

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Thursday 21 October 2021

at 10.00 am

**in 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 Wednesday 20 October and name and address details will be taken for NHS Test and Trace purposes.

You should not attend the meeting if you are required to self-isolate or are displaying any COVID-19 symptoms such as (a high temperature, new and persistent cough, or a loss of/change in sense of taste or smell), even if these symptoms are mild. If you, or anyone you live with, have one or more of these symptoms you should follow the [NHS guidance on testing](#).

MEMBERS: ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Cranney, Falconer, Fleming, Little, Price, Prince and Richardson.

- 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 30 September 2021.
- 4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS**
 - 4.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022/23 TO 2024/25 – Issues Referred From Finance and Policy Committee - *Director of Adult and Community Based Services*

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.

5. KEY DECISIONS

No Items.

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 Community Hubs Strategy – Consultation and Engagement Plan - *Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)*

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Mental Health Post Covid Support Funding - *Director of Adult and Community Based Services*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Forthcoming meeting dates are set out below. All meetings will be held in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

Thursday 25 November, 2021 at 10.00 am
Thursday 20 January, 2022 at 10.00 am
Thursday 17 February, 2022 at 10.00 am
Thursday 17 March, 2022 at 10.00 am



ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

30 SEPTEMBER 2021

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

Present:

Councillor: Tim Fleming (In the Chair)

Councillors: Gordon Cranney, Angela Falconer, Sue Little, and Carl Richardson.

Also present: Councillor Brian Cowie as substitute for Councillor Darren Price as substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2.

Councillor Moss Boddy as substitute for Councillor Amy Price as substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2.

Councillor John Riddle

Frank Harrison, and Gordon and Stella Johnston

Officers: Jill Harrison, Director of Adult and Community Based Services
Gemma Ptak, Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services

Leigh Keeble, Head of Community Hubs and Wellbeing

Sarah Scarr, Heritage and Countryside Manager

Julian Heward, Communications and Marketing Team

David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

9. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Darren Price and Amy Prince.

10. Declarations of Interest

None.

11. Minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2021

Councillor Riddle commented that he had been present at the previous meeting but had not been recorded on the attendance and requested that the minutes be amended accordingly.

Subject to the above, the minutes were received.

12. **Heritage Strategy** (*Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)*)

Type of decision

Non-key Decision.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to provide the Committee with details of the proposed Heritage Strategy.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services) reported on the proposal to develop a new Heritage Strategy for Hartlepool. In formulating the Heritage Strategy the Assistant Director stated that there were three key issues to consider,

1. Preservation – the current foundation of our work on heritage;
2. Priorities – what are the key events, activities and issues;
3. People – how we will acknowledge significant individuals from the past and engage people with our work now and in the future.

The strategy would also look to the future covering both events and the key sites and strategies which would showcase Hartlepool's heritage.

The Assistant Director also addressed the request submitted by Councillor John Riddle for the introduction of a blue plaque scheme in Hartlepool. The Assistant Director indicated that, unfortunately, such a scheme could not be delivered within existing financial or staffing resources although she highlighted that other means of commemorating significant individuals within Hartlepool's history and heritage were in place and opportunities to develop this work further were being explored. Councillor Riddle thanked the Assistant Director for the consideration of the scheme and indicated his support for the wider strategy.

Members expressed their concern with the condition of a number of the listed buildings in the town, many of which were now simply seen as a blight on local communities by many residents and questioned the work being done with their owners to progress matters. The former Odeon building was one such building highlighted by Members. There was also criticism of the significant money that had been invested in Church Street over the past decade which had done little to raise its fortunes.

The Heritage and Countryside Manager informed Members that the Council website did include a detailed list of those 'heritage' buildings that were considered at risk and a link would be circulated to Members. Officers did meet regularly to address the issues with derelict buildings and while there may be a perception that these buildings were simply being left vacant, a great deal of work was being done behind the scenes but much did depend on the owners.

In relation to Church Street, the Heritage and Countryside Manager stated that much of the recent investment into Church Street had been as a result of a successful Heritage Lottery bid. The council had, however, been unsuccessful in a bid for funding to bring the former Shades building back into use. The Church Street area had, though, changed significantly over recent years with the arrival of the new Northern School of Art college and the ongoing work on the development of the new Television and Film studios, and also the Council development of the BIS.

A Member considered that the situation with many of the derelict listed buildings had changed so little in over a decade that the decision should simply be taken to demolish those that had no hope of redevelopment and remove some of the sites of blight adversely affecting communities.

Members expressed their disappointment that a Hartlepool Blue Plaque scheme could not be brought forward as there many Hartlepool people from the past that had gone on to achieve significant national positions and honours.

The Assistant Director acknowledged Members comments and indicated that they would be fed into the process of developing the new Heritage Strategy and would form future reports for the Committee's consideration.

The following decision was agreed unanimously.

Decision

That the current work ongoing within this area be noted and that the Committee supports the development of a Heritage Strategy with reports being submitted to future meetings as appropriate in the preparation of the strategy.

13. Library Relocation (*Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)*)

Type of decision

Non-key decision.

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the relocation of Throston Library to Throston Youth Centre.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services) reported on a proposal to relocate Throston Library to the Throston Youth Centre. The Assistant Director also gave a short presentation to the Members as part of the report outlining the consultation process and the results thereof.

The Throston Library building had closed at the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic and had not re-opened due to the inability of officers to implement appropriate Covid-19 mitigation measures to protect staff and the public within such a small space. The most recent condition survey for Throston Library also recommended an investment of £249,000 to ensure the building is maintained and able to operate safely. There was no available budget for this work to be progressed.

Throston Youth Centre was not actively used during the day with most engagement taking place on an evening. As a result there was space available to host a library offer with the same amount of stock that was currently available at Throston Library without other services being adversely affected. Throston Youth Centre was 0.7 miles from the existing library and can accommodate the same hours of operation and existing programme of activity. There were also opportunities for a more collaborative and community focused way of working that would potentially increase and enhance the offer.

The Assistant Director also reported that Catcote School were looking for premises to expand their offer. Throston had been identified as a potential solution and, pending approval of relocation of the library, a full feasibility study would be conducted providing an opportunity for the asset to be transferred to Catcote School on a long term arrangement.

Members broadly welcomed the proposal as it would maintain the service in the Throston area. There were some concerns as the distance between the two locations and the availability of public transport. Members were also concerned to ensure that a popular youth centre was also not unduly impinged by the relocation of the library. The Assistant Director stated that she was confident this would be the case.

Members expressed some concern that a similar review of provision to this at Throston would be rolled out to other branch libraries around the town potentially eroding local service provision. The Assistant Director stated that the position with other libraries was being reviewed as part of the wider review of Community Hubs. Members requested details of the usage of the local libraries, which the Assistant Director undertook to share with Members.

The following decision was supported unanimously.

Decision

1. That the proposal to relocate Throston Library to Throston Youth Centre as reported, be approved; and
2. That officers engage further with Catcote School so that more detailed feasibility work can be undertaken to secure the long term use of the current Throston Library building.

14. Impact of Covid on Adult and Community Based Services - Update *(Director of Adult and Community Based Services)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To update the Committee on the position in the services operated by the department following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Adult and Community Based Services gave a presentation to the Committee outlining the Covid-19 case rate in Hartlepool in comparison with the local and national position and the uptake of vaccines across the community. The Director updated the Committee on the situation in care homes in the town indicating that following the mandatory introduction of the vaccine for care home staff only 10 of over 1000 staff were still awaiting their first vaccine. There currently only two homes reporting cases of Covid-19 with one of those being a member of staff.

The Director also gave an update on some of the additional work that had been undertaken during the pandemic and the additional services and 'demand shift' that had been experienced across the town. Day services were slowly returning to pre pandemic levels and community based services were also in the process of reopening. There had also recently been a number of events that had taken place in a covid secure manner – the Waterfront Festival and Big Lime Triathlon – that had been abandoned last year due to the pandemic.

One of the biggest concerns highlighted by the Director was the significant drop in income through the services operated by the department, particularly leisure services.

A Member expressed their concern that the mobility of the older generations in the town had been adversely affected by the need to isolate during the pandemic and that there could be an adverse effect on their health and an impact on council services because of this. The Director stated that this had been acknowledged and activity through the Occupational Health Teams and the Active Hospitals scheme where hospitals worked with patients on their mobility before discharge, were ongoing to mitigate the potential impact of this.

Decision

That the report be noted.

15. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

The Chairman indicated that he had been contacted by Councillor Price raising concerns that the changing facilities at playing fields had not been reopened causing difficulties for local and visiting sports teams. The Director stated that the only changing facilities at this time that were not open were at Rift House Recreation Ground. Officers were reviewing the operation of these facilities in a Covid secure manner before they could be reopened.

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 21 October, 2021 at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre.

The meeting concluded at 11.45 am.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 12 OCTOBER 2021

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

21st October 2021



Report of: Director of Adults and Community Services

Subject: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) 2022/23
TO 2024/25 – ISSUES REFERRED FROM FINANCE AND
POLICY COMMITTEE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Budget and Policy Framework.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purposes of this report are to enable Members to consider the savings proposals referred from Finance and Policy Committee and to determine the feedback they wish to refer back to Finance and Policy Committee.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 MTFS reports to Finance and Policy Committee (13.09.21 and 11.10.21) and Council (30.09.21) highlighted the scale of previous reductions in Government funding and the resulting cuts in services, including a reduction in the workforce of 20%. These measures cannot be repeated and the financial deficit now facing the Council means further service cuts will have to be made.

3.2 This is increasingly difficult to explain to the public, particularly as cuts will continue at the same time as reliance on Council Tax and the Adult Social Care precept continues to increase. This is not unique to Hartlepool – most councils face this challenge. Council Tax funds 53% (£42.7m) of the budget in 2021/22 - compared to 32% (£30.8m) in 2013/14. It is increasingly challenging to explain to the public how their Council tax is used – particularly when this funds Social Care Services for adults and children, which not all residents use or appreciate councils provide.

3.3 The recent national debate may have helped people understand the challenges facing Adult Social Care. There has not been a similar national

debate regarding the challenges facing Children's Social Care and the financial impact.

- 3.4 The MTFS report detailed the forecast budget deficits for the next three years, including the impact of reducing the total deficit from **£11.435m** to **£7.523m** by increasing Council Tax up to the level of the forecast national Referendum Limit, including the 3% deferred Adult Social Care precept. The precept could either have been implemented in 2021/22 or deferred to 2022/23.
- 3.5 The report advised Members that increasing Council Tax reflects national policy for funding local services. Therefore, against this national policy these increases provide the most robust basis for the budget and protecting services. The report also provided details of the Budget Support Fund which can be used to phase the deficit over three years and to support implementation of a Transformation Plan.
- 3.6 Finance and Policy Committee considered the issues detailed in the MTFS report and made detailed recommendation to Council, which will be considered on 30th September 2021. On the basis these recommendations are approved a savings plan now needs to be developed to deliver total savings of **£7.523m**. The majority of this deficit is front loaded in 2022/23. To support the plan it was recommended that reserves are used to phase the deficit over the next three years, as follows:

	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	5.154	1.212	1.157	7.523
Deficit deferred from 22/23 to 23/24 by using Reserves	(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

- 3.7 Achieving the savings plan will be challenging and will need to be managed carefully to ensure planned savings are delivered and reliance on reserves is phased out – as this is not sustainable.

4. TRANSFORMATION AND SAVING PLAN

- 4.1 The MTFS report to Finance and Policy Committee (11.10.21) advised Members that the ideal situation would be to have a three year plan to address the forecast budget deficit and include some additional proposals in the event that identified financial risks materialise over the next three year, for example grants cuts resume, national pay awards/inflation exceed the

modest MTFS forecasts, or additional grant funding is not provided for the 1.25% National Insurance increase in April 2022. A three year plan was recommended by the Local Government Association when they reviewed the Council's financial position and approach to managing the budget deficit.

- 4.2 However, the scale of the budget deficit means this plan needs to be in two phases:

- **Phase 1 - to address the deficit for 2022/23.**

This stage needs to be completed by December 2021 to enable savings to be implemented from 1st April 2022;

In developing the 2022/23 plan it is recommended we aim to exceed the minimum savings required to balance the budget of **£2.654m**. This will provide a more robust basis for future years and reduce reliance on using reserves in 2022/23. Detailed proposals are provided in the next section.

- **Phase 2 – to address the deficits for 2023/24 and 2024/25.**

This stage needs to be completed and approved by September 2022 as it is envisaged many issues will have longer implementation periods.

Once a robust plan has been approved for 2022/23 the Corporate Management Team will work on proposals for 2023/24 and 2024/25. This work will commence in January/February 2022 and provide proposals for Members to consider after the May 2022 elections.

To assist the development of phase 2 savings a number of proposal which require a longer lead time to implement are identified in the next section. .

5. **PROPOSED SAVINGS**

- 5.1 Finance and Policy Committee were advised:

- That the savings proposals have been identified by the Corporate Management Team against the background of the significant savings made in previous years, whilst seeking to minimise the impact on services. However, owing to the scale of the cuts required it is impossible to identify proposals which will not impact on services.
- That if the total proposed savings are all approved this is only **65%** of the total three year deficit of **£7.523m**. If some of these proposals are not approved this percentage will reduce and alternative savings will need to be identified. This will be particularly challenging for 2022/23.

- If all the proposals are approved and implemented this will address the 2022/23 budget deficit, but will require further significant savings to be identified in 2023/24 and 2024/25, as summarised below:

	A	B	C = A less B
	Cumulative deficit £m	Cumulative savings proposal (details Appendix A) £m	Cumulative shortfall still be addressed / (saving achieved in advance – i.e. reduced use of Budget Support Fund) £m
2022/23	2.654	2.824 to 2.999	(0.170 to 0.345)
2023/24	5.066	4.268 to 4.693	0.373 to 0.798
2024/25	7.523	4.503 to 4.883	2.640 to 3.020

- If these proposals are not supported Members will need to propose viable alternative proposals that they are prepared to implement. This strategic direction is needed to enable the Corporate Management Team to develop a detailed implementation plan, which will include all necessary consultation, to ensure savings can be implemented from 1st April 2022 to balance the 2022/23 budget.
- The majority of the savings proposals are self-explanatory and if approved the 2022/23 proposals can be implemented from 1st April 2021. A number of proposals have longer lead times and require Members to provide a strategic direction as part of the 2022/23 budget process to enable savings to be achieved in 2023/24.

5.2 In line with the Council's Constitution Finance and Policy Committee are seeking the views of individual Policy Committees on the savings proposals for their areas. Accordingly details of proposed savings for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 are summarised in **Appendix A. This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order 2006) namely: - Paragraph 1 - Information relating to any individual and Paragraph 2 - Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.**

6. OTHER CONSIDERATION

6.1 Equality and Diversity

6.2 The savings proposals put forward will impact on the delivery of frontline services or service users to varying degrees. There are some proposals which simply by the nature of the service area that they cover will impact on those with protected characteristics e.g. adult social care relating to older adults or

those with disabilities. However, due to the financial challenges facing the Council we have no choice but to change, redesign and potentially close services to reduce costs. Where we may need to change, redesign and close services we are working to minimise the impact on those with protected characteristics and will focus on securing services for those who are the most vulnerable within those protected characteristics.

- 6.3 Members are aware from previous MTFS reports that in making financial decisions the Council is required to demonstrate that those decisions are made in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different members of the community. This is achieved through assessing the impact that changes to policies, procedures and practices could have on different equality groups.
- 6.4 Appendix A – Part 1 Summary of Initial Savings Proposals identifies those who could potentially be affected by each proposal from the 9 protected characteristics. Further analysis will be undertaken to determine who will be directly and indirectly impacted by the proposals and Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) will be undertaken where required. Further information will be provided within the next Finance and Policy Committee report to enable Members to satisfy themselves that they are able to consider fully the potential impact of the proposed changes when making their decisions.
- 6.5 An overall central assessment will be undertaken to determine the cumulative impact of the savings proposals on each individual protected characteristic. This assessment will be included within the December MTFS report.

6.6 Child and Family Poverty

- 6.7 Appendix A – Part 1 Summary of Initial Savings Proposals identifies where proposal could potentially affect child and family poverty. Further analysis will be undertaken to determine who will be directly and indirectly impacted by the proposals and Child and Family Poverty Impact Assessments will be undertaken where required.
- 6.8 An overall central assessment will be undertaken to determine the cumulative impact of the savings proposals on child and family poverty. This assessment will be included within the December MTFS report to enable Members to satisfy themselves that they are able to consider fully the potential impact of the proposed changes when making their decisions.

6.9 Legal Considerations

- 6.10 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.

6.11 Staff and Asset Management Considerations

- 6.12 These are covered in the detailed savings proposals and the cumulative staffing impact will be included within the December MTFS report.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Council faces an extremely challenging financial position and budget deficits will need to be addressed from a combination of increasing Council Tax and the Adult Social Care precept, reflecting nationally set referendum limits, and budget cuts.
- 7.2 The report seeks the Committees views on the proposed budget savings they wish to refer back to Finance and Policy Committee for consider in December, prior to Finance and Policy Committee determining the savings proposals to be referred to Council.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that Members consider the savings proposals detailed in Appendix A and determine the feedback they wish to refer back to Finance and Policy Committee, including the proposals which require a decision as part of the 2022/23 budget process to achieve a saving in 2023/24 owing to the lead time for implementation.

9. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Constitution requires individual Policy Committees to be consulted on savings proposals.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- Finance and Policy Committee - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022/23 to 2024/25 – 11th October 2021;
- Finance and Policy Committee - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022/23 to 2024/25 – 13th September 2021;
- 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.

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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Director of Adults & Community Services
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Telephone: 01429 284144

Sign Off:-

Managing Director



Director of Resources and Development



Chief Solicitor



ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

21 October 2021



Report of: Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)

Subject: COMMUNITY HUBS STRATEGY – CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-Key decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide details of the proposed Community Hubs consultation and engagement plan.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A report was submitted to Adults and Community Based Services Committee on 12th March 2021 outlining a proposal to develop a Community Hub Strategy that included the future of the library service. At that time it was anticipated that consultation would take place over the summer. However with the ongoing constraints of the pandemic and with the focus in the Community Hubs on the Support Hub and supporting vulnerable people and people who are isolating, subsequent staffing pressures has led to the consultation being delayed.

3.2 Community Hubs were officially launched on 25th September 2017. The aim of the Hubs was to act as key community buildings that bring together a range of services, from different organisations, under one roof.

3.3 There are three Community Hubs located in the North, Central and South of the Borough and a number of branch libraries at Throston, Seaton and Headland.

3.4 Community Hubs are located in existing community buildings and each is unique in operation based on the space that is available, management arrangements and the demands of the population.

- 3.5 The Community Hubs have a core offer available or in development at each site. This includes:
- A library offer comprised of book loaning service including eBooks and audio books, children's rhyme time, People's Network, reading groups, genealogy, local history and much more.
 - Health and Well Being Services offering one to one and group support from Community Connectors. This is focused on positive lifestyle change, increasing physical activity, managing long term and limiting conditions and signposting to other opportunities and services.
 - Financial advice and guidance in partnership with West View Advice and Resource Centre.
 - Learning and Skills offering programmes of education, careers advice and volunteering opportunities.
- 3.6 The aim of the consultation is to ensure that the development and publication of a strategy is well informed and establishes the foundations for the long term management and development of the Community Hubs.
- 3.7 Based on existing knowledge, 5 key strategic priorities will form the framework for consultation and development of the Community Hubs Strategy. Each strategic priority will be underpinned by a set of ambitions which will inform, with partners and the community, the design of services going forward.
- 3.8 The strategic priorities are:
- Health and Wellbeing
 - Community
 - Digital
 - Reading, Education and Innovation
 - Diversity, Disability and Difference

4. PROPOSED STRATEGY

- 4.1 In formulating the Community Hub Strategy we are focused on an overarching vision whereby the Community Hubs in Hartlepool together with our partners and the Voluntary and Community Sector, nurture opportunities through access to ideas, imagination and connection.
- 4.2 The strategy needs to articulate the next part of the Community Hubs journey – to outline our ambitions and provide a clear plan on how we intend to reach them.

The Strategy will be for the next 5 years, it will be ambitious in its aspirations for the people of Hartlepool. It will embed the role of our libraries into the Community Hubs, ensuring our accountability for the comprehensive and efficient provision of libraries as outlined by the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The development of the strategy will include widespread consultation and engagement with current library members, community groups, the voluntary and community sector, residents and key partner organisations including schools and early year's settings to ensure that the people of Hartlepool are central to the way our service is designed and developed.
- 5.2 A programme of consultation and engagement will take place starting in November 2021. The consultation tools will be located on the Council's Your Say Engagement Hub but a range of methods including face to face sessions, focus groups and paper questionnaires will be used to ensure inclusive participation.
- 5.3 Regular press releases and a social media campaign will inform people of the range of opportunities available to them to take part in the consultation.
- 5.4 It is proposed that the consultation takes place in two 6 week blocks allowing us the opportunity to analyse feedback, review and amend our Strategy before final consultation in January and February of 2022.

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1. The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 places a Statutory duty on the Council "to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons" for all those who live, work or study in the area (section 7.)
- 6.2 The definition of a 'comprehensive and efficient service' will differ between Councils and Councils have the freedom to design their library service, based on their analysis and assessment of local needs. There are no longer prescribed national standards, which risked ignoring the specific circumstances or needs of individual library authorities.
- 6.3 Decisions about the delivery of the library service must be done in consultation with communities. Our proposed consultation is in line with the recommendation by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) of a 12 week consultation period.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The consultation and subsequent Community Hub Strategy will be delivered within existing budgets.
- 7.2 There remains a £25,000 pressure in service attached to the proposed closure of Seaton branch library in a paper to Finance and Policy in December 2016. This will need to be addressed as part of the programme of

consultation and engagement and any proposed model of delivery within the strategy.

- 7.3 There was an additional pressure of £25,000 attached to Throston branch library but this has been resolved through relocation of the service as detailed in a paper to Adults and Community Based Service Committee 30 September 2021.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There is a risk for the Council that the proposed Community Hub Strategy will not be reflective of the needs and aspirations of the community without the involvement of those parties in the process.

9. STAFFING

- 9.1 There are no staffing implications.

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

- 10.1 No issues.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 The Council currently owns Central Community Hub, Community Hub South, the branch libraries at Seaton, Headland and Throston Youth Centre where Throston library will relocate to. The Council also owns a mobile Community Hub and this will be reviewed as part of this process.
- 11.2 A decision made to close Throston and Seaton branch libraries has left a financial pressure on the Community Hub budget of £50,000. The recent move of Throston library to the Youth and Community Centre has reduced that financial pressure but the future of Seaton library needs to be considered. The building is in need of investment and renovation (estimated at around £220,000) and it is therefore proposed that an options appraisal for the future of Seaton library forms part of this consultation.
- 11.3 The usage of the mobile community hub will also be considered as school bookings have declined dramatically and people are accessing their books in different ways, either via the e-book service or by click and collect. The demand for the home library has grown exponentially and now has a waiting list, it will be considered how we manage this demand moving forward.
- 11.4 There will be consideration of engagement with schools and early year settings exploring how they interact with the Community Hubs and better

capitalise on using children's resources and outreach opportunities including author visits, Book Start and the Summer Reading Challenge.

12. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 12.1 The hubs support some of the most vulnerable people in our communities through a community led offer. Supporting families with financial advice and guidance, access to food provision and other important opportunities to enhance the wellbeing and meet the needs of people contributes towards our poverty prevention work.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 Access and inclusion will be a key consideration of the Strategy ensuring that it is available for all who wish to take part.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree to the Community Hub Strategy Consultation and Engagement Plan in Appendix 1.

15. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 It was agreed at Committee in March 2021 that a Community Hub Strategy would be developed. The Consultation and Engagement Plan will provide the evidence for the development of the Strategy.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Community Hubs Strategy – Consultation and Engagement Plan – 2021
Adult and Community Based Services Committee, 12th March 2021,
Community Hub Strategy.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Preventative and Community Based Services

Community Hubs and Wellbeing

Community Hubs Strategy – Consultation and Engagement Plan - 2021



**HARTLEPOOL
COMMUNITY HUBS**

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Introduction

Hartlepool Borough Council's Community Hubs and Wellbeing Service seeks to make a significant contribution to the lives of the people of Hartlepool through the delivery of a range of high quality services providing information, advice, support and guidance to people through a network of statutory and voluntary and community sector partners.

A Library Service review was conducted in 2015 highlighting the falling library footfall and book loads. This was followed by the launch of the Community Hubs in September 2017. The aim of the hubs was to act as key community buildings that bring together a range of services from different organisations under one roof. Progress towards this objective was slow however, there was a growth in the number of people and community groups wanting to make use of the space in the buildings.

"The way people use libraries and their expectations of public services are changing. Financial and demographic challenges are increasing. Standing still is not an option"

Source: [Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England, 2016-2021, Published by Department for Culture, Media and Sport \(DCMS\), 2016.](#)

This observation by the DMCS has been compounded by the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and in Hartlepool, by the development of the Support Hub.

The Covid pandemic has opened up some of the inequalities in the Community Hubs and Wellbeing service that our new strategy will need to address. The ability to access and navigate online tools and services has meant that many residents have been able to continue to work, shop and socialise online. Those without the skills or tools to get online have been disadvantaged. The community response to the pandemic in Hartlepool was amazing and there are examples of how the crisis has strengthened communities and informal support networks. However, there have been those who have felt very isolated and anxious and there is already evidence of an increase in mental health issues amongst adults and children. Financial pressures for residents have grown - the impact of the ending of the Furlough Scheme, reduction in Universal Credit and potential fuel cost increases will have an impact on people already struggling to manage.

We need to develop a Community Hub strategy that articulates the next part of the Community Hubs journey – outlining our ambitions to support recovery from the pandemic and providing a clear plan on how we intend to reach them.

We want to develop a Strategy for the next 5 years. We want to be ambitious in our aspirations for the people of Hartlepool. We want to embed the role of our libraries into the Community Hubs whilst ensuring our accountability for the comprehensive and efficient provision of libraries as outlined by the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act.

Consulting and Engaging

We are committed to ensuring that the people of Hartlepool are central to the way our service is designed and develops. To achieve this we will consult and engage with our customers and non-customers to:

- Introduce them to our vision
- Help us identify any gaps in our plans
- Review current use of facilities including building opening hours, programme/activities, our mobile community hub etc.

Proposed Consultation

We propose to consult over a total period of 12 weeks split into 2 periods of 6 weeks.

Weeks 1-6 we will ask open questions based on our draft proposal plus specific questions around operational considerations such as opening hours.

Weeks 7 – 12 we will provide a copy of the updated strategy and findings from all elements of the consultations and ask for feedback.

Timescale

The first consultation period will take place from 22nd November 2021 finishing on 21st January 2022 (taking into account the Christmas and New Year period).

The second period of consultation will take place from 21st February to 1st March 2022.

Methods of Engagement

Within the consultation period a mixed method of engagement will be used to obtain as much feedback as possible.

We will use the Council's Your Say Engagement Hub to form the basis of the consultation. We will use a range of functionality available on the platform including a questionnaire, ideas forum and ability for people to post specific questions.

In addition we will:

Hold Drop-in Sessions across the hubs over the consultation period where people will be able to access the Your Say Engagement Hub with or without staff support and have their say.

Paper copies of all documentation will also be available at the drop-in sessions.

Feedback Surveys which will be a mix of quick questions and more in-depth surveys will be available both online and in hard copies.

Focus Groups with groups who currently use the hubs, library members, partners from statutory services including schools and early year's settings, and the voluntary and community sector.

Raising Awareness of the Consultation

Contact will be made with all current members of the library service advising them of the consultation and how to get involved. In addition:

- Press releases will be issued over the period of consultation reminding people that it is taking place and encouraging them to participate.
- A social media campaign will take place on the Community Hubs and HBC Facebook page and Twitter.
- Work with key stakeholders to encourage engagement from targeted groups and communities ensuring feedback from a broad range of people.

Data Analysis and Evaluation

Analysis and evaluation of the data collected will take place at the end of the first period of consultation. This will be used to review and finalise the strategy and formalise operational recommendations. Feedback from the second phase of the consultation will be evaluated at the end of that period and the results presented to the people who took part in the consultation and other interested partners. This will be accompanied by a timeline of future actions.

**For further information about the
Community Hubs Strategy - Consultation
and Engagement Plan 2021, please contact
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ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

21 October 2021



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Based Services

Subject: MENTAL HEALTH POST COVID SUPPORT
FUNDING

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 No decision required; for information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide the Adult and Community Based Services Committee with an update on the use of Mental Health Post Covid Support Funding.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The impact of the Covid pandemic on mental health and emotional wellbeing is becoming increasingly evident. Across the life span there are heightened rates of anxiety and low mood across the population. Loneliness, social isolation and the lack of freedom and meaningful activity that lockdowns have caused poses significant challenges to emotional wellbeing.

3.2 The pandemic has caused many people to reflect on their own emotional wellbeing and what helps maintain this. Services have had to become more creative and flexible in how they operate and how they meet the needs of the local population. There is recognition that it is crucial that we learn from these experiences and put into place robust support for people as they navigate their own journey to a place of greater wellbeing.

3.3 Non-recurring funding has been allocated across the Tees Valley by Tees Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) which aims to improve the wellbeing of the local community of all ages impacted by Covid 19. Additional resources were identified within the Covid Outbreak Management Fund to support mental health related projects, giving a total allocation of £205,000.

- 3.4 Organisations were given the opportunity to apply for grants of between £5,000 and £30,000.

4. PROJECTS

- 4.1 Guidance for applications (with clear criteria) was produced in partnership with TEWV in June 2021 and publicised across the voluntary and community sector. The closing date for application was Friday 23 July, with a panel assessment taking place on Friday 30 July 2021. The panel was made up of representatives from TEWV, Hartlepool Carers, THE Chair of the Hartlepool Mental Health Forum and officers of Hartlepool Borough Council.
- 4.2 26 bids were received requesting total funding of £493,316. All bids were scored against the identified criteria by the panel, with 10 successful bids allocated a total £204,335.
- 4.3 All organisations were advised of the outcome and the successful organisations were asked to meet with HBC and TEWV to agree a Service Level Agreement (SLA) including monitoring arrangements.
- 4.4 The successful applications were:

Bid name	Age Range	Amount	Description
Play out Hartlepool	Children & Families	£5,940	Spending time outdoors. Funding and training for employing one person to run sessions in outdoor toddler groups; outdoor sessions for groups of children; outdoor family sessions; - to help build relationships between parents, children and peers.
PFC trust (social prescribers)	11-18 year olds	£26,400	Funding will pay for 2 x P/T social prescribing link workers for young people to receive referrals from multiple organisations to provide help/experiences for young people; meet with the young people; support them to engage with organisations and periodically follow up and support.
HEDM & PTE (Turning the Tide)	18-55 year olds	£26,900	Provide a targeted MH, community involvement and employment wraparound project for the most vulnerable and people furthest from the job market. To improve MH, prevent crisis and develop a sustainable community resilience.
Hartlepool East Durham Mind (HEDM) & other partners	All age groups	£29,000	Employ a psychosocial practitioner to deliver direct support to people and families with Covid, long Covid and struggling with impact of lockdown/pandemic. Worker will support people with highest priority identified through navigation worker based at the hub, Poolie Time Exchange outreach team, and HEDM network.
Peoples Meeples (Gaming)	18-30 Men / families	£29,185	Promote the social and educational benefits of gaming - by reducing social isolation, facilitate the development of new relationships, reduce demand on specialised MH services, providing an ongoing 'new hobby' for over 100 people.
CIC sport and HEDM	Children & Adults	£5,000	Over 100 sports clubs in Hartlepool. The project will address sport club gaps in knowledge and experience of MH challenges which have been exacerbated in the pandemic - learn appropriate coping mechanisms that can

			help those who deliver services and those who access services, including those who would not typically access statutory services.
MH Alliance group (Dads) HEDM	Dads	£28,500	Funding to support a 'Like a Dad support worker' to find dads/males with parental responsibilities and work intensively with those Dads to encourage them to get involved in activities that will support their MH and those around them.
Consortium bid (Wharton trust; BlooinArt; Lillyannes coffee bar; RunFit Hartlepool; Minds for Men/Wellness for Women)	All age groups	£30,000	Aim to strengthen the link between social prescribers based at Lillyannes coffee bar by creating a role within the coffee shop for a community connector. The CC will be able to take referrals and signpost and support them to the offer from each organisation.
Incontrollable	18-55 year olds	£15,000	Create two choirs 'Hear My voice' to reduce the risk of male suicide and 'Girls Are Loud' will be an opportunity for women to meet , share experiences and have fun.
Link project CIC (Salaam)	BAME - all ages; focus on Women.	£8,410	Help bring together people from different cultural backgrounds through tailored services, activities, therapies, and trips to create an opportunity and space for them to socialise and talk to other people.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is a risk that this targeted support may not meet the needs of the identified cohort. This is partly mitigated by the Council working with the projects, as well as providing opportunities to come together to collaborate and share information, creating a peer support network. The Support Hub will also play a role in signposting people to these services.
- 5.2 Sustainability of these initiatives after the funding has been used is a risk, but this has been mitigated by including options for how this should be sustained as part of the bid itself. The focus of this funding is related to supporting people around Covid recovery.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 These projects are being supported by non-recurring funding from TEWV and the Covid Outbreak Management Fund, so there are no ongoing financial implications for the Council.
- 6.2 The awarding panel examined the financial elements of all bids and monitoring spend will be included as part of the ongoing monitoring process.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 TEWV identified that the impact of Covid 19 has heightened rates of anxiety and low mood amongst the population. Evidence from the Support Hub has shown that people have been living in fear of contracting the virus alongside feelings of anxiety surrounding re-engaging with community life.
- 7.2 Ongoing feedback will be completed as part of the project monitoring.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 There are no legal considerations in relation to this funding.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 9.1 There are no child and family poverty considerations in relation to this funding. A number of the projects are targeted at children, young people, families and parents and aim to support children and families, including those experiencing poverty.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 Equality and diversity was considered as part of the panel decision-making process. All ages, gender and ethnic minority groups are included in the successful projects.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no implications for existing staff.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no implications for asset management.

13. RECOMMENDATION

- 13.1 It is recommended that the Adult and Community Based Services Committee note the progress made in identifying, allocating and monitoring these projects.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 To ensure that members of the Adult and Community Based Services Committee are aware of work that is underway to support people who are experiencing mental wellbeing issues as a result of the Covid pandemic.

15. CONTACT OFFICER

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