to all those involved in the programme. During the debate, the Board recognised issues associated with the programme in terms of some anxieties by residents and reassurances were provided from a number of Board members.

(iv) North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

Deepak Dwarakanath highlighted the salient issues included in a report which had been circulated. Key messages included the multiple challenges which the Trust had dealt with during the current Covid-19 pandemic, some of which had brought with them many challenges and clinical and operational unknowns. The

report provided an overview of the impact of Covid on resources, the clinical and operational challenges, the impact on staff health and wellbeing, however also outlining the innovative practices implemented to both absorb the emergency pressures and recover business as usual.

Board Members joined the Chair in expressing their appreciation to the Trust. The Trust representative responded to a number of questions arising from the report including the reintroduction of elective surgery, support for long covid patients and also support for Trust staff who had experienced the most pressured time in their careers.

Decision

The updates were noted.

31. Ongoing Consultations

(i) 'Big Conversation' - Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust – Presentation

The Board received a presentation by Sharon Pickering on the review of the Trust's Strategic Framework and provided a summary of the 'Big Conversation' journey to date. It was noted that the Trust was confident that a representative spread of colleagues, service users, carers and families had 'joined the conversation'. A consensus had been reached on many subjects and analysis had revealed seven core narratives had been identified which were detailed in the presentation.

The following 5 key areas had been agreed to focus on and work had started on the milestones for each of the areas:

- Co creation at core
- Having a Clear Clinical Approach
- Being a Great Place to Work
- Playing a leading role in systems
- Having an Empowering Infrastructure

Following the presentation, it was confirmed that progress would be reported to the Mental Health Forum. It was agreed that any additional comments/feedback from Board Members should be communicated directly to Dominic Gardner or Sharon Pickering with contact details forwarded to Members.

(ii) ICS proposals - NHS Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group

A report had been circulated to update Board members in relation to the Integrated Care System Consultation and CCG approach. The Board was advised that a corporate CCG response had been submitted by the deadline of 8 January 2021. A White Paper and Bill had subsequently been published.

The Board noted that David Gallagher had undertaken to provide update reports to the Board.

Following presentation of the report, Karen Hawkins responded to concerns expressed by the Chair. Assurances were given in relation to local autonomy. In relation to greater engagement in the future, it was noted that David Gallagher would be requested to present details of future changes to the Board.

Meeting concluded at 1.20 p.m.

CHAIR

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13th September 2021



Report of: Director of Resources and Development

Subject: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS)
2022/23 TO 2024/25

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Budget and Policy Framework.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

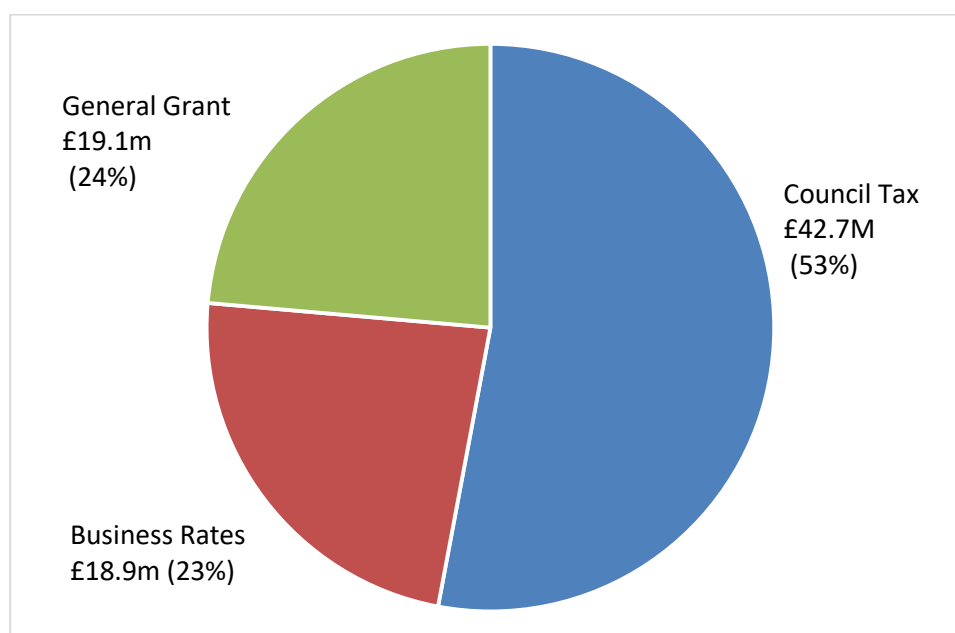
- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council's financial position and enable Members to approve a strategic direction for the MTFS, including the 2022/23 recommended Council Tax level to be referred to Council.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 To provide context to the financial challenges facing the Council over the period 2022/23 to 2024/25 it is important to consider where we are starting from and the significant changes that have occurred. The key issues are:
- Funding changes;
 - Previous budget cuts;
 - Recurring Budget pressures;
 - Recovery from Covid pandemic;
 - Strategy adopted for setting 2021/22 budget.
- 3.2 Further details on these issues are set out in **Appendix A**, which includes the following key issues:
- 2021/22 core grant **£31.7m (63%)** less than 2013/14
 - £22m less after new Adult Social Care grants
 - 2021/22 Council Tax income **£11.9m** more than 2013/14 , includes:
 - £4.3m Council Tax base growth; and
 - £3.8m Adult Social Care precept
 - Significant services cuts – including reduction of 500 jobs (20% reduction)

- Increased proportion of recurring resources coming from Council Tax, which is the funding the Council has most control over. This means increasing this funding from growing the Tax Base and increasing Council Tax up to national Referendum Limits is critical to securing recurring resources and the sustainability of services.

2021/22 Recurring Resources



3.3 Whilst, an understanding of the starting position is helpful, the reality of the situation is these issues are not going to change. Therefore, it is essential that a robust plan is developed to address the budget deficits facing the Council.

3.4 In broad terms the key issues facing the Council are highlighted below:

- The budget for 2021/22 was set on the basis of freezing Council Tax and the significant use of one off resources. It was recognised this is not sustainable and deferred a significant budget deficit 2022/23. The three year budget deficit currently stands at **£11.435m**.
- Members understand Council Tax is a major source of funding and maximising increases in line with national referendum limits protects services. Not increasing Council Tax will lead to more difficult decisions on service reductions and this will need to be explained to the public. There are no easy funding options that can mitigate this without adversely impacting on the Council's financial resilience.
- There remains considerable uncertainty over the level of future government funding and the level of economic uncertainty as the country continues its recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

- This report commences the 2022/23 planning cycle and the Council has recognised that it needs to take a longer-term approach to filling the gap over a number of years. This will require establishing a formal Transformation Programme that identifies measures to address the budget deficit and manages achievement of the programme.
- Reserves are low in comparison to other councils and only a limited amount is available to support the budget and achieve a sustainable financial position. The significant number of future financial challenges reinforces the need to retain reserves at an adequate level.

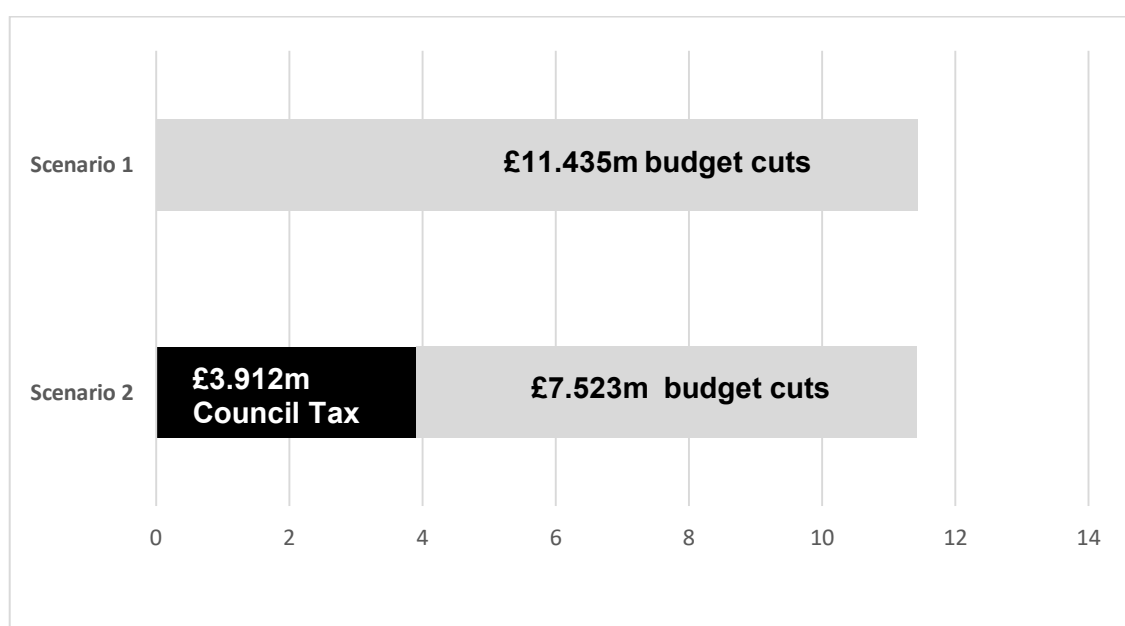
3.5 Against this background the financial sustainability of the Council and ability to survive as a unitary authority is critically dependant on developing a robust multi-year Transformation plan.

3.6 To enable a sustainable plan to be developed Members need to consider the implications of the following scenarios and make a recommendation to Council:

- **Scenario 1** – Do not increase Council Tax in line with Government referendum limits and address all the deficit by making cuts to services.
- **Scenario 2** – increase Council Tax in line with Government referendum limits and reduce the scale of cuts to services.

3.7 As highlighted below, **Scenario 2** is recommended as this secures recurring Council Tax income which would reduce the deficit from **£11.435m** to **£7.523m**.

Budget Deficit 2022/23 to 2024/25



- 3.8 Both scenarios are extremely challenging and require significant transformation and cuts to service. A strategy based on increasing Council Tax provides a degree of protection for services. Communicating this message to the public is a key issue and a communications plan will be developed.
- 3.9 Once a Council Tax decision is made for 2022/23 there will be greater certainty over the size of the budget gap. This will then enable a Transformation and Savings Plan to be developed and reported to this Committee.
- 3.10 The gross deficit is front loaded to 2022/23 and the total scenario 1 figure includes a deficit of £7.267m in 2022/23 arising from the factors highlighted in the table below.

Summary gross deficit of £11.435m – scenario 1

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
2% Inflation forecast and forecast National Living Wage increase	2.497	2.644	2.628	7.769
Recurring impact of 21/22 unfunded pay offer	0.875	0	0	0.875
Deficit deferred from 21/22 - use of Budget Support Fund (includes £0.854m permanent loss of recurring 2021/22 Council Tax increase 1.9%)	4.047	0	0	4.047
Deficit deferred from 21/22 - use of non-recurring grant	0.882	0	0	0.882
Deficit deferred from 21/22 - use of other Reserves	0.253	0	0	0.253
Less forecast increase in Business Rates	(0.573)	0	0	(0.573)
Less forecast Council Tax base growth	(0.714)	(0.547)	(0.557)	(1.818)
Deficit	7.267	2.097	2.071	11.435

- 3.11 The above table highlights that just to meet moderate inflation pressures of 2% (£2.497m in 2022/23) the Council faces annual recurring deficits. In the absence of increased Government funding this means continued reliance on Council tax increases, housing growth and service cuts. To provide context to this figure each 1% Council Tax increase only raises around £0.430m.

4. FINANCIAL RESILIENCE BENCHMARKING

- 4.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Financial Resilience Index is a tool to assist authorities assess financial risk. The index is made up of a set of indicators which use publicly available data and compare similar authorities across a range of factors. There is no single overall indicator of financial risk, so the index instead highlights areas where additional scrutiny may be needed in order to provide additional assurance.
- 4.2 The index consists of 11 factors detailed in **Appendix B**. Two of these factors are non financial indicators which record corporate / service performance. If these areas are assessed as weak this will adversely impact on financial resilience as additional spending would be required to achieve necessary improvements:

- External Auditors Value for Money (VfM) assessment

This is prepared annually and the most recent assessments were issued for 2019/20. The Council has always achieved an ‘unqualified’ VfM assessment – which is a positive result. New arrangements are being introduced for 2020/21 and it is anticipated external auditors will increasingly report on concerns regarding ongoing financial sustainability. Further details will be reported when details of the new approach are known.

- Ofsted Children’s social care assessment

This indicator is included as authorities assessed as ‘requiring improvement’ or ‘inadequate’ will have to increase spending to address these issues and improve services.

Hartlepool has consistently been assessed as ‘good’. Only three other North East councils are currently assessed as ‘good’ and Sunderland has recently moved from inadequate to outstanding. The other seven North East councils have either been assessed as ‘requires improvement’ or ‘inadequate’.

- 4.3 A comparison of key financial indicators is provided in **Appendix B**, which compares Hartlepool with the other eleven North East Councils and the CIPFA statistical neighbours (i.e. authorities similar to Hartlepool in terms of deprivation etc.) and highlights the following key issues:

Summary of the Financial Resilience index analysis

- Lower than average proportion of the budget funded from Council Tax
 - Hartlepool 48.6% - North East average 52.8%
- Continued reliance on Government grant funding
 - Risk if funding cuts recommence;
- The high proportion of the budget spent on Adult and Children’s Social Care – costs / services are difficult to reduce:
 - Hartlepool 67.9% - Other councils average 67.7%
- The finite nature of reserves.
 - Unallocated Reserves
 - Hartlepool 5.2% - Same as North East average
 - Earmarked
 - Hartlepool 23.7% - Other councils average 28%

5. COUNCIL TAX OVERVIEW

- 5.1 Council Tax raises significant income for councils, although the percentage of net expenditure raised by individual councils varies significantly. This is basically the result of differences in property values. Areas which raise a low percentage of resources from Council Tax have a higher proportion of properties in the lowest two Council Tax Bands, and fewer properties in band D and above. This is the opposite position in areas which raise a high percentage of resources from Council Tax.

Percentage of properties in Bands A and B

- Hartlepool 70%
- National Average 43%

- 5.2 There are four fundamental problems with the Council Tax system:

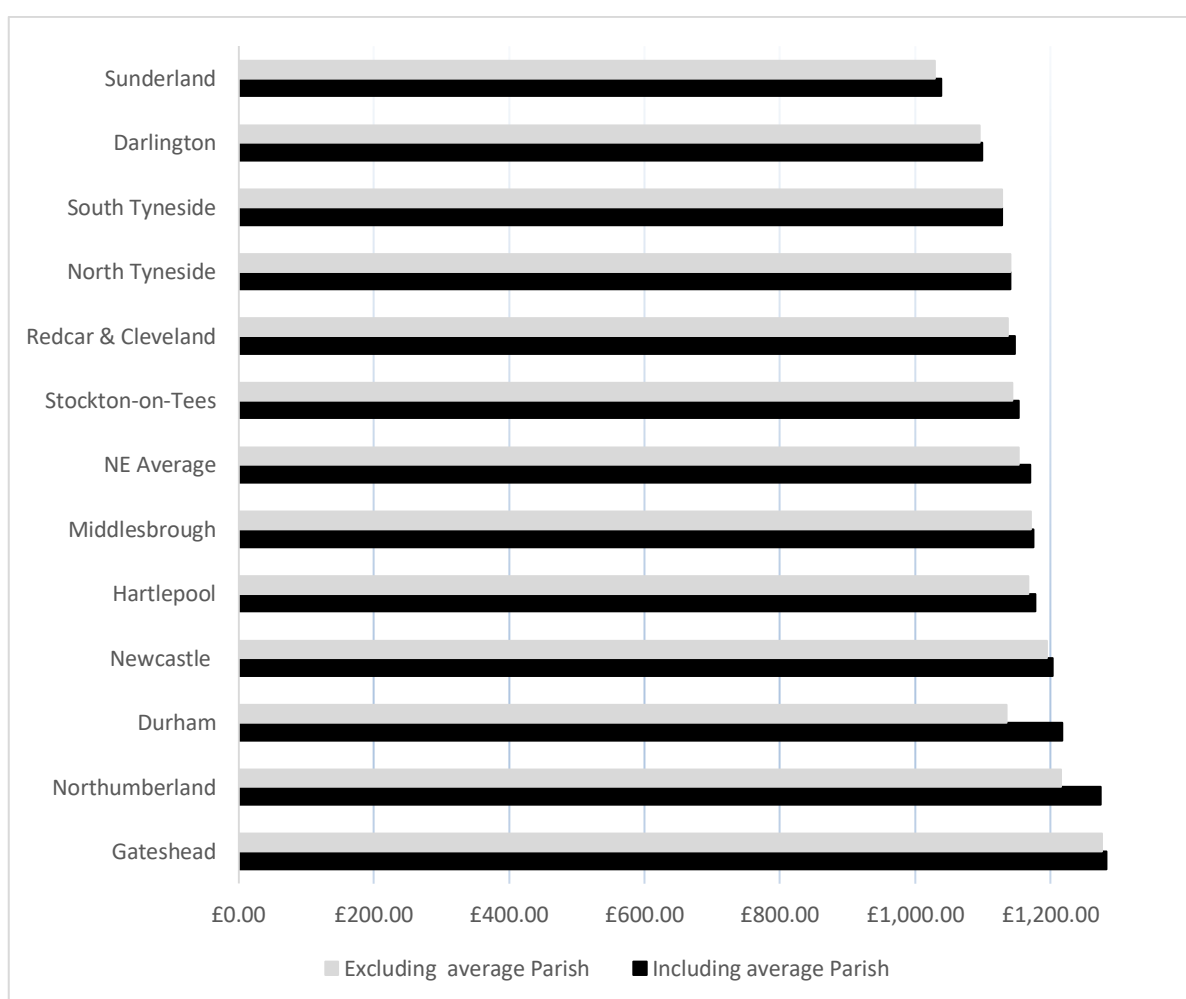
- Based on 1991 property values – which are out of date
- Only 8 Council Tax Bands – this links to the first point as the bandings do not adequately reflect changes in house values.
 - Band H property (the highest band) value is **eight times** the valuation of a Band A property (the lowest band).
 - Council Tax paid on a Band H property is **only three times** the amount paid by a Band A property.
- Government Council Tax policy – since 2015/16 Government Council Tax policy has shifted the burden for funding local services from Government grant on to Council Tax.
- Governance arrangements – local Government structures vary across England and this makes Council Tax comparisons more difficult between areas. From a households perspective the key comparator is the Council Tax bill they receive and not which tier of local government provides the service.

5.3 2021/22 Council Tax levels (excluding Police and Fire precepts)

- Government Referendum Limit **5%**
 - includes 3% Adult Social Care precept, for either 2021/22 or 2022/23
- National average increase 4.4%.

- Average increase for North East councils 4.2%
- Eleven North East councils implemented some element of the Adult Social Care precept in 2021/22 – including six authorities which implemented the full 3% Social Care precept.
- Hartlepool Band A - £1,167
- North East councils Band A ranges from £1,039 to £1,283

2021/22 Council Tax (excluding Police and Fire precepts)
– Band A property (53% Hartlepool properties)



7 North East council have a separate Garden Waste charge - between £32 and £43

5.4 Further information in relation to Council Tax is provided in **Appendix C**.

6. THE CHANCELLOR MARCH 2021 BUDGET

6.1 The key issues detailed in the March 2021 Budget are as follows:

- **Spending cuts** - The Chancellor's budget included a £4 billion per year cut in public sector spending from 2022/23 and indicated "this is a purely mechanical" change as inflation was lower than forecast. Since March there has been an increase in inflation and it has not yet peaked. As the NHS, schools and the Ministry of Defence have protected budgets, this new cut will fall on unprotected services and the impact on councils will not be known until later in the year.
- **National Tax income** – The Chancellor is forecasting an increase in Income Tax arising from a freeze in personal allowance from April 2022 to April 2026. Additionally there is a forecast Corporation Tax increase from 19% to 25% from April 2023.
- **Council Tax** – The Chancellor is forecasting increasing Council Tax income, which assumes Tax Base growth returns to the pre-Covid level and 2% national core Council Tax Referendum limits from 2022/23 – actual limits will be determined annually.

Chancellor's Tax Forecasts 2021/22 to 2025/26

	21/22 £'billion	Percentage	Forecast increase 21/22 to 25/26	
			£'billion	Percentage
Income Tax	198.2	27.1%	50.0	25.2%
National Insurance	146.8	20.0%	23.4	15.9%
Other Taxes	154.7	21.1%	29.8	19.3%
VAT	127.9	17.5%	31.3	24.5%
Corporation Tax	40.3	5.5%	44.6	110.7%
Business Rates	23.8	3.3%	11.8	49.6%
Council Tax	39.9	5.5%	5.7	14.3%
Total	731.6	100.0%	196.6	26.9%

Council Tax most visible of all Taxes – but raises only 5.5% of all Tax paid

- 6.2 The Chancellor's budget clearly set out the challenges facing the public sector and as outlined later in the report the best councils can hope for is a cash freeze in funding – which may be optimistic.
- 6.3 Councils will continue to face an uncertain financial position until four key issues are addressed by Government:
- The size of the funding pot for councils and the distribution basis – will Fair Funding be implemented?
 - Introduction of a sustainable funding system for Adult Social Care;
 - Recognition of Children's Social Care pressures and provision of funding;
 - Government Council Tax Referendum limits 2022/23 to 2024/25.

7. 2022/23 to 2024/25 BUDGET

- 7.1 The previous MTFS report advised Members that after reflecting the 2021/22 budget decisions and forecast inflation the Council faces a significant 2022/23 budget deficit – which includes

- **£4.047m** deferred from 2021/22 by using reserves;
- **2%** annual provision for inflation and national pay awards; and
- **£0.875m** recurring impact of the national April 2021 pay offer of 1.75% made in July 2021. The Unions have not accepted this offer and any further increase would increase the budget deficit.

The previous MTFS report advised Members that the Chancellor announced a pay 'pause' for public sector workers, with the exception of the NHS – initially offered 1%. On this basis no provision was made in the 2021/22 budget for a national pay award.

The pay offer compares to a revised offer of 3% for the NHS and the Government's continued stance of a pay pause for police and teachers.

The previous MTFS report highlighted the potential pay risk, which has now materialised. In 2021/22 a strategy will need to be developed to fund the pay award from either in-year managed budget underspends, or if these cannot be achieved from one off resources. The recurring impact increases the 2022/23 budget deficit.

- 7.2 The budget forecasts have been rolled forward to 2024/25 and reflect the planning assumptions and risk assessment detailed in **Appendix D**. These issues will be kept under review.

7.3 The forecast budget deficits for the next three years are summarised below:

2022/23 to 2024/25 Forecast Deficits

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total 22/23 to 24/25 £'m
	£'m	£'m	£'m	
Cost of services	107.460	110.104	112.732	
Less previous years' deficit (assumes budget is balanced each year)	n/a	(7.981)	(10.625)	
<u>Less Forecast Resources:</u>				
- Council Tax income (before forecast Tax base growth and Council Tax increases)	(42.736)	(42.736)	(42.736)	
- Business Rates	(18.909)	(18.909)	(18.909)	
- General Government Grant	(19.056)	(19.056)	(19.056)	
- Specific Government Grants	(18.778)	(18.778)	(18.778)	
Deficit <u>BEFORE</u> Council Tax increase and forecast Tax Base Growth	7.981	2.644	2.628	13.253

7.4 There are two critical factors in reducing the budget deficit:

- Achieving the forecast Tax base increase – i.e. housebuilding and reduction in LCTS claimants. Over three years this provides forecast recurring resources of **£1.818m**;
- Implementing annual Council Tax increases of 1.9%, plus in 2022/23 implementing the deferred 3% Adult Social Care precept. Over three years these proposals potentially provide forecast recurring resources of **£3.912m**.

7.5 On the basis of these planning assumptions the forecast budget deficit can be reduced significantly from **£13.253m** to **£7.523m**, as summarised below.

2022/23 to 2024/25 Forecast Deficits net of forecast housing growth
and forecast Council Tax increases

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total 22/23 to 24/25
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Deficit <u>BEFORE</u> Council Tax increase and forecast Tax Base Growth	7.981	2.644	2.628	13.253
Less Forecast Tax Base Increase	(0.714)	(0.547)	(0.557)	(1.818)
Deficit <u>AFTER</u> Council Tax forecast Tax Base Growth	7.267	2.097	2.071	11.435
Less 3% Deferred 2021/22 Adult Social Care precept	(1.259)	0.000	0.000	(1.259)
Less 1.9% Core Annual Council Tax increase	(0.854)	(0.885)	(0.914)	(2.653)
Deficit <u>AFTER</u> Council Tax increase and forecast Tax Base Growth	5.154	1.212	1.157	7.523

- 7.6 As highlighted in the above table the majority of the deficit is in 2022/23. Addressing this amount will be challenging, particularly during the Covid recovery period.
- 7.7 To help manage this position Reserves were reviewed as part of the 2021/22 budget and a Budget Support Fund established of **£7.691m**. This one off funding is available to support the implementation of a Transformation Strategy and the budget while this plan is implemented.
- 7.8 At this stage it is recommended that the Budget Support Fund reserve is split on a 50:50 basis between:
- Direct support of the budget to phase savings evenly over three years;
 - To meet one off investment needed to achieve service transformation recurring savings and to meet redundancy / retirement costs of reducing the workforce.
- 7.9 Using reserves to balance the budget is not sustainable. However, using reserve to phase cuts over three years provides a more manageable position – **provided the Council commits to a robust plan to balance the budget and fully removes reliance on the use of reserves.**
- 7.10 This plan is based on using the highest level of the Budget Support Fund in 2022/23, then reducing this temporary support in 2023/24 and eliminating it in 2024/25.
- 7.11 On this basis the net deficit of **£7.523m** could be phased more evenly as summarised below:

Impact of using Budget Support Fund to re-phase
2022/23 to 2024/25 Forecast Deficits

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total 22/23 to 24/25
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Deficit <u>AFTER</u> Council Tax increase and forecast Tax Base Growth	5.154	1.212	1.157	7.523
Deficit deferred from 22/23 to 23/24 by using Reserves to phase deficit	(2.500)	2.500	0.000	0.000
Deficit deferred from 23/24 to 24/25 by using Reserves	0.000	(1.300)	1.300	0.000
Revised Deficit <u>AFTER</u> Council Tax increase and forecast Tax Base Growth and use of reserves	2.654	2.412	2.457	7.523

- 7.12 As summarised below the proposed use of the Budget Support Fund will fully commit these resources, which underlines the finite nature of this funding and highlights the need to develop a sustainable savings plan before this money runs out.

Planned use of Budget Support Fund 2022/23 to 2024/25

	2022/23 £'m	2023/24 £'m	2024/25 £'m	Total £'m
Opening Balance 1st April	7.691	3.734	1.228	7.691
Less allocated to Support Budget	(2.500)	(1.300)		(3.800)
Less allocated to fund service transformation and redundancy / pension strain costs arising from budget cuts	(1.457)	(1.206)	(1.228)	(3.891)
Balance 31st March	3.734	1.228	0	0

8. IMPACT OF LOWER COUNCIL TAX INCREASES 2022/23 TO 2024/25

- 8.1 The proposals detailed in the previous section are based on implementing the 2021/22 deferred 3% Adult Social Care precept in 2022/23 and the assumption the Government will set annual core Council Tax limits of 2%. Without this additional income the budget deficit increases from **£7.523m** to **£11.435m**.
- 8.2 As Reserves are finite the permanent reduction in recurring Council Tax income would mean a significant increase in the cuts required, **particularly in 2022/23**, as highlighted in the following table:

2022/23 to 2024/25 Deficits WITH and WITHOUT

Adult Social Care precept and Council Tax increases

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total 22/23 to 24/25 £'m
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Deficit <u>AFTER</u> Council Tax increase and forecast Tax Base Growth but no Adult Social Care precept	7.267	2.097	2.071	11.435
Deficit deferred from 22/23 to 23/24 by using Reserves to phase deficit	(2.500)	2.500	0.000	0.000
Deficit deferred from 23/24 to 24/25 by using Reserves	0.000	(1.300)	1.300	0.000
Phased Deficit <u>WITHOUT</u> ASC Precept and Council Tax increase - Scenario 1	4.767	3.297	3.371	11.435
Phased Deficit <u>WITH</u> ASC Precept and Council Tax increase - Scenario 2	2.654	2.412	2.457	7.523
Permanent loss of funding from freezing Council Tax i.e. additional budget cuts required for Scenario 1 compared to Scenario 2	2.113	0.885	0.914	3.912

9. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**9.1 Legal Considerations**

9.2 The following issues are relevant in relation to this report:

- the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires local authorities to set a balanced budget – this report starts the budget process and further reports will enable budget proposals to be approved and then referred to Council to meet this requirement;
- the Local Government Act 2003 requires local authorities to consider the advice of their Section 151 Chief Finance Officer (the Director of Resources and Development) when making budget decisions. This advice must include details of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. These requirements will be addressed in future reports and initial advice is detailed later in the report.

9.3 Child and Family Poverty

9.4 Increasing Council Tax will impact on all households. The proposal to maintain a 12% Local Council Tax Support Scheme (separate report on agenda) will mitigate the impact on low income working age households.

9.5 Asset Management Considerations, Equality and Diversity, Consultation

- 9.6 There are no specific issues in relation to these areas from the proposals in this report. Issues will be identified as individual savings are developed and will be reported to future meetings.

9.7 Staff Considerations

- 9.8 The scale of the budget deficit means there will be staffing consideration and details will be reported when detailed savings proposal are developed.

10. BUDGET TIMETABLE

- 10.1 The following table details the key tasks and initial reporting timescales

Task	Timescale
MTFS update and determination of 2022/23 Council Tax level to be recommended to Council. Separate supporting report on 2022/23 Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme options	Finance and Policy Committee – this report
MTFS update and consideration of 2022/23 Council Tax level recommended by Finance and Policy Committee Separate supporting report on 2022/23 Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme options	Council – 30 September 2021
Review of income and potential options to increase income generation	Finance and Policy Committee – 11 October 2021
Consideration of initial savings proposals 2022/23 to 2024/25	Finance and Policy Committee – October 2021
Consideration of initial savings proposals referred from Finance and Policy Committee	Individual Policy Committees – Late October to November 2021
Feedback from Individual Policy Committees and determination of budget and LCTS proposals to be referred to Council	Finance and Policy Committee – 13 December 2021
Consideration budget and LCTS proposals to be referred from Finance and Policy Committee	Council – 16 December 2021

- 10.2 The budget timetable will also include Members briefings, consultation with the Trade Unions and Businesses Sector representatives, and statutory consultation as required in relation to detailed budget proposals as these are developed.

11. CONCLUSIONS AND INITIAL ROBUSTNESS ADVISE

- 11.1 As outlined in section 3 the reports focuses on determining a strategic direction to balance the budget over the next three years. To enable a sustainable plan to be developed Members need to consider the level of Council Tax for 2022/23, as this will have a significant impact on the cuts that need to be made.
- 11.2 By law as the Council's Section 151 Officer I am required to provide advice on the robustness of the budget forecasts. This advice will be provided later in the year when all the relevant information is available. The Council has robust financial management arrangements and a track record of delivering multi-year savings plans in previous years. The risks of achieving further cuts together with the uncertainties outlined within this report, including future uncertainty on government funding and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, puts the financial sustainability of the Council at risk.
- 11.3 There continues to be increased scrutiny on Council Finances nationally, including the issuing of Section 114 notices and the Government providing capitalisation directives (i.e. authority to treat revenue expenditure as capital) where councils have requested this support to deal with specific financial challenges. The Government has imposed strict conditions on councils receiving capitalisation directives to:
- undergo an external assurance review focusing on the plan to deliver medium-term sustainability;
 - where capitalised expenditure is not funded from capital receipts, any increased borrowing must be obtained from the PWLB (Public Works Loan Board), and is subject to an additional 1% premium on the interest rate.
- 11.4 Members will recognise the need to ensure the Council avoids such an outcome and a planned approach is needed.
- 11.5 The level of Council Tax is a decision for Members. However, in reaching this decision Members need to consider the implications on the financial sustainability and resilience of the Council in the medium term.
- 11.6 In my professional opinion not increasing Council Tax in line with Government referendum limits (including the deferred Adult Social Care precept) will not be robust until a savings plan to address the increased budget deficit is approved. This plan will need to be reviewed to ensure it is robust and the savings will be delivered.
- 11.7 When considering the level of Council Tax the Finance and Policy Committee and full Council need to consider the following key issues:
- The impact of the national Council Tax policy on available funding for local services;

- The impact on arguing for additional grant funding, as the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) are unlikely to be sympathetic to authorities that have not used available Council Tax limits;
 - The permanent reduction in recurring Council Tax income as Council Tax referendum limits apply for a defined period. This means limits are either used within the defined period, or the income lost permanently.
- 11.8 Replacing reduced Council Tax income would significantly increase the budget cuts that need to be made and increase the risk we reach a point whereby a section 114 report is unavoidable.
- 11.9 There are two potential scenarios where a section 151 officer is required to issue a section 114 report. Firstly, where an authority has, or is about to make a decision which involves or would involve the authority incurring expenditure which is unlawful. Secondly, it appears to the section 151 officers that expenditure in a financial year is likely to exceed resources available.
- 11.10 It is the second situation where there is a potential risk of a future section 114 report if a robust savings plan is not developed to address the forecast budget shortfalls. We are not at that point for 2022/23 and need a robust plan to avoid this occurring in 2023/24 or 2024/25.
- 11.11 Responding to a section 114 report would be significantly more challenging than a managed approach based on a combination of Council Tax increases / budget cuts and result in some form of intervention from MHCLG.
- 11.12 The financial position beyond 2024/25 will remain extremely challenging and it is therefore important that the budget is balanced on a recurring basis by 2024/25. Key issues for 2025/26 include:
- **Waste Disposal Contract** – there will be a significant recurring budget pressure from July 2025 when the existing waste disposal contract terminates. This contract was put in place by the previous County Council and the four successor councils have benefitted from this arrangement for over 25 years. The new contract, which will cover the five Tees Valley councils, Durham and Newcastle, will increase costs and details will be reported once a new contract has been awarded.
 - **Power Station** - is scheduled to close in 2024/25 and this currently accounts for **24% (£4.5m)** of the Business Rates income retained by the Council. Closure will result in the Council becoming eligible for Business Rates Safety Net grant. However, this does not cover the full income reduction and the Council will have to manage a recurring annual shortfall of **£1.1m** until such time as the funding baseline is reset. Timing of such resets are currently unknown. A reserve has been established as part of the 2020/21 closure and this will avoid this

risk impact before 2025/26. This will provide longer lead time to develop a strategy to manage this recurring income reduction.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 It is recommended that Members:

- i) Note the report;
- ii) Note a national pay offer of 1.75% effective from 1st April 2021 has been made which will require funding from in-year savings / use of one off resources in 2021/22 and will increase the 2022/23 budget deficit by £875,000. This offer has not been accepted and if an increased offer is made this would increase the budget deficit.
- iii) Consider the initial robustness advice detailed in section 11 and if this advice is ignored record the reasons for this decision.
- iv) Recommend to Council a 2022/23 Core Council Tax increase of 1.9% (subject to confirmation of a 2% referendum limit by the Government) and a 3% Adult Social Care precept (approved Government limit that could either have been applied in 2021/22 or deferred to 2022/23);
- v) Recommend indicative 2023/24 and 2024/25 Core Council Tax increase of 1.9% (subject to confirmation of a 2% referendum limit by the Government);
- vi) Note that recommendations (iv) and (v) secure recurring Council Tax income of £3.912m and therefore reduce the budget deficit from £11.435m to £7.523m;
- vii) Note that phased use of the Budget Support Fund to support the budget and meet redundancy / early retirement will enable the deficit of £7.523m to be phased over three years. Note the Corporate Management Team will develop a draft savings plan and report these proposals to a future meeting to deliver the following annual savings:
 - 2022/23 £2.654m
 - 2023/24 £2.412m
 - 2024/25 £2.457m
- viii) Note the financial risks detailed in Appendix D which could potentially increase the forecast deficits detailed in the report.
- ix) Approve the budget timetable detailed in section 10, which includes the development of a detailed savings plan.

13. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 To enable the Finance and Policy Committee to approve the proposals to be referred to full Council to provide a strategic direction for the development of a robust three year savings plan.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- Finance and Policy Committee - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021/22 to 2022/23 – 25th January 2021;
- Council - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021/22 to 2022/23 – 28th January 2021.

15. CONTACT OFFICER

Chris Little
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Telephone: 01429 523003

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Director of Resources and Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Chief Solicitor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX A

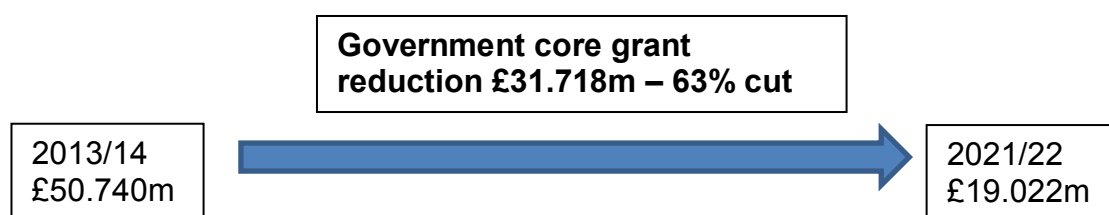
OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL CHALLENGES AND CONTEXT

1.1 The following sections provide detailed information to help understand the financial environment the Council is operating within.

1.2 National funding changes – reduction in Government grant

1.3 Councils faced nine years of austerity up to 2019/20. This includes the period since 2013/14 when significant changes to the national funding system were made, including transferring responsibility for Local Council Tax Support to councils. Nationally these changes significantly reduced Government grant and increased reliance on Council Tax, including the introduction of the Adult Social Care precept in 2016/17.

1.4 For Hartlepool the cut in recurring core Government grant is £31.718m. This is the cash reduction and when account is taken of inflation and budget pressures the real term reduction was even greater:



1.5 Funding Changes – increase in Council Tax

1.6 Over the period 2011/12 to 2015/16 Government policy supported authorities to freeze Council Tax by paying additional grant. This policy only covered 50% of the recurring income lost by freezing Council Tax.

1.7 Hartlepool was the only Council in the Tees Valley which froze Council Tax for five years (2011/12 to 2015/16).

1.8 In 2016/17 Government Council Tax policy shifted as the Government stopped providing grant to freeze Council Tax and expected Council Tax to increase. There was a further fundamental change in 2016/17 when the Adult Social Care precept was introduced by the Government.

Summary of the impact of Government Council Tax policy 2015/16 to 2021/22

- Shift from national funding on to Council Tax
- 2021/22 Government Council Tax Referendum limit 5%
- 2021/22 Average Council Tax increase 4.4%
- Nationally Adult Social Care precept will raise £2.8 billion in 2021/22
 - £2.8 billion is the same as 1.4% increase in income tax
 - £2.8 billion includes £610 million for 2021/22 – highest annual amount

1.9 For Hartlepool the Adult Social Care precept now accounts for **£3.7m** and funds **12%** of the amount the Council spends on Adult Social Care.

1.10 Funding Changes – Tax base growth

1.11 The budget also benefits from Tax Base growth, which consist of two main components. Firstly the impact of housing growth – including the mix of properties. Secondly, a reduction in households eligible for Local Council Tax Support (LCTS). Prior to the pandemic this reduction reflected improving economic condition – the economic impact of Covid has reversed the majority of this reduction.

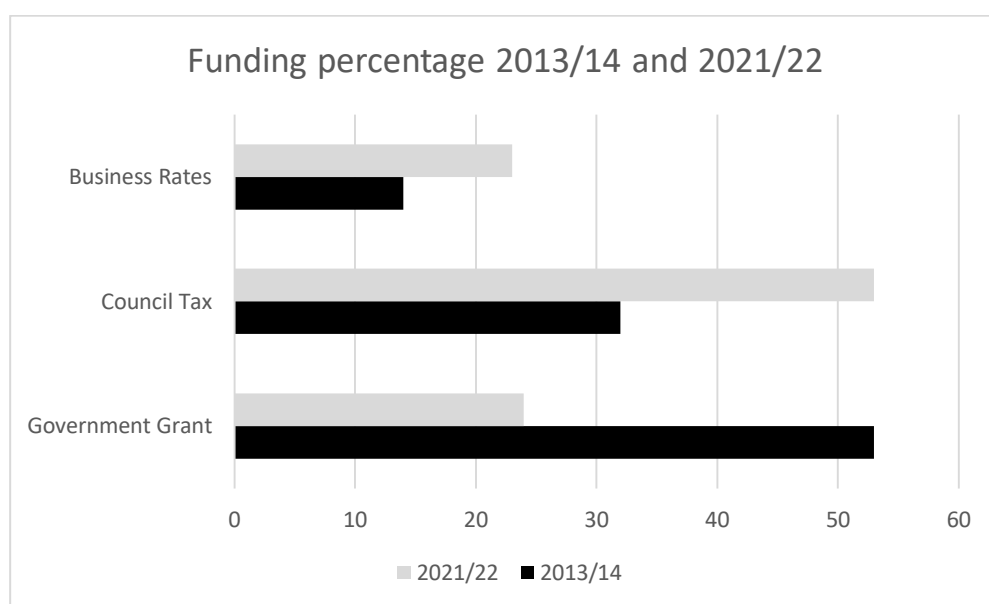
2015/16 to 2019/20 Tax Base Changes

- Hartlepool **11%** - National increase **8.7%**
- Additional local growth reflected
 - increase in properties in Council Tax Bands E and F
 - reduction in LCTS claimant numbers

1.12 Summary of changes in recurring cash resources 2013/14 to 2021/22

1.13 The following table highlights:

- the significant shift in resources - in 2013/14 Government grant was **53%** of resources and in 2021/22 is only **24%**;
- Conversely in 2013/14 Council Tax was **32%** of resources and in 2021/22 is **53%** (Includes impact of tax base growth and Adult Social Care precept)
- Business rates was **15%** of resources in 2013/14 and **23%** in 2021/22.



1.14 Previous Budget cuts

1.15 To address recurring cuts in funding the Council has made significant efficiencies and cuts. Over the nine years up to 2019/20 the Council removed **500** jobs - a reduction of **20%**. The cuts and efficiencies made in previous years cannot be repeated, which means balancing future budgets will be even more challenging. Increasingly future measures will have a visible impact on the services the Council can deliver.

1.16 Recurring Budget Pressures

1.17 Alongside cuts in recurring funding the Council has also faced recurring budget pressures. This means the resources available for services are significantly squeezed from two sides. Major pressures included:

- Annual increases in National Living Wage – impact on Adult Social Care contracts

Over the period 2017/18 to 2021/22 increases in the National Living Wage have increased recurring costs by approximately £1.6m.

- Increases in Children's Social Care

Councils have seen sustained increases in the number of vulnerable children requiring care and support. Demand for children's social care has continued to increase due to significant adult related issues such as domestic abuse, substance misuse and parental mental ill health. These issues have impacted on Hartlepool and over the period 2017/18 to 2021/22 the number of children in our care has increased from 278 to

360 – a 30% increase. To provide some context this is broadly the number of children in a typical primary school.

In financial terms the recurring cash budget increase is approximately £7m – a 43% increase, as investment has been required across the whole system to manage the volume of demand for children's social care and reflects the significant increase in the complexity and number of vulnerable children needing support. This includes more children requiring support at the highest levels of intervention, i.e. subject to child protection plans or in the care of the local authority.

1.18 **Recovery from Covid Pandemic**

1.19 The economic impact of Covid on councils was significant and impacted in many different ways, including:

- Increased costs;
- Reduction in service income from the closure of facilities during lockdown periods;
- Reduction in Council Tax income from lower house building;
- Increase in the cost of Local Council Tax Support arising from higher unemployment;
- Increase in Business Rates risks arising from potential increase in business failures.

1.20 In 2020/21 the Government provided significant financial support to mitigate the impact of these issues. In 2021/22 the Government is providing significantly less funding and they expect the funding provided to be focused on Covid pressures impacting on adult social care, children's services, public health services, households waste services, shielding the clinically vulnerable, homelessness and rough sleeping, domestic abuse, managing excess deaths, support for re-opening the country and the additional costs associated with the local election in May 2021. As reported to Finance and Policy Committee on 25th January 2021 guidance to use this funding to support adult social care was reinforced strongly in a letter from the Department for Health and Social Care on 21st January 2021.

1.21 Nationally the Government is providing £1.55 billion and Hartlepool has been allocated £3.2m for 2021/22. The Council has committed support Care Home providers and other commitments include income shortfalls. An update will be reported to a future meeting when the position is clearer.

1.22 No Government Covid funding has been announced for 2022/23 as the Government expects that councils will have returned to 'normal'. This was also local planning assumption adopted at the start of 2021 when the budget was prepared. The position will be updated later in the year when the recovery position will be more certain as the extended lockdown has means some income streams will not return to the pre-Covid level within the current

year and shortfall will continue into 2022/23. Additionally, some services are continuing to experience higher demand, for example Children's Social Care.

1.23 Strategy adopted for setting 2021/22 budget.

1.24 In recognition of the financial uncertainty caused by the pandemic a review of reserves enabled a Budget Support Fund to be established to support the budget over the period 2021/22 to 2023/24. This reserve was designed to provide one off resources to enable budget cuts to be phased over more than one year, including avoiding any cuts in 2021/22 to help support the recovery.

1.25 The final budget decisions, including not implementing a core Council Tax increase and deferring the Adult Social Care precept, committed £4.312m of the Budget Support Fund and deferred a budget deficit from 2021/22 to 2022/23 of £4.047m.

APPENDIX B

CIPFA FINANCIAL RESILIENCE FACTORS

Factor	Purpose of factor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserves sustainability • Reserves level • Change in Reserves 	<p>These factors measure reserves and how quickly they are being used and flag where an authority is using reserves to support recurring expenditure. Where reserves are being used a sustainable strategy to address this position needs to be developed as reserves are finite and cannot be relied upon on a recurring basis.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest payable as percentage of net revenue expenditure • Gross external debt • Social care to revenue expenditure 	<p>These costs are either fixed or take a long time to change as they relate to ongoing expenditure commitments. Authorities with a higher percentage for these costs have less flexibility to reduce expenditure and therefore face greater potential risk to their financial resilience.</p>
Fees and charges to external expenditure ratio	<p>This factor compares the level of fees and charges. A low percentage could indicate where there is scope to generate more income to support services, or may reflect higher levels of deprivation and the lower ability of residents to pay fees and charges.</p> <p>A high percentage was previously considered to demonstrate greater financial resilience. However, the Covid pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of some income streams and the adverse impact reductions in this income has on financial resilience.</p>
Council Tax to net expenditure ratio	<p>This factor measures ability to fund services from Council Tax income and authorities with a high ratio have more resilience as they control more of their income and are less dependent on Government grant funding.</p> <p>This ratio has become more important in recent years as Government grant funding continued to be cut and Government policy continued to be based on annual Council Tax increases, including the Adult Social Care precept.</p>
Growth above baseline	<p>This indicators compares growth in business rates income and council tax income against the baseline funding level.</p>

Auditors Value for Money (VFM) Assessment	The current External Auditors assessment of VfM includes examining the arrangements an authority has in place for preparing the annual budget, implementing savings plans and identifying future saving plans. Where a 'qualified' opinion is issued by the Auditor they will highlight the areas of concerns resulting in this conclusion. If these issue are not addressed by an authority this is likely to impact adversely on financial resilience.
Children's social care assessment	The Ofsted assessment has a critical impact on financial resilience as authorities assessed as 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' will have to spend additional resources to address these concerns and improve services.

APPENDIX B

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE BENCHMARKING

The key financial indicators are provided below and compare Hartlepool with the other eleven North East Councils and the CIPFA statistical neighbours (i.e. authorities similar to Hartlepool in terms of deprivation etc.).

Council Tax - only **48.6%** of the Council's resources are raised from Council Tax, compared to a North East Average of **52.8%** and CIPFA statistical neighbours' range of 39.9% to 59.8% (figures based on CIPFA analysis of resources).

This highlights the continued risks to financial resilience if Government grant is not increased in 2022/23 to help fund increased service costs.

It also highlights the lower ability to raise additional income from increasing Council Tax compared to authorities which raise a higher percentage of resources from Council Tax – for example Northumberland 65.9%, Windsor and Maidenhead 75% and Woking 94%.

Adult and Children's Social care – the Council spend **67.9%** of the budget on these service, which is in line with the CIPFA statistical neighbours average of **67.7%**. For all authorities continued service pressure in these areas are a risk to financial sustainability and resilience.

If future Government funding settlements, including a long term funding strategy for Adult Social Care costs, do not recognise need and the different ability of individual authorities to fund these services from Council Tax many authorities will become financially unsustainable.

This index does not reflect the significant additional recurring funding provided in the Council's 2021/22 base budget for Children's Social Care pressures – which has increased the percentage of the budget spent on these services. This underlines the continuing services and financial pressures facing the Council – which were not addressed in the 2021/22 Government grant allocation. This factor was a major driver on the use of reserves in setting the 2021/22 budget, which in turn is reflected in the 2022/23 forecast deficit as use of reserves is not sustainable.

Unallocated Reserves as percentage of net revenue budget - These reserves are generally referred to as the General Fund Reserve. The Council holds this reserve to meet emergency expenditure and any use would then need to be repaid. The Council's long standing policy is to retain the current level of reserve.

The Council's unallocated reserves are 5.2%, which is the average for the CIPFA statistical neighbours and a range of 1.4% to 9.5%.

Earmarked Revenue Reserves as a percentage of net revenue budget - comparisons between Earmarked Reserves of individual authorities are very difficult as these reserves will be held for different purposes and the whole of these reserves

may be fully committed. However, as a general rule the higher the level of these reserves the more financial resilience an authority should have.

The Council's earmarked reserves are 23.7%, compared to the CIPFA statistic average (excluding one authority with unusually higher reserves) of 28% and a range of 10.4% to 66.3%.

	Hartlepool	12 North East Councils (includes Hartlepool)			16 CIPFA statistical neighbours (includes Hartlepool)	
		Average	Range		Range	
			Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
Council tax to net expenditure ratio	48.6%	52.8%	42.0%	65.9%	39.9%	59.8%
Authorities which fund a lower percentage of spending from Council Tax are more exposed to financial risks from reductions in Government funding AND have less ability to raise additional income from increasing Council Tax as each 1% increase raises less income than in more affluent areas. As highlighted above Hartlepool raises 48.6% on resources from Council Tax - this is slightly below the North East Average and around mid table for the CIPFA statistical neighbours. Other authorities raise a much higher percentage of resources from Council Tax e.g. Windsor and Maidenhead 75%, Working 94%.						
Children's Social Care spending as percentage of net revenue budget	29.3%	23.4%	17.1%	38.7%	20.4%	40.4%
Adult Social Care spending as percentage of net revenue budget	38.6%	38.1%	33.3%	46.7%	33.4%	48.6%
Higher spending on Children's and Adult Social Care can adversely impact on financial resilience as this expenditure is difficult to reduce if resources are cut as these services support vulnerable people. Therefore, the need to maintain this expenditure puts additional pressure on other Council services when resources are restrained.						
Interest Payable as percentage of net revenue budget	3.0%	6.2%	2.6%	17.4%	3.0%	17.4%
Higher spending on interest cost is generally a long term commitment arising from borrowing to fund capital expenditure. This also reduces resources available to spend on other services.						
Unallocated Reserve as percentage of net revenue budget	5.2%	8.1%	1.4%	28.7%	1.4%	9.5%
These reserves are generally referred to as the General Fund Reserve. This Council holds this reserve to meet emergency expenditure and any use would then need to be repaid. The Council's long standing policy is to retain the the current level of reserve.						
Earmarked Reserve as percentage of net revenue budget	23.7%	30.7%	10.4%	61.3%	10.4%	100.4%
Comparisons between Earmarked Reserves of individual authorities are very difficult as these reserves will be held for different purposes and the whole of these reserves may be fully committed. However, as a general rule the higher the level of these reserves the more financial resilience an authority should have.						
CIPFA Statistical Neighbours - Blackpool, Gateshead, Halton, Kingston-upon-Hull, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Sunderland, Walsall, Wolverhampton, St Helens, Stoke-on-Trent, Middlesbrough, North East Lincolnshire, Stockton, Redcar and Cleveland.						

APPENDIX C

COUNCIL TAX OVERVIEW

1.1 Council Tax raises significant income for councils, although the percentage of net expenditure raised by individual councils varies significantly. This is basically the result of differences in property values. Areas which raise a low percentage of resources from Council Tax have a higher proportion of properties in the lowest two Council Tax Bands, and fewer properties in band D and above. This is the opposite position in areas which raise a high percentage of resources from Council Tax.

1.2 There are four fundamental problems with the Council Tax system:

- Based on 1991 property values – these valuation are now 30 years old and over this period there have been significant regional variances in property values. If regular revaluations had been completed this would have captured these changes and resulted in a fairer distribution of Government grants and Council Tax charges.
- Only 8 Council Tax Bands – this links to the first point as the bandings do not adequately reflect difference in house values.
 - Band H property (the highest band) value is **eight times** the valuation of a Band A property (the lowest band).
 - Council Tax band on a Band H property is **three times** the amount paid by a Band A property.

A greater number of property bands would help address this position and make the tax less regressive.

- Government Council Tax policy – since 2016/17 Government Council Tax policy has shifted the burden for funding local services from Government grant on to Council Tax. This included introduction of the Adult Social Care precept in 2016/17.
- Governance arrangements – local Government structure vary across England and this makes Council Tax comparison more difficult between areas. From a households perspective the key comparator is the total Council Tax bill they receive. Governance arrangement fall into three broad categories:
 - Single purposes Metropolitan and Unitary authorities – with very limited Parish councils.

In these areas, which locally includes Tees Valley and the Tyneside/Wearside areas, the single purpose authority provides most services and there is either no, or very limited, service delivery by parish councils;

- Single purposes Metropolitan and Unitary authorities – with greater Parish council service delivery.

In these areas, which locally includes Durham and Northumberland, the town/parish councils deliver significant services, such as parks, cemetery, local sports pitches and set their own additional Council Tax. These are services this Council provides;

- County and District area

In these areas there are two main authorities, plus significant town/parish council service deliver. Each individual authority sets its own Council Tax for the services they provide.

- 1.3 The following paragraphs provide details of Council Tax base comparisons and Council Tax levels for the North East Councils.

- **Tax Base Comparisons**

To reflect the significant difference in size of Authority (i.e. Hartlepool population 93,663, Durham 530,094) the Band D Tax bases have been expressed as a value per 100 head of population to enable like for like comparison to be made. On this basis:

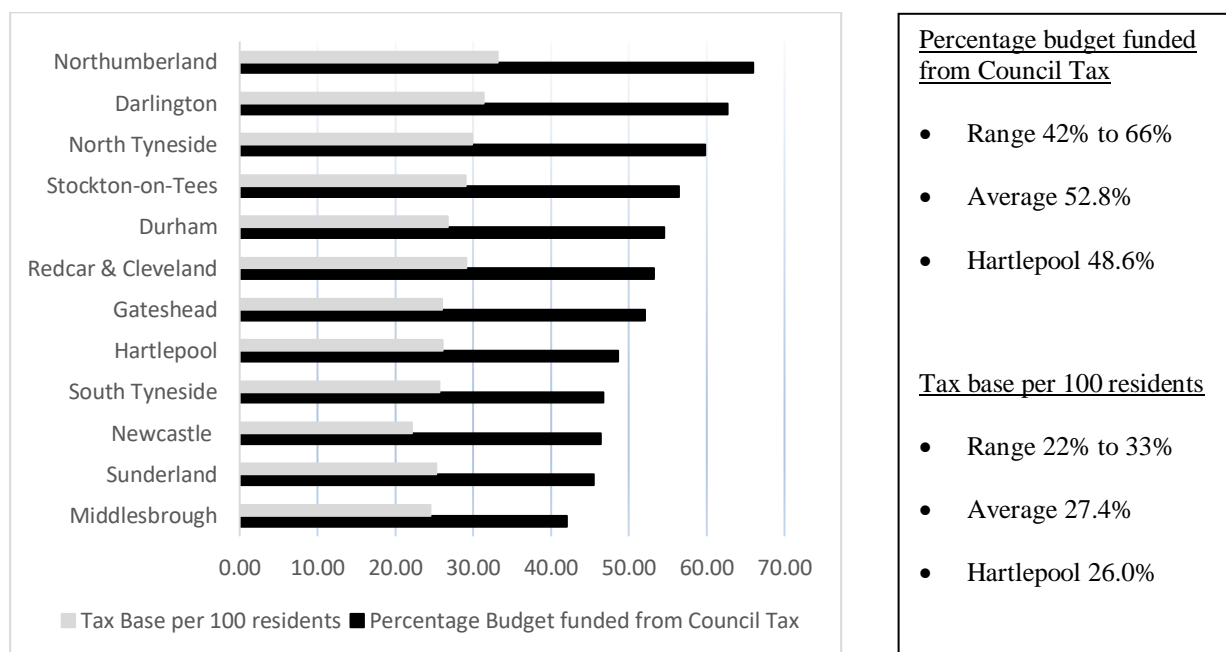
- Hartlepool's Council Tax base is the 8th lowest in the North East and less than the North East average.

This position reflects the higher proportion of Hartlepool properties in Band A and B. If Hartlepool's Tax Base was in line with the North East average the additional recurring Council Tax income would be nearly **£2.5m**. This underlines the continued financial importance of encouraging more housing development of higher value properties and attracting people to live in Hartlepool.

- To underline the importance of the housing mix the analysis shows Darlington (population 106,803 – **14%** higher than Hartlepool) has the second best Council Tax base per 100 head of population in the North East. Darlington's Council Tax base is **20%** greater than Hartlepool.

As a result of the differences in Council Tax Base Darlington's financial position is more resilient than Hartlepool as they raise more income from Council Tax. This position also means Darlington is less reliant on Government grant, so face less risks in relation to Government grant in 2022/23 and future years.

- As highlighted in the following table authorities with a low Council Tax base fund a lower percentage of their budget from Council Tax. This makes these authorities less financially resilient.

Tax base per 100 residents / percentage of budget funded from Council Tax**COMPARISON OF BAND A COUNCIL TAX 2021/22 (excluding Police and Fire)
(53% of Hartlepool properties)**

The table in paragraph 5.3 of the report compares the amount of Band A Council Tax residents pay for the 12 North East Councils, including the town / parish amount where service provision is split between the unitary council and the town / parish council.

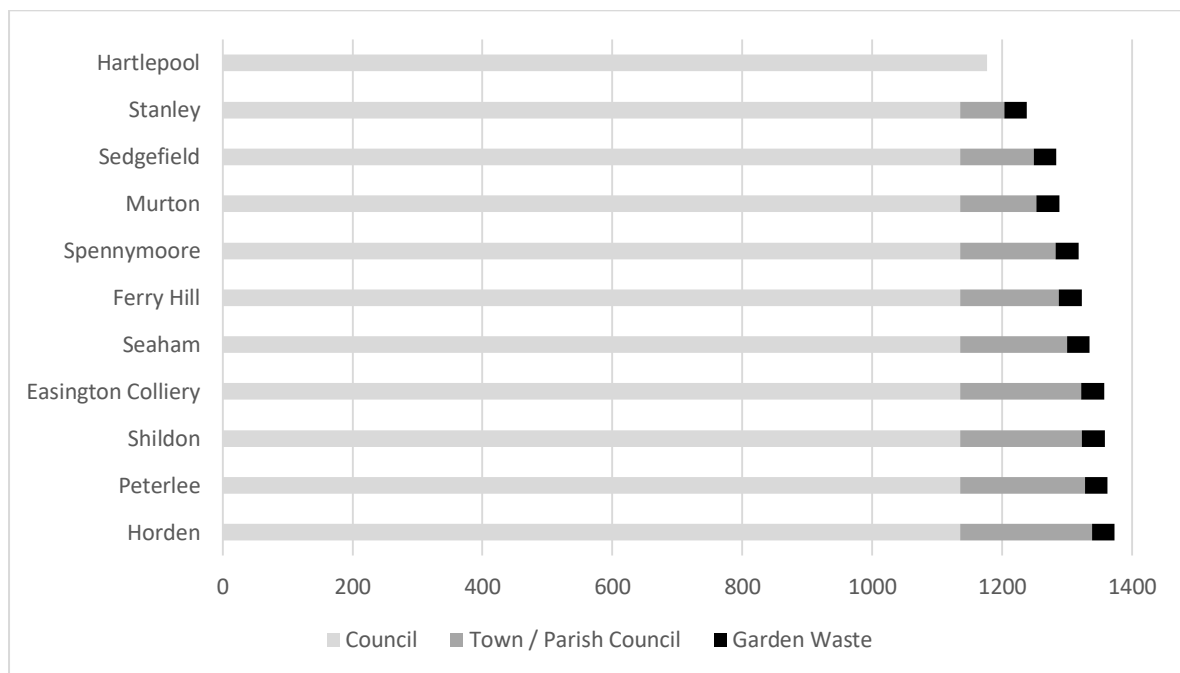
Within Hartlepool the majority of residents do not have a town / parish council – which means all service are provided by the Council and 53% of residents in Band A property pay Council Tax of £1,167.34.

Within Durham service provision is split. This means Durham residents pay Band A Council Tax of £1,135.72 for services provide by Durham unitary council – plus an additional charge for the town / parish councils – the table below shows the top 10 charges for the Durham area which add between £67.39 and £202.71 to overall Council Tax bills.

Durham Residents also pay a separate annual Garden Waste Charge of £35.00 – Hartlepool does not charge.

Parish councils only cover 10% of Hartlepool and for six areas the additional Band A Council Tax is between £2.31 and £13.87. Dalton Parish Band A has a precept of £50.20

Comparison of Band A Council Tax and Garden Waste Charges
(excludes Police and Fire)



APPENDIX D

2022/23 TO 2024/25 KEY PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

The budget forecasts have been rolled forward to 2024/25 and reflect the following key planning assumptions

- **Government core grants are frozen for three years**

In 2021/22 these grant total £19.022m, which is 19% of current resources. For planning purposes it is assumed there will be no cuts over the period 2022/23 to 2024/25.

RISK 1 - cuts are made in this funding – each 1% cut equates to £0.190m;

RISK 2 – there is a further delay in the Fair Funding review changes are again delayed from 2022/23 to 2023/24.

- **Specific Government Grants**

In 2021/22 these grant total £18.8m, which is 18.9% of current resources. This includes £8.576m Public Health Grant and £9.173m Improved Better Care Fund / Social Care Grants. For planning purposes it is assumed there will be no cuts over the period 2022/23 to 2024/25.

RISK – cuts are made in this funding – each 1% cut equates to £0.188m

- **Council Tax Referendum limits** – assumed to be 2% PLUS 3% deferred Adult Social Care precept from 2021/22.

RISK 1 – Deferred 3% Adult Social Care precept is not implemented in 2022/23 – permanent loss of funding of £1.259m.

RISK 2 – the Council does not approve 2% core annual increases – each 2% is permanent loss of funding of £0.854m.

- **Council Tax Base Growth** – over the period 2013/14 to 2020/21 the Council Tax base increased by 14.7%, a total increase of 3,181 – annual average of approximately 400. This reflected a reduction in LCTS eligible households – 36% of the total increase - and housing growth – 64% of the total increase.

The Covid Pandemic reversed a significant element of the reduction in LCTS eligible households and the 2021/22 Council Tax base of 24,384 is 498 less than the 2020/21 base of 24,882.

It is too early to estimate how long it will take for the LCTS caseload to reduce to the pre-Covid level as this is the first economic shock since councils became responsible for LCTS in 2013/14. The position will be reviewed later in the year before the 2022/23 Council Tax base needs to be set.

For planning purposes Tax Base growth of 1,000 over the period 2022/23 to 2024/15 is currently forecast - phased 400 for 2022/23, 300 for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

RISK - each shortfall in Tax base growth of 100 equates to approximately £180,000.

UPSIDE – the Covid impact on LCTS may reverse over a shorter timescale than forecast and therefore increase the overall Tax base and recurring Council Tax income. Any benefits would help mitigate other risks detailed in this report, which remain uncertain e.g. 2021 national pay award and business rates risks.

- **Business Rates income (includes section 31 grants)** – this income amounts to £18.909m (approximately 19% of resources). Government support is only provided when shortfalls in this income exceed the ‘safety net threshold’ – currently **£1.1m**. The Council must manage the shortfall up to this limit from its own resources. There are three areas of risk

RISK 1 - following the purchase of the steel works by Liberty Steel there was a significant delay in the VOA splitting the Rateable Value for the site. As a consequence Liberty Steel made no business rates payments. Once the rateable value was split an instalment plan was agreed to clear the outstanding liability by 31.03.22.

The financial backers of Liberty Steel have recently gone into financial administration and this may potentially have a significant impact on Liberty Steel. This could potentially result in historic Business Rates income becoming unrecoverable and a reduction in recurring income. The potential impact on the Council is as follows:

- £861k – irrecoverable previous years Business Rates income;
- £273k – irrecoverable 2021/22 Business Rates income;
- £273k – reduction in recurring 2022/23 Business Rates income.

RISK 2 - the Power Station accounts for **24%** of the Council’s Business Rate income and pays a total of £9.3m – of which **£4.558m** is retained by the Council. The station is scheduled to operationally close in **2024/25** – at that point the Council will either fully lose this income, or a significant proportion of it as the Rateable Value reflects the electricity generated. Assuming the current ‘Safety net threshold’ remains in place the Government will only provide additional grant funding for the loss above this limit – the Council will then have to address the remaining recurring reduction in resources of **£1.1m** by making budget cuts, until the next funding baseline reset, the timing of which is uncertain.

To manage this risk and the potential earlier impact if the operational closure date is brought forward a specific risk reserve has been established. This will not provide a permanent solution to a reduction in

recurring income. However, this approach will provide a slightly longer lead time until additional recurring Government funding is secured, or to identify further budgets cuts if additional funding is not forthcoming.

- **Pay awards do not exceed 2% for three years**

RISK - pay awards from 2022 are greater than 2% and each additional 1% equates to £0.5m.

- **National Living Wage (NLW)** – planned national increases have happened slower than previously indicated by the Government. The NLW will increase from £8.72 to £8.91 (a 2.2% increase) from 1st April 2021. To achieve a NLW of £10.50 by April 2025 (a year later than previously announced by the Government) will require annual average increases of 4.6% for four years from April 2022.

Annual increases at this level will be an annual budget pressure of approximately £400k i.e. £1.2m by 2024/25. At this stage this is a prudent planning assumption for the 2022/23 to 2024/25 MTFS and will be reviewed as more information becomes available.

- **Social Care Funding** – the Government has promised a sustainable funding model. Implementation of changes has been complicated by the continued reliance on the Adult Social Care precept.

RISK 1 – the reform is again delayed;

RISK 2 – the sustainable funding model relies on continuation of the Social Care precept.

- **Redundancy / Pension Strain costs** – the scale of the 2022/23 to 2024/25 budget deficit will mean that further reductions in staffing will be unavoidable. At this stage it is not possible to quantify what proportion of the deficit will be addressed by staffing reductions.

This risk will need to be assessed once detailed savings proposals are identified as these costs will need to be funded from the £3.891m of the Budget Support Fund it is recommended is allocated for Transformation costs. If costs exceed the available one off funding additional savings/ cuts will need to be identified. This is unlikely to be a risk a risk for 2022/23, but will be an increasing risk for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

- **Capital Programme** – the Council has an ambitious capital programme, funded from a combination for grants and borrowing. Financial risk will be mitigated by allocating uncommitted capital receipts to establish a capital contingency and details will be reported as part of the 2022/23 budget process.

RISK - Until contracts are let and projects are delivered there will remain a potential risks that costs exceed available resources. Each £1m shortfall would result in an unbudgeted revenue pressure of £40,000 for borrowing costs.

APPENDIX E**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT 07.09.21**

The Prime Minister presented proposals to Parliament and the key issues are:

- 1.25% increase in National Insurance (NI) for employees and employers from April 2022 as NI increase and from 2023 as separate Health and Social Care Tax – which will raise a net £11.4 billion per year
- 1.25% increase in dividend tax –which will raise £0.6 billion per year
- Total additional £12 billion average per year for next three years
- 22/23 to 24/25 majority allocated to NHS backlog / vaccine costs
- Council will not receive any of this funding in 22/23, payments will commence 23/24
- Intended more of the money then flows to Social Care from 24/25 as reforms are rolled out.

Further details were then provided in a document titled “Building Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care”. This documents includes the following key paragraphs:

Paragraph 35 -states

The Government is committed to creating a sustainable adult social care system that is fit for the future, alongside its programme of wider healthcare reform. While there are different systems in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland which are run by the devolved administrations, the Government will look to establish a programme of joint work to share best practice across the home nations. In England, the Government will work with leaders in Local Government and the social care sector, service users and carers, as well as the NHS Chief Executive and the NHS, to develop and publish a White Paper for reforming adult social care, which will commence a once in a generation transformation to adult social care.

- **Assessment of proposal** – the Government’s overall announcement is a positive step forward in addressing adult social care reform, although the proposals only relate to older people. At this stage there is insufficient information to comment on and the Council will respond to detailed consultations when they commence.

Paragraph 36 - states

The Government will ensure Local Authorities have access to sustainable funding for core budgets at the Spending Review. We expect demographic and unit cost pressures will be met through Council Tax, social care precept, and long-term efficiencies; the overall level of Local Government funding, including Council Tax and

social care precept, will be determined in the round at the Spending Review in the normal way. We will invest £5.4 billion in adult social care over the next three years to deliver the funding and system reform commitments set out in this document.

- **Assessment of proposal** – the references to Council Tax and the social care precept suggest that councils will be expected to continue to implement further increases in 2022/23 and future years.

As the social care precept set for 2021/22 could either be used in 2021/22 or deferred to 2022/23 the Government will need to provide the same phasing flexibility if the Spending Review confirms an additional 2022/23 social care precept (i.e. to be phased over 2022/23 or 2023/24).

Paragraph 73 – states

In England, from 2022/23 receipts from the Levy will be added to the existing NHS allocation. From 2023, receipts from the Levy will go to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), NHS England and Improvement and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). The Government will work closely with Local Government sector stakeholders on the implementation of the new social care reforms. Specific funding allocations for each Local Authority will be communicated by MHCLG in the usual way through the Local Government Finance Settlement process.

- **Assessment of proposal**

This paragraph makes it clear there is no additional funding for councils in 2022/23 and this reflects the fact that capping of social care costs does not commence until October 2023 (i.e. financial year 2023/24). It is not yet clear how this funding will be allocated to individual councils.

The impact of capping social care costs will have significant regional variances as more affluent areas have more ‘self funders’ who will benefit from the cap. This is likely to mean these areas may receive a greater proportion of this funding to compensate for the loss of contributions from individuals.

This is the most complex aspect of the proposals and updates will be provided when more information becomes available.

Paragraph 86 – states

The Government intends to compensate departments and other public sector employers in England at the Spending Review for the increased cost of the Levy and provide Barnett consequential on this funding to the devolved administrations. If the Government did not take this step then the spending power of public services, including the NHS, would be reduced. This adjustment reduces the amount that is available from the Levy to spend on health and social care by around £1.8 billion per year.

- **Assessment of proposal** – this proposal is welcomed and MHCLG has indicated this covers the additional costs in relation to Council employed staff and external staff delivering adult social care. For our own directly employed

staff the additional NI cost is approximately £625,000. This proposal should hopefully avoid a significant increase in the 2022/23 budget deficit, although this position will not be certain until we know the actual funding allocations.

This proposal will not cover the impact on other contracted services, including Children's Social Care, which councils will have to fund from within existing resources - which will increase the budget deficit. Details will be reported when the position has been assessed.

Conclusions

The national funding announcements set out the Government's broad strategy. However, significant details is still to be provided on how the new arrangements will operate and the additional costs which will need to be funded from the money allocated to councils.

In 2022/23 the only impact on councils is the 1.25% NI increase and the majority of the additional costs should be funded from additional grant.

The major impact on councils arises in October 2023 from the measures to cap the care costs individuals have to pay. This will transfer costs to councils, which will have to be funded from the new money provided. Therefore, the funding will begin to flow from 2023/24.

The cap will be impact on by regional property values, which is the main driver of the amount individuals pay. This means the new funding will not follow previous distribution patterns as more funding will be allocated to areas with a higher proportion of current self funders. Hartlepool has a comparatively low proportion of self funders.

An assessment of the impact from 2023/24 will be made when more information is available. For planning purposes it is assumed that the income reduction from the cap in personal contributions will be offset by the new grant – so the change will be budget neutral. There will also be potentially significant staffing implications for adult social care linked to additional assessments of needs for self-funders, additional financial assessments being required and the operation of care accounts for individuals.

There is also an expectation that an element of the new funding will be used to increase care fees paid to providers, but the detail of this is not yet known.

The change further complicates the funding of Adult Social Care, which from April 2023 will be funded from a combination of seven funding sources:

1. Share Core Council Tax
2. Share Core grant
3. Share of Business Rates
4. Existing specific social care grants (including Social Care precept equalisation funding)
5. Social Care precept
6. New social care grant from 2023/24
7. Cap personal contributions

Finance & Policy Committee

13 September 2021



Report of: Director of Resources and Development

Subject: LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT 2022/23

1. TYPE OF DECISION / APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Budget and Policy Framework Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to:

- i) Update Members on the operation of the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme; and
- ii) Set out options for the operation of the LCTS scheme for 2022/23 for consideration.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The former national Council Tax Benefit Scheme was abolished by the Welfare Reform Act of 2012 and was replaced with a requirement for Councils to determine and operate their own LCTS scheme with effect from 1 April 2013, thereby transferring responsibility for Council Tax support from central to local government.
- 3.2 Grant Funding transferred at the time was subject to a national 10% reduction (13.4% for Hartlepool). However, the requirement for Councils to fully protect low income pensioners eligible for LCTS support meant the funding reductions fell on working age households and effectively reduced funding for that cohort by 20%. Since 2014 LCTS funding has been included within core revenue grant allocations for individual councils and has therefore reduced further over the years.
- 3.3 Despite this reduction in funding the Council has operated a “12% scheme” in every year since 2014/15 (8.5% in 2013/14) ensuring that working age households with a full entitlement pay no more than 12% of Council Tax. Having a supportive LCTS scheme is consistent with the

Councils determination to support vulnerable households and the Council Plan 2021/22 to 2023/24.

- 3.4 By way of comparison, within the Tees Valley for 2020/21 two Local Authorities operated a 20% scheme, one operated a 17.5% scheme and one a 15% scheme. However, Stockton is currently consulting on a banded LCTS scheme, which will reduce the overall Council Tax income they collect from eligible households, with a small number of the most vulnerable paying no Council Tax. Research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (published January 2019) showed that for 2018/19 nationally 20% was the most common scheme operated, but a significant number of councils operated a scheme with a higher percentage i.e. less favourable to claimants.
- 3.5 The 12% scheme means that for 2021/22 a Band A household in receipt of full support will pay £167.76. The table below compares the annual Council Tax payment with the different Tees Valley scheme percentages and highlights the additional annual support the Council's 12% scheme provides.

LCTS Scheme	Annual Council Tax	Increase in Annual Council Tax
12%	£167.76	0
15%	£209.70	£41.94
17.5%	£244.65	£76.89
20%	£279.60	£111.84

Claimant Numbers

- 3.6 There had been a general reduction in claimants over the period of the local schemes operation. An increase in claimants was experienced during 2020/21, peaking in August 2020 as the Covid pandemic impacted the economy before gradually reducing towards year end. Claimants were supported by the one-off hardship allocation provided by government which reduced LCTS accounts by up to £167. Additionally, the furloughing scheme undoubtedly ensured that numbers did not increase as much as would have been the case without this support. There remains a risk that when furlough ends in September 2021 the caseload may increase significantly and then take a period of time to reduce to the pre Covid level. As at July 2021 there were 13,632 LCTS claimants, of which 9,034 were working age and 4,598 pension age.

- 3.7 Forecasting future claimant numbers is difficult, especially given the current circumstances. At this stage it is anticipated that the impact of Covid will not be permanent with a steady reduction in the working age caseload back to pre-covid levels followed by stable numbers going forward. However, in addition to renewed Covid risks, there remains short to medium term risks that claimant numbers could increase linked to economic factors and the performance of the UK economy. The LCTS scheme may in future years be impacted by further national welfare reforms.

Collection Performance

- 3.8 Collecting Council Tax from LCTS households is more resource intensive than non LCTS households. These households are less likely to pay by Direct Debit, instead choosing to make payment in different ways e.g. cash, either at the Civic Centre or via the Post Office and Paypoint network at local shops. In addition there is a greater likelihood that payment is ultimately obtained through Attachment of Benefit. All recovery action is managed sensitively, whilst seeking to maximise income collection.
- 3.9 Attachment of Benefits (AOB) can only be requested to the DWP following the Council securing a liability order via the Magistrates Court. Currently the highest attachment allowable is £3.70 a week, with only one AOB deduction active at any one time. Given in the best case scenario, such an attachment could only be secured 12 weeks into the financial year, thus allowing 40 weeks of collection, the maximum collectable in this scenario is £148 in total. The least amount payable for a Band A property is £167.76 as set out in section 3.5 above, therefore, unless individuals circumstances change, debt will continue to accrue year on year. Currently 5,826 Council Tax accounts have an Attachment of Benefits, though these will not all be current LCTS accounts. In addition there are 4,540 Attachments of Benefits pending. As at the end of July 2021 £3.128m of debt is outstanding to those with Attachment of Benefits. Collection levels remain high for this debt, albeit payment is not all received in the year the liability first became due.

Cost of Scheme

- 3.10 The cost of the current LCTS scheme for 2020/21 was £13.508m in relation to Council Tax support provided to eligible low income households, including pensioners. Each year an estimate is made as to the forecast cost and this is included within the annual Council Tax Base calculation.

Core Principles

- 3.11 In common with LCTS schemes established by many other Councils, the Hartlepool LCTS scheme has been centred on a number of core principles:

Every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax - All working age claimants will have their LCTS entitlements calculated to ensure an affordable and sustainable scheme.

Everyone in the Household should contribute appropriately - Hartlepool will implement Central Government changes to the value of non-dependant adult deductions from Council Tax Support entitlements.

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

Streamline / Simplify the LCTS Scheme – the Hartlepool scheme will continue to remove 2nd adult rebate, and restrict backdating of LCTS to a maximum of 4 weeks. The 2nd Adult rebate applies only to Working Age claims, Pension Age claims continue to be eligible for 2nd Adult rebate although current numbers are extremely small.

Retain War Widows / War Pensions Local disregards framework – under the national CTB regulations Local Authorities are required to disregard the first £10 per week of War Pension Scheme and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments. In addition Local Authorities have the discretion to top up the disregard to the full amount. Hartlepool have historically applied the discretionary top up and this continues to apply in the Council's LCTS scheme.

- 3.12 The Government considered the position of low income pensioners associated with the abolition of Council Tax Benefit and the introduction of LCTS. They determined that, unlike most other groups, pensioners cannot reasonably be expected to seek paid employment to increase their income. Therefore the Government determined that as a specific vulnerable group, low income pensioners should be protected from any reduction in support as a result of this reform. There is no indication that the Government will change its position on this core principle for 2022/23.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Council has the option to amend the LCTS on an annual basis subject to approval and relevant consultations. Given the budget position outlined elsewhere on today's agenda an increase in support (i.e. a reduction in rate payable) has not been included as an option for

consideration – as this would increase the budget gap and mean more service cuts are required.

- 4.2 The table below details a number of potential options to reduce support (i.e. increase the rate payable) for consideration.

LCTS Scheme	Additional Potential Council Tax Income*	Impact on Households				
		Band A LCTS Liability	Council Tax Increase for LCTS - full entitlement	Amounted Collected via Attachment of Benefit In Year	Arrears at the end of Year 1	Arrears at the end of Year 2
12%	n/a	£168	n/a	£148	£20	£40
14%	£0.168m	£196	17%	£148	£48	£95
16%	£0.337m	£224	33%	£148	£76	£151
18%	£0.505m	£252	50%	£148	£104	£207
20%	£0.673m	£280	67%	£148	£132	£263

*Figures are based on a 90% collection rate for LCTS households

- 4.3 An increase in the minimum amount payable would have a beneficial impact on the value of Council Tax collectable within the Borough. However, there would be a number of consequential outcomes that need careful consideration:

- Collection from LCTS households is generally more challenging and resource intensive for the Revenues Team. One of the proposals anticipated to be brought forward to close the budget gap is to increase the overall collection rate to 99% in the Council Tax Base. An increase to the LCTS amount payable would significantly increase the risk that a 99% overall collection rate becomes unachievable. This would mean this savings proposal would need to be reviewed.
- Whilst the headline increases may appear small, the percentage increase is more significant and impacts on those least able to pay. An increase from 12% to 20% represents a 67% increase for those in full receipt of LCTS i.e. from £168 to £280.
- Currently, in the best case scenario, Attachment of Benefits (AoB) from week 12 would result in a year end Arrears of £20. An increase in the scheme % rate would increase arrears for these low income households. In a 20% scheme scenario these arrears increase significantly to £132 for year one. As only one AoB can be in place at any one time, higher arrears will also become stacked, placing a significant financial burden on low income households.
- Despite best efforts, there would likely be an increase in arrears and Bad Debt write off in future years as a consequence of any increase. For those with Attachment of Benefits, arrears would grow year on year.

- The last public consultation on the LCTS was in Autumn 2019. Of the 333 respondents, 64% were in favour of retaining the 12% minimum payment. Of those who did favour an increase, 49% were in favour of the smallest possible increase, to 14%.
- 4.4 Given the factors listed above, the economic uncertainty regarding the ending of furlough and the economic recovery from Covid, a period of stability is needed. Therefore, it is recommended that the Council continues to adopt a 12% LCTS scheme for 2022/23.
- 4.5 The core principles set out in section 3.11 underpin the Council's LCTS scheme and have been in place from the outset. It is proposed that these principles are carried forward into the 2022/23 scheme without amendment.
- 4.6 LCTS entitlements are determined using a complex means tested calculation. Hartlepool continue to apply within its LCTS schemes, those changes applied by the DWP to the national Housing Benefit scheme. It is proposed that this continues for 2022/23 to mirror national changes to promote consistency and simplify administrative processes.
- 4.7 However, a growing number of Councils are moving to a "banded scheme" which creates income bands that determines a level of Council Tax Support, rather than specific income. Such an approach whilst creating cliff-edges in support does simplify the scheme and has clear administrative benefits.
- 4.8 As Universal Credit continues to be rolled out, those households transferring no longer receive housing benefit from the Council but instead receive housing financial support as part of their Universal Credit. This has a consequential impact on the level of Housing Benefit Administration Grant received by the Council and therefore the size and structure of the Benefits team within the Council.
- 4.9 Given the continued reduction in administration grant, future consideration of a banded scheme may be required, in order to ensure enough capacity is retained within the benefit team for other core work. This will require significant and complex financial modelling. Experience from councils which have adopted this approach indicates that the changes either increase the cost to the council, which would increase the budget gap, or reduce support to low income households. Neither outcome would be appropriate during the Covid recovery period. Therefore, it is not proposed to progress a banded scheme for 2022/23.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Any increase in the level of Council Tax payable by recipients of LCTS will increase the risk of collection performance dropping for LCTS recipients but also the wider collection position given the increased

administrative burden that will result. Continuing with a 12% scheme will mitigate that risk.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The cost of the LCTS scheme is included within the annual Council Tax Base calculations. The MTFS allows for a base increase over the period, reflecting both the anticipated cost of LCTS, but also other factors such as housing growth. The MTFS will be updated when the Base position is calculated based on latest available information in November.
- 6.2 The proposals set at section 4, outline the potential increased Council Tax that could be achieved with a reduction in support. Continued effort will be made to engage with and increase the collection rate for those in receipt of LCTS.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Councils are required to determine and operate their own LCTS scheme for each financial year. Once a LCTS scheme has been set for a financial year it cannot be altered until the following financial year.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 There is a requirement to consult on any proposals that amend the current LCTS scheme. Therefore, if Members determine they wish to consider alternative LCTS schemes the necessary consultation will need to be undertaken and a further report then brought back to this Committee to determine the recommended scheme to be referred to Council.

9. CHILD / FAMILY POVERTY

- 9.1 An Impact Assessment covering LCTS has been reviewed and is included at **Appendix A**, which reflects continuation of a 12% scheme. This will need updating if Members wish to consult on alternative options and the implications then considered alongside the consultation outcome before a final decision is made.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 10.1 An Impact Assessment covering LCTS has been reviewed and is included at **Appendix B**. As detailed in paragraph 9.1 this is based on a 12% scheme and would also need to be updated should alternative options be considered.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no direct staffing implications of the proposals.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 There are no asset management considerations.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 It is recommended that Members:

- i. Note the current costs and administration impact/risks associated with the LCTS scheme; and
- ii. Approve the 2022/23 scheme continues as a 12% scheme, to be referred to full Council.

14. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 To update Finance and Policy Committee on the latest position with regard to the LCTS scheme.

14.2 The recommendation to refer continuation of a 12% LCTS scheme for 2022/23 to full Council is designed to provide a period of stability for both low income working age households eligible for this support and the Council, whilst the economy recovers from the financial impact of the Covid pandemic.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21 – Finance and Policy Committee, 9th December 2019.

16. CONTACT OFFICER

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director



Director of Resources and Development



Chief Solicitor



Poverty Impact Assessment Form

4.2 Appendix A

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	✓			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.
Those who are disabled or suffer from illness / mental illness	✓			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.
Those with low educational attainment	✓			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.
Those who are unemployed	✓			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.
Those who are underemployed	✓			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.
Children born into families in poverty	✓			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.
Those who find difficulty in managing their finances	✓			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.
Lone parents	✓			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.
Those from minority ethnic backgrounds	✓			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.

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
Low Income Individuals, Families and Households	Yes			The operation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme means that those meeting the eligibility criteria will receive a reduction to Council Tax payable.
Overall impact of Policy / Decision				
POSITIVE IMPACT	Yes	ADJUST / CHANGE POLICY / SERVICE		N/A
NO IMPACT / NO CHANGE	N/A	STOP / REMOVE POLICY / SERVICE		N/A
ADVERSE IMPACT BUT CONTINUE	N/A			
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

Equality Impact Assessment Form

4.2 Appendix B

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
Resources and Development	Finance	Benefits	James Magog
Service, policy, practice being reviewed/changed or planned	Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2022/23		
Why are you making the change?	At this stage no change is proposed.		
How might this impact (positively/negatively) on people who share protected characteristics?			
<i>Please tick</i>		POSITIVELY	NEGATIVELY
Age			
The Government considered the position of low income pensioners associated with the abolition of Council Tax Benefit and the introduction of LCTS. The Government determined that unlike most other groups, pensioners cannot reasonably be expected to seek paid employment to increase their income. Therefore the Government determined that as a specific vulnerable group, low income pensioners should be protected from any reduction in support as a result of this reform. The Government has not changed its position on this core principle for 2022/23. A neutral relative impact is therefore envisaged.			
Disability			
The 2022/23 proposed scheme continues with the core principle that every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax. The Council endeavours to minimise the impact of LCTS. The scheme does not provide protection of detriment to any specific working age group. A neutral relative impact is therefore envisaged.			
Gender Re-assignment			
The 2022/23 proposed scheme continues with the core principle that every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax. The Council endeavours to minimise the impact of LCTS. The scheme does not provide protection of detriment to any specific working age group. A neutral relative impact is therefore envisaged.			
Race			
The 2022/23 proposed scheme continues with the core principle that every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax. The Council endeavours to minimise the impact of LCTS. The scheme does not provide protection of detriment to any specific working age group. A neutral relative impact is therefore envisaged.			
Religion			
The 2022/23 proposed scheme continues with the core principle that every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax. The Council endeavours to minimise the impact of LCTS. The scheme does not provide protection of detriment to any specific working age group. A neutral relative impact is therefore envisaged.			
Gender			
The 2022/23 proposed scheme continues with the core principle that every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax. The Council endeavours to minimise the impact of LCTS. The scheme does not provide protection of detriment to any specific working age group. A neutral relative impact is therefore envisaged.			
Sexual Orientation			
The 2022/23 proposed scheme continues with the core principle that every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax. The Council endeavours to minimise the impact of LCTS. The scheme does not provide protection of detriment to any specific working age group. A neutral relative impact is therefore envisaged.			

Marriage & Civil Partnership			
The 2022/23 proposed scheme continues with the core principle that every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax. The Council endeavours to minimise the impact of LCTS. The scheme does not provide protection of detriment to any specific working age group. A neutral relative impact is therefore envisaged.			
Pregnancy & Maternity			
The 2022/23 proposed scheme continues with the core principle that every working age household should pay something towards Council Tax. The Council endeavours to minimise the impact of LCTS. The scheme does not provide protection of detriment to any specific working age group. A neutral relative impact is therefore envisaged.			
Has there been consultation /is consultation planned with people who will be affected by this policy? How has this affected your decision making?		<p>The existing scheme has been consulted upon previously. Consultation would be undertaken should an amendment be proposed.</p> <p>It is not envisaged that any scheme change will impact the Equality Impact Assessment, the same relative impact is anticipated.</p>	
As a result of your decision how can you mitigate negative/maximise positive outcomes and foster good relationships?		By applying the scheme fairly and consistently across all households within Hartlepool.	
Describe how you will address and monitor the impact		1. No Impact - No Major Change	
		No new impact expected.	
		2. Adjust/Change Policy	
		N/A	
		3. Adverse Impact but Continue as is	
		N/A	
		4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal	
		N/A	
Initial Assessment		Reviewed	19/08/21
Completed	19/08/21	Published	13/09/21

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13th September 2021



Report of: Director of Children's & Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Budget and Policy Framework.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To outline the process for the development of the draft Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021-2023 (**Appendix 1**) and approve the draft Plan for consultation.

2.2 The purpose of this report is to present the Council with the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2021-2023, Finance and Policy Committee for consultation prior to the approval of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021/23, which will be presented to Safer Hartlepool Partnership on the 20th September 2021; Audit and Governance Committee on the 29th September, and Children's Services Committee on 12 October 2021.

2.3 Recommendations made by the Finance and Policy Committee, Children's Services Committee, Safer Hartlepool Partnership and Audit and Governance Committee will be incorporated into the final plan which will be reported back to Children's Services Committee prior to final adoption of the plan by full Council.

2.4 The report will be present to Children's Service Committee on the 29th September to seek approval for the presentation to Full Council on the 4 November to seek adoption of the Youth Justice Plan 2021/2023.

2.4 The final Strategy Plan will also be sent to the National Youth Justice Board.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The national Youth Justice System primarily exists to ensure that children and young people between the age of 10 and 17 do not engage in offending or re-offending behaviour and to ensure that where a young person is arrested and charged with a criminal offence, they are dealt with differently to adult offenders to reflect their particular welfare needs as children.
- 3.2 Local Youth Offending Services were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop, deliver, commission and coordinate the provision of youth justice services within each Local Authority.
- 3.3 Hartlepool Youth Justice Service was established in April 2000 and is responsible for youth justice services locally. It is a multi-agency service and is made up of representatives from the Council's Children's Services, Police, Probation, Health and Education.
- 3.4 The primary objectives of Youth Justice Services are to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people and reduce the use of custody.
- 3.5 There is a statutory requirement for all Youth Justice Services to annually prepare, a local Youth Justice Plan for submission to the national Youth Justice Board.
- 3.6 The annual Youth Justice Plan provides an overview of how the Youth Justice Service, the Youth Justice Service Strategic Management Board and wider partnership will ensure that the service has sufficient resources and infrastructure to deliver youth justice services in its area in line with the requirements of the *National Standards for Youth Justice Services* to:
- promote performance improvement;
 - shape youth justice system improvement;
 - improve outcomes for young people, victims and the broader community.
- 3.7 The Youth Justice Service were inspected by HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in October 2020. This inspection is part of a four-year programme of youth offending service (YOS) inspections. HMIP inspected and rated Hartlepool Youth Justice Service (YJS) across three broad areas of its work, referred to as 'domains': the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. HMIP inspect against 12 'standards', shared between the domains. Overall, Hartlepool YJS was rated as 'Good' which is a very positive outcome and provides the authority with a level of assurance, the recommendations for improvement identified in this report have been address in YJS plan 2021/23.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 It is proposed that the Youth Offending Service and broader youth justice Partnership focus on the following key strategic objectives during 2021/23;

- **Early Intervention and Prevention** - sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that there remain strategies and services in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour
- **Re-offending** - Reducing further offending by young people who have committed crime with a particular emphasis on the development of activities to address the offending behaviour of young women
- **Remand and Custody** – Demonstrate that there are robust alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands to custody whilst awaiting trial/sentencing
- **Voice of the Young Person** – ensure that all young people are actively involved in developing their own plans and interventions and have the opportunity to develop and inform current and future service delivery
- **Effective Governance** – ensure that the Youth Offending Strategic Management Board is a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Offending Service performance
- **Risk and Safety & Wellbeing (Asset Plus)** – ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk of harm, safety and wellbeing concerns and desistance factors, to inform effective intervention and risk management
- **‘Child First’** – ensure that the Child First principles are embedded within the Youth Justice Service and that every child has the opportunity to live a safe and crime free life, and makes a positive contribution to society.
- **Education, Training, Employment** – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Schools, Virtual School, One Stop Shop etc to ensure all Young People open to the YJS are actively engaging in some form of suitable ETE, thus reducing NEET numbers and increasing attendance.
- **Substance Misuse** – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Horizons/START to improve and sustain the engagement of young people open to the YJS within substance misuse services.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The strategic plan identifies key risk to future delivery as detailed in Section 8. of the plan these are:
- The unpredictability associate with secure remand episodes and secure remand length has the potential to place significant financial pressure on the Youth Justice Service and the broader Local Authority
 - Managing the potential for reduction in YJB grant and partnership financial and ‘in-kind’ contributions for post-2021/23
 - Performance on reoffending outcomes and impact to children
 - Emerging concerns around Serious Youth Violence, Criminal Exploitation and County Lines.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 A local authority must submit a youth justice plan annually to the Youth Justice Board setting out (a) how youth justice services are to be provided and funded in their area and (b) how the YOTs established by them are to be composed and funded, how they are to operate and what functions they are to carry out. The plan must be published in such manner and by such date as the Secretary of State may direct.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 This plan has had the approval of the Youth Justice Management Board and consultation will be sought through the committee approval process before providing the Youth Justice Board with a final version.

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

- 9.1 Not applicable

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

10.1 Not applicable

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

11.1 There are no staffing consideration within this report

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 There are no asset management consideration within this report

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 The Council is requested to note the progress made against the local Youth Justice Plan (2019/2021) and ratify the 2021/2023 plan.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 The development of the Youth Justice plan for 2021/2023 will provide the Youth Justice Service with a clear steer to bring about further reductions in youth offending and contribute to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families alongside the broader community.

14.2 The local Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2021/2023 will establish responsibility across the Youth Justice Service and the Youth Justice Strategic Board for taking each improvement activity forward within agreed timescales.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Director of Finance and Policy ☒

Chief Solicitor ☒



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1. FOREWORD

Welcome to the 2021 - 2023 Hartlepool Youth Justice Strategic Plan. This plan sets out our ambitions and priorities for Hartlepool Youth Justice Service and the broader local Youth Justice Partnership for the next 2 years.

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership, Community Safety Plan 2020-21 establishes a vision for the town:

“To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit”

The Youth Justice Service and broader partnership has a key role in contributing to this vision, by continuing to deliver a high quality, effective and safe youth justice service that prevents crime and the fear of crime, whilst ensuring that young people who do offend are identified, managed and supported appropriately, without delay.

In recent years Hartlepool has witnessed a significant reduction in youth crime. The local youth justice partnership has been particularly effective in reducing the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time, but there still remains a need to drive down incidents of re-offending by young people who have previously offended. This will be achieved through a combination of robust interventions designed to manage and reduce risk of harm, support safety & wellbeing, restore interpersonal relationships, promote whole family engagement and achieve positive outcomes. Encouragingly, Hartlepool Youth Justice Service has implemented a strong health offer for all young people and continues to develop its restorative offer whilst ensuring that victims of youth crime also have a voice.

The recent HMIP inspection was a positive experience resulting in a strong GOOD result overall for the service. It highlighted many positives to be maintained and built upon and also areas requiring improvement, the YJS and partners continue to work hard to improve in all in areas. The HMIP inspection framework, ‘Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019’ and the ‘Child First’ ethos will be integral to the way the service builds upon progress to date. However, it must be acknowledged that the ongoing difficulties with the COVID 19 pandemic, current economic climate, and the continuing introduction of new reforms relating to how we respond to children, young people, families and communities, will inevitably present new challenges in the coming year and beyond.

Despite these challenges I am very confident that Hartlepool Youth Justice Service and the broader Youth Justice Partnership will continue to help make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit.

In 2021-23 we will strive to continuously improve by:

- Maintaining and building upon the current Health offer and Enhanced Case Management model, with trauma informed practice at its core.
- Continuing to work with partners to develop a clear and consistent approach to all forms of child exploitation.
- Building on the improving YJS offer of a 'whole family approach'
- Ensuring the Service maintains a 'child first' ethos.
- Continuing to develop and embed a creative Early Intervention & Prevention offer

None of the above will be possible without the continued support and close working relationships of our partners and Children's Social Care. In addition, these relationships allow us to mitigate the impact of ever reducing partnership budgets whilst maintaining the quality and effectiveness of the Service.

2020-21 has been a difficult and frustrating year for everyone, especially in light of the COVID 19 pandemic, an initial radical overhaul of service delivery and ever changing Business Continuity and Recovery Plans added to the ongoing pressures. It needs to be highlighted that all staff have coped admirably and very professionally throughout this period ensuring the service continued to reach out and deliver interventions to all young people in very difficult circumstances.

In light of the above, as always, the local authority and Strategic Management Board is extremely grateful for the skill and dedication of our employees in continuing to support young people who offend, or are at risk of becoming involved in offending.

On behalf of Hartlepool Borough Council Children's Services and Youth Justice Service Strategic Management Board I am pleased to pledge my support to and endorse the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021-23



Sally Robinson, Director, Children and Joint Commissioning Services

2. INTRODUCTION

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service (YJS) covers the local authority area of Hartlepool which is impacted upon by a range of social, economic and environmental factors. Using the 2019 average score of the Index of Multiple Deprivation Hartlepool is the 10th most deprived Local Authority in the country with high levels of unemployment, the initial impact of Universal Credit, crime and anti-social behaviour, domestic violence and substance misuse. All of these factors provide significant challenges to the young people we work with impacting on their behaviours and influencing outcomes.

Hartlepool is served by 5 Secondary Schools, 1 Pupil Referral Unit and Catcote Academy which caters for secondary and post-16 students with special educational needs. There are 4 Sixth Form providers two of which are located within Secondary Schools.

The current population of Hartlepool is in the region of 93,000 with approx. 10,000 being between the ages of 10-17.

Hartlepool also has a low BAME population currently at 2.1%

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

In summary, young people who offend are:

- Dealt with by youth courts;
- Given different sentences in comparison to adults and
- When necessary, detained in special secure centres for young people.

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority and statutory partners to secure and coordinate local youth justice services for young people in our area who come into contact with the Youth Justice System as a result of their offending behaviour. This is achieved through the established Youth Justice Service.

The primary functions of Youth Justice Services are to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people, reduce the use of custody and ensure all of the above are delivered with a “Child First” ethos embedded across the service.

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service was established in April 2000 and is a multi-agency service made up of representatives from Children’s Services, Police, Probation, Public Health, Education and Community Safety. Hartlepool Youth Justice Service seeks to ensure that:

- All young people entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk and protective factors associated with their offending behaviour in order to inform effective interventions.
- Courts and Referral Order panels are provided with high quality reports that enable them to make informed decisions.
- Orders of the Court are managed in such a way that they support the primary aim of the youth justice system, alongside managing risk of harm and ensuring there is due regard to the welfare of the young person.
- Services provided to courts are of a high quality and ensure that magistrates and the judiciary have confidence in the supervision of young people.
- Comprehensive bail and remand management services are in place locally for young people remanded or committed to custody, or on bail while awaiting trial or sentence.
- The needs and risks of young people sentenced to custodial sentences (including long-term custodial sentences) are assessed to ensure effective resettlement and management of risk.
- Those receiving youth justice services are treated fairly regardless of race, language, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or any other factor, and actions are put in place to address discrimination if identified

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

- Creative strategies and services are in place locally to prevent young people from becoming involved in crime or anti-social behaviour;
- Out-of-court disposals deliver targeted and bespoke interventions for those at risk of entering the Youth Justice System
- Assistance is provided to the Police when determining whether Youth Cautions should be issued and
- Restorative approaches are used, where appropriate, with victims of crime and ensures that restorative justice is central to work undertaken with young people who offend.

The Hartlepool Youth Justice Plan for 2021-2023 sets out how youth justice services will be delivered, funded and governed in response to both local need and national policy changes and in line with the Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019, the recent HMIP inspection findings and the ongoing Business Continuity and Recovery plan. It also highlights how Hartlepool Youth Justice Service will work in partnership to prevent offending and re-offending by young people and reduce the use of custody.

3. STRATEGIC VISION AND PRIORITIES

Hartlepool's Children's Strategic Partnership has set out its vision for children and young people within the town as follows:

Vision:

Our ambition as a children's partnership is to enable all children and families in Hartlepool to have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and be supported to be safe in their homes and communities.

Obsessions:

- Children and young people have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and are safe
- Improving family relationships, strengths, skills and ability to cope
- Reducing the impact of domestic violence, mental health, drugs and alcohol misuse on children and families
- Helping parents, carers and young people to gain skills and get jobs

The Youth Justice Service, as part of the wider services for children, seeks to deliver on the vision and obsessions through a number of identified Youth Justice Service Strategic Priorities for 2021 - 2023.

In addition, these priorities align and overlap with the strategic priorities set by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership for 2020-21:

- Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour
- Reduce the harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse

- Reduce Domestic Violence

To enable Hartlepool Youth Justice Service to contribute to the vision above, it will focus on the following strategic objectives and priorities:

Strategic Objectives and Priorities – 2021-2023

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service (and the broader Youth Justice Partnership) will be utilising the YJB grant to help achieve the following key strategic objectives during 2021-23:

Youth Justice Strategic Priorities

Re-offending - reduce further offending by young people who have committed crime with a particular emphasis continuing on the development of Service interventions that are structured, responsive and tailored to meet identified individual need and evaluated. (Both within Youth Justice Services and provided by external agencies).

Key Actions

- Undertake quality assessments of young people at risk of re-offending, ensuring risks, desistance factors and needs are identified which inform effective intervention planning
- Improve interventions delivered, through innovation and collaboration where appropriate
- Improve intelligence and timely information sharing relating to those young people who are at risk of offending, to inform service-wide improvement activity or targeted work
- Continue to improve the 'whole family' approach and Health offer within the service and with partners
- Continue to undertake scoping activities in relation to retaining both the Speech & Language Therapist, Trauma Informed Care Pathway and Emotional Wellbeing therapists presence within the YJS beyond March 2020

Early Intervention and Prevention – sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that creative strategies and services remain in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Key Actions

- Embedding of the YJS Early Intervention and Prevention offer across Children's Services and the partnership
- Operate a targeted approach to supporting individuals and groups of young people at risk of offending - based on intelligence and collaborative working with key partners (Police, ASB, Early Help, Voluntary Community Sector, Schools, etc)
- Work with Partners to reduce and respond to the Child exploitation
- Ongoing trend analysis of past and current FTE's to identify key themes and responses
- Ongoing briefings to key partners (such as Police and Social Care) to emphasise and promote the Prevention and Diversion agenda
- Ensure point of arrest diversion is evident as a distinct and substantially different response to formal out of court disposals

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

Key Actions

- Monitor and maintain the use of Compliance Panels to ensure continued effectiveness
- Ensure the Service provides intensive packages of supervision and support to high intensity orders and bail arrangements
- Ensure that the needs of young people in custody and the factors relating to their offending behaviour are addressed in the secure estate to prevent further offending upon release
- Ensure that robust and timely Resettlement Planning is in place for young people upon release to reduce the risk of further reoffending (HMIP Youth Justice inspection framework, standard 4.1 Resettlement, May 2021)
- Review capacity to deliver ISS, and resource appropriately, through a multi-agency approach

Risk and Safety & Wellbeing (Asset Plus) – ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk of harm, safety and wellbeing concerns and desistance factors, to inform effective intervention and risk management.

Key Actions

- Continued Asset Plus refresher training, ensuring robust assessment of a young person's needs
- Work in partnership with other agencies to ensure there is a co-ordinated assessment and plan relating to a young person's risk and safety & wellbeing
- Implement an audit cycle/performance clinic to ensure assessment and plans are meeting the appropriate quality standards through robust and transparent quality assurance and feedback.
- Ensure that desistance factors are identified and analysed in all assessments of every young person subject to YJS supervision through quality assurance and staff supervision.
- Attendance and contribution to YJB Regional Effective Practice groups and peer collaboration with Tees Valley and North East YOT colleagues
- Ongoing internal staff training and workshops to benchmark quality standards in the management of risk and safety & wellbeing
- Continue to work alongside the partnership to identify suitable interventions and pathways for children and young people criminally exploited and potentially being drawn into County Lines activity
- Undertake 'Practice Week', this consists of a team of independent auditors to carry out case work audits, undertake practice observations and gain feedback from young people and their families. The evaluation of practice week will inform the service development plan.

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

Key Actions

- Ensure that victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches leading to improved outcomes for victims
- Continue to use restorative practice across all aspects of the Youth Justice Service
- Regularly re-visit, review and develop practice and process around Referral Order panels to ensure increased involvement from victims, panel members, young people and their families
- Continue to develop the in-house RJ 'offer' to consolidate and embed current and better integrated working practices – including the victim's evaluation

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

Key Actions

- The Youth Justice Management Board will provide oversight and scrutiny of the service action plan and performance
- Ensure Management Board members attend regular development and shadowing opportunities as provided by the YJS Team Manager.
- Continue to review the Terms of Reference for the YJS board to ensure it is fit for purpose and includes appropriate representation and contribution of all statutory partners.
- Attendance and representation at YJB Regional executive meetings with colleague YOT Managers from the North East – to share learning and Governance issues to improve wider regional service delivery

Voice of the Young People – ensure that all young people are actively involved in developing their own plans having the opportunity to develop and inform current and future service delivery

Key Actions

- Ensure young people's involvement in relation to their assessment and plans is clearly evidenced within the records.
- Young people to be actively involved in developing their own plans and their comments are captured at implementation, review and closure of all plans
- The service will ensure young people are provided with opportunities to influence and shape service delivery – through access to, and completion of, Survey Monkey feedback
- YJS leadership team to hold regular evaluation/feedback meetings to ensure all comments are seen and actioned where required

'Child First' – ensure that the Child First principles are embedded within the Youth Justice Service and that every child has the opportunity to live a safe and crime free life, and make a positive contribution to society.

Key Actions

- Prioritise the best interests of children, recognising their needs, capacities, rights and potential.
- Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion.
- Ensure that all work carried out by the service is a meaningful collaboration with children and their parents/carers.
- The YJS will promote a childhood that is removed from the Justice System, using prevention, diversion and minimal intervention and that all work minimises stigma.

Education, Training, Employment – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Schools, Virtual School, One Stop Shop etc to ensure all Young People open to the YJS are actively engaging in some form of suitable ETE, thus reducing NEET numbers and increasing attendance.

Key Actions

- Ensure Education is suitably represented on the Strategic Management Board
- Education reports submitted by partners for each Strategic Management Board meeting
- Encourage children's active engagement with their respective education provider
- The YJS leadership team to hold monthly Education meetings with all education partners
- Working in collaboration regarding children with EHCP/SEN

Substance Misuse – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Horizons/START to improve and sustain the engagement of young people open to the YJS within substance misuse services.

Key Actions

- Ensure Substance Misuse providers are suitably represented on the Strategic Management Board
- Regular reports/updates submitted to the Strategic Management Board by Substance Misuse providers
- Ensure the co-location and continued working arrangements/pathways are embedded between the YJS and Substance Misuse partners
- All children and young people identified as needing support are actively encouraged to engage with appropriate Substance Misuse services

4. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Service Structure:

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service employs a staff team of 27 people, which includes three seconded staff, and 5 sessional workers (**see Appendix 1**). The service also benefits from a team of 6 active volunteers who are Referral Order Panel members. All staff and volunteers are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks which are renewed every three years.

The YJS delivery model has been reconfigured and restructured during the last year to ensure the service remains sufficiently flexible to address future challenges. This will continue to be achieved through a generic case management and intervention delivery model, across pre and post court functions. This will ensure maximum resilience, capacity and flexibility to meet the needs of children and young people and the service as a whole.

The current YJS structure aims to consolidate areas of strong performance and effective practice, whilst also providing a dynamic framework to respond to emerging priorities, recognised both by the Local Authority and key partners.

This model (alongside the YJS strategic plan) allows the organisation and the wider YJS partnership to action the priorities for service delivery and to achieve best outcomes for children and young people across the range of statutory and preventative services.

Governance:

The Youth Justice Service is located within the Children & Joint Commissioning Services Department. The Management Board is chaired by the local Neighbourhood Policing Chief Inspector and is made up of representatives from Children's Social Care, Police, Probation, Public Health, Courts, Education, Youth Support Services and Community Safety.

Effective integrated strategic partnership working and clear oversight by the Management Board are critical to the success and effective delivery of youth justice services in Hartlepool. The board is directly responsible for:

- Determining how appropriate youth justice services are to be provided and funded;
- Overseeing the formulation each year of the youth justice plan;
- Agreeing measurable objectives linked to key performance indicators as part of the youth justice plan;
- Ensuring delivery of the statutory aim to prevent offending by children and young people;
- Giving strategic direction to Youth Justice Service Manager and Youth Justice Service Team;
- Providing performance management of the prevention of youth crime and periodically report this to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership;
- Ensuring that Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019 are embedded across the whole service and audits are completed within required timescales;
- Promoting the key role played by the Youth Justice Service within local integrated offender management arrangements;

- Advocate on behalf of the YJS within their own service areas and beyond, specifically supporting the YJS to overcome barriers to effective multi agency working;
- Oversight of all data submissions to the YJB ensuring timeliness, especially conditions set out in the YJB grant;
- Ensuring the recommendations outlined in the HMIP inspection report are addressed and monitored at board meetings

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

Members of the Board are knowledgeable, participate well in discussions and are members of other related boards, such as the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Safer Hartlepool Partnership, which contribute to effective partnership working at a strategic level. Board meetings are well structured and members are held accountable. The current membership of the Board is as follows:

Mark Haworth (Chair)	Chief Inspector – Neighbourhood Policing (Cleveland Police)
Jane Young (Deputy Chair)	Assistant Director – Children and Families' (HBC)
Roni Checksfield	Hartlepool YJS Manager (HBC)
Emma Rutherford	Virtual School Headteacher (HBC)
Ann Powell	Head of Cleveland NPS – National Probation Service (NE)
Rachel Parker	Community Safety Team Leader (HBC)

Zoe McKenna	One Stop Shop Manager (HBC)
Deborah Clark	Public Health Improvement Practitioner (HBC)
Jo Heaney	Clinical Commissioning Group (Tees Valley) (CCG)
Kate Stockdale	Head of Service, Substance Misuse (HBC)
Heather Moreton	Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS)
David Ward	Head of Finance (Children's & adults) (HBC)
Lisa Oldroyd	Office for Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
Helen Marriott	Health & Justice Services (TEWV)
Linda Bush	Head of Innovation and Engagement (North East & Cumbria) Youth Justice Board for England and Wales

5. PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

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

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

The Youth Justice Service contributes both to improving community safety and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and in particular protecting them from significant harm.

Many of the young people involved with the Youth Justice Service are amongst the most vulnerable children in the borough and are at greatest risk of social exclusion. The Youth Justice Service's multi-agency approach ensures that it plays a significant role in meeting the safeguarding needs of these young people. This is achieved through the effective assessment and management of safety & wellbeing and risk, through working in partnership with other services, for example Children's Services, Health, Education, Secure Estate and Police to ensure young people's wellbeing is promoted and they are protected from harm. Regular ongoing communication, meetings, joint training opportunities and speedy information/intelligence sharing ensure ongoing strong links and relationships.

All high risk cases can be escalated to either one or both of the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked group (VEMT) or the Strategic Risk Management Group, the Youth Justice Service has representation on both groups which meet monthly. Discussions around serious youth violence, criminal exploitation and county lines are conducted within these forums ensuring tight plans are implemented and strategic management oversight is afforded

6. RESOURCES AND SERVICES

The Youth Justice Service budget is mainly funded by a combination of Local Authority funding and Youth Justice Board grant, although historically there have been financial contributions from the Police and Health (CCG and Public Health). The Local Authority's contribution to the service has remained protected; however over time there have been reductions in the other areas of funding.

In April 2021 the YJB announced their grant allocations which is an 8.8% increase for Hartlepool (£411k compared to £378k in 20/21) equating to an additional £33,000. It is unclear whether this increased grant will apply in future years as the grant award letter does state:- *“This one-off uplift is by exception and is not guaranteed for future years. The YJB has sought for this additional funding to support local authorities to address some of the pressures in the system as you move into recovery following the impact of COVID-19 and to support the delivery of our strategic plan.”*

The National Probation Service continue to provide funding (£5k) as well as their staffing contribution which is 0.5 FTE, and the CCG contribution is a non-cash contribution via the commissioning of the Trauma Informed Care Pathway.

Cleveland Police ceased their cash contribution in 2013/14, however still provide the seconded Police Officer. Funding secured from the Police and Crime Commissioner in 2015 towards the delivery of Triage continues, there has however been a slight reduction in the amount of this funding which is secured for the next 12 months.

2021/2022 Youth Justice Service Budget

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Police		45,000		45,000
Police and Crime Commissioner			32,000	32,000
Probation		18,500	5,000	23,500
Health				0
Local Authority	150,000	120,000	105,000	375,000
Welsh Government				0
YJB	256,000		130,000	411,000
Other				0
Total	406,000	183,500	272,000	886,500

Planned/Proposed Expenditure 2021/22

Direct Costs	2021/22 Budget
	£'000
Employees	585
Premises	40
Transport	15
Other Non-Pay Costs	141
Indirect Costs – HBC #	42
Indirect Costs - Police	45
Indirect Costs - Probation	19
Total	887

- Inc recharges for premises, management, payroll, HR, finance, legal etc

The minimum staffing requirements set out in the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 requires that the service has a nominated person from each of the following statutory partners; Police Service, Children's Social Services, National Probation Service, Education and Health. Hartlepool YJS does not have an education rep sitting within the team, however there is a designated Education Officer who deals solely with YJS children as well as a designated One Stop Shop (OSS) worker who leads on all YJS post 16 education. Monthly Education meetings, attended by Education representatives, OSS worker and YJS staff are held where each child in the current cohort is discussed in depth, barriers to education, current circumstances and plans moving forward are also agreed. All staff have direct access to the Education Officer, wider Virtual School staff who provide support, advice and guidance and OSS worker to discuss ongoing daily education issues as and when they arise and gather any information/data as required.

7. PERFORMANCE & PRIORITIES

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

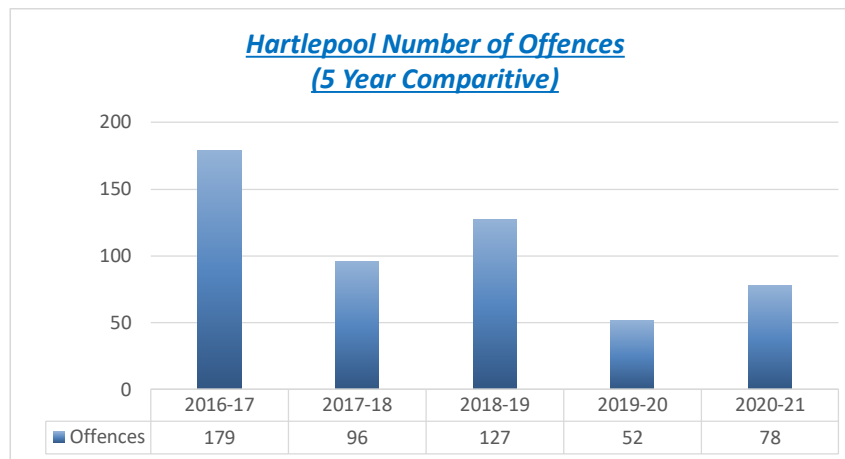
1. HARTLEPOOL YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	COMMENTS/UPDATES
Re-offending - <i>reduce further offending by young people who have committed crime with a particular emphasis in the development of Service interventions that are structured, responsive and tailored to meet identified individual need and evaluated. (Both within Youth Justice Service and provided by external agencies).</i>	Hartlepool YJS are in the process of embedding a clearer more robust process of identification and intervening much earlier with YP regarding reoffending. This needs to be a multi-agency approach across the LA with regular communication and buy in from all service areas. Recently received updated data from the YDS indicates a reduction in reoffending over the last year, however this remains a key priority as we are all too aware of how these figures can fluctuate very quickly. The YJS and partners continue to work hard in this area, to ensure the reduction is built upon and improved over the next 2 years.
Risk and Safety & Wellbeing (Asset Plus) – <i>ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk of harm, safety and wellbeing concerns and desistance factors, to inform effective intervention and risk management.</i>	All pre and post court cases within Hartlepool YJS benefit from an AssetPlus assessment. Quality Assurance frameworks have been implemented and aligned with HMIP Best Practice guidance, with all AssetPlus assessments countersigned by YJS managers. Risk management meetings are held for all High and V High and referrals to VEMT/Strategic Risk Management are made as required. The YJS Internal training programme 2021/22 (Attached at Appendix 2) covers the above as well as desistance etc.
Remand and Custody – <i>demonstrate that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody.</i>	Hartlepool YJS have a clear process for alternatives to custody through the offer of ISS bail packages and utilisation of pre-breach meetings for those at risk of custody via non-compliance. There has been a significant reduction in remands, 1 in 2019/20, 0 in 2020/21 and also 0 to date in 2021/22.

	Custody figures – 1 in 2019/20, 2 in 2020/21 and 0 to date in 2021/22. The YJS and partners continue to work hard in reducing these figures.
Early Intervention and Prevention – <i>sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that strategies and services remain in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.</i>	Hartlepool YJS have a robust embedded diversionary offer and OoCD disposal process. To enhance this offer and widen Early Intervention/Prevention the YJS will be working directly 1:1 with referrals received from the wider Children's Services for those YP at risk of offending. A bigger onus is now being placed on Prevention/early Intervention and the service is working very hard on bespoke creative individual packages of support for all children/YP being identified and referred.
Child First – <i>ensure that the Child First principles are embedded within the Youth Justice Service and that every child has the opportunity to live a safe and crime free life, and makes a positive contribution to society.</i>	We continue to embed the "Child First, Offender second" principles across the service, our aim is to deliver a non-stigmatising approach to interventions where all children/YP have a voice and are active in planning their own pathways and plans. Alongside this there are ongoing discussions/meetings being held with Cleveland Police and partners regarding Criminal exploitation and LAC (the criminalisation of these young people) and the various forums these issues are discussed.
Restorative Justice – <i>ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is incorporated in to the work undertaken with young people who offend.</i>	RJ and victim work continues to be delivered in house. We are now reviewing our own processes/monthly audit etc to improve our practice and the offer/outcomes to victims? This is being carried out at Leadership meetings, we have introduced an RJ database where this info is stored and monitored. We are seeing an increased improvement across the service with all areas of RJ.
Voice of the Young People – <i>ensure that all young people are actively involved in developing their own plans and interventions and have the opportunity to develop and inform current and future service delivery</i>	Hartlepool YJS continue to have an established in-house evaluation tool via 'survey monkey' – which is based on questions asked by HMIPs 'Viewpoint' survey before it was decommissioned in March 2017. We have now implemented Survey Monkey evaluations for young people, Parents/carers and Victims. AssetPlus self-assessments are completed at all initial, review and closure stages (across pre and post court cases). Children, YP and Parents/Carers are actively engaged in the creation of their plans and reviews with comments requested at all stages, as well as in depth Closure Summaries. This information is shared with the Management Board at board meetings for further discussion and to help shape future delivery and services.
Effective Governance – <i>ensure that the Youth Justice Strategic Management Board is a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Justice Service performance.</i>	As a result of various national and local drivers, it is important to emphasise that the YOT partnership should reflect the most appropriate local arrangement for maximum effectiveness. The Board's membership and activity was reviewed in May 2021 and will be reviewed again in 2022, this will be undertaken with all board members. There is a need to ensure development days and shadowing days are prioritised. Board members attended the bite size sessions delivered by the YJB in early 2021 and activity from board members is and continues to improve.

Education, Training, Employment – <i>Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Virtual School, OSS etc ensure all Young People open to the YJS are actively engaging in some form of suitable ETE, thus reducing NEET numbers and increasing attendance.</i>	<p>Identified during the recent HMIP as an area needing improvement. There is a need for the YJS to work closely with all relevant partners and work towards reducing NEET figures and improving engagement/attendance for all YP and their education provision.</p> <p>Up to date education reports are now presented at each board meeting by the relevant representatives, monthly education meetings are held and a database of all YP updated. Support with EHCP, SEN, alternate provision, PEX, PRU and Post 16 education is available via the Education reps. All YJS staff have direct access to the Education reps on a day to day basis.</p>
Substance Misuse – <i>Working with partners i.e. Horizons/START to improve and sustain the engagement of young people open to the YJS with substance misuse services.</i>	<p>Identified during the recent HMIP as an area needing improvement. There is a need for the YJS to work closely with all relevant partners to understand the low engagement and work towards sustaining the engagement of all YJS YP with Substance Misuse services. HOS Substance misuse now sits on the board and will be producing up to data/reports for future board meetings.</p> <p>Co-location of staff, joint working, joint training and daily communication is ongoing.</p>

Young People Who Offend

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



The number of offences committed by the YJS cohort has reduced from 179 (2016/17) to 78 in 2020/21, there have been slight fluctuations during this period, however this represents a significant reduction of 57% across the last 5 years and a 38% reduction in the last 3 years.

Prevention and Diversion

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service, and the broader youth justice partnership, continue to place a significant emphasis on the prevention of young people's involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour. This continues to positively impact on the reduction of young people entering the Youth Justice System.

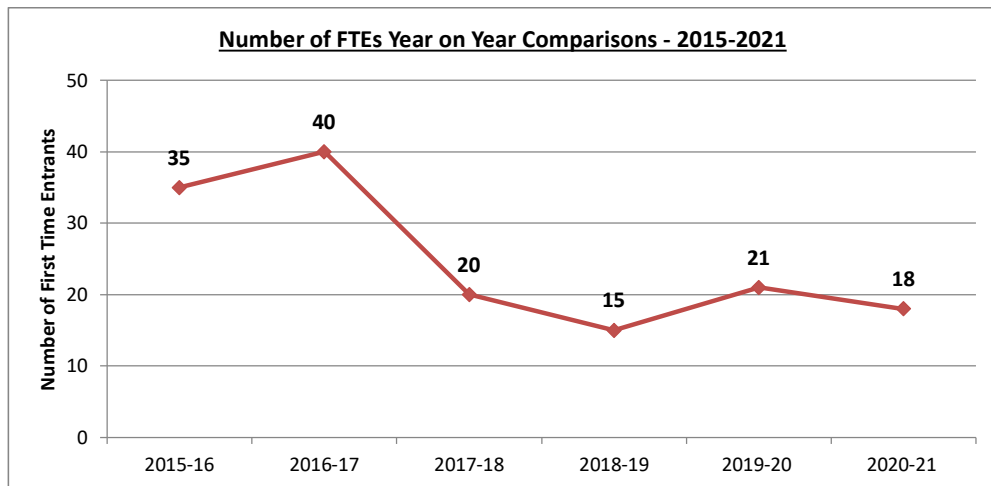
Youth crime prevention and diversion is based on the premise that it is possible to change the direction of young people by reducing risk factors that may lead to offending behaviour and enhancing protective factors that might help prevent offending.

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

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

Hartlepool YJS partnership arrangements with Cleveland Police are established and effective in relation to the diversion of young people from the Youth Justice System. This remains primarily through the delivery of Out Of Court Disposals (OOCd), with longer term data trend evidencing significant success in this area. Indeed, Hartlepool YJS will continue to monitor the number of FTEs and for those young people subject to an OOCd, ensuring interventions are robust and sufficient to address the offence committed, alongside other areas of need identified in the assessment, in order to help prevent any further offending.

Cleveland PCC continues to fund the diversionary Triage programme which has made a considerable contribution to the continuing reduction of FTEs. There was a recorded 40 FTEs in 2016/17 compared to 18 in 2020/21 a reduction of 55%, although figures have fluctuated over the last 3 years we are confident as a partnership that we can continue to reduce these figures.



Discussions are currently ongoing between the 3 Cleveland YOTs, Cleveland Police, CPS and the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner to discuss implementation of a “Divert from Charge” process, if and when implemented this will add another strand to the Prevention/Early Intervention/Diversion offer

Our Prevention and Early Intervention Offer has been overhauled and redesigned continuing the focus of a Child First Youth Justice Service. This will be delivered by ensuring that we:

- Prioritise the interests and needs of all children/YP
- Promote their individual strengths and capacities
- Build trusting supportive relationships
- Empower Children/YP to make positive contributions
- Encourage participation
- Ensure a non-stigmatised contact with the service

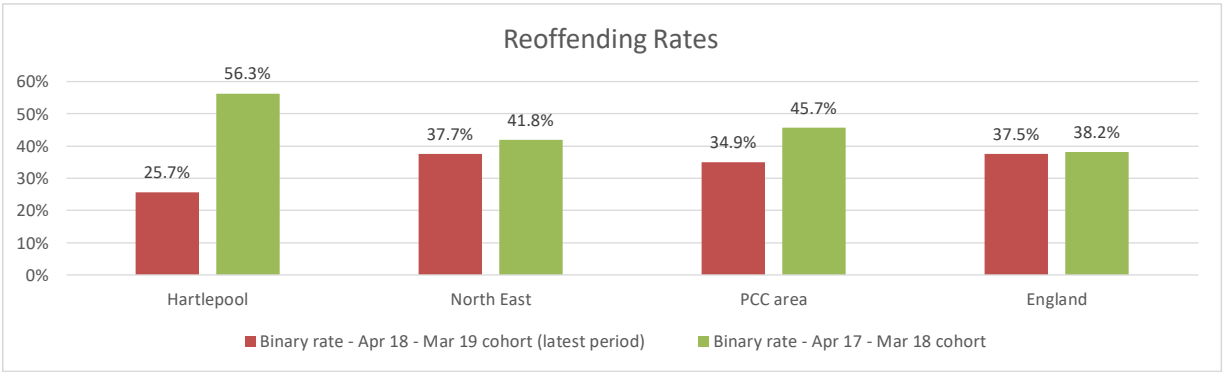
Referrals and numbers via this route will continue to increase into the service, this will be recorded and highlighted within all Management Board reports to indicate the ongoing importance of this work and the effect this is hoped to have on the reduction of children/YP entering the service via statutory means.

Continued multi agency partnership work is ongoing to implement suitable interventions and processes to work intensively with those young people identified as potentially being criminally exploited. Hartlepool YJS will be providing a leading role in this process alongside the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) local board. Discussions and plans are in the advanced stages within Children’s Services with the implementation of a Contextualised Safeguarding Hub which will bring the other forums together under one roof.

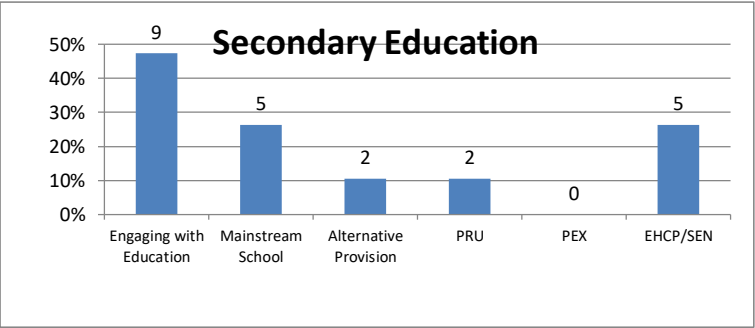
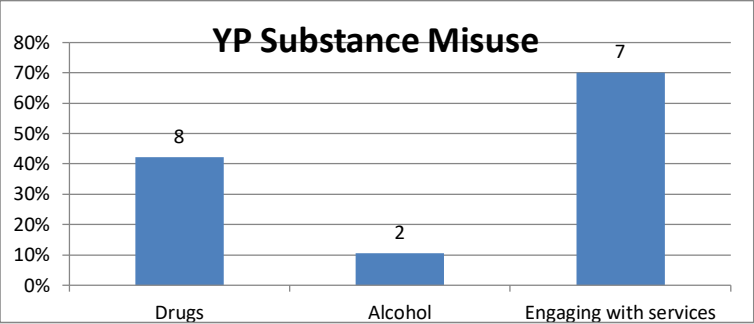
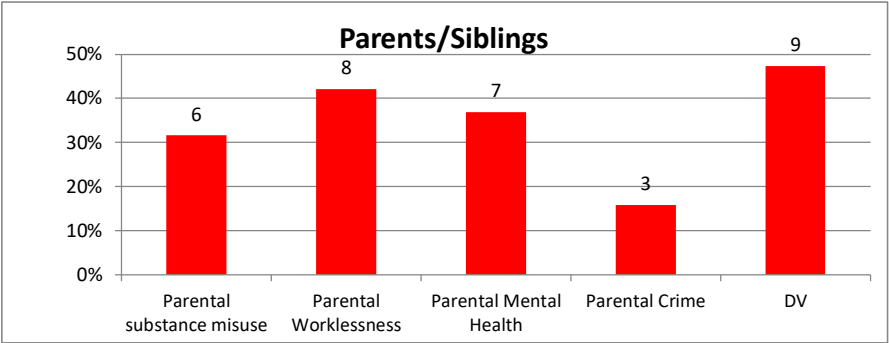
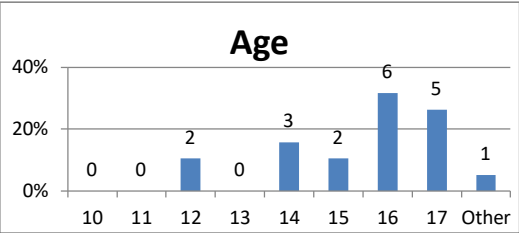
Reoffending

The rate of youth reoffending within Hartlepool has reduced significantly over the last year, it is currently below the national and regional average, however, it will continue to be a key priority in the coming year. Numbers can and will no doubt fluctuate in the future, we need to continue to work together as a service and partnership to aim to drive these figures down.

Each of the cohorts are tracked for a period of 12 months, plus a further waiting period of 6 months to allow for any offences which may not have yet been dealt with by the Criminal Justice System – therefore the most recent reoffending data always has an 18 month time lag.



The service is dealing with smaller caseloads consisting of complex individuals with multiple risks and vulnerabilities. Hartlepool YJS carry out a quarterly Needs Analysis of all YP open to the service and place a big onus on this. The Needs Analysis enables the service and partnership via Management Board meetings to have a good snap shot of the current cohort's complexities and potential gaps within delivery, services and areas of concern. Recent analysis reveals a cohort which display broader lifestyle choices relating to substance misuse and the need to generate income to maintain this. This also reflects the national and regional picture in terms of caseload composition.



**These graphs highlight a small snap shot of the Needs Analysis
**There are numerous graphs created depicting a multitude of up to date data

Furthermore, this cohort of young people who continue to offend are predominantly young males aged between 15 and 17, many of whom reside within Hartlepool's most deprived neighbourhoods. Although not mutually exclusive, the common criminogenic need and welfare issues prevalent amongst this cohort as identified within quarterly Needs Analysis as:

- higher than average mental health/emotional wellbeing needs
- higher levels of drug and alcohol use than for the general population and in particular 'heavy cannabis use'
- low educational attachment, attendance and attainment
- having family members or friends who offend
- higher than average levels of loss, bereavement, abuse and violence experienced within the family
- a history of family disruption
- chaotic and unstructured lifestyles

Alongside this cohort of young males, there is another cohort of young females aged 14 -17 whom, although perhaps not as prolific in terms of reoffending, are of significant concern due to multiple complex issues which are predominately welfare-orientated. These include:

- Substance misuse
- Chaotic lifestyles
- Sexual exploitation
- Missing from home
- Family breakdown

Again, as with the male cohort, young females who are offending are noted to have a higher prevalence of poor emotional well-being. Analysis shows that this arises from loss, bereavement and domestic or sexual abuse.

Working in partnership is key to supporting a greater understanding of these underlying issues, alongside addressing them in a holistic and co-ordinated way to provide "pathways out of offending", with the intention of trying to reduce crime and break the cycle of offending behaviour across generations. This collaborative work is achieved through the following partnerships:



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It is also important to adopt an 'intelligence-led' targeted approach, particularly in relation to prevention, and build on service-wide staff training to respond to Speech, Language, & Communication, alongside the emotional health and wellbeing needs of the young people. An important element to the reduction of reoffending and the number of those entering the youth justice system is the development of the YJS interventions. Interventions are bespoke, based on high quality, integrated assessments and plans, delivered by YJS staff and partner agencies. Progress has been made in this area, however further work is needed in the forthcoming year. Innovative interventions have been developed and a more evident 'Whole Family' approach is being further developed with the recent inclusion of Psychological Therapists and the re commissioning of the Speech and Language Therapist alongside the Trauma Informed Care Pathway within the service. This will continue to be monitored through established quality assurance and performance measures, such as the monthly YJS performance clinics and the Hartlepool Community Safety Partnership meetings between Police, Social Care, ASBU, YJS, Fire and Rescue Services and Adult Services.

Hartlepool YJS Health Offer is attached at Appendix 3

Victims of Youth Crime

Whilst crime rates in Hartlepool have fallen, the likelihood of being a victim of crime still remains a reality, especially in our most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. The YJS and broader Youth Justice Partnership are working hard to reduce the numbers of victims of crime, by incorporating the use of restorative justice practices. Restorative Justice (RJ) provides opportunities for those directly affected by an offence (victim, offender and members of the community) to communicate and ensure victims of youth crime have a voice.

In addition victims of youth crime are helped to access appropriate support pathways that enable them to move on from the impact of crime. A personalised approach is taken to ensure that victims of crime in Hartlepool are placed at the centre. This includes ensuring that individual needs and wishes are fully taken into account. As a result we aim to visit all victims of crime so they are able to access pathways to support, including the option to participate in restorative justice. Across 2019/20 and 2020/21 there were **79** contacts with direct victims of crime and where consented a Victim Impact Statement carried out.

RJ is an important underlying principle of all disposals for young people on YJS caseload, from Triage to Detention & Training Orders. Whilst restorative processes typically result in practical reparation, for example participating in a task that benefits the community, the communication between victim and offender, as part of this process, can also produce powerful emotional responses leading to mutual satisfaction and socially inclusive outcomes.

The decision was made to in-source the RJ and Victim provision as of 1/4/17. These statutory duties have been re-aligned within the existing staffing of Hartlepool YJS – all of whom have undertaken service-wide RJ training, many to level 3.

This decision has enabled Hartlepool YJS to have direct control and influence in shaping the direction and quality of RJ work, including the establishment of updated working policies, practices and procedures. In turn, this has already begun to result in better outcomes for both victims and young people and is much more responsive to local need.

There is considerable evidence that RJ practice is much more integrated across all areas of the service. In particular, there is a closer link between those workers with additional RJ responsibility and case managers in relation to the needs and wishes of victims.

During the last year direct and indirect reparative projects were difficult to deliver, as part of the ongoing recovery plan we are now introducing suitably risk assessed 1:1 reparation projects, these are individual bespoke projects and are planned to take place involving furniture restoration, bird boxes for distribution to local groups and Christmas hampers for those in need. This will build over the year and hopefully allow us to get back into the position we were in prior to the COVID 19 pandemic.



Quality of Services

Throughout 2019/20 & 2020/21 the YJS continued preparation for the much anticipated HMIP inspection, considerable time was put in by all staff. All Policies & Procedures were re written and regular case audits were carried out to ensure assessment, planning, intervention and delivery were off a good standard.

The service was inspected in Oct 2020 virtually over a 4 day period, and was rated as GOOD, 4 areas were Outstanding, 6 Good and 2 Requiring Improvement. The service, board and wider partnership were very pleased with the outcome and agreed with the findings of the report. Work hasn't stood still and everyone continues to drive forward to ensure the recommendations are addressed and actioned.

Performance management and data analysis has continued to be a priority with significant work undertaken in conjunction with the Local Authority's Data information and IT teams. This has enabled various processes and documents (including the YJS Board Report) to be aligned with cleansed data, which not only makes performance management data more accessible and understandable, but also allows such data to inform service improvement activity, comparative analysis and the directing of resource to areas of organisational need.

Hartlepool YJS continue to commission South Tees YOS, to provide duty cover of Youth Court work in Teesside. Whilst allowing the service to maintain excellent working relationships within the Court arena, this continues to create some necessary and critical capacity within the team to manage the volume of post-court work and utilise staffing time more effectively. Given the success of this arrangement (strategically, operationally and financially) this was re commissioned in March 2021 for a further 12 month period.

A continued key strength of Hartlepool YJS and identified within the HMIP inspection is the ability of all staff to engage complex and challenging young people, through outstanding assessments and response to individual need. This builds positive relationships and leads to better outcomes – both for the young person as an individual and their families and the community as a whole. There continues to be a considerable service-wide training programme (attached at Appendix 2), which complements staff members' professional development on an individual level and alongside the training from the Local Authority and other statutory and voluntary partners. Alongside internal training around Risk of Harm, Safety & Wellbeing, and Asset Plus refreshers. Hartlepool YJS has received Talking Mats training which is a specialist Speech Language and Communication Need (SLCN) intervention and some staff attended Kids for Law training. Our extensive health offer (attached at Appendix 3) is now embedded within the service which has allowed the implementation of an Enhanced Case Management model, The HMIP Lead Inspector did comment "There is excellent health provision that meets the physical, emotional and mental health needs of Hartlepool children".

Staff development continues throughout and remains a key focus in working towards a quality service. This will be supported by regular supervision and appraisal, alongside reflective supervision sessions which encourage staff to analyse their practice within a supportive learning environment.

Service User Feedback

The voice of the young person continues to be a key strategic objective and completion of Asset Plus self-assessments remains critical in capturing the voice and perceived needs of those young people with whom the YJS work. Hartlepool YJS completed some internal work to develop an evaluative Survey Monkey (based on the original Viewpoint questions) to measure Young People's perceptions of: Quality of Service, Likelihood of Offending, and Fairness of treatment by YJS staff and Quality of interventions.

59 surveys were completed by young people across the last 2 years:

- Just under 90% of YP indicated they know what kind of things make them more likely to offend;
- Just under 90% of YP indicated work with the YJS made them realise change is possible;
- 90% of YP indicated they are a lot less likely to offend;
- Over 90% of YP felt they were treated fairly;
- Over 80% of YP felt the service they were given was 'very good';
- 100% of YP felt listened to by the people who worked with them
- Just under 80% of YP indicated the sessions helped change their behaviour

Alongside this Children/YP and Parents/Carers comments are captured within the assessment SAQ, individual personalised plans and reviews as well as Closure Summaries. All of this information is produced in report format for quarterly management board meetings and used to improve service delivery and identify gaps within the service as well as areas of good practice which can be shared and maintained.

8. RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC AND RECOVERY FROM COVID 19

Hartlepool Borough Council responded to the COVID 19 pandemic by ensuring all staff were WFH from 23rd March 2020 – below is a snap shot of the last year and ongoing recovery.

Response and Challenges:

- The first few weeks as with most services were of confusion and frustration, the not knowing. After coming to terms with the situation and starting to receive guidance from the local authority the YJS quickly settled into a process of virtual contact with all YP. All cases were RAG rated in terms of risk levels which identified the volume of calls needed for each YP. This process continued for a considerable period of time, it allowed staff to become creative with methods of virtual contact and delivering interventions.
- It was decided in June 20 after guidance and following the national protocol that the service would start face to face contact again, initially this was via doorstep visits and walks and once again this was prioritised by our RAG rated risk process. The Courts also opened again in June and began to start moving YP through the process. Virtual Court processes were set up and suitable training given, however Cleveland didn't carry out virtual hearings for any YP.
- Prior to any planned face to face visits staff would phone the YP/Parent/Carer to ascertain the situation in the home, i.e. did anyone have the symptoms. This proved problematic at times as we were not in a position initially to confirm responses.
- Following restrictions easing, the service were in a position to quickly implement direct 1:1 interventions from our offices which were suitably cleaned, risk assessed and allowed suitable social distancing. At the same time our Referral Order Panels were reintroduced from a virtual to face to face process and continues as such to date.
- All staff have remained WFH with suitable IT, they were and are in a position to utilise the team offices, off site provision and other suitable local authority buildings for 1:1 face to face interventions. These sessions were centrally booked allowing the monitoring of the footfall into these buildings. PPE was available at all times in all buildings.
- Anxiety has been a challenge throughout the pandemic, the not knowing and at times not understanding, the multitude of differing guidance received from various sources added to the confusion and at times the anxiety.
- Initially there was the considerable challenge of preparing for and delivering the service virtually, positive lines of communication were opened across the local authority and regular updates and discussions via regional YJB HOS meetings eased the pressure and ensured the service and staff had the relevant support and guidance available to move forward. IT was also initially frustrating and a challenge, however with perseverance and regular support the service is now fully functional with all staff having suitable access and support as required.

Recovery:

Recovery was an ongoing process from the outset, below are the salient points and recovery/learning to date.

- In March 2020 the YJB requested Business Continuity Plans from each YOT for analysis and fortnightly YJB virtual meetings were established.
- All open cases were RAG rated in line with order/risk levels and engagement identified.
- Procuring suitable IT to allow staff to WFH
- Ensuring all YJS meetings and business could be delivered virtually and face to face where feasible
- Courts opening in June 2020
- Face to face interventions starting in June 2020
- Local Authority organises lap tops for all vulnerable pupils without one, including YJS cohort.
- Organisation of Referral Order panels and Risk Management Meetings into a hybrid model with face to face and a virtual option
- In July 2020 the YJB published the guidance for COVID recovery plans for all YOTs
- YP back in the majority of schools in Sept 2020
- YJS cohort identified as Vulnerable Pupils and encouraged to attend their education provision
- YP access to suitable IT now implemented within assessment process (Identified in the HMIP COVID 19 Thematic Inspection)

Learning Points:

- The YJS is flexible and dynamic in its response and able to react quickly to situations
- A lot of virtual meetings do work better, attendance has improved at these meetings and they need to continue (Identified in the HMIP COVID 19 Thematic Inspection)
- The service can be delivered virtually as and when required
- Walk and talk interventions have been positive and will remain
- Ensuring all YP have access to suitable IT to ensure engagement is positive with the YJS and Schools, this is now captured and identified as part of the initial AssetPlus assessment (Identified in the HMIP COVID 19 Thematic Inspection)
- The constant discussions locally, regionally and nationally ref the YOT cohort being classed as a “vulnerable pupil” took too long before the right decisions were made (Identified in the HMIP COVID 19 Thematic Inspection)
- Staff, children, young people and families emotional wellbeing needs to be monitored very closely and taken into account with all engagement at all times.

Hartlepool Borough Council will be implementing a Hybrid Model of working, this is due to be revisited and potentially implemented from 19th July 2021 and following Government guidance. Staff will split their working week WFH and being office based. This has been tested over the last 15 months and the YJS are in a strong position to implement and maintain this model without any impact on service delivery.

9. RISKS TO FUTURE DELIVERY

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

Risks	Potential Impact	Control Measures
Secure Remand Costs	The continued unpredictability associated with remand episodes and remand length has the potential to place significant financial pressure on the YJS and broader Local Authority.	It remains essential that the service can demonstrate to magistrates that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody. Coordinated multi-agency responses to young people at risk of remand where safe and secure accommodation is the precipitating factor to be further developed. Remand budget is incorporated within Wider Children's Services placement costs.
Managing the potential for reduction in YJB grant and partnership financial and 'in-kind' contributions post-2021/22	Consequential negative impact on performance. Reduced capacity to meet strategic and operational obligations and statutory requirements. Reduced capacity to continue to focus on early intervention and identification	Targeted resources to address need. Continue to administer and embed the current structure and practice. Regional collaboration with neighbouring YOS' such as coverage of Teesside Youth Court. Robust financial management and oversight from strategic board.
Continued concerns around Serious Youth Violence, Criminal Exploitation and County Lines	The rise in FTE, reoffending rates and exploitation of vulnerable children. Ultimately leading to criminalisation and wider service	Continued regular communication, intelligence and information sharing across all services. Ensuring a multi-agency approach is adopted with senior strategic oversight.

	involvement having an adverse impact on Looked After Children (LAC) figures	Ongoing joint training and regular updates on the national and local picture enabling timely and relevant interventions. Ensure clear processes and pathways (known to all staff) are implemented to work with identified children.
COVID Risk The risk of further waves and further national/local lockdown imposed	Negative impact on staff/YP/families leading to a rise in anxieties/EWB, adding to engagement/contact difficulties. Disengagement from education and the added problems of reintroduction	Carefully monitoring of the local, regional and national picture regarding further waves and risks of national and local lockdowns. The YJS is in a position to revert to initial "lockdown" delivery of the service as required.
COVID Risk Staff emotional wellbeing/Safety	Negative impact on staff anxieties/EWB Risk of increased staff sickness levels Negative impact on workload and output	The YJS Leadership team continue to carry out face to face and virtual supervisions, Skype/TEAMS team meetings are in place and continued communication across all staff is very good. PPE is readily available to all staff and regular updated LA guidance is shared with everyone regarding HV, Transportation etc etc. **All staff have received 2 Vaccinations**

10. SERVICE BUSINESS & IMPROVEMENT PLAN

As a result of the recent HMIP inspection findings, five recommendations were made that HMIP believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of youth offending services in Hartlepool and will improve the lives of the children in contact with youth offending services, and better protect the public.

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service has identified actions already taken and planned to ensure these recommendations are implemented and remain key priorities in the future. This Improvement Plan is added to future quarterly Management Board reports produced by the YJS Manager and discussed/monitored to ensure the relevant senior strategic oversight is in place and direction of travel remains positive.

Added to the Improvement Plan below is the YJS internal training programme (attached at Appendix 2) which targets operational improvements and refreshers throughout the year.

No	Recommendation	Action taken/Planned	Owner	Target Date
1	Ensure that the identified priorities for the service correspond to the needs of the children supervised by the Hartlepool YJS to ensure these needs are met.	Strategic Priorities have been amended following the findings of the inspection. These will continue to be amended and discussed at all future Management Board meetings to correspond with the needs of children supervised by the YJS and in line with the up to date Needs Analysis/Data presented at all board meetings. Individual meetings have also been undertaken with the Virtual School, OSS and Substance Misuse Services to strengthen this process – all are members of the YJS Management Board and will submit updates at board meetings.	YJS Management Team Management Board Chair/Members	Completed and monitored at all future Management Board meetings
2	Work with the relevant partner agencies (virtual school and one-stop shop) to maximise the education, training and employment opportunities for children	Work is underway with the Virtual School Headteacher and OSS Manager. Education Reports with relevant data will be produced at all future Management Board meetings allowing for discussion and more strategic oversight/challenge as required. The YJS Management team are in the process of identifying and forming closer links with the relevant staff at all Academies/Schools to build better communication on a direct level. YJS attendance at Vulnerable Pupils group and Team around the secondary school meetings to build positive links with schools across Hartlepool	YJS Management Team Virtual School Headteacher OSS Manger Management Board Chair/Members	Initial Reports presented at May Management Board meeting and then subsequent board meetings

3	Develop an effective escalation and challenge process with children's social care	Discussions are ongoing between the YJS Manager and the Safeguarding and Assessment/Through Care Teams to ensure any issues/requests are addressed ASAP and recorded appropriately on all systems. All challenges/differences of opinion will be discussed between the YJS Manager and relevant Social Care Head of Service/AD and will be recorded appropriately and discussed at future Management Board meetings. The YJS will follow the "Professional Challenge and Resolution of Professional Disagreement" process which can be found in the Tees Safeguarding Children Partnerships' Procedures at https://www.teescpp.org.uk/	YJS Management Team Management Board Chair/Members	Process in place and any unresolved issues/challenges to be shared and discussed at future Management Board meetings
4	Confirm a start date for the new Chair of the Board	A start date was confirmed and the Chair of the Board took over at the Board meeting 25 Nov 2020 and also chaired the meeting on the 16 Feb 2021. The Chair also signed up and attended the YJB "Bite Size" session for YOS Board Chairs on 23 Feb 2021.	Management Board Chair	Completed and to be continually monitored
5	Use the existing process to get feedback from children and their families to develop services.	The YJS Leadership team have slightly re worded the current Survey Monkey questions which will be implemented and used for YP, Parents/Carers and Victims. Data will be produced at all future board meetings where discussions will be held regarding the development of services. As an addition ongoing quarterly feedback will also be gathered direct from the Children/YP and families by the	YJS Management Team YJS Management Board Chair/Members	Process in place and all feedback/evaluation to be presented at Management Board meetings for discussion

		YJS Management Team and fed back into the system above.		
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11. STRATEGIC SUMMARY

In spite of the ongoing adversities that families and communities contend with in Hartlepool and the added difficulties everyone continues to face with the COVID 19 pandemic the local Youth Justice Partnership has had significant success in recent years in preventing and reducing youth offending behaviour.

A continued emphasis on a creative prevention, early intervention and diversion model needs to be maintained, however this presents significant challenge in light of the continued economic climate and potential impact on staffing and resources. In spite of the continued reductions in offences, FTE and the recent reductions in reoffending, these will all remain areas of priority, the Youth Justice Service will continue to work with partners to identify and support children and young people at risk of offending and ensure all children and families in Hartlepool have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and be supported to be safe in their homes and communities.

Evidence highlights that it is often the complex interplay of multiple deprivation factors and difficulties that makes problems in some households insurmountable and places these vulnerable children at significant risk of criminal exploitation, involvement in anti-social and offending behaviour and in some instances links to County Lines. As a result there is now a greater emphasis on “Contextualised Safeguarding” and the soon to be creation of a Contextualised Safeguarding Hub with all partners should help identify “pathways out of offending” and ultimately help reduce crime and break the cycle of offending behaviour across generations.

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

As identified in the recent HMIP inspection Hartlepool Youth Justice Service is a good service, staff are motivated and engaged, and there is an excellent health provision to meet the requirements of children. Assessments for all cases were outstanding. Staff analysed information well and were skilled at engaging with children and their families. Staff make good use of the outstanding health offer to ensure that the delivery of interventions meets the needs of all children and all staff worked well in sequencing and coordinating these interventions. There are areas to improve and the YJS are fully aware of these with a current improvement plan in place.

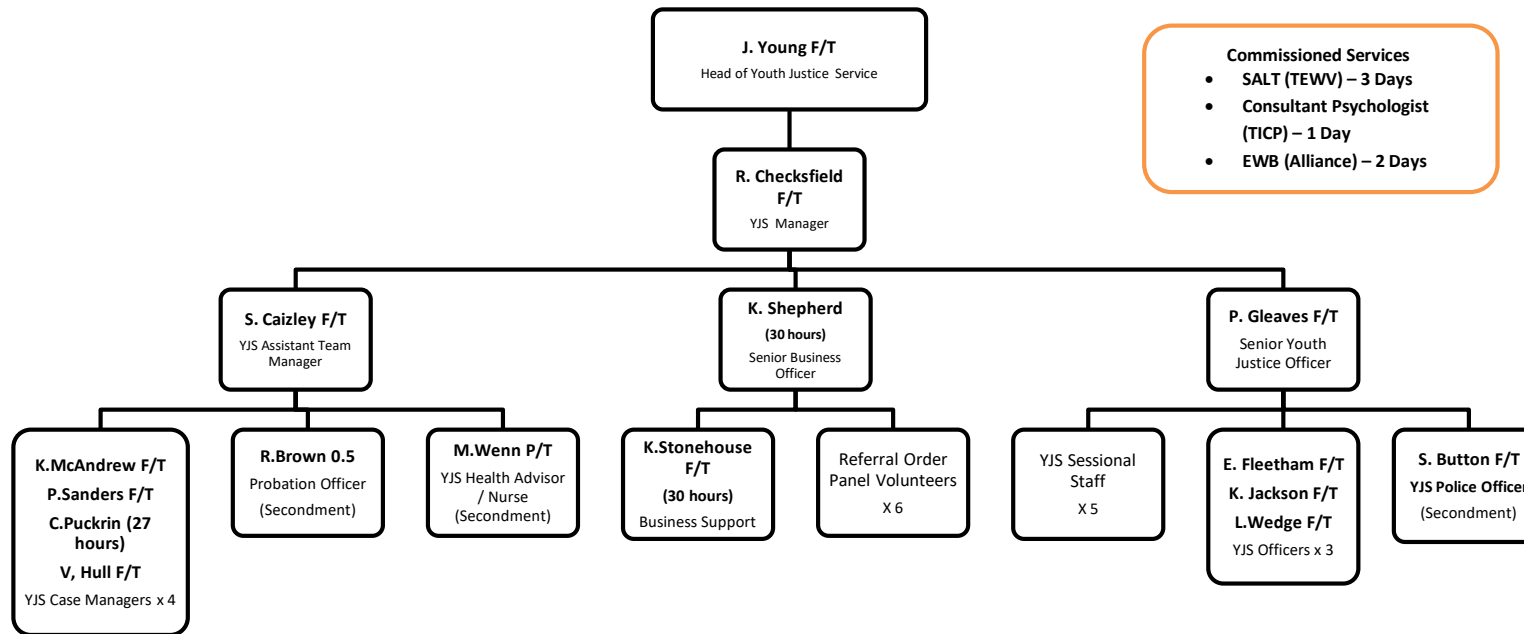
All of the above has the child and the child's voice prioritised and running throughout, as identified in the YJB Business Plan 2021-2022 we will continue to help, support and create a "Child First Youth Justice System" across Hartlepool.

Hartlepool Youth Justice Partnership



Appendix 1

Youth Justice Service Structure



Appendix 2

Youth Justice Service Internal Training Programme

Month	Date	Briefing/Training	Delivery	Comments
	16th & 22nd April 1000-1130 TEAMS dial in	Health Offer Briefings –	Health Team Update on respective areas of the Health Offer	All available staff to dial in to at least one of the sessions
	21st April 1100-1200 TEAMS dial in	Distinction between Mental wellbeing & Mental illness (Screening and Signposting)	Clinical Psychologist	All available staff to dial in
May				
	12th May 1000-1130 TEAMS dial in	Start of an Order – The front end process – getting it right	Leadership Team	All available staff to dial in
	19th May 1100 – 1200 TEAMS dial in	Neurodevelopmental Presentation (ASD & ADHD)	Clinical Psychologist	All available staff to dial in
June				
	9th June 1000-1130 TEAMS dial in	ROSH/Safety & Wellbeing	Leadership Team	All available staff to dial in
	16th June 1000 – 1100 TEAMS dial in	Suicide & Self Harm	Clinical Physiologist	All available staff to dial in
	23rd June 1000 – 1130 TEAMS dial in	SLT and communication needs awareness training (refresher)	SALT	All available staff to dial in
July				
	Date & Time TBC	Education – Role of the YJS and Case Manager/Officer	Virtual School Headteacher	All available staff to dial in
	21st July 1000 - 1130	Accessible Information training	SALT	All available staff to dial in
August				
	4th August 1400 - 1530	Team Choice Topic	Clinical Psychologist	All available staff to dial in

September				
	23rd September 1000-1130	Desistence Refresher	Leadership Team	All available staff to dial in
	15th September 1400-1530	Team Choice Topic	Clinical Psychologist	All available staff to dial in

Appendix 2

Youth Justice Service Health Offer

Alliance Psychological Services

Jemma Westwood-Horner

Jemma can help with **mental health difficulties** such as anxiety, low mood and depression.

- Jemma can **work with you** and **your family**
- Jemma can help you with issues such as bereavement (coping after the death of a loved one), relationship difficulties and behaviour. You can find out more on this website: <https://www.alliancepsychology.com/young-people/>
- You can be seen face to face, at home, at school or online (Skype and Zoom). Whatever works for you!

Speech and Language Therapy

Katie Hughes



Speech and Language Therapy can **look at** and **help** with your **communication skills**.

- Katie's job is to work with you to find out what you are **good at** and what can be **difficult for you**.
- Katie will look at what your **talking** and **understanding** are like in everyday situations, like school or college.
- Katie can help other people to understand your communication and tell them how they can help.



Youth Justice Nurse Specialist

Melanie Wenn

The Nurse can help with your **health needs**. Mel sees every young person who comes into the Youth Justice Service.

- Mel can do a **full health assessment** – this looks at any medical problems, your behaviour, your sexual health, skin problems, issues with your eyes or hearing, dental health, relationships and anything else that might affect your health and wellbeing.
- Mel can do some **work with you** around your health and wellbeing. She can make sure you are working with the right people to meet any health or learning needs you might have
- Mel offers **one to one appointments**, usually face to face.



Trauma Informed Care Pathway / Adolescent Forensic Outpatients Service

Dr Kay Anne Rooney

- **Trauma informed care pathway**→ aims to better understand your needs and behaviours. Kay does this by getting to know you and looking at your life and your experiences as a whole. You can be offered *Direct Work* (where you work with Dr Kay) or *Indirect Work* (where Dr Kay works with the professionals involved in your care).
- **Outpatients Service**→ Dr Kay or someone she works with from the Adolescent Forensic Outpatients Service can help and support you with any mental health difficulties.

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 September 2021



Report of: Director of Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services

Subject: DRAFT COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2021-24

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.2 Budget and Policy Framework - To consider and comment on the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Draft Community Safety Plan 2021-24

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Introduced by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's) have a statutory responsibility to develop and implement a Community Safety Strategy (known as the Community Safety Plan) setting out how it intends to address crime and disorder, substance misuse, and re-offending issues in the local area.
- 2.2 CSP's are made up of representatives from the 'responsible authorities' as specified in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. These include the Local Authority, Police, Fire Brigade, The Probation Service and Clinical Commissioning Group. CSP's have a number of statutory duties which includes:
- Producing a **Community Safety Strategy** that details how the CSP will tackle the crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and re-offending priorities in its local area;
 - Producing an annual partnership **strategic assessment** to help identify and better understand local community safety priorities;
 - **Consulting** with local residents and organisations on community safety priorities.

- 2.3 At its meeting on 19th July 2021, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership agreed the draft plan and to the commencement of an eight week consultation period from 13th September 2021.

3. DRAFT COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2021-24

- 3.1 The Community Safety Plan 2021-24 provides an overview of some of the recent activities undertaken to improve community safety in Hartlepool, and key findings from the Partnership's 2020 Strategic Assessment and public consultation. The Partnership's proposed strategic objective, priorities and some of the key activities it will take forward over the next year are also outlined. **(Appendix 1)**
- 3.2 The proposed strategic objective and priorities from the 2020-21 plan are retained in the 2021-24 plan as detailed below.
- 3.3 The proposed strategic objective for 2021-24 is:
- “To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit”
- 3.4 The key priorities for the Safer Hartlepool Partnership in the first year (2021-22) of the Plan are:
- Anti-social Behaviour
 - Domestic Violence
 - Drugs and Alcohol

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 As approved by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership on 19 July 2021, the draft Community Safety Plan will be subject to an eight week consultation period with the consultation exercise comprising of the following:
- An online consultation survey – with links published on the Hartlepool Borough Council website, Hartlepool Borough Council Facebook page and Hartlepool Borough Council Twitter page. The use of local media mechanisms including but not limited to Hartlepool Mail.
 - Targeted emails will be sent to a wide range of public, private, community and voluntary sector representatives and groups containing a link to the online consultation survey.
 - A virtual Face the Public event.
 - Presentation of the draft strategy to the Councils Audit and Governance Committee, Finance and Policy Committee, and the Health & Wellbeing Board.

- 4.2 It is anticipated that the final Plan will be presented to the Partnership in December 2021, and subject to the approval by the Partnership will be considered by the Council's Finance and Policy Committee prior to being referred for adoption by full Council in December 2021.

5. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

- 5.1 The delivery of the Community Safety Plan will be monitored by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership, through the provision of quarterly performance reports to demonstrate progress against the agreed priorities.
- 5.2 The Community Safety Plan incorporates a proposed delivery structure and performance indicators..

6. SECTION 17 CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Failure to develop a Community Safety Plan would undermine the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's ability to fulfill its statutory responsibilities to set out a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder, combating substance misuse and reduction of re-offending in Hartlepool

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 In accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended) the Safer Hartlepool Partnership is required to produce a Community Safety Plan to set out how it intends to address crime and disorder, substance misuse, and re-offending issues.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 8.1 The annual strategic assessment and consultation process will ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are considered when formulating and implementing the Community Safety Plan 2021-2024.

9. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Risk Implications	No relevant issues
Financial Considerations	No relevant issues
Child/Family Poverty Considerations	No relevant issues
Staff Considerations	No relevant issues
Asset Management Considerations	No relevant issues

10. RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 As part of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership consultation process it is recommended that the Finance and Policy Committee consider and comment upon the draft Community Safety Plan 2021-24.

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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Safer Hartlepool Partnership



Community Safety Plan

2021 - 2024

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1. FOREWORD

As Chair, I am pleased to present the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan for 2021 – 2024 on behalf of The Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP).

The Partnership Plan brings together our aims, ambitions and priorities for the next three years. We will work in Partnership to tackle the issues which impact on, and matter to local people.

The Community Safety Plan retains the strategic objective and priorities of the 2021/24 plan, reflecting the outcomes of the 2020 SHP Strategic Assessment and ongoing analysis of emerging issues across the Town. Utilising this data and information enables the SHP to deliver a holistic approach to address the priorities, with a greater emphasis on prevention and reducing harm.

The SHP has faced many new challenges in recent years, not least the difficult circumstances presented by the Coronavirus Pandemic. There has been a significant change in issues that are presented to partners to address, whilst also tackling substantial resource pressures. Important matters such as anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, domestic violence and responding to those members of our communities with specific vulnerabilities understandably take priority.

The SHP will continue to look at new and innovative ways of working collaboratively to reduce crime and disorder, substance misuse and re-offending, and most importantly, improving the quality of life for the people who live and work in and visit Hartlepool.

Councillor Shane Moore

Chair, Safer Hartlepool Partnership

2. INTRODUCTION

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP) brings together a number of agencies and organisations concerned with tackling crime and disorder in Hartlepool. As defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Partnership comprises members from each of the “responsible authorities”; Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Police, Cleveland Fire and Rescue Service, The Probation Service and Hartlepool and Stockton Clinical Commissioning Group. In addition, a range of other stakeholders from the public and voluntary sectors are also represented and include Thirteen Group, Safe In Tees Valley and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland.

Our key role is to understand the kind of community safety issues Hartlepool is experiencing; decide which of these are the most important to deal with; and then decide what actions we can take collectively, adding value to the day-to-day work undertaken by our individual agencies and organisations.

We detail these actions in our Community Safety Plan. To help us do that we undertake a Strategic Assessment which analyses a range of detailed information that exists about crime, disorder, substance misuse, re-offending and other community matters that are affecting Hartlepool.

The outcomes of the assessment form recommendations about how to keep the Community Safety Plan priorities relevant.

In producing our plan we are also mindful of the pledges of the Police and Crime Commissioner in the Police and Crime Plan and the requirement to 'have regard' to the priorities established by this plan.

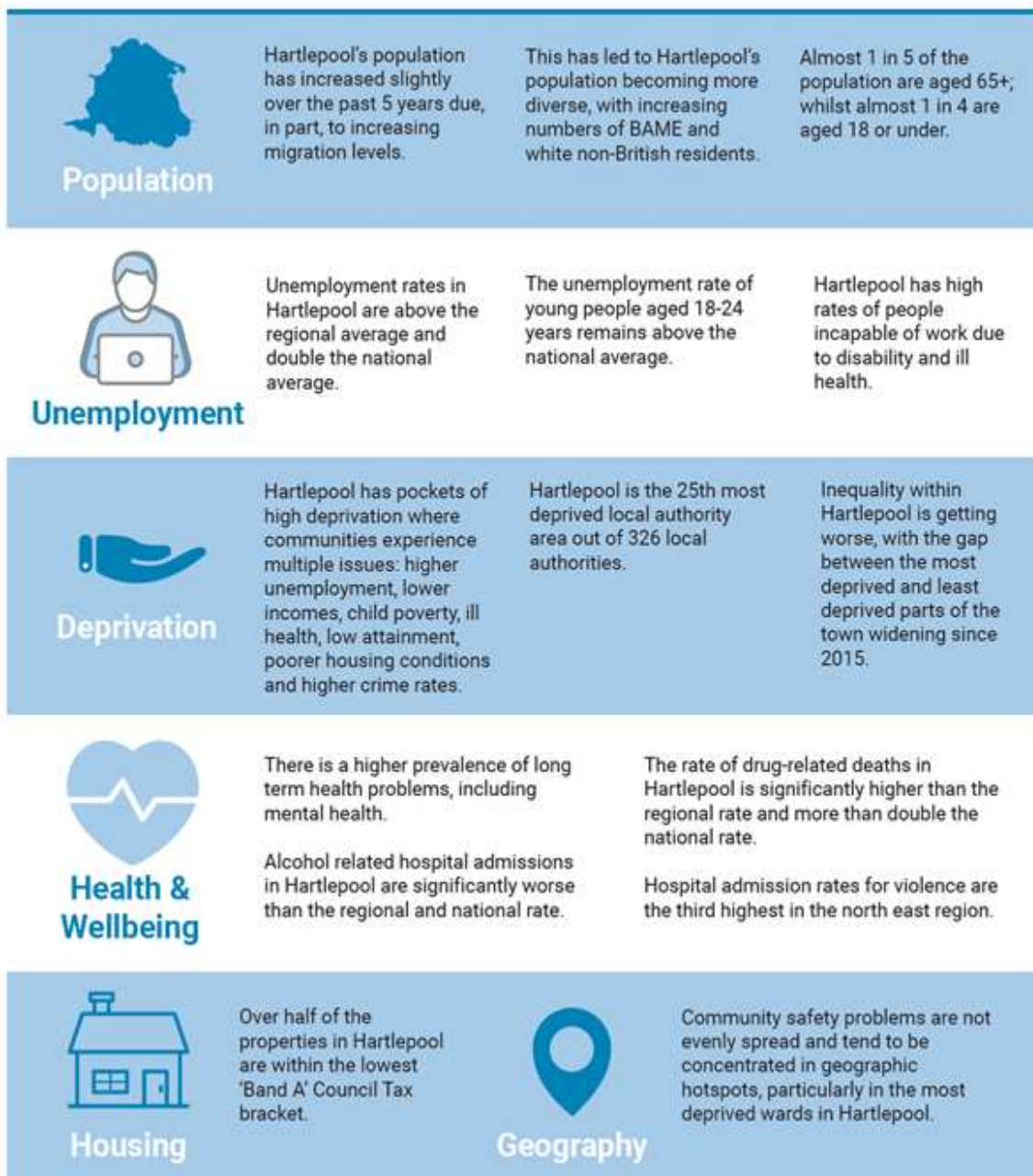
The community safety landscape continues to evolve and partners continue to face challenges in having to adapt the way services and initiatives are delivered. Since the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, legislative changes have amended our focus, and also the statutory partners we work with, but the principles of working together remain at the heart of tackling crime and disorder.

The strategic objective of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership remains unchanged and is still as important as it ever has been:

“To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit”

3. LOCAL CONTEXT

Hartlepool is the smallest unitary authority in the North East region and the third smallest in the country comprising of some of the most disadvantaged areas in England. Issues around community safety can be understood by a number of contextual factors:



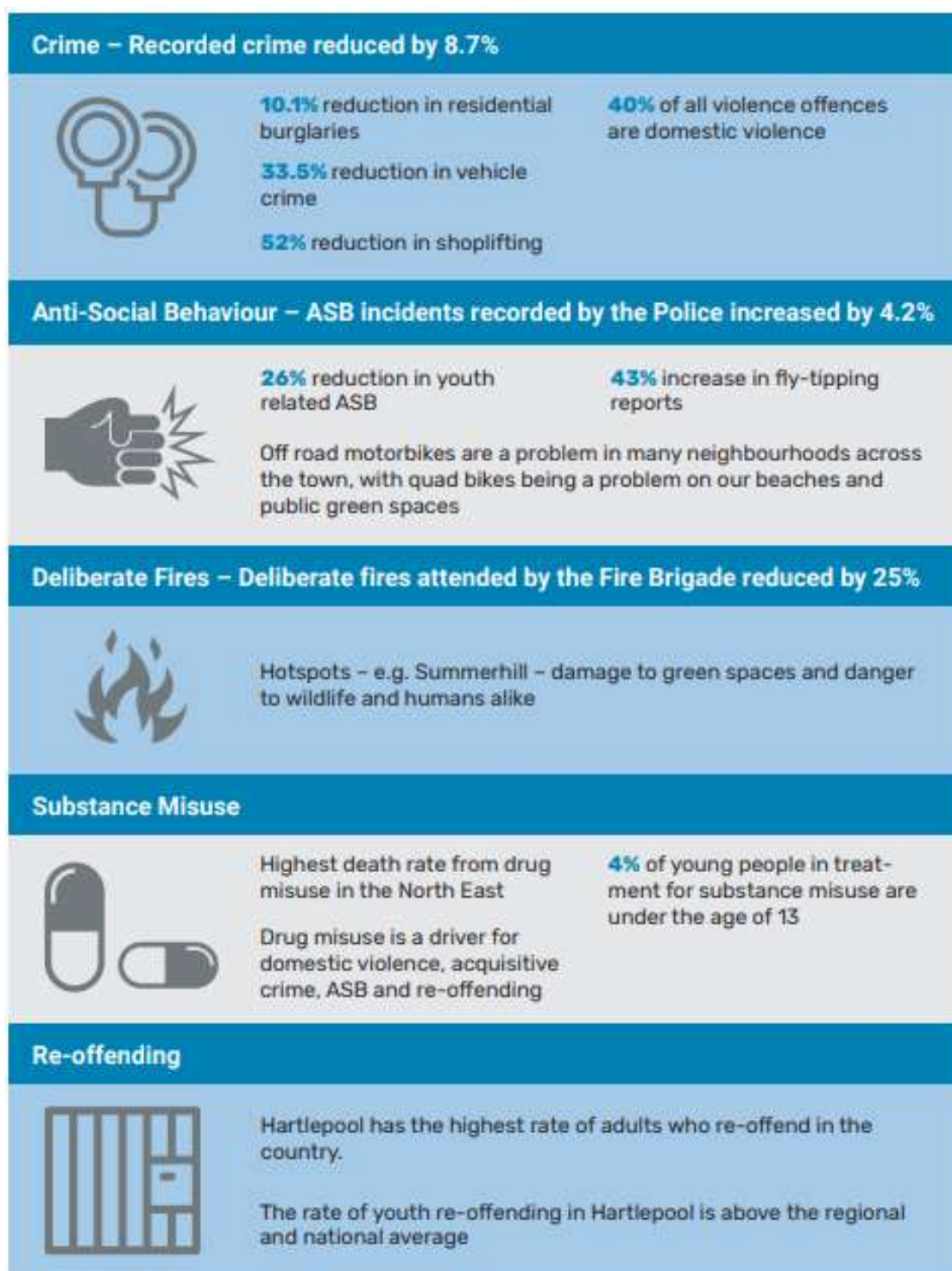
4. SUMMARY OF THE 2020/21 PLAN

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic the SHP continued to focus on the priorities in the Community Safety Plan 2020-21 and some of the work undertaken to make Hartlepool a safe place for residents, workers and visitors included:-

Priority	Activity
Anti-Social Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of early intervention, diversionary, educational and positive activities through the deployment of the Targeted Youth Outreach Team • Provision of home and personal crime prevention advice, target hardening and emotional support to victims of crime and anti-social behaviour. • Co-ordination multi-agency “Days of Action” to target anti-social behaviour and environmental issues in hotspot locations • Development and delivery of multi-agency action plans to address unacceptable behaviour by adults and young people occurring in the Town’s parks and green spaces • Formation of working groups to specifically focus on fly-tipping, deliberate fires and nuisance vehicles.
Drugs and Alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of an integrated drug and alcohol treatment service, START – Supporting Treatment and Recovery Together • Successfully obtained 6 premise closure orders for residential properties concerned in the supply of illegal drugs
Domestic Violence and Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of a Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board to assess the need for Domestic Abuse Support Services in Hartlepool and publish a strategy to meet assessed need. • Development of a “Grab Bag” project which enables our specialist domestic abuse support service, Harbour, to provide individuals fleeing abuse with basic essentials when they arrive at the refuge or other safe accommodation.

5. STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

The Partnership conducts an annual assessment of the levels and patterns of crime and disorder, substance misuse and re-offending in Hartlepool to identify and address the community safety issues that impact upon and really matter to the local community. Key findings from the 2020 assessment are outlined below:



6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership has a statutory obligation to engage and consult with the communities of Hartlepool about community safety priorities.

The annual Community Safety Survey is designed to assist the Partnership to:

- Gain a wider understanding of public perception of crime and anti-social behaviour in the local area;
- Understand what makes people feel safe and unsafe; and
- Understand which issues cause most concern

Analysis of the results of the survey conducted in 2020 highlighted that, although many residents perceive crime and anti-social behaviour to be a problem in their area, more than half of respondents said they had not been a victim of crime in the previous 12 months.

When asked about feelings of safety, most respondents said they feel safe being outside during the day and after dark. Those who said they felt unsafe stated this was due to poor street lighting, lack of police, suspicious people hanging around and people dealing drugs.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, work is underway to establish the most appropriate and effective way for the SHP to hold the Face the Public event this year.

7. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2021-2024

Based on the findings of the 2020 Strategic Assessment and consultation with the local community and other stakeholders, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's Strategic Objective 2021-2024 is: -

To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit

8. PRIORITIES 2021 - 2022

As with any town, Hartlepool faces many challenges and must work within an environment of conflicting demands and limited resources.

The Partnership recognises that there are many issues that impact on the lives of some, or all, of Hartlepool's residents and continued efforts will be made by all Partnership members to address these in a focussed and effective manner.

Issues such as violence (particularly serious violence) and exploitation are significant in both the local and national context and the Partnership recognises the need to work both individually and collectively to address them.

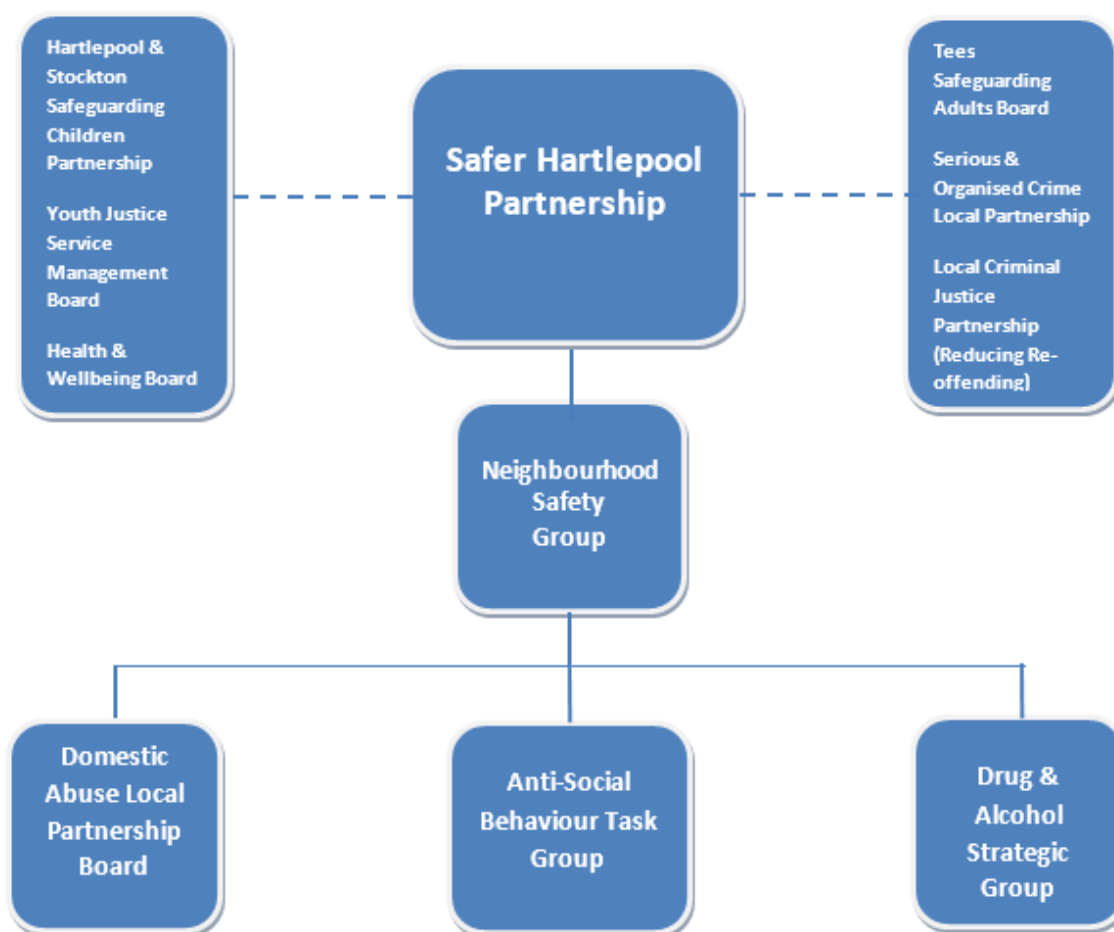
However, the Partnership also recognises the benefits of identifying those issues that have the greatest impact on the town and the need to target resources and efforts to deal with them effectively and efficiently.

To do this, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership will continue to focus activity on three key priority areas – each of which contributes towards a wide range of community concerns. The three key priority areas for 2021-22 are: -

Anti-Social Behaviour	By adopting an intelligence led problem solving approach, the Partnership will work to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) across the town by deploying resources and undertaking targeted activity to address the issues that cause concern for our residents and communities and negatively impact on their quality of life.
Drugs and Alcohol	Through targeted partnership working, focussed efforts will be made to reduce both the demand for, and the supply of, illegal drugs in Hartlepool. The Partnership will also work together to reduce the negative social, personal and health consequences caused by the misuse of alcohol in the town.
Domestic Violence and Abuse	The Partnership will work together to safeguard individuals and their families from domestic violence and abuse.

9. DELIVERING THE PLAN

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership has the responsibility to deliver the priorities that are set out within this plan. The governance structure is outlined below. Performance monitoring will be undertaken on a quarterly basis to assess progress against key priorities drawn from the strategic assessment and identify any emerging issues.



10. MONITORING PERFORMANCE

Performance of the Community Safety Plan will be monitored by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership against a range of key performance indicators for each of the priorities which include:

Priority	Indicator
Anti-Social Behaviour	ASB incidents reported to the Police
	Rate of ASB per 1,000 population
	Number of noise complaints received
	Number of fly-tipping reports received by the Council
	Number of Deliberate Secondary (F3) fires
	Number of Deliberate Vehicle Fires
Drugs and Alcohol	Drug Offences - Possession
	Drug Offences - Supply
	% of opiate drug users that have successfully completed drug treatment
	% of non-opiate drug users that have successfully completed drug treatment
	% of alcohol users that have successfully completed alcohol treatment
	% of young people that have successfully completed treatment
	Number of young people known to substance misuse services
	% of people dependent on alcohol and not in the treatment system
	% of people dependent on opiates or crack and not in the treatment system
Domestic Violence	Domestic Abuse incidents reported to the Police
	Rate of Domestic Abuse incidents per 1,000 population
	Repeat Incidents of Domestic Abuse
	Rate of repeat Domestic Abuse incidents per 1,000 population

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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 September 2021



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Based Services

Subject: COVID RECOVERY SUPPORT FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE PROVIDERS

1. TYPE OF DECISION / APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key decision – General Exception

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek agreement from the Finance & Policy Committee regarding COVID recovery support for adult social care providers for the remainder of the 2021/22 financial year.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) report to Finance and Policy Committee on 25th January informed Members that the Government announced a final allocation for local authorities of £1.55 billion of additional un-ringfenced funding for Covid-19 expenditure pressures. The Council has been allocated £3.178m.

3.2 The Government stated this is the final Covid grant they will pay to councils and they expect the funding to be focused on Covid pressures impacting on adult social care, children's services, public health services, households waste services, shielding the clinically vulnerable, homelessness and rough sleeping, domestic abuse, managing excess deaths, support for re-opening this country and the additional costs associated with the local election in May 2021.

3.3 At the time this funding was announced the impact of Covid was continuing to change, including the impact of the statement made by the Prime Minister on 4th January 2021 regarding the new variant of the virus and the resulting further restrictions. As it was unclear what level of additional service demands and costs the Council will face during 2021/22 and 2022/23 it was recommended that no commitments were made against this grant as part of

the budget setting process. The position would continue to be monitored closely and a separate report will be brought to this Committee later in the year updating the Covid financial position for 2021/22. It was also recommended that any detailed proposals for using this grant would be reported to Finance and Policy Committee for consideration and approval.

- 3.4 As has been reported previously, and highlighted nationally, COVID has had a significant impact on care homes, particularly those that support older people and providers of care in people's own homes have also been affected. In addition to the human impact of supporting individuals receiving support and staff who tested positive for COVID and sadly dealing with COVID related deaths, providers also faced significant financial challenges associated with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), workforce requirements and infection prevention and control measures.
- 3.5 At the peak of the first wave of the pandemic in April 2020, some care homes had up to 50% of staff self-isolating due to being symptomatic or having tested positive and in one week there were 42 cases confirmed and, tragically 12 deaths reported amongst care home residents. This was clearly incredibly challenging to manage, but the response from care providers was really heartening with services showing huge commitment and compassion throughout the COVID19 response.
- 3.6 In addition to supporting providers with supplies of PPE, advice and guidance, daily calls and staff to manage crises, the Council paid COVID premiums to providers in 2020/21 as has been reported previously. The Council paid providers premiums based on a percentage of their usual contract payments (varying from 2.5% to 10% at different stages of the pandemic response) and national grants were also made available to providers via the Council, through the Infection Control Grant (Tranches 1 and 2), Workforce Capacity Fund and Rapid Testing Fund.

4. CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 A COVID Recovery Support Package was developed for the first part of the 2021/22 financial year to recognise the ongoing impact of COVID 19 on adult social care providers, focused on care homes for older people and providers of home care as these were the sectors most affected. The COVID Recovery Support Package was made up of two elements:
- COVID Recovery Support Payment - a payment to care homes for older people and providers of home care / extra care for older people equating to an additional 2% of their usual four weekly payment.
 - Occupancy Support Scheme –where occupancy has fallen in a particular payment period by more than 5% compared to pre-COVID levels (2019/20 average occupancy) an additional payment equating to 75% of the difference is paid, which will guarantee income at an agreed level.
- 4.2 Payments for both elements of the scheme were implemented from 29 March and initially agreed for 6 payment periods through a Managing

Director's Decision Record until the payment period ending 12 September 2021 with a review to be undertaken in July 2021 to determine whether either or both elements of the scheme should continue beyond this date.

- 4.3 It was confirmed in July 2021 that allocations from the Infection Control & Rapid Testing Fund have been extended until 30 September 2021 with monitoring of pressures in the care sector to continue.

5. PROPOSALS FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2021/22

- 5.1 COVID continues to have an impact on social care providers with some care homes still experiencing occupancy levels that are lower than they were prior to the pandemic. The recent surge in cases has also impacted on care home staff and residents despite good uptake of the vaccination and nine care homes had Outbreak Control Plans in place at the time of preparing this report.
- 5.2 Following a review of payments made to date and the ongoing support requirements of the sector a proposal has been developed for the remainder of the financial year as follows:
- COVID Recovery Support Payment - a payment to care homes for older people and providers of home care / extra care for older people based on a reduced percentage of an additional 1% of their usual four weekly payment for a further three payment periods (ending 5 December 2021).
 - Occupancy Support Scheme – continuation of additional payments to care homes (remaining at 75% of the difference) where occupancy has fallen but with increasing thresholds of 10% for 2 payment periods, then 15% for a further two payment periods (ending 2 January 2022).

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are ongoing risks associated with the sustainability of the care market.
- 6.2 Occupancy levels will continue to be monitored on a weekly basis and providers will be advised to contact the Council if they are experiencing particular difficulties as a result of COVID that are impacting on their ongoing viability.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The scheme that has been in place from 29 March to 12 September 2021 had maximum estimated costs identified as follows:
- COVID Recovery Support Payment £240k
 - Occupancy Support Scheme £340k

Costs vary each month and were not expected to reach the maximum level stated as occupancy was expected to increase.

- 7.2 The actual cost incurred to date is £338k based on four of the six payment periods. Based on current occupancy levels the total cost is expected to be £500k for the initial period for which the scheme was agreed.
- 7.3 The cost of continuing the COVID Recovery Support Scheme at the reduced rate of 1% for a further 3 payments is £58k.
- 7.4 The cost of continuing the Occupancy Support Payments on a tapering basis will vary depending on vacancy rates across care homes for older people for the remainder of the year. Based on current occupancy rates the maximum cost would be £60k.
- 7.5 In summary the costs of the initial support (29th March to 12 September) and the additional cost of COVID Recovery Support payments for the remainder of the financial year will be funded from the £3.178m COVID Grant. As reported to Finance and Policy Committee in the MTFS report this is one off grant funding and the Government expects this funding to be focused on COVID pressures impacting on adult social care, children's services, public health services, household waste services, shielding the clinically vulnerable, homelessness and rough sleeping, domestic abuse, managing excess deaths, support for re-opening the country and the additional costs associated with the local election in May 2021. Commitments against this funding will need to be carefully managed and updates will be provided to Finance and Policy during the year.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Council has a duty under the Care Act 2014 to manage the local care market.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 None identified.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 None identified.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

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

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

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

13. RECOMMENDATION

- 13.1 It is recommended that the Finance and Policy Committee approve the proposals for continued COVID Recovery Support to adult social care providers as outlined in section 5.2.

14. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 14.1 The recommendation ensures that care providers continue to receive additional financial support over the coming months with support targeted at those providers experiencing the greatest financial impact.

15. CONTACT OFFICER

Jill Harrison
Director of Adult and Community Based Services
jill.harrison@hartlepool.gov.uk
01429 523911

Sign Off:-

Chief Executive



Director of Finance and Policy



Chief Solicitor



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 September 2021



Report of: Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY

1. TYPE OF DECISION / APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key decision - CJCS 110/21

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To present the first draft 'Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-24' to Finance and Policy Committee for comment.

2.2 To advise Members on the Committee of the consultation process.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 required council's across the country to prepare and implement a clear strategy for homelessness reduction and rough sleeping. Hartlepool has historically included homelessness and rough sleeping within the council's approved Housing Strategy however advice from The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is that this does not adequately address the strategy for homelessness and rough sleeping and a stand-alone strategy is required.

4. DRAFT STRATEGY

4.1 A draft strategy has been produced and is attached for consideration (**Appendix A**). The draft has been prepared using officer knowledge and experience and with support from the Homelessness Prevention Partnership (HPP). The Homelessness Prevention Partnership was established in 2019 with a focus on the premise that wherever possible homelessness should be

prevented rather than alleviated and that together effective solutions can be found.

- 4.2 When the council's Housing Strategy is reviewed and refreshed in 2023/24, the two strategies will be brought together into one cohesive document subject to MHCLG's agreement.

5. KEY OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 It is proposed that the following four key objectives will protect the most vulnerable and form the basis of our plan to:
- Prevent and relieve homelessness;
 - End rough sleeping;
 - Provide temporary accommodation, support people to move on and increase housing options; and
 - Support complex adults.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Public consultation opened on the 23 July 2021 and was open throughout July and August. To date the consultation process has included:
- Circulation of the draft for comment to relevant stakeholders including registered providers, landlords, housing service providers, police, health, substance misuse, community safety, adult and children's social care, Probation Service, Voluntary and Community Sector and more;
 - A workshop with the Homelessness Prevention Partnership which includes all the key organisations/ registered providers/ support agencies etc that work within the sector;
 - A members briefing scheduled for 13 September 2021;
 - An online survey via the new Your Say Our Future software - https://yoursay.hartlepool.gov.uk/hbc21-homelessness-strategy/survey_tools/hbc21-homelessness-strategy-survey
 - Discussions with service users with lived experience face to face and online - Tell us your story survey; and https://yoursay.hartlepool.gov.uk/hbc21-homelessness-strategy/survey_tools/hbc21-homelessness-tell-us-your-story.
- 6.2 Following completion of the consultation, the draft strategy will be updated to include comments with a final strategy to be presented to Finance and Policy Committee in November 2021 for approval.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no specific financial considerations for this report.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Council has a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to prepare and implement a clear strategy for homelessness reduction.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The majority of people who present as homeless are individuals however any family with children who are identified as homeless are supported by the team as a matter of urgency. The provision of suitable housing and accommodation for those who are or are at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping improves life chances.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 Vulnerable groups have been identified within the draft strategy and the team will continue to work to support those identified as homeless.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

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

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

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

13. RECOMMENDATION

- 13.1 Members are asked to consider and comment on the attached draft homelessness reduction and rough sleeping strategy.

14. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 14.1 To ensure that those individuals and families who become homeless are supported to find appropriate accommodation.
- 14.2 To ensure that the council fulfils its statutory duties.

15. CONTACT OFFICER

Penny Thompson, Head of Housing, Hardship and Welfare Support Services, Civic Centre, 01429 284878, penny.thompson@hartlepool.gov.uk

Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning, Civic Centre, 01429 523732, Danielle.swainston@hartlepool.gov.uk

Sign Off:-

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

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2021 – 2024

CONTENTS PAGE

1. Introduction
2. National policy and context
3. Local context
4. Supporting vulnerable people and preventing homelessness
5. Current support and provision
6. Core objectives and actions required
7. Measuring effectiveness

1. Introduction

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 required council's across the country to prepare and implement a clear strategy for homelessness reduction. Hartlepool Borough Council's approach to homelessness is one of partnership with a shared commitment to reducing, preventing and tackling homelessness through a multi agency approach. The Homelessness Prevention Partnership was established in 2019 with a focus on the premise that wherever possible homelessness should be prevented rather than alleviated and that together effective solutions can be found.

This strategy sets out the local context and how together we will tackle homelessness. It has due regard for the approved Council Plan, the Local Plan, the Economic Growth Strategy, the Joint Health and Well-Being Strategy, the Child and Family Poverty Strategy, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Plan (which includes community safety and domestic abuse) and the Housing Strategy 2019-2024.

Across all key strategic plans Hartlepool Council is clear: we have a duty to protect vulnerable residents through effective and targeted intervention, create an environment which fosters opportunity and prosperity, promotes equality and develops strong and healthy communities. Specifically the council has due regard to:

1.1 Protect the most vulnerable through targeted intervention including:

- People who are subject to or at risk of harm
- People who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
- People who are financially excluded
- People whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

1.2 The Housing Strategy 2019-2024

The Housing Strategy is a strategic document that sets out the framework for how we will work with our partners and residents to grow, improve, support and deliver our housing offer. Our ambition is to offer more housing choice by developing new homes and improving and regenerating our existing homes and communities. We are strongly committed to supporting our most vulnerable residents to access and maintain appropriate and good quality housing to meet their needs.

2.0 National Policy and Context

Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping is a key priority for the government and The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 significantly reformed homelessness legislation by placing duties on local authorities to intervene at an earlier stage to prevent homelessness. It also requires housing authorities to provide homelessness services to all those affected, not just those who are vulnerable and in priority need. It includes a new prevention and relief duty. The government has committed to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-rough-sleeping-strategy>

2.1 The definition of homelessness

The definition of homelessness remains unchanged as defined in the Housing Act 1996. In summary, someone is considered to be homeless if they do not have a legal right to occupy accommodation, or if their accommodation is unsuitable to live in. This can cover a wide range of circumstances, including, but not restricted to, the following:

- having no accommodation at all
- having accommodation that is not reasonable to live in, even in the short-term (e.g. because of violence or health reasons)
- having a legal right to accommodation that they cannot access (e.g. if they have been evicted illegally)
- living in accommodation they have no legal right to occupy (e.g. living in a squat or staying with friends temporarily)

Local councils have a legal duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone that requires it; in addition there is a duty to provide advice and assistance to people who are legally defined as homeless or threatened with homelessness. However, not everyone who falls within the legal definition necessarily qualifies for temporary accommodation.

2.2 Making Every Contact Count (2016)

Making Every Contact Count is a joint approach to prevent homelessness, which recognises that intervening earlier to prevent homelessness is key to its ambitions on social justice, particularly in terms of supporting the most disadvantaged individuals and families by tackling many of the underlying problems that, if left unchecked, can contribute to homelessness. The aim of this objective is a simple one: “to make sure every contact local agencies make with vulnerable people and families really count”. We must be clear, for many people becoming homeless is not the beginning of their problems; it comes at the end of a long line of crises, interactions with public and voluntary agencies and missed opportunities, which must be changed.

2.3 Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation

Nationally homelessness services are facing unprecedented pressures, with demand for both permanent and temporary accommodation often exceeding supply. For most Local Authority's bed and breakfast (B&B) placements are regarded as the “last resort” in terms of placements for interim accommodation and are made in cases of emergency where no other suitable accommodation is available at the time to meet the needs of the person or family, for example, when accommodation is needed outside of office hours or during weekends. Specifically, 16 and 17 year olds should not be in B&B and if they are this should not be longer than 6 weeks.

2.4 ‘No second night out’ and ‘Everyone In’

The government's ‘No Second Night Out’ specifically relates to rough sleepers and urges councils to ensure rough sleepers are identified and helped off the streets immediately. It includes ensuring they have a place of safety where their needs can be assessed and they can get help. Since the COVID-19 pandemic this has been extended through ‘Everyone In’ with funding support from government to ensure all rough sleepers are temporarily accommodated for the duration of the pandemic acknowledging that they are amongst the most vulnerable people.

2.5 Housing First

Housing First is an approach to end long term homelessness for people with complex needs. It has been developed specifically to meet the needs of the most challenging client groups who have previously been unable to access or sustain housing. It works on the simple premise that securing safe and stable accommodation first provides the necessary foundation to enable the steps towards improved recovery.

3.0 The Local context

Hartlepool is a small coastal town with a population of c93,700 people. c57,500 residents are aged over 16 years and according to the mid 2019 census data there are 44,250 dwellings. 36 of our LSOAs fall within the top 10% most deprived nationally compared to 29 across the Tees Valley region. Our homeless relief duty rate is recorded in 2019 as 4.6 per 1000 and is lower than the 7.1 per 1000 average for the Tees Valley region. [

https://teesvalley-ca.gov.uk/InstantAtlas/Tees_Valley_Data_Insights/atlas.html]

Hartlepool has a Housing Strategy and Advice Team that undertakes all functions associated with rough sleeping and homelessness. Our working knowledge and service user experience tells us that most people that experience homelessness can be supported successfully to secure alternative suitable accommodation and support where appropriate. However for a minority of people, homelessness is a by-product of a complex interplay of problems often outside of the individuals' control that can include (but are not limited to) poverty, physical and mental ill health and substance misuse.

3.1 Key facts

In 2020-21 the government amended housing legislation to prevent people being made homeless through eviction during the pandemic. This has therefore impacted on the general advice and relief duties for the 20-21 financial year. Tables 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 indicate the numbers of general housing and homelessness enquiries received and recorded by the Housing Advice Team and the number of those that resulted in a 'relief' duty and accommodation.

Table 3.1.1

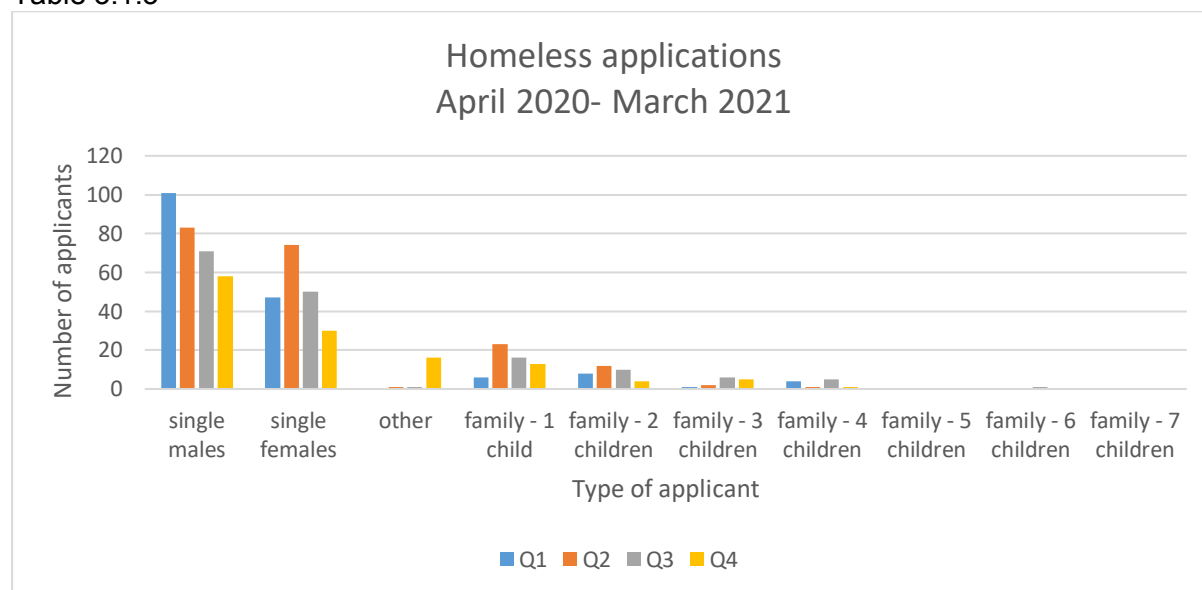
General advice – housing and homelessness	
2020-21	619
2019-20	956
2018-19	851

Table 3.1.2

Relief and accommodation duty accepted		
	Relief duty accepted	Accommodation accepted
2020-21	243	172
2019-20	268	184
2018-19	181	125

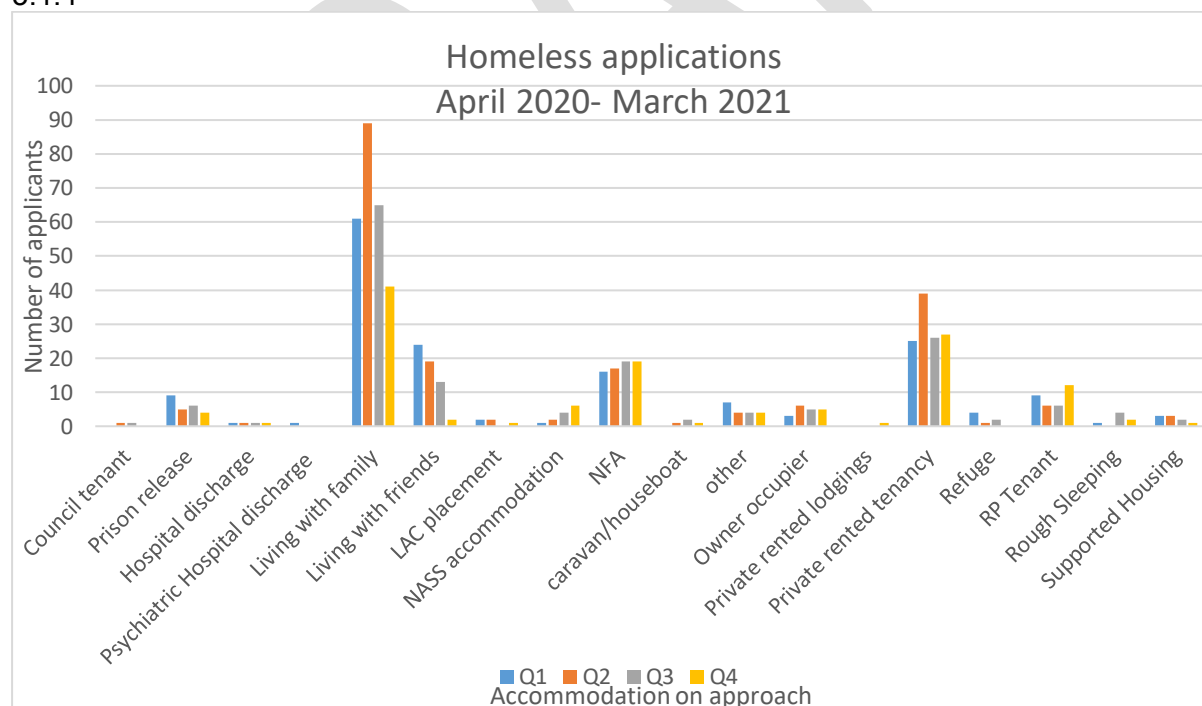
Typically single people make the largest number of homeless applications – usually more men than women. Table 3.1.3 below shows the quarterly trend over the past year and confirms that only small numbers of cases in Hartlepool involved families with dependent children. This confirms our need for one bedroom accommodation as this is by far in greatest demand. Single people tend to be in the 18 – 54 years age bracket with more than half of them being 18-34 years of age.

Table 3.1.3



Reasons for homelessness are detailed in 3.1.4 below and indicate that family no longer willing or able to accommodate is by far the biggest reason for referral for homelessness support. The end of a private rented tenancy, domestic abuse and relationship breakdown are the next greatest reported reason for homelessness.

3.1.4



4. Supporting vulnerable people and preventing homelessness

Most people that experience homelessness are supported successfully into alternative accommodation and do not require any further support. However some people have greater needs and require different levels of support in order to prevent and alleviate homelessness.

These people require a multi agency partnership approach, tailored to their needs to ensure they do not fall through the net and that their vulnerabilities are not further increased.

4.1 Young people and care leavers

A pathway is in place to support any young people aged 16-17 who are at risk of homelessness ensuring they are assessed and supported into suitable support and accommodation. This includes supported lodgings, supported accommodation and where appropriate independent living.

Care leavers are supported by the council's Through Care Team to support the transition from care to independent living. This includes a Pathway Plan and ongoing support after they leave care.

4.2 Victims of Domestic Abuse

The new Domestic Abuse Bill places additional duties on local authorities including the requirement to establish a multi-agency Local Partnership Board (LPB). The Bill includes a duty to:

Assess the need and demand for accommodation-based support for all victims and their children, including those who require cross-border support

Develop and publish strategies for the provision of support to cover the locality and diverse groups of victims.

Give effect to strategies by making commissioning / de-commissioning decisions

Meet the support needs of victims and their children.

4.3 Former members of the armed forces

Members of Her Majesty's regular naval, military and air forces are generally provided with accommodation by the Ministry of Defence (MOD), but are required to leave this accommodation when they are discharged from the service. Prior to leaving the service, the armed forces provide housing information and advice to service personnel.

The Tees Valley Allocations Policy gives an additional priority to those who are serving, or who have served with the armed forces ensuring that any homeless needs are met.

4.4 Migrants and refugees

Hartlepool has an asylum community supported by the government's commissioned provider 'Mears'. Mears provides all necessary support and accommodation to asylum seekers and there is no legal responsibility on the council. Should they be awarded Leave to Remain by the government then a notification procedure is in place to ensure that their transition to refugee status includes support from the council to access suitable accommodation that meets their family needs. With only 28 days notice to leave their asylum accommodation, the turn around can be difficult and it is not unusual for refugees to be housed in the private rented sector as this is often the quickest way in which they can secure a home.

4.5 Modern Day Slavery, Human Trafficking and Those with No Recourse to Public Funds

Local authorities have a duty under section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to notify the Home Office about a potential victim of trafficking or modern slavery. We do this by making a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) subject to consent. Our experience of such cases is limited however across both Children's and Adults departments we are fully aware of our responsibilities and duties should a situation occur.

4.6 People with an offending history

There are a number of agencies, both statutory and voluntary, dealing with ex-offenders. Many ex-offenders experience homeless or are threatened with homelessness. There is a need for prisoners and ex-offenders to be aware of their housing rights, both in respect of

maintaining their accommodation where appropriate on sentence and accessing accommodation on their release. The prison service has a Duty to Refer ensuring that the housing advice team is fully briefed on potential homeless applications from ex-offenders.

4.7 Service users with multiple and complex needs

A small number of adults have significant and complex needs including problems with their mental and physical health. These adults require intensive support from a range of service providers to ensure they are supported into suitable accommodation and helped to sustain it. The costs associated with not supporting such adults with a 'team around' approach far exceed those associated with providing a multi-agency response and in many cases help prevent death.

5. What have we got in place?

Hartlepool Council has access to a range of accommodation and support options for service users experiencing homelessness and our response is tailored to an individual's assessed needs. This includes accommodation and support for young people as well as adults. In some cases this is commissioned and in other cases providers deliver supported exempt accommodation and claim appropriate subsidy costs for their services.

5.1 Working in partnership

Preventing and alleviating homelessness and rough sleeping is everyone's business. The key to sustained success requires partnership support. We work collaboratively with a number of internal and external partner agencies. This includes for example:

- MHCLG
- Internal council partnerships: Strategic Housing Management and the HRA / Private Sector Housing and Enforcement Public Protection / Community Safety and ASB team / Special Needs Housing / Planning Department
- The Homeless Prevention Partnership
- The Rough Sleeper Action Group
- Tees Valley Lettings Partnership
- North East Regional Homelessness Forum
- The VCS

What do we know is missing and needs to be developed?

Hartlepool continues to deliver an effective homelessness service however the town is seeing rough sleeping more than in previous years. Every In has enabled us to establish further temporary accommodation and support options and this needs to be sustained. Additionally, complex service users are on the increase and have multiple support needs; these clients require extensive time and resources to keep them housed and safe.

OBJECTIVE 1: PREVENT AND RELIEVE HOMELESSNESS

- Ensure the newly restructured team is fit for purpose and suitably trained and equipped to undertake all statutory functions relating to homelessness
- Ensure public information is up to date, accurate and readily available for those experiencing homelessness
- Ensure the Homeless Prevention Partnership is strong, effective and appropriately supported to deliver on the homelessness action plan
- Maximise all opportunities for funding to support the delivery of our services
- Review all supported accommodation currently available in the town and ensure it delivers services and support that matches need
- Review the allocations police ensuring it meets the needs of those most vulnerable
- Review 'Quality Homes' to ensure it delivers the principles of social lettings

- Re-inforce the Duty to Refer process with key stakeholders so that effective communication and information sharing supports the accommodation of vulnerable adults
- Re-visit the 'Team Around' process ensuring adults with complex lives are effectively supported via a multi agency approach
- Engage service users in our work allowing their voice to influence our approach
- Work collaboratively across the Tees Valley with colleagues on activities that are mutually beneficial
- Undertake a Needs Assessment and ensure our data is accurate and reported appropriately so we have a thorough understanding of need.

OBJECTIVE 2: END ROUGH SLEEPING

- Continue to collaborate with key partners in the Rough Sleeper Action Group
- Continue to benefit from external experts in rough sleeping and their flexible approaches to locating rough sleepers out of hours
- Investigate the opportunity to operate a 'safe place to go/ stay' in Hartlepool
- Provide a rapid response to those affected by rough sleeping
- Address the root causes of rough sleeping tackling identified issues in collaboration with partners
- Explore alternative accommodation solutions including the Housing First model where appropriate
- Ensure provision of emergency accommodation for cold weather months (SWEP), including support for people to be able to move on.

OBJECTIVE 3: PROVIDE TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION, SUPPORT PEOPLE TO MOVE ON AND INCREASE ACCESS TO HOUSING

- Continue to provide an out of hours service so that the public and emergency services can make contact and we can secure safety for homeless people
- Ensure temporary accommodation is always available, accessible and of a good standard and used appropriately while homelessness assessments are undertaken
- Use "out of borough" placements as a last resort
- Ensure strong relationships with Registered Providers and Private Rented Sector Landlords are in place so that a wide range of accommodation options are available
- Explore alternative accommodation options for service users maximising use of existing buildings and space where appropriate
- Ensure tenancy support is in place so that service users can be helped to move on from temporary accommodation into alternative housing with support plans in place as appropriate
- Strengthen our tenancy support and Housing First delivery process.

OBJECTIVE 4: SUPPORTING COMPLEX ADULTS

- Ensure appropriate staffing is in place to meet the needs of complex service users
- Ensure the team is trained in understanding the needs of complex service users and the impact of Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences on lives
- Review the current TATI procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose and address the needs of complex adults that are experiencing multiple issues including homelessness
- Hold TATI meetings for service users with multiple needs and ensure multi agency support is in place to support effective interventions
- Assess and secure suitable accommodation for complex service users using a range of options including commissioned supported accommodation, Housing First, support in dispersed accommodation
- Provide Tenancy Support to complex service users ensure they have a plan and are supported to achieve agreed goals

- Make sure we have regular contact with our most complex service users and be confident that they are safe; alert appropriate partners where we do not think this is the case.

MONITORING THE STRATEGY AND PLAN

The Homeless Prevention Partnership will have oversight of the strategy and will develop an action plan based on the core objectives of this strategy. The Strategy will be reviewed annually. The Partnership will have oversight of the action plan and monitor progress.

The plan will:

- Detail all actions required to meet our core objectives
- Detail timescales for completion and identify named lead officers/ partners
- Highlight resource implications
- Identify gaps in service provision that need attention
- Indicate anticipated outcomes and measurements of success

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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 September 2021



Report of: Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: DEVELOPMENT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY AND RE-PROCUREMENT OF RECOMMISSIONING OF DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE INCLUDING NEW ACCOMMODATION DUTIES

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key decision - CJCS 113/21

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To update members on changes to the domestic abuse duties through the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

2.2 To seek approval to develop a domestic abuse strategy and consult on the draft strategy.

2.3 To seek approval to recommission domestic abuse support services including the accommodation requirements as set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 There are some 2.4 million victims of domestic abuse a year aged 16 to 74 (two-thirds of whom are women) and more than one in ten of all offences recorded by the police are domestic abuse related.

3.2 The Domestic Abuse Bill was originally introduced in the last Parliament, and was carried forward into this Parliament. The Bill aimed to ensure that victims of domestic abuse have the confidence to come forward and report their experiences, safe in the knowledge that the state will do everything it can, both to support them and their children and pursue the abuser. The Bill

received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021 and is now the Domestic Abuse Act 2021; it is anticipated that most of the provisions in the Act will come into force in 2021/22.

3.3 The new legislation:

- Creates a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, coercive or controlling, and economic abuse.
- Establishes in law the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner and set out the Commissioner's functions and powers.
- Provides for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order.
- Places a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.
- Prohibits perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in the civil and family courts in England and Wales.
- Creates a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts.
- Clarifies, by restating in statute law, the general proposition that a person may not consent to the infliction of serious harm and, by extension, is unable to consent to their own death.
- Extends the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the criminal courts in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to further violent and sexual offences.
- Enables domestic abuse offenders to be subject to polygraph testing as a condition of their licence following their release from custody.
- Places the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme ("Clare's law") on a statutory footing.
- Provides that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance.
- Ensures that where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an assured shorthold tenancy) this must be a secure lifetime tenancy.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGY

- 4.1 The introduction of the Domestic Abuse Bill requires local areas to review their strategies to ensure that they are meeting all the duties. All strategies need to be reviewed by 31 October 2021. The timeline to meet the required timescales are set out below:

May 2021	Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board established
May 2021 – July 2021	Literature review, data analysis and development of Needs Assessment
August 2021 – October 2021	Draft strategy produced and partners consulted on draft strategy
Sept 2021 – October 2021	Consult Safer Hartlepool Partnership: 20 th September 2021 18 th October 2021
November 2021	Approval of strategy: Finance and Policy Committee
October 2021 – March 2022	Commissioning process to appoint domestic abuse provider
April 2022	Contract awarded and domestic abuse provider in place

5 TIMESCALE FOR PROCUREMENT

- 5.1 The current contract with Harbour ends on 31st March 2022. A commissioning process needs to be undertaken to develop a service specification taking into account the findings from the needs assessment and the priorities within the new Strategy. It is proposed that the contract length will be three years with two additional years available to extend dependent on performance of the provider.
- 5.2 The procurement process will begin in October 2021 to ensure that a provider is in place for 1st April 2022.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There is a significant risk that if we do not recommission a domestic abuse service the council will not be fulfilling its statutory duties.
- 6.2 The levels of domestic abuse in Hartlepool continue to be concerning and it is important that the council and its partners work together to reduce the risk of domestic abuse. The development of a strategy based on our local needs assessment alongside a domestic abuse support service that addresses the priorities will support a reduction in risk.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Appendix A Not for Publication information sets out the budget information

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).

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The commissioning of this service is vital to ensure that the council is meeting its statutory requirements within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The specification will include the new accommodation duties as set out in section 3.3

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 The draft strategy will be consulted on with the following:

- Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board
- All stakeholders including members
- Safer Hartlepool Partnership
- Victims of domestic abuse via Harbour

9.2 Following completion of the consultation, the strategy will be presented to Finance and Policy Committee in November 2021 for approval.

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

10.1 There is no specific child and family poverty considerations within this report. Reducing domestic abuse will improve the life chances of vulnerable children and their families.

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

11.1 This service is available for all those needing it therefore there is no specific equality/diversity implications. Vulnerable groups have been highlighted within the needs assessment and will be addressed within the strategy.

12. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no staffing implications and any TUPE requirements will be dealt with via the current and potential provider.

13. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 There are no asset management implications as the provider will be expected to identify suitable premises.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 For members to note the changes to the domestic abuse duties through the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- 14.2 For members to approve the development and production of a domestic abuse strategy and consultation on the draft strategy.
- 14.3 To seek approval to recommission domestic abuse support services including the accommodation requirements as set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 The council has a statutory duty to provide domestic abuse services as set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 None

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Chief Executive



Director of Finance and Policy



Chief Solicitor



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13 September 2021



Report of: Chief Solicitor

Subject: CORPORATE PROCUREMENT QUARTERLY
REPORT ON CONTRACTS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information only in accordance with the Contract procedure Rules.

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.
- 3.3 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires consideration of the following when commencing a procurement exercise:
- How will this procurement improve economic, social and environmental wellbeing?
 - How can the improvements be secured?
 - Is consultation needed?
 - Which local benefits can form part of the evaluation?
- 3.4 HBC ‘considers’ Social Value when commencing all Tenders/Quick Quotes over £25K not just Services but Goods and Works as well where applicable.
- 3.5 NEPO is currently leading a region wide consultation with all 12 local authorities to help shape the development of a North East Themes, Outcomes, Measures (TOMs) model. The National Social Value Measurement Framework or National (“TOMs”) - is a method of reporting and measuring social value to a consistent standard. It is designed to provide a “golden thread” between an organisation’s overarching strategy to the delivery of that vision. The Framework was developed by Social Value Portal and

launched in 2017 but is quite complex and in its present form would likely serve as a disincentive to smaller local firms from tendering. NEPO has acknowledged this and aims to work together to create a local model that is robust and can confidently be used throughout the region by both procurers and suppliers.

4. INFORMATION FOR REVIEW

4.1 Tender information

Appendix A details the required information for each procurement tender awarded since the last quarterly report along with the social value percentage weighting that was incorporated at the application stage.

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. Exemption request forms have been amended to detail reasons why Hartlepool based firms have not been selected and this information is now being collated.

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. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Risk Implications	No relevant issues.
Financial Considerations	No relevant issues.
Legal Considerations	No relevant issues.
Staff Considerations	No relevant issues.
Asset Management	No relevant issues.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 That the Committee note and comment on the contents of the report,

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 There are no background papers.

9. CONTACT OFFICER

- 9.1 Hayley Martin
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Sign Off:-

Managing Director

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Director of Resources and Development

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Chief Solicitor

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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
16/06/2021	Verge Hardening – Various Schemes. DN 543196	Contractors on HBC Select List of Contractors for Highways Civil Engineering were invited to submit prices for providing new parking laybys within the verge areas of various housing estates around Hartlepool and associated works	2 months	Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services	BAM Ritchies Glasgow Esh Construction Ltd Bowburn County Durham Hall Construction Services Ltd Rushyford County Durham Highway Construction Services Ltd Stockton-on-Tees Rainton Construction Ltd Durham Seymour Civil Engineering Contractors Ltd Hartlepool	Esh Construction Ltd Bowburn County Durham Hall Construction Services Ltd Rushyford County Durham Highway Construction Services Ltd Stockton-on-Tees Rainton Construction Ltd Durham Seymour Civil Engineering Contractors Ltd Hartlepool	100% Price (Original Application Social Value 8%)	Seymour Civil Engineering Contractors Ltd Hartlepool	N/A
13/07/2021	Supported accommodation for individuals who are homeless or	Provision of supported accommodation for individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless	3 Years (plus 1 x 24 month extension)	Adults & Community Based Services	Open Invitation	Home Group Limited, Newcastle Relief Professional Group, Stockton	80% Quality 20% Price (10% Social Value)	Home Group Limited (No Sub-Contractors)	N/A – New Service

	at risk of becoming homeless – DN539270					Sanctuary Housing Association, London			
18/08/2021	Befriending Network DN554326	The provision of services to increase social contact and reduce loneliness and isolation of older people within Hartlepool (Befriending Network)	3 years (plus 2 x 12 month extension)	Adults & Community Based Services	Open Invitation	Cleveland Fire Brigade, Hartlepool	90% Quality 10% Price (5% Social Value)	Cleveland Fire Brigade, Hartlepool (No Sub-Contractors)	Cleveland Fire Brigade, Hartlepool

Procurements Exempted from Council Contract Procedure Rules

Exemption Information

Dept.	Service Unit	Company Name	Company based at	Duration	Description	Approval
Resources and Development	Communications and Marketing	SD Advertising Limited	Tyne & Wear	21/06/2021 – 26/07/2021	Multi Media Advertising Campaign. There is a requirement to utilise SD Advertisement Limited to enable HBC to respond speedily to an apparent rise in COVID-19 cases in Hartlepool with a multi-media advertising campaign focusing on key vaccination and testing messages.	Request Approved by Denise McGuckin, Chris Little & Hayley Martin on 17.6.2021
Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services	Regulatory Services - Public Protection	EON Energy Solutions Limited	Coventry	18/06/2021 – 31/12/2021	Energy Efficiency Measures The Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Phase 2 (LAD2) Scheme aims to improve the energy efficiency of homes of low-income households, help to reduce fuel poverty, phase out high carbon fossil fuel heating, and deliver progress towards the UK's commitment to net zero by 2050. The North East Yorkshire and Humber Energy Hub (The Hub) has secured £51.95m in Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD2) Phase 2 Scheme funding from the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, plus an additional £1m to support Local Authorities in the development of their projects. As a direct result of these tight timescales Hartlepool, as well as the other Tees Valley Local Authorities, have worked collectively with E.ON to develop a partnership agreement which will allow the Council to start work to deliver the project which will benefit 79 properties across the borough.	Request Approved by Chris Little, Hayley Martin & Tony Hanson on 22.6.2021
Adult and Community Based Services	Preventative and Community Based Services	Think Practice	Stockton	01/07/2021-30/09/2021	Cultural Strategy for Hartlepool. Think Practice are based in the Tees Valley with specific knowledge and experience of working in Hartlepool, Tees Valley and Regional specifically within cultural and creative industry. With over 25 years' experience in the sector and holding a senior leadership position in the Arts Council they are well informed of national and local context. They are actively working with TVCA, other Tees Valley Local Authorities, Voluntary and Community Sector as well as leading on national evaluation work with DCMS regarding cultural leadership and recovery of the sector considering the pandemic.	Request Approved by Chris Little, Hayley Martin & Jill Harrison on 21.7.2021

					<p>There are politics and allegiances within the sector and some strained relationships that need to be explored as part of this process. There was a need for an independent facilitation of the process whilst enough knowledge to navigate challenges sensitively. Think Practice has good trust and relationships across the sector and was a favoured choice across the whole collaboration to lead on the development of a Cultural Strategy for Hartlepool. Prices are competitive in the industry for independent facilitation and the VFM in terms of what this strategy will provide is significant.</p>	
Public Health	Public Health	Weight Watchers (delivered locally)	Maidenhead	01/08/2021-30/04/2022	<p>Adult Weight Management.</p> <p>The council has received one off funding from PHE – Adult Weight Management. The council are required to use this funding to either deliver or commission a service for adults to reduce their weight.</p> <p>Due to the very tight timescales and the funding needing to be spent by April 2022 officers feel the only option is to commission a provider already delivering this service.</p>	Request Approved by Chris Little, Hayley Martin & Sally Robinsons on 29.7.2021
Public Health	Public Health	Slimming World: (delivered locally)	Derbyshire	01/08/2021-30/04/2022	<p>Adult Weight Management</p> <p>The council has received one off funding from PHE – Adult Weight Management. The council are required to use this funding to either deliver or commission a service for adults to reduce their weight.</p> <p>Due to the very tight timescales and the funding needing to be spent by April 2022 officers feel the only option is to commission a provider already delivering this service.</p>	Request Approved by Chris Little, Hayley Martin & Sally Robinsons on 29.7.2021

Extension Information

Dept.	Service Unit	Company Name	Company based at	Duration	Description	Approval
Adult and Community Based Services	Preventative and Community Based Services	North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC)	Northallerton	01/04/2021-31/03/2022	Cleaning Contract – Carlton Adventure Centre Carlton Adventure is a residential centre for schools/groups opening 7 days per week in Carlton Cleveland. There is a requirement for a 1 year extension to the existing cleaning contract which received exemption approval in 2020, although based on restrictions the centre was unable to offer residential provision therefore the required cleaning was limited. The initial contract for the cleaning was created in September 2019 and expired after a 6 month period.	Request Approved by James Magog, Hayley Martin & Jill Harrison on 13.7.2021
Public Health	Public Health	Dr Ian Holtby	Redcar	30/06/2021-30/09/2021	Additional Capacity to Support DPH, There is a required to extend the additional capacity to support DPH (there is currently a vacancy for PH Consultant in the team and need to ensure that the team can respond to the pandemic) Support for outbreak control plans and technical advice	Request Approved by Chris Little, Hayley Martin & Sally Robinson on 14.7.2021
Public Health	Public Health	Panoramic Associates	Bristol	01/09/2021-28/02/2022	There continues to be a vacancy for a Deputy Director of Public Health which continues to place pressure on the DPH. Recruitment processes have been explored however this has unfortunately not resulted in the recruitment of a Deputy Director of Public Health due to a lack of available candidates.	Request Approved by Chris Little, Hayley Martin & Sally Robinson on 10.8.2021
Adult and Community Based Services	Adult Social Care	Penderels Trust Limited	Coventry	20/10/2021-19/04/2022	Direct Payment Support Service to individuals and families living in Hartlepool Penderels provide a Direct Payment Support Service to individuals and families living in Hartlepool to enable them to employ PAs through direct payments. Penderels were contracted from Oct 2015 on the basis of a 3 years contract with the option (dependent on performance) to extend until Oct 2020. It was agreed in 2020 that it would be best to bring this service in house and an exemption for a year was approved which will end in October 2021. In order for the procurement process to be implemented and a provider appointed we are proposing to extend the current provider until April 2022. This will enable the procurement process to be undertaken and if a new provider is appointed allows for a transition period (which	Request Approved by Chris Little, Neil Wilson Martin & Jill Harrison on 16.8.2021

					is complex due to the financial and employment element that the service provides).	
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