

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Monday 20 June 2022

at 3.00 pm

**in Committee Room B,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

Those wishing to attend the meeting should phone (01429) 523568 or (01429) 523019 by midday on Friday 17 June and name and address details will be taken.

You should not attend the meeting if you 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: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Cassidy, Cook, Creevy, Howson, Jackson, Little and Moore.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To receive the Minutes and Decision Record of the meeting held on 24 March 2022

4. PRESENTATION

- 4.1 The Role and Remit of the Neighbourhood Services Committee – *Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*

5. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 Hartlepool Local Plan – Partial Plan Review - *Assistant Director (Place Management)*

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

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

6. KEY DECISIONS

- 6.1 Parking Strategic Assessment 2022/32 – *Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*
- 6.2 Review of Post 16 Transport Policy – *Assistant Director (Place Management)*

7. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 7.1 Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2022/23 – *Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*
- 7.2 Trading Standards Service Plan 2022/23 - *Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*
- 7.3 Elwick Village - Traffic Calming - *Assistant Director (Place Management)*

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

No items

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 26 July 2022 at 3.00pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th June 2022



Report of: Assistant Director (Place Management)

Subject: HARTLEPOOL LOCAL PLAN – PARTIAL PLAN REVIEW

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Budget and Policy Framework.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek permission for a partial Local Plan review and the update of related evidence based work which will support the robust development of the Local Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The 2018 Hartlepool Local Plan was adopted by Full Council on the 22nd May 2018 following receipt of the Planning Inspectors Report from the Local Plan Examination.

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 states that policies in local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and then should be updated as necessary.

3.3 Since the Local Plan was adopted in 2018 there have been a number of changes which have arisen which need to be reflected in a partial review of the Local Plan.

A) The Government's announcement of the Wynyard Garden Village requires the authority to consider amendments to the plan to amend the limits to development to incorporate North Burn which is proposed for housing and other associated community and employment.

B) COVID-19 has had a significant impact on a wide range of issues, most notably in terms of the Local Plan has been the impact that was felt in terms of the housing market. Starts and completions have been impacted, especially in 2020/21, and these impacts in terms of housing supply and the 5 year supply need considering as part of a local plan review. If it is shown that an appropriate supply of housing sites for the

next 5 year period and over the wider plan period can't be delivered there may be a need to allocate further sites to ensure a supply.

- C) Over the past 4 years, climate changes have been significantly more apparent and wide spread. The Climate Change chapter will be brought up to date in terms of evidence and some of the policies will be amended.
 - D) Recently the issue of Nutrient Neutrality and harm to the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) has been announced by Ministers and Natural England. This will impact any "in scope" developments. Applications which are shown through assessment to have a negative impact on the SPA through nitrates entering the eco-system can't be determined unless an appropriate mitigation strategy is agreed with Natural England and put in place.
 - E) The Employment chapter will need updating to reflect changes identified through the Employment Land Review and to take account of any land that needs to be de-allocated or allocated.
 - F) The Infrastructure chapter will need to be reviewed and take account of new developments proposed.
 - G) The heritage chapter may need updating to reflect any changes since the adoption of the 2018 local Plan.
 - H) Other chapters will be considered as appropriate as wider changes to the strategic vision become apparent and result in changes elsewhere in the plan.
- 3.4 There are a number of stages which must be followed in terms of a partial Local Plan review which are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Consultation responses will be considered in developing the Local Plan.
- 3.5 The Government Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (May 2022) includes sections on Planning and the development of Local Plans. Information contained within the Bill and any legislation flowing from it will be considered and will inform the development of the partial Local Plan review where necessary.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 That HBC undertake a partial Local Plan review.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 If the Local Plan is not kept up to date this would create uncertainty for the Council, developers and residents in the decision making process for planning applications.
- 5.2 Failure to have an up to date plan and being able to meet housing targets could result in the Council being “designated”, which is in effect being put into special measures, where decision making powers in terms of how Hartlepool develops could be taken out of the hands of the Local Authority.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The preparation of a Local Plan review and supporting evidence base will have a financial cost. The Planning Policy Team will undertake a significant amount of the required work however there will be costs of consultants to prepare specialist elements of evidence base.
- 6.2 The costs will be met from grant funding provided in relation to the development of the Garden Village at Wynyard and as such will not put an additional financial pressure on the authority.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Hartlepool Borough Council is required by law to have a Local Plan to guide development in the Borough. Reviews at least every five years are a legal requirement for all local plans under Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 7.2 The Plan will be prepared in line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and any updated regulations that are introduced by the government as the plan progresses.
- 7.2 An updated Local Plan is important to ensure that planning decisions are robust and to minimise the potential of successful legal challenge.
- 7.3 The Chief Solicitor is satisfied that all relevant statutory processes will be followed in terms of the review and that the recommendations within this report are within the legal powers of the Council.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Local Plan will be prepared in accordance with the various stages set out in the Town and Country Planning Regulations and consultation events will run for a minimum of eight weeks on each stage, in accordance with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement, to give interested parties opportunity to comment on the Local Plan.

9. ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Throughout the process of preparing the Local Plan review there are requirements to prepare Sustainability Appraisals, which may be amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, and Habitats Regulations Assessment to support the development of the Local Plan. The Planning Inspector will need to be satisfied with these at the independent Examination in Public.

10. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 The plan will be prepared by officers within the Planning Policy Team with the support and advice of officers in other Council teams where necessary. Some of the evidence base will require specialist advice which will be procured from external consultants where required.

11. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Child/Family Poverty Considerations – see Appendix 1	No relevant issues
Equality and Diversity Considerations	No relevant issues
Asset Management Considerations	No relevant issues

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 That Neighbourhood Services Committee give approval to begin the process of preparing a partial Local Plan review, along with the supporting evidence base, to ensure that the policies within the Local Plan remain up to date and help to guide development in Hartlepool in the coming years.
- 12.2 That Members grant permission for consultation at each stage of the process where a draft version each document needs to be consulted on.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 To ensure that, in line with national policy, the Local Plan remains up-to-date and provides a development framework for Hartlepool which will lead to sustainable development over the coming years and is clear to developers and to residents how the Borough will grow.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 The existing Hartlepool Local Plan and policies map can be accessed at the following links

Hartlepool Local Plan 2018

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/downloads/file/4393/hartlepool_local_plan_-_adopted_may_2018pdf

Hartlepool Local Plan Policies Map 2018

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/downloads/file/4394/hartlepool_local_plan_policies_map_may_2018_front_mappdf

15. CONTACT OFFICER

Tony Hanson
Director of Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services
Civic Centre
Hartlepool Borough Council
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523301
E-mail: tony.hanson@hartlepool.gov.uk

Matthew King
Planning Policy Team Leader
Civic Centre
Hartlepool Borough Council
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 284084
E-mail: matthew.king@hartlepool.gov.uk

Sign Off:-

- Director of Resources and Development ☒
- Chief Solicitor/Monitoring Officer ☒

POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

1. Is this decision a Budget & Policy Framework or Key Decision? <u>YES</u> / NO If YES please answer question 2 below				
2. Will there be an impact of the decision requested in respect of Child and Family Poverty? <u>YES</u> / <u>NO</u> If YES please complete the matrix below				
GROUP	POSITIVE IMPACT	NEGATIVE IMPACT	NO IMPACT	REASON & EVIDENCE
Young working people aged 18 - 21	✓	x		
Those who are disabled or suffer from illness / mental illness				
Those with low educational attainment				
Those who are unemployed				
Those who are underemployed				
Children born into families in poverty				
Those who find difficulty in managing their finances				
Lone parents				
Those from minority ethnic backgrounds				
Poverty is measured in different ways. Will the policy / decision have an impact on child and family poverty and in what way?				
Poverty Measure (examples of poverty measures appended overleaf)	POSITIVE IMPACT	NEGATIVE IMPACT	NO IMPACT	REASON & EVIDENCE

POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

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

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th June 2022



Report of: Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services

Subject: PARKING STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT 2022/32

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

- 1.1 Key Decision (test (i) and (ii) both) apply. Forward Plan Reference No NRS06/21.
- 1.2 The Draft Parking Strategy (see **Appendix 1**) had been intended for submission to the Committee in November 2021 but was delayed due to work pressures at that time associated with Covid. The report was further delayed into the new municipal year in order to ensure the public consultation process associated with this report did not take place within Purdah.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The Department for Transport Operations Guidance recommends that local authorities operating Civil Parking Enforcement prepare a long term parking strategy. The previous strategy for Hartlepool covered a ten year period which expired in February 2021. A final report will be resubmitted to Members for consideration and approval later in the year, once comments from the consultation process have been considered.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The draft Hartlepool Parking strategy has been prepared taking into account current national, regional and local policies covering those transport and planning policies that directly affect parking on both the highway network and off street car parks.
- 3.2 The operational guidance requires that local authorities produce a strategy covering on and off street parking that is linked to local objectives and circumstances.
- 3.3 The Parking Strategy therefore considers aspects such as anticipated demand, future trends and proposed management of our parking assets.

- 3.4 This report has also been prepared during significant uncertainty due to issues caused by COVID-19. As a result it is difficult to predict the immediate impact on commuter, visitor and shopping demand. As a consequence it may be necessary to review and amend the long and short term priorities identified in this report as circumstances and behaviours change, and local issues evolve.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 This report identifies the significant number of policies which influence parking and considers various factors and strategic goals identified at a national, regional and local level.
- 4.2 National planning policy and local directives dictate new and existing developments, while locally, such planning considerations are determined by the Hartlepool Local Plan. Transport issues are included within the Local Plan and are reflective of the common goals and objectives of the Hartlepool Local Transport Plan.
- 4.3 Transport issues have a number of tiers of responsibility and although national policies are again consistent with local objectives, since 2011 much of the regional directive has been provided by Local Enterprise Partnerships which in Hartlepool is managed by the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) under an Elected Mayor. This report therefore encompasses the aims of the Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan (2020-2030) and works in collaboration with the TVCA to deliver a number of local objectives for Hartlepool.
- 4.4 The Hartlepool Parking Strategy is consistent with the objectives of the existing Hartlepool Local Transport Plan and aims to provide a balanced package of measures and support to the local economy, reduced congestion, offer more sustainable travel choice, reduce carbon emissions, increase electric vehicle infrastructure, improve accessibility for all and manage the parking assets and highway network.

5. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 All local authorities operating Civil Parking Enforcement are recommended to produce and publicise a parking strategy indicative of appropriate planning policy and transport powers, and reflective of regional and local objectives.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 This draft version of the Parking strategy will be open for a period of public consultation. A final version will therefore be brought back to this committee for further consideration and approval later this year.

7. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The local authority has responsibility for many assets including those on the highway network and off-street car parks. This Parking Strategy considers existing provision, future demand, site management, reactive and scheduled maintenance together with any required of statutory responsibility.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Risk Implications	No relevant issues
Financial Considerations	No relevant issues
Child/Family Poverty Considerations	No relevant issues
Equality and Diversity Considerations	No relevant issues
Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change Considerations	No relevant issues
Staff Considerations	No relevant issues

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Neighbourhood Services Committee note the report and give approval for the consultation on the draft Parking Strategy to commence.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 This is a draft report for consultation. The final Parking Strategy will be brought back to this committee later in the year, after any views and comments from the consultation process have been evaluated and updated into the final document.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 None

12. CONTACT OFFICER

Tony Hanson
 Director of Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services
 Civic Centre
 Hartlepool Borough Council
 TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523301
 E-mail: tony.hanson@hartlepool.gov.uk

Phil Hepburn
Community Safety & Operations Manager
Hartlepool Community Safety Team
Hartlepool Police Station
Avenue Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8AJ
Tel: 01429 523258
Email Philip.hepburn@hartlepool.gov.uk

Sign Off:-

- Director of Resources and Development ☒
- Chief Solicitor/Monitoring Officer ☒

DRAFT HARTLEPOOL PARKING STRATEGY

2022 – 2032



CONTENT	Page	Para. number
Introduction		1 - 1.2
Purpose		2 - 2.1
Policy content		3 - 3.1
National policy		4
National transport policy		4.1 - 4.1.5
National planning policy		4.2 - 4.2.16
Regional transport policy		4.3 - 4.3.1
Local planning policy		4.4 - 4.4.5
Local transport policy		4.5 - 4.5.4
Civil parking enforcement		4.6 - 4.6.6
Current parking provision		5
Town centre		5.1 - 5.6
On street enforcement		5.7 - 5.7.2
Off street enforcement		5.8 - 5.8.2
Seaton Carew		5.9 - 5.9.4
Park Mark award		5.10 - 5.10.1
Motorcycle parking		5.11 - 5.11.1
Cycle stations		5.12 - 5.12.1
Electric vehicle charging points		5.13 - 5.13.1
Disabled parking bays		5.14 - 5.14.2
Resident only permit parking zones		5.15 - 5.15.9
Parking for registered Blue Badge holders		5.16 - 5.16.9
Hartlepool BC staff parking scheme		5.17 - 5.17.1
Enforcement by approved devices		5.18 - 5.18.5
Parking tariffs		6 - 6.7.1
Key issues		7 - 7.11.4
Objectives		8 - 8.1
Objective 1 - Economic growth		9 - 9.4.2
Objective 2 - Tackle congestion		10 - 10.5
Objective 3 - Climate change		11 - 11.10
Objective 4 - Improved accessibility		12 - 12.18.3
Objective 5 - Road safety		13 - 13.10
Objective 6 - Healthier travel		14 - 14.12
Objective 7 - Equality of opportunity		15 - 15.11
Policy summary		16 - 16.20
Appendix A		
Appendix B		

Hartlepool Parking Strategy 2022 -2032

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the Parking Strategy for Hartlepool up until 2032, along with details of how it will be implemented. The documents provides a view of local needs that have arisen but recognises some local issues will evolve during the cycle of the strategy.
- 1.2 The strategy draws together a broad range of issues including supply and demand for parking, pricing, safety, security, quality of provision and new technology and public choice. It also provides a key link between parking and land use planning and the delivery of a local and regional transport strategy. It includes parking provision for commercial, retail, leisure and residential use, together with anticipated parking demand for new developments.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of the Parking Strategy is to provide a balanced package of measures to achieve the following:
- a) Support the local economy – through the provision of appropriate parking for retailing, business, tourism and leisure in the town centre, local centres and on development sites throughout the Borough.
 - b) Reduced congestion on Hartlepool's road network by keeping them free of obstruction caused by in appropriate parking.
 - c) Provide a strong encouragement to people to change their travel behaviour by improving sustainable travel choice and influencing the level of travel by car for short "in town" journeys.

- d) Reduce Carbon emissions by providing an improved infrastructure with greater number of electric vehicle charge points to meet with future demand.
- e) Improve accessibility for all through the provision of appropriate facilities and rigorous enforcement.
- f) Effectively manage the car parking asset, through a programme of maintenance and improvements.

3 Policy context

- 3.1 Over recent years there have been a number of changes to policy at national regional and local level that have a significant impact on how parking is provided, managed and enforced, with further changes with regard to moving traffic offences likely to be approved imminently. The effective management of parking is a key tool in reducing congestion, improving accessibility, tackling travel safety and improving quality of life. The supply of parking and provision of sustainable travel choices are key determinants of land use planning and are integral to the emerging local development framework.

4 National Policies

4.1 Transport

4.1.1 The **Department for Transport – Transport Investment Strategy** sets out the government's long term vision for a modern, efficient and sustainable transport system. Effective management of the road network is a key part of this.

4.1.2 Through investment the strategy intends to create more reliable, less congested and better connected transport networks that work for the users that rely on them. The strategy recognises that the networks are intensively used, aging and face increasing demands which currently create delays and undermine reliability.

4.1.3 In England the strategic road network is managed by Highways England on behalf of the Transport Secretary with other roads and local transport networks managed by the local authority. Although the local authority decide on transport issues in their community based on investment, road safety and bus priority measures, a significant share of the funding is provided by Central Government. However since 2011, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's) have been established across England to enable more strategic decisions to be made on a regional basis which for Hartlepool falls under the Tees Valley Combined Authority headed by an Elected Mayor. How this strategy is to be applied at regional level is set out in the Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan 2020-2030.

4.1.4 The **Traffic Management Act 2004**, is relied on by local authorities for most enforcement jurisdiction with parking control and traffic management of the highway. The Traffic Management Act imposes an explicit duty on local authorities to manage their

network so as to reduce congestion and disruption and as a consequence there is an obligation to ensure that parking does not create congestion on the highway network. The Act originally decriminalised a number of parking offences previously enforced by the Police under the Road Traffic Act, transferring enforcement jurisdiction to Civil Enforcement Officers. The government continues to review further transfer of powers such as footpath enforcement and moving traffic offences to Civil Enforcement control.

- 4.1.5 The Department for Transport Operational Guidance to Local authorities Parking Policy and Enforcement states that all local authorities operating Civil Parking Enforcement need to develop a parking strategy covering on and off street parking that is linked to local objectives and circumstances. This strategy needs to take into account appropriate planning policies and transport powers and consider the appropriate number of total spaces, the balance between short and long stay spaces and the level of tariff charge.

4.2 Planning

- 4.2.1 There are a number of planning policies that impact on traffic management and parking. **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** sets out the governments planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other developments can be produced. The NPPF has several objectives which have implications for traffic management and parking provision mainly covered (but not limited to):

- a) Building a strong, competitive economy
- b) Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- c) Promoting healthy and safe communities
- d) Promoting sustainable transport.

4.2.2 The NPPF states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposal so that:

- a) The potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed.
- b) Opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage are realised.
- c) Opportunity to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued
- d) The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account.
- e) Patterns of movement, street parking and other considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.

4.2.3 Significant developments should focus on locations which can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health.

4.2.4 Planning policies should:

- a) Support an appropriate mix of uses across an area and within larger scales sites to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure education and other activities.
- b) Be prepared with the active involvement of local highway authority, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and

investment for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned.

- c) Identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development.
- d) Provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycle networks with supporting facilities
- e) Provide for any large scale transport facilities that need to be located in the area and the infrastructure and wider development required to support their operation.
- f) Recognise the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields taking into account their economic value in serving businesses, leisure training and emergency service needs.

4.2.5 When setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential developments the NPPF states that policies should take into account:

- a) The accessibility of the development
- b) The type, mix and use of development
- c) The availability of opportunities for public transport
- d) Local car ownership levels and
- e) The need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

4.2.6 Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by

public transport. In town centres local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

4.2.7 Planning policies and decisions should also recognise the importance of providing adequate overnight lorry parking facilities, taking into account any local shortages to reduce the risk of parking in locations that lack proper facilities or could cause a nuisance.

4.2.8 The NPPF further states that developments should ensure that:

- a) Appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be and have been taken up
- b) Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users
- c) The design of streets parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflect current national guidance including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design code and
- d) Any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion) or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable level.

4.2.9 Within this context applications should:

- a) Give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements both within a scheme and within neighbouring areas and second as far as possible to facilitate access to high quality public transport.
- b) Address all needs of people with disabilities and reduce mobility in relation to all modes of transport

- c) Create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter and respond to local character and design standards.
- d) Allow for the efficient delivery of goods and access by service and emergency vehicles and
- e) Be designed to enable charging of plugin and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations

- 4.2.10 Any development that generates significant amounts of movement are also be required to produce a travel plan and travel statement / assessment so that any impact can be assessed.
- 4.2.11 Planning practice guidance is also determined by **The Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government – National Model Design code (NMDC)**. The NMDC sets a baseline standard of quality and practice. The guidance considers a number of area types including movement, build form, nature, identity, public space, use, home, buildings and resource.
- 4.2.12 **Movement** considers a number of traffic management conditions for the consideration of car parking, cycle parking for town centres, urban neighbourhood and Suburb surroundings and recognises the importance and impact car parking can have on the quality of places. Developments should aim to minimise the impact of the car. Developments should be accessible and easy to move around and can be achieved through good connected network of streets, good public transport, the promotion of walking and cycling and well considered parking and servicing.
- 4.2.13 **Public Spaces** identifies policy to be adopted in **primary streets** which should be designed to take through traffic and public transport, **high streets** where the focus is for local shopping centres often with traffic but sometimes traffic free, **secondary**

streets which take local traffic into neighbourhoods and often the location of shopping parades and **local streets** which provide vehicle access only to the properties on the street but with through pedestrian and cycle traffic.

4.2.14 The NMDC covers **active travel** and refers to none motorised and sustainable forms of transport, primarily walking and cycling. Prioritising active travel is about making walking and cycling comfortable and attractive for all users so that they are seen as a genuine choice for travel on local journeys. Developments therefore need to prioritise walking and cycling travel for short local travel journey (particularly those of 5 miles or less) then public transport, service and emergency vehicles and only then motor vehicles. For local journeys this means creating continuous clear relatively direct and attractive walking and cycling routes.

4.2.15 Car parking can affect the quality of a place both visually and in terms of how it is used (particularly by pedestrians). Although parking standards are set by local authorities they need to concern the identify appropriate parking options for different area, street and building types together with the associated requirements and needs including such issues as access to electric charging points.

4.2.16 **Resident parking**

a) **Un-allocated parking** spaces are an efficient way to provide parking. Development are recommended to provide for the average rather than maximum level of car ownership. Its flexibility of use should therefore enable it to accommodate residents and visitors throughout the day. In some areas it may be possible to accommodate all parking requirements in this way but in areas of high demand, it may be necessary to manage unallocated on street parking through controlled parking zones and resident parking permits.

- b) Allocated parking** – is normally accommodated on plot or on site.

4.3 Regional Transport Policy

4.3.1 **The Tees Valley Transport Strategy** has been developed in order to meet national priorities set out in DfT Transport Investment Strategy and to reflect the regional demand of the Tees Valley. The Tees Valley Councils have commonly agreed to:

- a) Look to invest in “smarter choice” measures to reduce car travel (and hence greenhouse gas emission) and increase access to services for those within the Tees Valley.
- b) Continue to maintain existing walking, cycling and highway networks to improve the connectivity and maximise their reliability and functionality
- c) Deliver road safety measures and education to contribute to better safety, security and health and longer term life expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health.

4.3.2 The Tees Valley Strategic Transport plan has a vision to provide a high quality, quick, affordable, reliable, low carbon and safe transport network for people and freight to move within, to and from Tees Valley. To do so the plan has several key objectives which include:

4.3.3 **Rail network –**

- a) Improve rail links between Tees Valley and the rest of the country
- b) Improve rail station infrastructure
- c) Ensure rail network can cater for future growth and demands

4.3.4 **Major roads**

- a) Deliver and maintain a safe, resilient key route network for Tees Valley

4.3.5 **Connecting centres**

- a) Deliver and maintain a frequent, high quality, reliable and integrated public transport network
- b) Develop and improve interchanges and ticketing options and information.

4.3.6 **Unlocking key Sites**

- a) Address specific constraints on the strategic local transport networks to provide a transport system that facilitates effective economic and housing growth across the Tees Valley.
- b) Develop and maintain a transport system that facilitates efficient freight movement.

4.3.7 **Local Journeys**

- a) Deliver and maintain safe walking and cycling routes and local bus services that link housing sites to key destinations and transport interchanges for onward journeys.

4.3.8 **Delivering social equality and protecting the environment**

- a) Improve access to those with physical disabilities, mental health conditions, learning difficulties and those with sensory impairment.
- b) Reduce carbon emissions and deliver measures to improve local air quality.
- c) Reduce noise and vibration from transport.

- d) Protect Tees Valley's built and natural environment
- e) Improve equality opportunity for remote and deprived communities and enhance health and wellbeing.
- f) Ensure that the existing transport network and planned investment is resilient to climate change.

4.4 Local Planning Policy

4.4.1 The transport and connectivity policies in the **Hartlepool Local Plan** have been prepared within the context of the transport challenges and ambitions of Tees Valley sub-region. The Transport ambitions include:

- a) **Resilient network connectivity** – Improving journey experiences on urban and local passenger networks, improving freight and passenger movements to and from national and international gateways which Hartlepool hopes to achieve by improvements to local rail network including stations and interchange opportunities, targeted strategic and local highway improvements.
- b) **Access to employment** – improving local bus services and opening up economic development opportunities by Investment in new buses and journey time information, Bus priority measures with better passenger facilities and improved ticketing, enhanced cycling and walking networks for shorter communities and facilitating development at traffic pinch points.
- c) **Reducing carbon emissions** – supporting transport systems that do not exacerbate climate change and promoting active travel and targeted programmes of smarter choices by workplace and school travel planning, more electric vehicle charging points and promoting a model shift from the private car to rail and bus travel.

- 4.4.2 Within the Location, Accessibility, Highways Safety and Parking section of the Local Plan, seeks to ensure that developments are safe and accessible along with being in a sustainable location or has the potential to be well connected with opportunities for sustainable travel. This is achieved by:
- a) Considering the proximity of the development to nearby shops and services and how they can be accessed
 - b) Ensuring all residents and visitors can move with ease and safely and that features such as entrances ways and parking are conveniently located.
 - c) Service arrangements and highway safety provisions are in line relevant local guidance and requirements
 - d) Creating multi-purpose environments, managing the conflict between highway users specifically by distinguishing between sympathetic highway safety measures.
 - e) The provision of adequate, safe secure and conveniently located car and cycle parking, having regard to the possible movement of residents and visitors.
 - f) Ensuring new car parking areas and proposals that include car parking, should where viable, use permeable paving solutions.
- 4.4.3 There are also policies covering tourism, retail and commercial developments to ensure that they benefit the local economy but include safeguarding measures to ensure developments do not generate levels of traffic that would have an adverse impact upon the operation of the highway network or on highway safety.
- 4.4.4 Provision also exists to ensure extensions and alterations to existing dwellings retain adequate parking space within the curtilage to prevent adverse implications on the public highway.

- 4.4.5 The town centre policies ensure improved public transport provision, cycling facilities, whilst managing and providing car parking facilities to meet demand.

4.5 **Local Transport Policy**

- 4.5.1 The **Hartlepool Local Transport Plan (LTP)** sets out how the local authority intends to deliver a safe and sustainable local transport system which is sympathetic and aligned with national and regional strategic policy and expectations.

- 4.5.2 Parking policies need to be integral to a local authority's transport strategy and the Hartlepool LTP therefore has several key objectives:

- a) Improve maintain and manage the existing transport network
- b) Support and encourage economic growth of local economies
- c) Reduce carbon emissions
- d) Improve road safety
- e) Support and encourage health lifestyles
- f) Improve equality of opportunity to socially necessary goods and service
- g) Ensure transport serves to improve quality of life for all.

- 4.5.3 The LTP recognises the importance of transport to the economy. Although the LTP seeks to improve local public transport, also recognises that car ownership across the Tees Valley is still the most common mode of transport to travel to work. With this in mind although there are measure to encourage alternative modes of travel there is a recognition that car ownership is likely to rise, requiring appropriate traffic management to prevent potential

congestion and ensure convenient and accessible spaces are available that are close to the retail and leisure facilities. In terms of parking and traffic management the LTP seeks to achieve the following:

- a) Development of a network of walking and cycling routes with associated infrastructure improvements.
- b) Manage travel demand through parking availability and cost, by improving car parks to achieve Park Mark award standards, managed on street parking spaces by creating short stay payment areas, dedicated discounted business and commuter parking spaces and resident permit controlled parking zones.
- c) Promoting smarter travel choice including travel planning and improved sustainable travel and developing a number of workplace travel plans as part of the planning process for new developments. Encouraging and promoting initiatives to encourage walking and cycling to school, supported by school parking enforcement.
- d) Effective management of the existing traffic network by design measure to improve road safety and address accident “hot spots” including enforcement of Traffic Regulation Orders.
- e) The LTP is also conscious of the climate agenda seeking to improve air quality and increase the use of electric vehicles by installing additional electric charge points to meet increasing user demand therefore reducing Co2 emissions and limiting the effects of traffic pollutions.

4.5.4

The HBC **Council Plan** sets out the local authority’s vision in terms of improving Hartlepool, the economy, communities and improving the lives of residents. In doing so it recognises the importance of carbon reduction and vehicle pollution and has key aims and commitments to support cleaner transport initiatives and improve healthier lifestyles. Such measures are captured through a range of delivery plans and recognises that such plans and priorities may change. The plans need therefore to be able to respond to emerging issues and opportunities which will evolve throughout the

lifetime of the plans. Consequently we work to understand the needs, hopes and views of residents, communities and partners through engagement consultation and research.

4.6 Civil Parking Enforcement

- 4.6.1 Before the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE), the enforcement of Traffic Regulation Orders were the responsibility of the Police and Traffic Wardens. Hartlepool Borough Council managed only the off street parking restrictions (car parks).
- 4.6.2 The Traffic Management Act 2004 allowed local authorities the option to apply to the Secretary of state for Transport to create a Civil Enforcement Area Order that allowed the decriminalisation of parking restrictions. The local authority can then retain the income received from parking penalties provided the revenue is used to fund the cost of running the parking service with any surplus being spent within the prescribed parameters of the legislation.
- 4.6.3 Hartlepool successfully obtained ministerial approval to adopt Civil Parking Enforcement in 2005 and has since taken over responsibility for the enforcement of most of the parking restrictions including off street car parks, on street parking bays and waiting or prohibition to stop restrictions of all types.
- 4.6.4 **The Traffic Management Act 2004** also introduced a national schedule with differential penalty charges and each parking contravention split into one of two tier groups. The higher or lower charge tier is dependent on the considered seriousness of the parking contravention being deemed to be those contraventions that cause the most disruption to motorists. The Act allows Councils the choice to set the penalty charge from a prescribed band of charges. In Hartlepool the higher level charge is set at £70 and lower level at £50. In both cases the charge is reduced by 50% if paid within 14 days of the contravention.

4.6.5 Parking enforcement plays a key role in achieving traffic aims and objectives. Although the service has inevitable running costs which are funded from parking revenue, the main objectives of CPE is to improve compliance not to generate income. Hartlepool's application to introduce CPE included the following justification and they continue to dominate our objectives.

- a) Encourage safe and sensible parking
- b) Improve congestion on the roads
- c) Improve access for competing demand for kerb space
- d) Improved road safety for all road users.
- e) Clarity that a single responsible enforcement authority brings rather than a dual Police / council role.
- f) The effective enforcement of new and existing restrictions.
- g) Improved enforcement of permit controlled spaces
- h) Improve the environment.

4.6.6 Parking, traffic and road safety enforcement is carried out by Civil Enforcement Officer's operating under the jurisdiction of the Traffic Management Act 2004, although in Hartlepool the officers carry out a dual role and can investigate a variety of environmental crimes covered by Public Space Protection Orders.

5.0 **Current Parking Provision**

5.1 **Town Centre**

- 5.2 There are a number of different parking provisions available in Hartlepool reflective of need and demand. Town centre car parks offer shoppers and visitor's convenient parking close to the facilities with a tariff charge set to encourage vehicle turnover and maintain a degree of parking availability.
- 5.3 Commuters, students and long stay users have the option of parking in dedicated long stay parking sites, many of which offer discounted season tickets or contracted permit controlled parking bays.
- 5.4 Parking provision seeks to support the local economy and is reflective of perceived retail, business, tourism and leisure demand. Although current usage would suggest parking provision in the town centre is adequate for existing demand it should be noted that the majority of Off street parking provision is predominantly located around the Middleton Grange Shopping Centre with only limited provision to the north of the town (at Mill House) and no provision at all in the developing retail and leisure facilities at Hartlepool Marina.
- 5.5 The current public parking provision at Hartlepool Marina is private managed, leaving an element of risk in terms of Hartlepool Borough Council supporting the evolving local economy in this area. Where opportunity arises, consideration should therefore be given to expanding local authority managed off street parking provision at this location in order to support local residents / businesses removing the reliance of privately managed parking enforcement.

5.6 Equally, provision for the long stay parking to the north of the town centre is provided at Mill House Car Park. Mill House Car Park predominantly serves the leisure facility and bowls club with the short stay tariff geared to support the customer base. There are however also number of long stay parking areas within this site which allow a degree multiple use commuter parking. As the swimming baths are due to be demolished and the site redeveloped, the long stay commuter parking demand will still remain. Such provision therefore needs to be maintained in any future development of the area.

5.7 **On street enforcement**

5.7.1 Hartlepool Borough Council enforce a number of on street parking restrictions including prohibition of waiting and loading, limited and restrictive parking, no stopping orders including bus clearways and school keep clear markings, disabled parking bays and cycle lanes.

5.7.2 Consideration is given to the creation of further Traffic Regulations Orders to assist manage traffic on the local highway network in accordance with the local authorities obligation and commitment to improve accessibility and reduce congestion.

5.8 **Off Street Car Parks**

5.8.1 Hartlepool Borough Council manages 3330 parking spaces within the Borough. **Appendix A** of this report provides a list of the Off and On street parking sites managed and enforced by Hartlepool Borough Council, together with the number and type of spaces available.

5.8.2 The local authority manages 15 off street public car parks with 1965 parking spaces in the town centre and a further 809 parking bays within 3 off street sites at Seaton Carew. Charges apply

between the hours of 8am – 6pm Monday – Saturday excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

5.9 **Seaton Carew**

5.9.1 Seaton Carew is a seaside location within Hartlepool Borough, which is popular with visitors, especially during the summer months. Traffic management can be difficult during this period as On Street parking availability is limited and can consequently spill into the adjoining residential streets.

5.9.2 From April 2022, the summer seasonal pay and display tariff charge was replaced with an “all year” charge to help manage additional vehicle and visitor demand. Street parking availability.

5.9.3 Three off street sites provide additional parking at Rocket House, Station Lane and Sea View car parks.

5.9.4 In recognition of the additional visitor parking demands Seaton Carew can experience, Sea View Car Park was extended and refurbished in 2020 and the bay capacity increased from 350 to over 600 spaces.

5.10 **Park Mark award scheme**

5.10.1 All of the 15 town centre and 3 Seaton car parks have all been recognised by the British Parking Association as achieving secure “Park Mark” Award standard. The Park Mark scheme is nationally recognised and endorsed by the Association of Police Officers and measures car parks on quality management, maintenance, effective CCTV surveillance and measures to deter criminal activity and antisocial behaviour. Sites are regularly assessed to ensure the criteria standards are met and maintained.

5.11 **Motorcycle parking provision**

- 5.11.1 Dedicated motorcycle parking bays are provided within eight car parks. They include Basement Car Park (1) Roker Street Car Park (1), Westside Car Park (1), Eastside Car Park (1), Transport Interchange (1), Dover Street Car Park (1) and Colwyn Road car park (2). A parking tariff is still required to be paid for motor cycles.

5.12 **Cycle stations**

- 5.12.1 National, regional, local planning and transport plans recognise the need to invest, promote and support walking and cycling networks in order to improve accessibility and offer cycling as a genuine choice of travel on local journeys. The importance of secure cycle stations as part of the infrastructure is key to such ambitions. HBC will therefore continue to support and invest in such priorities and aim to significantly increase cycle storage options either within our own parking provision or working in collaboration with partners.

5.13 **Electric Vehicle Charge points**

- 5.13.1 Currently there are 2 electric vehicle charging points within the HBC managed car parks although there are several other alternative privately managed sites. HBC continues to work with the Tees Valley Combined Authority to consider future demand and provision for electric vehicles and there are plans to substantially increase the number of electric charge points within the HBC managed car parks. By mid-2022 a further 40 (TVCA funded) rapid EV charge points will have been installed. They will be located at Westside car park (8) Waldon Street car park (8) Sea View car park, Seaton Carew (12) and an additional 12 at Transport Interchange car park site (south) to compliment the existing 2 points at Transport Interchange (North).

5.14 Disabled parking bays

5.14.1 There are currently 38 on street disabled parking spaces and 123 dedicated disabled parking bays in HBC managed car parks. (**Appendix A** includes details of off street locations). On street bays are installed to provide convenient parking within close proximity to facilities where disabled access is likely to be required and off street parking alternatives are not available.

5.14.2 HBC has made a conscious decision not to approve requests to install disabled parking bays at residential locations. The demographic layout of much of the town (consisting of narrow terraced streets with limited on street availability) prevent accommodating individual disabled bays. Such requests assume a degree of ownership of the parking space (when actually they can be used by any Blue Badge holder), lead to further requests for spaces and is considered unmanageable due to the number of Blue Badge holders in Hartlepool.

5.15 Resident Only Permit Parking Zones (RPZ's)

5.15.1 There are currently 15 Resident only permit controlled parking zones within Hartlepool extending to various Wards across the Borough. **Appendix B** provides a list of streets and locations.

5.15.2 HBC introduced RPZ's where there is evidence of residents having difficulty parking in close proximity to their homes, due to long term use of parking spaces by none residents and in particular where there is little or no alternative On street parking options. Such restrictions are normally introduced to protect residential streets from displaced commuter or visitor traffic, parking for convenience or to avoid parking fees.

- 5.15.3 Residents living within one of the controlled zones can apply for a resident permit in line with the guidance. Hartlepool Borough Council recently amended the permit scheme in order to reduce operational costs and provide more practicable, convenient and improved customer service experience, by introducing virtual permits. Individual vehicles can be registered to a property with the vehicle registration number providing the patrolling officer with the validity of the stay with no requirement to display a physical permit. Once registered residents can pay for, register a change of vehicle and renew permits via the convenience of the HBC website portal.
- 5.15.4 There are further plans to introduce automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology to this process which will further enhance this service, allow for additional and more frequent patrols which will in turn improve compliance.
- 5.15.5 There are currently no limits to the number of resident permits that can be issued per property with the annual cost per permit determined on a sliding scale dependant on the number of permits issued as follows:
- 1st permit = £15
 - 2nd permit = £25
 - 3rd permit = £40 (and any subsequent thereafter)
- 5.15.6 Enforcement hours typically apply between 8am – 8pm with the restrictions an applicable times displayed on signs at each location. Permit charges are reviewed annually.
- 5.15.7 The permits allow residents or their authorised visitors to park within the specified street within the RPZ during the hours of enforcement.

5.15.8 Other permits available

- a) **Open permits** – Contain no specific vehicle registration, providing flexibility to residents with no car ownership or where demand exists for managing visits in addition to any vehicle already registered to the property. “Open permits” are physical permits that need to be displayed in the vehicle whilst it is parked in the permit controlled street. Permits are only valid for the duration of the visit.
- b) **Visitor permits** – Residents can apply to include regular visitors to their property with a specific visitor permit but have the flexibility to amend the details of up to 5 vehicles on any one permit. Once registered, residents can update, alter and change vehicle details via the online portal.
- c) **Health / carers** – Health care workers and carers requiring regular visits as an essential part of their work can apply for an annual permit covering all zones. Applications need to include proof of employment and the type of work they undertake.
- d) **Essential worker permits** – consideration will be given to other key and essential workers who, as part of their professional work, require regular visits to clients residing in properties within a controlled parking location.
- e) **Concessionary permits** – Available for use by customers of businesses located in a resident controlled permit zone and where the nature of the business has been identified as meeting the concessionary permit criteria.
- f) **Off street parking bays** – Dedicated parking spaces provided for frequent and regular car park users at a discount annual charge.*
- g) **On street parking bays** - Discounted long stay parking available for use in a specific location. The permit allows parking (subject to availability) in designated block bays across several controlled streets (no designated bay).*

*Such permits are popular and some locations may have a waiting list for spaces to become available.

- h) **Landlord permits** - Property landlords can apply for a permit in order to visit properties located in a controlled zone and allow parking for a maximum stay of 2 hours per visit.
- i) **Religious person's concessionary permits**- Religious institutions can apply for a permit allowing them to park in a zone (maximum stay of 2 hours) to allow for visits to parishioners living in a controlled zone.
- j) **Hotels** – Hotels operating within a controlled parking zone can apply for additional “open” permits accommodate guest parking. The hotel can amend the vehicle registration numbers via the online portal but are capped at 2 per hotel.
- k) **Contractor's daily permits (waivers)** – contractors requiring access to property that cannot be accommodated by the resident by use of an “open” or “visitor” permits. Similar requests can also be made to suspend a parking restriction.
- l) **Suspension of a parking bay / space** – applications can be made to temporarily suspend single or multiple parking spaces. There may also be a requirement to apply for additional permits for skip licences etc. which will be at an additional cost to the bay suspension.

5.15.9 Further information in relation to current permit availability and cost can be found on the HBC website.

5.16 **Parking for registered Blue Badge holders**

5.16.1 The Blue Badge scheme provides a range of national on street parking concession for people with severe mobility problems, helping them to park closer to their destination. In August 2019 the Blue Badge scheme was amended to include hidden illnesses into the approved criteria.

- 5.16.2 Although the scheme is administered and applications are ultimately approved by local authorities, much of the eligibility criteria is set out by central government (Department for Transport) to ensure a degree of consistency in terms of how cases are considered and approved. The scheme examines qualification within two sets of criteria being automatic and none automatic as set out in the statute legislation.
- 5.16.3 Applications that do not meet this eligibility criteria may still qualify for a Blue Badge but will be required to be considered for further assessment with any decision made by the local authority. Such a decision is based on the findings of a mobility assessment the applicant will be asked to attend or in the case of “hidden illnesses” the supporting evidence that may have been provided by specialist medical professionals.
- 5.16.4 Blue badges are awarded for a period of 3 years.
- 5.16.5 **The Equality Act 2010** places a responsibility on all service providers to ensure that access to their services are available to all. Improving accessibility for those with physical disabilities, mental health conditions, learning difficulties and those with sensory impairment are key objectives within the regional Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan and the Hartlepool Local Transport Plan. As a result, a number of adjustments and adaptations have been made to our surface and multi storey car parks reflective of commitment to improve access for all and to ensure compliance with legislation requirement.
- 5.16.6 The number of disabled parking spaces within the car parks is higher than the percentage recommended by national guidelines and have been designed to comply with planning specification. Some sites such as Eastside Car Park have an intentionally higher number of disabled bays due to its close proximity to Shop Mobility and the obvious higher customer demand this generates. Any new

scheme or refurbishment of existing sites is designed with accessibility as a priority consideration. Designated bay usage is assessed and monitored in comparison to numbers of blue badges issued by the local authority and consideration will be given to increasing the numbers of such bays as and when required, to reflect any changing demand. Disabled bays are also situated as close to the facilities to provide convenient parking for users.

5.16.7 The Blue Badge scheme also provides badge holders with a concession to park on single and double yellow lines (where no loading restrictions are in place) for up to three hours. In Hartlepool we also allow a three hour parking exemption (with a valid blue badge) to park in residential controlled zones.

5.16.8 Civil Enforcement Officers have authority under the Traffic Management Act to take action against those that commit fraud or misuse the badge. Misuse of a badge undermines the scheme and takes parking spaces away from those that genuinely need them. Misuse can include:

- a) Using a badge that is no longer valid
- b) Using a badge that has been forged or copied
- c) Using a badge that has been lost or stolen
- d) A valid badge that has been misused by a friend or relative.

5.16.9 A blue badge holder is the sole benefactor of the concession the badge provides, not the vehicle owner. The Blue Badge holder must therefore be travelling in the vehicle for the Blue Badge to be valid.

5.17 **Hartlepool Borough Council staff Car Parking schemes.**

5.17.1 Like many large employers, Hartlepool Borough Council operates a private workplace parking scheme for their employees. There are currently 9 staff car parks (covering 365 bays). Parking charges apply and are based on employee salary rate although a further

premium parking charge also applies to staff within the Civic Underground. Elected Members also pay a parking charge for the use of this site.

5.18 **Enforcement by the use of an approved Device (CCTV camera car)**

- 5.18.1 In order to tackle several issues of congestion and disruption on the road network, The Traffic Management Act 2004 allowed local authorities to utilise certain approved CCTV devices to assist with enforcement of a number of parking contraventions and traffic management concerns.
- 5.18.2 Hartlepool has been using such camera enforcement since 2009 when a liveried “camera car” equipped with a roof mounted approved device, predominantly to assist with school enforcement. Congestion outside schools causes significant road safety concerns during peak drop off and collection times. School Keep Clear markings are legislated by “No Stopping Orders” and although the stay of a vehicle can often be relatively short, the volume and frequency of vehicles in the immediate area can be a hazard to both pedestrians and other motorists.
- 5.18.3 The Camera Car provides a cost effective, less labour intensive means of enforcement, in comparison to the traditional officer patrols. The mobility of the vehicle has the added advantage of allowing several locations to be covered in the one visit. The car is a visual deterrent and regular patrol visits have proven to improve compliance. Hartlepool has 36 schools within the Borough and it is not therefore possible to visit all of them at the same time but the uncertainty of if and when the vehicle will patrol, has resulted in a change of driver behaviour and greater compliance.
- 5.18.4 The enforcement process differs for contraventions issued by an approved devices in that PCN’s are issued by post rather than served on the vehicle or handed to the driver. Appeal and payment

discounts therefore apply from the time of posting rather than time of contravention.

- 5.18.5 Hartlepool's CCTV camera car was introduced in 2009 and there are therefore plans to replace this vehicle and upgrade the existing technology in order to allow further enforcement use including permit control.

6.0 **Parking tariffs**

- 6.1 Parking tariff charges are reviewed annually and have been set to be competitively priced in comparison to neighbouring local authorities.

- 6.2 A number of parking promotions have been introduced to assist and support local businesses. They include:

- 6.3 **First 3 hours parking free** – An initiative introduced by the Tees Valley Mayor to encourage local trade and support local businesses. This is a temporary promotion will be available for a 24 month period until Feb 2023 and will be applicable in several designated town centre “shoppers” car parks.

- 6.4 **Free parking on Sunday** – To support businesses trading on Sunday, HBC offers free parking in all town centre car parks and on street parking locations. A Sunday charge does however apply at all HBC managed locations at Seaton Carew.

- 6.5 **Christmas promotion** – HBC continues to support local shops and businesses by encouraging local shopping in the run up to Christmas by offering free weekend parking during December.

6.6 **Free after 3pm** – This promotion was superseded and replaced by first three hour free parking promotion.

6.7 **Payment options**

6.7.1 Cash parking machines are located within car parks where tariff charges are applicable. Alternatively cashless payment options are available via mobile phone payment app. In addition and to reduce the dependency on cash only payment stations, HBC are looking to phase out the number of cash machines we operate and replace them with card reader / contactless alternatives. A replacement procurement programme is planned over the next five years.

7.0 KEY ISSUES

- 7.1 The provision and management of parking in formal car parks and on street is complex and has a direct impact on many residents, businesses and visitors. A number of key issues have been identified
- 7.2 Car Parks are often a visitor's first impression of the town and are a significant council asset which should be maintained to a high standard. Car Parks are not currently part of the Transport Asset Management Plan as they are not part of the highway network although they are routinely inspected to identify safety defects (e.g. trip hazards). Condition inspections are undertaken by Structural Engineers and issues such as cracks and undulations in the surface of the car park in order to identify repairs mitigate against escalation of maintenance costs.
- 7.3 The quality of the car parks still needs some improvement. There are still complaints received about the size and layout of spaces, surface condition and cleanliness of some of the sites. A regular cleansing programme is in place to ensure parking sites are swept and bins emptied, whilst quarterly inspections are carried out and reactive repairs carried out. Although some design layouts can be restricted by pillars in The Multi and Basement car parks, a programme of scheduled refurbishment ensure the sites maintain the recognised "park mark" award.
- 7.4 Parking tariffs are annually reviewed and are reflective of demand management and supporting the local economy. Parking tariffs have been set in order to be competitive with neighbouring authorities whilst HBC also supports several promotional campaigns to encourage local trade including, free parking at Christmas and periodical free parking periods in designated car parks. The balance of short and long stay parking bays is also regularly reviewed to ensure provision meets existing demand and expected growth.

- 7.5 Although the current on and off street capacity meets demand, there is a recognition that change and future developments may impact on existing parking provision and the need to revise and plan for change. The majority of the town centre parking is based in and around the commercial centre and primarily serves the Middleton Grange Shopping centre but development of the town centre, particularly if this involves the loss of existing surface car parks as part of the redevelopment plans. Long stay parking provision is limited in the North of the town whilst para 5.4 – 5.6 of this report recognised the lack of parking provision the local authority manages in and around the Marina and poses a potential risk to supporting the local economy on this area of Hartlepool.
- 7.6 Increasing car ownership and multiple car ownership creates an increased demand for parking space in residential areas. This is a particular problem in some of the terraced housing areas of the town where no off street parking spaces exist and residents are reliant on the On street parking provision which can often exceed demand.
- 7.7 There are often conflicting demands for highways users and the needs and requirements of residents, businesses, shoppers and visitors as well as public transport, taxis, motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians. For this reason parking control by tariff has been used to successfully encourage long stay parking at more peripheral car parks and enable short stay parking, with high vehicle turnover in the core retail area.
- 7.8 In Order to meet planning policy and guidelines new developments must comply with parking standards as well as implementing travel plans to reduce any perceived problems associated with excessive parking demands.
- 7.9 To support the local economy, tariff charges are annually reviewed to ensure they are competitive with neighbouring local authorities

and supports specific promotions including “first three hours free” and “free parking during December as well has free parking on Sunday to encourage local trade.

- 7.10 HBC operates a number of contracted business and commuter parking bays providing parking convenient and available parking provision for those that need regular access.
- 7.11 A number of parking promotions have been introduced to assist and support local businesses. They include:
 - 7.11.1 **First 3 hours parking free** – An initiative introduced by the Tees Valley Mayor to encourage local trade and support local businesses. This temporary promotion will operate for a 24 month period until Feb 2023 and will be applicable in several designated town centre “shoppers” car parks.
 - 7.11.2 **Free parking on Sunday** – To support businesses trading on Sunday, HBC offers free parking in all town centre car parks and on street parking locations. A Sunday charge does however apply during the summer season at all managed locations at Seaton Carew.
 - 7.11.3 **Christmas promotion** – HBC continues to support local shops and businesses by encouraging local shopping in the run up to Christmas by offering free weekend parking during December.
 - 7.11.4 **Free after 3pm** – This promotion was superseded and replaced by first three hour free parking promotion.

8 OBJECTIVES

8.1 The objectives of the authorities Local Transport Plan interlink with many of the national, regional and local policies but identifies seven key goals:

- 1) Delivering sustainable economic growth
- 2) Tackle congestion
- 3) Reducing the impact of transport on the environment and tackling climate change
- 4) Improve Accessibility, maintain existing transport network and manage the parking assets.
- 5) Improve road safety
- 6) Safer and healthier travel
- 7) Improve equality of opportunity through access to services

9. **OBJECTIVE 1 – DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH**

9.1 Transport is a derived demand in that most people do not travel for its own sake, rather they travel to undertake another activity, such as going to work, school, shopping and leisure or accessing services. In the same way, car parking is a derived demand for car drivers. In Hartlepool, five types of potential demands have been identified, namely:

- a) Parking for town centre shopping and other short stay activities
- b) Parking for town centre employment and other all day use
- c) Parking in residential streets where demand exceeds supply due to conflicting needs of users of different land uses (residential, employment, business, health etc.)
- d) Parking associated with major transport facilities for onward travel– e.g. interchange
- e) Parking to serve employment use

9.1.1 In considering how to respond to and manage the different types of parking demand, the council has to balance the role of supporting business and inward investment whilst meeting the parking needs of local residents and their visitors.

9.2 **Parking supply**

9.2.1 There are in effect two different parking demands:

- a) Short stay facilities for those who need to park for a few minutes or hours including provision for delivery vehicles to

serve businesses, bus stops and accessible parking for those with Blue Badges

- b) Long stay facilities for those who need to stay for longer periods of time for example workers attending their place of employment. In this case the demand pattern may be repeated over several days.

9.2.2 There is also a need to have a consistent approach to the provision of parking at new developments, which balances the need to attract inward investment into Hartlepool with the potential negative impacts of increased traffic and associated parking on the highway and local environment.

9.2.3 **POLICY 1 – Determining future levels of parking stock.**

Ensure that the overall supply and location of long and short stay parking is sufficient to meet the needs of shoppers and visitors and those drivers who need to commute or visit attractions and facilities.

9.3 **Pricing Policy**

9.3.1 Parking charges are an important mechanism for controlling the demand for parking spaces. However a balance need to be struck. If charges are too high, car park spaces will be underused. Conversely, if charges are too low, then demand will increase such that vacant car parking spaces will be more difficult to find and congestion will increase. Low charges can also result in increased car usage at the expense of more sustainable means of travel. Currently Hartlepool public parking provision is managed through the application of a tiered system of charges, both on and off street at a level which contributes to demand management.

9.3.2 Parking charges are applied to many car parks within the Borough both as a means of replaying some of the costs of providing the facilities (land, infrastructure, operation) but also to control the utilisation of the available spaces. In Council operated car parks, the principle of paying to park is also justified because the benefit it is not universal to all residents.

9.3.3 In addition, a careful balance in the charge levels needs to be maintained to ensure that the town centre is not disadvantaged in comparison to out of town centres and other neighbouring centre. The needs of the local economy and the policy context need to be considered in determining what level of parking charge is fair and reasonable to apply.

9.3.4 **POLICY 2 – Pricing**

- a) Retain the differential charges for long and short stay parking areas.***
- b) Review charges annually, having regard to occupancy levels, charges levied in competing centres and the transport context.***
- c) Support additional parking promotions aimed at supporting the local economy***

9.4 **Parking standards and new developments**

9.4.1 The number and design of parking spaces are determined during the planning process and are currently guided by National Planning Policy Framework, National Model Design Code, Department for Transport Design guidance and reflective of regional and local plans. Maximum standards are designed to be part of a package of measures to promote and prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement and where possible facilitate access to high quality public transport, promote sustainable travel, create places that are

safe and secure and minimise potential conflict of vehicle with pedestrians and cyclists.

9.4.2 **POLICY 3 - PARKING STANDARDS**

- A) Ensure that parking standards for new developments and amendments/ alterations to existing developments comply with necessary government advice, and adopted local policy.***
- B) Ensure those with impaired physical disabilities and hidden illnesses have access to convenient designated disabled parking spaces close to the facilities.***
- C) Ensure that the provision of larger designated disabled parking bays with improved access continues to be within the required guidance and parking standards.***

10 OBJECTIVE 2 - TACKLE CONGESTION

10.1 Hartlepool is tackling congestion in four ways:

- 1) To increase highway capacity at pinch points, particularly through junction improvements and reallocation of highway space.
- 2) To better manage the highway network to reduce delays by efficient enforcement of Traffic Regulation Orders to deter inappropriate and inconsiderate parking, particularly on key routes into the town centre.
- 3) To promote travel choices through improved public transport, walking and cycling networks and providing high quality, accessible information on those choices.
- 4) By effectively managing utility and contractor operations in and on the highway to ensure that they cause minimum disruption.

10.2 Managing and enforcing parking can have a significant impact on the level of traffic and resulting congestion on the highway network. The local Transport Plan has introduced strategies to reduce the number of trips made by car, by implementing policies that improve other travel choices such as public transport as well as seeking to tackle parking at schools and the workplace. Improved enforcement of parking regulations can reduce delay caused to vehicles through illegal parking.

10.3 The Traffic Management Act also place a duty on the council to keep traffic moving, thus reducing congestion. Illegal parking at bus stops, parking on double yellow lines or in a loading bay, causes short term localised disruption on the highway network. This creates problems for public transport and delivery vehicles but also creates general congestion that impacts on all road users.

- 10.4 In Hartlepool, parking enforcement is carried out by Civil Enforcement Officers having been granted authorisation by The Secretary of State to introduce Civil Parking Enforcement in 2005.

10.5 **Policy 4 – Enforcement**

The Council will continue to manage the Traffic Network to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic whilst meeting and reconciling the competing demands for road space with the use of Traffic Regulation Orders and the enforcement of legislation to comply with our statutory duty.

DRAFT

11 **OBJECTIVE 3 – REDUCING THE IMPACT OF TRANSPORT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE**

11.1 Climate change is a significant problem which affects us all. Whilst the future impacts of climate change are uncertain we recognise that this something we need to address. Transport for the North recently produced a regional draft decarbonisation strategy with key aims of:

- a) Transforming economic performance by understanding the clean growth opportunity as a result of transport decarbonisation
- b) Increase efficiency, reliability, integration and resilience in the transport system
- c) Improving inclusivity, health and access opportunities for all
- d) Promoting and enhancing the built, historic and natural environment.

11.2 Hartlepool needs to be prepared for the impacts of climate change and will be working in partnership to secure local and global action to tackle it.

11.3 The Hartlepool Local Transport Plan recognises that over 40% of CO2 emissions in Hartlepool come directly from what we do as individuals, including travel. Whilst increased personal mobility has undoubtedly had a positive impact on the borough we need to manage the environmental issues associated with motorised vehicle use.

11.4 The Climate Change Act 2008 sets a target of 80% cut in carbon emissions across all sectors by 2050 although Hartlepool has agreed to go beyond the objectives of EU energy policy in terms of reduction of CO2 emissions through enhanced energy efficiency and cleaner energy production and use.

- 11.5 Industrial air quality in the borough has improved over the last 40 years however the rapid rise in personal mobility through road transport has introduced a new range of pollutants being emitted. Air pollution from domestic and commercial sources is also low as are industrial emissions leaving road transport as the most significant air pollution source.
- 11.6 The Environment Bill 2021 sets out targets and key goals and outcomes of the 25 year environment plan (future environmental improvement plan). In respect of any matter which relates to natural environment or peoples enjoyment of it and will require government to consider and target outcomes in four key areas of air quality, biodiversity, water and resource efficiency / waste reduction. This Bill is likely to receive Parliamentary approval in 2022 when targets for clean air in terms of vehicle emission reduction and traffic pollution may have further implications for this strategy.
- 11.7 In anticipation of the changes required and as part of existing commitments within regional and local policy for a carbon reduction programme, HBC recognises a need to have provision in the infrastructure to ensure availability and to meet increasing demand. Hartlepool has a long established commitment to the “plugged in places” initiative and more recently The Transport for the North decarbonisation strategy. Both schemes support and encourage the use of electric vehicles in terms of carbon emissions and vehicle pollution reduction. As such, Hartlepool is currently identifying additional sites for the siting of a significant number of further electric vehicle charge points.
- 11.8 Such work has been carried out in conjunction with Tees Valley Local authorities to ensure the infrastructure will be consistent across the Tees Valley and will provide greater availability and offer reassurance for Electric Vehicle motorists when planning journeys and improved connectivity.

11.9 The HBC “Council Plan” recognises the importance of carbon reduction and vehicle pollution and has key aims and commitments to support cleaner transport initiatives and improve healthier lifestyles.

11.10 **Policy 5 – Carbon emissions / electric vehicles**

- a) Supporting transport systems that do not exacerbate climate change and promoting active travel and targeted programmes of smarter choices by workplace and school travel planning. The council will continue to recognise the importance of tackling climate change and will support measures to work with partners to secure local and global actions to tackle it.***
- b) Will continue to support energy policies to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and support cleaner transport initiatives.***
- c) Will continue to improve electric vehicle infrastructure by increasing the number of EV charging stations reflective of increasing demand.***
- d) Will promote alternative transport modes to reduce the dependence on motorised car journeys.***

12 OBJECTIVE 4 – IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY, MAINTAIN EXISTING TRANSPORT NETWORK AND MANAGE PARKING ASSETS

- 12.1 This objective seeks to ensure that those who need access to parking are able to do so and to address the often conflicting demands for space. The parking strategy primarily relates to parking of the private car, but consideration should also be given to the needs of all users and types of transport.
- 12.2 **Accessible parking** – There are currently 78 parking spaces specifically designed for blue badge holders in Hartlepool's car parks. The bays are where ever possible sited to provide convenient parking close to the facilities. Dedicated parking provision continues to be reviewed in order to assess demand whilst taking into consideration the number of blue badges issued locally and in circulation nationally.
- 12.3 **Cycle parking** - the quality and availability of cycle parking at key destinations is a key element in encouraging a modal shift from private car to more sustainable forms of transport. Safe and secure cycle storage provision continues to be reviewed to meet demand and encourage further cycle use.
- 12.3.1 HBC continue to improve cycle and walking networks targeted at corridors identified within the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Tees Valley Integrated Transport Plan.
- 12.4 **Motorcycle parking** – The institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers guidelines for motorcycling encourages local authorities to increase provision of motorcycle parking that is near, clear, secure and safe to use. HBC will therefore work towards providing improved motorcycle parking provision within existing car parks and at relevant facilities throughout the Borough.

12.5 **Policy 6 - Improve availability and quality of parking for all users**

The Council will continue to improve the provision of convenient parking for those with physical disabilities, motor cyclists and cyclists both within public car parks and on street.

12.6 **Lorry parking** – HBC do not provide a dedicated site for HGV's. Overnight parking is however available at sites under private ownership at Wynyard and A19 Service Stations.

12.6.1 The local authority has no statutory requirement to provide lorry parking and no resource for this purpose. New sites for leisure, industrial, warehousing and retail developments need to take into account the potential of the developments to generate commercial heavy goods vehicle traffic and consider how lorry parking is going to be accommodated in the surrounding area.

12.6.2 Consideration should be given to ensure lorry parking in residential areas is avoided as the resulting noise pollution from running engines and refrigeration units is inappropriate. Parking on the side of the highway can also impede traffic flow and cause congestion, whilst lorry parking can cause visual intrusion in certain areas.

12.7 **Coach parking** – Parking for coaches is available at Hartlepool Interchange and The Royal Navy Museum sites in the town centre whilst dedicated coach parking facilities are available at Sea View Car Park at Seaton Carew. This site does however operate a seasonal dusk till dawn timetable resulting in the site being closed overnight.

12.8 **Motor homes** – there are currently no dedicated mobile home parking facilities within Hartlepool. Although some privately operated sites do offer camping facilities there are no parking

spaces within public ownership specifically designed to accommodate motorhomes and / or offer facilities for an overnight stay. Most demand is from visitors to Seaton Carew and as most motor homes are self-sufficient, have in the past parked in off street car parks where no overnight closure times apply or on the unrestricted public highway.

- 12.8.1 Many of the current HBC car parks inhibit motor home access due to height restrictions and this can prohibit many motor home users from visiting the town. Motor home enthusiasts have highlighted the limited options available to them when visiting the area and this is seen as a weakness in promoting Hartlepool as a tourism attraction. There is an opportunity to bolster tourism and visitor numbers whilst providing investment into the local economy by developing sites / facilities to offer motor home owners a dedicated parking provision suited for their specific needs and market the facilities to attract tourists to visit the area.

12.9 **Policy 7 - Lorry and coach parking**

The council will continue to develop and assess lorry, coach and motor home parking provision, working in conjunction with existing privately managed sites, whilst assessing future needs and requirement demands.

12.10 **Policy 8 - Future Lorry and coach parking**

The council will investigate opportunities to improve the provision for coach and lorry parking facilities and will work with developers to achieve this where necessary.

12.11 **Policy 9 - Motor homes**

The council will investigate opportunities to develop parking sites to accommodate motor homes and consider options to provide facilities to encourage visits and overnight stays for motor home owners.

12.12 Managing Residential Parking Issues

- 12.12.1 The Council recognises that residents expect that they will be able to park in the vicinity of their homes and have accepted that needs of residents should have a high priority in such situations.
- 12.12.2 There are currently 15 Resident Only permit controlled parking zones within Hartlepool extending to various wards across the Borough.
- 12.12.3 The Council introduces Resident Parking Zones (RPZ's) where there is evidence of residents having difficulty parking within close proximity to their homes, due to long term use of parking spaces by none residents and in particular where there is little or no alternative On street parking options. Such restrictions are normally introduced to protect residential streets from displaced commuter or visitor traffic, parking for convenience or to avoid parking fees.
- 12.12.4 Residents living within one of the controlled zones are entitled to apply for a parking permit in line with the published guidance. HBC recently amended the permit scheme in order to reduce operational cost and provide a more practicable, convenient and improved customer experience, by introducing virtual permits. Individual vehicles can be registered to a property with the vehicle registration number providing the patrolling officer with the validity of the stay and no requirement therefore to display a physical permit in the vehicle. Once registered, residents can pay, register changes and renew permits on line.
- 12.12.5 Future enforcement will look to see enforcement by automatic number plate recognition, allowing more frequent patrols and a more robust enforcement regime which should result in increased compliance.

12.12.6 Further details on the types of permits available, cost and eligibility are available on the HBC website.

12.12.7 Areas affected by parking availability can apply for inclusion within a RPZ but would require majority support of residents before legal orders are progressed.

12.12.8 **Policy 10 - Residents parking schemes**

a) The need for new RPZ's (as a result of a development) will be identified during the planning process and appropriate conditions applied to the development.

b) Consideration will be given to include established location if problems with parking demands emerge, where a workable RPZ can be designed to alleviate and prioritise parking demand and where there is majority residential support for such a scheme.

12.13 **Managing and maintaining the transport network**

12.13.1 HBC has a statutory duty as Highway Authority to manage and maintain the highway network. We have a general duty of care to our residents, visitors and businesses whilst The Highways Act 1980 imposes a duty to maintain the highway. The highway network is a valuable asset and as such maintenance is a significant factor in ensuring that people and goods move freely, safely and efficiently around Hartlepool.

12.13.2 HBC manage the network in accordance with the policy framework as set out in our published Highway Management Plan and Highway Inspection programme. The plan conforms to the government's transport policy via a risk management strategy and sets out a detailed inventory, defined hierarchy and policy objective linked to maintenance activity through an inspection and assessment programme in accordance with agreed conditions and standards. The plan sets out a programme of prioritised

maintenance works including reactive and routine maintenance together with a predetermined inspection programme to protect strategic routes, main and secondary distributor routes, as well as linked and local access roads. The Highway inspection programme also includes pedestrian zones, primary and secondary walking routes together with linked footways and local access footways.

- 12.13.3 The Traffic Management Act 2004 further introduced a duty for the local authority to manage the highway network, by controlling any utility work on the highway and increasing civil enforcement of traffic offences. The act established a duty of care for all local traffic authorities to manage their road network and to secure the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network. The act includes all highway users including pedestrians and cyclists.

12.13.4. **Policy 11 – Managing the highway network**

To continue to maintain the public highway in accordance with the published inspection, maintenance and planned investment programme, in accordance with best value and risk assessment whilst ensuring the authority continues to meet its statutory responsibilities and aspirations.

12.14. **Managing the parking asset**

- 12.14.1 Off street car parks and kerbside parking on the highway are valuable assets that the council owns and manages. Off street car parks have an inherent value as pieces of land and as potential development sites for many other potential uses. They are used to provide a service, which provides a source of income. Therefore on both these counts they should be effectively managed to maximise their return and value to local people.

- 12.14.2 As an asset, car parks should be maintained and improved as appropriate. They do not currently form part of the Transport Asset

Management Plan as they are not part of the highway. Whenever parking takes place on the highway (charged for or free) it is allocating space to parking rather than to free flowing traffic. Under the Network Management Duty the council has a duty to ensure that traffic is able to flow and therefore it may be appropriate to allocate some road space currently used for parking to general traffic or specifically to certain modes such as buses, taxis or cycles.

- 12.14.3 The council operates quality parking management in its car parks to reflect perceived user expectations. This includes how well the car parks are designed, maintained, and regular cleaning and how secure and well-lit the sites are. We also strive to ensure there is clarity from the information provided, services are easy to use whilst the enforcement regime is fair with a level of customer service.
- 12.14.4 Public expectations of the quality of car parking has increased and customers now expect well managed, clean and attractive car parks. For visitors, the town's car parks often contribute to their first impression of the town and can determine whether they return on subsequent occasion. Such impressions are therefore important as they can impact on the economy of the town. The council therefore seeks to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of its car parking provision.
- 12.14.5 In recognition of the quality parking provision provided in Hartlepool all our town centre car parks have achieved and been credited with Park Mark status. The Park Mark award scheme is a nationally recognised standard for the quality of off street parking facilities, endorsed by the Association of Police Officers and operated by the British Parking association. Car Parks are measured on the following criteria: Quality management and maintenance, effective CCTV surveillance, measures to deter criminal activity and anti-social behaviour, thereby preventing crime or reducing the fear of crime for car parking users. Sites are regularly assessed to ensure the criteria standards are met and maintained. There are currently 23 public and HBC staff car park

sites recognised as achieving this award covering over 3000 parking bays.

12.14.6 **Policy 12 - Managing the parking asset**

To inspect and maintain car parks to highway standards as part of the Transport Asset Management plan with appropriate levels of funding and to seek to improve the quality of Hartlepool's Car Parks by carrying out a programme of improvements to meet customer needs.

12.15 **Rural parking** – Appropriate parking restrictions can be used to protect the traditional character of villages e.g. to avoid erosion of village greens. Signage also need to be designed to respect its setting especially in conservation areas, where this is legal and practical.

12.15.1 **Policy 13 – Rural parking**

Parking restrictions in rural areas will be reviewed with the traditional character of villages being considered where possible.

12.16 **Verge Hardening** – In some cases the geographical layout of an area allows for potential additional parking spaces to be created by formal verge hardening. Consideration will be given to requests for verge hardening where there is a clear benefit to residents and such measures will increase parking and access. Where possible HBC will work in association with Housing providers to fund such initiatives.

12.16.1 However, verge hardening can also have a detrimental effect on the environment as a result of the loss of green space and trees and also with regard to increased surface water run-off and the

environmental impact should therefore be a consideration of any proposed scheme.

12.16.2 **Policy 14 – Verge hardening**

Verge hardening requests will be considered based on the individual circumstances of each scheme.

12.17 **Events** – Organised events in the Borough can have a significant short term impact on the environment. They can cause congestion and road safety concerns as well as inconvenience householders who may be affected by large numbers of visitor vehicles descending into residential areas. Such events will be considered by the Safety Advisory Group (SAG). Where necessary the organisers of the event should be required to fund any traffic management measures intended to mitigate such problems.

12.17.1 **Policy 15 – Events**

The parking implications of organised events will be considered through the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) and will require organisers to fund traffic management to mitigate against parking problems associated with the event.

12.18. **New technology** – The Council continues to invest in new technology to improve the management of its car parks and traffic management enforcement. This has included additional CCTV coverage of the car parks, new card-less payment machines options to pay for parking via mobile phone app and the installation of additional infrastructure to meet demand from cleaner greener transport. In addition HBC upgraded the historical parking IT notice processing and support system, allowing for more services to be delivered online including PCN payments, case reviews and challenges as well as allowing online permit requests, payments

and renewals. Further consideration is being given to replacing / upgrading the CCTV “camera car” to allow for more efficient enforcement, covering larger areas of the town due to automatic number plate recognition facility.

12.18.1 The council will continue to invest in new technology to further improve the parking offered. As further changes are made to the Traffic Management Act and additional powers, such as moving traffic offences, are handed to local authorities, further considerations will be given to adopting such powers and investing in the technology required to deliver such enforcement.

12.18.2 Further investment is planned with a roll out programme to replace existing cash payment machines with cashless / contactless card payment alternatives.

12.18.3 **Policy 16 – New technology**

HBC will continue to review available technology and invest in such technology where appropriate, to assist in the effectiveness and efficient management and enforcement of parking within the Borough.

13 OBJECTIVE 5 – IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY

13.1 Road casualties are categorised as fatal, serious or slight and whilst The Tees Valley has a lower fatal transport casualty rate and fewer slight casualties than the national average, it does have more serious transport casualties than the national average. We therefore continue to look to improve road safety across the Borough. Equally levels of crime and antisocial behaviour and perception of safety can impact on a person's decision to travel by public transport, cycle or walk. Our Local Transport and Council Plans therefore have key objectives and priorities to address such issues including the need to review parking restrictions to address casualty reduction, road safety and risk. Key priorities are:

- 1) **Provision of parking spaces** – Where ever possible, it is desirable and safe to park on the highway, taking into account the access needs of emergency service vehicles, this should be allowed. The conditions relating to who may park and for how long, will be tailored to meet the local needs, including those residents, shops and businesses. Priorities will be afforded to Blue Badge Holders who rely on their vehicles to access local amenities but resident parking provision together with shopper, commuter and visitor parking are also important. There are areas where traffic access needs to be limited, restricted or even prohibited with such traffic management controlled and enforced by locally introduced Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 2) **Road safety and casualty reduction** – Parking restrictions will be considered if an accident investigation identifies that parking is a contributory factor to the road safety. Parking restrictions will be investigated if it is considered that parking is causing potential road safety hazards at a particular location, including impairing vision for pedestrians seeking to cross the highway.

- 3) **School gate parking** – Each day during the school term thousands of Hartlepool children and their parents travel from home to school in the morning and make the return trip in the afternoon. Many pupils living close to the school may walk or cycle, with those living further away travelling mainly by bus or car. The school journey causes localised congestion and parking around the schools can create road safety problems and inconvenience residents.

13.2 Enforcement Officers therefore regularly patrol and carry out ANPR camera visits to schools to change driver attitudes for parking close to schools and to increase driver compliance.

13.3 Through school travel plans, Hartlepool Borough Council is taking a lead in addressing the need to encourage greater use of sustainable travel and less dependency of the private car. Hartlepool is promoting cycling and extending and improving the cycling infrastructure with a view to improving levels of cycling.

13.4 The **School Travel Plan** strategy sets out why and how the Council aims to bring about a step change in home to school travel patterns to help cut congestion, pollution and ease school parking and the associated disruption for those who live close to the school.

13.5 **Footpath parking** – Many pedestrians complain at the lack of enforcement in relation to footpath obstruction. Although some changes in the Traffic Management Act allow for the enforcement of dropped kerbs, most contraventions on non-regulated footpath areas remain an obstruction of the public highway and therefore fall under the jurisdiction of The Police. Central Government continue to review if a similar parking contravention should be introduced for local councils to enforce, replicating those offences that already exist in London.

13.6 **Policy 17 – School gate parking and footpath obstruction**

- a) New schools will be designed to give priority to the principles of sustainable travel.***
- b) Appropriate parking controls will be introduced and enforced outside schools to address road safety concerns and promote sustainable travel.***
- c) Civil Enforcement Officers to work in conjunction with Police to ensure appropriate enforcement of footpath obstruction issues depending on appropriate jurisdiction.***

13.7 **Traffic Flow** – Parking restrictions will be considered to maintain traffic flow and ensure safe turning movements. Situations affecting the passage of emergency service vehicles will be addressed in consultation with the emergency service affected. The extent of the proposals will be determined in accordance with the nature and classification of the highway. Priorities will be given to proposals benefiting alternative modes of transport and reducing the dependency of the private car.

13.8 **Environmental conditions** – Parking conditions will be considered in order to improve the quality of life for residents, shoppers and other road users by reducing conflict between vehicles and pedestrians/ cycles.

13.9 Priority will be given to parking conditions around schools to coordinate with the authorities safer routes to schools initiative. Priority will also be given to residents where the introduction of other parking controls has resulted in parking displacement to their community.

13.10 **Policy 18 – Parking controls and restrictions**

The Council will review existing parking restrictions and the need to introduce new restrictions where necessary, in order to meet the objectives and priorities of relevant traffic and transport plans.

14 OBJECTIVE 6 – SAFER HEALTHIER TRAVEL

- 14.1 The Council Plan and Tees Valley Transport Plan and Local Transport Plan all have objectives to improve transport related safety and promoting healthier travel. The number of people who are killed or seriously injured on our roads is of serious concern and we have a statutory obligation under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to investigate the occurrence of injury related road collisions and implement measures to prevent death and any kind of injury on our roads. We therefore deliver a comprehensive range of road safety education, training and publicity initiatives.
- 14.2 Hartlepool also has a number of objectives aligned to the Tees Valley Transport plans to Reduce Carbon emission and deliver measures to improve local air quality, reduce noise and vibration from transport, protect the Tees Valley built and natural environment, whilst ensuring that the transport network and planned investment is resilient to climate change many of which have been covered in objective 3.
- 14.3 In order to deliver safer healthier travel The Tees Valley Transport Plan intends to improve the Tees Valley cycling and walking networks targeted at corridors identified within our own local plan whilst improving local bus services that link housing sites to key destinations and transport interchanges for onward travel journeys. Locally this is achieved by writing and implementing travel plans to encourage the use of greener more sustainable modes of transport and low carbon vehicles. Through such platforms we can influence other people's travel choice and behaviour to minimise the impact on the environment.
- 14.4 Department of Transport Strategy recognises the benefits of walking and cycling and through local transport plans seeks to increase use. The Dept. for Transport, cycling and walking investment strategy safety review (2018) recognise the benefits of both activities and the positive transport outcomes and wider environmental and public health goals.

- 14.5 **Health** – Physical inactivity costs the NHS up to £1bn per annum and further indirect costs calculated at £8.2bn.
- 14.6 **Wellbeing** – 20 minutes of exercise per day cuts the risk of developing depression by 31% and increase the productivity of workers.
- 14.7 **Air Quality** – meeting the targets to double cycling and increased walking would lead to savings of £567m annually from air quality alone and prevent 8,300 premature deaths per year.
- 14.8 **Climate change** – Mode shift to activate transport is one of the most cost effective ways of reducing transport emissions.
- 14.9 **Economy** – Cycling contributes £5.4bn to the economy per year and supports 64K jobs.
- 14.10 **Local businesses** – up to 40% increase in shopping footfall by well planned improvements in the walking environment.
- 14.11 Consequently, our own local planning and transport plans are reflective of measures to support and encourage cycling and walking use whilst prioritising walking and cycling travel for short local travel journeys particularly those of 5 miles or less.
- 14.12 **Policy 19 – Safer, healthier travel**

In order to achieve our healthier travel objectives, we aim to:

- a) Reduce the demand for travel – encouraging people to think about the trips they make and discourage them from making unnecessary trips.*
- b) Promote “smarter choice” through the travel planning process.*
- c) Promote the use of energy efficient vehicles – personal electric vehicles will be promoted in conjunction with*

improved infrastructure by providing additional electric vehicle charge points and parking spaces as well as working with bus operators to achieve a high quality bus network which includes the provision of new, low emission passenger vehicles.

d) Review the energy efficiency of our own fleet of vehicles and make sure that all travel plans are giving the best opportunity to deliver effectively.

e) To improve health we will promote active travel and smarter choices and we can do this through potential health related outcomes include improving cycling and walking networks to offer greater choice for shorter stay journeys.

15 OBJECTIVE 7 – IMPROVE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY THROUGH ACCESS TO SERVICES

15.1 Good transport links are a vital element of building local communities as well as contributing to community cohesion, safer communities, healthier people, improved equality and social inclusion and environmental and economic objectives. The ability to access employment and education should not be determined by where you live, your income or physical ability.

15.2 **The Hartlepool Plan** has six key objectives supporting such goals:

- a) Supporting healthy and independent lives
- b) Keeping people staff
- c) Strong communities with opportunities for all
- d) A green and healthy place to live
- e) A great economy that supports business and good jobs
- f) A council that supports Hartlepool

15.3 In terms of how this impacts direct with transport and travel, the HBC local transport plan influences equality of opportunity in the following ways:

- a) Improving accessibility to basic services such as education, healthcare, employment and leisure facilities for certain groups in society to ensure they are not disadvantaged and
- b) Improving affordability of transport to ensure certain groups are not disadvantaged.

15.4 Access to services often depends upon the transport networks in their local area, where they need to go and the time the journey

takes. Choice of travel is then determined by constraints such as travel alternatives, local transport, private car, taxi, cycling or walking but other factors such as infrastructure, cost and frequency of service become factors of consideration.

- 15.5 The local transport plan recognises that 24.4% of households have no car usage and are therefore limited in choice of alternative transport modes. The frequency of local bus services can cause issues for residents in rural areas with limited / restricted or intermittent footpaths / poor cycling facilities which can deter choice.
- 15.6 People with long term limiting illnesses or disability are also more likely to experience accessibility difficulties than other sections of the population.
- 15.7 Regionally the Tees Valley Integrated Transport Programme seeks to develop and maintain a transport system where road and rail networks have appropriate capacity for passenger and freight movement and has objectives of delivering and maintaining a frequent, high quality reliable and integrated public transport network. Locally this is achieved in collaboration with local bus and rail operators and by developing cycling and walking networks to offer more transport mode choice to residents and discourage the dependency on motorised vehicles.
- 15.8 HBC are also investigating the possibilities of developing community transport particularly where bus links are not commercially viable. Taxis have an important role to play as their presence in Hartlepool is wide ranging and affordable due to the high level of competition between various taxi operators. Taxis afford people direct door to door travel but they can also integrate into the public transport network and provide longer distance connectivity. There is however further scope to investigate and assist taxi operators improve their “green credentials”.

- 15.9 HBC will also improve local connectivity by improving walking and cycling facilities to serve to encourage walking and cycling as a leisure activity, which promotes good health and economic growth. A quality infrastructure for walkers and cyclists will provide benefits for all but particularly those with mobility and sensory impairment.
- 15.10 Transport has a supporting role with improving quality of life. Providing access to services such as employment and shopping can often be taken for granted but some people have poor access to location or personal circumstances. Poor access to leisure and social activities can have a negative impact on people's physical and mental health and contribute to feelings of isolation.
- 15.11 **Policy 20 - Connectivity and access to services**
Improve connectivity with our neighbours, providing access to nearby authorities and better links regionally will feed into the quality of life objectives as residents will not feel as isolated and limited by the opportunities available to them.

16. **POLICY SUMMARY**

16.1 **POLICY 1 – Determining future levels of parking stock.**

Ensure that the overall supply and location of long and short stay parking is sufficient to meet the needs of shoppers and visitors and those drivers who need to commute or visit attractions and facilities.

16.2 **POLICY 2 – Pricing**

- a) Retain the differential charges for long and short stay parking areas.
- b) Review charges annually, having regard to occupancy levels, charges levied in competing centres and the transport context.
- c) Support additional parking promotions aimed at supporting the local economy

16.3 **POLICY 3 - PARKING STANDARDS**

- a) Ensure that parking standards for new developments and amendments/ alterations to existing developments comply with necessary government advice, and adopted local policy.
- b) Ensure those with impaired physical disabilities and hidden illnesses have access to convenient designated disabled parking spaces close to the facilities.
- c) Ensure that the provision of larger designated disabled parking bays with improved access continues to be within the required guidance and parking standards.

16.4 **Policy 4 – Enforcement**

The Council will continue to manage the Traffic Network to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic whilst meeting and reconciling the competing demands for road space with the use of Traffic Regulation Orders and the enforcement of legislation to comply with our statutory duty.

16.5 Policy 5 – Carbon emissions / electric vehicles

- a) Supporting transport systems that do not exacerbate climate change and promoting active travel and targeted programmes of smarter choices by workplace and school travel planning. The council will continue to recognise the importance of tackling climate change and will support measures to work with partners to secure local and global actions to tackle it.
- b) Will continue to support energy policies to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and support cleaner transport initiatives.
- c) Will continue to improve electric vehicle infrastructure by increasing the number of EV charging stations reflective of increasing demand.
- d) Will promote alternative transport modes to reduce the dependence on motorised car journeys.

16.6 Policy 6 - Improve availability and quality of parking for all users

The Council will continue to improve the provision of convenient parking for those with physical disabilities, motor cyclists and cyclists both within public car parks and on street.

16.7 Policy 7 - Lorry and coach parking

The council will continue to develop and assess lorry, coach and motor home parking provision, working in conjunction with existing privately managed sites, whilst assessing future needs and requirement demands.

16.8 Policy 8 - Future Lorry and coach parking

The council will investigate opportunities to improve the provision for coach and lorry parking facilities and will work with developers to achieve this where necessary.

16.9 Policy 9 - Motor homes

The council will investigate opportunities to develop parking sites to accommodate motor homes and consider options to provide facilities to encourage visits and overnight stays for motor home owners.

16.10 Policy 10 - Residents parking schemes

a) The need for new RPZ's (as a result of a development) will be identified during the planning process and appropriate conditions applied to the development.

b) Consideration will be given to include established location if problems with parking demands emerge, where a workable RPZ can be designed to alleviate and prioritise parking demand and where there is majority residential support for such a scheme.

16.11 Policy 11 – Managing the highway network

To continue to maintain the public highway in accordance with the published inspection, maintenance and planned investment programme, in accordance with best value and risk assessment whilst ensuring the authority continues to meet its statutory responsibilities and aspirations.

16.12 Policy 12 - Managing the parking asset

To inspect and maintain car parks to highway standards as part of the Transport Asset Management plan with appropriate levels of funding and to seek to improve the quality of Hartlepool's Car Parks by carrying out a programme of improvements to meet customer needs.

16.13 **Policy 13 – Rural parking**

Parking restrictions in rural areas will be reviewed with the traditional character of villages being considered where possible.

16.14 **Policy 14 – Verge hardening**

Verge hardening requests will be considered based on the individual circumstances of each scheme.

16.15 **Policy 15 – Events**

The parking implications of organised events will be considered through the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) and will require organisers to fund traffic management to mitigate against parking problems associated with the event.

16.16 **Policy 16 – New technology**

HBC will continue to review available technology and invest in such technology where appropriate, to assist in the effectiveness and efficient management and enforcement of parking within the Borough.

16.17 **Policy 17 – School gate parking and footpath obstruction**

- a) New schools will be designed to give priority to the principles of sustainable travel.
- b) Appropriate parking controls will be introduced and enforced outside schools to address road safety concerns and promote sustainable travel.
- c) Civil Enforcement Officers to work in conjunction with Police to ensure appropriate enforcement of footpath obstruction issues depending on appropriate jurisdiction.

16.18 Policy 18 – Parking controls and restrictions

The Council will review existing parking restrictions and the need to introduce new restrictions where necessary, in order to meet the objectives and priorities of relevant traffic and transport plans.

16.19 Policy 19 – Safer, healthier travel

In order to achieve our healthier travel objectives, we aim to:

- a) Reduce the demand for travel – encouraging people to think about the trips they make and discourage them from making unnecessary trips.
- b) Promote “smarter choice” through the travel planning process.
- c) Promote the use of energy efficient vehicles – personal electric vehicles will be promoted in conjunction with improved infrastructure by providing additional electric vehicle charge points and parking spaces as well as working with bus operators to achieve a high quality bus network which includes the provision of new, low emission passenger vehicles.
- d) Review the energy efficiency of our own fleet of vehicles and make sure that all travel plans are giving the best opportunity to deliver effectively.
- e) To improve health we will promote active travel and smarter choices and we can do this through potential health related outcomes include improving cycling and walking networks to offer greater choice for shorter stay journeys.

16.20 Policy 20 - Connectivity and access to services

Improve connectivity with our neighbours, providing access to nearby authorities and better links regionally will feed into the quality of life objectives as residents will not feel as isolated and limited by the opportunities available to them.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S
Appendix A	Total	Short	Long	Disabled	Contract	Coach	Extended	Electric	Motorcycle	Secure	Park	Height	Opening	Closure		Restriction	Pay & Display	Enforcement
	spaces	Stay	stay	spaces	permit	Parking	bays	Charging	spaces	cycle	Mark	limit	times	times	Locked		tarrif charge	times
	bays	bays	bays		bays	bays		Bays		lockers	Award							
Off Street Car Parks																		
Multi Storey Car Park	454	219	231	4	0			0			✓	2.1M	7:30am	6:30pm	✓	P&D	A(short)J(long)	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Basement Car Park	123	112		9	0			1	1		✓	1.9M	7:45am	6:15pm	✓	P&D	A	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Waldon Street Car Park	281	251		15	15			0			✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	A	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Roker Street Car Park	131	96		4	30			0	1		✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	C	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
West Side Car Park	153	137		12	0			0	4		✓	2.1M	n/a	n/a		P&D	A	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Open Market Car Park	41	39		2	0			0			✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	A	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Eastside Car Park	150	138		10	1			0	1		✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	A	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Eden Street Car Park	119		36	2	81			0			✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	G	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Transport Interchange	151		138	7	3			2	1		✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	K	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Mill House Car Park	148	100	45	3				0			✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	D(short)G(long)	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Dover Street Car Park	107		38	1	67			0	1		✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	F	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Andrew Street Car Park	13	11	0	0	2			0			✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	F	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Murray Street Car Park	19	16		3				0			✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	H	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Park Road Car Park	22	14		8				0			✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	A	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Victoria Road Car Park	53	45		8				0			✓		n/a	n/a		P&D	L	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Coronation Drive CP, Seaton	66		60	6							✓					P&D	M	Mon-Sun-8:00-18:00
Rocket House CP, Seaton	82		78	4							✓					P&D	M	Mon-Sun-8:00-18:00
Sea View CP, Seaton	607		576	18	4	5	4			6	✓		Dawn	Dusk	✓	P&D	M	Mon-Sun-8:00-18:00
	2720	1178	1202	116	203	5	4	3	9	6								
Colwyn Road	5	2		1					2									
Middlegate, Headland	43			5	38											None		Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Oulton Manor Shops	31			1	30											None		Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
King Oswy Drive Shops	20				20											None		Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Archer Street	6				6											None		Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Newburn Bridge	20															None		Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Station Lane CP, Seaton	54	52			2											Limited stay		Mon-Sun-8:00-18:00
	179	54		7	96				2									
Off Street Totals	2899	1232	1202	123	299	5	4	3	11	6								

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S
Appendix A																		
On Street Pay and Display																		
Tower Street	36		36	0				0									G	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Back York Road	26	26	26	0				0	0	0	✓						A	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Gainford Street	26	24		2				0		0	✓						C	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Whitby St	21	21		0				0	0	0							B	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
The Front, Seaton	100	100		0				0	2	0							M	Mon-Sun-8:00-18:00
	136	100	36	0	0			0	2	0								
On Street Totals	136	100	36	0	0	0	0	0	2	0								
HBC Staff Car Parks																		
Civic Underground	80			2				1	0		✓							Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Grand Hotel	47										✓							Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Lauder Street	31										✓							Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Titan House	57																	Mon-Sat-8:00-18:00
Multi level 4	80																	
	295	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0									

APPENDIX B – RESIDENTIAL PARKING ZONES

Zone A	Alderson Street Carlton Street Clifton Avenue Dalton Street Eltringham Avenue Hutton Avenue Johnson Street Landsdowne Road Lindon Grove Mitchell Street Osborne Road (1-6) St Pauls Road Stanhope Avenue Stotfold Street Thornton Street	Zone B	Avenue Road Errol Street Lowthian Road (1-19a, 2-18) Wharton Street
Zone C	Alma Street Barbara Mann Court Brook Street Christopher Street Collingwood Road Collingwood Walk Dent Street Derwent Street Elliott Street Grange Road Grosvenor Gardens Grosvenor Street Hart Lane Hartley Close Laburnum Street Lowthian Road (20-34,21-51) Milton Road Morton Street Sandringham Road Sheriff Street Straker Street Tankerville Road Thornville Road Young Street	Zone D	Flaxton Court Flaxton Street Lister Street (37-96) Osborne Road (6-99) Windsor Street
Zone E	Bathgate Terrace Elwick Road Holt Street Houghton Street Kilwick Street Lister Street (2-35) Back of Lister Street Stockton Road Vicarage Gardens Waldon Street	Zone F	Rium Terrace

Whitburn Street

Zone G Burbank Street
 Empire Square
 Huckelhoven Way (10-24 even)
 Lynn Street
 Musgrave Walk
 Newhaven Court
 Surtees Street
 Tower Street
 Whitby Grove
 Whitby Street
 Whitby Walk/St Abbs Walk
 William Street

Zone I Colwyn Road
 Penrhyn Street

Zone K The Parade

Zone M St David's Walk
 Throston Grange Lane

Zone P Darlington Street

Zone H Addison Road
 Belk Street
 Cameron Road
 Furness Street
 Greenwood Road
 Henderson Grove
 Lansbury Grove
 Lynnfield Road
 Milner Grove

Zone J Bolton Grove
 Church Street
 Crawford Street
 Deacon Gardens
 East View Terrace
 Elizabeth Way
 Green Terrace
 Lawson Road
 North Road
 Queen Terrace
 Rectory Way
 Ruswarp Grove
 Station Lane
 The Cliff
 The Front
 The Green
 Victoria Street

Zone L Holdforth Road
 Howbeck Lane
 Warren close
 Warren Road

Zone N Victoria Terrace

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th June 2022



Report of: Assistant Director (Place Management)

Subject: REVIEW OF POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Decision (test (ii)) Forward Plan Reference No NRS05/22.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 On the 13th December 2021 Finance and Policy Committee agreed a set of measures which were agreed at Council on the 16th December 2021 to help enable the Council to meet their savings targets for the following financial year.

2.2 As part of these targets, it was agreed that Post 16 Special Education Needs Transport would cease from September 2022 for new applicants. This report sets out the considerations for the revised Policy following this decision.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 There is a statutory duty on local Authorities to provide travel assistance to students attending education up to the age of 11, if they meet the eligibility criteria. There is no entitlement to travel assistance once students leave compulsory education at the age of 16.

3.2 At present the Council provide free home to school travel assistance to students aged 16-19 who have a special education need. This is to a range of venues both within the Borough and across the North East.

3.3 In December 2021 Full Council agreed that Post 16 Special Education Needs Transport would cease from the beginning of the Academic year September 2022 for new applicants. Those currently accessing transport will continue to do so until the end of their current course.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Post 16 Transport Policy (see **Appendix 1**) requires updating to reflect the service provision.
- 4.2 That a range of discretionary factors be considered to provide some form of assistance to those who would never be able to travel without some level of support.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Young people aged 16-19 with an Education Health and Care Plan are assessed under the 16-19 duty and therefore have no automatic entitlement to travel assistance. However, Local authorities are expected to make reasonable transport decisions about what transport arrangements and support should be available based on the needs of their population, local transport infrastructure and the resources they have available.
- 5.2 Local Authorities must have regard to the statutory guidance in relation to students accessing post 16 education and their Post-16 Transport Policy statement must include specific arrangements for these young people to ensure they have the necessary support.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The decision to cease the provision of Post 16 Special Education Needs Travel assistance has already been made. This report is to update the policy to reflect this.
- 6.2 The provision of Post 16 SEND Transport will remain in place for those currently accessing the service until their current course is ended. Therefore the projected savings will be staggered over the next few years.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 In January 2019 statutory guidance was issued by the Department for Education on Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training. When setting out their Post-16 Transport Policies, Local Authorities must have regard to this guidance.
- 7.2 Case law states under sections 509AA and 509AB of the Education Act 1996 there is no absolute obligation on local authorities to provide transport, even as regards children with special educational needs. It is clear however, in particular from section 509AB(3), that the authority's policy is intended to have regard to a range of discretionary factors, including in particular, the reasonable practicability of the child receiving education if no arrangements were made and the cost of the provision of transport.

- 7.3 The policy contains a range of discretionary factors to provide some form of assistance to those who would never be able to travel without some level of support.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Post-16 Education establishments have been made aware of the change in Policy from September 2022.

- 8.2 Parents/carers of young people with and Education, Health and Care Plans who are leaving compulsory education in the summer of 2022 will be made aware of the change in Policy.

9. CHILD/FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS – (see Appendix 2)

- 9.1 Some young people aged 16-19 with special education needs may not have the capacity or ability to plan, fund or make a journey independently.
- 9.2 Some students with special education needs may require a travel companion.
- 9.3 Some families or lone parents may not have the funds to procure suitable transport.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS – (see Appendix 3)

- 10.1 Age and Disability – some young people aged 16-19 with a special education need may not be able to organise and fund their own travel and transport.

11. ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations.

12. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 All of the current routes operating to Post-16 established are provided by external operators via the Home to School transport contract. Routes will naturally cease under the contract conditions.
- 12.2 At present there are 2 part-time passenger assistants employed in the provision of Post-16 SEND transport and both of these staff will be deployed to other home to school transport routes.

13 ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 There are no assessment management considerations.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 That Neighbourhood Services Committee approve the revised Post-16 Transport Policy to reflect the decision of Full Council to cease Post-16 travel.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 To meet ensure the policy is up to date with the service provision.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 None

17. CONTACT OFFICER

Kieran Bostock
Assistant Director (Place Management)
Civic Centre
Hartlepool Borough Council
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429)284291
E-mail: kieran.bostock@hartlepool.gov.uk

Jayne Brown
Passenger Transport Services Team Leader

Tel: (01429) 523526
Email: Jayne.brown@hartlepool.gov.uk

Sign Off:-

- Director of Resources and Development
- Chief Solicitor/Monitoring Officer



HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL – CHILD AND ADULT SERVICES POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY STATEMENT 2022/2023



1. Introduction

This document describes the Post 16 policy which provides a starting point for students in order for them to be able to establish if they are entitled to travel assistance and how and where to access the support if available.

2. Sixth Form/Further Education Students

Financial concessions or other support may be available to students attending school sixth forms (years 12 and 13) and Colleges of Further Education from their respective Educational establishments. Section 5 details the support provided by some Colleges and provides contact details to enable you to discuss your needs further.

3. Concessionary Travel

Where spare seats are available on home to school buses, these can be sold to students who are not entitled to free transport, this is called concessionary travel. The cost for each seat will be charged over a term. For further details of the concessionary travel scheme, including bus routes available and how to apply, please contact Passenger Transport Services on 01429 523855 or at passengers@hartlepool.gov.uk

4. Transport arrangement for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

There is no automatic entitlement to free home to school or college transport once a student is over compulsory school age. Compulsory school age ceases on the last Friday in June in the school year in which a child reaches the age of 16. This is usually at the end of Year 11. Responsibility for making appropriate transport arrangements rests with a student and/or their parents/carers

Young people who have a learning or physical disability may be entitled to an English National Concessionary Travel Pass that allows them to travel free of charge after 09:30 or for a flat fare of £0.30 pence before 09:30, on Public bus services. Details of bus services and other ticketing options are detailed later in this policy.

The Authority have the discretion to consider referrals for travel assistance in exceptional circumstances, any such cases should be made via the Authorities Special Education Needs and Disability Team (SEND)

Any SEND requests need to be directed to the **0 – 25 Commissioning Team, Child & Adult Services, Civic Centre**.

Assessment for inclusion in the **Independent Travel Training scheme (ITT)** is also available to all SEND students. This is a scheme aimed at providing training on journey planning and travel options to enable young people to travel independently to their place of education. For further information on the ITT scheme, please contact Passenger Transport Services on 01429 523855

5. Educational Establishment Contact Information and Travel Support

College	Contact Details	Travel Support
Hartlepool Area		
Hartlepool College of Further Education, Stockton Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7NT	Tel: 01429 295000 Web: https://www.hartlepoolfe.ac.uk/	Learners whose household income is below £25,000 (including all tax credits) and who live 2.5 miles or more from Hartlepool College of Further Education are entitled to free travel support to cover the cost of the cheapest, suitable public transport method. This will either be a termly bus pass (where available) or money paid into the student's bank account. Learners with limited mobility may be entitled to apply for further assistance. More information is available from Student Support Team. https://www.hartlepoolfe.ac.uk/student-support/getting-blue
Dyke House Sports & Technology College, Mapleton Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8NQ	Tel: 01429 266377 Web: https://dha.northerneducationtrust.org/ Email: dykehouse.enquiries@northerneducationtrust.org Andrea Thompson Business Manager Dyke House Academy a.thompson1@northerneducationtrust.org	The College provide free travel on designated school transport for students resident in Hartlepool – for further details contact Andrea Thompson, Business Manager
The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College, Catcote Road, Hartlepool, TS25 4HA	Tel: 01429 273790 Web: https://ems.bhcet.org.uk/ Email: admin@ems.bhcet.org.uk	Contact the College for details

Hartlepool Sixth Form College, Blakelock Road, Hartlepool, TS25 5PF	<p>Tel: 01429 294444</p> <p>Web: https://www.hartlepoolsixth.ac.uk/</p> <p>Email: info@hartlepoolsixth.ac.uk</p>	Contact the College for details
The Northern School of Art, Church Square, Hartlepool, TS24 7EX	<p>Tel: 01429 422000</p> <p>Web: www.northernart.ac.uk</p> <p>Email: studentrecruitment@northernart.ac.uk</p>	Contact the School for details
Catcote Academy, Catcote Road, Hartlepool, TS25 4EZ	<p>Tel: 01429 264036</p> <p>Web: www.catcoteacademy.co.uk</p> <p>Email: admin@catcote.co.uk</p>	Contact the Academy for details
Durham Area		
East Durham College, Peterlee Campus, Willerby Grove, Peterlee, SR8 2RN	<p>Tel: 0191 5182000</p> <p>Web: www.eastdurham.ac.uk</p> <p>Email: enquiries@eastdurham.ac.uk</p>	<p>To try and make life just that little bit easier for you, East Durham College offers FREE bus travel to college to ALL students. We've teamed up with Arriva North East to offer you free bus travel to get you to and from college. All you need to do is simply show your college ID badge to the Arriva driver when you get on the bus.</p> <p>Your free travel is available to use on any Arriva bus during term-time, Monday to Friday.</p> <p>This offer is available to all East Durham College students, studying courses at any of our three campus sites, regardless of age or household income</p> <p>For further information click https://www.eastdurham.ac.uk/free_bus_service https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/</p>
East Durham College, Houghall Campus, Durham, County Durham, DH1 3SG	<p>Tel: 0191 3754700</p> <p>Web: www.eastdurham.ac.uk</p>	<p>As above</p> <p>https://www.eastdurham.ac.uk/free_bus_service</p>

	<p>Email: enquiries@eastdurham.ac.uk</p>	https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/
<p>Bishop Auckland College, Woodhouse Lane, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 6JZ</p>	<p>Tel: 01388 443000</p> <p>Web: https://bacoll.ac.uk/</p> <p>Email: start@bacoll.ac.uk</p>	<p>Students studying at Bishop Auckland College and South West Durham Training will be able to travel for free on all Arriva North East services in order to make their journey to and from campus as simple as possible.</p> <p>Simply show your Campus ID card to the driver then sit back, relax and enjoy the journey. They offer a comprehensive network of services within County Durham, along with some dedicated college day only services and journeys designed to ensure as many students as possible can benefit.</p> <p>https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/school-travel/bishop-auckland-college-bus-travel</p>
<p>Derwentside College, Front Street, Consett, County Durham, DH8 5EE</p>	<p>Tel: 01207 585900.</p> <p>Web: https://www.derwentside.ac.uk/</p> <p>Email: enquiries@derwentside.ac.uk</p>	<p>All full time 16-18 learners are eligible for free travel regardless of personal circumstances. 16-18 learners receive a bus pass, allowing FREE travel to and from College during term time. Learners using their own transport receive a mileage allowance. 19+ learners who meet the required eligibility criteria receive a reimbursement of evidenced public transport costs of a mileage allowance.</p>
<p>New College Durham, Framwellgate Moor Campus, Durham, DH1 5ES</p>	<p>Tel: 0191 375 4000</p> <p>Web: https://www.newcollegedurham.ac.uk/</p> <p>Email: access.fund@newdur.ac.uk</p>	<p>Contact the College direct for details</p> <p>https://www.newcollegedurham.ac.uk/full-time-further-education/studying-further-education/rewards/flex-and-travel/</p>
<p>Durham Community Business College, Bracken Court, Ushaw Moor, Durham, DH7 7NG</p>	<p>Tel 0191 3730336</p> <p>Web: https://www.durhamfederation.net/</p> <p>Email: contact@durhamfederation.net</p>	<p>Contact the College for details</p>

Middlesbrough Area		
Middlesbrough College, Dock Street, Middlesbrough, TS2 1AD	Tel: 01642 333333 Web: https://www.mbro.ac.uk/	Contact the College direct for details. https://www.mbro.ac.uk/student-services/travelling-to-college
Macmillan Academy, Stockton Road, Middlesbrough, TS5 4AG	Tel 01642 800800 Web: http://www.macmillan-academy.org.uk/ Email: office@macademy.org.uk	Contact the Academy for details Macmillan Academy Post 16 Travelling
Darlington Area		
Darlington College, Central Park, Haughton Road, Darlington, DL1 1DR	Tel: 01325 503050 Web: https://darlington.ac.uk/ Email: enquiryline@darlington.ac.uk	Contact the College for details.
Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Vane Terrace, Darlington, County Durham, DL3 7AU	Tel 01325 461315 Web: www.geliz.ac.uk General Email: enquiry@geliz.ac.uk Transport Email: transport@geliz.ac.uk	Details regarding college transport and financial support for students can be found on the College's website https://www.geliz.ac.uk/life-at-qe/transport-financial-support/ For further information about college transport please email transport@geliz.ac.uk
Redcar & Cleveland Area		
Prior Pursglove College, Church Walk, Guisborough, TS14 6BU	Tel:01287 280800 Web: https://pursglove.ac.uk/	For information on financial support, please contact our main reception on 01287 280800 https://pursglove.ac.uk/16-19-students/student-support/financial-support/
Redcar & Cleveland College, Corporation Road, Redcar, TS10 1EZ	Tel: 01642 473132 Web: https://www.cleveland.ac.uk/home Email: info@cleveland.ac.uk	Free Travel Redcar & Cleveland College provide all our full-time students aged 16-18 with a FREE Arriva bus pass. Students can enjoy the benefit of free travel 24/7 during term time including weekends. In addition to this students can use the bus pass Monday-Friday during college holidays. The areas covered by the pass include

		<p>Redcar, East Cleveland, Stockton-On-Tees, Middlesbrough and Whitby. Students living outside of these areas will be provided with an enhanced bus pass covering their home location area as well as the Teesside and East Cleveland region.</p> <p>Passes are issued in-line with enrolment criteria and remain the property of the College throughout your time at Redcar & Cleveland College.</p> <p>For students who are over the age of 19 who are struggling to afford their transport to college, we may be able to support you with a bus pass or a travel allowance. This funding is means tested and students are encouraged to apply at the beginning of the academic year as the allocation is limited.</p>
Stockton Area		
<p>Stockton Riverside College, Harvard Avenue, Stockton on Tees, TS17 6FB</p>	<p>Tel:01642 865400</p> <p>Web: https://www.stockton.ac.uk/</p> <p>Email: info@stockton.ac.uk</p>	<p>Contact the college for details</p>
<p>Stockton Sixth Form College, Bishopton Road West, Stockton on Tees, TS19 0QD</p>	<p>Tel: 01642 612611</p> <p>Web: https://www.stocktonsfc.ac.uk/</p> <p>Email: info@stocktonsfc.ac.uk</p>	<p>The college provides free return transport for students living in Wynyard, Billingham, Norton, Eaglescliffe, Yarm, Ingleby Barwick, Thornaby and Acklam areas.</p> <p>http://www.stocktonsfc.ac.uk/about-us/getting-here/</p>

6. Not in Education, Employment or Training

The Tees Valley Pathways and Routeways Programmes form part of the Youth Employment Initiative.

If you are aged 15 to 29 years old and either unemployed or not in education, employment or training (NEET) they can help you by providing: -

- A range of innovative and interesting activities, courses and opportunities to support you into work, education or further training;
- Programmes using sport, creative arts, culture and outdoor activities to improve your communication and personal skills;
- Activities to build your confidence and improve your employability skills using both enterprise and self-employment;
- A dedicated careers advisor who will provide you with personalised one to one support and independent advice and guidance;
- Support through a Flexible Fund which may be able to pay for items such as travel expenses, clothing, equipment, tools and specialist training;
- Routeways in partnership with employers into growth sectors such as Health & Social Care, Construction, Digital and Advanced Manufacturing.

You can contact them by calling [01429 857080](tel:01429 857080) or emailing YEI@hartlepool.gov.uk.

Details of all local bus operators, Transport Information Providers and ticketing options can be found in the following sections

7. Operator Contact Details

Stagecoach in Hartlepool 8, Market Place, HARTLEPOOL, TS24 7SB Telephone: 01429 267082, or 0191 5660231 Website: www.stagecoachbus.com/hartlepool	Stagecoach on Teesside Church Road, Stockton on Tees, TS18 2HW Telephone: 01642 636307, or 0191 5660231 Website: www.stagecoachbus.com
Arriva Boathouse Lane, STOCKTON-ON-TEES, TS18 3AW Telephone: 0344 800 44 11 (Customer Services) Website: www.arrivabus.co.uk	Dales & District Procters Coaches, Tutin Road, Leeming Bar Industrial Estate, Leeming Bar, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 9UJ Telephone: 01677 425203 Website: www.procterscoaches.com
Go NorthEast Go North East Customer Services Team, Freepost NT2674, Gateshead, NE8 1BR Telephone : 0191 4205050 Website: www.gonortheast.co.uk	Scarlet Band Bus & Coach Welfare Garage, Station Road, West Cornforth, Ferryhill, County Durham, DL17 9LA Telephone: 01740 654247 Website: www.scarletbandbuses.co.uk

Compass Royston Bowesfield Industrial Estate, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 3EG Telephone: 01642 606644 Website: https://www.compassroyston.com/	Pauls Travel 32 Bilsdale Road, Hartlepool, TS25 2AQ Telephone: 01429 236360
---	--

Tees Valley Connect – One stop shop for travel information in the Tees Valley

 Website: www.connectteesvalley.com
Traveline – National Public Transport information service

 Telephone: 0871 200 22 33 Website: www.traveline.info

Nextbuses - NextBuses is a service provided by Traveline. It is designed to work on mobile phones that have internet connection. To use the service, simply type the bus stop code (The bus stop code may be displayed on the bus stop flag or in the timetable case) as a text message in your mobile phone - and send it to **84268**

8. Public Transport Ticketing Information

The following tickets are:

- Valid for **ONE DAY**
- Can be used for travel **WITHIN** the Tees Valley
- Can be used on **MORE THAN ONE** operator

EXPLORER NORTH EAST

OPERATORS: Arriva, Go North East, Shields Ferry, Stagecoach, Travelsure, Tyne & Wear Metro

COVERAGE: This ticket allows **UNLIMITED** travel throughout the North East.

RESTRICTIONS: Not valid on Trains (except Sunderland to Blaydon rail line), National Express Coaches, Pre-booked coach tours, Hadrian's Wall service, Moorbus services and City sightseeing tours.

WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE TICKET: Drivers, bus service apps and Metro ticket machines

	https://networkonetickets.co.uk/tickets/explorer/
PLUSBUS - HARTLEPOOL	<p>OPERATORS: Arriva, Go North East & Stagecoach Grand Central and Northern Rail.</p> <p>COVERAGE: This ticket allows UNLIMITED bus travel within the urban areas of Hartlepool and Seaton Carew.</p> <p>RESTRICTIONS: Tickets can only be purchased in conjunction with rail tickets to and/or from Hartlepool Station. The rail journey must extend beyond the PLUSBUS area. The usual morning peak time, but not fare, restrictions applicable to certain Railcards apply.</p> <p>WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE TICKET: From any rail station ticket office, online from train company websites and some third-party rail ticket retailers and from self-service ticket machines at selected rail stations.</p> <p>http://www.plusbus.info/hartlepool</p>
PLUSBUS – MIDDLESBROUGH AND STOCKTON (TEESSIDE)	<p>OPERATORS: Arriva, Go North East, Stagecoach, Grand Central, Northern Rail & Transpennine Express</p> <p>COVERAGE: This ticket allows UNLIMITED bus travel around the Teesside urban areas.</p> <p>RESTRICTIONS: Tickets can only be purchased in conjunction with rail tickets to and/or from Eaglescliffe, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Thornaby stations. The rail journey must extend beyond the PLUSBUS area. The usual morning peak time, but not fare, restrictions applicable to certain Railcards apply.</p> <p>WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE TICKET: From any rail station ticket office, online from train company websites and some third-party rail ticket retailers and from self-service ticket machines at selected rail stations.</p> <p>http://www.plusbus.info/middlesbrough</p>
TEESSIDE DAYRIDER PLUS	<p>OPERATORS: Stagecoach</p> <p>COVERAGE: These tickets are valid on all Stagecoach buses within the Tees Valley ticket zone.</p> <p>RESTRICTIONS: None</p> <p>WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE TICKET: From the driver or via the Stagecoach Bus app.</p>

	https://www.stagecoachbus.com/regionaltickets/north-east/teesside/dayrider
<p>The following tickets are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEEKLY, MONTHLY OR ANNUAL • Can be used for travel WITHIN the Tees Valley • Can ONLY be used on ONE operator 	
DARLINGTON TOWN	<p>OPERATORS: Arriva</p> <p>COVERAGE: This ticket allows UNLIMITED travel within Darlington town area.</p> <p>RESTRICTIONS: None</p> <p>WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE TICKET: From the drivers, on the website or using the Arriva app.</p> <p>https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/north-east</p>
REDCAR	<p>OPERATORS: Arriva</p> <p>COVERAGE: This ticket allows UNLIMITED travel within Redcar as far as Dormanstown, Marske and New Marske.</p> <p>RESTRICTIONS: None</p> <p>WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE TICKET: From the drivers, on the website or using the Arriva app.</p> <p>https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/north-east</p>
TEESSIDE	<p>OPERATORS: Arriva</p> <p>COVERAGE: This ticket allows UNLIMITED travel within the boroughs of Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees, and in the Eston area and Bishopston.</p> <p>RESTRICTIONS: Not valid on services X60, X61 or Moorsbus</p> <p>WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE TICKET: From the drivers, on the website or using the Arriva app.</p> <p>https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/north-east</p>

<p>The following tickets are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEEKLY, MONTHLY OR ANNUAL • Can be used for travel WITHIN the Tees Valley • Can ONLY be used on ONE operator 	
<p>TEES VALLEY</p>	<p>OPERATORS: Arriva</p> <p>COVERAGE: This ticket allows UNLIMITED travel within the Tees Valley area.</p> <p>RESTRICTIONS: Not valid on services X60, X61 or Moorsbus</p> <p>WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE TICKET: From the drivers, on the website or using the Arriva app.</p> <p>https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/north-east</p>
<p>MEGARIDER PLUS</p>	<p>OPERATORS: Stagecoach</p> <p>COVERAGE: This ticket allows UNLIMITED travel within Hartlepool and Tees Valley.</p> <p>RESTRICTIONS: None</p> <p>WHERE CAN YOU BUY THE TICKET: Drivers (7 days only) or via the Stagecoach Bus app.</p> <p>https://www.stagecoachbus.com/regionaltickets/north-east/hartlepool/megarider</p>

9. Complaints Process (HBC Applications Only)

If you are dissatisfied with the decision not to be granted assistance, you have the right to raise a complaint about that decision.

This is the procedure that must be followed by any person who wishes raise a complaint:

- Write to the Passenger Transport Services Team Leader, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Department, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool TS24 8AY, stating the grounds of your complaint and provide any other supporting evidence.
- Receipt of your complaint will be acknowledged within 14 days.
- The Panel meets as and when required.
- The Panel is made up of independent members.
- The Panel's decision on whether complaint has been successful will be sent to you as soon as is practically possible after the meeting.
- The decision of the Panel is binding on both sides.

You have the right to refer your case to the Local Government Ombudsman if you feel there has been any maladministration, which is failure to comply with procedural rules or irregularities in the way the appeal has been handled.

10. Complaints Process (College Applications Only)

The complaints procedure if applicable will be determined by each College or further education establishment and details will be issued from the student support team.

11. Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman or the Secretary of State

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the Local Authorities review following a complaint, it may be appropriate for you or your family to consider contacting the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) or complaining to the Secretary of State for Education. The LGO is an independent organisation that looks into complaints against Councils. This is a free service and information can be found online at www.lgo.org.uk

To complain to The Secretary of State, you or your family should visit www.gov.uk for further information. Any complaints should outline the case, set out the decision taken by the Local Authority and include any other relevant documentation.

POVERTY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

1. Is this decision a Budget & Policy Framework or Key Decision? YES / <input type="checkbox"/> If YES please answer question 2 below				
2. Will there be an impact of the decision requested in respect of Child and Family Poverty? YES / <input type="checkbox"/> If YES please complete the matrix below				
GROUP	POSITIVE IMPACT	NEGATIVE IMPACT	NO IMPACT	REASON & EVIDENCE
Young working people aged 18 - 21			X	
Those who are disabled or suffer from illness / mental illness		X		Some young people aged 16 – 19 with special education needs may not have the capacity or ability to plan or make a journey independently. They may need to procure suitable transport and require a travel companion
Those with low educational attainment		X		Some young people aged 16 – 19 with special education needs may not have the capacity or ability to plan or make a journey independently. They may need to procure suitable transport and require a travel companion
Those who are unemployed			X	
Those who are underemployed			X	
Children born into families in poverty		X		Some families may not have the funds to procure suitable transport
Those who find difficulty in managing their finances		X		Some families may not have the funds to procure suitable transport
Lone parents		X		Some lone parents may not have the funds to procure suitable transport
Those from minority ethnic backgrounds		X		Some students are refugees and may not have the funds or understanding to procure suitable transport

Poverty is measured in different ways. Will the policy / decision have an impact on child and family poverty and in what way?

Overall impact of Policy / Decision

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services	Place Management	Passenger Transport Services	Jayne Brown
Service, policy, practice being reviewed/changed or planned	Post 16 – Special Education Needs Transport		
Why are you making the change?	<p>On the 13th December 2021 Finance and Policy Committee agreed a set of measures to enable the Council to meet their savings targets for the following financial year.</p> <p>As part of these targets, it was agreed that Post 16 Special Education Needs Transport would cease from September 2022 for new applicants</p>		
How might this impact (positively/negatively) on people who share protected characteristics?			
<i>Please tick</i>		POSITIVELY	NEGATIVELY
Age			X
<i>Young People aged 16 - 19 with a special Educational need will no longer be entitled to free travel assistance to their further education establishment. Those currently accessing services will continue to do so until their current course ceases. New students accessing Post 16 Special Education Needs Education will be required to organise and fund their own travel and transport</i>			
Disability			X
<i>Young People aged 16 - 19 with a special Educational need will no longer be entitled to free travel assistance to their further education establishment. Those currently accessing services will continue to do so until their current course ceases. New students accessing Post 16 Special Education Needs Education will be required to organise and fund their own travel and transport</i>			
Gender Re-assignment			
<i>Please describe...</i>			
Race			
<i>Please describe...</i>			
Religion			
<i>Please describe...</i>			

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Gender		
<i>Please describe...</i>		
Sexual Orientation		
<i>Please describe...</i>		
Marriage & Civil Partnership		
<i>Please describe...</i>		
Pregnancy & Maternity		
<i>Please describe...</i>		
Has there been consultation /is consultation planned with people who will be affected by this policy? How has this affected your decision making?	<p>Education establishments who provide education For post 16 students with Special Education Needs have been made aware Post 16 Education establishments have been made aware of the change in Policy from September 2022</p> <p>Parents/carers of young people with and Education, Health and Care Plans who are leaving compulsory education in the summer of 2022 have been made aware of the change in Policy</p>	
As a result of your decision how can you mitigate negative/maximise positive outcomes and foster good relationships?	<p>The Post 16 Transport Policy provides details of transport and ticketing options within Hartlepool and across the region for young people accessing Post 16 Education</p>	
Describe how you will address and monitor the impact	1. No Impact - No Major Change <i>Please Detail</i>	
	2. Adjust/Change Policy <i>Please Detail</i>	
	3. Adverse Impact but Continue as is	

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

		Please Detail	
		4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal	
		Please Detail	
Initial Assessment	27/05/2022	Reviewed	00/00/00
Completed	00/00/00	Published	00/00/00

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th June 2022



Report of: Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services

Subject: FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICE PLAN
2022/23

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To approve the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2022/23.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Food Standards Agency has a key role in overseeing local authority enforcement activities. They have duties to set and monitor standards of local authorities as well as carry out audits of enforcement activities to ensure that authorities are providing an effective service to protect public health and safety.
- 3.2 On 4th October 2000, the Food Standards Agency issued the document “Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement”. The guidance provides information on how local authority enforcement service plans should be structured and what they should contain. Service Plans developed under this guidance will provide the basis on which local authorities will be monitored and audited by the Food Standards Agency.
- 3.3 The service planning guidance ensures that key areas of enforcement are covered in local service plans, while allowing for the inclusion of locally defined objectives.
- 3.4 The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2022/2023 is available in **Appendix 1** and takes into account the guidance requirements. The Plan details the Service’s priorities for 2022/23 and beyond, where appropriate. It also highlights how these priorities will be addressed.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Service Plan for 2022/23 has been updated to reflect last year's performance and reflect changes in Service demand.
- 4.2 The Plan covers the following:
- (i) Service Aims and Objectives;
 - (ii) The scope and demands on the Food Service;
 - (iii) Service delivery, including intervention programmes, service requests, complaints, advice, liaison and promotion;
 - (iv) Resources, including financial allocation, staff allocation and staff development; and
 - (v) A review of performance for 2021/22.

5. SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES RAISED IN THE PLAN

- 5.1 As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the majority of Public Protection staff were redeployed between 2020 and 2022 to carry out COVID work. This included providing advice to businesses, carrying out COVID enforcement work and undertaking enhanced contact tracing and involvement in outbreak management. This has meant that from the outset of the pandemic, this service has been severely impacted in its ability to deliver the usual obligations in relation to food safety.
- 5.2 During the pandemic proactive official food controls were suspended by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to minimise footfall in certain types of premises and only official controls in high priority areas were permitted. Throughout the pandemic the FSA has issued guidance to local authorities in relation to what businesses they should, and should not, inspect and this has periodically been updated. We have had regard to the guidance and inspected relevant premises. Service delivery and performance during 21/22 is discussed below.
- 5.3 The Council is responsible for 837 food premises within the Borough mostly comprising retailers, manufacturers and caterers. During 21/22 156 new food businesses were registered. All businesses were provided with advice and their inspections prioritised. A large proportion of these businesses had commenced trading from home during the pandemic. The food businesses are predominantly small to medium sized establishments and the majority of these are liable to food hygiene and food standards interventions.
- 5.4 The food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs intervention programmes are risk-based systems that accord with current guidance. The current

premises profiles (as at 1st April 2022) are included in the Service Plan in **Appendix 1**, at page 10.

- 5.5 The intervention programme for 2022/23 comprises scheduled food hygiene and food standards interventions and includes those interventions overdue for inspection. This intervention programme is set out on page 11 of the Service Plan.
- 5.6 In June 2021 The FSA set out its COVID-19 Response – Recovery Plan setting out guidance and advice for local authorities on delivery of official food controls and related activities in the period 1st July 2021 to 2023/24. This has been periodically updated as restrictions have eased. This sets out how Local Authorities are being asked to return to a planned routine inspection, in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice. Local authorities are expected to have regard to the guidance and advice.
- 5.7 The Plan provides a framework for re-starting the delivery system in line with the Food Law Code of Practice for new food establishments and for high-risk and/or non-compliant establishments while providing flexibility for lower risk establishments.
- 5.8 The FSA recognises and acknowledges that local authorities will be starting from different positions in terms of the impact that COVID-19 has had to date, the challenges they will face during the recovery period, and the resources that they have available. Where local authorities are able to, the expectation is that they should move at a faster pace in realigning with the Code of Practice.
- 5.9 There are 2 distinct phases to the Recovery Plan which is to last from 1st July 2021 to 2023/4, and these are detailed in the Service Plan. We will have regard to this guidance and will focus our efforts on those food businesses presenting the highest risk. We are currently on track to meet the plan requirements by 31st March 2023.
- 5.10 The Food Hygiene Rating System (FHRS) scheme was launched by the FSA as a FSA / local authority partnership initiative to help consumers choose where to eat out, or shop for food. It was developed with the aim that it would become the single national scheme for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The profile of Hartlepool's food premises is shown below and also is on page 32 of the Service Plan:

Figure 1: Business profile

Hygiene Rating	No @ 1.4.13	No @ 1.4.14	No @ 1.4.15	No @ 1.4.16	No @ 1.4.17	No @ 1.4.18	No @ 1.4.19	No @ 1.4.20	No @ 1.4.21	No @ 1.4.22
5 'Very Good'	434 (60.9%)	456 (66.7%)	471 (68.3%)	502 (72.2%)	539 (76.9%)	561 (80.6%)	580 (82.9%)	596 (83.9%)	587 (73.2%)	688 (87.3%)
4 'Good'	164 (23.0%)	149 (21.8%)	136 (19.7%)	125 (18.0%)	107 (15.3%)	101 (14.5%)	76 (10.9%)	77 (10.8%)	72 (9%)	64 (8.1%)
3 'Generally Satisfactory'	63 (8.9%)	63 (9.2%)	56 (8.1%)	55 (7.9%)	43 (6.1%)	28 (4.0%)	38 (5.4%)	36 (5.1%)	32 (4%)	35 (4.4%)
2 Improvement Necessary'	22 (3.1%)	9 (1.3%)	18 (2.6%)	8 (1.2%)	10 (1.4%)	4 (0.6%)	3 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.1%)
1 'Major Improvement Necessary')	13 (1.8%)	7 (1.0%)	9 (1.3%)	3 (0.4%)	2 (0.3%)	2 (0.3%)	3 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
0 'Urgent Improvement Necessary'	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
'Awaiting Inspection'	17 (2.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.01%)	111 (13.8%)	0 (0%)
Sub Total	713	684	690	695	701	696	700	710	802	788

'Exempt'	49	45	44	45	42	42	37	39	39	39
'Excluded'	9	10	10	1	1	10	12	2	2	8
Sensitive	32	32	1	8	9	1	1	10	10	2
Total	803	771	745	749	753	749	750	761	853	837

5.11 Year on year the profile has improved with 99.9% of the premises inspected received a hygiene rating of '3' ('generally satisfactory') and above. Due to the limited number of inspections carried out during 20/21 and 21/22 it is impossible to determine the impact of the pandemic at the moment. The FSA have stated that there is anecdotal information suggesting that there has been a general trend of reducing hygiene standards in food establishments since the onset of the pandemic. This has been our experience to date.

5.12 The service is committed to focussing its resources on carrying out interventions at those businesses which are deemed not to be 'broadly compliant' and has continued to liaise with businesses that have been awarded a hygiene rating of '2' or less, offering advice and support. Revisits and enforcement action will be taken to secure compliance where necessary. It is anticipated that a higher level of revisits and enforcement will need to be undertaken than in previous years.

5.13 Under the FHRS there is a procedure which affords food business operators the opportunity to request a re-visit inspection once they have taken action to rectify non-compliances identified during an inspection. In certain circumstances a charge can be levied. At the re-visit the establishment may be re-assessed and given a new hygiene rating.

- 5.14 During 21/22, 9 businesses submitted applications for a re-rating and all demonstrated an improvement in standards and their rating increased following an unannounced inspection.
- 5.15 Service performance during 21/22 is detailed in the Service Plan. Ordinarily our target is to complete 100% of the intervention programme for food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs. These are extremely challenging targets. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was not possible to complete the intervention programme for food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs. The service complied with directions issued by the Food Standards Agency targeting its resources on the highest risk premises. This enabled officers to focus on the COVID-19 response.
- 5.16 There were minimal food hygiene inspections placed upon the Council during 2020-2022 enabling officers to focus their efforts on COVID work and meant that the usual statutory requirements in relation to food hygiene inspections were amended as the year progressed. We successfully completed 252 food hygiene, 202 food standards and 5 feed hygiene interventions. In 2020/21 40 food hygiene interventions, 28 food standards and 5 feed hygiene interventions were completed. This included all unrated premises that were due food hygiene and food standards inspections.
- 5.17 During this time period, the Council responded to complaints in the usual manner. The service dealt with 74 complaints relating to the condition of food premises and/or food handling practice, which was a significant increase on previous years, as for example during 2019/20 27 complaints were received.
- 5.18 In addition, 30 complaints were received regarding unfit or out of condition food or extraneous matter. A further 27 complaints concerning the composition or labelling of food items were received. No complaints were received regarding animal feeding stuffs. Investigations into all complaints were undertaken within our target of 2 working days.
- 5.19 No formal enforcement action was undertaken during 2021/22, however 2 food premises voluntarily closed due to unsatisfactory hygiene conditions as no hot water was available at the time of inspection. It is anticipated that food hygiene standards may have fallen in some food premises during the pandemic so it is possible that enforcement action may be required during 2022/23.
- 5.20 While face to face interventions have been disrupted for much of the pandemic, the team has continued to offer tailored advice and information on request with 20 advisory visits to businesses being carried out during the year. This is approximately a third of the number of advisory visits undertaken in previous years.
- 5.21 Due to the pandemic minimal food sampling was undertaken. Only 8 beverages were sampled from a local manufacturer, however all were found to be satisfactory. Water obtained from a private supply and used for manufacturing purposes was also sampled and all results were satisfactory.

- 5.22 No promotional/campaign work was carried out during 2021/22. It is planned that activities that support the Public Health Agenda will resume in 2022/23 including supporting the Government's Obesity Strategy, raising awareness of new legislation relating to food and drink high in fat, salt or sugar food, allergens and labelling requirements for products which are pre-packed for direct sale.
- 5.23 The response to COVID-19 required officers to lead on work relating to provision of advice, education and ultimately, enforcement, to both businesses and residents. Officers also were heavily involved in contact tracing and outbreak management. This work had a significant impact on service delivery.
- 5.24 We will continue to have regard to the FSA's recovery plan for addressing any backlog of inspections arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and will keep performance under review.
- 5.25 The Public Protection Section continues to face significant financial pressures due to ongoing Council savings and, as such, the need to prioritise service delivery and maximise effectiveness remains paramount. During 2022/23 we will target our resources effectively using a range of interventions, including providing advice to businesses, with the aim of influencing behaviour and improving the management of food safety risks which will have impact on wider public health outcomes. We will continue to explore how we can contribute to Public Health outcomes and source funding streams to support our work.
- 5.26 We will need to keep abreast of, and respond to any changes to legislation, guidance and policy decision, and monitor the impacts of any changes to the regulatory framework. We will continue to review and update our Food and Feed Quality Management System and Standard Operating Procedures to reflect the changes.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 If the Food Law Enforcement Law Service Plan 2022/23 is not adopted we will not meet the requirements of the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 If the Food Law Enforcement Law Service Plan 2022/23 is not adopted we will not meet the requirements of the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Financial Considerations	No relevant issues
Child/Family Poverty Considerations	No relevant issues
Staff Considerations	No relevant issues
Asset Management Considerations	No relevant issues
Consultation	No relevant issues
Equality and Diversity Considerations	No relevant issues
Economy, Sustainability & Climate Change	No relevant issues

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Neighbourhood Services Committee approves the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan for 2022/23.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2022/23 needs to be adopted to comply with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 There are no background papers for this report.

12. CONTACT OFFICER

Tony Hanson
 Director of Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services
 Civic Centre
 Hartlepool Borough Council
 TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523301
 E-mail: tony.hanson@hartlepool.gov.uk

Jane Kett
 Environmental Health Manager (Commercial)
 Civic Centre
 Hartlepool

Tel: (01429) 523320
 Email: jane.Kett@hartlepool.gov.uk



Hartlepool Borough Council

Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2022/23

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2022/23

INTRODUCTION	
1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	3
1.1 Service Aims and Objectives	4
1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans	3
2. BACKGROUND	5
2.1 Profile of the Local Authority	6
2.2 Organisational Structure	6
2.3 Scope of the Food Service	6
2.4 Demands on the Food Service	7
2.5 Enforcement Policy	8
3. SERVICE DELIVERY	8
3.1.1 Interventions Programme	8
3.1.2 Broadly Compliant Food Establishments	9
3.2 Service Delivery Mechanisms	9
3.2.1 Intervention Programme	11
3.2.2 Registration and Approval of Premises	16
3.2.3 Microbiological and Chemical Analysis of Food/Feed	17
3.2.4 Food Inspection	20
3.2.5 COVID-19	20
3.2.6 Provision of Advice and Information to Food/Feed Businesses	21
3.2.7 Public Health Initiatives	22
3.2.8 Investigation of Food/Feed Complaints	23
3.2.9 Investigation of Cases of Food Poisoning and Outbreak Control	23
3.2.10 Dealing with Food/Feed Safety Incidents	24
3.2.11 Complaints relating to Food/Feed Premises	25
3.3 Complaints Against our Staff/Service	25
3.4 Liaison Arrangements	25
3.5 Home Authority Principle/ Primary Authority Scheme	25
4. RESOURCES	26
4.1 Financial Resources	26
4.2 Staffing Allocation	26
4.3 Staff Development	28
4.4 Equipment and Facilities	28
5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT	29
6. REVIEW OF 2021/22	29
6.1 Overview	29
6.2 Performance Review 2021/22	29
6.2.1 Intervention Programme	30
6.2.2 Registration and Approval of Premises	30
6.2.3 Food Sampling Programme	30
6.2.4 Food Inspection	31
6.2.5 Promotional Work	31
6.2.6 Food Hygiene Rating Scheme	31
6.2.7 FHRS Re-Rating & Promotional Visits	33
6.2.8 Food/Feed Complaints	33
6.2.9 Food Poisoning	33
6.2.10 Food Safety Incidents	34
6.2.11 Enforcement	34
6.2.12 COVID-19 Response	34
6.2.13 Complaints Against Our Staff/Service / Compliments	34
7. KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT & CHALLENGES FOR 2022/23	34

INTRODUCTION

This Service Plan details how the food law service will be delivered by Hartlepool Borough Council. The food law service covers both food and feed enforcement.

The Plan accords with the requirements of the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement, and sets out the Council's aims in respect of its food law service and the means by which those aims are to be fulfilled. Whilst focussing primarily on the year 2022/23, longer-term objectives are identified where relevant. Additionally, there is a review of performance for 2021/22 and this aims to inform decisions about how best to build on past successes and address performance gaps.

The Plan is reviewed annually and previous plans have been approved by the Neighbourhood Services Committee.

1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Hartlepool Borough Council aims to:

- carry out our enforcement duties and deliver high quality services through the efficient and effective use of resources;
- supplement our enforcement role by providing targeted education and advice;
- encourage innovation through actively seeking out best practice and working in partnership with other agencies;
- actively contribute towards achieving nationally agreed strategic aims and objectives; and
- ensure our actions are consistent, proportionate and targeted and that we are transparent and open about what we do.

The service aims to ensure:

- that food and drink intended for human consumption which is produced, stored, distributed, handled or consumed in the borough is without risk to the health or safety of the consumer;
- food and food packaging meets standards of quality, composition and labelling and reputable food businesses are not prejudiced by unfair competition; and
- the effective delivery of its food law service so as to secure appropriate levels of public safety in relation to food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs enforcement.

In its delivery of the service the Council will have regard to directions and examples of best practice as disseminated by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), including Approved Codes of Practice, the Regulators' Code and other relevant guidance shared by Local Government Regulation and Central Government.

1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

This service plan fits into the hierarchy of the Council's planning process as follows:

- Hartlepool Council's Plan 2021/22 - 2023/24
- Hartlepool's Community Strategy – the Local Strategic Partnerships (the Safer Hartlepool Partnership) and the Health and Well Being Board
- Food Law Enforcement Service Plan - sets out how the Council aims to deliver this statutory service and the Public Protection service's contribution to corporate objectives.

1.2.1 Overall Aim / Vision

The Council's vision is that:

Hartlepool will be a place...

- ***where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives;***
- ***where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm;***
- ***of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all;***
- ***that is sustainable, clean, safe and green;***
- ***that has an inclusive and growing economy;***

with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

To contribute to the Council's overall vision, through this Food Law Enforcement Service Plan, the team has made a commitment to protecting and improving the quality of life for residents of Hartlepool through effective promotion and enforcement of food hygiene and safety legislation.

This Food Law Enforcement Service Plan contributes towards elements of the Council Plan vision in the following ways:

...that has an inclusive and growing economy.

By providing advice and information to new and existing businesses to assist them in meeting their legal requirements with regard to food hygiene and safety requirements, and avoid potential costly action at a later stage;

By providing advice and guidance to traders so as to ensure awareness and compliance with food legislation;

...where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

By ensuring that businesses only provide safe products that comply with relevant food safety standards;

...with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community

By developing ways of communicating well with all customers, including business operators whose first language is not English, and ensuring that we deliver our service equitably to all.

To contribute towards the key outcomes of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation and to deliver effective customer focussed services, meeting the needs of diverse groups and maintaining customer satisfaction.

The Council is committed to the principles of equality and diversity. The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan consequently aims to ensure that the same high standards of service are offered to all, and that recognition is given to the varying needs and backgrounds of its customers.

2 BACKGROUND**2.1 Profile of the Local Authority**

Hartlepool is located on the north-east coast of England to the north of the River Tees. The Borough consists of the main town of Hartlepool, the seaside resort of Seaton Carew and a number of small outlying villages. The total area of the Borough is 9,390 hectares. The residential population is 93,663 (Mid-Year Estimates 2019, ONS) of which ethnic minorities comprise 3.4% (2011 census).

Hartlepool is a unitary authority, providing a full range of services. To the south of Hartlepool is the wider Teesside conurbation which includes the boroughs of Middlesbrough, Stockton on Tees and Redcar and Cleveland, and which together with Hartlepool and Darlington makes up the Tees Valley sub-region. Bordering Hartlepool to the north is the administrative area of County Durham.

The borough has a long and proud history, with the original settlement of Hartlepool dating back to Saxon times. Originally an important religious settlement the town's early development resulted from the existence of a safe harbour and its role as a port for the city of Durham and subsequent grant of a Royal Charter from King John in 1201.

The main phase of Hartlepool's expansion took place from the mid-19th Century with the building of a new railway and docks to serve the export of coal. The town continued to expand over the next 100 years as port trade increased and the development of heavy industries including steel making, shipbuilding and manufacturing. Like most industrialised towns in the north of England, Hartlepool has suffered over the last half century from structural reform of these industries and the town has had to look for new opportunities to diversify the economy.

Over the past 20 years Hartlepool has experienced some transformational changes through public and private investment. This has included the transformation of the former South Docks area into a fabulous 500-berth marina where the town hosted The Tall Ships Race in 2010. The Authority is due to be a host port for the race again in 2023.

The tourist industry impacts upon recreational opportunities, shopping and leisure facilities, including the provision of food and drink outlets restaurants, bars and cafes. There are currently 837 food establishments in Hartlepool, all of which must be subject to intervention to ensure food safety and standards are being met.

2.2 Organisational Structure

Under the Council's governance arrangements, most day-to-day decisions are taken by five Policy Committees. These Policy Committees cover the following main service areas: -

- Finance and Policy Committee
- Adult & Community Based Services Committee
- Children's Services Committee
- Neighbourhood Services Committee
- Regeneration Services Committee

The Neighbourhood Services Committee provides political oversight for Food law enforcement.

The Council is made up of four Departments:

- Resources & Development
- Children's & Joint Commissioning Services
- Adults & Community Based Services
- Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services

The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan is delivered through the Public Protection Division contained within the Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services Department.

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

The Council's Commercial Services team is a constituent part of the Public Protection Division contained within the Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services Department and is responsible for delivery of the food service. The food service covers both food and feed enforcement.

Service delivery broadly comprises:

- programmed interventions of premises for food hygiene, food standards and feed hygiene;
- registration and approval of premises;
- microbiological sampling and chemical analysis of food and animal feed;

- food & feed inspection;
- checks of imported food/feed at retail and catering premises;
- provision of advice, educational materials and courses to food/feed businesses;
- investigation of food and feed related complaints;
- investigation of cases of food and water borne infectious disease, and outbreak control;
- dealing with food/feed safety incidents; and
- promotional and advisory work

Effective performance of the food law service necessitates a range of joint working arrangements with other local authorities and agencies such as the Food Standards Agency (FSA), UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) & the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD).

The Council aims to ensure that effective joint working arrangements are in place and that officers of the service contribute to the on-going development of those arrangements.

The service is also responsible for the following:

- health and safety enforcement;
- the provision of guidance, advice and enforcement in respect of smoke free legislation in public places;
- the provision of guidance, advice and taking enforcement action in response to the legislation introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- water sampling; including both private and mains supplies & bathing water;
- port health;
- provision of assistance for animal health and welfare inspections, complaint investigation and animal movement issues; and
- acting as a statutory consultee for applications made under the Licensing Act 2003

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

The Council is responsible for 837 food premises within the borough mostly comprising retailers, manufacturers and caterers. The food businesses are predominantly small to medium sized establishments and the majority of these are liable to food hygiene and food standards interventions.

In addition there are 90 registered feed businesses for which the Council is the enforcing authority.

The delivery point for the food enforcement service is at:

Civic Centre
Victoria Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Telephone: (01429) 266522

Members of the public and businesses may access the service at this point from 08.30 - 17.00 Monday to Thursday and 08.30 - 16.30 on Friday.

A 24-hour emergency call-out also operates to deal with Environmental Health emergencies which occur out of hours. Contact can be made on (01429) 266522, then Option 1, then Option 2.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

Hartlepool Borough Council adopted its current Enforcement Policy in 2021. Supplementary to this, there is a Public Protection Enforcement Policy that deals with those enforcement issues specific, or unique, to the service.

The Commercial Services team, which is responsible for food and feed law enforcement, will take account of the 2014 Regulator's Code when carrying out its interactions with food business operators.

3 SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1.1 Interventions Programme

The Council has a wide range of duties and powers conferred on it in relation to food law enforcement. The Council must appoint and authorise inspectors, having suitable qualifications and competencies for the purpose of carrying out duties under the Food Safety Act 1990 and Regulations made under it.

Authorised officers can inspect food at any stage of the production, manufacturing, distribution and retail chain. The Council must draw up and implement an annual programme of risk-based interventions so as to ensure that food and feeding stuffs are inspected in accordance with relevant legislation, the Food Law Code of Practice and centrally issued guidance.

The Code allows local authorities to choose the most appropriate action to be taken to drive up levels of compliance with food law by food establishments. In so doing it takes account of the recommendations in the 'Reducing Administrative Burdens: Effective Inspection and Enforcement'.

Interventions are defined as activities that are designed to monitor, support and increase food law compliance within a food establishment. They include:

- Inspections / Audit;
- Surveillance / Verification;
- Sampling;
- Education, advice and coaching provided at a food establishment; and
- Information and intelligence gathering.

Other activities that monitor, promote and drive up compliance with food law in food establishments, for instance 'Alternative Enforcement Strategies' for low risk establishments and education and advisory work with businesses

away from the premises (e.g. seminars/training events) remain available for local authorities to use.

3.1.2 Broadly Compliant Food Establishments

The Code established the concept of ‘Broadly Compliant’ food establishments. In respect of food hygiene, “broadly compliant”, is defined as an establishment that has an intervention rating score of not more than 10 points under each of the following components;

- Level of (Current) Hygiene Compliance;
- Level of (Current) Structural Compliance; and
- Confidence in Management/Control Systems

“Broadly Compliant”, in respect of food standards, is defined as an establishment that has an intervention rating score of not more than 10 points under the following:

- Level of (Current) Compliance
- Confidence in Management/Control Systems

Local Authorities are required to report the percentage of “Broadly Compliant” food establishments in their area to the FSA on an annual basis through the Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS). The Agency will use this outcome measure to monitor the effectiveness of a local authority’s regulatory service.

As at the 1st April 2020, 99.9% of businesses in the borough were “Broadly Compliant” with food safety requirements. For food standards 98.1% of businesses achieved broad compliance. No figures were produced for 2020/21 due to the suspension of some proactive food inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic. We aim to concentrate our resources to maintain these standards however given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and current financial climate this will be extremely challenging.

The Food Law Enforcement Plan will help to promote efficient and effective approaches to regulatory inspection and enforcement that will improve regulatory outcomes without imposing unnecessary burdens. The term enforcement does not only refer to formal actions, it can also relate to advisory visits and inspections.

3.2 Service Delivery Mechanisms

3.2.1 Intervention Programme

Local Authorities must document, maintain and implement an interventions programme that includes all the establishments for which they have food law enforcement responsibility.

Interventions carried out for food hygiene, food standards and for feeding stuffs are carried out in accordance with the Council’s policy and standard

operating procedures on food/feed premises inspections and relevant national guidance.

Information on premises liable to interventions is held on the APP computerised system. An intervention schedule is produced from this system at the commencement of each reporting year.

The food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs intervention programmes are risk-based systems that accord with current guidance. The current premises profiles (as at 1 April 2022) are shown in the tables below:

Food Hygiene:

Risk Category	Frequency of Inspection	No of Premises
A	6 months	0
B	12 months	7
C	18 months	81
D	24 months	399
E	36 months or other enforcement	350
Unclassified	Requiring inspection / risk rating	0
No Inspectable Risk (NIR)		0
Total		837

Food Standards:

Risk Category	Frequency of Inspection	No of Premises
A	12 months	2
B	24 months	96
C	36 months or other enforcement	739
Unclassified		0
No Inspectable Risk (NIR)		0
Total		837

Feed Hygiene:

Registered Activity	No of Premises
R5 Distributor	1
R7 Supplier of Surplus Food	11
R8 Transporter	3
R9 Stores	1
R10/11 On Farm Mixer	10
R12 Co Product Producer	2
R13 Livestock Farm	41
R14 Arable Farm	21
Total	90

The intervention programme for 2022/23 comprises the following number of scheduled food hygiene and food standards interventions (this includes those interventions overdue for 2021/22:

Food Hygiene:

Risk Category	Frequency of Inspection	No of Interventions
A	6 months	0
B	12 months	7
C	18 months	49
D	24 months	303
E	36 months or alternative enforcement strategy	249
Unclassified		0
Unrated		0
Total		608

Food Standards:

Risk Category	Frequency of Inspection	No of Interventions
A	12 months	2
B	24 months	52
C	36 months or alternative enforcement	218
Unrated		0
Unclassified		0
Total		272

Approved Establishments:

There are 2 approved food establishments in the borough; a fishery products establishment and a manufacturer of food ingredients. These premises are subject to more stringent hygiene provisions than those applied to registered food businesses. These premises require considerably more staff resources for inspection, supervision and advice on meeting enhanced standards.

Approach to Food Hygiene Inspections in 22/23

In June 2021 The FSA set out its COVID-19 Response – Recovery Plan setting out guidance and advice for local authorities on delivery of official food controls and related activities in the period 1 July 2021 to 2023/24. This guidance has been periodically updated.

This sets out how Local Authorities are being asked to return to a planned routine inspection, in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice. Local authorities are expected to have regard to the guidance and advice.

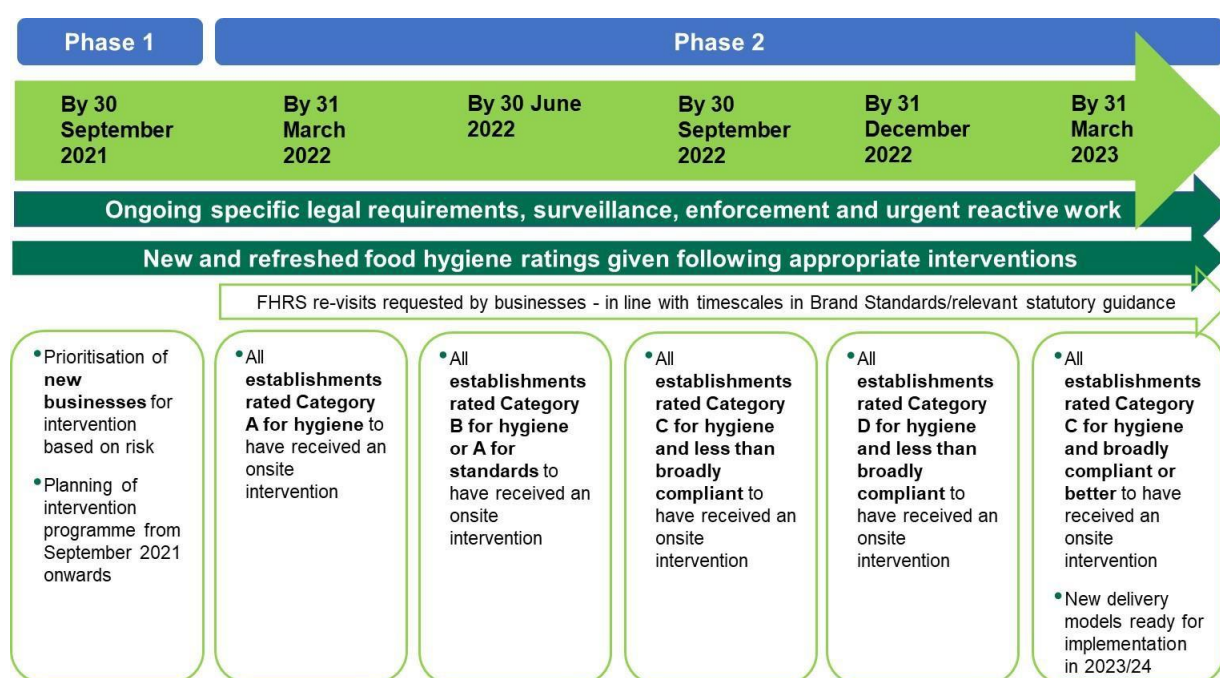
The Plan provides a framework for re-starting the delivery system in line with the Food Law Code of Practice for new food establishments and for high-risk

and/or non-compliant establishments while providing flexibility for lower risk establishments.

The FSA recognise and acknowledge that local authorities will be starting from different positions in terms of the impact that COVID-19 has had to date, the challenges they will face during the recovery period and the resources that they have available. Where local authorities are able to, the expectation is that they should move at a faster pace in realigning with the Code of Practice.

There are 2 distinct phases to the Recovery Plan which is to last from 1 July 2021 to 2023/4: Phase 1 and Phase 2. An outline of the recovery plan is shown below:

Figure 1: Outline of the Recovery Plan



Notes

The key milestone dates within the Recovery Plan for higher risk establishments are shown.

For lower risk establishments not shown in the figure, local authorities have the flexibility to defer planned interventions and only undertake intervention where information/intelligence suggests that risks have increased/standards have fallen or if the establishment is otherwise considered a priority for intervention due to the risk posed.

In the case of food standards, the impact on the business of the new requirements on allergen labelling for products prepacked for direct sale - that apply from 1 October 2021 - should also be taken into account.

Phase 1 (1 July to 30 September 2021).

In Phase 1, local authorities are expected to deliver the following:

- official controls where the nature and frequency are prescribed in specific legislation and official controls recommended by FSA guidance that are undertaken to support trade and enable export
- reactive work including enforcement in the case of non-compliance, managing food incidents and food hazards, and investigating and managing complaints

- sampling in accordance with the local authority sampling programme or as required in the context of assessing food business compliance, and any follow-up necessary in relation to the FSA Surveillance Sampling Programme
- ongoing proactive surveillance to obtain an accurate picture of the local business landscape and to: identify open/closed/recently re-opened/new businesses; as well as businesses where there has been a change of operation, activities, or Food Business Operator (FBO)
- for 'new businesses', consideration of registration information and intelligence with appropriate onsite interventions carried out where there are concerns around public health/consumer protection
- for 'new businesses' where consideration of registration information and intelligence indicates low risk, initial visits should be prioritised and undertaken in accordance with the Codes of Practice and Practice Guidance taking account of the flexibilities provided
- planning for resumption of planned intervention programmes for high-risk category and non-compliant establishments in Phase 2.

Phase 2 (1 October 2021 to 2023/24)

In Phase 2, local authorities are expected to deliver the following:

- official controls where the nature and frequency are prescribed in specific legislation and official controls recommended by FSA guidance that are undertaken to support trade and enable export
- reactive work including, enforcement in the case of non-compliance, managing food incidents and food hazards, and investigating and managing complaints
- sampling in accordance with the local authority sampling programme or as required in the context of assessing food business compliance, and any follow-up necessary in relation to the FSA Surveillance Sampling Programme
- ongoing proactive surveillance to obtain an accurate picture of the local business landscape and to: identify open/closed/recently re-opened/new businesses; as well as businesses where there has been a change of operation, activities or FBO
- for 'new businesses', consideration of registration information and intelligence with appropriate onsite interventions carried out where there are concerns around public health/consumer protection
- for 'new businesses' where consideration of registration information and intelligence indicates lower risk, initial visits should be prioritised and undertaken in accordance with the Codes of Practice and Practice Guidance taking account of the flexibilities provided
- implementing planned intervention programmes for high-risk category and non-compliant establishments
- implementing an intelligence/information based approach for lower risk category establishments
- responding to FHRS requested re-visits in line with the timelines specified in the FHRS Brand Standard for England or the statutory guidance in Wales and Northern Ireland.

Hartlepool Borough Council currently has 0 unrated premises, 0 rated Category A for hygiene, 7 rated category B and only 1 category C or D rated as less than broadly compliant. In addition we have 2 approved establishments that will require interventions plus any newly registered premises during the year. We plan to focus our efforts during 2022/23 on premises presenting the highest risk and are on track to meet the requirements of the FSA plan by 31 March 2023.

The roadmap requires an enhanced level of inspections to take place in 22/23 in order for the planned inspection programme to return in 23/24, which is likely to be a revised model.

The FSA have stated that there is anecdotal information suggesting that there has been a general trend of reducing hygiene standards in food establishments since the onset of the pandemic. Our findings support this.

Planned interventions can be achieved within the resource available (subject to the Government's COVID-19 Roadmap continuing on its current path). We will continue to monitor if additional resources are required.

In 2021/22 the Council successfully applied for grant funding from the FSA to support the prioritisation of new businesses 'awaiting inspection'. The funding was to help tackle backlogs of new businesses by employing administrative staff for a short period of time to triage businesses and prioritise those that were trading/intending to trade for initial onsite visits. The funding agreed was to assess 80 businesses. This work was completed and in addition all unrated food premises were inspected.

Primary Producers:

The service has 73 primary producers. Inspections are combined with visits to farms for animal welfare and/or feed legislation as far as possible.

Feed Hygiene Intervention Programme 2022/23:

The National Trading Standards Board (NTSB) is responsible for the co-ordination of grant funding allocations for the FSA Feed Delivery Programme. A regional lead feed co-ordinator has been appointed. As a member of this group Hartlepool Council will receive funding to meet the costs of the following feed inspections:

Risk Category	No of Interventions
R05 Distributor	0
R07 Feed/Materials / Ingredients/Surplus Food	1
R08 Transporter	0
R09 Stores	0
R10/ R11 On-farm Mixer	1
R12 Co-Product Producer	0
R13 Livestock Farms	2
R14 Arable Farms	0
Total	4

Visits outside of standard hours

An estimated 10% of all programmed interventions relate to premises where it is more appropriate to conduct visits outside the standard working time hours. Arrangements are in place to visit these premises out of hours by making use of the Council's flexible working arrangements, lieu time facilities and, if necessary, paid overtime provisions. In addition, these arrangements will permit the occasional inspection of premises which open outside of, as well as during standard work time hours. The Food Law Code of Practice requires inspections of these premises at varying times of operation.

Revisits

As a follow-up to primary inspections, the service undertakes revisits in accordance with current policy. For the year 2022/23, the intervention programme is expected to generate an estimated 125 revisits. This number is likely to be higher than in previous years as some premises may have temporarily ceased trading and/or not been inspected due to the restrictions introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic and hygiene standards may have fallen as a result. A number of these premises revisits will be undertaken outside standard working hours and arrangements are in place as described above to facilitate this.

It is anticipated that consistent, high quality programmed interventions by the service will, over time, result in a general improvement in standards, reducing the frequency for recourse to formal action. The performance against intervention targets for all food hygiene and food standards inspections is reported annually to the Neighbourhood Services Committee via the Service Plan.

EU Exit

Since the 2016 referendum and the subsequent exit from the European Union, Hartlepool Borough Council's focus has been to prepare for any potential adverse impact of EU Exit on the continuity and quality of its services.

The European Communities Act 1972 gave legal authority for EU law to have effect as national law in the UK. The EU Withdrawal Act 2018 repealed the Act, however parts of it have been kept in force by the Withdrawal Agreement Act 2020 which transferred EU regulation and law onto the UK statute book.

The UK exited the EU on 31 January 2020 and was in a transition period until 31 December 2020. The UK government reached an agreement with the EU as to the relationship beyond the end of the transition period.

The Food Standards Agency's EU Transition Programme provided guidance, support and oversight to ensure that the FSA and local authorities were prepared for the end of the EU Transition Period. Since 1 January 2021, the Programme's activities have shifted towards ongoing support for those work areas with a phased implementation, consideration of the outstanding challenges, and embedding new activities into business as usual.

Port Health

Hartlepool is a Port Health Authority. To date there has been no significant changes at the Port as a result of EU exit in that it remains the case that no food or feed enters the port.

Work in relation to imported food control can therefore ordinarily be accommodated within the day-to-day workload of the service, however if circumstances were to change whereby food or feed was imported/exported additional resources would be required which would have an effect on the programmed intervention workload and other service demands.

From 1.4.22 we have commenced offering ship sanitation inspections and certification. We will also undertake water sampling as required.

Fish Quay

There is a Fish Quay within the Authority's area which provides a market hall although it is not currently operational and there are associated fish processing units, one of which is an approved establishment.

During 2021/22, 23 fishing vessels registered with Hartlepool Borough Council as food business establishments. All fishing vessels were inspected in accordance with directions issued by the Food Standards Agency.

3.2.2 Registration and Approval of Premises

Food and feed business operators must register their establishments with the relevant local authority. This provision allows for the service to maintain an up-to-date premises database and facilitates the timely inspection of new premises and, when considered necessary, premises that have changed food/feed business operator or type of use.

The receipt of a food/feed premises registration form initiates an inspection of all new premises. In the case of existing premises, where a change of food/feed business operator is notified, other than at the time of a programmed intervention, an assessment is made of the need for inspection based on the date of the next programmed intervention, premises history, and whether any significant change in the type of business is being notified.

During 2021/22, 156 new registrations were received and whilst face to face visits could not be carried out to all businesses all were provided with advice. During 2022/23 we are undertaking work to ensure that all food business

registration forms are up to date. It is anticipated that approximately 100 additional food premises inspections will be generated for new food businesses during 2022/23.

A competent authority must with some exceptions, approve food business establishments that handle food of animal origin. If an establishment needs approval, it does not need to be registered as well.

Food premises which require approval include those that are producing any, or any combination of the following; minced meat, meat preparations, mechanically separated meat, meat products, live bivalve molluscs, fishery products, raw milk (other than raw cows' milk), dairy products, eggs (not primary production) and egg products, frogs legs and snails, rendered animal fats and greaves, treated stomachs, bladders and intestines, gelatine and collagen and certain cold stores and wholesale markets.

The approval regime necessitates full compliance with the relevant requirements of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 and Regulation (EC) 853/2004. There are 2 premises in the Borough which are subject to approval; a fishery products establishment and a manufacturer of food ingredients. During 2020/21 the latter changed its trading name and the approval document was changed accordingly.

Since 1 January 2006 feed businesses have been required to be approved or registered with their local authority under the terms of the EC Feed Hygiene Regulation (183/2005). This legislation relates to nearly all feed businesses. This means, for example, that importers and sellers of feed, hauliers and storage businesses now require approval or registration. Livestock and arable farms growing and selling crops for feed are also within the scope of the provisions of the regulation.

3.2.3 Microbiological and Chemical Analysis of Food/Feed

An annual food/feed sampling programme is undertaken with samples being procured for the purposes of microbiological or chemical analyses. This programme is undertaken in accordance with the service's Food/Feed Sampling Policy.

All officers taking formal samples must follow the guidance contained in and be qualified in accordance with relevant legislative requirements and centrally issued guidance, including that contained in the Food Law Code of Practice/Feed Law Code of Practice and associated Practice Guidance. Follow-up action is carried out in accordance with the service's sampling policy.

Microbiological analysis of food and water samples is undertaken by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Food, Water & Environmental Laboratory based at York. Chemical analysis is undertaken by an appointed Public/Agricultural Analyst.

Sampling allocations from UKHSA are based on a credits system dependant on the type of sample being submitted and examination required.

The allocation for Hartlepool is 8,300 credits for the year 2022/23. Points are allocated as follows:

Sample type	No of credits
F1:Food Screen	10
F2:Food Basic	25
F3:Food Complex	35
W1:Water Screen	10
W2:Water Basic	20
W3:Water Complex	25
M1:Dairy Products	10
E1:Environmental Screen	10
E2:Environmental Basic	25
E3:Environmental Complex	35
Certification	15

If an authority uses less than 80% of its allocation, it is possible that the allocation may be reduced. In the event of over-performance, UKHSA will raise an invoice in April of the following year for payment of the cost of the workload over and above the agreed baseline allocation.

A sampling programme is produced each year for the start of April to assess the microbiological quality of food, water and environmental surfaces and composition and labelling of food. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in accordance with the FSA guidance, sampling was significantly curtailed during 20/21 and 21/22. Consequently no samples were taken in 20/21 and 8 in 21/22.

The sampling programme for 2022/23 will take account of national and regional surveys and local interventions and the availability of local resources.

Sampling programmes have been agreed with the Food Examiners and Public/Agricultural Analysts. These have regard to the nature of food/feed businesses in Hartlepool and will focus on locally manufactured/processed foods/feed and food/feed targeted as a result of previous sampling and complaints.

The service aims to meet a national target set in 2007 by the Food Standards Agency, the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) and the Association of Port Health Authorities that imported food should make up 10% of the food samples taken by local and port health authorities.

The sampling plans for 2022/23 are detailed below.

Microbiological Food Sampling Plan 2022/23

April Study 74 – Hygiene in sandwich and salad bars	May Study 74 – Hygiene in sandwich and salad bars	June Study 74 – Hygiene in sandwich and salad bars
July Study 74 – Hygiene in sandwich and salad bars	August Local Imported Food Survey – fresh fruit	September Study 75 – Vegan meals/ingredients/meat alternatives
October Study 75 – Vegan meals/ingredients/meat alternatives	November Study 75 – Vegan meals/ingredients/meat alternatives	December Local Imported Food Survey – dried fruit/nuts/seeds
January Study 76 – reactive study tbc	February Study 76 – reactive study tbc	March Study 76 – reactive study tbc

Composition and Labelling Sampling Plan 2022/23

Survey	Number of Samples
Allergens in food	10 (plus any re-samples)
Vegan meals/ingredients/meat alternatives	5
Food Labelling – food pre-packed for direct sale	20
Adhoc samples arising from emerging priorities identified during the year	tbc

Feeding Stuffs Sampling Plan 2022/23

At present feeding stuffs sampling is being given a low priority due to the lack of local manufacturers and packers, accordingly no sampling of animal feeding stuffs is planned during 2022/23, however we will respond to any emerging national or local issues.

Regional funding provided by the National Trading Standards Board and Food Standards Agency will supplement our sampling budget.

Private Water Supplies

A local brewery uses a private water supply in its food production. Regular sampling is carried out of this supply in accordance with relevant legislative regulations.

3.2.4 Food Inspection

The purpose of food inspection is to check that food complies with food safety requirements and is fit for human consumption, and is properly described and labelled. As such, the activity of inspecting food commodities, including imported food where relevant, forms an integral part of the food premises intervention programme. Food inspection activities are undertaken in accordance with national guidelines.

3.2.5 COVID-19

The outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 placed significant additional burdens on the Public Protection Service until all restrictions were lifted in 2022. From the outset of the pandemic, this service has been severely impacted in its ability to deliver the usual obligations in relation to food safety. The cohort of officers allocated to this work were immediately identified and delegated by Government to provide the frontline response within the majority of Coronavirus Regulations enforced by local authorities.

The work of the service, and demands from the public, changed significantly with many traditional shops closed for many months and the lockdown preventing much of the service industry from operating. Throughout the pandemic the service has provided advice to businesses to ensure that they traded in accordance with COVID requirements and reopened safely. Enforcement action has been taken against those who chose to ignore it.

The Food Standards Agency issued guidance throughout the pandemic advising Local Authorities as to what the types of food businesses they could and could not inspect. This enabled the work area to focus on the COVID-19 response and meant that the usual statutory requirements in relation to food hygiene inspections were amended as the year progressed. The response to COVID-19 has required officers to lead on work relating to advice, education and ultimately, enforcement, to both businesses and residents.

3.2.6 Provision of Advice and Information to Food/Feed Businesses

It is recognised that for most local food businesses contact with an officer of the service provides the best opportunity to obtain information and tailored advice on legislative requirements and good practice. Officers are mindful of this and aim to ensure that when undertaking premises interventions sufficient opportunity exists for food business operators to seek advice.

The COVID-19 pandemic meant that face to face interventions were not always possible so the service had to carry out some interventions, including the provision of advice, remotely. Remote interventions were used to inform the service of where to target resources.

When providing advice to food businesses, advisory leaflets including those produced by the Food Standards Agency, are made available.

In February 2006 the Food Standards Agency introduced Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) aimed at assisting smaller catering businesses to introduce a documented food safety management system. Since this time significant resources have been directed towards assisting businesses to fully implement a documented food safety management system.

Guidance is also prepared and distributed to food businesses relating to changes in legislative requirements. The service also encourages new food/feed business operators and existing businesses to seek guidance and advice on their business. It is estimated that 80 such advisory visits will be carried out during the year.

The Council operates the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme whereby each business is awarded a rating which reflects the hygiene conditions found at the time of the primary inspection. The business' rating is made available to the public via the Food Standards Agency's website and the business is provided with a sticker to display on their premises. The service has made a commitment to work with businesses to improve their rating; in particular those awarded a rating of less than '3' (generally satisfactory).

A limited level of promotional work is also undertaken by the service on food safety, with minimal impact on programmed enforcement work. Feeding stuffs advice is available via the Council's web site.

3.2.7 Public Health Initiatives

In recent years significant resources have been directed towards carrying out initiatives which will contribute to the Public Health Framework Outcomes. During 2020/21 and 2021/22 these initiatives were paused however during 2022/23 the Public Protection team plan to carry out the following initiatives:

1) Support the Government Obesity Strategy

Over the medium term (next 3-5 years) we plan to focus support on the Government's Obesity Strategy through awareness raising and

enforcement of new legislation that is being introduced in 2022 relating to food and drink high in fat, salt or sugar. New legislation includes The Calorie Labelling (Out of Home Sector) (England) Regulations 2021 and The Food (Promotion and Placement) (England) Regulations 2021. (The latter legislation is intended to restrict retailer promotions on food and drink high in fat, salt or sugar.)

We are acutely aware of the impact that access to unhealthy food is having on the rising rates of obesity and health inequalities. Research has shown that fast food takeaways provide a source of some of the unhealthiest food that is available in our communities.

We will continue to work with other regulators, including colleagues in the Planning team to encourage good practice within the takeaway sector. In particular we will support the use of planning measures to restrict the proliferation of hot food takeaways in areas of over concentration or where vulnerable groups of children and young people are a concern.

All relevant hot food takeaways in Hartlepool have been identified and mapped. The density of local and future provision of takeaways is addressed in the Council's Local Plan.

In particular we plan to deliver:

- a) training for Enforcement Officers on new legislation including The Calorie Labelling (Out of Home Sector) (England) Regulations 2021 and The Food (Promotion and Placement)(England) Regulations 2021;
- b) awareness raising of this new legislation with relevant businesses; and
- c) enforcement action may be taken against non-compliant food business operators.

2) Allergy Awareness

We will use a range of interventions including sampling, provision of information and advice and working in partnership with colleagues in the other North East local authorities as part of a regional group to raise awareness regarding allergens. We also plan to continue to raise awareness of changes in food labelling legislation relating to foods which are pre-packed for direct sale. As part of the Regional Work Programme we are currently working with the other North East local authorities to produce a range of video clips which can be promoted using social media.

3.2.8 Investigation of Food / Feed Complaints

The service receives on average 40 complaints each year concerning food/feed, all of which are subject to investigation. During 2021/22, 30 complaints were received concerning food. An initial response is made to these complaints within two working days. Whilst many complaints are investigated with minimal resource requirements, some more complex cases may be resource-intensive and potentially affect programmed intervention workloads.

All investigations are conducted having regard to the guidance on the 'Home Authority Principle'.

The procedures for receipt and investigation of food/feed complaints are set out in detailed guidance and internal policy documents.

3.2.9 Investigation of Cases of Food Poisoning and Outbreak Control

Incidents of food related infectious disease are investigated in liaison with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) North East Public Health Team and in the case of outbreaks in accordance with the Outbreak Control Policy.

Where it appears that an outbreak exists the Environmental Health Manager (Commercial Services) or an EHO, will liaise with UKHSA North East Health Protection Team to determine the need to convene an Outbreak Control Team.

Further liaison may be necessary with agencies such as the Food Standards Agency, the UKHSA Food, Water and Environmental Laboratory, Public Analyst, Anglian Water and Northumbrian Water.

It is estimated that between 150-175 food poisoning notifications are received each year, a large proportion of which are confirmed cases of Campylobacter.

As relatively little benefit has been demonstrated from the investigation of individual sporadic cases of Campylobacter only those who are food handlers or live/work in a residential care home are routinely investigated.

Any cluster or outbreak identified by UKHSA North East Public Health Team or Environmental Health will be investigated following the agreed outbreak investigation arrangements. In the event of any major food poisoning outbreak a significant burden is likely to be placed on the service and this would inevitably impact on the performance of the intervention programme.

3.2.10 Dealing with Food / Feed Safety Incidents

A national alert system exists for the rapid dissemination of information about food and feed hazards and product recalls, this is known as the food/feed alert warning system.

All food and feed alerts received by the service are dealt with in accordance with national guidance and internal quality procedures. Food and feed alert warnings are received by the service from The Food Standards Agency via an electronic mail system. Several officers have also subscribed to receive alerts via their personal mobile phones.

The Environmental Health Manager (Commercial Services) ensures that a timely and appropriate response is made to each alert.

The out of hours contact telephone number for the service is (01429) 266522, then Option 1, then Option 2.

In the event of a serious local incident, or a wider food safety problem emanating from production in Hartlepool, the Food Standards Agency will be alerted in accordance with guidance.

We continue to receive food alerts for action or information, food allergy alerts and food recall notices throughout the year. Whilst it is difficult to predict with any certainty the number of food safety incidents that will arise, it is estimated that the service is likely to be notified of approximately 100 food alerts, product recalls or withdrawals during 2022/23, a small proportion of which will require action to be taken by the Authority. In addition we will receive approximately 50-100 allergy alerts.

This level of work can ordinarily be accommodated within the day-to-day workload of the service, but more serious incidents may require additional resources which may have an effect on the programmed intervention workload and other service demands.

3.2.11 Complaints relating to Food / Feed Premises

The service investigates all complaints that it receives about food/feed safety and food standards conditions and practices in food/feed businesses. An initial response to any complaint is made within two working days. In such cases the confidentiality of the complainant is paramount. All anonymous complaints are also currently investigated. During 2021/22 a significantly higher number of complaints was received than in other years (74 complaints about hygiene standards in food premises were received compared to 27 in 2019/20). All were investigated within our 2 day response time.

The purpose of investigation is to determine the validity of the complaint and, where appropriate, to seek to ensure that any deficiency is properly addressed. The general approach is to assist the food/feed business operator in ensuring good standards of compliance, although enforcement action may be necessary where there is failure in the management of food/feed safety, or regulatory non-compliance.

Based on the average number of complaints received during previous years it is estimated that approximately 80 such complaints will be received in 2022/23.

3.3 Complaints against Our Staff/Service

Anyone who is aggrieved by the actions of a member of staff is encouraged, in the first instance, to contact the employee's line manager. Details of how and who to make contact with are contained in the inspection report left at the time of an inspection.

Formal complaints are investigated in accordance with the Council's corporate complaint procedure.

3.4 Liaison Arrangements

The service actively participates in local and regional activities and is represented on the following:

- Tees Valley Heads of Public Protection Group
- Tees Valley Food Liaison Group
- UKHSA/Local Authority Sampling Group
- Tees Valley Public Health Group
- North East Public Protection Partnership
- North East Trading Standards Liaison Group, which incorporates the North East Trading Standards Animal Feed Group (NETSA).

There is also liaison with other organisations including the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the Trading Standards Institute, UKHSA, Defra / Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA), OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Officers also work in liaison with other Council departments including the Planning Services and Licensing teams.

3.5 Home Authority Principle / Primary Authority Scheme

The introduction of the Primary Authority Scheme in April 2009 under the provisions of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 placed a statutory obligation on the Council to provide a significantly expanded range of Home Authority services to local businesses when requested by that business. There are opportunities for local authorities to recover costs from businesses to provide this premium service.

It is the Council's policy to comply with the Local Better Regulation Office's Primary Authority Scheme.

In particular the Council will contact the Primary Authority and liaise over:

- any proposed formal enforcement action
- service of Notices
- shortcomings in the companies policies that have wider implications

In Hartlepool, there are currently no formal Primary Authority arrangements in place with a Hartlepool based trader however the service works closely with some local businesses on an informal basis.

The level of resourcing will have to be reviewed if an opportunity to enter into a formal Primary Authority arrangement arises.

4 RESOURCES**4.1 Financial Resources**

The annual budget for the Consumer Services section in the year 2022/23 is:

	£	000
Employees		630
Other Expenditure		69
Grant Funding		(33)
Income		(8)
Net Budget		658

This budget is for all services provided by this section including Health & Safety, Animal Health, Trading Standards and resources are allocated in accordance with service demands.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

The Director (Regeneration & Neighbourhoods) has overall responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the Council's Public Protection service, including delivery of the food/feed law service, in accordance with the service plan.

The Assistant Director (Regulatory Services), with the requisite qualifications and experience, is designated as lead officer in relation to food safety and food standards functions and has responsibility for the management of the Food Service.

The resources determined necessary to deliver the service in 2022/23 are as follows:

Food Hygiene

1 x 0.10* FTE Assistant Director (Regulatory Services) (with responsibility for the below services) (*This resource is for Food Hygiene & Food Standards)

1 x 0.5 FTE Environmental Health Manager (Commercial Services) (with responsibility also for Port Health, Health and Animal Health and Welfare)

3 x 0.5 FTE EHO (with requisite qualifications and experience and with responsibility also for Health & Safety)

1 x 0.3 FTE Part-time EHO (with requisite qualifications and experience and with responsibility also for Health & Safety)

1 x FTE Technical Officer Food (with requisite qualifications and experience)

Food Standards

1 x 0.2 FTE Environmental Health Manager (Commercial Services) (with responsibility also for Port Health, Health and Animal Health and Welfare)

4 x 0.3 FTE EHO (with requisite qualifications and experience and with responsibility also for Health & Safety)

1 x 0.16 FTE Part-time EHO (with requisite qualifications and experience and with responsibility also for Health & Safety)

During 2020/21 and until restrictions were lifted in 2022 the majority of Public Protection staff were redeployed to carrying out COVID-19 work. Funding was secured for the equivalent of 1 x FTE EHO post to assist with COVID contact tracing work and to create additional capacity for the above staff to carry out essential official food control and other statutory duties.

A member of staff left the authority in December 2021 and this post remained vacant until the post was filled in March 2022. An officer also transferred to another team in January 2022 leaving a vacant post. We made a number of temporary appointments to assist with contact tracing work and to address recovery across the Public Protection service, including adherence to the FSA Recovery Plan. We have appointed the equivalent of 0.4 of a FTE Senior Environmental Health officer Post to complete overdue inspections for a 6 month period and will continue to review the resources required.

The Assistant Director (Regulatory Services) has responsibility for planning service delivery and management of the Food Law Service, Health & Safety at Work, Licensing, Public Health, Water Quality, Trading Standards, Animal Health & Welfare, Environmental Protection, Emergency Planning, Private Sector Housing, Community Safety and I.T. as well as general management responsibilities as a member of the Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services Departmental Management Team.

The Environmental Health Manager (Commercial Services) has responsibility for the day to day supervision of the Food/Feed Law Service, Port Health, Health & Safety at Work, Public Health, Water Quality and Animal Health & Welfare. The Environmental Health Manager (Commercial Services) and a Senior Trading Standards Officer are designated as lead officers for imported food control and animal feed enforcement.

The EHOs have responsibility for the performance of the food premises intervention programme as well as the delivery of all other aspects of the food law service, particularly more complex investigations. In addition these officers undertake Health & Safety at Work enforcement.

The Technical Officer (Food) is also responsible for interventions, including inspections as well as revisits, investigation of less complex complaints and investigation of incidents of food-borne disease.

Authorised Trading Standards Officers have responsibility for the performance of the feed premises intervention programme as well as the delivery of all other aspects of the feed law service.

Administrative support is provided by Support Services based within the department.

All staff engaged in food/feed safety law enforcement activity are suitably trained and qualified and appropriately authorised in accordance with guidance and internal policy.

Staff undertaking educational and other support duties are suitably qualified and experienced to carry out this work.

4.3 Staff Development

The qualifications and training of staff engaged in food/feed law enforcement are prescribed and this will be reflected in the Council's policy in respect of appointment and authorisation of officers.

It is a mandatory requirement for officers of the food/feed law service to maintain their professional competency by undertaking a minimum of 20 hours continuous professional development (CPD) training each year which may involve attendance at accredited short courses, seminars or conferences. This is also consistent with the requirements of the relevant professional bodies.

The Council is committed to the personal development of staff and has in place Personal Development Plans for all members of staff. This allows for the formal identification of training needs of staff members to be linked with the development needs of the service.

The details of individual Personal Development plans are not included in this document but in general terms the priorities for the service are concerned with ensuring up to date knowledge and awareness of legislation, building capacity within the team with particular regard to approved establishments, the provision of food hygiene training, developing the role of the Food Safety Officer, and training and development of new staff joining the team. Detailed records are maintained by the service relating to all training received by officers.

4.4 Equipment and Facilities

A range of equipment and facilities are required for the effective operation of the food/feed law service. The service has a documented standard operating procedure that ensures the proper maintenance and calibration of equipment and its removal from use if found to be defective.

The service has a computerised performance management system, the Authority Public Protection computer system (APP). This is capable of maintaining up to date accurate data relating to the activities of the food/feed law service. A documented database management standard operating procedure has been produced to ensure that the system is properly maintained, up to date and secure. The system is used for the generation of the intervention programmes, the recording and tracking of all food/feed interventions, the production of statutory returns and the effective management of performance.

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Council is committed to quality service provision. To support this commitment the food law service seeks to ensure consistent, effective, efficient and ethical service delivery that constitutes value for money.

A range of performance monitoring information will be used to assess the extent to which the food service achieves this objective and will include on-going monitoring against pre-set targets, both internal and external audits and stakeholder feedback.

Specifically the Environmental Health Manager (Commercial Services) will carry out accompanied visits with officers undertaking interventions, investigations and other duties for the purpose of monitoring consistency and quality of the inspection and other visits carried out as well as maintaining and giving feedback with regard to associated documentation and reports.

It is possible that the Food Standards Agency may at any time notify the Council of their intention to carry out an audit of the service.

6 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

6.1 Overview

It is recognised that a key element of the service planning process is the rational review of past performance. In the formulation of this service plan a review has been conducted of performance against those targets established for the year 2021/22.

This service plan will be reviewed at the conclusion of the year 2022/23 and at any point during the year where significant legislative changes or other relevant factors occur during the year.

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Director (Regulatory Services) to carry out that review with the Director of Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services.

The service plan review will identify any shortfalls in service delivery and will inform decisions about future staffing and resource allocation, service standards, targets and priorities.

Following any review leading to proposed revision of the service plan Council approval will be sought.

6.2 Performance Review 2021/22

This section describes performance of the service in key areas during 2021/22.

6.2.1 Intervention Programme

Ordinarily our target is to complete 100% of the intervention programme for food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs. These are extremely challenging targets. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Food Standards Agency issued guidance throughout the pandemic advising Local Authorities as to what they could and could not inspect. Many of the planned visits to food businesses were suspended and as such it was not possible to complete the intervention programme for food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs. This enabled the work area to focus on the COVID-19 response and meant that the usual statutory requirements in relation to food hygiene inspections were amended as the year progressed.

The service complied with directions issued by the Food Standards Agency targeting its resources on the highest risk premises. The response to COVID-19 has required officers to lead on work relating to advice, education and ultimately, enforcement, to both businesses and residents and contact tracing.

There were minimal food hygiene inspections placed upon the Council 21/22 and the focus was on completing interventions outlined in the FSA Road Map.

During the year we successfully completed 252 food hygiene, 202 food standards and 5 feed hygiene interventions. (In 2020/21 40 food hygiene interventions, 28 food standards and 5 feed hygiene interventions were completed).

We met our 2 working day response time for all complaints.

6.2.2 Registration and Approval of Premises

During 2021/22, 156 new food businesses were registered. This was an increase on the previous year when 98 were registered and reflected the fact that many businesses started trading from domestic premises or changed their trading practices.

Two premises subject to approval were inspected and given relevant guidance.

6.2.3 Food Sampling Programme

Routine sampling did not take place in 2020/21 and 2021/22 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However 8 samples were taken of beverages manufactured by a new business. All were deemed to be Satisfactory.

Sampling also continued in relation to private drinking water used by a brewery. The results of the samples taken were all satisfactory.

Programmed food sampling will recommence in 2022/23 focussing on issues of public safety and taking account of local and national priorities.

6.2.4 Food Inspection

The service undertook no formal seizure of unfit food in the year.

6.2.5 Promotional Work

Food safety promotion whether by advice, education, training or other means is a key part of the food team's strategy in changing behaviour and increasing compliance in businesses.

In February 2006 the Food Standards Agency introduced Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) aimed at assisting smaller catering businesses to introduce a documented food safety management system. Since this time our resources have been directed towards continuing to assist businesses to fully implement a documented food safety management system.

Whilst face to face interventions have been disrupted for much of the year the team has continued to offer tailored advice and information on request with 20 advisory visits to businesses being carried out during the year.

Circular letters are issued as required to inform food business operators of food safety matters relevant to their operations e.g. changes in legislation, food alerts and guidance on re-opening their businesses.

6.2.6 Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

On 1st April 2012 Hartlepool Council introduced the 'Food Hygiene Rating Scheme' (FHRS); a Food Standards Agency / local authority partnership initiative to help consumers choose where to eat out, or shop for food. The 'Food Law Code of Practice', requires that a risk rating is undertaken which is used to determine the frequency of intervention for the business. The hygiene rating is derived from the risk rating which is given to a business following every 'primary' inspection.

Of the seven main categories used to determine the overall rating score the following three factors are used to create a hygiene rating:

1. Food Hygiene and Safety
2. Structure and Cleaning
3. Management and Control

These ratings are the only ones that are directly controllable by the business and are the reason they have been used to obtain the food business' hygiene rating.

The total score from the 3 categories is then used to derive the hygiene rating ranging from '0' ('Urgent improvement necessary') through to '5' ('Very Good'). The profile of the premises ratings is shown overleaf.

Hygiene Rating	No @ 1.4.13	No @ 1.4.14	No @ 1.4.15	No @ 1.4.16	No @ 1.4.17	No @ 1.4.18	No @ 1.4.19	No @ 1.4.20	No @ 1.4.21	No @ 1.4.22
5 Very Good	434 (60.9%)	456 (66.7%)	471 (68.3%)	502 (72.2%)	539 (76.9%)	561 (80.6%)	580 (82.9%)	596 (83.9%)	587 (73.2%)	688 (87.3%)
4 Good	164 (23.0%)	149 (21.8%)	136 (19.7%)	125 (18.0%)	107 (15.3%)	101 (14.5%)	76 (10.9%)	77 (10.8%)	72 (9%)	64 (8.1%)
3 Generally Satisfactory	63 (8.9%)	63 (9.2%)	56 (8.1%)	55 (7.9%)	43 (6.1%)	28 (4.0%)	38 (5.4%)	36 (5.1%)	32 (4%)	35 (4.4%)
2 Improvement Necessary	22 (3.1%)	9 (1.3%)	18 (2.6%)	8 (1.2%)	10 (1.4%)	4 (0.6%)	3 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.1%)
1 Major Improvement Necessary	13 (1.8%)	7 (1.0%)	9 (1.3%)	3 (0.4%)	2 (0.3%)	2 (0.3%)	3 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
0 Urgent Improvement Necessary	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Awaiting Inspection	17 (2.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.01%)	111 (13.8%)	0 (0%)
Sub Total	713	684	690	695	701	696	700	710	802	788

'Exempt'	49	45	44	45	42	42	37	39	39	39
'Excluded'	9	10	10	1	1	10	12	2	2	8
Sensitive	32	32	1	8	9	1	1	10	10	2
Total	803	771	745	749	753	749	750	761	853	837

Year on year the profile has improved with 99.9% of premises inspected during 2021/22 having received a hygiene rating of '3' ('Generally Satisfactory') and above. Fewer inspections have been undertaken during the past 2 years so it is hard to know the true impact of the pandemic on food hygiene ratings, however it is anticipated that the standards in some businesses may have fallen.

The service is committed to focussing its resources on carrying out interventions at those businesses which are deemed not to be 'broadly compliant' and has liaised with businesses that have been awarded a hygiene rating of '2' or less offering advice and support. Where appropriate, enforcement action will be taken to secure compliance.

Under the FHRS there is a procedure which affords food business operators the opportunity to request a re-visit inspection once they have taken action to rectify non-compliances identified during an inspection. At the re-visit the establishment may be re-assessed and given a new hygiene rating.

During 21/22, 9 businesses submitted applications for a re-rating. Further information is provided in **6.2.7**.

The food hygiene ratings are published online at www.food.gov.uk/ratings

In total 47 establishments were considered to be 'exempt' (39) or 'excluded' (8) from the scope of the FHRS and as such they may not be rated. These are those who either do not supply food directly to consumers e.g. manufacturers or packers, or 'low risk establishments' which are not generally recognised by

consumers as being a food business e.g. establishments like chemists or newsagents selling pre-packed confectionery amongst a range of goods.

Certain establishments operating from private addresses are classed as 'sensitive'. These are mainly childminders, but can include other establishments where caring services are being provided in the home environment as part of a family unit (as opposed to residential care). These establishments should not be rated.

6.2.7 FHRs Re-rating & Promotional visits

During 2021/22 officers worked closely with food business operators to improve food hygiene standards in our lowest rated premises. During the year 9 businesses submitted applications for a FHRs re-rating.

These businesses were re-inspected in accordance with the FHRs and all demonstrated an improvement in standards. Two improved from a 4 to a 5, one from a 3 to 5, one from a 2 to a 5, three from a 1 to a 5, one from a 1 to a 4 and one from a 2 to a 3.

On 1st April 2018 we introduced a dual system for dealing with re-rating requests. This system was agreed by the five constituent members of the Tees Valley Food Liaison Group.

The scheme enables food businesses to apply for one free re-rating revisit (as per the original scheme). To qualify they must have carried out the necessary improvements to their business and be willing to wait a minimum of three months from their last inspection (this period is known as a 'stand still' period). Businesses can elect to pay £150 if they wish to be inspected within three months of their inspection. They are also eligible to submit more than one application to be re-rated if they pay the £150 fee. During 21/22 no businesses elected to pay for a re-rating inspection.

6.2.8 Food / Feed Complaints

During the year the service dealt with 74 complaints relating to the condition of food premises and/or food handling practice (this was a significant increase on previous years, for example during 2019/20 27 complaints were received). In addition, 30 complaints were received regarding unfit or out of condition food or extraneous matter. A further 27 complaints concerning the composition or labelling of food items were received. No complaints were received regarding animal feeding stuffs. Investigations into the above were undertaken within our target of 2 working days.

6.2.9 Food Poisoning

During the pandemic there was a significant fall in the number of non COVID infectious disease notifications received. The majority of these notifications related to cases of *Campylobacter*; all of which appeared to be sporadic (isolated) cases.

Campylobacter is the most common bacterial cause of food poisoning in England and Wales. National data shows that while the incidence of *Salmonella* infections has steadily declined since the late 1990s those caused by *Campylobacter* had significantly increased. As a result in recent years the FSA and UKHSA has been spearheading campaigns to address this.

6.2.10 Food Safety Incidents

The Service received Food Alerts and a number of Product Recall/Withdrawal notifications and Allergy Alerts from the Food Standards Agency during the year. All Food Alerts requiring action were dealt with expeditiously.

The Service also receives reports from the FSA regarding incidents involving food fraud, which may present a risk to health and require immediate investigation. Many of these relate to illicit alcohol due to the chemicals used as a substitution for genuine alcohol. In addition intelligence is received from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) regarding counterfeit alcohol.

6.2.11 Enforcement

No formal enforcement was undertaken in relation to official food controls during the year, however 2 voluntary closures of food premises occurred as a result of unsatisfactory hygiene standards.

6.2.12 COVID-19 Response

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the Public Protection Division in 2020/21 until restrictions were lifted in 2022 with most officers having to spend some, or all, of their time giving advice to the general public/traders, dealing with complaints regarding various issues such as shops being open when they should not be or a lack of social distancing etc. Officers also undertook local contact tracing and were heavily involved in outbreak management.

6.2.13 Complaints against Our Staff/Service

No complaints were made against our staff during 2021/22.

7. KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT & CHALLENGES FOR 2022/23

In addition to committing the service to specific operational activities such as performance of the intervention programme, the service planning process assists in highlighting areas where improvement is desirable. Detailed below are specifically identified key areas for improvement that are to be progressed during 2022/23.

1. The outbreak, and continued impact, of COVID-19 had a significant impact on service delivery for the Public Protection Service, which was given shared responsibility for ensuring business compliance with COVID-19 requirements whilst having to continue to monitor, enforce and engage with the trade in a COVID secure manner.

The service will need to address its backlog of overdue inspections in accordance with Food Standards Agency (FSA) direction. The FSA has introduced a 2 year recovery programme which we will need to have regard to. We will also need to address any fall in standards and where necessary this may involve taking enforcement action.

2. We will continue to explore how we can contribute to the Public Health Outcomes Framework and funding streams to support this area of work.
3. We will continue to seek additional income streams to supplement our budget.
4. We will need to keep abreast of and respond to any changes to legislation, guidance and policy decision and monitor the impacts of any changes to the regulatory framework. We will review and update our Quality Management System/Standard Operating Procedures for Food and Feed as appropriate.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th June 2022



Report of: Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services

Subject: TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE PLAN 2022/23

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To approve the Trading Standards Service Plan for 2022/23.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Trading Standards operates within the Public Protection Department and has a wide range of enforcement responsibilities including product safety, underage sales, weights and measures, and counterfeiting. It also plays a significant role in, amongst other things, the detection and prevention of doorstep crime, illicit tobacco, cowboy roofers and builders, and other scams.

3.2 Trading Standards publish an annual Service Plan detailing the previous performance of the Service, the main challenges facing it and a plan of work to be undertaken in the forthcoming year.

3.3 The Service Plan details the Trading Standards priorities for 2022/23 and highlights how these priorities will be addressed.

3.4 The Service Plan for 2022/23 is attached as **Appendix 1**.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 The Service Plan for 2022/23 has been updated to reflect last year's performance and reflect changes in Service demand.

4.2 The Plan covers the following:

- (i) Service Aims and Objectives;
- (ii) The scope and demands on the Trading Standards Service;
- (iii) Service delivery, including intervention programmes, service requests, complaints, advice, liaison and promotion;
- (iv) Resources, including financial allocation, staff allocation and staff development; and
- (v) A review of performance for 2021/22.

5. SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES RAISED IN THE PLAN

5.1 Prioritising Service Delivery – Resources are allocated in accordance with identified priorities. In 2022/23 these will be:

5.2 High Priority

5.2.1 *Rogue Traders* – Doorstep crime, cowboy builders and other types of scams can cost local residents hundreds, or even thousands, of pounds. Trading Standards work closely with a number of agencies to help protect the vulnerable from this type of crime.

5.2.2 *Scams and Cons* – Unscrupulous traders routinely prey on the vulnerable and elderly by taking advantage of their goodwill. Most people regularly receive unsolicited letters or e-mails offering services that are ‘too good to be true’. Sadly, on some occasions, consumers are drawn into these scams and pay for goods or services that either never arrive, or are not what was initially described. In many cases, making one purchase opens up the consumer to many, many other scams and therefore problems can escalate even more. Trading Standards aim to identify common scams and notify consumers through press releases and other mass media.

5.2.3 *Product Safety* – Consumers are entitled to assume that all products they purchase will be safe. Trading Standards is responsible for the monitoring, sampling and testing of consumer products to ensure they do not pose a risk.

5.3 Medium Priority

5.3.1 Those subject areas identified as ‘medium priority’ are still cause for significant concern, but are considered to offer a lesser degree of harm (to health and/or wealth) for the general public than those other issues identified as ‘high priority’.

5.3.2 *Tackling Underage Sales* – The illegal sale of alcohol and other age-

restricted products to children not only contributes significantly towards anti-social behaviour in Hartlepool, but can also represent a serious risk to the health and well-being of the children involved.

- 5.3.3 Underage sales has moved from being a high priority to a medium priority following a reduction in complaints from the general public (30 complaints in 2015 and only 5 in 2021/22) and a significant investment of time and resources over recent years to educate retailers about their obligations and the consequences of non-compliance.
- 5.3.4 *Counterfeiting and illicit tobacco* – The illegal copying and distribution of intellectual property such as computer software, designer clothing and jewellery continues to be a significant issue in Hartlepool. Counterfeiting is bad for business – it takes money away from local retailers who sell genuine products and puts it into the hands of local and national criminals – with little or no local benefit for the Borough. Counterfeiting is often carried out by large organised crime units who are also engaged in other types of criminal activity such as drugs and smuggling.
- 5.3.5 Trading Standards works closely with HMRC, the Police and trade mark holders to identify and prosecute those who sell counterfeit products.
- 5.3.6 *Animal Welfare* – The Trading Standards Team is responsible for carrying out animal welfare checks at farms and other similar establishments. This work is important both for the welfare of the animals, and also for public health, as many of the animals are bred for human consumption.
- 5.3.7 In addition, there has been a significant local, regional and national increase in complaints about illegal puppy farms. Puppies can now cost more than £2,500 each and have become a focus for organised crime groups as well as others who simply see the profit to be made from breeding and selling as many litters as possible.
- 5.3.8 Dog breeding is a licensable activity, administered by the Council's Licensing Team, but as the element of criminality has increased, it is now appropriate for Trading Standards to take an investigative role to identify those illegally profiting from this trade.
- 5.3.9 As such, animal welfare is a priority area for the Trading Standards Team in 2022/23.

5.4 Low Priority

- 5.4.1 *False Descriptions* – Most consumer purchases are made on the basis of the description they are given by either the manufacturer or retailer. In some cases descriptions are deliberately or negligently misleading – causing consumers to make purchase decisions that they may not have made otherwise. Once money has been handed over it can, on occasion, be very difficult to get back other than to go through the court system. Trading

Standards investigates complaints about traders who falsely describe goods and look for the accuracy of descriptions during routine interventions.

- 5.4.2 *Weights and Measures* – Many products are still sold by either weight or by length and consumers expect that they will receive the quantity stated. For some products, such as petrol, the value of goods is so high that even a small error in the accuracy of a measuring machine may lead to significant consumer loss.
- 5.4.3 Trading Standards officers are ‘Weights and Measures Inspectors’ and routinely carry out checks on weighing and measuring equipment.
- 5.4.4 *Misleading Pricing* – Most products are now sold with no price marking on them – bar codes having replaced price stickers. This has made it extremely difficult to check whether the price stated on a shelf is actually the price charged at the checkout. For some purchases, there may be ‘hidden extras’ that can significantly inflate the final price of goods or services.

5.5 Responding to Change

- 5.5.1 As the retail environment continues to change, Trading Standards is required to remain vigilant and respond to new threats and challenges. The continued growth of internet sales means that Trading Standards must now monitor the *virtual* High Street and ensure that consumers remain protected.

5.6 Social Media

- 5.6.1 Whereas counterfeit goods were once only found at car boot sales or from the ‘back of a lorry’, social media has now become a significant source of illegal goods.
- 5.6.2 Trading Standards in Hartlepool has its own social media profile whereby sites that are suspected of selling counterfeit goods receive a Trading Standards ‘post’ informing the account holder, and anyone visiting the site, that Trading Standards are monitoring the site.
- 5.6.3 While this approach usually has an immediate positive impact, some social media users have responded by changing the way in which their accounts operate and interact with potential purchasers. Trading Standards has, in turn, had to adapt its approach in order to continue its monitoring of this growing sales platform.
- 5.6.4 The Trading Standards Service has a ‘standalone’ computer that can be used to monitor social media and other websites without giving away their identity. Where problems are identified traders are contacted and, where appropriate, test purchases can be made to establish whether legal requirements are being complied with. In some cases, this is followed up by the seizure of criminal property and other evidence.

5.7 Protecting the Vulnerable

- 5.7.1 Trading Standards has continued to promote No Cold Call Zones as a means of reducing the number of traders that visit people on their doorsteps. Since 2016, the number of zones has increased from 7 to 54 and over 11,000 ‘Say No to Doorstep Traders’ stickers have been issued, free of charge, to local residents.
- 5.7.2 The Service has been working closely with other Council departments and external organisations such as banks and post offices, to ensure that they are aware of the risks that rogue traders can pose to their clients and what can be done to help them.
- 5.7.3 A significant amount of work has also been undertaken in relation to mail order and telephone scams with free ‘call blockers’ being supplied to those considered most vulnerable.
- 5.7.4 As victims can sometimes become repeat targets, Trading Standards Officers can install covert CCTV cameras into victim’s homes in order to provide some reassurance and help identify any rogue traders who return.

5.8 Public Health

- 5.8.1 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the team was not able to use underage volunteers to carry out underage sales test purchases in 2021/22, however officers have made a number of successful purchases of counterfeit and illicit tobacco – in one case, resulting in the closure of the International Food Store in Murray Street.
- 5.8.2 Test purchasing was also used to confirm a complaint that another store was illegally selling a type of disposable vape called a ‘geek bar pro’.
- 5.8.3 Test purchasing, and the use of underage volunteers to identify premises selling age restricted products to children, will continue throughout 2022/23.

5.9 Enforcement Action

- 5.9.1 On some occasions, formal legal action is taken against traders.

6. **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Risk Implications	No relevant issues
Financial Considerations	No relevant issues
Child/Family Poverty Considerations	No relevant issues
Staff Considerations	No relevant issues
Asset Management Considerations	No relevant issues
Legal Considerations	No relevant issues
Consultation	No relevant issues
Equality and Diversity Considerations	No relevant issues

Economy, Sustainability & Climate Change	No relevant issues
--	--------------------

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That Neighbourhood Services Committee approves the Trading Standards Service Plan for 2022/23.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Trading Standards Service Plan sets out the priorities for, and methods of, service delivery in 2022/23.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 There are no background papers for this report.

10. CONTACT OFFICER

Tony Hanson
Director of Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services
Civic Centre
Hartlepool Borough Council
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523301
E-mail: tony.hanson@hartlepool.gov.uk

Ian Harrison
Trading Standards & Licensing Manager

Tel: (01429) 523349
Email: ian.Harrison@hartlepool.gov.uk



Hartlepool Borough Council

Trading Standards Service Plan

2022/23

TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE PLAN 2022/23

INTRODUCTION

1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Overall Vision
- 1.2 Service Aims and Objectives
- 1.3 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Profile of the Local Authority
- 2.2 Organisational Structure
- 2.3 Scope of the Trading Standards Service
- 2.4 Demands on the Trading Standards Service
- 2.5 Intelligence Operating Model
- 2.6 Enforcement Policy

3. SERVICE DELIVERY

- 3.1 Proactive Work
- 3.2 Trading Standards Interventions
- 3.3 Advice & Guidance
- 3.4 Acting as Statutory Consultee
- 3.5 Local programmes/initiatives
- 3.6 E-Crime
- 3.7 Sampling
- 3.8 Test Purchasing
- 3.9 Reactive Work
- 3.10 Complaints and Requests for Service
- 3.11 Liaison Arrangements
- 3.12 Regional Enforcement
- 3.13 Primary Authority Scheme

4. RESOURCES

- 4.1 Financial
- 4.2 Staffing Allocation
- 4.3 Staff Development
- 4.4 Equipment and Facilities
- 4.5 Working with Others

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

6. PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2021/22

- 6.1 Overview
- 6.2 Public Health
- 6.3 Underage Sales
- 6.4 E-Crime
- 6.5 Sampling

- 6.6 Promotional / Campaign Work
- 6.7 Doorstep Crime
- 6.8 Serious Violence and Knife Crime
- 6.9 Formal Enforcement Action
- 6.10 Responding to Complaints
- 6.11 Covid Response
- 6.12 Complaints against our Staff

7. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT / KEY CHALLENGES FOR 2022/23

INTRODUCTION

This Service Plan details how the Trading Standards Service will be delivered by Hartlepool Borough Council.

Whilst focussing primarily on the year 2022/23, longer-term objectives are identified where relevant. Additionally, there is a review of performance for 2021/22 and this aims to inform decisions about how best to build on past successes and address performance gaps.

The Plan is reviewed annually and previous plans have been approved by the Neighbourhood Services Committee.

1 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Overall Vision

The Council's overall vision is that Hartlepool will be a place...

- Where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives;
- Where those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm;
- Of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all;
- With a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community;
- That has an inclusive and growing economy; and
- That is sustainable, clean, safe and green.

1.2 Service Aims and Objectives

Hartlepool Borough Council aims:

- To carry out our enforcement duties and deliver high quality services through the efficient and effective use of resources;
- To supplement our enforcement role by providing targeted education and advice;
- To encourage innovation through actively seeking out best practice and working in partnership with other agencies;
- To actively contribute towards achieving nationally agreed strategic aims and objectives; and

- To ensure our actions are consistent, proportionate and targeted and that we are transparent and open about what we do.

In its delivery of the service the Council will have regard to directions and examples of best practice as disseminated by Local Government Regulation, Chartered Trading Standards Institute and Central Government.

1.3 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

This service plan fits into the hierarchy of the Council's planning process as follows:

- Hartlepool's Community Strategy - the Local Strategic Partnerships (the Safer Hartlepool Partnership) and the Health and Wellbeing Board
- Public Protection Service Plan
- Trading Standards Service Plan - sets out how the Council aims to deliver this statutory service and the Trading Standards Service's contribution to corporate objectives.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Hartlepool is located on the north-east coast of England to the north of the River Tees. The Borough consists of the main town of Hartlepool, the seaside resort of Seaton Carew and a number of small outlying villages. The total area of the Borough is 9,390 hectares. The residential population is 92,028 of which ethnic minorities comprise 3.4% (2011 census).

Hartlepool is a unitary authority, providing a full range of services. To the south of Hartlepool is the wider Teesside conurbation which includes the boroughs of Middlesbrough, Stockton on Tees and Redcar and Cleveland, and which together with Hartlepool and Darlington makes up the Tees Valley sub-region. Bordering Hartlepool to the north is the administrative area of County Durham.

The borough has a long and proud history, with the original settlement of Hartlepool dating back to Saxon times. Originally an important religious settlement the town's early development resulted from the existence of a safe harbour and its role as a port for the city of Durham and subsequent grant of a Royal Charter from King John in 1201.

The main phase of Hartlepool's expansion took place from the mid 19th Century with the building of a new railway and docks to serve the export of coal. The town continued to expand over the next 100 years as port trade increased and the development of heavy industries including steel making, shipbuilding and manufacturing. Like most industrialised towns in the north of

England, Hartlepool has suffered over the last half century from structural reform of these industries and the town has had to look for new opportunities to diversify the economy.

Over the past 20 years Hartlepool has experienced some transformational changes through public and private investment. This has included the transformation of the former South Docks area into a fabulous 500-berth marina where the town hosted The Tall Ships Race in 2010 and will be hosting it again in 2023.

2.2 Organisational Structure

Under the Council's governance arrangements, most day-to-day decisions are taken by five Policy Committees. These Policy Committees cover the following main service areas: -

- Finance and Policy Committee
- Adult & Community Based Services Committee
- Children's Services Committee
- Neighbourhood Services Committee
- Regeneration Services Committee

The Neighbourhood Services Committee provides political oversight for Trading Standards law enforcement.

The Council is made up of four Departments:

- Resources & Development
- Childrens and Joint Commissioning Services
- Adults and Community Based Services
- Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services

The Trading Standards Service Plan is delivered through the Public Protection Division contained within the Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services Department.

2.3 Scope of the Trading Standards Service

Service delivery broadly comprises:

- Investigating complaints relating to consumer protection issues;
- Carrying out programmed test purchase exercises to monitor trader compliance with relevant legislation – including underage sales;
- Taking samples of consumer products for testing and analysis
- Carrying out programmed interventions;
- Providing advice and information to both consumers and traders;
- Taking action (formal and informal) to ensure compliance with legislation;
- Acting as a statutory consultee for applications made under the Licensing Act 2003;

- Ensuring appropriate standards of animal welfare at farms and other relevant premises; and
- Enforcing smoke free legislation in public places;

To achieve its strategic aims and objectives it is necessary to work in partnership with other organisations and agencies such as local authorities, Cleveland Police, Her Majesties Revenues & Customs (HMRC) and local businesses. The Council aims to ensure that these joint working arrangements are in place and that officers of the Service contribute, and are committed to, the ongoing development of these arrangements.

2.4 Demands on the Trading Standards Service

The Trading Standards Service is the principal enforcing authority for approximately 500 statutory instruments relating to consumer protection.

Periodically, the Service carries out a public survey to identify what priority the general public believes should be given to its main responsibilities. The most recent survey, carried out in 2014, highlighted the following: -

		Very high priority %	High priority %	Medium priority %	Low priority %	Very low priority %	Overall score (Priority order) %
A	Underage sales (e.g. cigarettes, solvents, alcohol) (N=1362)	59	28	10	2	1	85 (3)
B	Toy and product safety (1338)	38	38	19	5	0.8	77 (5)
C	Weights and measures (e.g. short weights) (N=1307)	21	32	35	9	2	65 (9)
D	Counterfeit goods (e.g. pirate videos, computer games) (N=1347)	29	29	30	9	3	68 (8)
E	Rogue traders (e.g. cowboy builders, bogus charities & persistent problem traders) (N=1352)	72	23	3	0.5	0.6	91 (1)
F	False description on goods and services (e.g. car clocking & holiday brochures) (N=1358)	34	37	23	5	1	75 (6)
G	Misleading prices and bogus sale events (N=1349)	33	36	24	5	1	74 (7)
H	Loan sharks and consumer credit (N=1343)	66	21	9	3	1	87 (2)
I	Phoney prize winning letters and home working scams (N=1359)	54	25	14	6	1	81 (4)

It can be seen from the above that the majority of Trading Standards functions were considered by the general public to be either high or very high priority.

With limited resources it is necessary to prioritise proactive work and this has been done by the development of a 'Resource Allocation Matrix'. This takes account of a range of factors including public concerns (as identified above), business concerns, degree of risk to the public, complaint trends, government concerns at a national level (as expressed through the National Trading Standards Board) and local councillors concerns – each of which helps establish which enforcement areas should take priority over others.

Due to a significant increase in both the number and seriousness of complaints regarding 'scams and cons', and a reduction in the number of complaints about 'underage sales', scams has now moved from being a medium priority to a high priority issue whilst underage sales has moved from high to medium.

In addition, the responsibility for enforcement against loan sharks has moved to the national Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) and local Trading Standards no longer have a direct responsibility in this year. As such, 'loan sharks' has been withdrawn from the list of priorities for 2022/23 and has been replaced with 'animal welfare'.

'Animal welfare' applies to the welfare of animals on places such as farms where Trading Standards Officers have a statutory duty to carry out inspections and also includes other areas such as the illegal breeding and sale of dogs and puppies which has become an increasingly serious issue in recent years.

The current priority areas for the Trading Standards Service are: -

High Priority

Rogue Traders – Doorstep crime, cowboy builders and other types of scam can cost local residents hundreds or even thousands of pounds. Trading Standards work closely with a number of agencies to help protect the vulnerable from this type of crime.

Scams and Cons – Unscrupulous traders routinely prey on the vulnerable and elderly by taking advantage of their goodwill. Most people regularly receive unsolicited letters or e-mails offering services that are 'too good to be true'. Sadly, on some occasions, consumers are drawn into these scams and pay for goods or services that either never arrive or are not what was initially described. In many cases, making one purchase opens up the consumer to many other scams and problems can escalate. Trading Standards aims to identify common scams and notify consumers through press releases and other mass media.

Where a company can be identified, formal action would be commenced against them.

Product Safety – Consumers are entitled to assume that all products they purchase will be safe. Trading Standards is responsible for the monitoring, sampling and testing of consumer products to ensure they do not pose a risk.

Medium Priority

Tackling Underage Sales - The illegal sale of alcohol and other age-restricted products to children not only contributes significantly towards anti-social behaviour in Hartlepool but can also represent a serious risk to the health and well-being of the children involved.

Trading Standards and licensing officers work closely with Cleveland Police and other agencies to target premises that are thought to sell to children and uses underage volunteers to identify where offences are being committed.

Counterfeiting and illicit tobacco – The illegal copying of DVD's, computer software, designer clothing and jewellery continue to be a significant issue in Hartlepool. Counterfeiting is bad for business – it takes money away from local retailers who sell genuine products and puts it into the hands of local and national criminals with little or no local benefit for the town. Counterfeiting is often carried out by large organised crime units who are also engaged in other types of criminal activity such as drugs and smuggling.

Trading Standards works closely with HMRC, the Police and trade mark holders to identify and prosecute those who sell counterfeit products.

Animal Welfare – Trading Standards Officers are responsible for carrying out inspections of farm premises to ensure that animals that may end up in the food chain are looked after correctly. There has also been a significant increase in the illegal sale of puppies as a result of the very high prices that are now being charged (commonly £2000 per puppy for many breeds).

Low Priority

Weights and Measures – Many products are still sold by either weight or by length and consumers expect that they will receive the quantity stated. For some products, such as petrol, the value of goods is so high that even a small error in the accuracy of a measuring machine may lead to significant consumer loss.

Trading Standards officers are 'Weights and Measures Inspectors' and routinely carry out checks on weighing and measuring equipment.

Due to the specialist nature of weights and measures compliance, an arrangement has been entered into with Durham County Council for them to undertake inspections at factory sites and other premises in Hartlepool where specialist testing equipment is required.

Misleading Pricing – Most products are now sold with no price marking on them bar codes having replaced price stickers. This has made it extremely difficult to check whether the price stated on a shelf is actually the price charged at the checkout. For some purchases, there may be ‘hidden extras’ that can significantly inflate the final price of goods or services.

Trading Standards staff routinely check the accuracy of price indications in shops and respond to complaints about misleading price indications.

False Descriptions – Most consumer purchases are made on the basis of the description they are given by either the manufacturer or retailer. In some cases descriptions are deliberately or negligently misleading – causing consumers to make purchase decisions that they may not have made otherwise. Once money has been handed over it can, on occasion, be very difficult to get back other than to go through the court system. Trading Standards investigates complaints about traders who falsely describe goods and look for the accuracy of descriptions during routine interventions.

2.5 Intelligence Operating Model

In addition to the identification of local priorities, the Trading Standards Service also contributes towards the development of regional and national priorities through Regional and National Tasking Groups.

The purpose of these groups is to identify those specific areas of concern that have a cross border impact and which, if tackled on a regional or national level, can benefit consumers everywhere.

The Intelligence Operating Model introduces a national intelligence framework to support regional and national enforcement through the collection and utilisation of information and data to inform work planning processes. Hartlepool Trading Standards will continue to both contribute and benefit from this Model.

2.6 Enforcement Policy

Hartlepool Borough Council adopted its current Enforcement Policy in 2021. Supplementary to this, there is a Public Protection Enforcement Policy that deals with those enforcement issues specific, or unique, to the service.

The Trading Standards Service will take account of the 2014 Regulator’s Code when carrying out its interactions with the business community.

3 SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Proactive Work

3.2 Trading Standards Interventions

As pressure on the Service has continued to grow in areas such as doorstep crime, the ability to maintain a high level of routine inspections has been seriously challenged. As such, proactive inspections will be targeted where consumer risk is considered to be high because of intelligence received; a high numbers of complaints etc; or where new businesses have been established that may well not be fully aware of their duties and responsibilities.

On-line retailing continues to flourish and therefore it is necessary to monitor internet retailers to ensure consumers are receiving a fair deal and that products are safe.

Opening a line of communication with new businesses early will ensure that they can set up their operations as efficiently and effectively as possible without having to 'catch up' with their legal compliance at a later date.

Information on premises liable to Trading Standards interventions is held on the APP computer system. An intervention programme is produced from this system at the commencement of each reporting year.

It is anticipated that consistent, high quality programmed interventions by the Service will, over time, result in a general improvement in standards, reducing the frequency for recourse to formal action.

Revisits will be carried out to check compliance where contraventions have been identified.

3.3 Advice and Guidance

The Trading Standards Service works closely with the national Consumer Advice helpline which is now being operated by the Citizen's Advice Bureau, to provide a comprehensive advice and guidance service. Consumers in need of advice regarding the civil law will be serviced by Citizen's Advice but where issues are raised that may have a broader local impact, or there may be a criminal element to the complaint, the local Trading Standards Service will be alerted and, if appropriate, an investigation commenced.

In most cases the Trading Standards Service will look to work in partnership with local businesses to ensure they are fully aware of their legal obligations and how best to achieve legal compliance. Such advice is offered free of charge and can be made available at a time to suit the trader.

Trading Standards staff also regularly provide advice sessions to local community groups on issues such as doorstep crime, rogue traders and ‘the work of Trading Standards’.

Recent surveys carried out by the Government have indicated that businesses and retailers value visits by Trading Standards staff as being an important source of up to date advice and information.

The Council considers that assistance to business, in order to help them to comply with the requirements of legislation, is one of our core activities. For Trading Standards issues the Council has a policy of offering comprehensive advice to any business for which it is, or is likely to become, the enforcing authority.

Advice will be available during the course of routine visits and interventions, through information leaflets and booklets, in response to queries and through the Council’s website.

3.4 Acting as Statutory Consultee

Trading Standards is a statutory ‘Responsible Authority’ under the Licensing Act 2003. This means that every application for a licence to supply alcohol or offer other regulated entertainment must be submitted to the Trading Standards Service who will consider the application in terms of its likely impact on the Act’s ‘licensing objectives’. For Trading Standards this primarily means the protection of children from harm and officers use their expertise in detecting and preventing underage sales to work with prospective licensees and ensure operating procedures are put in place to prevent the sale of alcohol to children.

3.5 Local programmes/initiatives

Trading Standards will be conducting a range of projects and surveys during 2022/23 in order to improve consumer protection and to raise consumer confidence. These will include: -

Protecting the Most Vulnerable – Complaints continue about rogue roofers, cowboy builders and telephone/postal scams that have targeted the elderly and vulnerable and scammed them out of money for poor quality or, sometimes, non-existent work and non-existent prize money.

Trading Standards officers will continue to work to raise awareness amongst targeted groups and identify and prosecute the traders involved.

Due to the significant impact on victims, temporary funding is being used to continue to provide an officer who will develop a series of measures aimed at helping people to help themselves and to educate and inform agencies and organisations who can provide support.

This officer works closely with agencies and organisations such as the Police, Social Workers, banks, building societies and Post Offices.

In addition, the Team continues to work with the Police and local banks to promote the national 'Banking Protocol'. The protocol involves training bank staff to recognise when their customers may be the victim of an ongoing scam and where appropriate they can dial 999 and the local Police force has committed to treat the incident as an emergency – sending officers/Trading Standards Officers direct to the bank to assist.

The Trading Standards Team will also continue to promote No Cold Call Zones and set them up where there is an identified demand. At the end of 2021/22 Hartlepool had 54 NCCZ's (an increase from just 7 in 2016) and there is a target that five more will be created during 2022/23.

Officers will continue to offer awareness raising presentations to neighbourhood and community groups and will promote the 'No Cold Calling' stickers that are available free of charge.

The Trading Standards Team works closely with the National Scams Team which provides details of Hartlepool consumers who have been found on scammer's databases. Trading Standards Officers will continue to contact and offer support to victims identified this way.

3.6 E-Crime – Using the internet to buy goods and services is now commonplace and rogue traders have used this as an opportunity to sell counterfeit and dangerous goods to the unsuspecting public.

Trading Standards secured national funding to purchase specialist equipment that allows local officers to identify and target rogue e-traders operating in Hartlepool.

Officers will be conducting regular monitoring of internet sites that have a Hartlepool connection and, working with other agencies, specifically the Regional Investigations Team, test purchases will be made to generate evidence for formal legal action where such steps are considered appropriate.

Social media sites have become a popular forum for the sale of counterfeit goods and, in response, the Trading Standards Service has created a Facebook 'profile'. Suspected sellers of counterfeit goods receive a 'post' from Trading Standards advising that their activities are being monitored.

This acts as a deterrent for those sellers who had not considered the potential consequences of their activities. For those who ignore the warnings, Trading Standards is able to have sites 'taken down' by Facebook. For those who continue to trade using alternative pages, investigation and prosecution will follow.

3.7 Sampling

In order to protect the public it is essential that potential problems, particularly safety related, can be identified before they cause damage or harm.

One way of achieving this is through the regular sampling of consumer products to ensure they comply with relevant safety standards or with the descriptions being applied to them.

Product Safety – Trading Standards will be purchasing a wide range of consumer products to test for compliance with appropriate safety standards. Products to be tested are usually identified as a consequence of national issues or on products that have a history of problems. Testing during 2022/23 will concentrate on product safety.

3.8 Test Purchasing

Trading Standards (or underage volunteers under the supervision of Trading Standards officers) will carry out test purchases at premises where there is reason to suspect that illegal activity may be taking place.

Test purchasing establishes whether a trader is engaging in a certain activity, the way in which they do it and provides the best possible evidence for potential formal action.

Test purchasing has been carried out at several premises suspected of selling counterfeit or illicit tobacco and helped generate the evidence needed to successfully obtain a three month closure order against the *International Food Store* in Murray Street.

Following a complaint that *Charlies* in Duke Street was selling illegal disposable vapes (known as ‘geek bar pro’s’), an 18 year old volunteer was sent into the shop to see what she could buy. She was sold an illegal product and also, despite her age, was not asked to produce any evidence to prove her age despite vaping products being age restricted.

As a result of this, Trading Standards officers made an application to review the alcohol licence of *Charlies* based on the concern that if there was no age verification check for one age restricted product there would likely be nothing for alcohol. The resulting licensing hearing resulted a number of additional conditions being added to the licence.

3.9 Reactive Work

3.10 Trading Standards Complaints and Service Requests

It is intended that every complaint/request for service is responded to within two working days.

The majority of consumer complaints are forwarded to the Trading Standards Service via the 'Citizen's Advice Consumer Service' (CACS) – a national consumer hotline funded by central government. CACS provide scripted advice that can resolve many of the simplest complaints but the more complex matters, or those requiring a potential criminal investigation, are referred on to the local Trading Standards department.

The initial response is determined after assessment of the information received, and is based on the risk arising from the conditions that are the subject of the complaint.

The potential actions that are available vary from the provision of advice, often after liaison with the business, to full prosecution procedures in line with the Public Protection Enforcement Policy.

The work of the service, and demands from the public, changed significantly during 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of the covid pandemic with many traditional shops closed for many months and the lockdown preventing much of the service industry from operating.

234 complaints were received in 2021/22 which is comparable with previous years (except for 2020/21 when there were 1141 complaints/service requests – most of which were covid related).

3.11 Liaison Arrangements

The Council actively participates in local and regional activities and is represented on the following:

- Tees Valley Public Protection Heads of Service Group
- North East Public Protection Partnership (NEPPP)
- North East Trading Standards Association (NETSA)
- Various multi-agency intelligence networks

3.12 Regional Enforcement

Hartlepool's Trading Standards manager sits as an executive member of the North Eastern Trading Standards Association (NETSA) and contributes to the regional enforcement activity planned by it.

In addition there is a National Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) which is now directly funded by a levy on the Banking industry and a Regional Investigations Team (previously 'Scambusters'), funded via the National Trading Standards Board, that targets criminal activity at a regional and national level.

To assist with the work of these two teams NETSA also manages the work of a Regional Intelligence Analyst whose role is to gather and disseminate

intelligence to NETSA members, the IMLT and the regional Investigations Team.

3.13 Primary Authority Scheme

It is the Council's policy to comply with the Local Better Regulation Office's Primary Authority Scheme.

In particular the Council will contact the Primary Authority and liaise over:

- any proposed formal enforcement action
- service of Notices
- shortcomings in the companies policies that have wider implications

In Hartlepool, there are currently no formal Primary Authority arrangements in place with a Hartlepool based trader however the service works closely with some local businesses on an informal basis.

The level of resourcing will have to be reviewed if an opportunity to enter into a formal Primary Authority arrangement arises.

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Resources

The annual budget for the Consumer Services section in the year 2022/23 is:

	£	000
Employees		630
Other Expenditure		69
Grant Funding		(33)
Income		(8)
Net Budget		658

This budget is for all services provided by this section including Food, Health & Safety, Animal Health and Trading Standards with resources being allocated in accordance with service demands.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

The Director of Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services has overall responsibility for the delivery of the Trading Standards Service in accordance with the Service Plan.

The Assistant Director (Regulatory Services) has responsibility for planning service delivery and management of the Trading Standards Service, Food, Licensing, Public Health, Private Sector Housing, Water Quality, Health & Safety, Animal Health and Welfare, Environmental Protection, Emergency

Planning and Community Safety as well as general management responsibilities as a member of the Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services department.

The Trading Standards & Licensing Manager has responsibility for the day to day supervision of the Trading Standards and Licensing Service and, having the requisite qualifications and experience, is designated as the authority's Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures.

Senior Trading Standards officers are responsible for carrying out the Trading Standards premises intervention programme as well as the delivery of all other aspects of the Trading Standards service and will undertake complex investigations.

The Technical Officer (Trading Standards) post is temporary funded through a non-recurring Public Health grant and their remit is to specifically develop products and systems to protect the elderly and vulnerable from doorstep crime. Due to continued financial pressure, the future of this post is currently only guaranteed until March 2023.

Administrative support is provided by a dedicated Support Services team.

All staff engaged in Trading Standards law enforcement activity will be suitably trained and qualified and appropriately authorised in accordance with guidance and internal policy.

The resources determined necessary to deliver the Trading Standards Service in 2022/23 are as follows:

1 x 0.2 FTE Assistant Director (Regulatory Services)

1 x 0.5 FTE Trading Standards & Licensing Manager (with responsibility also for Licensing)

3 x Senior Trading Standards Officers

1 x FTE Technical Officer

4.3 Staff Development

The Council is committed to the training and personal development of its employees and has in place Personal Development Plans for all members of staff.

The Staff Training Plan allows for the formal identification of the training needs of staff members in terms of personal development linked with the development needs of the service on an annual basis.

The Training Plan clearly prioritises training requirements of individual staff members will be developed and reviewed bi-annually.

Detailed records are maintained by the service relating to all training received by officers.

As part of its succession planning, the Team's Technical Officer will soon begin his training to become a qualified Trading Standards Officer with qualification being likely in May 2024. This should ensure that the team can maintain a full complement of qualified officers for the foreseeable future.

4.4 Equipment and Facilities

A range of equipment and facilities are required for the effective operation of the Trading Standards Service.

The service has a computerised performance management system, Authority Public Protection (APP). This is capable of maintaining up to date accurate data relating to the activities of the Trading Standards Service. A documented database management procedure has been produced to ensure that the system is properly maintained, up to date and secure. The system is used for the generation of the intervention programmes, the recording and tracking of all Trading Standards activities, the production of statutory returns and the effective management of performance.

4.5 Working with Others

Durham County Council undertakes the majority of Hartlepool's weights and measures inspections and maintains the specialist equipment necessary to meet statutory metrology requirements.

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Council is committed to quality service provision. To support this commitment the Trading Standards Service seeks to ensure consistent, effective, efficient and ethical service delivery that constitutes value for money.

A range of performance monitoring information will be used to assess the extent to which the Trading Standards Service achieves this objective and will include on-going monitoring against pre-set targets, both internal and external audits and stakeholder feedback.

Specifically the Trading Standards & Licensing Manager will carry out accompanied visits with officers undertaking interventions, investigations and other duties for the purpose of monitoring consistency and quality of the intervention as well as maintaining and giving feedback with regard to associated documentation and reports.

6 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

- 6.1 Overview** - It is recognised that a key element of the service planning process is the rational review of past performance. In the formulation of this service plan a review has been conducted of performance against those targets established for the year 2021/22.

This service plan will be reviewed at the conclusion of the year 2022/23 and at any point during the year where significant legislative changes or other relevant factors occur during the year.

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Director (Regulatory Services) to carry out that review with the Director of Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services.

The service plan review will identify any shortfalls in service delivery and will inform decisions about future staffing and resource allocation, service standards, targets and priorities.

Any relevant amendments to the Council's Corporate Plan will be incorporated into the service plan.

6.2 Public Health

The Trading Standards Team undertakes a range of activities designed to protect public health.

The sale and supply of counterfeit or smuggled tobacco continues to be a significant issue in Hartlepool and the North East as a whole.

During 2021/22 officers made six undercover test purchases of counterfeit and illicit tobacco and successfully obtained a Closure Order against the International Food Store, Murray Street because of their persistent sale and supply of counterfeit tobacco.

The Trading Standards team will continue to focus on premises suspected of selling counterfeit and illicit tobacco premises and take formal action where needed.

The team also monitors the sale of alternative tobacco products. There are strict rules governing the composition and marketing of 'nicotine delivery devices' such as e-liquids and vapes (which are age restricted products) and the team has been working with local retailers, and several manufacturers to ensure legal compliance.

As detailed in in 3.8 one retailer had its premises licence reviewed following an investigation revealed it was selling disposable vapes (known as 'geek bars') and illegally strong vapes ('geek bar pro's') without verifying the age of the purchaser.

The Team also carries out checks on the safety of products made available for sale to the general public. These may be visual checks of the product and its labelling or the purchase of the product for testing at an accredited laboratory.

Following the outbreak of covid and the subsequent stress on the importance of good hand washing, the team tested a range of alcohol hand washes and found one product that did not contain the percentage of alcohol that was stated on the label. The product was subsequently removed from shelves in Hartlepool.

Product sampling and testing will continue to take place throughout 2022/23.

6.3 Underage Sales

During 2021/22 no children were used for underage test purchase operations but an 18 year old volunteer was used for the test purchase of geek bars as detailed in para 6.2 above.

Underage sales test purchasing will resume in 2022/23.

6.4 E-Crime

Officers have continued to monitor websites during 2021/22 and social media, such as Facebook, continues to be a significant source of counterfeit goods.

Counterfeit sellers can either sell directly from their own site or advertise their goods through a 'Selling Page' operated by a third party.

The Trading Standards Team continues to have a Facebook presence which allows it to interact with other Facebook users and this is used to identify where social media sites are being used to sell counterfeit, or otherwise illegal, goods.

In addition to social media, the internet is also increasingly being used for the sale of general goods which can create its own difficulties when faulty goods are delivered or goods fail to arrive. Complaining to 'virtual' traders is often not as easy as returning to a shop and, where difficulties arise, consumers are generally referred to the Citizen's Advice Consumer Service for advice and guidance.

On those occasions where criminal offences may have been committed by internet sellers, Trading Standards Officers must undertake investigations that can be far more complicated than when dealing with traditional, fixed site retailers. Internet sellers can be based anywhere in the world and even obtaining the genuine name and address of a trader can be a challenge.

National and regional relationships have been, and continue to be, established with larger internet retailers and service providers to allow for the effective investigation and resolution of criminal and civil matters.

6.5 Sampling

Following the outbreak of covid, and the promotion of the importance of hand washing with alcohol-rich hand washes, the Team tested a number of products on the market.

One product was found to have less alcohol than stated on its label but still sufficient to be effective against covid. The retailer was contacted and the product was removed from their shelves.

6.6 Promotional/Campaign Work

Due to covid, no presentations were given to community groups in 2021/22 but they will begin again in 2022/23.

6.7 Doorstep Crime/Scams

The Team continues to focus resources on preventing the vulnerable from becoming victims of unscrupulous traders and identifying and prosecuting those found to be responsible.

'No Cold Calling' stickers continue to be made available that can be placed in a front door or window advising prospective callers that they are not welcome. The sticker also provides the homeowner with a valuable 'aide memiore' on what to do if a cold caller ignores the sticker. Over 11,000 have been issued to Hartlepool residents since the initiative began in 2015.

As detailed in paragraph 3.5 above, 54 No Cold Call Zones (NCCZ's) have been created with a target to establish a further five more in 2022/23.

The Trading Standards Service also works closely with the National Scams Team which routinely sends details of Hartlepool consumers who have been found to be on scammer's databases.

Officers contact, and subsequently visit, these victims to provide help and support. Where appropriate, other agencies, such as Adult Safeguarding Teams, are brought in to provide ongoing professional support.

In 2021/22 details of 13 Hartlepool residents were provided by the National Scams Team.

6.8 Serious Violence and Knife Crime

Knife crime continues to be an issue of serious concern and whilst Hartlepool has not been as seriously affected as some other areas of the country, the

sale of illegal knives and the sale of knives to children are issues that must not be ignored or overlooked.

The Trading Standards team will be monitoring the retail market for illegal knives (such as ‘zombie knives’) and will take action if anything is discovered. Underage test purchase operations will also be undertaken to ensure that local retailers are not selling knives, of any kind, to children.

6.9 Formal Enforcement Action

On some occasions it is necessary to prosecute for serious or repeat offences.

In March 2022, Mr Edmond Ellwood was convicted of deliberately and persistently keeping his gym open during the national covid lockdown of February 2021.

He received a fine of £30,000 and was ordered to pay the Council’s costs of £25,000.

In December 2021, the Trading Standards Team successfully obtained a three month closure order against the International Food Store, Murray Street because of their persistent selling of counterfeit tobacco products.

In February 2022 the Team applied for a review of the alcohol licence for *Charlies*, Duke Street. This followed the sale of an illegal disposable vape (known as a ‘geek bar pro’) to a Trading Standards volunteer. The subsequent licensing hearing resulted in a number of additional conditions being added to *Charlies*’ licence.

While a number of other case files have been prepared no further prosecutions were possible in 2021/22 due to the initial closure of the Courts and then the subsequent delays as they attempt to ‘catch up’.

6.10 Responding to Complaints

234 complaints were received in 2021/22 which is comparable with previous years (except for 2020/21 when there were 1141 complaints/service requests – most of which were covid related).

6.11 Covid Response

Covid had a significant impact on the Public Protection Division in both 2020/21 and 2021/22 with most officers having to spend some, or all, of their time giving advice to the general public/traders, dealing with complaints or contact tracing.

6.12 Complaints against Our Staff

No complaints were made against our staff during 2021/22.

7. KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT & KEY CHALLENGES FOR 2022/23

1. The Public Protection Service continues to face significant financial pressures due to ongoing Council savings and, as such, the need to prioritise service delivery and maximise effectiveness remains paramount.
2. There are significant changes taking place at a national level as the Government presses forward with regulatory reform. The National Trading Standards Board has been established which identifies national priorities and increases Regional and Sub-Regional co-ordination including the funding of the North Eastern Regional Investigations Team. The Trading Standards & Licensing Manager sits on the management board of this Team which, due to tightening budgets, remains under pressure to reduce costs and contribute towards national projects as and when required.
3. Serious doorstep crime continues to be a major concern and responding to complaints is extremely resource intensive. Due to the significant consumer detriment involved, tackling rogue traders remains the highest of priorities which may mean that responding to other areas of responsibility has to be delayed.

An officer continues to be employed on a temporary basis to raise awareness and set up systems that will allow the public and other agencies to better protect the vulnerable from the escalating nuisance of doorstep crime.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

20th June 2022



Report of: Assistant Director (Place Management)

Subject: ELWICK VILLAGE - TRAFFIC CALMING

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek approval for the implementation of a traffic calming scheme in Elwick Village (**Appendices 1 and 2**).

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 At Neighbourhood Services Committee held on 19th March 2021, approval was given to develop and consult on a proposed local safety scheme on North Lane in the vicinity of Elwick School.

3.2 An initial consultation for the installation of a road hump scheme was undertaken, with a majority of residents responding negatively to the proposals.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 The revised proposal was to implement gateway features at each of the 3 village entry points. These would comprise of a pinch point feature, which will require traffic entering the village to give way to traffic leaving the village. The features would be located at the start of the existing 20mph speed limit in addition to a reduction in the speed limit on approach to the village.

4.2 A 4th pinch point is also proposed outside St Peters Primary School on North Lane, which will also act as a pedestrian crossing facility outside of the school gate.

4.3 A 5th pinch point is proposed on The Green, to help maintain traffic speeds at 20mph through the centre of the village.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The estimated total cost of the scheme is £45,000 and will be funded from an existing Highways budget.

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Should the scheme be approved Traffic Regulation Orders will be advertised for the speed limit amendments, providing the opportunity for any objections to be raised.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 All households in the village were sent letters inviting them to view the plans and take an online survey in order to establish their support, or otherwise, for the proposed measures. Residents could also apply for paper copies if they were unable to access the online consultation.

- 7.2 *The following responses were received.*

- Do you agree or disagree that the gateway features should be introduced as shown on the plan?
15 (60%) agreed 10 (40%) disagreed
- Do you agree or disagree with the proposed implementation of a vehicle priority / give way build out near the school?
12 (54.5%) agreed 10 (45.5%) disagreed
- Do you agree or disagree with the proposed implementation of a vehicle priority / give way build out located near The Green?
14 (58.3%) agreed 10 (41.7%) disagreed

- 7.3 Elwick Parish Council also submitted the following comments:

- *Councillors were all in agreement with the gateway proposed at the A19 end of North Lane, and the 'build outs' by the school and on the main road through The Green;*
- *The proposed gateway near Church Bank was not needed; traffic was already slowing here to navigate the blind corner and narrow bridge at the bottom; It would be better to have a 'build out' on the other side of the stream, half way down the bank;*
- *The proposed gateway at the east end of the village was likewise unnecessary, as traffic already slowed for the bend; it was immediately after drivers rounded the bend and saw the long stretch through the green that the speeding occurred; a 'build out' on the main green side*

of the bend would be more effective, this was also true of drivers accessing the road from North Lane and Church Bank;

- The proposed design will probably lead to a huge increase in street furniture, the opposite of what the village needed/wanted – this is a Conservation Area;*
- Has this design met with approval from the HBC Conservation Officer?*
- Why is HBC considering spending this amount of money if the new bypass is going to remove most of the through traffic anyway?*
- Although many North Lane residents apparently opposed the short, hard ‘bumps’ either side of the school that were in the original proposal, and Councillors understood that wider, flatter black rubber ‘mats’ could not be laid side by side due to the narrow width of the highway, they felt that, if these were offset, they would have the same effect and be more acceptable, having less visual impact or stress on vehicles.*

7.4 The Councils Conservation Manager has been consulted on the project and has advised that the design of the traffic calming should follow guidance set out in ‘Streets for All; Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places’ produced by Historic England in 2018. Therefore it is proposed to use materials sympathetic with the rural setting and signs and markings will be kept to a minimum as per the advice in this document.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Risk Implications	No relevant issues
Child/Family Poverty Considerations	No relevant issues
Equality and Diversity Considerations	No relevant issues
Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change Considerations	No relevant issues
Staff Considerations	No relevant issues
Asset Management Considerations	No relevant issues

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Given the close consultation results, and taking into account the views expressed by the Parish Council, it is recommended that Neighbourhood Services Committee approve the 2 features within the village (outside of the school and by The Green) (**Appendix 2**) for implementation.
- 9.2 It is also recommended that the 3 gateway features at the entrances to the village (**Appendix 1**) are not implemented at the request of the Parish Council.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To target road safety measures at the points of greatest risk within the village, outside of the school and within the village where pedestrian activity is higher.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 There are no background papers.

12. CONTACT OFFICER

Kieran Bostock
Assistant Director (Place Management)
Level 3
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 284291
E-mail: kieran.bostock@hartlepool.gov.uk

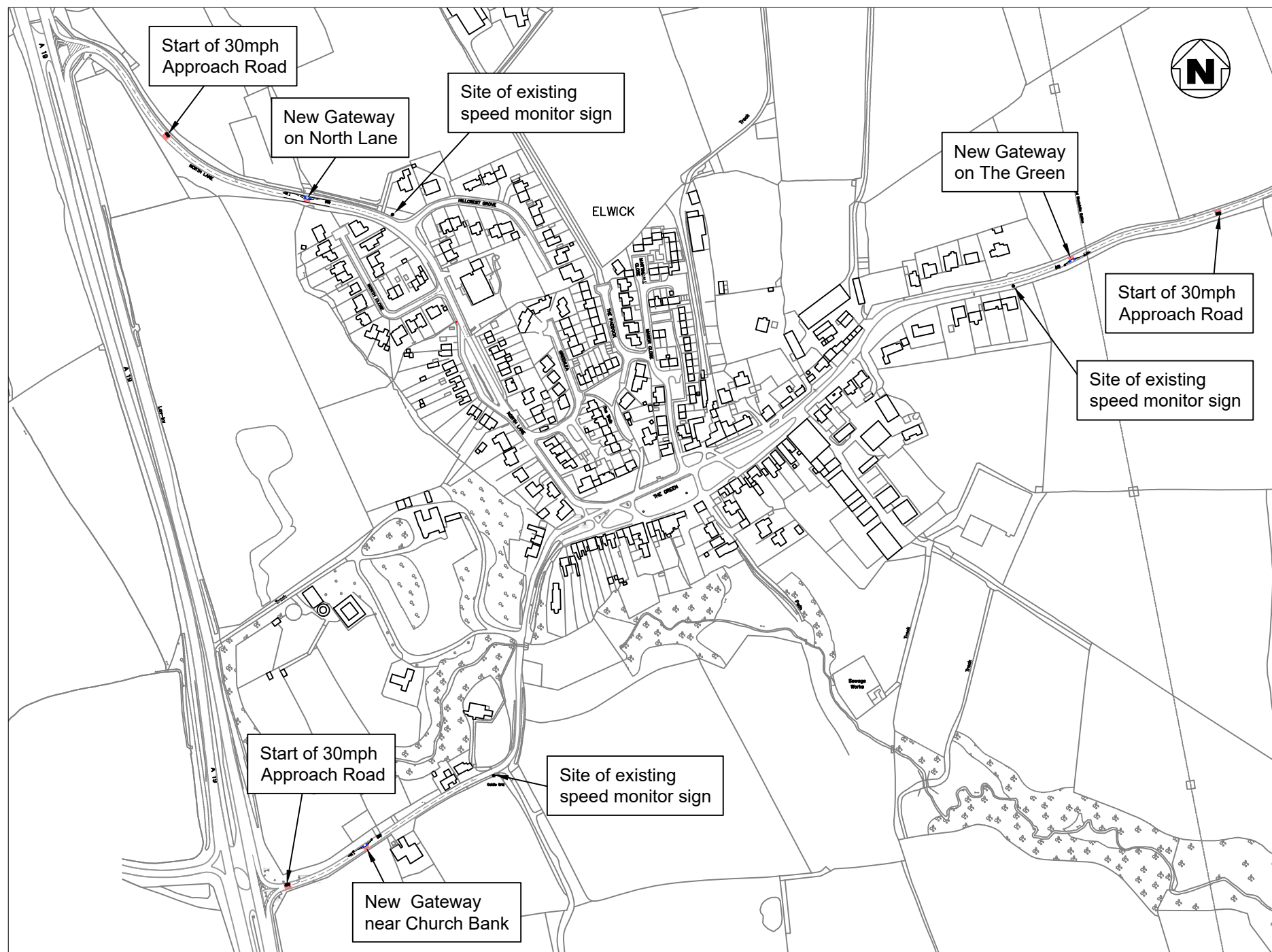
Peter Frost
Highways, Traffic and Transport Team Leader
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Tel (01429 523200)
E-mail: peter.frost@hartlepool.gov.uk

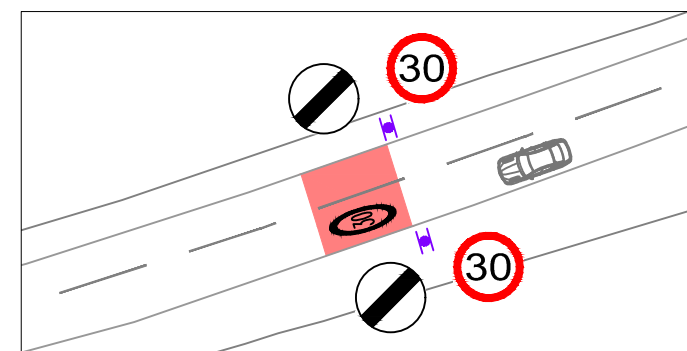
Sign Off:-

- Director of Resources and Development
- Chief Solicitor/Monitoring Officer

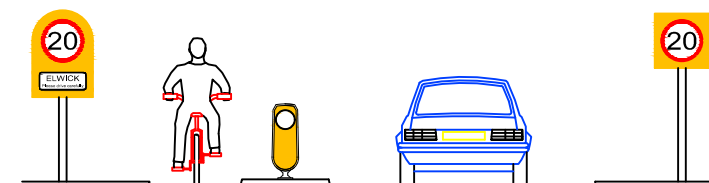




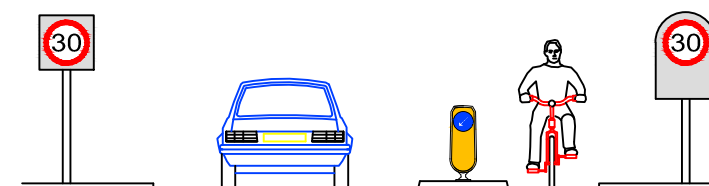
Proposed 20mph Gateway Features with 30mph Approach Roads



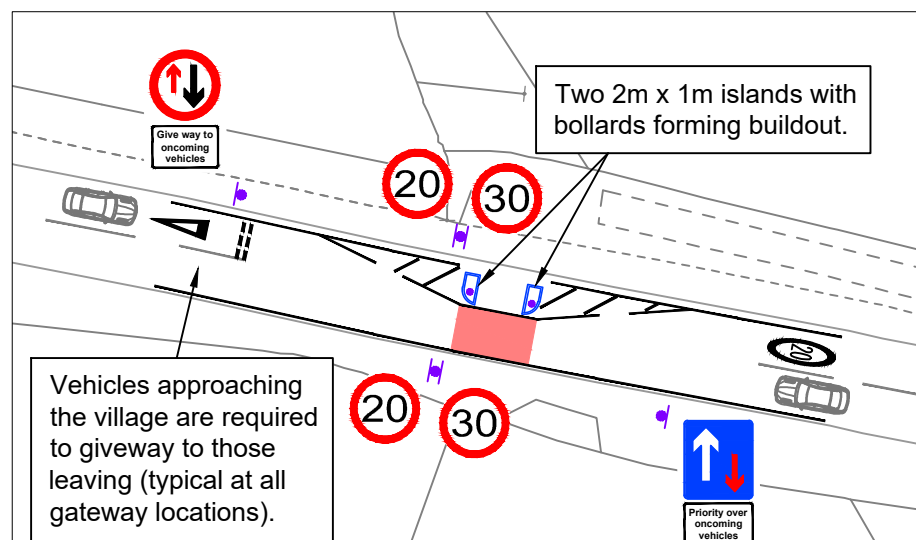
Typical Plan on Start of 30mph Approach Road



View on New Gateway with Cycle Lane Entering the Village

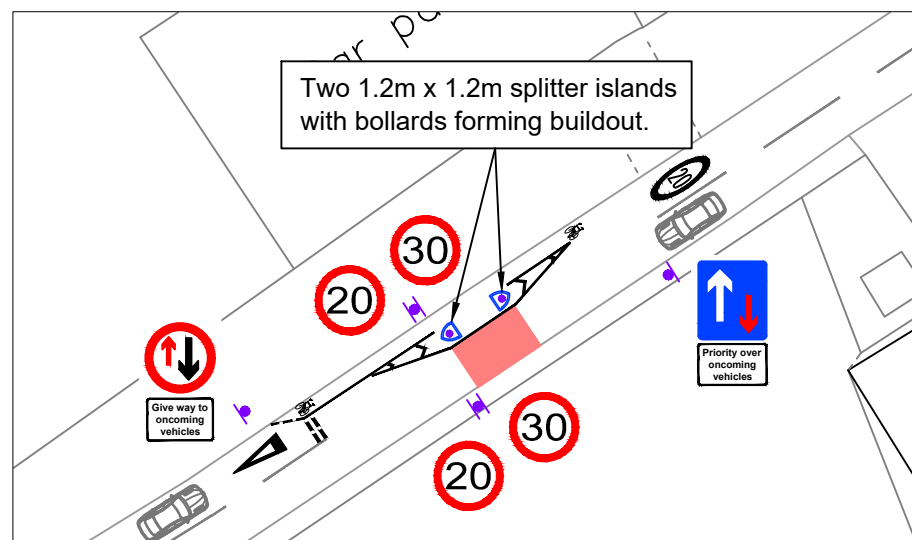


View on New Gateway with Cycle Lane Leaving the Village

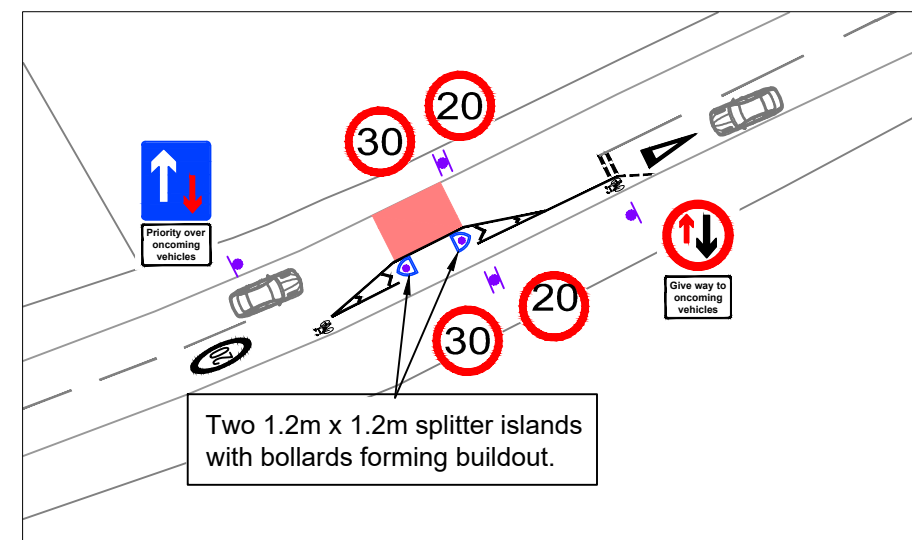


Vehicles approaching the village are required to give way to those leaving (typical at all gateway locations).

New Gateway without Cycle Lane on North Road

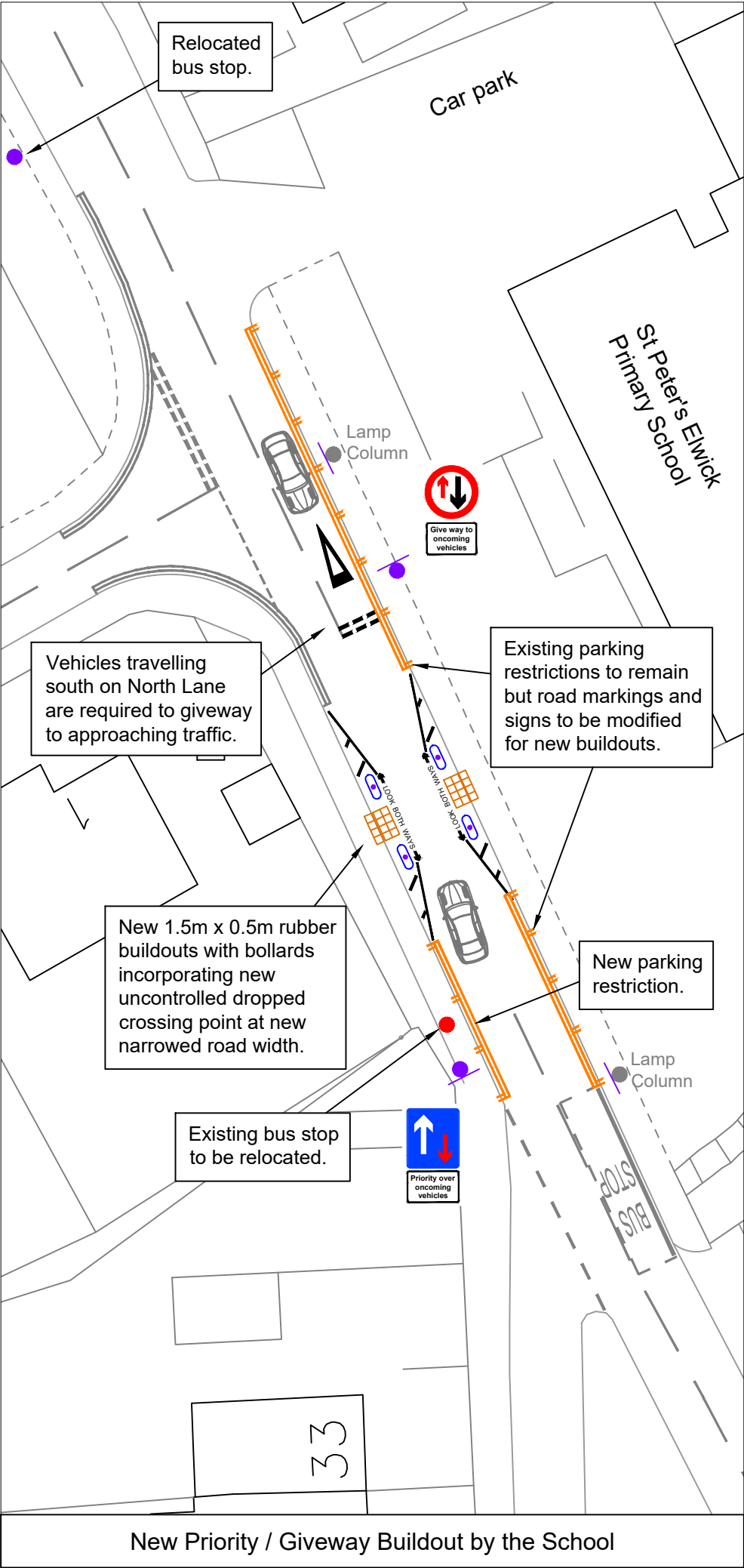


New Gateway with Cycle Lane near Church Bank



Two 1.2m x 1.2m splitter islands with bollards forming buildout.

New Gateway with Cycle Lane on The Green



Proposed Priority / Giveaway Sites Within Elwick Village

