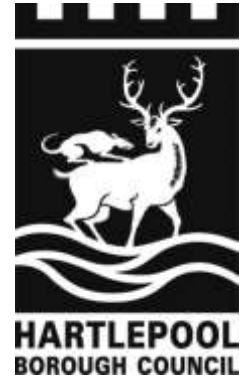


# **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE AGENDA**



**Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**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) 523193 by midday on 25 February 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”**

## **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:**

Councillors Boddy, Cook, Cowie, Feeney, Hall, D Loynes, Picton, Richardson, Riddle and 1 vacancy.

Standards Co-opted Independent Members: - Mr Martin Slimings and Ms Tracy Squires.

Standards Co-opted Parish Council Representatives: Parish Councillor John Littlefair (Hart) and Parish Councillor Alan O'Brien (Greatham).

Local Police Representative.

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
- 3. MINUTES**

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022 (*to follow*).

## **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. **AUDIT ITEMS**

None.

5. **STANDARDS ITEMS**

None.

6. **STATUTORY SCRUTINY ITEMS**

**Crime and Disorder Scrutiny**

No items.

**Health Scrutiny**

- 6.1 North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust - 2021/22 Quality Account - Presentation
- 6.2 Child Poverty Investigation - Draft Final Report - *Statutory Scrutiny Manager (to-follow)*
- 6.3 Accessibility of Services to People with Disabilities and Lifelong Conditions - Council Referral - Timetable Update - *Statutory Scrutiny Manager (to follow)*

7. **OTHER ITEMS FOR DECISION**

- 7.1 Personnel Sub-Committee – *Chief Solicitor and Monitoring Officer*

8. **MINUTES FROM THE RECENT MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

No items.

9. **MINUTES FROM THE RECENT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE RELATING TO PUBLIC HEALTH**

No items

10. **MINUTES FROM RECENT MEETING OF TEES VALLEY HEALTH SCRUTINY JOINT COMMITTEE**

No items.

11. **MINUTES FROM RECENT MEETING OF SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP**

No items.

12. **REGIONAL HEALTH SCRUTINY UPDATE**

No items.

**13. DURHAM, DARLINGTON AND TEESSIDE, HAMBLETON, RICHMONDSHIRE AND WHITBY STP JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

No items.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

For information: -

Date and time of forthcoming meetings: -  
Thursday 17 March, 2022 at 2.00 pm

# **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

### **10 FEBRUARY 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor: Rob Cook (In the Chair).

Councillors: Brian Cowie, Tom Feeney, Stephen Picton, Carl Richardson and John Riddle.

Standards Co-opted Members:

Mr Martin Slimmings– Independent Member

Also Present: In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2, Councillor Tom Cassidy was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Dennis Loynes.  
Councillor Angela Falconer.

Gavin Barker, Mazars

Karen Hawkins, Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group

Dr Carl Parker, McKenzie Group Practice

Officers:

Craig Blundred, Director of Public Health

James Magog, Assistant Director, Finance

Joan Stevens, Statutory Scrutiny Manager

David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

## **101. The Mayor, Councillor Brenda Loynes**

The Chair informed the Committee of the sad recent death of Councillor Brenda Loynes, the current Mayor, and spoke in tribute. Members and all present observed a period of silence as a mark of respect.

## **102. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Moss Boddy and Dennis Loynes

### **103. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Falconer declared a personal interest as a patient at the Hartfields Medical Practice.

### **104. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2021 and 13 January 2022.**

Both sets of minutes were confirmed.

### **105. Mazars Report - Audit Progress Report** (*Assistant Director, Finance*)

The Mazars representative presented the Audit Progress report. As had been reported to the meeting on 11 November 2021, there had been a delay obtaining the required assurance from the pension fund auditor but Mazars had signed the audit opinion on 14 December 2021 and updated members through a follow up letter. The report explained that the value for money work was not completed and the latest guidance from National Audit Office (NAO) allowed auditors to report the results of their value for money work in a new Auditor's Annual Report, within three months of giving the opinion on the financial statements. Mazars had now completed this work and the Auditor's Annual Report was a separate item on this agenda. No significant weaknesses in arrangements were identified and there were no recommendations arising from the audit.

As reported in the Auditor's Annual Report Mazars had not yet issued the Audit Certificate for 2020/21, which formally closed the audit. It was expected that the National Audit Office would confirm their requirements for Whole Government Accounts shortly and Mazars would close the audit once their instructions had been received and the required procedures completed.

Mazars had commenced the planning work for the 2021/22 audit. There were no issues to bring to the Council's attention at this early stage of the audit process. Mazars would share the formal 2021/22 Audit Strategy Memorandum at a future meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee.

It was questioned if the failure to complete the previous year's audit would have any impact on the current financial year. The Mazars representative stated that there were no consequences for the Council's financial management.

#### **Recommended**

That the report be noted.

### **106. Mazars Report – Auditors Annual Report** *(Assistant Director, Finance)*

The Mazars representative reported that the Auditors Annual Report replaced the previous Annual Audit Letter but also included the Auditor's value for money conclusions. The Mazars representative stated that there had been no difficulties during the audit and all the documentation was of a very high quality. The Mazars representative thanked the HBC Officers for their assistance during the audit process.

The report highlighted the additional work around value for money and accounting estimates that had resulted in higher fees which were in accordance with those guided by Public Sector Auditor Appointments.

#### **Recommended**

That the report be noted.

### **107. Treasury Management Strategy** *(Director of Resources and Development)*

The Assistant Director, Finance presented a report setting out: -

- i. A review of Treasury Management activity for 2020/21 including the 2020/21 outturn Prudential Indicators;
- ii. A mid-year update of the 2021/22 Treasury Management activity; and
- iii. Enabled the Audit and Governance Committee to scrutinise the recommended 2022/23 Treasury Management Strategy before it is referred to the full Council for approval.

The Treasury Management report would be presented to the next meeting of Council on 24 February 2022.

#### **Recommended**

That Council be recommended to: -

Treasury Management Outturn Position 2020/21

1. Note the 2020/21 Treasury Management Outturn detailed in section 4 and Appendix A of the report.

Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 Mid-Year Review

2. Note the 2021/22 Treasury Management Mid-year Position detailed in section 5 of the report.

Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23 (Prudential Indicators)

3. Approve the prudential indicators outlined in Appendix B of the report.

#### Borrowing Strategy 2022/23

4. Core borrowing requirement – following the securing of exceptionally low interest rates approve that the remainder of the under borrowing is netted down against investments.
5. To note that in the event of a change in economic circumstances that the Director of Resources and Development may take out additional borrowing if this secures the lowest long term interest cost.
6. To authorise the Director of Resources and Development to implement Treasury Management arrangements which minimise the short and long term cost to the Council.

#### Investment Strategy 2022/23

7. Approve the Counterparty limits as set out in paragraph 8.7 of the report.

#### Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement

8. Approve the MRP statement outlined in paragraph 9.3 of the report.

### **108. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) – Quarterly Update** (*Chief Solicitor*)

The Principal Democratic Services Officer reported that in accordance with the requirements of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2011 no authorisations had been sought during the last quarter.

#### **Recommended**

That the report be noted.

### **109. Covid-19 Update Presentation** (*Covid-19 Update Presentation*)

The Director of Public Health gave a presentation to the Committee setting out the most up-to-date information relating to the Covid-19 pandemic in Hartlepool. The Director stressed that Covid had not gone away and the positive testing rate at 823.5 per 100,000 population was higher than when the country had entered the 'Plan B' restrictions. There was also concern around the falling numbers of PCR tests and LFT tests being reported. The numbers of people dying within 28 days of a positive Covid-19 test were stabilising which the Director commented was due to the success of the vaccine programme.

The Director indicated that the levels of reinfection were starting to be measured and the uptake of the vaccine in the under 40's age groups was still a great concern. People were encouraged to get their vaccines and the booster as soon as they could and there were a number of vaccine venues across the town.

Members noted the report and the statistics presented. There was concern expressed at the numbers of those under 40 that had not had a vaccine, or the second or booster jab. The Director was questioned on any statistics around long-covid. The Director stated there was little information on this at this time.

### **Recommended**

That the report be noted.

## **110. Hartfield's Medical Practice (part of the McKenzie Group) - Closure Application** *(Author)*

The Tees Valley CCG representative briefly outlined the background to the issue around the Hartfields GP Practice and the request from the McKenzie Group to close the practice last year. The CCG had requested some detailed engagement work as it believed the original situation around Covid-19 had been resolved and the practice was now fully open. It had been intended that a 10 week engagement process commence on 10 January which would have been concluded and reported on before the election purdah period. However due to circumstances including some staff involved contracting Covid-19 this had not happened and a second date of 28 January was set with a reduced engagement period.

The CCG representative reported that since those discussions advice had been received which suggested that in order to have a robust and unchallengeable conclusion following the engagement, a full engagement period of 10 weeks should be observed. Various options had been considered with the McKenzie Group and it was agreed that as the practice was currently open and operating there would be little impact on patients in delaying the engagement process until after the elections in May. Details of the further dates and engagement process would be reported to future meetings of the Committee.

The representative of the McKenzie Group supported the comments made by the CCG representative and indicated that the work around identifying the engagement cohort had been substantially more difficult than originally envisaged.

Members expressed concern at the potential targeting of patients to get the desired result. The McKenzie Group representative stated that this was not the case, the Group had been asked to identify patients who had used the premises in the last 2 years. It was this work that had proved difficult as computerised records did not provide the information and it was having to be done manually.

Members also sought assurance that appropriate publicity work was being done to highlight the fact that the Hartfields practice was open to patients.



The Chair indicated that he was disappointed that the engagement process had not commenced when originally intended and highlighted that he had written to the CCG in this regard. The Chair was concerned that the results of the engagement process would now not be reported to this Committee until the summer. The CCG representative understood the Chair's frustrations and assured him that work would continue to identify the engagement group so the process could begin after the elections. As well as the local authorities own guidance around the purdah period, the CCG also had strict guidance. No decision could be taken until the full engagement process had been undertaken and Members could be assured work would remain ongoing on readying matters for the engagement.

The Scrutiny Manager stated that the role of scrutiny in the process had not changed and she would continue work with the CCG and the McKenzie Group on preparing for the engagement process.

The Chair thanked the representatives of the McKenzie Group and the CCG for their attendance at the meeting.

#### **Recommended**

That the report be noted.

### **111. Visit to Rowan Suite, University Hospital Hartlepool** (Author)

The Scrutiny Manager reported that it had been necessary to cancel the proposed visit to the Rowan Suite in January. Work was ongoing on identifying a new date for the visit which would allow Members to see the operation of the new maternity suite and the implementation of this Committee's recommendations. The Chair encouraged Members to take up the option to visit the Rowan Suite when the new dates were circulated. The Chair also highlighted that the re-opening of maternity services in Hartlepool had been due to the successful campaign led by the Mayor, Councillor Brenda Loynes.

#### **Recommended**

That the report be noted.

### **112. Minutes of Recent Meeting of Safer Hartlepool Partnership – 20 September 2021** (Author)

Received.

### **113. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

None.

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday 28 February 2022 commencing at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

The meeting concluded at 11.30 am.

CHAIR

# AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

28 February 2022



**Report of:** Statutory Scrutiny Manager

**Subject:** DRAFT QUALITY ACCOUNTS 2021/22 – NORTH  
TEES AND HARTLEPOOL NHS FOUNDATION  
TRUST – COVERING REPORT

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To introduce representatives from North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust who will join today's meeting to engage with Members in respect of their Draft Quality Accounts for 2021/22.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In November 2009 the Government published the Health Bill which required all providers of NHS healthcare services to provide an annual Quality Account. The Department of Health made a legal requirement on all NHS healthcare providers to send their Quality Accounts to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the local authority area where the provider has a registered office.
- 2.2 Subsequently, representatives from North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust will be present at today's meeting to give the Committee an opportunity to:
- i) Consider and comment on:
    - Performance against the priorities identified in the 2020/21 Quality Account ; and
    - Priorities identified for quality improvement within the draft Quality Account for 2021/22.
  - ii) Formulate views / comments to inform the Committee's Third Party Declaration, to be included in the published version of the Quality Accounts for 2021/22.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 3.1 That for North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust's Quality Accounts, the Audit and Governance Committee:-

##### i) Consider and comment on:

- Performance against the priorities identified in the 2020/21 Quality Account ; and
- Priorities identified for quality improvement within the draft Quality Account for 2021/22.

##### ii) Formulate views / comments to inform the Committee's Third Party Declaration, to be included in the published version of the Quality Accounts for 2021/22.

**Contact Officer:-** Joan Stevens – Statutory Scrutiny Manager  
Chief Executive's Department – Legal Services  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 284142  
Email: joan.stevens@hartlepool.gov.uk

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in preparation of this report.

## **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**28 February 2021**



**Report of:** Statutory Scrutiny Manager

**Subject:** ACCESSIBILITY OF SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES AND LIFELONG CONDITIONS – TIMETABLE  
UPDATE

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members of the Audit and Governance Committee for the conduct of the investigation into Accessibility to Services to People with Disabilities and Lifelong Conditions in Hartlepool.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 On the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 Council considered a motion, as detailed below.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and emphasised the extent of pre-existing health inequalities in many towns and cities and particularly those in the North of England. Hartlepool has high numbers of residents with disabilities and lifelong conditions which often impact massively on their ability to access services, facilities and many aspects of day-to-day life which many of us take for granted. This can impact on physical and mental wellbeing and subsequently lead to isolation, loneliness and exclusion.

Over many years Hartlepool Borough Council has developed services and facilities aimed at supporting residents with disabilities and lifelong conditions and has invested in state-of-the-art facilities such as the Centre for Independent Living and worked closely with health and community and voluntary sector partners.

However, much still needs to be done if Hartlepool is to become a truly accessible town for all of our residents and visitors to ensure that the voices of residents living with disabilities and lifelong conditions are sought, heard and incorporated into future Council initiatives which may impact on the future physical, economic and social environment of the town.

To this end, the Labour Group calls upon the Council to agree that the Audit and Governance Committee will examine the contents of the Motion in the next municipal year:

**A review of Council regeneration & development activity and accessibility to services for those with disabilities and lifelong conditions to ensure that any barriers, physical, procedural or otherwise, which may inhibit access to services and day to day living are identified, so that reasonable adjustments can be made”**

- 2.2 Council approved the motion and referred the review to the Audit and Governance. In accordance with the referral from Council, the Audit and Governance Committee on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021 approved a timetable for conclusion of its investigatory activities prior to purdah. Culminating in the presentation of a report to Council in June 2022.
- 2.3 A number of contributory factors have meant that it has not been possible for the Committee to progress this investigation, in accordance with the agreed timetable. On this basis, and with the support of the chair, a revision to the timetable is now required allow a full as effective investigation to be undertaken.
- 2.4 The Committee is asked to approve an amendment to the timetable, as detailed below.

**June 2022 (date to be confirmed):**

- i) Recap for potential new members of evidence provided at the December 2021 to provide:
  - a) An overarching understanding of national equality legislation, and in particular statutory duties as they relate to the activities of Hartlepool Borough Council.
- ii) Gain an understanding of data in relation to the number of residents in Hartlepool with disabilities and lifelong conditions and consider existing evidence of the challenges they face in accessing services.
- iii) From a Hartlepool Borough Council service (universal and targeted) and activity perspective:
  - Consider the results of Hartlepool Borough Council departmental surveys in relation to accessibility of services (departments and staff) and explore how the Council complies with its Equality Duty in ensuring accessibility to all areas of service provision (as detailed in the referral); and
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of the Council’s activities to ensure that people with disabilities and lifelong conditions have easy access to its services.
- iv) To examine the barriers (physical, procedural and other) that may inhibit access to Hartlepool Borough Council services / activities, and day to day living, and ascertain their prevalence and impact (including the impact of Covid-19); and
- v) To identify if any changes / additions are needed to deliver tangible improvements to the accessibility of Hartlepool Borough Council Services.

### **June / July – Undertake Focus Group Sessions**

#### **July 2022 (date to be confirmed):–**

- i) Obtain a resident, partner and VCS perspective in relation to the accessibility of universal and targeted HBC services:
  - Consider the results of public survey and focus groups in relation to accessibility of HBC services and explore how the Council complies with its Equality Duty in ensuring accessibility to all areas of service provision (as detailed in the referral); and
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's activities to ensure that people with disabilities and lifelong conditions have easy access to its services.
- ii) To examine the barriers (physical, procedural and other) that may inhibit access to Hartlepool Borough Council services / activities, and day to day living, and ascertain their prevalence and impact (including the impact of Covid-19).
- iii) To identify if any changes / additions are needed to deliver tangible improvements to the accessibility of Hartlepool Borough Council Services.

**August / September 2022** (date to be confirmed) - Agree Final Report for submission to Full Council

**September 2022** - Consideration of Final Report by Full Council

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That the revised timetable be approved.

**Contact Officer:** - Joan Stevens – Statutory Scrutiny Manager  
Chief Executive's Department – Legal Services  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 284142  
Email: joan.stevens@hartlepool.gov.uk

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background paper(s) was/were used in the preparation of this report:-

- a) Minutes and reports of the Audit and Governance Committee on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021
- b) Hartlepool Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- c) Long Term Conditions – Working Well – Health – Hartlepool Borough Council
- d) Care Act 2014
- e) [EQUALITY ACT 2010 PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY.pdf](#)
- f) Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018
- f) <https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/hartlepool-borough->

- [council/access\\_guides?vtag=false](#)
- g) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty>
- h) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>



# **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**28 FEBRUARY 2022**



**Report of:** Chief Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

**Subject:** PERSONNEL SUB COMMITTEE

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek the appointment of an Elected Member to the Personnel Sub Committee.

## **2. BACKGROUND/ISSUE FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 2.1 Members will recall that the Committee was asked to appoint three members to the Personnel Sub Committee at the first meeting of the municipal year on 8 July 2021 (Minute No. 14 refers). At that meeting Councillors B Loynes, Cook and Richardson were appointed to the Personnel Sub-Committee.
- 2.2 Due to the very recent and sad death of Councillor Brenda Loynes the Personnel Sub Committee is now in a position that it cannot meet as its quorum is three members and we are unable to appoint a substitute Member for Councillor Brenda Loynes.
- 2.3 In most other circumstances, given the lateness in the Municipal Year, we would not have brought such a report to Members; we acknowledge this is a very sensitive issue. However, there are two outstanding matters for the Sub Committee to consider that cannot be deferred to the new Municipal Year. The Committee is, therefore, requested to appoint a third Member to the Sub Committee to sit alongside the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee.

## **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The Committee is requested to appoint an Elected Member to the Personnel Sub Committee.

**4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To comply with the requirements of the current Council Constitution.

**5. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 5.1 Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.  
Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 8 July 2021.

**7. CONTACT OFFICERS**

- 7.1 Hayley Martin, Chief Solicitor and Monitoring Officer  
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