Hartlepool Board
Friday 6 November 2026 at 9am

Meeting Notes

Attendees – Board Members:
Jonathan Brash MP – Member of Parliament
Iain Caldwell – Hartlepool Opportunities Partnership
Christiana Celestine – Hartlepool Diversity Network
Cllr Rob Darby – Elected Member
Phil Douglas – Curious Arts
Cllr Scott Gaiety – Parish Council Representative
Calvin George – Hartlepool Sport
Darren Hankey – Hartlepool College of Further Education
Pamela Hargreaves – Hartlepool Development Corporation
Haani Hasnain – Vice Chair
Emma Joyeux – NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB
Tom Legg – Cleveland Police
Juli Simons – Hartlepool Community Trust
Matt Storey – Police & Crime Commissioner for Cleveland
Jess Tones – Co-Chair of Creative & Cultural Partnership
Malcolm Walker – Independent Chair
Kathryn Whittle – Thirteen
Matt Wilton - Hartlepool Borough Council
Chris Woodcock - Hartlepool Borough Council
Cllr Mike Young – Elected Member

Other Attendees:
Tracy Bushnall - Hartlepool Opportunities Partnership
Scott Campbell – Hartlepool Borough Council
Javed Khan – Hartlepool Borough Council
Lisa West – Hartlepool Borough Council

1.	**Welcome, Introductions and Apologies** Apologies were received from Neil Atkinson, Cllr Dave Bruce, Oliver Dixon, Carl Jorgeson, Esther Mireku, Martin Raby, Aaron Roy, Sue Sharpe, Mark Tilling, and Helen Wilson. Calvin George acted as substitute for Carl Jorgeson, Tom Legg for Helen Wilson, and Mike Young for Dave Bruce. MW notified Board members that Christine Eddowes has now left the Board, due to personal commitments. Hopefully, another Inter Faith representative will be added to the Board. MW asked that thanks to Christine for her time on the Board be recorded.	
2.	**Declarations of Interest** There were no conflicts of interest declared.	

3.	**Minutes and Actions from the Last Board Meeting** The minutes from the previous Board meeting were accepted as an accurate representation of the meeting.	
4.	**Pride in Place update** It was noted that the Vice Chair had suggested that the 'business' items of the meeting are first on the agenda moving forwards. This will help ensure that presentations and discussion items have sufficient time on the agenda. SC highlighted that the first open call was launched in October. There has been a fantastic response locally with lots of publicity. The Open Call has also been promoted at a range of events and networks including Sector Connector, Join the Dots, and Pool Together for Wellbeing. So far there has been: • 15 funding enquiries responded to, and organisations are being supported via HOP • 26 submissions by local residents through the Community Ideas Route He stated that we are still awaiting the first submitted application, but the deadline is not until Monday 30 November. SC outlined that a finance update will be a standing item on the agenda as part of the Pride in Place Update. He presented the profiled budget for the three investment periods and clarified that the total Pride in Place funding is actually £19.5 million, although Impact Fund and other aligned funding pots bring the figure to over £20 million. He shared details of the monitoring report which was recently submitted to MHCLG for the Pride in Place Programme. The next submission will be in April 2027. SC then discussed Year 2 of the £1.5 million Impact Fund which is part of the Government's wider PiP Strategy. There will be 32 projects delivered across the town, across four themes – high street revitalisation, improving parks, supporting neighbourhoods and community safety. There will be delivery across all wards within Hartlepool. He then presented a summary of the projects being delivered which included: • Installation of 7 new wayfinding columns around the Town Centre • New shutters for bandstand at Ward Jackson Park • Refurbishment of the public toilet facilities including community storage at Rossmere Park	

	• Environmental scheme to enhance Clavering Park • Purchase of three additional mobile CCTV cameras to be deployed at hotspots to help to deter ASB JB commented that match funding opportunities should be considered to increase the impact of the funding. JS talked about the funding coming into the town such as the £1.5million Impact Fund, £1 million from Arts Council for Rockpools, £2.5 million for Owton Manor and £1 million for Derelict Buildings Fund. JS also thanked Cleveland Fire Brigade for their support at a recent community event and commented that some work does not have to be high cost and could even be free by using social value from businesses in Hartlepool.	
5.	**Board Name Option** MW outlined that there have been discussions in both Board meetings and the Communications Sub Group about the long-term name of the Board. He stated that three options are available for members to vote on which are: • Retain Hartlepool Board • Change the name to Hartlepool Partnership • Change the name to One Hartlepool Comments were made about the names with MW stating that the current name sounds old fashioned and is not in line with the ethos of this group. PH expressed a preference for Hartlepool Partnership and HH questioned if there could be confusion with HOP, if Hartlepool Partnership were chosen. CC commented that One Hartlepool was used in a campaign by the Diversity Network in June/July. EJ added that there was already a Place Partnership in her area of the NHS. JB commented that, from a ministerial point of view, there was a Board for a lot of things, and the Partnership aspect is important for Pride in Place. Members recorded their preferences for the name on pieces of paper. The Chair advised the result of the votes were: • Retain Hartlepool Board – 3 Votes • Change to One Hartlepool – 8.5 Votes • Change to Hartlepool Partnership – 6.5 Votes MW advised that a member expressed support for both alternative options. The Chair advised that this has not been included but, regardless of this preference, One Hartlepool had received the greatest level of support and was therefore agreed as the new name of the Board.	

6.	**Hartlepool Opportunities Partnership Quarter 2 Report** IC discussed the quarterly report, which was shared as part of the meeting papers. All outputs are on target or are over-achieving and Tracy Bushnall as the Development Lead has been doing a lot of engagement work with VCSEs. He advised that progress is being made on the recruitment of three residents reps which will support the Board to be community-led by year three in line with the requirements from Government. He highlighted that the Place-Based Collaborative continues to develop as a mechanism for bringing together multiple programmes, partnerships, and organisations across the borough to create a more connected, place-based approach to improve outcomes across the town. IC stated that the reports asks for this group to be recognised as a subgroup of the Hartlepool Board, providing a mechanism for sharing learning, informing strategic priorities, and strengthening collaboration across all of the initiatives within Hartlepool. MW confirmed there were no objections to the Place-Based Collaborative becoming a Subgroup. IC added that a workshop will be held on Wednesday 18 November, for the Local Covenant Partnership Fund. He invited members to attend and the link to register your place is within the report from HOP. He also highlighted the external funding which has been secured by HOP for volunteering through the National Lottery Community Fund. MW added that it was positive to see external funding coming through. HH commented on the importance of trying to positively influence ways of working and bring ideas together. He also commented that, some of the wording in the report may be slightly inaccessible and may need to be a bit clearer. Following a question, IC added that one person is joining HOP's trustees, and the recruitment is still ongoing for a Chair.	
7.	**Hartlepool Creative & Cultural Partnership** MW advised that, although Hartlepool had not been successful in its Town of Culture application, it had been agreed that the Board would consider the next steps. PD and JT had been invited to provide an update as Co-Chairs of the Hartlepool Creative & Cultural Partnership. JT and PD outlined the purpose and recent work of the Creative & Cultural Partnership. Members heard that the partnership brings together organisations and individuals from across Hartlepool's creative, cultural and heritage sectors to	

	provide a collective strategic voice for the town. The Partnership currently has 12 members, seven invited observers and meets on a bi-monthly basis. Members were advised that governance arrangements had been strengthened through a refresh of membership and updated Terms of Reference. PD highlighted that activity over the past year had included the continued development of the Join the Dots Creative Network, wider engagement with cultural organisations and creatives across the town, and the commencement of work on a new Cultural Strategy for Hartlepool. PD highlighted the importance of partnership working in championing, celebrating, and developing the town's cultural offer. Members were advised that Hartlepool has a strong cultural foundation, including a growing creative community, a range of festivals and events, more than 150 listed buildings and monuments, and increasing levels of investment from the Arts Council. It was noted that over £2.8m of Arts Council investment had been secured for 2025/26 and that there was a growing sense of momentum across the cultural sector in Hartlepool. JT provided an update on Rockpools, Hartlepool's newly established Creative People and Places Programme. She stated that the programme is part of the Arts Council's national investment in areas where engagement in arts and culture has historically been low. Match funding was also contributed from the Council, JRF and TVCA. Rockpools aims to place residents at the centre of decision-making about cultural activity in the town and will operate with a long-term vision extending beyond the initial three-year funding period. She stated that it is being led by Christine Lee and is a significant opportunity to strengthen community-led cultural activity and participation across Hartlepool. PD highlighted the development of Hartlepool's Cultural Strategy, which will provide a shared long-term vision for culture in the town and recognise the role that culture can play in economic growth, regeneration, health and wellbeing, skills development, community ownership, and civic pride. A consultant has just been appointed to help develop the Strategy, which aims to be completed by April 2027. Members were encouraged to engage with the consultation process and contribute to the development of the Strategy. PD stated that the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport are considering making it a requirement that each LA has a Cultural Strategy. Reflecting on the Town of Culture bid, JT and PD acknowledged that although the application had not been	

	successful, the process had generated valuable collaboration between artists, communities, young people, and partner organisations. Members heard that consideration was now being given to developing a Hartlepool Year of Culture to build on the partnerships, ambition and momentum created through the bid process and ensure a lasting legacy for the town. DH had to leave the meeting at this point. Members welcomed the presentation and recognised the important role that culture plays. It was noted that the work of the Partnership aligned closely with a number of the Board's priorities and provided an opportunity to celebrate the town's strengths and tell a more positive story about Hartlepool. JB commented on the importance of this work, as it links in to a lot of things, celebrates who we are, and brings people together. JT appreciated the positivity from members, as sometimes there can be a feeling that there is a need to evidence culture at times. She advised that the Culture Awards will be taking place in Stockton-on-Tees soon, which has a regional focus, and a number of people from the town have been nominated including Celia Grace, Aaron Bowman, and Adam Strickland. In response to questions from members, JT highlighted a number of challenges facing the cultural sector in Hartlepool. These included low levels of confidence amongst some residents to participate in or apply for cultural opportunities, limited availability of suitable venues and creative workspace, transport and accessibility issues, and the need for more effective communication and promotion of opportunities. The absence of dedicated incubation space for creative businesses and graduates was also identified as a key barrier to retaining talent within Hartlepool. Members discussed opportunities to better utilise the town's physical and community assets, including vacant buildings. MWi queried if the Community Asset Ward Maps may be useful with this work, as a way of capturing physical and cultural assets. IC agreed and will progress this with the maps being a key output for HOP. JK commented that Arts England are trying to change their funding process including the language used, and the length of the application forms. CC emphasised the importance of ensuring that the emerging Cultural Strategy reflects Hartlepool's identity, heritage, and distinctive character. Links were recognised between the Cultural Strategy, Place Brand development and wider regeneration ambitions within Hartlepool such as the Production Village.	

	MW commented on the number of events in the town, for example, this weekend, there are shows by a local singer, and a French rock group, more promotion of events like these, and the town itself, would be positive. JT encouraged members to share cultural opportunities through the Creative & Cultural Partnership and to engage with the consultant appointed to develop the Cultural Strategy as work progresses. PD noted that the lack of a single communications channel for cultural activity remained a challenge and highlighted the importance of continued collaboration across organisations and sectors. MW thanked JT and PD for their presentation and emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum following the Town of Culture bid. He shared an invite for the consultant to engage with members at a future meeting of the Board. MW concluded by recognising culture as a key contributor to the future success, identity, and quality of life within Hartlepool.	
8.	**Any Other Business** JB advised the Board that, following the previous meeting, he had been approached by Rob Taylor, known locally as "Stitch", who had expressed an interest in becoming involved with the Board. JB explained that Rob leads a veterans' group in Hartlepool and highlighted that the town has one of the highest concentrations of veterans in the country. He noted the previous success of the funding bid for a VALOUR centre at Middleton Grange. JB stated that representation from the veterans' community would add an important perspective to the Board's discussions and support the aim of reflecting a broad range of voices from across Hartlepool. IC supported the proposal, commenting that it aligned with the Board's commitment to representing different communities and interests across Hartlepool as part of its resident-led approach for Pride in Place. MW sought the views of Board members on the proposal and members agreed to invite Rob Taylor to join the Board. **ACTION:** Invite Rob Taylor to become a member and attend future meetings of the Hartlepool Board.	
9.	**Date and Time of Next Meeting** The next meeting will take place on Thursday 3 December 2026 from 2.30pm - 4pm at Cleveland Fire Brigade HQ.	