ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Tuesday 18 October 2022

at 10.00 am

in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

MEMBERS: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Brown, Clayton, Feeney, Hargreaves, Lindridge, Loynes and Young.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

3. **MINUTES**

   3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2022 *(previously circulated and published).*

4. **BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

   No items.

5. **KEY DECISIONS**

   5.1 Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022 – Action Plan – *Assistant Director (Development and Growth)*

   5.2 Renewal of the Longhill and Sandgate Business Improvement District (BID) - *Assistant Director (Development and Growth)*

6. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

   No items.

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 <u>everyone</u> 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.

7. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

7.1 Creative Hartlepool Sector Research Study - *Assistant Director (Development and Growth)*

7.2 Referral from Council - Crustaceans Update – *Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services* (To follow)

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

For information

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 29 November 2022 at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

18 October 2022

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report of: Assistant Director (Development and Growth)

Subject: Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022 - Action Plan

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Key Decision, test (ii). Forward Plan reference CE 80/22.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee with an updated version of the Action Plan for the Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-2025 (Appendix 1) and seek approval prior to adoption and publication.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 At the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee on 19th July 2022 the Inclusive Growth Strategy and Action Plan, setting out Hartlepool's economic priorities and growth in the coming years, was presented after extensive consultation with local stakeholders and businesses.

3.2 The strategy is developed around three broad themes:
1. Developing people
2. Developing place
3. Developing business

3.3 To deliver the three themes, a ten point action plan was also presented with identified projects and initiatives.

3.4 The Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee discussed and agreed with the content and themes of the strategy and ten point plan, members did however ask for more detail in the accompanying Action Plan, in particular clear and detailed targets and timescales.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 The Action plan (Appendix 1) has been updated to include more precise targets with timescales for delivery.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Consultation has taken place with businesses and stakeholders through various methods including an Economic Regeneration & Tourism Forum, a survey and interviews.

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

6.1 Please refer to Appendix 2

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

7.1 Please refer to Appendix 3

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Staff Considerations	
Asset Management Considerations	
Risk Implications	
Legal Considerations	
Financial Considerations	
Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change Considerations	

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 The Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee is asked to review, agree and endorse the updated version of the Action Plan for the Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-2025.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The updated version of the Action Plan has been updated following feedback from the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee at its last meeting.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes of Meeting of Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee 19 July 2022

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

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TS24 8EY

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Sign Off:-

Director of Resources and Development	√
Chief Solicitor	√

Appendix 2

POVERY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

1. Is this decision a Budget & Policy Framework or Key Decision? YES				
2. Will there be an impact of the decision requested in respect of Child and Family Poverty? YES				
GROUP	**POSITIVE IMPACT**	**NEGATIVE IMPACT**	**NO IMPACT**	**REASON & EVIDENCE**
Young working people aged 18 - 21	✓			Employment and skills opportunities
Those who are disabled or suffer from illness / mental illness			✓	
Those with low educational attainment	✓			As above
Those who are unemployed	✓			As above
Those who are underemployed	✓			As above
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**
Overall employment rate	✓			
Proportion of young people who are NEET	✓			
Number of affordable homes built			✓	

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

Appendix 3

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

<table>
<tr><th>Department</th><th>Division</th><th>Section</th><th colspan="2">Owner/Officer</th></tr>
<tr><td>Resources and Development</td><td>Development and Growth</td><td>Economic Growth</td><td colspan="2">Michael Beirne</td></tr>
<tr><td>Service, policy, practice being reviewed/changed or planned</td><td colspan="4">Inclusive Growth Strategy</td></tr>
<tr><td>Why are you making the change?</td><td colspan="4">The</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">How might this impact (positively/negatively) on people who share protected characteristics?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Please tick</td><td>POSITIVELY</td><td>NEGATIVELY</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Age</td><td>✓</td><td>✘</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Disability</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Gender Re-assignment</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Race</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Religion</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Gender</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Sexual Orientation</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Marriage & Civil Partnership</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Pregnancy & Maternity</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td>Has there been consultation /is consultation planned with</td><td colspan="4">N/A</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">people who will be affected by this policy? How has this affected your decision making?</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">As a result of your decision how can you mitigate negative/maximise positive outcomes and foster good relationships?</td><td colspan="2">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" rowspan="4">Describe how you will address and monitor the impact</td><td colspan="2">1. No Impact - No Major Change
N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">2. Adjust/Change Policy
N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">3. Adverse Impact but Continue as is
N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal
N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td>Initial Assessment</td><td>5/10/2022</td><td>Reviewed</td><td>N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td>Completed</td><td>5/10/2022</td><td>Published</td><td>5/10/2022</td></tr>
</table>

Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy - Summary Action Plan

1. Developing a Vibrant Creative Quarter (or 'Production Village')

Actions	Partners	Date to be achieved	Measure	Economic Growth Indicators	National Indicators	Baseline
Develop and establish the concept of a Production Village regeneration area that capitalises on the new Film and TV Studios development	Northern School of Art TVCA NESIP	March 2025	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Sites/Premises developed or improved External Funding secured	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)
Map out current property ownership in the area, identify barriers to development and opportunities linked to the Production Village regeneration area	Existing occupiers Property owners Property investors	March 2023	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Sites/Premises developed or improved	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)
Promote the creative quarter as a desirable location for potential investors across a range of commercial, leisure, housing, community and education uses	Existing occupiers Property owners Property investors	March 2025	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Sites/Premises developed or improved Value of Inward Investment	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)
Continue to operate The BIS as a managed workspace for creative businesses and look at opportunities to strengthen its proposition linked to Production Village	Creative sector businesses	Ongoing	Increase business start up rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Positive employment jobs growth in line with or better than Tees Valley	New business start ups Jobs created	Business registrations per 10,000 of population Jobs Growth	280 (Dec 2020) 29,300 (2021)
Develop and deliver a programme of events to raise the profile of the	Creative sector businesses Northern School of Art	March 2025	Increase business start up rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley	New business start ups Businesses assisted	Business registrations per 10,000 of population	280 (Dec 2020)

creative quarter/production village			Increase productivity in businesses to be in line with or better than Tees Valley		Gross Value Added (GVA)	£44,537 (2019)
Establish a business forum for the creative quarter / Production Village	Creative sector businesses	April 2023	Increase productivity in businesses to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Businesses assisted	Gross Value Added (GVA) UK Business Count	£44,537 (2019) 2,275 (2021)

2. Supporting creative businesses

Actions	Partners	Date to be achieved	Measure	Economic Growth Indicators	National Indicators	Baseline
Establish and service a creative/cultural sector forum	Creative sector businesses TVCA NSoA	April 2023	Increase productivity in businesses to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Businesses assisted	Gross Value Added (GVA) UK Business Count	£44,537 (2019) 2,275 (2021)
Organise networking events/mechanisms for creative professionals	Creative sector businesses Northern School of Art	March 2024	Increase productivity in businesses to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Businesses assisted	Gross Value Added (GVA) UK Business Count	£44,537 (2019) 2,275 (2021)
Develop and seek funding for creative sector-specific business support packages	TVCA	March 2025	Increase business start up rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley	New business start ups	Business registrations per 10,000 of population	280 (Dec 2020)

			Reduce business failure rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley		New business survival rate (3 years)	50% (2019)
			Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Businesses assisted	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)
			Increase productivity in businesses to be in line with or better than Tees Valley		Gross Value Added (GVA)	£44,537 (2019)
Assess opportunities for the development of further creative business accommodation	TVCA	January 2024	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Sites/Premises developed or improved External Funding secured	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)
Establish better links between education providers and creative industries to develop career opportunities in the sector	Northern School of Art HCFE Schools Creative businesses	July 2023	Increase business start up rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley	New business start ups	Business registrations per 10,000 of population	280 (Dec 2020)
			Positive employment jobs growth in line with or better than Tees Valley	Jobs created	Jobs Growth	29,300 (2021)

3. A business support strategy

Actions	Partners	Date to be achieved	Measure	Economic Growth Indicators	National Indicators	Baseline
Identify any gaps in the provision of business support services available in Hartlepool, and consider opportunities to address the gaps	Business support providers TVCA	January 2023	Increase business start up rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley	New business start ups	Business registrations per 10,000 of population	280 (Dec 2020)
			Reduce business failure rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley	Businesses assisted	New business survival rate (3 years)	50% (2019)

			Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley		UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)
Continue to provide support to start-ups, existing businesses and inward investors through the Council's Economic Growth Team	Business support providers	Ongoing	Increase business start up rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Positive employment jobs growth in line with or better than Tees Valley	New business start ups Jobs created	Business registrations per 10,000 of population Jobs Growth	280 (Dec 2020) 29,300 (2021)
Develop a proactive engagement and events plan to ensure more businesses benefit from existing businesses support services	Business support providers TVCA	March 2025	Increase productivity in businesses to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Businesses assisted	Gross Value Added (GVA) UK Business Count	£44,537 (2019) 2,275 (2021)
Undertake a study to understand why Hartlepool has a higher proportion of business deaths from age 3 years onwards and look at options to address the issues identified	Business support providers	May 2023	Increase business start up rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Reduce business failure rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley	New business start ups	Business registrations per 10,000 of population New business survival rate (3 years)	280 (Dec 2020) 50% (2019)
Develop and implement pathways to self-employment for schools and college leavers	Schools Colleges	July 2023	Increase business start up rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Positive employment jobs growth in line with or better than Tees Valley	New business start ups Jobs created	Business registrations per 10,000 of population Jobs Growth	280 (Dec 2020) 29,300 (2021)

4. Sites and premises						
Actions	**Partners**	**Date to be achieved**	**Measure**	**Economic Growth Indicators**	**National Indicators**	**Baseline**
Commission a study to understand the current supply and demand, and opportunities to develop business accommodation in Hartlepool	TVCA Commercial property agents	September 2022	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Sites/Premises developed or improved	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)
Support the development of the Teesside Freeport and the associated sites in Hartlepool, alongside continued support for development to Hartlepool Port and Able Seaton Port.	TVCA Able UK PD Ports	Ongoing	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Sites/Premises developed or improved Value of Inward Investment	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)
Work with Hartlepool Power Station and TVCA to identify continued use of the site post decommissioning	EDF Energy TVCA	December 2024	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Sites/Premises developed or improved Value of Inward Investment	UK Business Counts	2,275 (2021)
Continued support to the process industry including addressing future skills requirements	TVCA	March 2025	Increase productivity in businesses to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Businesses assisted	Gross Value Added (GVA) UK Business Count	£44,537 (2019) 2,275 (2021)
Explore opportunities to support the development of sites for green jobs.	TVCA	January 2024	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Sites/Premises developed or improved Value of Inward Investment	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)
Support programmes to boost digital connectivity across the Borough,	TVCA Digital providers	December 2024	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	Sites/Premises developed or improved Value of Inward Investment	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)

linked to the Tees Valley Digital Strategy						

5. Learning and skills development

Actions	Partners	Date to be achieved	Measure	Economic Growth Indicators	National Indicators	Baseline
Establish a clear and detailed picture of current and anticipated skills needs	Key employers Local learning providers TVCA	July 2023	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate Close the basic qualifications gap in line with the wider Tees Valley	Jobs Created	Unemployment Rate % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	6.8% (2021) 86.2% (2021)
Work with learning providers to develop initiatives to address future skills needs, including exploring funding opportunities	Key employers Local learning providers TVCA	July 2024	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate Close the basic qualifications gap in line with the wider Tees Valley	Jobs Created External Funding secured	Unemployment Rate % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	6.8% (2021) 86.2% (2021)
Identify current barriers for Hartlepool residents to engage with training, employment and related support services, and explore initiatives to address these	Key employers Local learning providers TVCA	July 2023	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate Close the youth unemployment gap in line with Tees Valley Close the basic qualifications gap in line with the wider Tees Valley	Jobs Created External Funding secured	Unemployment Rate Unemployment rate (18-24) % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	6.8% (2021) 8% (2022) 86.2% (2021)
Develop a joined-up marketing plan to promote learning and training opportunities to Hartlepool residents	Key employers Local learning providers TVCA	May 2022	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate Close the basic qualifications gap in	Jobs Created	Unemployment Rate % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	6.8% (2021) 86.2% (2021)

			line with the wider Tees Valley			
Support the development of the Health and Social Care Academy and in a new Civil Engineering Academy to provide training opportunities for Hartlepool residents	Key employers Local learning providers	July 2024	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate Close the basic qualifications gap in line with the wider Tees Valley	Jobs Created	Unemployment Rate % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	6.8% (2021) 86.2% (2021)
Establish links with Teesworks Skills Academy to provide job opportunities for Hartlepool residents	TVCA	July 2023	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate	Jobs Created	Unemployment Rate	6.8% (2021)
Explore opportunities to address perceived gaps in digital skills in the borough to address barriers to employment	TVCA	January 2023	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate Close the basic qualifications gap in line with the wider Tees Valley	Jobs Created	Unemployment Rate % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	6.8% (2021) 86.2% (2021)
Establish the nature and scale of demand for non-accredited learning amongst local businesses and develop opportunities for programmes in Hartlepool, including exploring funding opportunities	Key employers Local learning providers TVCA	January 2023	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate Close the basic qualifications gap in line with the wider Tees Valley	Jobs Created	Unemployment Rate % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	6.8% (2021) 86.2% (2021)

6. Raising confidence and aspirations

Actions	Partners	Date to be achieved	Measure	Economic Growth Indicators	National Indicators	Baseline
Establish better links between schools and local employers to promote careers	Local schools TVCA	July 2023	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate	Jobs created	Unemployment Rate	6.8% (2021)

opportunities available in Hartlepool			Close the youth unemployment gap in line with Tees Valley Close the basic qualifications gap in line with the wider Tees Valley		Unemployment rate (18-24) % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	8% (2022) 86.2% (2021)
Continued support of opportunities for local residents to undertake work placements, apprenticeship and graduate apprenticeships with local businesses	Key employers	July 2024	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate Close the youth unemployment gap in line with Tees Valley Close the basic qualifications gap in line with the wider Tees Valley	Jobs created	Unemployment Rate Unemployment rate (18-24) % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	6.8% (2021) 8% (2022) 86.2% (2021)
Develop an ambassador programme with local business leaders to raise the aspirations of school pupils	Local schools Key employers	December 2023	Close the gap with overall Tees Valley employment rate Close the youth unemployment gap in line with Tees Valley Close the basic qualifications gap in line with the wider Tees Valley	Jobs created	Unemployment Rate Unemployment rate (18-24) % of 16-64 with a formal qualification (Level 1)	6.8% (2021) 8% (2022) 86.2% (2021)

7. Developing social enterprises

Actions	Partners	Date to be achieved	Measure	Economic Growth Indicators	National Indicators	Baseline
Explore opportunities to strengthen support to	LARCH HartlePower	May 2023	Increase business start up rate to be in	New business start ups	Business registrations per 10,000 of population	280 (Dec 2020)

existing and new social enterprises	Social enterprises and charities		line with or better than Tees Valley Reduce business failure rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	 Businesses assisted	 New business survival rate (3 years) UK Business Count	 50% (2019) 2,275 (2021)
Support charities and social enterprises in the area to grow through the LARCH partnership	LARCH HartlePower Social enterprises and charities	Dec 2023	Increase business start up rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Reduce business failure rate to be in line with or better than Tees Valley Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley	New business start ups Businesses assisted	Business registrations per 10,000 of population New business survival rate (3 years) UK Business Count	280 (Dec 2020) 50% (2019) 2,275 (2021)

8. Public health impacts

Actions	Partners	Date to be achieved	Measure	Economic Growth Indicators	National Indicators	Baseline
Explore feasibility for businesses and developers to detail potential impact on public health when seeking planning permission, licences and funding.	Departments across Hartlepool Council TVCA	September 2023	Bring the number of businesses in line with or better than Tees Valley Increase productivity in businesses to be in line with or better than Tees Valley	Business assisted	UK Business Count Gross Value Added (GVA)	2,275 (2021) £44,537 (2019)
Deliver a programme of events and initiatives for businesses to support the	TVCA	December 2024	Bring the number of businesses in line	Business assisted	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021)

development of healthy workforces linking to the Hartlepool Health Strategy.			with or better than Tees Valley Increase productivity in businesses to be in line with or better than Tees Valley		Gross Value Added (GVA)	£44,537 (2019)
Develop a clear vision of the type of place Hartlepool aspires to become and joined-up approach to place promotion	Hartlepool Economic Forum TVCA	June 2023	Growth in overall visitor numbers Growth in value of visitor economy	Inward Investment Visitor Numbers Value of Visitor Economy	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021) 2.56M (2021) £133M (2021)

9. Developing a vision and place brand

Actions	Partners	Date to be achieved	Measure	Economic Growth Indicators	National Indicators	Baseline
Develop a Hartlepool ambassadors initiative to promote the town externally	Hartlepool Economic Forum	September 2023	Growth in overall visitor numbers Growth in value of visitor economy	Inward Investment Visitor Numbers Value of Visitor Economy	UK Business Count	2,275 (2021) 2.56M (2021) £133M (2021)
Develop a Destination Management Plan for Hartlepool linked to the Tees Valley DMP	TVCA Local tourism businesses	May 2023	Growth in overall visitor numbers Growth in value of visitor economy	Visitor Numbers Value of Visitor Economy		2.56M (2021) £133M (2021)

10. Developing the tourism offer

Actions	Partners	Date to be achieved	Measure	Economic Growth Indicators	National Indicators	Baseline
Develop and deliver a marketing plan to promote the town's tourism offer	TVCA Local tourism businesses	December 2024	Growth in overall visitor numbers Growth in value of visitor economy	Visitor Numbers Value of Visitor Economy		2.56M (2021) £133M (2021)
Assess opportunities to develop a more ambitious programme of events and	Local venues TVCA	March 2023	Growth in overall visitor numbers	Visitor Numbers Value of Visitor Economy		2.56M (2021) £133M (2021)

festivals and seek funding opportunities			Growth in value of visitor economy			
Devise a plan to maximise short and longer term opportunities linked to the Tall Ships Race 2023	Local venues Local tourism businesses TVCA	November 2022	Growth in overall visitor numbers Growth in value of visitor economy	Visitor Numbers Value of Visitor Economy		2.56M (2021) £133M (2021)
Continue to strengthen the position of Hartlepool’s tourism and cultural assets including Council owned facilities i.e. the Borough Hall, Town Hall, The Waterfront and Elephant Rock.	Local venues	December 2023	Growth in overall visitor numbers Growth in value of visitor economy	Visitor Numbers Value of Visitor Economy		2.56M (2021) £133M (2021)

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday 18th October 2022

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report of: Assistant Director (Development and Growth)

Subject: RENEWAL OF THE LONGHILL AND SANDGATE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)

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1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Key decision, test (ii) Forward Plan Ref CE84/22

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide background information on the Longhill and Sandgate Business Improvement District (BID) and to seek authorisation to pursue a re-ballot for the renewal of the Longhill and Sandgate BID.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A Business Improvement District (BID) is a partnership arrangement where local authorities and the local business community can take forward schemes which will benefit the local community, subject to the agreement of non-domestic ratepayers within a specific BID area, who will then finance the scheme through an additional levy on their rates.

3.2 The Longhill and Sandgate BID began on 1st April 2008 and has continued to operate for three 5-year terms with the successful BID renewals having taken place in 2013 and 2018. This will be the fourth proposed Longhill and Sandgate BID term anticipated to run from April 2023 to 2028.

3.3 The BID levy is used to fund the revenue costs of monitoring and maintaining the 17 camera CCTV system installed throughout the Longhill and Sandgate Industrial Estates also, to fund additional environmental cleansing on the estate.

3.4 The BID partnership consists of the Longhill and Sandgate Business Association, the Borough Council and Cleveland Police.

3.5 Hartlepool Borough Council is the accountable body for the BID. The role involves collecting the levy from businesses, holding the money collected, arranging payments of invoices on expenditure, as approved in accordance with the overall BID purpose and agreement in the BID Partnership.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 It is proposed by the Executive of the Longhill and Sandgate Business Association to pursue a renewal of the BID for a further 5 years.

4.2 The BID intends to continue the operation of the estates wide 17 camera CCTV system, camera monitoring and environmental cleansing services to the estate.

4.3 Approval is also sought for Hartlepool Borough Council to continue in its role as the accountable body for the BID.

4.4 The process for renewing the BID involves a number of steps, as identified in the table below:

Deadline	BID Tasks
28/06/2022	The billing authority, Council's Returning Officer and Secretary of State have been notified in writing of BID proposer's intention to ask billing authority to put BID proposals to ballot.
1st – 15th September 2022	To help inform the Longhill and Sandgate Business Plan for the BID Renewal, a survey was sent to all current BID levy payers on the estate. The survey asked for feedback on crime and security, general environment and estate priorities. In summary, most respondents viewed CCTV, security and environmental cleansing as very important services for the estate in the future, which is in line with the proposed BID activities.
26/09/2022	Members of the Longhill and Sandgate Business Association Executive approved the proposed Business Plan, which details what the BID renewal aims to undertake, and how it will be achieved.
18/10/2022	A report to be presented to Economic Growth Committee (including the completed business plan proposal) for approval to undertake a renewal BID and the necessary ballot.
October to November 2022	There will a period of comprehensive communication to the businesses of Longhill and Sandgate informing them of the detail of the business plan and an opportunity to provide formal feedback. Marketing activities to promote the BID renewal will include printed flyers and canvassing businesses.
19/10/2022	Statutory notification of ballot sent to Secretary of State.
02/11/2022	Despatch of ballot papers undertaken independently by CIVICA on behalf of Hartlepool Borough Council.
30/11/2022	Close of ballot (ballot day).
01/12/2022	Issue of result by 5pm by the Council's Returning Officer.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Without a formal BID arrangement the ongoing funding of the CCTV system would most likely have to be met from voluntary contributions by the businesses located on the estate. This provides a number of potential issues:

- The full operating costs may not be met leading to the ultimate demise of the system.

- Experience of these types of systems previously is that voluntary contributions are difficult to collect and tend to 'dry up' over a period of time, again leading to the demise of the system.

- The Business Association is currently an unincorporated body and therefore responsibility for the finances of the BID, and as a consequence, for the maintenance of the CCTV system, lie with Hartlepool Borough Council's Economic Growth Team. Should alternative arrangements be required this will mean a complete change to the governance procedures of the Longhill and Sandgate Business Association that is not in a position to take on these responsibilities.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The income generation from the proposed BID levy is anticipated to be about £63,000 p.a. collected from over 300 businesses that are based in the BID area.

6.2 The income to the Council for providing services to the BID is detailed in the table below.

Council Service	**BID Activity**	**Income** (per annum)
Monitoring Centre	To monitor the 17 CCTV cameras across the estate.	£30,000
Finance	Specific IT system used for the BID administration, costs associated with sending out bill reminders and recovery action for non-payers.	£5,700
Environmental Cleansing	Regular environmental cleansing activities to the estate.	£11,000

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The legislative framework governing Business Improvement Districts is contained in:

Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004
Part 4 of Local Government Act 2003
Business Rate Supplements Act 2009

7.2 The Council will continue to be a partner in the Longhill and Sandgate BID Partnership and also continue in its role as the accountable body for the Longhill and Sandgate BID Partnership. A Service Level Agreement for the current BID is in place which will need to be updated if Members agree to continue being a partner.

7.3 The Longhill and Sandgate BID Partnership is an unincorporated entity with no legal status, however it does have its own agreed formal constitution.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 The Members of the Longhill and Sandgate Business Association Executive have been consulted and approved of the proposed Business Plan.

8.2 BID levy papers on the estate were sent a survey to provide feedback on the estate and priority areas for future BID activities.

8.3 Most of the survey respondents viewed CCTV, security and environmental cleansing as very important services for the estate in the future, which is in line with the proposed BID activities.

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

9.1 Please refer to Appendix 2

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

10.1 Please refer to Appendix 3

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

11.1 The Economic Growth Team will continue discussions with businesses and internal Council sections to progress with the BID renewal ballot.

11.2 The Economic Growth Team will continue support with maintenance of the CCTV system.

11.3 The Council will continue as a partner in the Longhill and Sandgate BID Partnership and continue its role as the accountable body.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 Not applicable.

13. ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

13.1 Not applicable.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 To agree and authorise the Economic Growth Team to continue discussions with businesses and internal Council sections to progress with the BID renewal ballot.

14.2 To agree to Hartlepool Borough Council to continue in its role as a partner in the Longhill BID and continue its role as the accountable body.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 The CCTV system provides security to over 300 businesses on one of Hartlepool's busiest industrial estates and enables them to trade successfully in the town.

15.2 The current BID has successfully funded the day to day operation of the CCTV system together with improvements to the system where required and enable the monitoring of crime and anti-social behaviour in the area.

15.3 Whilst the CCTV system is clearly for the benefit of the businesses based on the Longhill and Sandgate Industrial areas, the proximity of these estates to the Town Centre and its surrounding residential areas means that the system also benefits wider Community Safety issues.

15.4 The environmental cleansing services ensure the busy estate is kept clean and tidy for business owners and visitors to the estate which improves the overall appearance of the area.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 Appendix 1 – Longhill and Sandgate BID Business Plan 2023 – 2028.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Director of Resources and Development	√
Chief Solicitor	√

POVERY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM **APPENDIX 2**

1. Is this decision a Budget & Policy Framework or Key Decision? 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? No. **If YES please complete the matrix below**				
GROUP	**POSITIVE IMPACT**	**NEGATIVE IMPACT**	**NO IMPACT**	**REASON & EVIDENCE**
Young working people aged 18 - 21				
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**
Overall employment rate			X	
Proportion of young people who are NEET			X	
Number of affordable homes built			X	

Overall impact of Policy / Decision			
NO IMPACT / NO CHANGE	X	**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

APPENDIX 3

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Department	**Division**	**Section**	**Owner/Officer**
Economic Growth Team	*Development & Growth*	*Resources & Development*	*Israr Hussain*

Service, policy, practice being reviewed/changed or planned	A Longhill and Sandgate BID Partnership Renewal, to update the Service Level Agreement for the current BID for the Council to continue being a partner in the Longhill and Sandgate BID.
Why are you making the change?	The current 5 year Longhill and Sandgate BID concludes 31st March 2022 and is therefore, due for renewal.

How might this impact (positively/negatively) on people who share protected characteristics?

Please tick	**POSITIVELY**	**NEGATIVELY**
Age		
Please describe...		
Disability		
Please describe...		
Gender Re-assignment		
Please describe...		
Race		
Please describe...		
Religion		
Please describe...		
Gender		
Please describe...		
Sexual Orientation		
Please describe...		
Marriage & Civil Partnership		
Please describe...		
Pregnancy & Maternity		
Please describe...		

Has there been consultation /is consultation planned with people who will be affected by this policy? How has this affected your decision making?	The Members of the Longhill and Sandgate Business Association Executive have been consulted and approved of the proposed Business Plan. BID levy payers on the estate were sent a survey to provide feedback on estate conditions and priority areas for future BID activities.
As a result of your decision how can you mitigate negative/maximise positive outcomes and foster good relationships?	
Describe how you will address and monitor the impact	**1. No Impact - No Major Change** *Please Detail*
	2. Adjust/Change Policy *Please Detail*
	3. Adverse Impact but Continue as is *Please Detail*
	4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal *Please Detail*

Initial Assessment	*00/00/00*	Reviewed	*00/00/00*
Completed	*00/00/00*	Published	*00/00/00*

Longhill & Sandgate
Business Improvement District (BID)
Renewal

Business Plan
2023 to 2028

CONTENTS

PROJECT SUMMARY

The renewal of the current Longhill & Sandgate Business Improvement District (BID) will continue to provide a safe and secure environment for the customers and businesses based on the Longhill & Sandgate Industrial Estates area.

This will be achieved by the continuation of the established estate wide 17 CCTV camera system and CCTV Monitoring Centre services. This initiative provides cost effective security for all of the businesses on the Longhill & Sandgate Industrial Estates against instances of crime and vandalism.

The BID will also fund a regular estate wide cleansing service to improve the general environment of the estate for businesses and customers.

The initiatives will be funded through the continuation of the Business Improvement District, the mechanism for collecting the revenue needed through a self–imposed levy on the businesses in the Longhill & Sandgate industrial estates area.

The current BID has a lifetime of five years and comes to an end in March 2023.

The key priority of the Longhill & Sandgate Business Association is to continue to improve the security of the area and improve the general environment.

It is therefore proposed by the Executive of the Longhill & Sandgate Business Association to pursue a renewal of the current BID for a further 5 years to:

1. Ensure the existing estates wide CCTV remains operational.
2. Provide a reactive security response service to incidents picked up by the CCTV Monitoring Centre.
3. Provide a regular estate wide environmental cleansing service.

1. THE CONCEPT OF A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The Business Improvement District Regulations 2004 enable local businesses and other stakeholders to form partnerships to implement improvements, which will benefit their local area.

BIDs work by raising funding for additional services over and above those services provided by the Local Authority. The aims are to encourage the revitalisation of an area, addressing issues such as security, image, environment and transport.

Businesses will decide on the issues they want to address, the amount of funding to be raised and the services they want to implement in their area.

Any proposals must be agreed upon by a majority of ratepayers in the BID area via an independent ballot. Approval of the BID would have to meet two key tests:

1. Firstly, a simple majority of those voting in the BID ballot must vote in favour; and,

2. Secondly, those voting in favour must represent a majority by rateable value.

Once agreed the additional services will be funded via a supplement to the National Non-Domestic Rates that are billed by the Local Authority.

2. THE NEED FOR A BID

The Longhill & Sandgate BID began on 1st April 2008 and has continued to operate for three 5 year terms with the successful renewal ballots having taken place in 2013 and 2018. This will be the fourth Longhill & Sandgate BID ballot renewal anticipated to run from 2023 to 2028.

Initially funded in 2008 by the Hartlepool New Deal for Communities programme in response to the crime issues raised by businesses, an estates wide CCTV system has been successfully operating since that time.

The 17 camera CCTV system has reduced reported crime across the estates and acted as a crime deterrent. Cleveland Police fully support the initiative in assisting its role to prevent and reduce crime.

However, the fight against crime needs to be maintained and the established CCTV system needs to continue to be operational in order to ensure that that a safe and secure environment for customers and businesses is sustained.

There have been various consultations undertaken with the businesses on the Longhill & Sandgate Industrial Estates area to date that have highlighted that the provision for safety and security on the estates is still the top priority.

The consultations undertaken include:

- Longhill and Sandgate Business Association meetings
- Online Survey
- Individual canvassing of businesses by members of the Executive of the Longhill & Sandgate Business Association and by Officers of Hartlepool Council.

The Executive of the Longhill & Sandgate Business Association have considered the feedback from the consultations that has highlighted that there is sufficient demand demonstrated to continue funding the estates wide CCTV system in addition to monitoring services and an environmental cleansing service.

The Executive has determined that the best way to administer the running costs of the initiatives fairly to all businesses would be through continuing the current BID arrangements and pursuing a renewal of the current BID for a further 5 years.

3. LOCATION

The boundary of the Longhill & Sandgate BID includes the industrial areas of the Longhill Industrial Estate and the Sandgate Industrial Estate, in the Borough of Hartlepool. The estates area consists of over 300 businesses.

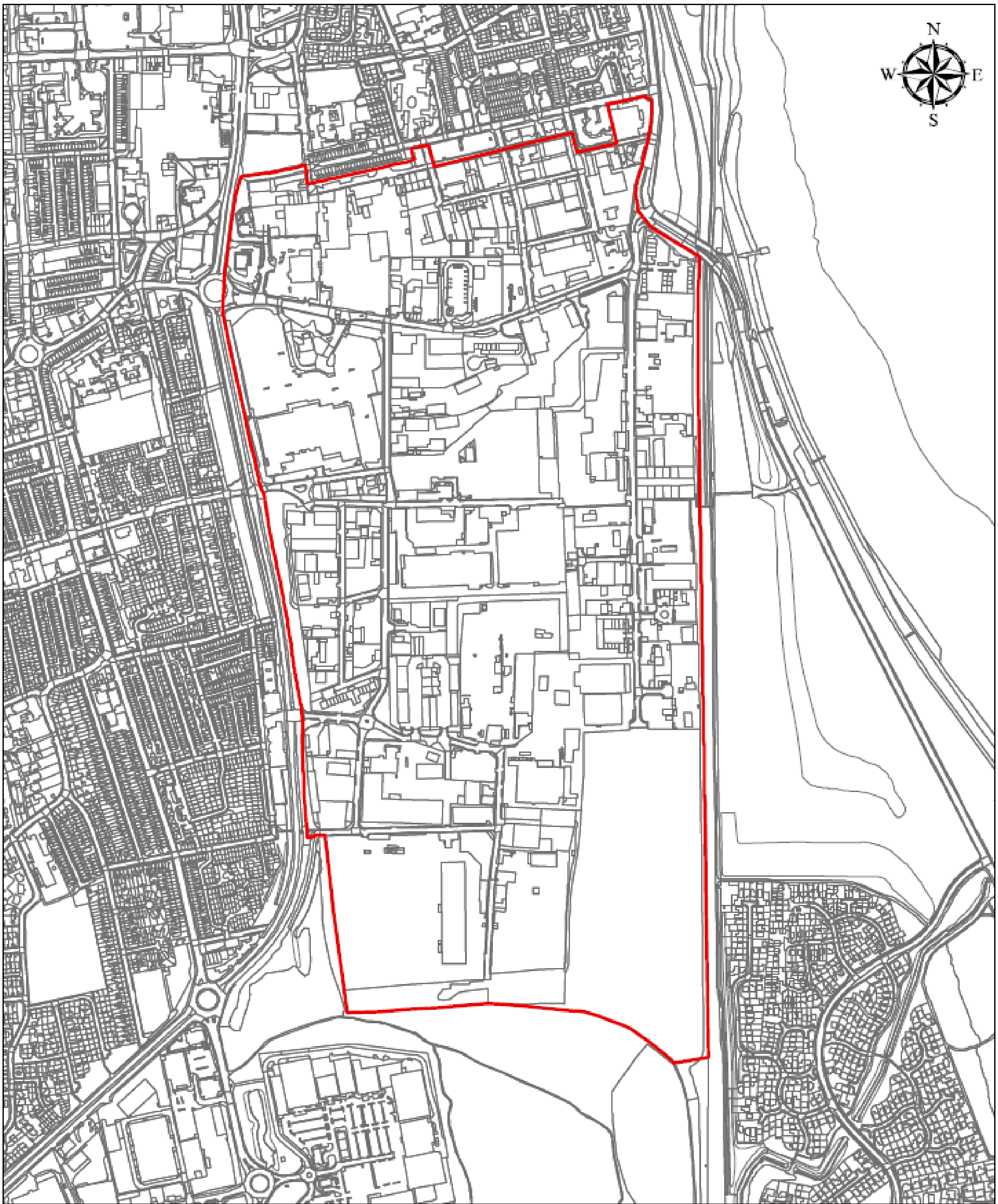
The location is formed by the following boundaries:

- To the north - Burbank St (part)/Moreland St.
- To the east - Railway line.
- To the south - The boundary of the industrial estate.
- To the west - The A689 Belle Vue Way.

It includes the following roads within its boundary:

- Windermere Road
- Redworth Street (part)
- Moreland Street
- Green Street
- Thompson Street
- Clark Street (part)
- Coniston Road
- Thomlinson Road
- Ullswater Road
- King Street
- Sarah Street
- Ladysmith Street
- Sydenham Road (part)
- Casebourne Road
- Greatham Street
- Baltic Street
- Lower Oxford Street
- Burn Road
- Mainsforth Terrace
- Ainsley Street
- Wood Street
- Sadler Street
- Havelock Street
- Burbank Street (part)
- Lynn Street South (part)
- Whitby Street South (part)
- Pilgrim Street
- Dundas Street
- Bowser Street
- Cromwell Street
- Freville Street
- Bertha Street
- Nelson Street

PROPOSED MAP OF THE AREA OF THE LONGHILL & SANDGATE BID



LOCATION	Longhill & Sandgate Industrial Estates	DRAWN BY CT	DATE 12/08/22
		SCALE	1:8000
DEED PACKET -	OS MAP NZ -	DRWG No	E/G/1033

Hartlepool Borough Council
Resources and Development

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Victoria Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

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4. THE BID PROPOSAL

The Longhill & Sandgate Business Association proposes the renewal of the Longhill & Sandgate BID for a 5 year term.

Hartlepool Borough Council is the Local Authority and the billing authority for National Non-Domestic Rates for the Longhill & Sandgate Industrial Estates area.

The Longhill & Sandgate BID renewal proposal involves the partnership of the Longhill & Sandgate Business Association, Hartlepool Borough Council and Cleveland Police (Hartlepool District).

If the Longhill & Sandgate BID renewal proposal is approved then the BID will start on 1st April 2023 and operate until 31st March 2028.

5. WHAT THE BID WILL COVER

Crime continues to be the top priority for resident businesses on the Longhill & Sandgate Industrial Estates area and the current estates wide CCTV system has been successful in reducing levels of crime and vandalism.

Resident businesses also identified the need to improve the general environment of the estates with the main issue being litter.

It is therefore proposed that the renewal of the current Longhill & Sandgate BID will:

- Maintain the safety and security of businesses, customers, employees and visitors through continuing to fund the monitoring and maintenance of the estates wide CCTV. The service consists of 17 cameras recorded during 24 hours and monitored for 12 hours in the evening and 24 hours at weekends (including Bank Holidays).

- Provide reactive security response service to incidents picked up by the CCTV Monitoring Centre.

- Provide a regular and reactive estates wide environmental cleansing service to tackle issues associated with litter.

The Longhill & Sandgate Business Association, Hartlepool Borough Council and Cleveland Police (Hartlepool District) have agreed that they will continue to utilise the policies, procedures and good practices that are currently used within the management of the CCTV system. This will ensure all regulatory and legislative requirements are met and they will positively pursue the security and safety of everyone who works, uses or visits the area.

6. THE LONGHILL & SANDGATE BID PARTNERSHIP

The Longhill & Sandgate BID Partnership consists of the Longhill & Sandgate Business Association, Hartlepool Borough Council and Cleveland Police (Hartlepool District).

The make-up of the Board that manages this partnership is set out below:

Longhill & Sandgate Business Association	2 representatives (Chair and Vice-Chair from the Executive of the Business Association).
Hartlepool Borough Council	2 representatives (From the Council's Economic Growth Team).
Cleveland Police (Hartlepool District)	1 representative.

The Longhill & Sandgate BID Partnership will continue to operate under the existing agreed constitution that will provide the rules and regulations that will govern the running of the Partnership.

The accountable body will continue to be Hartlepool Borough Council who will continue to manage the finances on behalf of the BID Partnership.

longhill sandgate business association

CLEVELAND POLICE *Putting People First*

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

7. FUNDING

The estimated Longhill and Sandgate BID income and expenditure is shown in the tables below.

INCOME	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
BID levy	**£66,840**	**£66,840**	**£66,840**	**£66,840**	**£66,840**	**£334,200**
EXPENDITURE						
CCTV Monitoring	£30,000	£30,500	£31,000	£31,500	£32,000	£155,000
Maintenance	£3,000	£3,300	£3,600	£4,000	£4,500	£18,400
Transmission	£12,800	£12,800	£12,800	£12,800	£12,800	£64,000
Electricity	£500	£550	£600	£650	£700	£3,000
IT, Billing and Recovery	£5,700	£5,800	£5,900	£6,000	£6,100	£29,500
Security Response Service	£1,200	£1,200	£1,200	£1,200	£1,200	£6,000
Environmental Cleansing Service	£11,000	£11,200	£11,400	£11,600	£11,800	£57,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**£64,200**	**£65,350**	**£66,500**	**£67,750**	**£69,100**	**£332,900**
BALANCE	£2,640	£1,490	£340	-£910	-£2,260	£1,300

8. BID BALLOT

The Longhill & Sandgate BID renewal proposal will only proceed if a formal BID ballot is successful.

The BID ballot will be a postal ballot and will be administered by CIVICA (formally known as the Electoral Reform Services) on behalf of the Longhill BID Partnership in accordance with the BID Ballot Regulations (2004).

All listed National Non Domestic ratepayers within the BID boundary on 30/11/2022 will be entitled to one vote per 'hereditament'. In the case of a vacant property the property owner will be entitled to vote.

The ballot will need to meet two tests.

- Firstly, a majority (51%) in number of those voting must be in favour of the proposal; and,

- Secondly, there must be a majority in the proportion of the aggregate rateable value of those voting.

Full voting procedures will be issued with ballot papers.

9. BID LEVY & COLLECTION

The BID levy will consist of one payment over and above the normal National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) paid by all businesses.

The current BID levy from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2023 is a basic levy of 1.5% of the rateable value charged on all hereditaments within the Longhill & Sandgate BID area. The minimum payment threshold of £50 and a maximum payment of £1,500 per hereditament.

The Longhill & Sandgate BID renewal proposal from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2028 will change from the current BID levy to ensure sufficient funds are generated to cover the BID activities.

It is proposed a basic levy of 1.75% of the rateable value will be charged on all hereditaments within the Longhill & Sandgate BID area in the next 5 year term. There will be a minimum payment threshold of £75 and a maximum payment of £1,500 per hereditament.

No individual hereditaments within the Longhill & Sandgate BID area will be exempt from the BID levy.

The levy will be based on the 2023 NNDR Rating Assessment as will be listed on the Valuation Office website (www.voa.gov.uk).

Any new hereditaments added to the National Non Domestic Rating List during the initiative will be charged the basic levy that applies.

Where any business is in occupation of a hereditament for a part of any chargeable period, that business will only be liable for a proportionate BID levy.

Where a premise is vacant, the liability to pay the annual BID levy, or proportion thereof, will revert to the legal occupier (e.g. leasehold or freehold interest etc).

Hartlepool Borough Council will collect the levy through the Direct Debit system using the ten monthly payment process, as it uses at present for collection of NNDR. This does not remove the right for a business to pay in one payment if it so wishes.

A separate bill will be sent out for the BID levy, this bill will show the amount of BID levy that each business will pay.

10. ALTERATION OF BID ARRANGEMENTS

The BID area cannot be changed nor the BID levy percentage increased without an alteration ballot that is put to businesses for a vote.

The Longhill & Sandgate BID Partnership will have the power to reprofile budget headings and costs within the constraints of the revenue received throughout the BID period and for the purposes set out for the BID.

11. BASELINE

Part of the legislative requirement of undertaking a BID is to have a baseline agreement with the Local Authority for all of the services provided by the Authority within the proposed BID area.

The renewal of the Longhill & Sandgate BID is focused on security and environmental cleansing however the baseline agreement is still required as the BID can be expanded to cover further environmental improvements or traffic or highways improvements if the Longhill & Sandgate BID Partnership were to agree further projects.

For the purpose of the baseline agreement, the geographical areas mapped out for inclusion.

Furthermore only those areas of adopted highway or land in the Council's ownership which fall within the Councils remit of responsibility for maintenance have been included. All other areas within the estate are not adopted and are therefore not included within this baseline agreement.

Cleansing

Manual Street Cleansing	Monthly.
Mechanical Street Cleansing	Monthly.
Weed spraying of hard standing area	All adopted carriageways & footways treated 3 times per year – Approximately March- July & October.
Fly Tipping Removal	Responsive service only.
Graffiti Removal	HBC property within 48 hours of notification.

Grounds Maintenance

Grass Cutting	Council owned grassed areas cut on a 14-21 day cycle.
Landscaping	There is no programmed activity currently in place.
Shrub Bed Maintenance	4 times per year.
Weed Spraying	All adopted carriageways & footways treated 3 times per year – Approximately March- July & October.

Highway Maintenance

Highway Inspection (statutory duty)	Walked inspection twice per financial year with all actionable defects identified and orders raised.
Winter Maintenance / Gritting	This estate is currently not on any gritting route.
Salt Bins	There are no Highways salt bins on the estates.
Pavement Maintenance	Inspected twice per financial year and all actionable defects identified and orders raised.
Road Maintenance	Inspected twice per financial year and all actionable defects identified and orders raised.
Street Furniture Maintenance	Inspected twice per financial year and all actionable defects identified and orders raised.
Street Lighting Maintenance	All the street lights are stress tested and maintained once per financial year.

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ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

18 October 2022

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report of: Assistant Director (Development and Growth)

Subject: HARTLEPOOL CREATIVE SECTOR RESEARCH STUDY

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1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

For information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To report to the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee the findings of the Local Government Association (LGA) funded Hartlepool Creative Sector Research Study (Attached at Appendix 1).

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In July 2021, Hartlepool Council were invited by the LGA to take part and benefit from their Economic Growth Advisers Programme. The Programme offered the Council procured specialist consultant support up to the value of £14,000 equating to 24 days of work.

3.2 This programme had been specifically developed by the LGA to assist Local Authorities with undertaking a fully funded piece of expert consultancy work to assist with any aspect of the Council's plans to get the local economy back on track following Covid-19.

3.3 The LGA agreed to support Hartlepool Council in mapping out a route to enhance and grow opportunities in the creative industries sector. This would in particular have the following service objectives:

1. The identification and mapping of both regional and national support organisations that offer assistance specifically for creative businesses.
2. To develop a framework for tailored support for creative businesses located in the BIS and wider Hartlepool to assist them to invest, grow and expand.

3. To develop a pathway for individuals who are at local schools and colleges in receiving the necessary support and guidance to consider self-employment as a career option and to set up a creative sector business.

4. The development of an engagement plan for stakeholders in the creative sector in Hartlepool that will include options for the setting up of a creative business forum, to allow sharing of ideas, working together and the promotion of Hartlepool as a creative destination. This would be part of and compliment the Stakeholder Forum being proposed by the Hartlepool Cultural Strategy.

3.4 After a competitive procurement exercise undertaken by the LGA, Chimera Consulting were appointed in October 2021 to work with the Economic Growth Team at Hartlepool Council to fulfil the set objectives.

3.5 Chimera Consulting, led by Adam Jeffrey, specialise in Economic Development research and have been delivering for a range of clients for over 20 years. In particular they have undertaken a number of projects specifically in the creative sector for clients in the Midlands.

3.6 Chimera Consulting were briefed to undertake a review of the current position of Hartlepool's creative industries sector through consultation with key stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sector. The findings of which were documented in the study along with outline recommendations.

4. STUDY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The key findings and recommendations from the study have been categorised into four key areas.

4.2 Partnership

There was a consistent message from many consultees concerning the lack of a "joined up" approach to supporting the creative sector. That's not to say there isn't strong partnership working and collaboration between creative businesses, community groups, education institutions and the Council, focused on specific initiatives, projects or events.

However there is a bigger picture to see and opportunity to be embraced and greater impact can be made as they believed there was and is a great amount of excellent work, businesses, talent, events and activity happening, in addition to a wide array of assets (buildings, equipment, facilities).

Recommendation 1: The creation of a new Creative/Cultural Consortium or Forum involving all key stakeholders across the education, community, private, and wider public sector.

4.3 Business Support

Creative sector businesses are established by individuals who are more typically motivated by their artistic/creative passion more than they are by generating money.

Moreover, traditional business support services don't necessarily fully align to the needs of creatives. The importance of developing a longer-term relationship with a business advisor, having access to mentoring and one to one support, plus links to peer networks can all play an important role.

There are some issues which creatives need additional support with such as financial savviness and marketing and promotion.

Recommendation 2: A business support guide that brings together all available support that are relevant to pre-start, start-up and established creative businesses.

Recommendation 3: A new Creative Sector Facilitator to act as lead co-ordinator to support creative industries across Hartlepool and with a focus on BIS.

Recommendation 4: A dedicated programme of business support for creatives that includes the provision of mentoring, and bespoke advice on finances, marketing, IP, and other aspects where demand isn't met by current business support offers.

Recommendation 5: Development of a creative network and a directory of businesses and talent with events developed to encourage creatives to come together and network.

Recommendation 6: An online business and talent matching portal – a website platform that showcases local creative businesses, individuals seeking a career or work experience, a list of all creative sector assets and equipment (including all school/college/university-based facilities open to public use/hire), tutors and teaching expertise, events, creative sector talks.

4.4 The BIS

The award-winning BIS was praised by consultees as a creative hub that wouldn't be out of place in one of the larger cities with a strong creative sector such as Leeds, Birmingham or Manchester.

However, many thought it wasn't achieving its potential and there were several opportunities for improvement highlighted by consultees. These included a need to raise its profile through marketing and promotion and to help it become a more vibrant creative hub. More defined links with educational institutions, drawing in students and graduates, offering incubation space for young people coming out of education and looking to start up, and a more "open community" feel.

Recommendation 7: Consider a “coffee kart” (portable) operator within the atrium and explore opportunities for small display/sales area to help tenants showcase their goods.

Recommendation 8: Develop a programme of events including guest speaker talks, training workshops, advice sessions, open days, open evenings and trade events to attract the community and wider local creatives to come into the BIS.

Recommendation 9: Dedicate one or two vacant units exclusively for student use, partnering with NSoA, Hartlepool College of Further Education, Hartlepool Sixth Form College and other schools to enable students to have access to workspace in a supervised business setting with links to other creatives and advice on site.

Recommendation 10: An annual business awards event to celebrate the creative sector.

4.5 Education

There appears to be a very healthy pipeline of local young people engaged in arts and creative subjects at school, at college and in higher education. Several institutions are continuing to develop their “creative offer” and facilities. Not only are young people discovering areas of creative work they love and have a passion for, but they are also developing skills that have wider benefits, including for employers: team working, communication, problem solving, independence and creative thinking.

Where there is a need for support, is more help to support young people make the transition from education into work (work placements and work experience, first jobs on the career ladder, self employment advice) and an understanding of the opportunities available/career pathways.

Recommendation 11: Making use of local alumni to provide short “career path” videos to shine a light on local people who have gone on to have successful careers (in dance, acting, music, film production, theatre design etc.) to engage young people and build their ambitions.

Recommendation 12: Allied to the above, a series of mini video clips covering all aspects of the creative sector, specialists and job roles, and what pathways people can take to achieve these roles.

Recommendation 13: A challenge is offering young people “first steps” employee roles instead of moving directly into self employment. Hartlepool does not have many established medium sized creative businesses and efforts to secure inward investors in this sector could provide wider spin offs in this regard. Alternatively some supported ILM (Intermediate Labour Market) model or apprenticeships which provides a wage whilst a young person experiences work in several micro businesses.

Recommendation 14: Some focus on addressing local skills shortages – dance and music teachers, audio and visual technicians etc. and helping schools/colleges/universities work with local employers on bespoke training packages.

Recommendation 15: A "We Are Creative Hartlepool" branded event that enables local young students and creative talent to be showcased – visual arts, digital experts, dance, film makers and photographers, crafts and a music event, with each having the opportunity to leave a permanent record of their work (e.g. local musicians all contributing to a record or playlist or photographers having an online and physical album of their work etc.)

5. NEXT STEPS/PROPOSALS

5.1 Hartlepool has many strengths regarding its creative sector and there is an opportunity for the Borough Council and wider stakeholders, across the public, community and commercial sectors, to work together to help the sector grow, flourish and provide many benefits to the town, its people and communities.

5.2 The Economic Growth Team will have ownership of the study and will take overall responsibility to review the recommendations of the study, and will work closely with internal colleagues in Preventative and Community Based Services and also the Tees Valley Combined Authority to develop and deliver actions as appropriate, ensuring they complement ongoing activity.

5.3 The Northern Studios will be a major part of the Hartlepool creative industries development and working in promoting the film studios with NSoA as well as opportunities for local business will be key.

5.4 Wider regional and national opportunities with the North East Screen Industries Partnership (NESIP) will also be explored to include Hartlepool as part of the ambition to position the North East as one of the leading film and TV production hubs. In particular this will be more pertinent with the BBC committed to spend at least £25 million on programming in the north east over the next 5 years.

5.5 Where appropriate the study recommendations have been incorporated within the Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022 Action Plan.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 To do nothing and to not give any due consideration to each of the recommendations would mean to not support the creative business sector in Hartlepool.

6.2 This would mean the lost opportunity to assist creative businesses set up and grow and the lost positive impact on the local economy.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 It is anticipated that most of the recommendations will have no financial implications and will be delivered by existing staff within existing budgets.

7.2 Some of the study recommendations do have financial implications such as the employing of a creative sector facilitator, however any such proposal will need to be developed with the costs identified and funding source agreed and approved.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Chimera Consulting's approach was to undertake a comprehensive desk based study to identify the landscape of support and support organisations coupled with local and national strategy and policy review.

8.2 The team also undertook a very comprehensive consultation process with key stakeholders in Hartlepool and wider to get a broad range of views and opinions to inform the findings of the study and recommendations

8.3 Between October 2021 and February 2022, Chimera Consulting conducted individual interviews with 39 key stakeholders and businesses to obtain information on what they perceive to be the challenges facing Hartlepool's creative sector and suggestions as to how these challenges may be overcome.

8.4 Interviews also took place with "good practice" advisors from the North East Lincolnshire Council, Leicester City Council and The Arches Project in Worcester. Expert advice was also sought from two creative coaches. Details of all consultees are listed in Appendix 1.

8.5 On the 8th September 2022 all consultees that had contributed to the study were invited to a presentation of the research findings and recommendations which was delivered by Chimera Consulting at The BIS. Consultees were given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations.

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

9.1 Please refer to Appendix 2

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

10.1 Please refer to Appendix 3

11. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Staff Considerations	N/A
Asset Management Considerations	N/A
Legal Considerations	N/A
Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change Considerations	N/A

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 The Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee is asked to note the findings and recommendation of the LGA funded Hartlepool Creative Sector Research study.

12.2 Agree to incorporate the recommendations within the Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022 Action Plan and for the Economic Growth Team to review the recommendations of the study, develop and deliver actions as appropriate within resources available.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 To assist and grow the Hartlepool creative business sector and in turn grow the Hartlepool economy.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

15. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Director of Resources and Development	√
Chief Solicitor	√

Appendix 2 POVERY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

1. Is this decision a Budget & Policy Framework or Key Decision? No				
2. Will there be an impact of the decision requested in respect of Child and Family Poverty? YES				
GROUP	**POSITIVE IMPACT**	**NEGATIVE IMPACT**	**NO IMPACT**	**REASON & EVIDENCE**
Young working people aged 18 - 21	✓			Employment and skills opportunities
Those who are disabled or suffer from illness / mental illness	✓			As above
Those with low educational attainment	✓			As above
Those who are unemployed	✓			As above
Those who are underemployed	✓			As above
Children born into families in poverty			✓	
Those who find difficulty in managing their finances			✓	
Lone parents			✓	
Those from minority ethnic backgrounds	✓			As above
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**
Overall employment rate	✓			
Proportion of young people who are NEET	✓			

Number of affordable homes built			✓	

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

Appendix 3 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
Resources & Development	Development & Growth	Economic Growth	Israr Hussain
Service, policy, practice being reviewed/changed or planned	n/a		
Why are you making the change?	n/a		

How might this impact (positively/negatively) on people who share protected characteristics?		
Please tick	**POSITIVELY**	**NEGATIVELY**
Age		
Please describe...		
Disability		
Please describe...		
Gender Re-assignment		
Please describe...		
Race		
Please describe...		
Religion		
Please describe...		
Gender		
Please describe...		
Sexual Orientation		
Please describe...		
Marriage & Civil Partnership		
Please describe...		
Pregnancy & Maternity		
Please describe...		

Has there been consultation /is consultation planned with people who will be affected by this policy? How has this affected your decision making?	
As a result of your decision how can you mitigate	

negative/maximise positive outcomes and foster good relationships?			
Describe how you will address and monitor the impact	**1. No Impact - No Major Change** *Please Detail*		
	2. Adjust/Change Policy *Please Detail*		
	3. Adverse Impact but Continue as is *Please Detail*		
	4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal *Please Detail*		
Initial Assessment	*00/00/00*	Reviewed	*00/00/00*
Completed	*00/00/00*	Published	*00/00/00*

chimeraconsulting

Research and evaluation specialists

Creative Hartlepool

Creative sector research study

March 2022

"Creative Hartlepool"

A research study to help the development and growth of the creative sector in Hartlepool

For

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Supported by

Local Government Association

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following for giving their time to meet with us and providing their views to inform this study. We have grouped these by broader category based on their organisation's primary focus with regard to the creative sector. In addition to Hartlepool Borough Council staff, these categories are: business support, creative businesses, education, and those representing voluntary and community sector organisations. Also, contacts involved in managing creative hubs or overseeing creative strategies elsewhere in England.

Hartlepool Borough Council

Hartlepool Borough Council	Israr Hussain
Hartlepool Borough Council	Caron Auckland
Hartlepool Borough Council	Gemma Ptak
Hartlepool Borough Council	Scott Campbell
Hartlepool Borough Council	Jamie Kelly
Hartlepool Borough Council	David Worthington
Hartlepool Borough Council	Susan French

Business Support

Chamber of Commerce	Gill Danby
Creative Fuse (Teesside University)	Wendy Parvin
Digital City (Teesside University)	David Dixon
Enterprise Made Simple	Nicky Burke
Federation of Small Businesses	Reshma Begum
North East Enterprise Agency	Sue Parkinson
Tees Valley Combined Authority	Kaye Lake
Tees Valley Young Creatives	Sonya Curle

Creatives

Artistic Solutions	Joanna Brobbel and Daniel Brobbel
BloomInArt	Rachel Laycock
Creative Enterprise	Lauren Morrell
Do Creative	Kim McKelvie and Jayne Harrison-Fawcett
Gift Stop	Stacey Jensen
James Leonard Hewitson	(musician)
Magnata	Sarah Leanne Trappe
Mags and Ags	Harriet Armstrong
Potency Ltd.	Belle Batkin
RAW 35	Francis Cox
Tanglewood Games	Chris Wood

Education

English Martyrs Catholic School & Sixth Form College	Lee Meynell
Hartlepool College of Further Education	Shaun Hope
Hartlepool College of Further Education	Maria Archbold
Hartlepool Sixth Form College	Toni Rhodes
Hartlepool Sixth Form College	Jane Reed
High Tunstall College of Science	Mark Tilling
Northern School of Art	Pat Chapman
St. Hild's Church of England School	Geoff Crannage
Teesside University / MIMA	Sharon Paterson

Voluntary and Community Sector

Hartlepower	Paul Hewitson
PFC Trust	Joe Dunne
Wharton Trust	Sacha Bedding

"Good Practice" advisors

Area:	
Hull, Coventry and Grimsby	James Trowsdale, North East Lincolnshire Council Strategic Lead for Culture. Former Head of Public Partnerships at Hull UK City of Culture 2017 and Head of Trusts and Foundations for Coventry City of Culture 2021.
Leicester	Peter Chandler, Leicester City Council, Head of Economic Regeneration and Former Manager of LCB Depot creative hub.
Worcester	John Holmes of Advantage Creative – The Arches project.

Also, Filomena Rodriguez, Creative Coach and advisor to the study, and Ellen O'Hara, Creative Enterprise Coach, for her advice on creative hubs.

This report was written by Adam Jeffrey, CEO of Chimera Consulting.

Adam was supported throughout the study with specialist creative sector advice from Filomena Rodriguez, Creative Coach. Additional support was provided by Ellen O'Hara, Creative Enterprise Coach.

March 2022

Contents

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Introduction

Hartlepool has many strengths regarding its creative sector and there is an opportunity for the Borough Council and wider stakeholders, across the public, community and commercial sectors, to work together to help the sector grow, flourish and provide many benefits to the town, its people and communities.

It has significant assets, talent, expertise and no shortage of energy, enthusiasm and ambition amongst the creative community and stakeholders we consulted for this study.

Despite the setbacks from the Covid-19 pandemic, the creative sector is growing. One in every eight enterprise in the UK is in the creative sector and over the 10 year period to 2020, the North East Region experienced a 68% growth in creative jobs – the fastest growth rate outside of London and the South East.

Creative businesses are overwhelmingly small. Nationally, 95% are micro-businesses and a significant proportion of these are freelancers and sole traders. The sector, with its reliance on freelancers, can present risks in terms of unpredictable income for creatives. Also, many see themselves as “creative practitioners” pursuing their passion and using their talents, interested in developing a reputation, perhaps more than seeing themselves developing a commercial enterprise. Understanding their motivations helps to understand what support they may need.

Hartlepool has several strengths, for example music and recording, dance, film and tv production. Also publishing, advertising, artistic creation, computer consultancy, cultural education, library and archive activities and others are well represented. The numbers of people working in the sector may still be relatively small compared to some of the more established sectors locally, but with consistent growth, positive opportunities and access to a range of support, Hartlepool is well positioned to grow its creative sector further. Hartlepool and wider Tees Valley is enjoying a high profile with Government and its “Levelling Up” agenda. Recent investments in Hartlepool including projects such as The BIS, Northern Studios and the BBC’s investment in the North East demonstrates confidence in the region. Several stakeholders believed this was the best opportunity in decades for Hartlepool and wider Tees Valley to attract public investment and maintain a high profile amongst key policy makers.

“We have a once in a generation opportunity on the table for investment coming through to Tees Valley”

Research study

This assignment sought to: understand the needs of creative sector; research the appropriateness of business support available and identify gaps; and, explore the career pathways from school, college and university through to the world of work. Also, to take a specific interest in The BIS centre to help maximise the opportunity of developing BIS further as a creative hub.

The research worked involved a significant programme of consultations with 43 individuals across 33 different organisations, including creative businesses, public and community sector representatives, and several education institutions. It also sought insights from "good practice" elsewhere, so that lessons learned that were of relevance to helping Hartlepool, could be identified and highlighted.

Findings from this research, through interviews, analysing relevant data sets and reviewing recent key reports on the sector, are set out within this study report. They can be distilled into the following:

Assets

Hartlepool has many assets for the creative sector – facilities, equipment, learning opportunities and expertise: within educational institutions (Schools, the College of Further Education, the Sixth Form, The Northern School of Art and also, nearby Teesside University and MIMA). Also within the community sector (e.g. Hartlepower), commercial businesses, Borough Council facilities, plus assets such as CECA and The Northern Studios and associated Scott Building teaching facility.

Some improvements could be made in maximising the use of these assets and enabling wider access: with more co-ordination between stakeholders and reviewing under-utilised assets to bring these into wider active use amongst the creative sector and for students and communities.

"It is incumbent upon all of us to champion the sector"

Education and talent

There are many opportunities to learn and develop creative skills with the local educational providers, leading to qualifications at GCSE, A Level and Degree (and postgraduate) level. Schools reported some pressures upon arts, design and creative courses, with the prioritisation of STEM subjects and focus on league tables, which can lead to a "squeeze" on creative subjects. At degree level, students can learn at the prestigious The Northern School of Art and nearby Teesside University offering a range of courses. Both have strong graduate retention figures.

Beyond creative specific skills, educators highlighted the importance of “employability skills” that creatives typically develop prized by employers in most sectors: communication skills, team working, problem solving and creative thinking. Hartlepool is quite a settled community. Many young people want to remain in the town after their education and retaining future talent locally will be important to nurturing the development of the creative sector (and other economic sectors).

Aspects that could be improved included: greater links between schools and businesses, articulating careers options and pathways, work placement opportunities, and making use of alumni to showcase their “success stories”. Also developing an entrepreneurial mindset alongside creative talent and more “first step” employee opportunities for creatives who are not yet ready for self-employment or who would prefer to work as part of a team within a creative company or organisation.

“The creative sector has the opportunity to act as a catalyst and make a real difference locally”

Business needs and support

Businesses can access a range of support and advice, from pre-start up through to established stages of development. Much of this is generic and can meet some needs but creatives need more focused support on issues such as marketing and self-promotion, on finances, online trading and Intellectual Property advice. Some would also benefit from a more bespoke and blended service that combines mentoring over a longer period of time together with specific topic advice. The importance of networking cannot be over-stated and an online platform is proposed that enables talent profiles, educational opportunities, business profiles, assets and events to be posted, to help nurture collaboration and broker access to opportunities.

“A thriving creative sector can have an incredibly positive impact for the town, its people and profile”

The BIS creative hub

This BIS is a flagship project and one that has the potential to become a vibrant creative hub and a facility that Hartlepool should be proud of. There were a number of suggestions to help its development further, including creative sector support for onsite management, more events and open days, collaboration space, better links to The Northern School of Art and other educational institutions with workspace for students/graduates. Also, networking opportunities and better use of the atrium, together with more marketing and promotion of BIS and its facilities.

> ***"There is a real opportunity for Hartlepool to become the creative capital of Tees Valley"***

Partnership

Above all, a consistent theme emerging from consultations was the need for all stakeholders to collaborate and work together on helping drive the sector forward. *"We need to join things up"* and *"we have some great assets, but we have not yet got the glue to bring them together"* were messages that chimed with many of the consultees. It was also pointed out that a specialist from a creative sector background would be beneficial to help facilitate the development and plans for the Partnership.

A proposal is to establish an independent consortium or a "Creative Hartlepool Partnership" which includes representation from educational providers, voluntary and community sector, the Borough Council, other public sector agencies and creative practitioners and businesses. The Council's Cultural Strategy also proposes a Partnership for the creative and cultural sectors and the findings and recommendations from these two complementary assignments should be brought together.

> ***"Our success is based upon us all working together"***

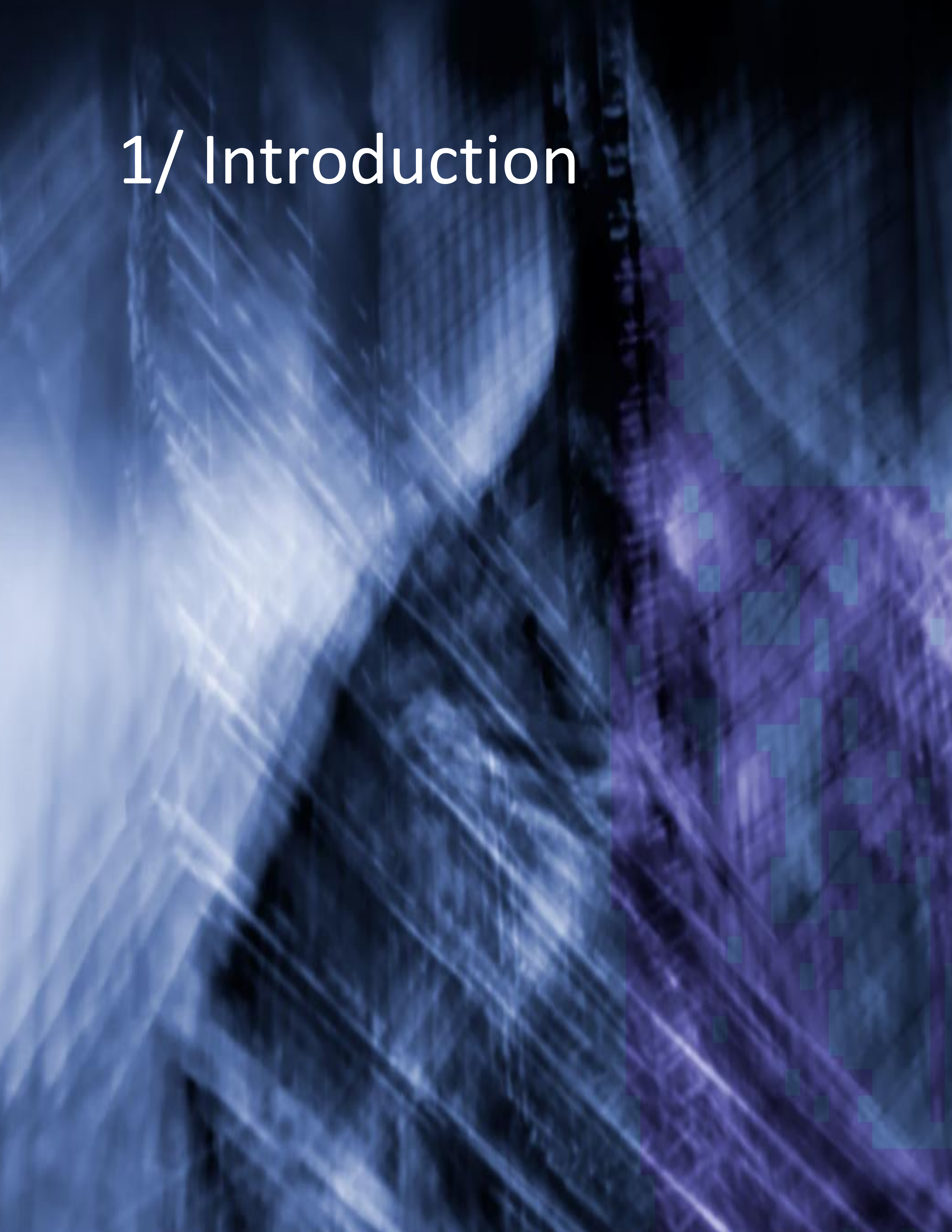
SWOT

Taking on board all our research, including extensive consultation feedback, we set out a SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats) analysis below:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Assets including BIS • Talent and alumni • Educational institutions and expertise • Sector growth • Passion and enthusiasm • Extent, quality and diversity of creative activity • Stable community and many people wish to stay local (good retention of talent)	• Some silo working • Lack of co-ordinated networking • Lack of dedicated facilitator • Links between education and BIS • CECA underused • Lack of awareness of BIS • BIS lacking a "buzz" • Lack of medium/larger creative employers to provide apprenticeships, work experience or first steps on the career ladder
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS***
• BIS as a vibrant creative hub • Partnership and collaboration • Maximise key local strengths (e.g. film production, dance, music etc.) • Businesses wanting to expand and seeking young talent • Hartlepool as a creative leader • Tees Valley investment and the "levelling up" agenda and Hartlepool to get more focus in accessing support • Link creative skills to non-creative sectors	• Not following through on momentum • Not developing a partnership • "Business as usual" • Lack of strategic ambition or leadership • Competing interests • Not committing to longer term support strategy

*Threats listed are ones that might hinder Hartlepool's opportunity to develop its creative sector, rather than a judgment on what will happen.

1/ Introduction



1: Introduction

1.1 Study Objectives and Context

Hartlepool Borough Council has previously invested in the creative sector (see **"History"** on next page) and identified the town's creative sector as being one with good opportunities for economic growth. However, it also acknowledged it required more in-depth understanding of the sector's needs, including specific business support and routeways from education to working in the creative sector, to help support its growth. In short, this assignment is led by an overall objective to:

"map out a route to enhance and grow opportunities in the Hartlepool creative industries".

Led by the Council's Economic Growth Team, a research study brief was developed and then approved by the Local Government Association (LGA) for support as part of the LGA's Economic Growth Advisors programme.

Responding to the tender opportunity the LGA issued to its pool of Economic Growth Advisors, Chimera Consulting was successful in being awarded the contract on 29th September 2021.

Ambitions

The intended outcomes of this research are:

- An increase in business start-up rates in the creative sector
- The provision of an identified support structure for creative businesses
- The provision of a clear pathway for local school and college leavers in considering self-employment in the creative sector
- An increase in Hartlepool business numbers
- The provision of growth and recruitment opportunities for local Hartlepool residents.

Scope of the brief

The requirements of this brief were to carry out research to result in a report which included:

- The identification and mapping of both regional and national support organisations that offer assistance specifically for creative businesses
- To develop a framework for tailored support for creative businesses located in the BIS and wider Hartlepool to assist them to invest, grow and expand

- To develop a pathway for individuals who are at local schools and colleges in receiving the necessary support and guidance to consider self-employment as a career option and to set up a creative sector business
- The development of an engagement plan for stakeholders in the creative sector in Hartlepool that will include options for the setting up of a forum to allow sharing of ideas, working together and the promotion of Hartlepool as a creative destination.

In addition, there was to be a focus upon the BIS, to help its ambitions to be the **"home of creativity"** in Hartlepool.

History

The Council has previously invested in the ambition to support the creative sector. In 2014 it commissioned a "Creative Industries Strategy" **[REF 1]** looking at the opportunity to develop a Cultural Quarter focused on Church Street and surrounding area. The aim of the study was to test and develop the proposition that the economic prospects of this "Cultural Quarter" could be enhanced through the creation of a cluster of creative, media and digital businesses. Also, linking these to two key local educational assets: Hartlepool College of Further Education and The Northern School of Art (or Cleveland College of Art and Design as it was called then), together with The Art Gallery, and an ambition to help graduates establish their own creative businesses and developing the area as a focal point for the creative sector. Intelligence gathered suggested the sector was relatively small (in terms of employment numbers) but acknowledged the trend, regionally and nationally, was one of growth, and local education institutions were providing a significant supply of creative talent.

A follow-on report was commissioned by the Council to explore the options and demand for creating a managed workspace facility for creative industries. The 2015 study by Cushman and Wakefield **[REF 2]** concluded there could be demand for a creative managed workspace facility in the area. It looked at a number of options for a facility, including the former Post Office at 13-17 Whitby Street.

Both of these studies laid the groundwork for a business case to be developed to renovate the former Post Office and create **The BIS**, a managed workspace for the creative sector, as a partnership between the Council and The Northern School of Art, with Local Growth Fund through Tees Valley LEP.

The Grade II listed building was renovated and extended and opened as The BIS in 2019, a flagship scheme for the Council and the town, with 28 units for the creative industries.

1.2 Methodology

Our approach to carrying out this research assignment included investing a significant amount of time in Hartlepool, meeting and consulting key stakeholders (across the public, community and commercial sectors) and creative business to understand their needs, their expertise, and their perspectives on how Hartlepool could better support the growth of creative industries. Also, to understand the opportunities (and challenges) for local talent moving from the world of education into creative work.

With an online Inception Meeting on 7th October, and first site visit to BIS on 22nd October, the study got underway. The bulk of in person meetings were held from mid-November through to mid-December and then, due to Covid-19 Omicron concerns, most meetings in January and early February were held online. In total, we consulted 43 individuals across 33 different organisations or businesses:

Consultee type (number of organisations in category)	Number of people consulted
Hartlepool Borough Council (1)	7
Education institutions (7)	9
Business support organisations and projects (8)	8
Creative businesses (11)	13
Voluntary and community sector groups (3)	3
Creative leads for good practice insights (3)	3
Total	43

Research also included some desk-based analysis, reviewing relevant documentation such as relevant strategies, plans, evaluation studies, business support directories and LMI data provided by Tees Valley Combined Authority. The **Reference section** sets these out.

1.3 Creative sector expertise

To provide creative sector expertise within our research team, Chimera Consulting drew upon the advice of Filomena Rodriguez, an artist and creative sector coach, to provide insights on the sector and the support and development needs of creatives. Filomena acted as a creative expert advisor to Adam Jeffrey, CEO of Chimera Consulting, throughout the study.

Also, another creative sector expert, Ellen O'Hara, provided us with observations on "good practice" and success factors elsewhere and provided her knowledge of creative hubs across England. Her report for the British Council in 2021 **[REF 8]**, mapping creative hubs across the country, is an excellent resource to review a wide variety of great projects.

Their combined sector specific knowledge and our consultations with people experienced in developing creative strategies and hubs in other towns and cities (Leicester, Hull, Grimsby, Coventry and Worcester), has provided some useful advice from lessons learned. This intelligence aims to provide points of consideration to help Hartlepool Borough Council and stakeholders in taking their next steps to support the creative sector. We highlight lessons from other projects and towns and cities in **Section 6.**

2/ The Creative Sector

2: The Creative Sector

2.1 Definitions

What is the "creative sector"? The UK Government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) defines cultural industries as:

"Those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property".

The list of creative industry groups, according to Creative England and the Creative Industries Federation, includes:

- Advertising
- Architecture
- Crafts
- Design (product, graphic, fashion)
- Film, TV, radio and photography
- IT, software, computer services and video games
- Publishing
- Museums, galleries and libraries
- Music, performing and visual arts.

Within each group are a number of sub-categories of activities. These are listed in **Appendix 2**.

The scale and scope of the "creative sector" is vast, including artists, dancers, musicians, photographers, videographers, writers, costume/fashion designers, actors, curators, art gallery and museum staff, through to graphic designers, web designers, video games designers, architects, digital technology specialists, sound engineers and many more.

2.2 The state of the sector - nationally

The creative industries is the fastest growing sector in the UK economy (growing at four times the rate of the wider economy) and one in eight UK enterprises are in the creative sector, generating £101.5 billion of gross value added to the UK economy **[REF 9 & REF 3].** Creative England estimates the figure to be closer to £116 billion.

It accounts for £46 billion of the UK's exports (12% of our total exports of goods and services) and is in strong demand internationally. Some of the largest international markets are the US (the US is the biggest purchaser of UK exports across eight of the nine sectors), also Germany, Ireland, Sweden, France, Switzerland and China all feature as key markets. The UK's creative sector has a very positive reputation internationally.

In the QS World Subject Rankings 2021:

- 7 UK education institutions were ranked in the top 50 globally for Arts and Design
- 8 UK education institutions were ranked in the top 50 globally for Communications and Media Studies
- 13 UK education institutions were ranked in the top 50 globally for Performing Arts.

In 2019, 2.1 million people were working in the Creative Industries and a further 1.4 million supported in the supply chain. More than 1 in 10 UK jobs are in or depend on the sector. Although the Covid-19 pandemic hit the sector particularly hard (2020 saw 10% of GVA lost), especially music, performing and visual arts, the sector is responding well and the outlook is bright. Oxford Economics predicts that an increase in spend and investment of 20% on 2019 levels by 2025 will result in the sector reaching £132 billion value and 2.3 million jobs.

"To a greater extent than in any other sector, commercial businesses, publicly-funded organisations and freelancers work hand in hand both across supply chains and internationally to produce the creative series and products that deliver this economic, social and cultural success." **[REF 9]**

2.3 The state of the sector - locally

From 2011 to 2020, outside of London and the South East where most of the Creative Industries jobs are, the North East demonstrated the largest growth rate of all regions.

Jobs grew by 68% in the North East over that ten year timeframe, compared to 61% in Yorkshire and Humber, 60% in the West Midlands, and 29% in Scotland, for example.

Also, in the North East, for every £1 spent, the sector contributes an extra £2.50 to the wider economy which is the highest rate (together with Wales) of all regions outside London and the South East.

Drawing upon 2020 and 2021 EMSI data, provided to us by TVCA (see further details in **Appendix 3**), we note that 687 people were working in creative sector jobs (as employees) in Hartlepool in 2021 out of 4,378 across Tees Valley.

This does not include figures for those who were self employed, and there are some caveats as some of the numbers are very small. It provides some interesting data about the local creative sector but not necessarily the full picture.

Largest creative sectors by job numbers.

Twelve sub-sectors employ 10 or more workers in Hartlepool. In ranked order they are:

SIC	Description	Avg. Wages Per Job	2021 Jobs (employees)	GVA	2020 Establishments
6202	Computer Consultancy Activities	£29,796	315	£9,129,684	34
3220	Motion Picture, Video and Television Programme Production Activities	£27,184	68	£0	2
9101	Library and Archive Activities	£24,909	53	£1,060,792	0
7311	Advertising Agencies	£21,478	44	£651,055	6
7111	Architectural Activities	£28,799	41	£597,034	6
3223	Motion Picture Projection Activities	£18,531	32	£152,560	1
9003	Artistic Creation	£32,949	24	£484,551	11
9102	Museum Activities	£23,653	15	£312,810	4
3224	Sound Recording and Music Publishing Activities	£30,251	14	£0	2
8552	Cultural Education	£16,770	13	£0	3
3227	Computer Programming Activities	£31,174	12	£627,178	8
7312	Media Representation	Insf. Data	10	Insf. Data	4

Source: EMSI Labour Market Intelligence data / TVCA **[REF 13]**

Job growth trends:

Sectors showing the largest growth in jobs locally from 2020 to 2021 were:

- Arts Officers, Producers and Directors: **+8%** (comparted to +2% nationally)
- Photographers, Audio-Visual and Broadcasting Equipment: **+5%** (compared to +1% nationally)
- Musicians: **+4%** (compared to +1% nationally)
- Dancers and Choreographers: **+3%** (compared to +1% nationally).

Local concentrations:

Analysing Location Quotient (LQ) data, enables us to observe which sectors are over/under represented when compared to national or regional averages. LQ is a way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a locality as compared to a wider geography. If we compare local (Hartlepool) to national figures, any LQ figure above 1.0 implies a sector that has more workers than we would expect, based on the total people working in the sector nationally, then calculated on a pro rata basis to the size of Hartlepool's workforce.

We find there are four creative sectors with LQs over 1.0, i.e. above expected average, in Hartlepool. They are:

1. Library and archive activities: LQ 1.73
2. Cultural education: LQ 1.53
3. Motion picture projection activities: LQ 1.40
4. Sound recording and music publishing activities: LQ 1.35.

When comparing Hartlepool LQ figures to those of all the other Tees Valley areas (Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, Darlington and Redcar & Cleveland), the data shows that Hartlepool ranks first for nine of the 31 sectors and second for 3 sectors.

Hartlepool ranks first in:

- Other Publishing Activities
- Motion Picture, Video and Television Programme Production Activities
- Sound Recording and Music Publishing Activities
- Computer Consultancy Activities
- Advertising Agencies
- Media Representation
- Cultural Education
- Artistic Creation
- Support Activities to Performing Arts.

SIC	Description	Hpool LQ	Hpool rank out of TV	Tees Valley LQ	North East LQ	M'boro LQ	Stockton LQ	Darlington LQ	Redcar LQ
3217	Other Publishing Activities	0.32	1	0.07	0.23	0.07	0.02	0.04	0.00
3220	Motion Picture, Video and Television Programme Production Activities	0.92	1	0.53	0.93	0.51	0.43	0.53	0.47
3224	Sound Recording and Music Publishing Activities	1.35	1	0.41	0.91	0.39	0.50	0.04	0.00
6202	Computer Consultancy Activities	0.79	1	0.47	0.57	0.16	0.65	0.58	0.15
7311	Advertising Agencies	0.43	1=	0.25	0.36	0.43	0.11	0.21	0.21
7312	Media Representation	0.55	1	0.23	0.30	0.22	0.00	0.27	0.46
8552	Cultural Education	1.53	1	0.59	0.70	0.84	0.37	0.00	0.67
9002	Support Activities to Performing Arts	0.64	1	0.23	1.31	0.00	0.20	0.20	0.38
9003	Artistic Creation	0.75	1	0.31	0.39	0.07	0.30	0.27	0.41
7430	Translation and Interpretation Activities	0.48	2	0.26	0.16	0.20	0.00	0.83	0.00
9001	Performing Arts	0.18	2	0.20	0.41	0.11	0.38	0.06	0.16
9102	Museum Activities	0.50	2	0.40	1.19	0.00	0.86	0.29	0.08

Source: EMSI Labour Market Intelligence data / TVCA [REF 13]

3/ Business Support

Business needs and the business support landscape

3: Business Needs and the Business Support Landscape

3.1 Creatives and creative business

Introduction – motivations

Firstly, it is worth considering the motivations for people who seek to establish a creative business. As broad and diverse as the sector is (as shown in **Section 2**: including visual artists, graphic designers, musicians through to gaming and software developers, and architects amongst many others), so too are the motivations for going into business.

For some, they will approach it with quite a commercially minded attitude and seek to develop and grow their business as entrepreneurs. Others will see themselves more as a “creative practitioner” than as an entrepreneur running their own business. Perhaps more a feature of the creative industries sector than for any other business sector, creatives are typically driven by their passion and aspiration to use their [creative] talent. They can be less motivated by money and their motivations can be driven more by emotional or psychological reasons. Some will not relate to their work as being classed as an enterprise or a business in the way that is the norm in other sectors. We understand, from our creative sector expert advisors, that neurodiversity tends to be higher amongst creatives than average which can suggest a need for the format and delivery of support to be tailored more specifically.

From the Creative Industries Federation survey of over 1,000 creatives in 2018 [REF 9], a number of key motivations were cited:

- To pursue a “burning idea” or innovation and drive to turn it into a reality
- To pursue something they love
- Personal aspirations (lifestyle related or work environment related)
- The desire to be recognised as highly successful in their creative field
- To increase their social impact
- To earn a sustainable income
- Reacting to an unexpected opportunity.

What are creative enterprises?

The creative sector includes a wide and diverse array of enterprises and activities and skill sets. The overwhelming majority (95%) are micro businesses, employing fewer than 10 people and a significant proportion of workers are self-employed (35% across the creative sector), more than double the UK average (15%) [REF 9]. It is quite a dynamic and lean sector, with the average staffing complement of a creative enterprise being 3.3 employees.

Income can be derived from a number of sources: selling directly to the public (retail), trading with commercial enterprises, selling services to others including commissioned work and, for some, accessing grants and income through donations or endowments etc.

Portfolio workers (mixed income model)

Freelancing is common place within the creative sector and a mix of potential income sources, can lead to many creatives having a "portfolio of activity". This portfolio may combine some sales of their work (or their expertise/service), some training and consultancy, or the delivery of workshop/training sessions to sustain a living. Others may support their financial needs by taking on non-creative sector part-time work. This is quite typical for many freelance creatives, particularly those in their early stages of self-employment or business trading journey. Suffice to say, income can be sporadic and unpredictable. Developing steady and regular income streams can be a challenge for many in the sector. A portfolio working arrangement can bring added pressures in that creatives can struggle to manage if they are devoting their time to three or four strands of income generating activity. In effect, the danger of "spreading themselves too thinly" and not focusing sufficient time on any one aspect. Some team up with others, providing complementary skills and expertise to work as a collective.

From hobby activity to trading

Some people are looking to convert their creative hobbies into something more tangible, on a trade-based footing. Covid-19 lockdowns have seen an increase in people, especially of mid/late career stage, spending time on creative activity, acquiring new skills and re-thinking their existing career paths. Some only seek to make modest additional income, but others have sought to take this further, leading to an entire career change with a new focus on their creative passion.

Hartlepool creative businesses consulted

Our research work sought to get feedback from local creative businesses to gain an understanding of their story: how they set up; any business support they had accessed; challenges they faced; issues they required further support with; and a general view on the local creative scene and ideas to support the sector's growth. We consulted as many tenants of the BIS centre as we could in addition to some other local artists and creative businesses. The vast majority were sole traders and micro-businesses, which is quite typical of the creative sector. The range of specialisms was quite indicative of the broad range of activities that are categorised under the creative sector banner.

Our consultees included business engaged in:

- Glassware
- Craft making
- Arts and crafts workshops
- Photography
- Video game design
- Dance
- Music
- Gift packaging design
- Education
- Production and hire of audio, lighting, stage and audio-visual design
- Creative advertising.

3.2 Creative business growth and challenges

Business growth metrics

Business growth is usually measured by an increase in business turnover, profitability, or headcount (number of staff). These metrics are helpful to assess business growth and development over time, but for many in the creative sector, other indicators of growth are important, if not more so.

A major study by the Creative Industries Federation in 2018 [REF 9] surveyed over 1,000 creatives across the U.K. Whilst 81% said they were aiming to grow their business over the next three years, most stressed that other factors were important to them in defining successful growth. These included less tangible measures such as:

- **Increased profile**
- **Reputation**
- **Social impact**
- **Recognition** (of their creative brand, their work/product/service).

Developing a positive reputation and profile is important for all businesses, especially at early stages of development and 54% of creatives said they used it as a metric for growth and acknowledge its importance in helping them attract new clients, projects and audiences. For freelancers whose "brand" and "business" is intrinsically linked to the individual creative, the importance of reputation and profile is perhaps even more relevant. Brand and profile are of paramount importance in certain industries where networking and word-of-mouth are common practice for obtaining work. The need to be constantly "visible" to potential contractors, reinforces the need to develop a strong and positive profile and brand.

The sector's freelance-heavy workforce and reliance on project or assignment-based work/commissions, can make it more challenging to project linear growth trajectories. Income can fluctuate dramatically and regular attention to monitoring cashflow is important. That said, turnover remains the dominant metric for measuring growth (with 70% surveyed saying they had experienced steady or high in turnover). It is worth noting that, despite the risks and fluctuations for many in the sector, there are at least twice (some experts suggest four times) as many jobs being created in creative industries as there are compared to the UK average across all industrial sectors.

The reasoning for setting out a context to the ambitions and growth metrics for creatives, is that these are important considerations in planning any sector-based business support strategy. Some creative business needs can be met by the more generic business support packages, but some flexibility to provide bespoke support would help many in the sector.

Business challenges

Again, drawing from the Creative Industries Federation study's findings [REF 9], there are four main challenges that creative enterprises face. Some of these issues were raised by the Hartlepool creatives we consulted. **Section 3.3** looks at local business needs more closely, but the CIF national survey highlights four main challenges for creatives. A lack of:

- Time to focus on growth
- Finance / access to finance
- Awareness of business support
- Quality and diversity of talent.

Time: 47% of businesses said a lack of time to focus on business development and planning for their business was one of their main challenges. One in five said it was the main challenge for them. This is very common for sole traders / freelancers who are often busy doing work, trying to secure new work and reacting to day-to-day challenges.

Finance: Many creatives, particularly those looking to transition out of start-up phase, reported that few funding options appeared to be available to them and that business finance "products" tended to be better suited to larger enterprises. That said, there was acknowledgment that many creatives lack a business plan or struggle with presenting their business in a way that resonates with investors.

Awareness of business support: Awareness of what business support is available and where to go for advice was highlighted as another challenge for creatives. Again, there was acknowledgement that many creatives can be great at pursuing their ideas but less well equipped to manage their business and financial/administrative roles. Some lack awareness of what support they might need as well as what is available.

Talent: Looking ahead, with robust growth projections for the sector, creative businesses expressed concern about the lack of sufficient numbers of people coming through as the talent pipeline. This is exacerbated by the perceived "devaluation" of creative education at the expense of other core subjects in schools.

The larger CIF survey of over 1,000 creatives **[REF 9]** emphasises the importance of support for Intellectual Property as it is the "bread and butter" for creatives with the high volume of freelancers and micro businesses. Creative industries often rely on intangible assets which can be more difficult to value, communicate and protect.

Also, a lack of awareness of the opportunities for exporting goods and services was noted by this report. It concluded that there were four main areas where greater attention was needed. Support for:

- Finance and navigating the funding landscape
- Access to expert advice (lawyers, business advisors, consultants, IP experts etc.)
- The facilitation of networking and collaboration
- Freelancers and micro businesses.

More generally, support packages that are tailored to the sector, whilst recognising the diversity of the sector is vast. This national feedback is helpful to consider. It aligns with much of the feedback from Hartlepool businesses and stakeholders, but we have gathered some more specific needs and ideas from the research work we have carried out in Hartlepool, summarised in **Section 3.5, Conclusions.**

3.3 Hartlepool creative business needs

Creative businesses and practitioners we consulted had accessed a mixture of advice and support from a variety of providers, in helping them start-up and develop. Tenants of the BIS had clearly built a direct relationship with the Council, and other support mentioned included the Prince's Trust, Arts Council England and links some have with the likes of The Northern School of Art or Hartlepool College of Further Education (HCFE). There may well have been a wider range of providers they have accessed, as we focused more of our consultation time understanding their future needs for support, the sector more widely and (for BIS tenants) thoughts on the BIS as a creative hub.

A need for more advice on specifics

Aspects of advice some recognised they and / or creative industries more widely required, included more support with:

- **Marketing and (self) promotion**
- **Making effective use of social media**
- **Online trading**
- **Networking**
- **Financial**
- **Intellectual Property advice**
- **Mentoring**
- **Support for events**
- **Opportunities to showcase their work physically or visually.**

Co-ordination

Beyond direct business needs, we received consistently strong messages (from creative businesses and stakeholders) highlighting the need for better co-ordination and networking opportunities, and for that to be driven / delivered by someone with a creative sector background. This message was amplified by those we spoke to in other towns and cities who had seen success resulting from creative leads taking up the reins to drive their creative networks, supported by stakeholders, to be at the heart of joining up activity and opportunity.

"No-one is doing stakeholder management" was a comment made by one business, and *"people are working in silos to survive, and the culture is often hidden"* was another, which provides a flavour of the feedback received on the desire to maximise the opportunities for the sector.

A longer journey to success

As previously mentioned, freelancing can be quite common in the creative sector. Working for yourself can be incredibly exciting as well as daunting and comes with a number of risks, not least the ability to generate stable income streams. Paid work can be sporadic and income profiles can lead to the classic issue for self-employed workers of experiencing a "famine or a feast" workload. We were advised by some experts that it can take 10-15 years or more for some creative practitioners to become sustainable. Helping them build resilience and confidence are important. Longer term commitment to supporting creatives was highlighted as a need for the sector and that "quick fixes won't work".

Networking

Also, the importance of contacts and a wider support network becomes more vital. Few people hold all the necessary skills sets that the self-employed are likely to need, especially at pre-start and early-stage development. How to promote your goods/services, researching your market, building your clientele, gauging how to price your work, book-keeping and accounts, making use of social media, and for some, online trading etc. are all aspects that require attention. Support to help become self-employed is available (see **Section 3.4**) but needs a special focus for the creative sector, as does helping the transition from education to self-employment. Again, there is support provided by secondary and tertiary sector education institutions (see **Section 5**) but that transition is a significant step and, perhaps, more dedicated support with a long term framework to help the creative ecosystem is required.

Creative ecosystem

The term "ecosystem" was used by a number of creatives we consulted, with the view that growth and opportunities often happen organically and naturally. The importance of making contacts and building relationships is key to help growth in the creative sector, allowing for a more fluid and evolving pathway to be taken rather than an adherence to pre-planned course of action.

Stakeholders and business support agencies have a key role to play in providing specific advice, support and resources and in commissioning, but supporting and nurturing an environment which encourages and facilitates networking and collaboration is vital. *"How can we help them to help each other?"* was a quote that captures this sentiment.

3.4 Business support available

We sought to gain as comprehensive a picture as we could of what the business support "landscape" looked like for Hartlepool creatives. Whether that be for creative people thinking of setting up a business or commercialising their work, for those at business start-up stage, and for more established enterprises. Support agencies were mainly local, with a Hartlepool or Tees Valley sub-regional remit and focus. Some have a wider North East regional remit and some have a national remit.

Those agencies with a more local focus were ones we consulted, including: Federation of Small Businesses, Chamber of Commerce, Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) / Tees Valley Business (Growth Hub), Teesside University (Digital City and Creative Fuse), North East Enterprise Agency Ltd. (NEEAL), Enterprise Made Simple and the Tees Valley Young Creatives project. Those with a national presence and scope, such as Arts Council England and Prince's Trust are important too, but we accessed relevant information through online research and documentation review rather than direct consultation.

Many business support "packages" and services are funded, in part, by external grants accessed by accountable/lead bodies. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), for example, has been a mainstay of much business support activity. UK domestic resources under the new Shared Prosperity Fund will look to "replace" much of that but partners are constantly monitoring appropriate funding resources than can then be deployed to support business start-up, development and growth.

Snapshot of key providers and services

There is a wide array of advice, information and resources online. From the Growth Hub (TVCA's Tees Valley Business) as a one stop shop service, to the Borough Council, banks, business advisors and from various other providers. It can be a confusing arena to navigate, especially when there are so many aspects to focus on, in becoming self-employed or setting up a business.

As a first port of call, Hartlepool Borough Council provides information, advice and guidance to all local businesses and also the Tees Valley Business website acts as a one-stop-shop for all business advice and has advisors to help people navigate the system. TVCA also has a "Lexicon" listing of as many business support projects and programmes, sources of grants and loans and business networks as it is aware of, including Local Authority support.

Hartlepool Borough Council: The Council's Economic Growth Team is a first point of contact for any and all business support enquiries. Information, advice and guidance is provided, and other support can be available: small grants to businesses looking to start up or expand, support for inward investment enquiries, and property and premises. The Council also acts as a key link to other business support services for Hartlepool entrepreneurs.

TVCA's Growth Hub, "Tees Valley Business" (TVB): seeks to provide a single, central gateway point for all businesses seeking advice or support in Tees Valley. It is there to act as an impartial conduit to both signpost and broker the relevant suite of products and services which are available, to support the individual enquirer on their business journey. TVB also has a team of staff including six business consultants that can provide a fully funded service (free to the user) to work with the entrepreneur/would-be entrepreneur to understand their business goals, challenges and opportunities and help develop a package of support. This may include advice, workshops, events or specialist programmes on topics such as: start-up, business planning, growth planning, access to finance, social media, marketing, skills development, leadership and management, digitalisation, exporting and more.

TVCA also provides a Tees Valley Business Growth Service and Fund, supporting businesses that are trading and looking to grow and create jobs. Priority sectors include digital, creative and cultural businesses. The service aims to help remove barriers to growth and can provide growth funding (capital and business consultancy grants). Grants can cover up to 55% of the costs, with the business contributing the remainder.

NEEAL Tees Valley Business Start Up (TVBSU) Scheme: NEEAL is a not-for-profit special purpose vehicle, established in 2008 to ensure there was regional coverage of enterprise and business support services across North East England. NEEAL is not directly customer-facing as a business support agency, but through its partnership structure, it contracts with delivery agencies. It also has management responsibilities for TVCA's part-ERDF funded Business Start Up Fund. Furthermore, it is a provider of incubation space across the region as well as being a significant provider of business support loans. The Start Up Scheme is supported by ERDF through to June 2023 and provides a business advisor to develop a package of support specifically for each client's needs. The support is fully-funded and includes a variety of workshops covering everything needed to start your own business in a supportive environment where people have the opportunity to meet and network with others also looking to start a business. These include topics such as: business planning; sales and marketing; social media; company structure; business finance. Businesses in the digital and cultural services sectors (as well as many others) can also access specialist mentoring. Support is targeted at businesses at pre-start and early-stage development.

From client database information NEEAL provided, we know that in 2021 there were 70 Hartlepool based clients accessing TVBSU services. Of those, 12 were creatives, with 11 of these being female, half being in the 16-24 age range and 75% were unemployed.

Types of creative activity the 12 clients specialise in are:

- Clothing design (3)
- Freelance illustrator (2)
- Creator of hand painted pots and planters to retail at craft fayres
- Photographer specialising in fashion and product photography
- Interior designer
- Garden designer
- Freelance commercial editor
- Environmentally friendly designed gift cards and wrapping paper
- Handmade gifts (online sales).

Most are home based and those selling products are mainly selling online (using the Etsy platform etc.). Support requested was with regard to marketing the product, including best use of social media, with some specific questions about support with pricing. None were asking for grants or premises.

Enterprise Made Simple: EMS was established in 2008 as an enterprise agency and has developed into the UK's largest growth training company. EMS has a base in Hartlepool and has previously delivered New Enterprise Allowance programmes across Hartlepool, Redcar, Middlesbrough and parts of Stockton helping people who were unemployed into self-employment. It provides pre-start and start-up advice and support under the TVBSU scheme and has delivered a couple of 2 hour advisory sessions for the Borough Council at BIS specifically targeting creatives.

Creative Fuse Tees Valley: The Creative Fuse project, based at Teesside University, was established in 2017 and is now in its second phase. Part ERDF funded, it helps businesses and freelancers in the creative, culture, digital and heritage industries to innovate and grow. Through academic support, one-to-one mentoring and consultancy, and themed collaboration and knowledge exchange events, creative and digital SMEs are able to explore how they can achieve a sustainable future in the Tees Valley. The project is part of the wider Creative Fuse North East initiative, which is a unique partnership between the North East's five universities including Teesside, Newcastle, Durham, Northumbria and Sunderland. The project's overall aim is to unlock the potential of the creative, cultural and digital sectors to drive innovation and growth, working with businesses and practitioners to develop their creativity and innovation capacity, encouraging growth and developing resilience.

Digital City: Digital City connects businesses with the knowledge, skills and expertise they need to thrive in the ever-expanding digital world of today. Since starting out in 2001, the ERDF-funded initiative has helped over 650 digital and creative businesses in the Tees Valley by: accelerating the growth of digital start-ups; supporting digital SMEs with scaling up; connecting digital businesses with the expertise needed to thrive; and helping traditional companies to adopt digital technology. There are two main elements to the programme: "Digital City Innovation" which includes the offer of business incubation space and "Digital Business", targeting business looking to scale-up. Digital City helps Tees Valley businesses across wider sectors to improve the way they operate by embedding digital technology. Through tailored digital assist programmes and masterclasses, organisations can establish the appropriate digital solutions that support their business development and long term goals. Teesside University (TU) also has a "launchpad" facility on campus providing early stage business support to TU students.

Tees Valley Young Creatives: managed by the ARC in Stockton, this TVCA commissioned programme offers a career-launching package of free support to arts and creative graduates based in the Tees Valley. It is designed to help them transition from the world of education into work. Working in partnership with the likes of The Northern School of Art, Teesside University and Stockton Riverside College, the programme offers opportunities for young creatives to network, enjoy socials, provide practical support, careers resources, specialist workshops and masterclasses, talks and workshops from industry speakers and more. Regular events and access to exclusive social media platforms plus the opportunity to facilitate introductions to established experts and talent. Young Creatives helps build ambition, confidence and generate practical contacts. Covid-19 has impacted in leading to delivery being mostly online. Funding is relatively short-term but it is hoped the programme will be commissioned again in 2022.

Northern Film and Media: Northern Film + Media, founded in 2002, is the North East of England's creative industries development agency. It works with businesses and professionals specialising in film, TV and screen-based arts, primarily through talent development projects, events and production service. In addition, it drives regional commercial film and television production and attracts inward investment by promoting the region as a base for incoming film and TV production. Previously part of the Government's regional screen agency network and core-funded by the UK Film Council and regional development agency One North East, the agency has since transformed into an agile, connected and essential supporter of creative enterprise in the region's screen industries.

It runs the **NFM Crew Academy** which aims to support those looking to begin their career working in film and TV with the knowledge and skills to find work. It also aims to support productions and production companies to confidently recruit those new to the industry into roles within their productions or companies. This is delivered through networking events, boot camps, masterclasses and workshops where people get to hear from and talk to industry professionals. The Academy is suitable for adults who are new to the industry or those already working looking to step into new roles and members may also receive CV surgeries and one-to-one mentoring and advice.

Tees Valley Screen: is a new development programme aimed at supporting talent, ambition and growth across the Tees Valley screen industries. Located within The BIS, the project is an innovative new collaboration between Northern Film + Media and Tees Valley Combined Authority, funded by the ERDF through Creative Industries Business Support and Development Programme 2014-20, bringing over £300m into the North East to support innovation, enterprise and business support across the region. Additional funding support for this project is from Tees Valley Combined Authority and Arts Council England.

FSB and Chamber of Commerce: both the FSB and Chamber are membership-based organisations with members having access to a range of advice and support. Part of the package of advice includes access to expert legal advice amongst many other services, events, and opportunities to network.

Prince's Trust: The Trust has helped 86,000 young people start their own business over four decades. Targeting young people (18-30), their "Enterprise" programme provides a three-stage approach, from information session to interactive workshops, through to advice on building a business, and then to launch where they present their business plans to a Business Launch Group. The Launch Group's role is to help ensure the business idea is viable and sustainable. There's also additional start-up finance support if needed.

Arts Council England: ACE tends to invest strategically in organisations, projects and programmes. Its "Let's Create" 10 year strategy has an ambition vision for the future of creativity and culture: *"by 2030, we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish. A country where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences".* ACE also offers grants directly to artists and creatives and has a number of "Open Funds" for individual creatives (and organisations) to apply for. Whilst highly competitive (there were 3 applicants for every grant approved in the last round of funding), the "Developing Your Creative Practice" is most relevant here. The programme helps to support the development of independent cultural and creative practitioners. This programme will give individuals the opportunity to apply for £2,000 to £10,000, to take a dedicated period of time to focus on their own cultural and creative development and take them to the next stage in their practice.

Department for International Trade (DIT): The UK Government, through DIT and its network of International Trade Advisors (ITAs), can support businesses (including sole traders) looking to export their goods or services. The specific support available can change over time as funding support available to DIT regions changes, but at the core there is a vibrant programme of workshops, masterclasses and event, online resources and an ITA can provide a 1:1 advisory service and open up links to more thematic or sector specialist advisors. The Internationalisation Fund can help business owners research overseas markets, attend international trade fairs or independent market visits, part-fund IP advice, translation services, international social media / SEO (search engine optimisation) or consultancy and other international commercial services.

Others: There are other programmes and sources of finance (mainly loan finance) listed on TVCA's Lexicon of business support and there may be others available, but the above has aimed to highlight the main business support services available to creative businesses in Hartlepool. The landscape is ever changing as new initiatives and funds come on stream and existing short-term programmes come to an end.

There are also privately-run services that emerge. For example, we were made aware of a 2-week business "bootcamp" hosted by the Hartlepool College of Further Education in late February/early March, delivered by the Rebel Business School. Also the Digital Boost programme (www.digitalboost.org.uk) supported by DCMS and others, was mentioned as a useful online resource that was proving popular.

3.5 Conclusions and suggestions

It would appear there is quite a robust array of traditional business support services available to creatives at pre-start up, newly formed and established stages of development. This may benefit from information being brought together in a sector-specific accessible guide that clarifies the support by type, by business development stage, by delivery agent and with contacts.

Suggestions

The main suggestions from consultations and from drawing upon expert advice from other projects and programmes, can be summarised as follows:

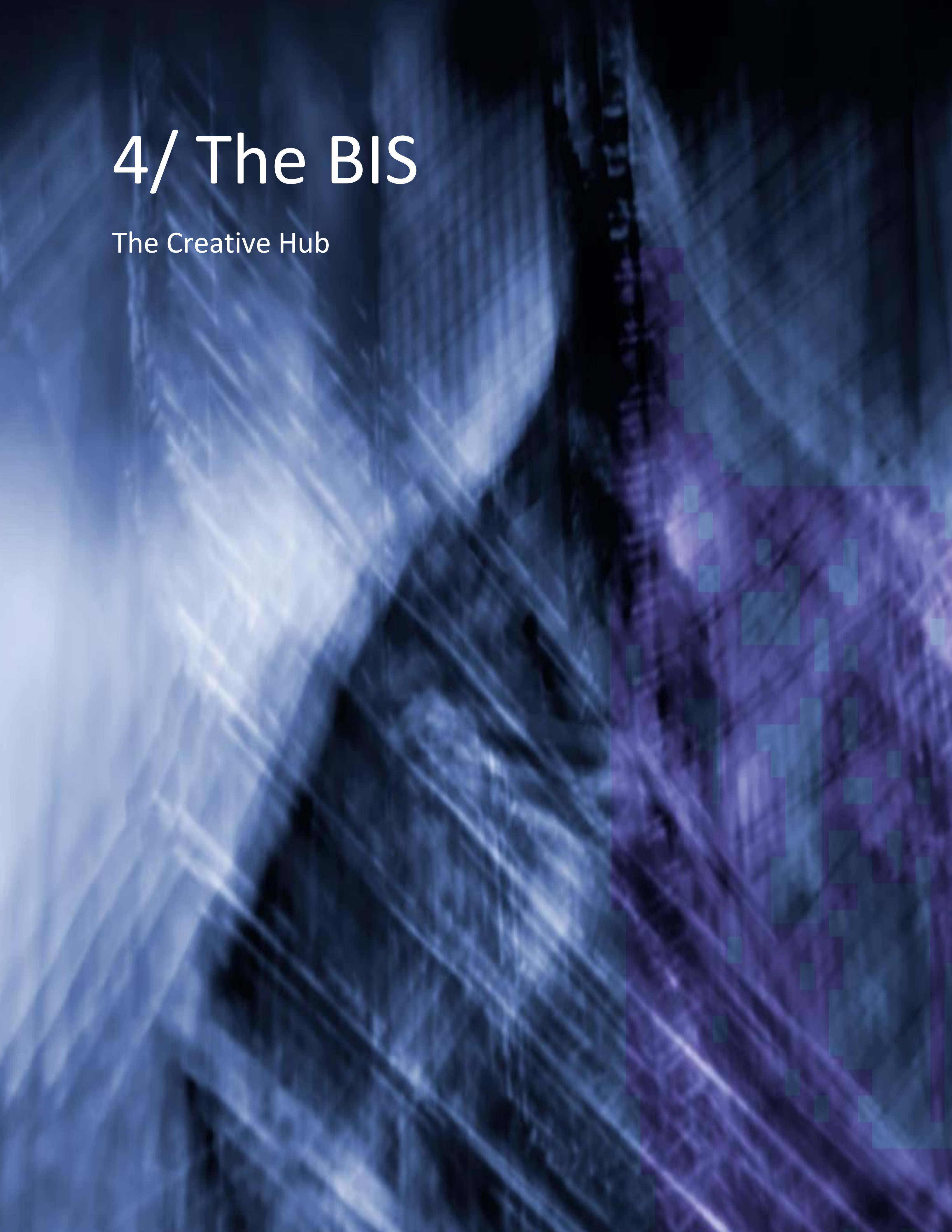
SUGGESTIONS

- A network for Hartlepool creatives
- A Creative Sector Co-ordinator (or Animateur)
- A simple guide for existing business support services, tailored specifically for the creative sector
- Events for business support agencies to talk through their service offers
- Additional focus of business support upon finances and financial acumen, marketing, pricing goods/services, online selling, IP advice, selling / closing sales and pricing
- Business mentors and creative coaches – for longer term relationship / business development
- Co-working / collaboration space
- An annual awards event
- Opportunities to showcase creative talent to traditional businesses requiring occasional creative input (graphic design, web design, photography, videography, social media support, illustrations etc.).

Also, from conversations held during this study, there are a number of businesses with strong Hartlepool roots looking to grow, create jobs, deliver training and provide opportunities including helping young people into work. It is important for the Council and other stakeholders to work with these businesses to maximise local opportunities.

4/ The BIS

The Creative Hub



4: The BIS

4.1 Introduction

The BIS is a managed workspace centre for the creative industry sector, on Whitby Street, Hartlepool. The centre was developed as a partnership between Hartlepool Borough Council and The Northern School of Art. Attracting investment from the Tees Valley Combined Authority's Local Growth Fund and Hartlepool Borough Council, this £4.5 million investment enabled the renovation and extension of this former Post Office, a Grade II listed building.

BIS

The concept of an "Innovation and Skills Quarter" or "Creative Quarter" dates back some eight years or so. The concept was to bring a place-based focus to supporting creative and innovative businesses in Hartlepool, to encourage the development of a cluster of creative activity. Within the Church Street area and surrounds, key assets such as Hartlepool College of Further Education, The Northern School of Art (and in more recent times The Northern Studios facility), and The Art Gallery are located. The Cushman and Wakefield study (October 2015) [REF 2] examined options to develop a managed workspace facility, which laid the foundations for a business case to develop the BIS.

BIS opened in 2019, providing 28 business units ranging from 13 sq.m to 141 sq.m (total business floorspace of 1,173 sq.m) over three floors. The facility is owned, managed and operated by the Borough Council, with a partnership agreement with The Northern School of Art who assess business applicants for alignment with the creative sector. BIS had an ambition to provide direct links for students into work, with workspace and links to other enterprises and business support. Currently 21 units are occupied by a mix of creatives, including this involved in web design, photography, arts and crafts, advertising, video games design, illustrators, giftware designers, graphic designers and more.

In addition to dedicated business units that tenants can access 24/7, and an atrium on the ground floor, there is access to two fully equipped meeting/conference rooms and BIS has an onsite management support. Tenancy arrangements are designed to be flexible, on "easy in / easy out" terms with pricing pitched at around half the market rate for the first 6 months. Rental increases at staggered over five increments (at month 6, 12, 18 , 24 and 24+) with the expectation that by two years into tenancy, businesses should be able to sustain paying a market level for rent.

It is a flagship scheme that, as some commented, *"wouldn't look out of place in a city such as Manchester, Leeds or Birmingham"*, cities with quite vibrant and well established strong creative industries. It has won several awards:

- RTPI: North East: Winner of award for Planning Excellence (2020)
- LABC Northern Region: Winner of award for Building Excellence (2020)
- RICS: Social Impact Award winner in "Heritage" category (2020)
- RTPI: Winner of "Excellence in planning for a successful economy" award (2021).

There have been some challenges. Covid-19 restrictions, such as lockdowns, were introduced nationally only a few months after BIS opened. Like many other hub facilities, it has had to operate in a "stop-start" manner for some time over 2020 and large parts of 2021, but has continued to engage with tenants, seen some tenants leave but secured others. Furthermore, the Council acknowledges that links with The Northern School of Art and to wider educational institutions have not been as strong as originally envisaged and need to be strengthened. Also, that it is keen to understand what can be done to help the centre become a more thriving focal point for the creative sector. Hence, in large part, the driver for this assignment. To help the Council with this, we consulted nine tenants, two other creatives, various Council staff and obtained feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders. All of this was done with a purpose of understanding what could be done differently or better, to help BIS flourish. We also interviewed people with responsibility for delivering and understanding creative hubs in other locations, to gain insights on key "success factors".

4.2 Feedback

We have grouped together feedback around key issues that were quite consistently raised and would benefit from some consideration and attention. All with the objective of seeking to improve the vitality of the centre and its development as successful creative hub. Many of these issues interlink.

Business centre or creative hub?

BIS mixes modern design internally with the fabric of an old, renovated building and with a modern extension. It is operated as an enterprise centre and several commented it had a more traditional feel of an enterprise centre rather than a creative hub. BIS has facilitated a few open evenings and events, which we were informed were quite poorly attended, but there was strong opinion, in the feedback from our consultations, that BIS should position itself as a more outwardly-focused facility for the creative community and as an asset for Hartlepool to be proud of. *"It needs to have more of a buzz about this place"* and *"we haven't got that creative vibe yet"* were a couple of comments that resonated with other feedback. To become a more vibrant creative hub, and to position BIS at the heart of creative business locally, there is a need to develop a stronger identity for BIS and areas for enhancement. We set out a number of issues and suggestions below, also within the recommendations.

The Atrium – social / networking space

Atrium

The atrium is the first part of the BIS you see beyond the reception area. A large zone with good natural lighting, it tends to be more of a circulation space for people to walk through rather than a social or meeting zone and is underutilised. Four ground floor units directly front onto the atrium, but tenants felt hindered in meeting there or even having their lunch or a drink as they didn't want to disturb or be a distraction to those working in the units.

The importance of networking for creatives was one of most commonly emphasised issues raised. Creatives tend to thrive on making connections and having the opportunity to interact informally, which can lead to the generation of fresh ideas, new creative opportunities and collaboration. The Atrium would seem the logical place to help facilitate that.

An onsite café was one of the most frequently raised suggestions to help create a more social space where tenants and other creatives can meet and talk. We were informed that the Council had been mindful of not wanting to compete with or put at a disadvantage, existing café traders in the local area. Furthermore, that a fully functioning café would have required more space likely leading to the loss of a unit. The atrium might not necessarily lend itself to a permanent café facility, but one compromise option might be to have a "coffee kart" mobile facility. This could be set up during core opening times and for events and contracted to an operator (existing traders or may be a new business or social enterprise) on a trial basis initially. We believe it would lift the feel of the BIS, help generate more of a buzz, and facilitate networking. Ground floor tenants would need to be consulted specifically on this, as their units overlook the atrium.

A number of tenants also expressed a desire for gallery or display space, so that they could showcase their work and, for some, an opportunity to trade directly. BIS was not intended to be a retail facility, but there may be some compromise opportunity to have a space set aside to rotate the display of tenants' work, or a large video screen that could showcase their work, products, services and forthcoming events.

Networking

As mentioned, the importance of networking for this sector is paramount. In addition to the BIS creating some space to enable this, we also advocate the creation of a new **Hartlepool Creative Network**. There are a number of networks in existence (for businesses in general and there are some for the digital sector) but we are not aware of a dedicated network for creatives locally. This needs some facilitation to establish, grow and maintain this, mixing an online platform with events, opportunities for in person contact, and with an ongoing programme of activities.

We propose a Creative Animateur to focus on co-ordinating and stimulating the creative sector and facilitate connections. We also propose a new web-based resource portal that brings together local assets, local talent, educational strengths and business opportunities (see **Section 7, Recommendation 6**) which links to this wider ambition to encourage networking.

Incubation space for students

Part of the ambitions for BIS was to provide a stepping stone base for students and graduates, especially from The Northern School of Art, to move from education into business or self-employment. Helping to encourage them to pursue their creative ambitions and enable to make a start as creative practitioners. BIS would act as a gateway for that progression, offering incubation space and business support services such as "routes to market" advice. There is recognition that this ambition has not been realised to the extent it was intended. We suggest a need to re-energise the links between the Council and The Northern School of Art on this issue and the wider agenda of linking students and graduates to the BIS as a creative hub.

Also, as a practical next step, we suggest at least one of the vacant BIS units could be dedicated to students/graduates from The Northern School of Art and maybe other education providers, enabling young people in the start of their creative careers to have a base and support for their work.

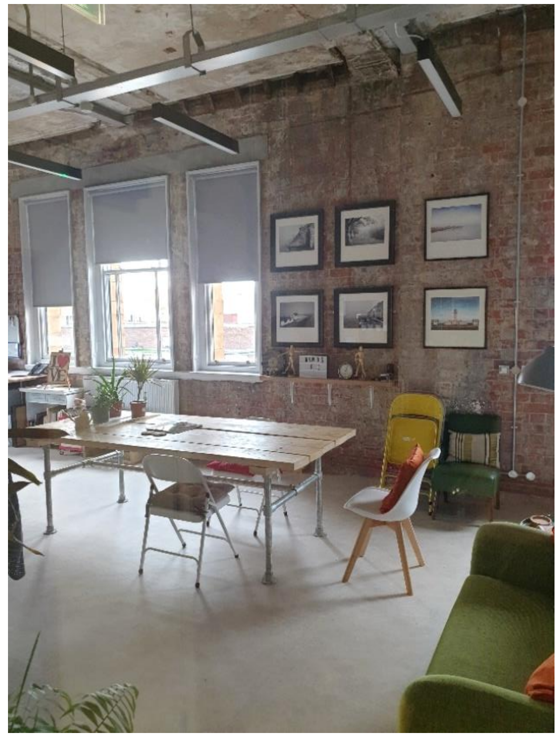
The project developed by HCFE, with their bespoke one-year Professional Diploma in Creative Enterprise Level 4 programme, is one that should be encouraged and monitored. This currently enables eleven students to pursue their creative passion and is integrated with business support advice to help them develop entrepreneurial skills. With some financial support from PFC Trust, there is a strong partnership which brings the world of education and enterprise together and seeks to link students to other businesses on site helping them make connections and gain business insights.

FE College Unit

Co-working and collaboration space

Prior to Covid-19 there was an increasing national (and international) trend of co-working or collaboration spaces being developed. Places where people could work for a few hours or all day, on a regular or infrequent basis. Restrictions due to Covid-19 have led to even more people working in flexible ways, whether that be from home, from coffee shops, or in other non-traditional work locations.

There is an opportunity for BIS to tap into that trend but with a focus on the creative sector. Again, it may be worth considering setting aside one unit for co-working space with some large tables with users charged at an appropriate rate (per hour/per half day) and with some form of membership available that provides a discount.



Raw 35 CIC unit

Promotion and awareness

Many felt BIS would benefit from more active marketing and promotional work to raise its profile, both locally and regionally. Several stakeholders we consulted, and businesses, thought it was somewhat of a "hidden jewel". A facility to be proud of but one that needs its profile to be raised.

Events

BIS has hosted some events such as training workshops, open evenings, talks and so on. More regular opportunities for creatives to showcase their services and work would be welcomed, together with a sustained programme of specialist training and workshop sessions. BIS uses social media and other avenues to promote events, and if more can be done to link promotion across the wider creative network through partners' own platforms, that should help to reach out to wider audiences. Also, an idea suggested was to create an annual awards event for creatives. This could be linked to the proposed Creative Network and would help raise the profile of some businesses, the sector and generate some media interest. It would also serve to further raise the profile of BIS and Hartlepool's creative talent.

Creative Animateur

A Creative Sector Co-ordinator or "Animateur", with a creative background, is strongly recommended to help maximise the opportunities for the sector in Hartlepool including BIS. To achieve this, there is a need to join up activity, contacts, talent and facilities between education institutions, creative individuals and businesses, the Council and other partners in the public and community sectors. The approach should help to stimulate the conditions that encourage networking and facilitate connections.

The recommendation to develop a Consortium or **"Creative Hartlepool Partnership"** would lead to an independent structure that the Animateur could report to, working on an agreed agenda and programme of work.

Praise from tenants

Whilst the above has focused upon opportunities for improvement and enhancement, it is fair to also reflect on the many positive messages provided by consultees. These included comments such as:

- "The Manager keeps me updated on whatever support and grants are available"
- "I am new to the area and people here have been incredibly friendly"
- "Moving in here [BIS] is the best thing I have ever done"
- "It offers me more space to work efficiently"
- "The BIS is so convenient and exactly what we wanted"
- "I feel privileged to have this facility"
- "This wouldn't look out of place in London".

4.3 Lessons from other creative hubs

Many creative hubs are managed and operated by Community Interests Companies or Companies Limited by Guarantee with Charitable Status or Charitable Incorporated Organisations. The 2021 Creative Hub Mapping survey for the British Council [REF 8] found that only 20% had governance structures which included partnership, consortiums, compacts, including those with local authority input. That said, their definition of hubs is “a physical place that brings enterprising people together who work in the creative or cultural industries”, and around 35% of those surveyed were physical centres, 30% were networks and 13% were online platforms. Others included studios and clusters. Income is generated from grants, rents, membership fees the sale of services, donations from individuals, crowd funding and public sector commissions. Average staffing levels were seven per hub, (although across a wide range from 1 to 300) with a mix of full-time, part-time, volunteers, internships and freelancers.

To help Hartlepool Borough Council regarding The BIS, we focussed further research on creative hubs with significant local authority involvement – either as landlord and/or managing agent. Two we consulted specifically were the LCB Deport in Leicester and The Arches in Worcester. More details are set out in **Section 6**, but some key lessons learned are:

- The importance of a long-term commitment not a “quick fix”
- A mixture of supporting a “grassroots up” approach in a “top down” command and control landscape. It needs a degree of both approaches
- Benefits for Council – place making, enterprise growth, skills development, financially too (hubs can generate a surplus)
- Local Authority role – to nurture and facilitate creative enterprise and sector development
- Importance of a café as a place to meet, talk and create a sense of place and activity
- Accessibility for non-tenants to use meeting/conference space and facilities
- Important to support “soft infrastructure” e.g. networking and training events as well as the physical infrastructure
- Good calibre people, political leadership and support are vital
- The need for people who care, have passion and can make things happen
- Creative sector expertise to drive progress and co-ordinate / link things up
- Support organic growth of networks – “you need an ecosystem of artists”.

4.4 Conclusions and suggestions

The BIS is a superb facility for Hartlepool. It is in a relatively early phase of development and has a lot of opportunity to develop as a vibrant, creative hub. We do appreciate the pressures on the Council to generate income for BIS to be sustainable. Attracting a few more established businesses that may seek long term residency, would help provide some more sustainable income. In turn this should give greater confidence and freedom to BIS, for example setting aside a unit or two dedicated to students and young creatives, but also allowing a few more risks to be taken and try new things out.

It may seem there are a lot of issues to address, based on feedback received, but many are interlinked and need time and attention, rather than significant investment. Some of the suggestions require stronger partnership working and collaboration. The main aspect that would need some new resource is for a Creative Animateur who can also provide creative sector support to the BIS Manager and colleagues.

Suggestions

The main suggestions from consultations and from drawing upon expert advice from other creative hubs, can be summarised as follows:

SUGGESTIONS

- Develop stronger identity for BIS
- More promotion and marketing of the centre
- More open days and events to draw people into BIS
- Set aside incubation space and informal working space for students
- Dedicate a unit for collaboration space
- Atrium as networking / informal communal area with coffee kart
- Sector specialist support to help onsite management team
- Display facility (e.g. large TV screen) to showcase tenants' work and forthcoming events
- Develop a "Creative Hartlepool Partnership" or consortium of stakeholders to oversee wider creative sector strategy

5/ Education

Developing Talent and Career Pathways

5: Education

5.1 Introduction

We sought to gain an understanding of the education provision for young people across Hartlepool, and of the career pathways and options available to progress from education into arts and creative industries. Our consultation programme included meetings with seven education providers, at secondary and tertiary levels: The Northern School of Art; Teesside University; Hartlepool College of Further Education; Hartlepool Sixth Form College; English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College (EMS); High Tunstall College of Science; and St. Hild's Church of England School.

We also obtained feedback from creative businesses and wider stakeholders on creative career pathways and issues that they thought could be improved or enhanced.

5.2 Education provision

We have set out some details of the educational institutions we consulted but appreciate there are a few others also serving the Borough.

Creative courses – GCSEs, A Levels, Diplomas and BTEC

High Tunstall: A secondary school with approximately 1,250 students, from age 11 to 16 (up to Key Stage 4) providing GCSEs in: Art, Design and Photography; Drama; Music; and Media.

St. Hild's: A secondary school with approximately 700 students from age 11 to 16 (up to Key Stage 4) providing GCSEs in: Drama; Art, Craft and Design; and 3D Design. It also has a new faculty of Creative Industries. It has had much success with fashion, with many students going to NSOA for Level 3 qualifications.

EMS: A secondary school and a Specialist Arts College with approximately 1,500 students, from age 11 to 18 (up to Key Stage 5) providing GCSEs in: Art and Design; 3D Art and Design; Photography; Music; Art Textiles; Dance; and a BTEC in Performing Arts. At Key Stage 5, the school offers A Levels in: Art and Design with Textiles; Photography; 3D Art and Employment; and Graphic Design. EMS has around 80 students undertaking creative A Levels (split between Years 12 and 13).

Hartlepool Sixth Form: Providing a mix of academic and vocational courses, including A Levels in Performing Arts; Graphic Design; and Computing as well as specialist short courses such as digital marketing and adult learning opportunities. Around 150 taking A Levels in digital/creative a year. It is looking to develop a Digital and Creative Academy and would like to do more on degree apprenticeships. Most students progress onto The Northern School of Art.

Hartlepool College of Further Education: The College provides a range of courses including: a Diploma in Art and Design for students who wish to gain a vocational qualification in the Art and Design sector. This course is designed to progress students to level 3 qualifications in Art and Design; a Level 3 Extended Diploma in Art and Design Practice, for those who wish to gain a specialist Level 3 vocational qualification, designed to progress students to Higher Education qualifications in Art and Design or for those who wish to enter employment. As a major new build completed in 2010, the College is located in close proximity to The BIS and the Northern School of Art.

It also provides a BTEC Extended Diploma in IT/Computing (which included computer games software) for those wishing to gain a Level 3 qualification in Computing, Digital and IT sectors for progression to employment, apprenticeships or higher education; and an Extended Certificate in Information and Creative Technology (which includes web development, multimedia products development and software development). These build a foundation for roles in digital marketing, website design and software or programme development including games design. The College also has a Performing Arts School (with approximately 26 students) and dance, acting and theatre work skills are part of the College’s offer.

The College is also trialling a unique, one year Level 4 Professional Diploma in Creative Enterprise with a cohort of 11 students based at The BIS (see Page 44). Approximately 80% of College creative students progress into self-employment.

Hartlepool College of Further Education

The Northern School of Art: has a history dating back to 1870, when The Middlesbrough School of Art was opened shortly followed by The Government School of Art in Hartlepool in 1874. These institutions later evolved into Cleveland College of Art and Design (CCAD) around 1979. Alumni including film director Ridley Scott, car designer Keith Patterson and artist Mackenzie Thorpe.

The School has two campuses. Its FE campus in Middlesbrough is a brand-new facility with around 500 students mainly studying creative diplomas at Level 3 (Diplomas are available in Arts and Design, Fashion, Film and TV Production, Graphic Design, Textiles, Photography, Fine Art, Architecture and more) as well as A levels, Access to HE, and Foundation. The campus is the only Ofsted Outstanding college in the Tees Valley and has the highest progression to HE of any college in the sub-region. Large numbers of students make use of the free travel to learn offer, travelling daily from Hartlepool. The School has a very active set of provision on Saturday mornings (including Arts Award and national Saturday Clubs) with around 200 children aged 6 to 16 attending each week through term time as it understands the reduction in opportunities available in schools in recent years.

Degrees

In Hartlepool, the School delivers three year undergraduate degrees (BA (Hons)) to around 600 students split between its two faculties: Stage & Screen, and Visual Arts.

The Northern School of Art

In Hartlepool, The School delivers three-year BA (Hons) degree courses in:

- Acting for Stage and Screen
- Animation
- Costume Interpretation with Design
- Digital Design and Advertising
- Fashion
- Film, TV and Theatre Production
- Fine Art
- Graphic Design
- Illustration for Commercial Application
- Photography
- Production Design for Stage and Screen
- Textiles and Surface Design
- Model Making and Visual FX.

Also, postgraduate courses (MA) in Design History; Creative Design Enterprise; Directing and Performance Practice; Arts Practice; and Design Practice.

Typical first year enrolment figures are 204 (the average over the past 5 years), and the cohort retention is circa 93%. Approximately 70% of undergraduates are from outside the Tees Valley area. Graduate retention in the Tees Valley area is around 65% (around 80% within the North East region). The Northern School of Art's graduate talent retention is twice that of the average 40% for graduates in creative subjects.

The School has a programme of events such a live performances in its theatre and its award winning biennial Northern Festival of Illustration which sees intense collaboration with the local community and business and has attracted more than 120,000 visits since it started in 2015.

The Northern School of Art has also led on the new Northern Film Studios facility (see **Section 5.4**), as a wholly owned subsidiary, with support from Tees Valley Combined Authority and the Office of the Tees Valley Mayor, Hartlepool Borough Council, Northern Film and Media, and Screen Yorkshire.

In terms of The School's employability offer in Hartlepool, it has a dedicated employability service, "Folio", which is the venue for individual, personalised support and small group seminars. It offers mentoring and coaching to all students and all graduates. It offers support in confidence building, communication and especially enterprise (where it runs regular sessions on marketing, funding, business planning etc.). Folio also organises:

- Networking, events and evening talks
- Specialist business mentoring
- Involvement in exhibitions & festivals
- Competitions and commissions
- Work Experience opportunities
- Extracurricular seminars and lecture series
- Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Support
- Progression to post graduate learning.

Teesside University: Teesside University has been actively engaged in creative education for over 50 years with a special focus on the connection between creative arts and industry.

At the heart of the learning community is the MIMA (Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art) a "Tate Plus" gallery, a cultural hub and creative resource. MIMA hosts exhibitions, collection displays, learning activities and community-focused initiatives involving collaborators locally, nationally and internationally.

MIMA

The University's School of Arts and Creative Industries, based in Middlesbrough, offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses. These include:

- **Art and Design:**
    - Comics and graphic novels
    - Curating
    - Design for creative industries
    - Fashion
    - Fine art
    - Graphic design and illustration
    - Graphic design with marketing
    - Illustration
    - Innovative home design and construction
    - Interior architecture and design
    - Interior design
    - Photography
    - Product design
- **Media and Journalism:**
    - Film and TV production
    - Journalism
    - Media and communication
    - Media production
    - Visual effects
    - Sports journalism
- **Music Production**
- **Performing Arts:**
    - Acting; Musical theatre
    - Performing arts
    - Production and technical arts
    - Production and technical arts for the stage

There are links to the business support programmes delivered here by the Digital City programme and Creative Fuse. The University has around 400 students enrolled on creative degree courses, and capacity is planned to expand. It is also launching a new Creative Media degree course.

Summary on provision

In summary, there are many providers of creative-specific education from GCSEs through to BTECs, A Levels, Foundation Degrees, Degree and Postgraduate Degree levels that the Hartlepool community can access. Together with their combined assets (facilities, equipment), teaching expertise, links with employers, and successes in helping people progress from education into creative industries, the town appears to be well catered for, and indeed some of these institutions are planning to expand provision to meet the growth in demand for creative courses.

The importance of creative education

We thought it worth highlighting a quote from “The Impact of Arts and Culture on the Wider Creative Economy” (2020) report by Metro Dynamics for Arts Council England:

> *“Education Arts and culture enable access to a rich and diverse education, preparing young people with the skills and creativity needed in a changing world of work. To produce a future workforce that is adaptable, resilient and innovative, we need to place greater emphasis on creativity in everyday learning. Though many creative education programmes are targeted at early-years or primary and secondary school children, we can do more to foster creative thinking in the workplace. Education enabling creative thinking and expression is a core output from the arts and culture sector, not only delivering a pipeline of talent for creative and cultural businesses, but also helping to improve students’ general attainment and skills development.*
>
> *Arts, culture and heritage are part of the UK’s national character, and cultural education brings value in and of itself, as well as benefiting general creativity and improving attainment across disciplines. Cultural education is the teaching of arts and culture as part of the curriculum or as an extracurricular activity, such as dedicated music or drama lessons, as well as educational programmes and hubs. A decline in the take-up of arts subjects in schools as well as a decline in the provision of cultural education (both in school and outside) is a pressing concern, as is inconsistency of access to creative teaching across the UK”.* **[REF 5]**

A recent study by the Institute of Employment Studies for the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC), "Enhancing Creative Education" [REF 10], also examined the importance of creative education in secondary schools, through a survey of a broad sample of teachers and case studies. Research findings of relevance to this study, are that:

- The creative education curriculum is under pressure – over the last decade there has been a reduction in the number of arts teachers, the number of hours taught, a decrease in percentage of pupils taking GCSE and A Level arts subjects (outside of Art and Design) and an increased focus upon STEM subjects.
- In addition to technical skills for working in creative industries, learning creative subjects can help develop general employability and transversal capabilities for wider employment sectors.
- The research has additionally demonstrated the importance of employer engagement to creative education and enhancing industry enrichment and creative employability. Local projects are a common way to work with employers, bringing multiple benefits to young people, teachers, schools and employers. Young people gain skills, capabilities and knowledge from being involved in projects with industry professionals as well as developing individual social capital. Schools can use the employer projects to support attainment and evidence towards meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks for their careers work. Teachers gain valuable up-to-date knowledge of diverse employment opportunities for their students.
- Furthermore, strong and collaborative relationships with local communities and cultural institutions can enable high quality teaching for creativity in schools, bringing creative opportunities and experience to life. The research case studies also confirmed the wider evidence in highlighting the increasing importance of local place-based partnerships to delivering a broader creative education; both for young people and for teachers. For young people they provide a way for them to see the opportunities for creative employment in their area and pathways to work in the creative sector for people like themselves. This will also help to address the lack of diversity in the creative industries. For teachers, it is an opportunity to develop a curriculum and offer experience to their students which is responsive to employers' needs.
- Creative industries have significant experience in responding and adapting to change such as atypical and flexible working modes, digitisation, freelance and project-based working and experimentation with new technologies.
- Creative education can benefit individual wellbeing and can underpin good mental health.

The creative industries are dominated by graduate level employment. PEC has found that 71% of sector employees are qualified to at least degree level.

5.3 Feedback

Consultations with education stakeholders allowed for wider perspectives on the needs and ambitions of their students, career pathways and opportunities to be shared together with thoughts on the general vitality of the creative "scene" in Hartlepool. We also sought to gather views on key strengths and challenges, or aspects and issues they would like to see improve.

This section sets out key feedback messages relating to education and career pathways and employability and skills. Key challenges and suggestions for improvement (to maximise opportunities and help develop a pipeline of creative talent) are set out in **Section 5.5**.

Education and career pathways – employability and skills

Robust provision: There would appear to be a wide and rich array of education across all aspects of the arts, creative, digital sectors within Hartlepool and available to young people locally (as well as for adults seeking to access learning and skills development opportunities). There are also some less formalised avenues available, with opportunities to engage in community-led or commercially-led activities, groups, workshops etc. As mentioned in this report, those who seek to move into the creative sector for employment tend to be following their particular passion and where they have a skill and/or have developed their specific talents. For young people moving into the world of work, that will typically be a pathway they commenced at school, college or university.

Competition and collaboration: Acknowledging that education institutions at A Level and especially at Degree Level, operate in a competitive environment, there does appear to be a good understanding of respective strengths of institutions and teachers / tutors clearly have their students' progression at the forefront of their thinking when imparting advice on appropriate pathways for them to take. There is strong competition at degree level with the number of applications to UCAS for creative courses having been quite stable for some years at a national level, but the North East has experienced recent decline. There are individual relationships and links between schools, colleges and universities, but these can be ad hoc and rely on individual contacts. A few of our education consultees wanted to see better collaboration, awareness of facilities and equipment that could be shared and benefit more people, and more concerted efforts to support their role in helping young people progress (access to employers, careers advice etc.). There are partnerships at a strategic level, such as Tees Valley Advisory Group, a Teesside College Partnership and MIMA is setting up a teachers network, to help foster co-ordination and collaboration. The Northern School of Art has run free workshops for teachers and careers advisors for more than five years and has a regular programme of online sessions and events with key industry figures.

Careers advice: We noted that each school, college and university provide some details of their curricula online (on their websites), and some have video links with teachers/tutors providing a flavour of the content of their courses. Conversations that students have with their tutors about choices and options will be central to young people in helping them make decisions on their educational pathways.

Where access to quality advice can be more fragmented, is with regard to helping creative students become aware of employment opportunities that may be available to them. Some institutions have links to employers and to individual creatives who have forged a career and can help broker contacts. The use of alumni to articulate their work, their background and choices is also a very helpful tool (see "Opportunities" in **Section 5.5**). One said that *"careers advice can be poor….can we tap into a more sector specific advice?"*. Another said *"the pathways and frames of reference here are less clear. If you were in a big city you'd probably walk past a few companies in the creative sector and be aware of them. They are visible. We don't have that here so much so it can be harder envisage the enterprises you may work for".*

First stage employers: A presence of more established creative businesses, visible within the town would also be an advantage to help provide some initial "stepping stone" opportunities for young people seeking their first foot on the career ladder, but not yet prepared to go self-employed. Work experience, internships, and initial career options all can play a role in helping the transition from education to employment. Hartlepool is lacking in medium / large sized creative businesses and a priority for inward investment activity should be to aim to secure some established creatives.

Entrepreneurial skills and mindset: Some mentioned the priority they place on embedding employability skills within their curricula. Furthermore, the innovative Level 4 "Diploma in Creative Enterprise" developed and implemented by the College of Higher Education at The BIS, seeks to develop creatives as entrepreneurs and is providing creatives with access to a range of business support advice.

Employability skills: Many mentioned the wider skills sets that creative students tend to develop that can be prized across many sectors and useful in most workplaces: communication, collaboration and team working, thinking "outside of the box", problem solving and independence. As one consultee stated, *"We turn out problem solvers!"*. Creative thinking and creative practice are in ever higher demand across the economy.

Retaining talent: Many commented on Hartlepool being quite a settled community with a tendency for people to want to stay locally. Retention of graduates was reported as being very high too, so the talent coming through the local education system is, in the main, remaining local. This is a positive feature for the development of the Hartlepool creative sector. *"We have a chance to retain young people in the best* *of their career years and that can only be good for the town and the local economy"* was a comment made which resonated.

Also, The Northern School of Art and Teesside University both stressed their ambitions to widen participation, reach out to people from more disadvantaged communities who may not otherwise consider a degree course, and placed high importance on inclusion and accessibility.

Both higher education providers place significant emphasis on widening participation, inclusion and accessibility for local people to engage in and benefit from degree level+ education. One commented, *"It is vital we continue to build a local creative talent pipeline"*.

5.4 Other assets

This study did not seek to create an inventory of creative "assets", but several consultees thought more could be done to help organisations, businesses and creatives make better use of what is available locally and help widen access to local communities. This relates to both physical assets (buildings, rooms, facilities, equipment) and people (expertise, knowledge and talent).

The educational institutions highlighted in **Section 5.2** host many of these but there are assets owned and managed by voluntary and community sector organisations and private businesses, in addition to those in the public sector. The recently published **"Hartlepool Cultural Strategy 2022"** **[REF 11]** also sets out the town's range of cultural and creative assets as well as the developing programme of regular festivals and events.

Within the scope of our research we did gain an insight into and visit two specific assets that are of importance to the creative sector: The Northern Studios and CECA (Centre for Creative Excellence in Art).

The Northern Studios

The Northern Studios is an exciting new project of regional, arguably national significance, resulting from a partnership of The Northern School of Art with Hartlepool Borough Council, TVCA, Northern Film and Media and Screen Yorkshire. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Northern School of Art. A £3.8 million of investment in the renovation of a former bus maintenance sheds on Lynn Street, on The Northern School of Art's campus, has enabled a new film production centre to be created, the largest dedicated film production centre in the North East and largest of its kind in England north of the M62. It provides two 20m x 50m sound stage studios and a 20m x 20m green screen studio.

Also on site is the Scott Building, providing teaching and workshop space for film and television students, with four classrooms and a workshop for film, TV and theatre. This will enable specialist technical and skills training for undergraduates studying on The School's stage and screen degrees.

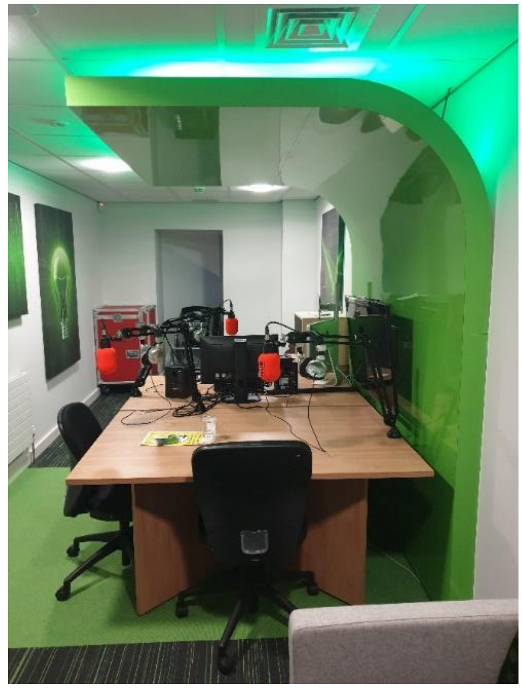
The Northern Studios (artist's impression)

The studios are ideally located for productions to use as a base for interior set shoots whilst allowing them to take advantage of the coastal, rural, urban, industrial and heritage locations offered by the region, all within easy reach. It is anticipated that the studios will be a catalyst for the creation of a cluster of businesses who supply the screen industries, from equipment hire through to catering, transport and building supplies.

The local area and The Northern Studios potentially offer opportunities for local employment for the School's graduates, establishing themselves as film makers, costume designers, actors or set designers. The Lambert Smith Hampton "Sites, Camera, Action Take 2" report of 2021 **[REF 12]** highlights the increasing demand for film and tv production space and the UK's success in the regard. The Northern Studios could be a major draw for the film and tv production companies and whilst it may not lead to significant volume of new permanent jobs being created, it will provide many spin-off benefits to the local economy (accommodation, hospitality), provide opportunities for local creatives and students to engage and be a major boost for the profile of the town.

CECA (Centre for Excellence in Creative Art)

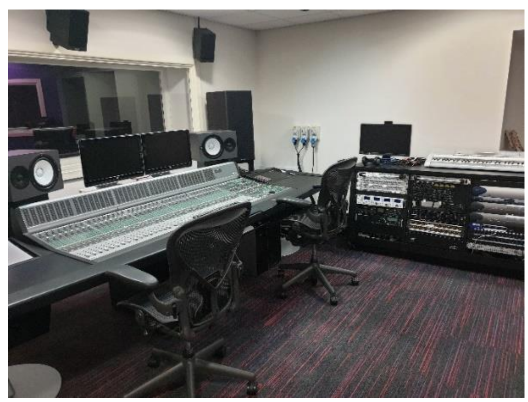
CECA was established as part of the ***My Place*** programme for new youth centres in the latter days of the New Labour government, attracting circa £4.5 million for the provision of a new centre on a site adjacent to St. Hild’s school. Originally managed by an independent trust, it ran into financial difficulties and was then taken on by the school (2010-2015) before being mothballed.



Broadcasting Suite (e.g. podcasts)

CECA includes a variety of facilities: a TV studio, sound recording studio, 120 seat theatre, media suite, meeting rooms plus dance and rehearsal studios. The centre is funded by The Tees Valley Combined Authority and delivered by Hartlepool Borough Council.

CECA aims to offer technical training routes and learning pathways for young people (up to 25 years old) into the creative industries, focussing on sound production, theatre and live events and digital media, introducing young people to alternative career paths, developing trainees with the technical skills and knowledge to form the next generation of the creative industries workforce.



Recording Studio

CECA offers technical training routes and learning pathways for young people into the creative industries. These include Level 2 courses for Key Stage 4 pupils, sessions for primary schools around coding and IT and a SEMH (Social, Emotional, Mental Health) offer. The Council is reviewing the business plan for CECA and exploring the programme of services and events it can offer in the future. An emphasis on support for young people with learning difficulties forms part of those considerations.

It was generally acknowledged that the facility, whilst a great asset, has been under-utilised and has struggled over its lifetime. Its location was viewed as a challenge to maximises its use, especially for young people who live outside the immediate catchment area and who are likely to be more reliant upon public transport.

Recording Studio

We would suggest some serious thought is given as to how the facilities can be made more accessible to the wider public. Whilst some equipment might need upgrading, the Centre could play an important role in supporting local creative talent, if it complements existing facilities and assets, and develops an identifiable role and position within the local creative sector.

5.5 Conclusions and suggestions

Challenges

A few of the main challenges reported to us were:

- Creative courses can be seen as a poor relation to "academic courses" and there can be temptation to "squeeze" creative classes if there is a push for more focus on, say, English and Maths (re: pressures relating to league tables etc.). Also, the industrial heritage of Hartlepool with a focus upon engineering and manufacturing has led to creative skills being viewed perhaps less favourably for apprenticeship pathways. It is taking time for creative skills to be regarded on a par with more established career paths.
- There can be a challenge in helping widen the horizons and raise the ambitions of some young people. It was reported that, for example, boys can often look to the work their father or grandfather did and want to follow the same path or limit their career ambitions with "what they see and know". They may have only known manufacturing jobs, or possibly long-term unemployment in the household. Educators can help widen those horizons – as an illustrative example, a boy thinking his career path will be in bricklaying can be encouraged to think about construction-related options such as 3D design or architecture with some support from his arts teacher.
- Access to work experience opportunities – with a sector heavily populated with freelancers / sole traders, it can be harder for them to provide time to engage and supervise students and provide work experience, even on a very informal basis.

Opportunities for improvement

All of the contacts we spoke were very positive about the creative sector generally, were enthusiastic about their work and the students they were supporting and had helped progress.

Some issues where it was felt improvements could be made are set out in the summary of suggestions on the next page.

Suggestions

The main suggestions on areas for improvement from consultations, can be summarised as follows:

SUGGESTIONS

- Better joining up on careers advice to enable all education providers to access a well maintained, up to date careers resource facility/service
- Better links to employers and perhaps the provision of short video clips of various creatives showing what they do, what route they took, what skills they use
- Making more use of alumni (from across Hartlepool's educational institutions) to hear about their career path and journey from local school to successful creative career – a "Hartlepool Creative Ambassadors" network
- Host more talks from industry leaders (in person and online)
- Raise awareness between educational institutions and other stakeholders (including CECA) on what facilities and equipment they have, to help widen access for students and local communities to enjoy creative activity and learning opportunities
- Develop a web-based "creative directory" platform that lists facilities, venues, events, procurement opportunities, education and learning courses and enables businesses and creative talent to upload profiles, enabling networking, recruitment and commercial opportunities to come to fruition
- Provision of support for emerging artists and young graduates to help them become successful
- Build upon some of Hartlepool's key strengths – film production, dance, music etc.
- Liaise with business owners seeking to forge closer links with schools and looking to address skills shortages (music technicians, audio-visual technicians - light and sound engineers, computer games designers etc.)
- Seek to attract inward investment to bring established medium sized creative enterprises to Hartlepool
- Consider a "transition to work" programme whereby creatives can access flexible support and students can gain vital work experience, shared across several freelancers/micro enterprises
- Consider more short courses and flexible courses where these might address gaps or increased demand (e.g. music teachers, dance instructors, audio-visual technicians etc.)

6/ Good Practice

Lessons from other towns, cities and creative hubs

6: Good Practice

6.1 Introduction

To explore and gain relevant lessons learned from elsewhere, we consulted a number of experts who had been involved (or still were) in projects and programmes across England.

They are highlighted in the acknowledgements but have provided insights into work at an area based level in: Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, Grimsby and Worcester and, senior level City of Culture work for Hull and Coventry. Also, experience of creative hubs in Leicester, Derby and Worcester.

We also reviewed some research work such as the British Council's "Mapping of Creative Hubs in England" [REF 8], (the lead author also provided us with advisory support) and Metro Dynamics' study "Impacts of Arts and Culture on the Wider Creative Economy" [REF 5], amongst others.

There are some excellent projects and strategies that are being delivered and as a follow-on to this assignment, we would suggest at least one site visit (LCB Depot in Leicester would be our recommendation) to gain further insights.

6.2 Place based creative partnerships

Drawing upon lessons from Hull, Coventry, Worcester, Leicester, Grimsby, Nottingham and Derby, some consistent lessons learned that might help Hartlepool partners, were highlighted, as set out below.

Strong partnerships

Those towns and cities that are seeing their creative sectors flourish, have developed quite strong partnerships at a strategic and delivery level. Local authorities have worked in collaboration with key educational institutions (typically colleges and universities), with Non-Profits and with businesses, in partnerships which play to respect strengths.

Councils as enablers and facilitators

Town or citywide approaches to supporting creative industries have, in the longer term, borne fruit where key institutions (including local authorities) have nurtured a more grassroots, or "bottom up" approach to sector development. Supporting the capacity and capabilities of the sector to grow has been important. One city had taken quite a "top down" approach, seeking to implement a Cultural Quarter Strategy and promoted the development of five large scale capital projects almost 20 years ago. Three were awarded funding, but the Council acknowledged it needed to reach out more to creatives and communities to engage them in helping to shape and deliver projects. This approach has worked well and all three are thriving and complement one another. Where funding allows, Councils can help with support such as small grants programmes, enabling creatives to access business support, equipment, or mentoring.

Councils can also recognise, that by engaging as enablers, there are benefits that will accrue to their locality and can help meet strategic needs such as business growth, job creation, place-making, skills development, talent retention and attraction and more.

Long term commitment

Supporting the creative sector is not a “quick fix”. Creatives typically take longer to become sustainable as enterprises and practitioners. Also, a support infrastructure that nurtures talent and allows for networks to emerge and grow organically, should have more sustainable impact than short-term solutions, that may be imposed with challenging deadlines driven by funding opportunity timescales.

Focus on strengths and unique stories: “How do we amplify our strengths?”

A key message from those who’d had involvement at town or citywide strategic levels, was to recognise that each area is different, to work with partners to agree and focus upon the unique story to be told and build upon that identity. These may draw from historic or current strengths, but ones which can play into an agreed “narrative” to help promote the town, supported with consistent messaging that reinforces an identity. For example, Hartlepool is making a concerted effort to become known as the North East’s centre for film production. There are major assets, talent, expertise and a focus upon film making and, not to the exclusion of other key strengths, there is a firm basis for Hartlepool to position itself as a centre of excellence in this field. Also, there was encouragement to be outward looking and make links to creatives outside of the area. This can help generate new ideas, fresh thinking, developing network opportunities and lead to further collaborations.

Independence and leadership

Ambition, strong leadership (including political) at a local level and consistent support have been important features of success in other locations. Collaboration between key stakeholders in the public, community and commercial sectors at strategic and delivery levels has been an important factor in successful place based creative sector strategies, and with creative expertise and knowledge at the heart.

Harnessing enthusiasm

"You need people who care, have passion and can make things happen" was one comment received, but resonated with many of the conversations we had. Moreover, it is important to help identify and support individual creatives, enterprises and those in key organisations who have the energy, enthusiasm to enable them to drive activity. *"If someone has a great idea, I encourage them to run with it. Why wait for us (the Council)?"* was a comment from a senior Council official, whilst acknowledging his team could provide support through signposting to contacts and wider support. From our consultation programme it was evident that there was a great deal of enthusiasm and energy, for the sector and also for the town and its people.

Illustrative place based creative partnership: The Big House

The Big House is a programme, and common brand, that was established in 2016 to support creatives and digital businesses across the D2N2 Derby and Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire) LEP area. Support is available to SMEs at any point in their journey: prospective start-ups, new entrepreneurs and more established SMEs looking to expand or bring new products and services to market. The programme has received significant investment from the European Regional Development Fund funding together with Local Growth Fund and Arts Council England. Support packages available include: grants, one to one advice and mentoring, networking opportunities and events, workshops and more.

It acknowledges that is almost impossible to create a “one size fits all” business support model for creative and digital sector businesses but brings together agencies that have a track record of support and specialist expertise that plays to respective strengths and builds on success.

The Big House is a partnership of seven key organisations across the region, with complementary areas of specialism and providing a “single door” entry point and joined up business support “offer” for those seeking to access support. The programme enables a business diagnostic to be carried out to help understand a creative’s needs and ambitions and provide access to a mix of support available across the partners. Business can “move through” The Big House of support, accessing help at every level they need and can help those who face barriers accessing mainstream support elsewhere.

The partners include:

- Nottingham Cultural Quarter – place based creative sector support partnership with business support diagnostic service, events and networking
- New Art Exchange (Nottingham) – inner city gallery, café and arts based agency with focus on ethnic minority communities
- NBV Enterprise Solutions Ltd. – mentoring and coaching specialists
- Nottingham Trent University – Hive business incubator facility and Nottingham Business School
- Derby Theatre – providing a theatre specific programme of support
- Derby QUAD – cinema, gallery, café and digital resource centre
- University of Derby – workshops, one to one advice, peer to peer learning and networking events.

The partnership contract is managed by Nottingham City Council, but The Big House is not a legal entity, more a partnership agreement which allows individual organisations to retain independent but under a common brand.

The East Midlands does a long history (over 20 years) of investing in its creative industries dating back to the days of Regional Development Agencies.

www.bighouse.org.uk

6.3 Creative Hubs

Section 4.3 sets out some key success factors from creative hubs across England, drawing upon our consultations with Leicester and Worcester, to tie in with the section on The BIS. It is worth emphasising here that lessons from a wider array of hubs, based on the research carried out by Ellen O'Hara and Deepa Naik for the British Council (March 2021) **[REF 8]**, set out a number of observations on common traits, behaviours and modes of operations that influence the success and growth of creative hubs. Having mapped 316 hubs, they obtained views via a survey from 144 hubs, with key success factors summarised as follows:

- Being user-led, listening and responding to the community to ensure relevance and responsiveness
- Fostering an entrepreneurial culture that enables a more emergent approach to leading and running the hub
- Having the ability to tell a compelling story about its distinctiveness, role and value
- Maintaining strong partnerships with the local community and wider networks that help the hub achieve its goals
- Securing and developing the right space to host and house the hub community – for those that are building based
- Diversifying income streams to build better resilience against financial shocks.

Bear in mind these include creative hub networks, studios, clusters, online platforms as well as physical creative hub centres. Many have mixed funding models, and few are local authority-led but the success factors are worth noting.

There is a case study in that report (page 42) for the Duke Studios and Sheaf Street in Leeds which we approached in the hope of carrying out a site visit but, at the time of writing, have yet to obtain a response from the owners.

LCB Depot, Leicester

The LCB Depot opened in 2004, one of three creative sector capital investment projects in Leicester as part of a regeneration approach to developing Leicester Cultural Quarter. Leicester adopted a creative cluster approach and the City Council has created conditions for private developers to bring forward space as well, providing a good mix of public and private projects and facilities.

The LCB Depot, a former bus office, is located quite centrally within the city and offers 53 workspaces ranging from 162 sq.ft to 1,592 sq.ft. together with an onsite café (open to the wider public as well as tenants), four meeting rooms, gallery facilities and onsite support.

There is an affiliated digital / media centre workspace facility (Phoenix Square) and a makerspace at Maker's Yard which combined, offer a wide range of workspace and facilities to creatives.

LCB Depot also offers a business postal address service and, for £50 a month, a "Business Lounge Membership" scheme which allows 24/7 access to a furnished, shared business lounge space which is an easy option for those who enjoy co-working space and ad hoc need for a creative work environment. It also delivers a Creative Industries Programme, highlighting a different type of creativity every month with exhibitions and events run by and for the city's creative communities.

LCB Depot, Leicester

Artists, designers and makers from our workspaces, based in Leicester and Leicestershire and nationally / internationally take over spaces and hold discussions, run workshops, exhibit and sell work, and more. Previous events have included:

- architecture, interior, product and furniture design
- visual art, sculpture, video and digital art
- digital art, design, VR, AR, Gaming
- graphics illustration, animation, motion graphics, branding, typography
- festivals Leicester Comedy Festival, Spark Festival, Cultural Exchanges
- film photography, film, video, TV, and online video
- fashion contour, footwear & fashion design
- craft ceramics, glass, metalwork, woodwork, textiles, jewellery
- sound music technology, sound, generative

Owned and managed by the City Council, we would strongly suggest a site visit by Hartlepool stakeholders to find out more about the project.

www.lcbdepot.co/uk

The Arches, Worcester

The Arches is a phased redevelopment of a series of Victorian railway arches in Worcester to become a modern workspace for creative industries. Proposals were developed by a partnership involving Worcester City Council, Worcestershire County Council, the University of Worcester, Severn Arts and The Arch Co. and submitted for funding under the DCMS Cultural Development Fund scheme in 2018. It was shortlisted from a total of 105 applications and in 2019 secured £3 million for a total project cost of £4.5 million.

Five arches have been brought into use, including a bar, café and corporate entertainment venue and the next phase of five will be marketed to creatives, to help generate a creative cluster of activity and businesses. Businesses will be public-facing, encouraging the public to view them at work and drop in to their unit. Managing and contracting arrangements are led by a design agency.

Through a robust partnership, the programme delivers on three fronts: physical regeneration, festivals/events and on "participation". The participation workstream involves the FE and HE sector to strengthen local leadership in culture and creative industries, deepen workforce diversity, and enhance artistic creativity and skills to stimulate economic growth. It reaches out to NEETs (young people Not in Education Employment or Training) as well as university students and also has developed a database of creatives, a newsletter and a regularly updated blog.

The Arches, Worcester

www.thearchesworcester.co.uk

7/ Conclusions and Recommendations

7: Conclusions and Recommendations

We have categorised our conclusions and recommendations into five main areas:

- **Partnership:** stakeholder engagement and developing a creative sector consortium
- **Business support:** addressing business needs and support business growth
- **The BIS:** developing the creative hub
- **Education:** nurturing talent, highlighting career pathways and workforce development
- **Next steps:** delivery.

7.1 Partnership

There was a consistent message from many consultees concerning the lack of a “joined up” approach to supporting the creative sector. They believed there was and is a great amount of excellent work, businesses, talent, events and activity happening, in addition to a wide array of assets (buildings, equipment, facilities), but with little overall co-ordination.

That’s not to say there isn’t strong partnership working and collaboration between creative businesses, community groups, education institutions and the Council, focused on specific initiatives, projects or events. There is, but there is a bigger picture to see and opportunity to be embraced and greater impact can be made if stakeholders work towards reducing the amount of “silo working”.

There is a wealth of skills, knowledge, expertise, talent and assets across the private, public and community sectors centred upon the “creative industry”. There is also significant energy and enthusiasm to tap into. If this can be brought together in a new, independent consortium (a “Creative Partnership”), to take a lead, engage all appropriate partners, it can help raise the ambitions for Hartlepool as a creative town and act as catalyst for growth.

We propose:

Recommendation 1: Creative Hartlepool Consortium / Partnership

The creation of a new Creative Hartlepool Consortium or Partnership, involving all key stakeholders across the education, community, private, and wider public sector. We would advocate an informal “steering group” to form initially, using the Cultural and Creative conference (see “Next Steps”) as the starting point for this group to take shape. The overall scope and plan of action can be agreed in more detail, but we propose two guiding principles: the partnership should enjoy independence and be creative-led.

7.2 Business support

Creative sector businesses are established by individuals who are more typically motivated by their artistic/creative passion more than they are by generating money. Indeed, many self-employed creatives (and the sector is heavily comprised of freelancers and sole traders) don't necessarily equate their creative work with "business" or "enterprise". Many creatives will have a portfolio of activity – selling goods or services, training, consultancy, or running workshops and for many, they will need to work in a more traditional part-time job to help ends meet.

Moreover, traditional business support services – and there are several packages available across Hartlepool and the wider Tees Valley area – don't necessarily fully align to the needs of creatives. The importance of developing a longer-term relationship with a business advisor, having access to mentoring and one to one support, plus links to peer networks can all play an important role.

There are some issues which creatives need additional support with:

- Financial acumen ("savviness")
- Marketing and promotion.

More specific topics such as Intellectual Property rights, online selling, how to price their goods/services were also identified as issues which need more attention as well as support for digital skills.

We propose:

Recommendation 2: Business support guide

A business support guide that brings together all available that are relevant to pre-start, start-up and established creative businesses (drawing upon much of the work summarising this in this report) in an easily accessible format – online text, video guide and pdf design. This can be supplemented with pro-active events (suggest twice a year) where business support agencies raise awareness of what they offer.

Recommendation 3: Creative Animateur

A new Creative Sector Facilitator or "Animateur" to act as lead co-ordinator to support creative industries across Hartlepool and with a focus on BIS. We suggest a part-time role initially with funding support for 3 years, with a tapered financial profile reducing in Year 3 and contracted on the basis they seek to generate their own income (sponsorship, grants, membership fees etc.) and sustain the role longer term. It may need more than one part-time position and a small accompanying project fund to facilitate project work.

Recommendation 4: Dedicated business support package

A dedicated programme of business support for creatives that includes the provision of mentoring, and bespoke advice on finances, marketing, IP, and other aspects where demand isn't met by current business support offers. The Creative Enterprise model shaped by the College of FE looks encouraging in respect of helping creatives develop business nous and entrepreneurial skill sets alongside their creative talents.

Recommendation 5: Creative Hartlepool Network

The development of a creative network – a directory of businesses and talent with events developed to encourage creatives to come together and network. This can be in the form of encouraging in person connections and the provision of an online networking platform (which ties in with Recommendation 6 below).

Recommendation 6: Online assets, talent and resource matching platform

An online business and talent matching portal – a website platform that showcases local creative businesses, individuals seeking a career or work experience, a list of all creative sector assets and equipment (including all school / college / university-based facilities open to public use / hire), tutors and teaching expertise, events, creative sector talks, commissioning opportunities and supported with a monthly or bi-monthly blog. This will need some dedicated time to develop and get off the ground, and to keep it updated.

This role may initially be undertaken by the Creative Animateur but is likely to require an additional resource. This could become the "go to" place for news, information and opportunities for Hartlepool creatives and a facility that further generates networking, collaboration, the sharing of resources and enabling of business growth.

7.3 The BIS

The award-winning BIS was praised by consultees as a creative hub that wouldn't be out of place in one of the larger cities with a strong creative sector (for example Leeds, Birmingham or Manchester). However, many thought it wasn't achieving its potential and there were several opportunities for improvement highlighted by consultees. These included a need to raise its profile through marketing and promotion and to help it become a more vibrant creative hub. More defined links with educational institutions, drawing in students and graduates, offering incubation space for young people coming out of education and looking to start up, and a more "open community" feel than a traditional business centre were typical of comments received. In addition, many thought the atrium should be much more of a social space enabling informal networking and a welcoming zone "with a buzz" where people could have a great coffee and snack. We propose:

Recommendation 7: Atrium

Consider a "coffee kart" (portable) operator within the atrium and explore opportunities for small display/sales area or large screen TV to help tenants showcase their goods and feature forthcoming events and activities. Also to encourage informal networking.

Recommendation 8: Events programme

Develop a programme of events – guest speaker talks, training workshops, advice sessions, open days, open evenings and trade events to attract the community and wider local creatives to come into the BIS and help tenant connect more with one another as well as the wider community.

Recommendation 9: Student workspace

Dedicate one or two vacant units exclusively for student use, partnering with The Northern School of Art, Hartlepool College of Further Education, Hartlepool Sixth Form and other schools to enable students to have access to workspace in a supervised business setting with links to other creatives and advice on site. This will help support emerging talent and young artists and creatives, providing a link between the world of education and the world of work.

Recommendation 10: Business awards

A business awards event – celebrate the creative sector with an annual business awards event.

7.4 Education

There appears to be a very healthy pipeline of local young people engaged in arts and creative subjects at school, at college and in higher education. Several institutions are continuing to develop their "creative offer" and facilities. Not only are young people discovering areas of creative work they love and have a passion for, but they are also developing skills that have wider benefits, including for employers: team working, communication, problem solving, independence and creative thinking.

Where there is a need for support, is more help to support young people make the transition from education into work (work placements and work experience, first jobs on the career ladder, self-employment advice) and an understanding of the opportunities available/career pathways. We propose:

Recommendation 11: Hartlepool's creative alumni - showcasing talent and career pathways

Making use of local alumni to provide short "career path" videos to showcase local people who have gone on to have successful careers (in dance, acting, music, film production, theatre design etc.), to engage young people, build their ambitions and help them understand the qualities that have enabled local people to succeed. There may be an opportunity to build deeper links with alumni and create a "Creative Ambassadors" initiative which supports them in helping them to promote Hartlepool to their contacts.

Recommendation 12: Career videos

Allied to Recommendation 11, create a series of mini video clips covering all aspects of the creative sector, specialists and job roles, and what pathways people can take to achieve these roles.

Recommendation 13: First step employment

A challenge is offering young people "first steps" employee roles instead of moving directly into self-employment. Hartlepool does not have many established medium sized creative businesses and efforts to secure inward investors in this sector could provide wider spin offs in this regard. Alternatively, some supported ILM (Intermediate Labour Market) model or apprenticeships which provides a wage whilst a young person experiences work across several micro businesses.

Recommendation 14: Addressing skill shortages

Some focus on addressing local skills shortages – dance and music teachers, audio and visual technicians etc. and helping schools / colleges / universities work with local employers on bespoke training packages to help meet demands, both current and projected.

Recommendation 15: "Creative Hartlepool" brand

A "Creative Hartlepool" branded event that enables local young students and creative talent to be showcased – visual arts, digital experts, dance, film makers and photographers, crafts and a music event, with each having the opportunity to leave a permanent record of their work (e.g. local musicians all contributing to a record or playlist or photographers having an online and physical album of their work etc.).

7.5 Next Steps

We suggest a "mini conference" that invites all consultees and those involved with the development of the Cultural Strategy, to a combined launch event with the opportunity for small group discussions to focus on specific actions to take forward.

From this study we advocate groups to discuss:

- The BIS
- Business Support
- Education Pathways
- Sector Facilitator (Animateur) and networking.

Both studies are proposing a new partnership and the wider delegate audience should be party to the plans for the creation and scope of this.

There is a strong appetite to move forward collaboratively to help Hartlepool's creative sector and it will be important to maintain momentum and follow through with actions.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Reference Materials

The following documents, reports and data sets were reviewed. Relevant information sourced from these are referenced within the main body of the report, numbered as follows:

Ref No.	Document Title / Information	Creator / Source	Date
1	Hartlepool Creative Industries Strategy (Church Street)	Rubicon Regeneration, for Hartlepool Borough Council	March 2014
2	Church Street Managed Workspace Study	Cushman and Wakefield, for Hartlepool Borough Council	October 2015
3	The UK Creative Industries – unleashing the power and potential of creativity	Creative UK Group	2021
4	DCMS Sector Economic Estimates	DCMS	August 2021
5	The Impact of Arts and Culture on the Wider Creative Economy	Metro Dynamics	June 2020
6	Data on occupational and employment levels	EMSI for Tees Valley Combined Authority	2021
7	Business Support Lexicon	Tees Valley Combined Authority	Current
8	Mapping Creative Hubs In England	British Council (Ellen O'Hara and Deepa Naik report)	March 2021

Reference Materials (continued)

Ref No.	Document Title / Information	Creator / Source	Date
9	Growing the UK creative industries – what do creative enterprises need to thrive and grow?	Creative Industries Federation (Charlotte Chung, Luise Yang and Evy Cauldwell-French	2018
10	Enhancing Creative Education	Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre led by NESTA (authored by Institute for Employment Studies	January 2022
11	Hartlepool Cultural Strategy 2022	Mark Robinson, commissioned by Hartlepool Borough Council	2022
12	Sites, Camera, Action Take 2	Lambert Smith Hampton	2021

Appendix 2: Creative sector activity types

Creative Industries Group	SIC code	Description
Advertising and marketing	70 21 73 11 73 12	Public relations and communication activities Advertising agencies Media representation
Architecture	71 11	Architectural activities
Crafts	31 12	Manufacture of jewellery and related articles
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	59 11 59 12 59 13 59 14 60 10 60 20 74 20	Motion picture, video and TV programme production activities Motion picture, video and TV post-production Motion picture, video and TV programme distribution Motion picture projection activities Radio broadcasting TV programming and broadcasting activities Photographic activities
IT, software and computer services	58 21 58 29 62 01 62 02	Publishing of computer games Other software publishing Computer programming activities Computer consultancy activities
Publishing	58 11 58 12 58 13 58 14 58 19 74 30	Book publishing Publishing of directories and mailing lists Publishing of newspapers Publishing of journals and periodicals Other publishing activities Translation and interpretation services
Museums, galleries and libraries	91 01 91 02	Library and archive activities Museum activities
Music, performing and visual arts	59 20 85 52 90 01 90 02 90 03 90 04	Sound recording and music publishing activities Cultural education Performing arts Support activities to performing arts Artistic creation Operation of arts facilities

Appendix 3: Labour market data

Employee jobs in Hartlepool by sector (EMSI – TVCA data)

SIC	Description	Avg. Wages Per Job	2021 Jobs (employees)	GVA	2020 Establishments
3212	Manufacture of Jewellery and Related Articles	£0	0	£0	0
3213	Book Publishing	£0	0	£0	0
3214	Publishing of Directories and Mailing Lists	£0	0	£0	0
3215	Publishing of Newspapers	Insf. Data	<10	Insf. Data	1
3216	Publishing of Journals and Periodicals	£0	0	£0	0
3217	Other Publishing Activities	Insf. Data	<10	Insf. Data	2
3218	Publishing of Computer Games	£0	0	£0	0
3219	Other Software Publishing	£0	0	£0	0
3220	Motion Picture, Video and Television Programme Production Activities	£27,184	68	£0	2
3221	Motion Picture, Video and Television Programme Post-production Activities	£0	0	£0	0
3222	Motion Picture, Video and Television Programme Distribution Activities	£0	0	£0	0
3223	Motion Picture Projection Activities	£18,531	32	£152,560	1
3224	Sound Recording and Music Publishing Activities	£30,251	14	£0	2
3225	Radio Broadcasting	£0	0	£0	0
3226	Television Programming and Broadcasting Activities	£0	0	£0	0
3227	Computer Programming Activities	£31,174	12	£627,178	8
6202	Computer Consultancy Activities	£29,796	315	£9,129,684	34
7021	Public Relations and Communication Activities	£0	0	£0	0
7111	Architectural Activities	£28,799	41	£597,034	6
7311	Advertising Agencies	£21,478	44	£651,055	6
7312	Media Representation	Insf. Data	10	Insf. Data	4
7410	Specialised Design Activities	Insf. Data	<10	Insf. Data	6
7420	Photographic Activities	Insf. Data	<10	Insf. Data	3
7430	Translation and Interpretation Activities	Insf. Data	<10	Insf. Data	2
8552	Cultural Education	£16,770	13	£0	3
9001	Performing Arts	Insf. Data	<10	Insf. Data	2
9002	Support Activities to Performing Arts	Insf. Data	<10	Insf. Data	0
9003	Artistic Creation	£32,949	24	£484,551	11
9004	Operation of Arts Facilities	£0	0	£0	0
9101	Library and Archive Activities	£24,909	53	£1,060,792	0
9102	Museum Activities	£23,653	15	£312,810	4
	Total	**£27,412**	**687**	**£13,490,322**	**98**

Location Quotients

SIC	Description	LQ Hartlepool	Hpool rank out of Tees Valley	LQ Tees Valley	LQ North East	LQ Middlesbrough	LQ Stockton on Tees	LQ Darlington	LQ Redcar & Cleveland
3217	Other Publishing Activities	0.32	1	0.07	0.23	0.07	0.02	0.04	0.00
3218	Publishing of Computer Games	0.00		0.30	2.96	0.00	0.00	0.16	1.83
3219	Other Software Publishing	0.00		0.12	0.40	0.09	0.28	0.03	0.00
3220	Motion Picture, Video and Television Programme Production Activities	0.92	1	0.53	0.93	0.51	0.43	0.53	0.47
3221	Motion Picture, Video and Television Programme Post-production Activities	0.00		0.39	0.88	0.00	0.74	0.78	0.05
3222	Motion Picture, Video and Television Programme Distribution Activities	0.00		0.01	0.21	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00
3223	Motion Picture Projection Activities	1.40	4	1.25	1.75	2.13	0.00	2.07	1.43
3224	Sound Recording and Music Publishing Activities	1.35	1	0.41	0.91	0.39	0.50	0.04	0.00
3225	Radio Broadcasting	0.00		0.33	0.27	1.41	0.00	0.02	0.00
3226	Television Programming and Broadcasting Activities	0.00		0.01	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00
3227	Computer Programming Activities	0.06	4	0.26	0.43	0.50	0.32	0.14	0.04
6202	Computer Consultancy Activities	0.79	1	0.47	0.57	0.16	0.65	0.58	0.15
7021	Public Relations and Communication Activities	0.00		0.25	0.24	0.18	0.13	0.88	0.00
7111	Architectural Activities	0.38	4	0.58	0.79	0.31	0.55	1.00	0.68
7311	Advertising Agencies	0.43	1=	0.25	0.36	0.43	0.11	0.21	0.21
7312	Media Representation	0.55	1	0.23	0.30	0.22	0.00	0.27	0.46
7410	Specialised Design Activities	0.16	5	0.34	0.41	0.29	0.44	0.43	0.19
7420	Photographic Activities	0.28	4	0.40	0.41	0.29	0.59	0.14	0.59
7430	Translation and Interpretation Activities	0.48	2	0.26	0.16	0.20	0.00	0.83	0.00
8552	Cultural Education	1.53	1	0.59	0.70	0.84	0.37	0.00	0.67
9001	Performing Arts	0.18	2	0.20	0.41	0.11	0.38	0.06	0.16
9002	Support Activities to Performing Arts	0.64	1	0.23	1.31	0.00	0.20	0.20	0.38
9003	Artistic Creation	0.75	1	0.31	0.39	0.07	0.30	0.27	0.41
9004	Operation of Arts Facilities	0.00		0.09	0.38	0.15	0.10	0.15	0.00
9101	Library and Archive Activities	1.73	3	1.49	0.79	0.00	0.89	2.65	3.39
9102	Museum Activities	0.50	2	0.40	1.19	0.00	0.86	0.29	0.08

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ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

18th October 2022

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report of: Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services

Subject: REFERRAL FROM COUNCIL – CRUSTACEANS UPDATE

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1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non-key – referral from Full Council.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 On 14th July 2022, it was agreed by Full Council, in response to a motion on the deceased and dying crustaceans impacting on our local fishing industry, that a report would be presented to the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee for consideration.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 14th July 2022, the following motion was presented to Full Council:

"Our fishing industry has been decimated since the Autumn of 2021 where thousands of deceased and dying crustaceans were washed up on the beaches in our region. Our fishermen and women have been unable to justify the costs of fuel to put to sea, and several of Hartlepool's fishing fleet have been advertised for sale.

It is unlikely that the area will recover from this environmental disaster in the short term.

We believe that the reports by Defra were flawed, given the independently commissioned report concluded so differently from the official reports.

The timing of this, with works beginning on piling around the Teesworks site, demolition works on site, and with dredging in and around the River Tees is really concerning and residents, fishermen and politicians and people from Whitby to Hartlepool, are worried and need reassurance as to what really happened, and action to resolve it.

Council therefore resolves to:

> *Request the appropriate bodies (which should include EA, Cefas, NEIFCA, MMO, FSA and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Teesworks and the TVCA), attend an appropriate public meeting, with councillors and interested members of the public present, to explain the discrepancies, and explain what action or recommendations can, or have been taken to support the future of our fishing industry.*
>
> *Refer to Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee to explore how to regenerate this vital and traditional industry in our town.*
>
> *Write to the Minister of State for the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, to seek an independent investigation into this environmental and economic disaster."*

3.2 Support was expressed for the Motion by Elected Members who were also updated on meetings which had already taken place by Jill Mortimer, MP, including assisting local fishermen and merchants to produce a report which evidences the need for further investigation into the crustacean and marine deaths, documents the die-off which is still occurring, highlights the need for support for those affected and discussed the potential for a package of Government support including schemes to support the Northeast fishing industry. The North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority was also recording and verifying reports of marine life strandings.

3.3 Following a suggestion by an elected member, it was agreed that the Motion be amended to include the Neighbourhood Services Committee being invited to the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee when this issue is discussed. It was further suggested that invites to the public meeting include all Elected Members, Tees Valley Mayor and businesses affected by the proposals.

3.4 The amendment was accepted and the amended motion was agreed, with no dissent.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 In early October 2021, reports were first received by the Council and their partners that crabs and lobsters were washing up dead, and dying, on Hartlepool beaches.

4.2 These reports continued throughout October and up to December 2021, although the most significant wash-ups occurred in October. The incident affected a significant stretch of coastline from County Durham to North Yorkshire, with the fishing community reporting a significant drop in catches to at least 4 nautical miles offshore.

4.3 Crabs and lobsters were the only species that appear to have been affected by the incident and were found to be displaying characteristic ‘twitching’ and lethargic behaviours.

4.4 In December 2021, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) took on overall responsibility for the Investigation from the Environment Agency (EA).

4.5 The Defra led investigation into the mortality event was stood down in March 2022 and in May 2022 a Joint Agency Investigation into Teesside and Yorkshire Coast Crab and Lobster Mortalities report was produced, which can be found at **Appendix 1**.

4.6 In summary an extensive range of testing was undertaken over several months by Defra group agencies with evidence suggesting that a harmful algal bloom was the most likely cause of this incident. Other potential causes including chemical contamination, dredging, and discharges, and disease were also investigated, however all proved to be highly improbable reasons for the event.

4.7 Healthy crabs and lobsters are now being caught in the region and, while crab and lobster stocks will continue to be monitored, the investigation into the cause of the incident has been closed.

4.8 However a separate study was commissioned by the Whitby Commercial Fishing Association and a second paper was produced in March 2022, which can be found at **Appendix 2,** which was alleging the identification of Pyridine as possible causative factor.

5. UPDATES

5.1 As agreed by Full Council, this matter is now being considered at a meeting of Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee.

5.2 Furthermore invites for the meeting were sent to Defra, EA, Food Standards Agency (FSA), UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Marine Management Organisation (MMO), North East Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA), Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), Natural England, South Tees Development Corporation (Teesworks), Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA), our Elected Member for Parliament, and all members of Neighbourhood Services Committee.

5.3 On 22nd September 2022, the Leader of the Council wrote to the Rt Hon Mark Spencer MP, as Minister of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in relation to the Mass Crustaceans Mortality Event in Tees Estuary, and a copy of this can be found at **Appendix 3**.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Finance	No relevant issues
Legal	No relevant issues
Risk Implications	No relevant issues
Consultation	No relevant issues
Staffing	No relevant issues
Child/Family Poverty Considerations	No relevant issues
Equality and Diversity Considerations	No relevant issues
Section 17 of The Crime And Disorder Act 1998 Considerations	No relevant issues
Asset Management Considerations	No relevant issues

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Members are asked to consider the content of the report.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 To support the referral from Council for a discussion to be held in relation to the crustaceans incident affecting Hartlepool.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Council Minutes – 14th July 2022.

10. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

- Director of Finance and Policy √
- Chief Solicitor/Monitoring Officer √

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Environment Agency

Centre for Environment Fisheries & Aquaculture Science

Marine Management Organisation

Joint Agency Investigation into Teesside and Yorkshire Coast Crab and Lobster Mortalities

Investigation summary

Date: May 2022

Contents

1. Executive summary

- Between October and December 2021, dead and dying crabs and lobsters were washed ashore in unusually high numbers along parts of the Northeast coast of England.
- Animals displayed ‘twitching’ and lethargic behaviour as well as an inability to self-right. Crabs and lobsters appeared to be predominantly affected in large numbers.
- Environment Agency (EA) led the initial emergency response, with Defra taking responsibility for the ongoing investigation in December 2021 and in doing so coordinating a multi-agency response involving the EA, Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science (Cefas), NE Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA), Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). The investigation concluded in March 2022.
- The EA, MMO and Cefas investigated a range of potential causes including licensed dredging activity, chemical contamination, activities related to offshore windfarms, presence of algal blooms and aquatic animal disease.
- No single, consistent causative factor was identified. However, a harmful algal bloom present in the area coincident with the event was identified as of significance.
- The presence of a harmful algal bloom was indicated by satellite imagery and confirmed by the consistent detection of lipophilic algal toxins (specifically the diarrhetic shellfish toxins okadaic acid and dinophysistoxin 2) in washed up dead crab and lobsters, confirming that animals had been exposed to algal toxins.
- The significance of these algal toxins in the context of the mortality event is not yet fully understood. This will be explored in Defra funded research at Cefas.
- Healthy crabs and lobsters are now being caught in the region and, while crab and lobster stocks will continue to be monitored, the investigation was closed in March 2022.

2. Incident summary

In early October 2021 the Environment Agency (EA) received reports that crabs, and lobsters were washing up dead and dying on Teesside beaches. The EA immediately launched an emergency investigation, working with a range of government agencies including, Cefas, MMO, FSA, UKHSA, and Defra. The roles of each agency were as followed:

- EA – Investigating pollution related incidents.
- Defra – Coordinating the investigation from December 2021 onwards.
- Cefas – Investigating disease and biosecurity threats.
- MMO – Investigating whether licensable activity, including dredging and disposal, cabling and offshore windfarm activity, might have caused the mortality event.
- NEIFCA – Liaison with local fishing community and intelligence on stranding.
- Food Standards Agency – Advising on food safety implications
- UKSHA – Advising on any threat to human health.
- Local councils – Local outreach and advice on local areas.

Reports of dead and dying crabs and lobsters found washed up on beaches and in fishing pots continued throughout October and into December 2021. The most significant wash-ups occurred in October. The incident affected a stretch of coastline stretching approximately from County Durham and Teesside to Robin Hoods Bay, with the fishing community reporting a significant drop in catches to at least 4 nautical miles offshore.

Defra took on overall responsibility for the Investigation from the EA in December 2021.

Affected moribund crabs and lobsters displayed clinical signs including lethargy, inability to self-right (turn off their backs) and a twitching behaviour before dying. The event seemed to affect crabs and lobsters only, and this was supported by the EA *in situ* observations through survey of the area - no other taxonomic groups appeared to be impacted either intertidally (observations made around rockpools) or sub tidally (vessel grab samples and trawls).

Several primary causes were considered including:

- Licensed activities – dredging and disposal of sediment from local ports
- Chemical pollution from land-based source including from sewage or industry discharge, and contaminants potentially released from dredging or offshore activities in the Tees area
- Aquatic animal diseases
- Harmful algal blooms and associated algal toxins
- Seismic activity
- Electromagnetic fields from undersea power cables
- Unusual environmental conditions such as sudden drops in temperature, storm events etc.

3. Investigation summary

The following were reviewed.

3.1. Licenced Activities (including dredging)

Capital and maintenance dredging activities in English waters require a Marine Licence, unless exempt under Section 75 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009- where a Statutory Harbour Authority have their own powers to carry out dredging provided specific criteria are met. The MMO, as the licensing authority, are responsible for issuing Marine Licences to cover all relevant activities not covered by exemptions. Some Marine Licences will, therefore, include both dredging and disposal, while others may only licence particular activities of the wider project, such as disposal to sea. As part of the licensing process, the MMO consider all relevant legislation and policies, potential impacts, and carry out consultation with key stakeholders. Further information can be found here for impact assessments and the licensing process.

Following the reports of the incident, the MMO reviewed marine licenced activities within the area which supported the conclusion that based on the evidence available the licenced activities including cabling and offshore windfarm activity and dredging/disposal of sediment to designated disposal grounds was not likely to be the cause of the decapod mortalities.

Prior to considering options for the disposal of sediment to sea, dredged material undergoes rigorous regulatory testing, in line with international guidance, to ensure that deposit of such material will not cause significant harm to marine life. Uncontaminated material from dredging operations on the Tees is deposited at the designated Inner and Outer Tees disposal grounds off Teesmouth. As part of the initial response to the incident, the EA tested environmental media for a wide range of contaminants (see Section 3.2) including contaminants that are routinely tested to support marine licence applications for the disposal of dredged material to sea. This additional screening undertaken by the EA as part of this investigation supports the conclusion that the licenced disposal of dredged sediment to designated disposal grounds was not likely to be the cause of the mortalities.

Information pertaining to a Marine Licence can be found by searching the reference number on the Public Register here.

Additionally, Cefas completed an indicative 2D tracking model of the potential sediment plume from the designated Tees dredge material disposal site. The model indicated that any plume extents were relatively confined along the tidal excursion at the disposal site and did not have the same geographic extent that would be consistent with the known mortalities.

3.2. Chemical pollution

Analysis of water, sediment, and biological tissue samples detected no indicative chemical cause that could explain the scale of impact observed. Following extensive investigations, the EA did not consider chemical pollution or sewage as a likely cause of the mortalities.

The Tees Estuary has both current and historical industry activity, with a century of the iron, steel, and chemical industry activity in the area. Given the location of the initial findings of moribund and dead crabs in and around the Tees Estuary, a possible contaminant cause was the focus of the EAs investigation at the earliest stage. However, it was essential that all analysis results were put into context of the pre-incident period, to differentiate between identified chemicals, present in samples from this area and a chemical, or group of chemicals, that could cause the mortalities observed at this time.

A range of possible sources of contamination were considered such as industrial and wastewater discharges, as well as sediment disturbance activities (dredging). EA regulatory officers checked for any unusual activity in industry or water companies that discharge into the Tees Estuary and immediate coastal area. No abnormal site activities or non-conformances with numeric permit conditions at any of the sites were noted. Furthermore, no significant sewage or surface water outfall incidents were reported to the EA.

As the spatial scale of the incident became more obvious and mortalities occurred over several weeks, it became highly improbable that there was a point source contaminant cause as there was no indication of dilution mitigation over time and space.

The EA analysed water, surface sediment and blue mussel and crab tissue, considering over 1000 different chemicals (The EAs scheduled contaminant sample data can be found in the Water Quality Archive on data.gov.uk as part of the public archive. Open WIMS data). As well as processing samples using their standard, fully established laboratory methods, the EA's laboratory service modified their water screening methods to look for unusual traces of contamination in the sediments and crab flesh. Although these matrices have not previously been analysed using these methods, it was hoped that they could provide an indication that could then be investigated in more detail. This was the case with the pyridine findings (see below).

The EA's analysis focused on organic pollutants, including pesticides, based on the behaviour of the dying crabs and the targeted nature of the impact. However, Cefas also conducted metal analysis (chromium, nickel, copper, zinc, arsenic, cadmium, lead, selenium, manganese, iron and mercury) of the soft tissues from crabs. The concentrations of all metals analysed in the body tissues were consistent with baseline levels for healthy brown crab.

Cyanide was not initially analysed for as, had this been the cause, a highly visible impact would have been observed from the start of the incident across the whole biological community rather than the more targeted impact on the crabs and lobsters. However, at the request of the fishing sector, sediment, and water samples, collected by the EA from the impacted area around Teesside in early October, were subsequently screened for free cyanide. Results from these samples were below the detection limit of the test.

In summary, no chemicals tested were identified at levels which would consistently explain the cause of the mortality event over the spatial and temporal scale observed.

3.2.1. Pyridine

Pyridine was identified in the crab soft tissue using the investigative, semi-quantitative screening technique. However, concentrations could not initially be put into context as this analysis had not previously been carried out on crab tissue and background levels were unknown. To provide some immediate comparison, healthy crab tissues from outside the area of impact (St. Mary's Lighthouse, South Shields, Norfolk Wash and Cornwall) were analysed and they were also found to contain varying amounts of pyridine. It is also thought that pyridine could be being formed naturally post-mortem in the crab tissue. It has been reported amongst other amines monitored as indicator of freshness in fish.

- The pyridine finding illustrates how the EA further explored investigative findings from the screening results to provide potential lines of enquiry. Upon the initial pyridine findings in the first crabs analysed, follow up steps were immediately taken to explore whether this was the cause:
- On the assumption that pyridine was causal, a potential source of the contaminant was sought. This included taking a formal water discharge sample from a possible industrial source. Using validated, fully quantifiable, tests no pyridine was present in water samples. No source could be identified. (Note: As the impacted area and length of time of the Incident increased, with no dilution mitigation, a contaminant source became increasing improbable).
- Literature searches for information including the ecotoxicology and background levels of, and impact of, pyridine in crabs and lobsters, were carried out.
- Comparison crabs from outside the known impacted area were sourced to provide an indication of the 'background' levels of pyridine in crab tissues. Comparison crabs were obtained from St. Mary's Lighthouse, South Shields, Norfolk Wash (Eastern IFCA), Cornwall, and analysed using the same indicative screening technique. Levels found ranged from low to medium.
- Pyridine was analysed for in other materials in the area – water, sediment, and blue mussels. Pyridine was detected at low levels by the screening method in blue mussels but not in the sediment samples. Pyridine was generally not detected in the water samples (Note: historically we do see some positive detects of pyridine in saline wasters, including in the Tees). Pyridine is readily soluble in water, considered to be "mobile" in soil/sediments, and has a low potential for bioaccumulation in aquatic habitats.
- A laboratory pyridine standard was obtained to validate that the screening technique was identifying pyridine. It has been confirmed that the substance detected was pyridine but the 'concentrations' remain indicative only.

Taken together the findings from the different parts of the Investigation could not support the hypothesis that pyridine was the cause of the mortalities.

3.3. Aquatic Animal Disease

The Fish Health Inspectorate (FHI) at Cefas is responsible for investigating suspected outbreaks of listed and emerging aquatic animal diseases under the Aquatic Animal Health Regulations (England and Wales) 2009. The FHI, working with partner agencies including the EA and NEIFCA, took a number of samples from the affected area through October and November 2021.

There was no evidence of the major listed disease of crustacea, White Spot Syndrome Virus (WSSV) in any of the samples. Bacteria were detected in a number, but not all samples, bacteria were identified as *Vibrio* spp. and *Marimonas aquiplantarum.* Many *Vibrio* spp. are autochthonous members of marine environments and thus detection is not uncommon. *Vibrio* spp. were likely to be either commensal flora or opportunistic and not expected to be linked to primary mortalities. Likewise, *Marimonas aquiplantarum* is regularly found in marine environments, often associated with seagrasses and has not been implicated in crustacean mortalities previously. In summary it was concluded that an infectious disease agent was not responsible for the mortalities observed.

In March 2022, an additional report of 2 unhealthy lobsters in pots was received amongst an otherwise healthy commercial catch. On examination at Cefas, both animals were found to be heavily parasitised by the 'lobster louse' *Nicothoe astaci* which has been linked to impaired respiratory function. *Nicothoe astaci* is commonly found in samples of lobster from around the UK. It was not observed in any other sample as part of the investigation and is not considered the cause of the wider mortalities reported in the Autumn of 2021.

3.4. Harmful algal blooms and algal toxins

As the investigation continued, consideration was given to the possible involvement of a harmful algal bloom(s) (HAB). Sea temperatures in the Tyne/Tees were higher than normal (>15 °C until 26 September) in the run up to the incident (Figure 1) and potentially conducive to the formation of a HAB. It was also noted that the autumnal decrease in temperatures were severe in 2021 as shown in Figure 1 (red box). Over the period 26 September to 7 October the water temperature dropped by >2ºC, following discussion this rapid temperature perturbation was considered unusual.

Figure 1. Tyne/Tees WaveNet Site seawater temperature August – December 2021.

Data from the EA routine phytoplankton samples showed that HAB were occurring in early September in high densities in the NE region (Detection and enumeration of *Karenia mikimotoi* bloom of 385,000 cells per litre in Beadnell Bay, Northumberland, 50 nm north of the Tees). Multiple other phytoplankton species were identified, and cell densities measured, including various potentially toxic genera such as *Dinophysis* and *Cyanobacteria* in the NE region. Data from the EA monthly routine phytoplankton sampling programme provided a 'snapshot' of phytoplankton assemblages and abundance during September but because of monitoring frequency (monthly), not an inclusive systematic record of all HAB presence. These data are not available; therefore, a relatively short-lived algal bloom would not have been confirmed during the period.

However, harmful algal bloom, was indicated by satellite imagery across multiple platforms, which appeared to be of significance given the apparent timing of the potential bloom as well as spatial scale. Satellite data from two online platforms (Eutro Viewer (cefas.co.uk) & – s-3 EUROHAB) appeared to indicate that an algal bloom occurred along the coastal area in question prior to the onset of mortalities from 20 to 26 September 2021.

The University of Plymouth was also contacted as part of the investigation and provided a separate report detailing *K. mikimotoi* HAB risk around the Tees Estuary in September – October 2021 using Earth observation data (NERC Earth Observation Data Acquisition and Analysis Service (NEODAAS)). The report showed an elevated risk of HAB in the region at different times through September and October 2021 (Figure 2).

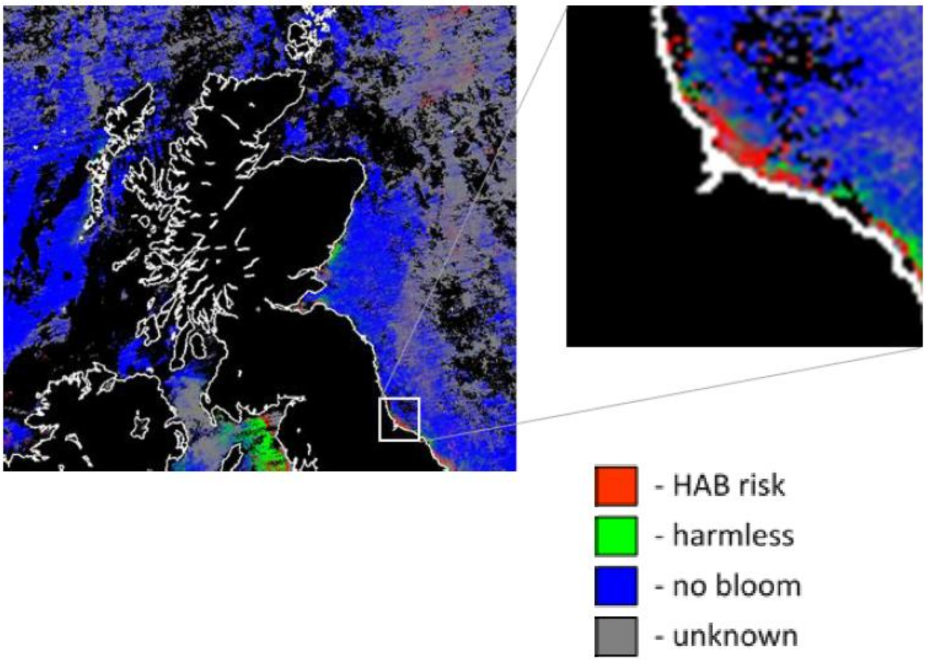

Figure 2. *Karenia mikimotoi* HAB risk map, 7-day composites, Suomi VIIRS sensor (9-15th October 2021) Courtesy of Plymouth University / NEODAAS data.

Furthermore, *Karenia mikimotoi* was also identified (albeit at low concentrations) at depth on Teesside in EA samples taken as part of the investigation in November 2021 (approximately 1.5 months after the onset of the mortality event). This species of algae has previously been implicated in mortality events in crustaceans in the USA - 2 years ago, lobsters started dying in their traps. Now scientists think they know why | WBUR News. Where putative cause was reported to be reduced oxygen / hypoxic conditions at depth following microbial breakdown of dead algal blooms. *K. mikimotoi* species have also been linked to negative impacts on aquatic animal health. Gill damage in farmed fish exposed to *K. mikimotoi* was reported in Scotland in 2006 as well as mortalities in benthic organisms (Davidson *et al*., 2006). It should be noted however that no evidence of hypoxia or consistent gill pathology was confirmed in this event.

Whilst satellite data indicated algal bloom formation in the region at the time of the mortality event it is important to recognise the limitations of this approach. Uncertainties mainly relate to interpretation of satellite data in near shore waters, where it can be difficult to confidently identify species composition and bloom density. Further supporting evidence relating to HABs in the region, was confirmed however through detection of algal biotoxins (produced by certain species of HAB) in dead and moribund animal tissues sampled during, but not after, the event.

Initially, samples of frozen dead crab and lobster were screened for two classes of marine algae-produced neurotoxins (ASP and PSP) which are known to have impacts on animal health within the marine food web. There was no evidence for these marine neurotoxins (domoic acid and saxitoxins) being present in the samples received at levels which would cause a concern. However, further samples of dead crab and lobster from the early wash-ups (8th October) were sent to the Cefas laboratory to be screened for additional algal toxins in light of the new information on the presence of *Karenia* algal blooms in the broader vicinity.

Analysis of these tissues was conducted for toxins in the crab tissue (hepatopancreas / brown meat). Samples were subjected to methanolic extraction to assess the potential presence of brevetoxins – natural lipophilic toxins which have been reported in other countries as produced by various *Karenia* species of phytoplankton. Whilst brevetoxins were not detected, other lipophilic toxins, either okadaic acid and dinophysistoxin 2, were detected and quantified in all samples. Lipophilic toxin concentrations, in some instances, exceeded the regulatory limits applied for bivalve molluscs. This finding was reported to the FSA. The consistent detection and quantitation of these compounds, sometimes at high concentrations, in washed up dead crab and lobster tissue confirmed exposure to algal toxins. Two lobsters sampled in March 2022 (see section 3.3) were also tested for a full suite of algal toxins – only trace levels were detected. Further work is underway to explore the potential physiological impact of high levels of okadaic acid and dinophysistoxin 2 on crustacea.

4. Further work

The Defra led investigation into the mortality event was stood down in March 2022. Subsequently Defra have commissioned Cefas to further investigate a number of lines of enquiry to (1) ensure better preparedness for any future incident, (2) to further investigate the indicative results relating to pyridine, particularly in relation to its formation as part of a ‘normal’ biological process during decomposition and (3) to examine the physiological impacts of high levels of algal toxins on crustacean physiology.

5. Sources of further information

Throughout the incident investigation information was collected and variously communicated to stakeholders, where this information is not indicated in the body text links are provided here:

Update on investigation into the deaths of crabs and lobster in the North East - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Environmental scientists and experts investigate Teesside crab deaths - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Environment Agency rules out chemical pollution as likely cause of Teesside crab deaths - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

In addition, to assist the public and other stakeholders during the investigation a series of FAQs was developed. This is included in Annex 1.

Annex 1.

Frequently asked questions

Is this an ongoing issue? Should levels of catch, more instances of dead or dying shellfish, and other issues continue to be reported and how?

- Anecdotal evidence suggests that dead and dying crabs and lobsters are no longer being found in significant numbers, but local industry and the public should continue to report any instances. This will help us get a better picture of what is still happening.
    - The public can report via the EA phone line
    - Local industry can do this through the NEIFCA office

Has dredging been ruled out as the cause? What testing has been done to reach this conclusion?

- Dredging has been ruled out as a likely cause. Samples of dredge material must meet the highest international standards protecting marine life before it is permitted to be disposed of at sea. If samples analysed for contaminants do not meet the standards, the disposal to sea of that material will not be licensed.
- Nothing in the testing of sediment prior to disposal or evidence from EA sampling suggests a chemical contaminant is a cause. Testing of sediment at the Inner Tees disposal site has already taken place in April 2021 and there was no evidence of significantly elevated contaminants in sediment at locations around and within the disposal site.
- Sediment that is proposed to be dredged in the Tees Estuary is tested and sampled across the footprint of the area to be dredged at least every three years prior to disposal.
- Cefas completed an indicative 2D tracking model of the potential sediment plume from the dredge disposal site. The model indicates that the plume extents are relatively confined along the tidal excursion at the disposal site and do not have the same geographic extent that would be consistent with the reported scale of mortalities.

Will the disposal of dredged sediment be stopped?

- No. The MMO uses the best available evidence to inform its decision making. There is no evidence to suggest that the disposal of dredged sediment responsible for the crab and lobster mortality – this has been tested in accordance with international (OSPAR – Oslo/Paris convention (for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic)) obligations.

Has cyanide in the sediment/water been tested for?

- Sediment and water samples collected by the EA from the impacted area around Teesside in early October have now been screened for free cyanide. Results from these samples were below the detection limit of the test.

Is it only crabs and lobsters affected? What about other species?

- The incident only appears to have affected crabs and lobsters. Reports of other animals, including octopus, limpets and shrimp found dead in the area appear to be unconnected and are more likely to be a result of storms and bad weather in the area.

- Please continue to report instances of dead or dying animals through the helpline or NEIFCA representative so we can investigate.

Are there links to seabird deaths reported earlier in the year?

- The seabird death incidents were during late August and September and cases have significantly reduced since then. Samples of liver and kidney from guillemots and razorbills were analysed at Cefas for the neurotoxic marine biotoxins (saxitoxins and domoic acid), but only trace concentrations of saxitoxin detected in some samples, providing very little evidence for any natural toxin impacts on bird health, assuming samples provided were representative of the affected bird population and toxin levels remained in tissues post death and sample shipment. Further samples will be received at Cefas for analysis late March 2022, and will be assessed for ASP, PSP as well as DSP toxins.

What about dogs which have been reported as falling ill recently?

- We are aware that there has been an increase in reports of vomiting and diarrhoea in dogs in the Northeast, and across England. The University of Liverpool Small Animal Veterinary Surveillance Network (SAVSNET) have been investigating and found no link to the affected dogs and the incident. While they cannot definitively point to a common cause, they do suggest this is a transmissible infection rather than contact with the beach area or sea water.

And seals?

- There is no evidence linking reports of dead seals to the investigation on crab and lobster deaths in the North East.
- If a member of the public observes a seal they deem in danger or distress, they should contact an appropriate helpline for advice and assistance (e.g. the RSPCA hotline in England and Wales; SSPCA hotline in Scotland; and USPCA in Northern Ireland, or the British Divers Marine Life Rescue on 01825 765546).
- The APHA Disease of Wildlife Scheme in conjunction with a network of collaborators from across GB undertake surveillance for new and emerging diseases in seals, however, large die-offs can occur for many reasons, including storm surges, food shortages, trauma, predation or disease outbreaks.
- The APHA Wildlife Expert group has commented that they have carried out post mortems on seal samples, taken from a range of sites in Great Britain, over the last year and not seen any evidence of an emerging disease.
- We will continue to engage with wildlife experts and remind the public not to approach dead or sick seals.

How are you measuring the impact on shellfish stocks in the area?

- We are continuing to work with fishers in the areas. Any information provided – especially in comparison to previous years' catch – will help us get a better picture of the impact on stocks. Please report this via your NE IFCA representative.

Are you sure that crabs and lobsters are safe to eat and sell? What about eating species which feed on crab/lobster?

- There is currently no evidence of food safety risk from fishery products caught off the North East coast. Businesses should continue to ensure that food placed on the market is safe and meets the relevant legislative requirements in relation to food safety and hygiene.

How are you sure that disease is not the cause?

- Cefas has taken further samples from the area recently, to investigate whether an aquatic animal disease is the cause of this incident. There is no evidence in the samples analysed that there is an infectious disease agent responsible for the mortalities.

What about compensation/support for the industry?

- The priority of the government is to investigate and understand the cause of the issue. At this stage, while investigations into the cause are ongoing, we are not considering financial support.

What about the possibility of natural causes?

Mass crustacean mortality events can occur from natural causes. For example, a mortality event was evident off the Kent coast in December 2011 that was linked to unseasonal low temperature.

Mass Mortality of marine species along N.E coast of England:

(2nd Report)

Up-dated Review of relevant data provided by DEFRA Agencies and others

Briefing Paper to Whitby Commercial Fishing Association

…………………………………………………………..

Tim Deere-Jones (Marine Pollution Research and Consultancy) 08/03/2022

CONTENTS:

Introduction:

***I**n January 2022 I was commissioned by the Whitby Commercial Fishing Association (WCFA)to write a "Preliminary" report" on the Mass Mortality (MM) of marine species including crabs and lobsters, along the N.E. coast of England. The purpose of that Report was to review relevant environmental data made available by DEFRA Agencies (Environment Agency, CEFAS, Marine Management Organisation) in response to a number of FoI submissions.*

The FoI responses consisted of chemical analyses of crab flesh samples and data, introduced in support of the DEFRA hypothesis that the MM had been caused by a toxic HAB (Harmful Algal Bloom). The DEFRA hypothesis postulated that HAB had either inflicted direct toxic impacts on marine life, or had caused secondary lethal impacts as a result of hypoxic (depleted oxygen) conditions generated by the eventual "die off" of the algal bloom.

The WCFA report concluded that the HAB hypothesis was NOT supported by significant empirical evidence and that, unless supporting empirical evidence was forthcoming, it remained an un-evidenced hypothesis.

The WCFA report noted that DEFRA agency chemical analyses of crab flesh had reported the presence of elevated concentrations of the presence of the toxic chemical Pyridine in N.E. coastal water crab samples (max 430 mgs/kg), relative to low concentrations in "control samples" from Penzance (5 mg/kg). The WCFA report provided additional scientific material about Pyridine toxicology and environmental behaviour and concluded that, on the basis of the available empirical evidence, the toxic chemical Pyridine represented the more likely causative factor for the MM.

Following the publication of the WCFA report, DEFRA has continued to promulgate its HAB hypothesis and briefed regional MP and media on the matter while ignoring or "down playing" the WCFA commentary on the toxic chemical Pyridine.

In response, and on behalf of WCFA, an additional series of FoI submissions have been made to DEFRA agencies and others requesting the supply of additional information relating to both the un-evidenced DEFRA HAB hypothesis and supporting the body of empirical evidence supporting WCFA identification of as a likely causative factor.

It is in the context of responses to that second round of FoI submissions, and further scientific desk reviews carried out on behalf of the WCFA, that this second, up-dated report has been compiled.

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Major Conclusions: Pyridine:

Of the multiple chemical determinands in crab flesh analysed by DEFRA agencies, only the toxic chemical Pyridine was present at the relatively very high concentrations (up to 400+ mg/kg) reported.

It is clear that crab flesh samples from within the area impacted by the NE coast Mass Mortality hold up to 80 times greater concentration of Pyridine than "control samples" collected from outside the area of the MM (Penzance)

Highly relevant is the 2013 scientific data from Pyridine toxicity tests carried out on the only marine crustacean species for which such data is available, which has reported that the initiation of Pyridine product acute toxicity, for the marine crustacean shrimp T. japonicus, occurred at concentrations as low as 6.6 micro grams (O.OO6 mg) per litre.

It is concluded, on the basis of the available empirical evidence, and in the absence of any empirical evidence to the contrary, Pyridine and its derivative compounds are currently the most likely causative factor behind the Mass Mortality of marine species along the NE coast

RECOMMENDATIONS: (It is noted that DEFRA have now committed to undertake further investigation in order to identify the cause of the Marine Mortality. This implies that DEFRA maybe reconsidering its position on HABs.)

1: It is strongly recommended that the DEFRA agencies (Environment Agency, CEFAS etc) immediately undertake follow on research in order to further, and more comprehensively clarify the in-estuary distribution of the high levels of Pyridine and its derivative compounds reported in TEES estuary sediments in 2021 (see paras above), such work would also greatly assist the identification of the most likely source of the most significant Pyridine (and derivative compounds) input to the TEES estuary.

2: It is strongly recommended that the DEFRA agencies undertake a review of ALL sources of Pyridine (and derivative compounds) discharged to the TEES estuary. As highlighted in the WCFA January Review document the Environment Agency is expected to hold a comprehensive list of all licensed/permitted discharges of these substances to the TEES estuary and it should be a straightforward task for the EA to interrogate their record and produce this information

3: It is further recommended that the DEFRA agencies undertake a wide ranging assessment of regional marine wildlife species of all trophic levels in order to identify the full range of species impacted by the Mass Mortality. This assessment should include consultation with regional Wildlife Support Groups, consider apex predator species such as seabirds and common and grey seals and review the photographic and other records of the range of species stranded on the regional shorelines during the Mass Mortality.

4: It is additionally strongly recommended that regional inshore commercial fishermen, who by virtue of their daily work experience are custodians of vitally relevant local knowledge of the marine environment, fisheries and wildlife are consulted by the DEFRA agencies in order to enhance the effectiveness of the DEFRA investigations.

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CONCLUSIONS regarding the DEFRA HAB hypothesis
It is concluded, on the basis of the current ambiguous and inconclusive evidence

submitted by DEFRA agencies in support of the claim that HAB is the cause of the Mass Mortality of NE coast marine life, there is no empirical evidence to support that claim.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1: ***It is recommended that independent academic (not DEFRA based) analysis of the TEES estuary sediments is undertaken in order to confirm whether or not the TEES estuary sediments have "similar spectral properties" to those of any algal bloom species (including Karenia mikimotoi).***

2: It is further recommended that independent academic (not DEFRA based) analysis of the PML TEES estuary satellite imagery is carried out, in order to provide empirical proof whether or not the imagery shows any indication that the "spectral properties" of TEES estuary sediments are causing "ambiguities".

Only when such work has been completed can it be empirically confirmed that the PML satellite imagery has not been mis-interpreted as a "false positive" identification of a Karenia spp Harmful Algal Bloom, when it may have been imagery of some other algal bloom or suspended sediment.

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PYRIDINE: The original FoI submission requested details of regional crab analyses, Blue Mussel analysis, water and sediment analysis. Following an extensive in-depth review of the data supplied by Env' Agency, supported by a search for and review of relevant academic literature, this Consultancy concluded that the Crab (chemical) analyses best represented the issue under investigation because regional crustaceans were one of the most impacted species groups and the analyses were carried out for a very wide range and number of chemical subjects.

The chemical analyses of regional inshore waters Crab samples from Seaton (Tees mouth), Bran Sands (Tees mouth), Saltburn (approx. 20 kms south east of Tees mouth), Runswick (approx. 55 kms south east of Tees mouth), St Mary's Lighthouse (approx. 55 kms north of Tees mouth) and "Eastern IFCA" were collected and analysed for a large number of chemical determinands.

Control samples of Crab obtained from a Penzance (Cornwall) fish merchant were also analysed and the outcomes presented for comparison purposes.

Review of the details of these chemical analyses reveals that the very great majority of samples were shown to hold very low levels (fractions of mg/Kg). A few determinands were shown to be present in some samples at concentrations of up to 10 mg/Kg.

However, this Review reports that the most outstanding analytical data outcomes were those detailing the generally very high concentrations of Pyridine in regional Crab samples compared to the control samples from Cornwall; as tabulated below:

Pyridine in Crab samples:

Site	Pyridine concentrations
Penzance (control)	5.929 mg/Kg
Seaton	203.765 mg/Kg
Bran Sands	255.700 mg/kg
Saltburn	439.611 mg/Kg
Runswick	20.0710 mg/Kg
St Mary's Lighthouse	77.917 mg/K
"Eastern" IFCA 3	194.600 mg/Kg

In the context of the relatively very high concentrations in NE coast crab samples it is both unusual, and surprising, that no further investigation of Pyridine in the environment has been carried out by the DEFRA agencies.

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Review of PYRIDINE marine environmental data: Pyridine is a chemical compound which is structurally related to highly toxic long lived poly aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Very low(trace) levels of Pyridine can be found in some plant and animal products, but it is not naturally abundant (see Penzance control levels of Pyridine). In the environment, concentrations of Pyridine elevated above "trace levels" are consensually agreed to be derived from human activity.

Pyridine is widely reported as very dangerous to humans. The fate/behaviour of Pyridine in marine environments and the toxic impacts to marine species is relatively uncommon and it is clear that, compared to many other chemicals, these parameters for Pyridine have been poorly studied.

Sources to the Environment: pyridine is released into the environment as a waste product discharged from industrial processes such as steel manufacture, processing of oil shale, coal gas production, coking plants and incinerators and from marine antifouling and anticorrosion applications. Pyridine and its derivatives occur in many compounds used in industry, agriculture and the maritime industries. Historically Pyridine has been intentionally produced from coal tar or as a by-product of coal gasification, but is now manufactured by a number of chemical industry processes.

No data on the quantities of Pyridine produced in the UK as a waste product or by deliberate manufacture, or of the volumes of Pyridine (and derivatives) permitted for discharged to UK water courses has been identified.

U.S. industrial releases of Pyridine to surface water and groundwater (underground injection) reported in 1987 were estimated to be 4,630 pounds and 303,650 pounds, respectively. In addition, 209,880 pounds of pyridine were disposed of in publicly owned treatment works in 1987. Some fraction of the quantity treated at POTWs is probably released to the environment. Pyridine was detected in one of two oil shale processing effluents at a concentration of 152 µg/L (ppb), but not in coal gasification plant effluents. Pyridine was also detected in effluents from coke-oven quenching operations at 11mg/L and detected, but not quantified, in four industrial effluents. Pyridine was also found in oil-shale retort water in Australia at a concentration of about 5 mg/L.

Uses: Pyridine is a precursor/base of a number of agrichemicals (including insecticides, fungicides and herbicides used in both terrestrial and marine applications), it is highly recommended as an anticorrosion treatment for marine structures such as those in the offshore hydrocarbon industry. It is also an industrial solvent, a water proofing agent, and a constituent of many dyes and disinfectants.

Marine environmental behaviour and fate: Pyridine mixes well with water. However, when discharged to water courses, Pyridine rapidly sequesters into marine intertidal and seabed sediments by adsorption to the outer surfaces of sedimentary particles, especially those suspended in the marine water column. Under the influence of flocculation processes in estuarine environments, such particles agglomerate, become heavier and are deposited out into estuarine intertidal and subtidal sedimentary deposits. The process reduces water column bio-availability of Pyridine but significantly increases concentrations in the deposited sediment.

Pyridine is persistent and non-bio-degradable in anoxic (oxygen depleted and typical of industrial/urban estuaries) marine sediments over extended time scales. Marine sediments collected from estuarine environments are shown to degrade Pyridine at varying rates depending on the ambient salinity. **(REFs: Kuo CE et al: Chemosphere 33: 771-81. 1996. & Liu SM et al': Chemosphere 36; 2345-57. 1998)**

Bio-degradability of Pyridine in marine intertidal and subtidal sediments is, in common with many other chemical pollutants, also reduced by non-exposure to UV (sunlight) and/or elevated sea surface temperatures.

Concentrations of Pyridine will significantly increase in "industrial" estuaries if inputs continue over the long term at rates greater than the degradation rates. Since estuaries heavily polluted with urban/municipal and industrial wastes generally suffer from highly depleted oxygen and UV and lower temperatures, reduced bio-degradability of Pyridine is to be expected.

It is clear that any resuspension of Pyridine contaminated sediments, by dredging and dredge disposal activity, will generate the creation of Pyridine enriched dredge plumes capable of re-distributing the previously sequestered Pyridine and giving rise to abnormal and markedly enhanced bio-availability of Pyridine.

Environmental impacts: Under normal conditions bio-concentration of Pyridine has been observed in aquatic species. **(REFS: Franke C et al'. Chemosphere 29. 1501-14. 1994. &: de Voogt P et al': Aquatic Toxicology, 169-194.1991)**

Academic research of the quantification of the degree of bio-concentrations in a representative range of marine species has not been identified to date and appears to be very limited, and perhaps non-existent.

Pyridine is defined as “Very toxic to aquatic life. Warning Hazardous to the aquatic environment, acute hazard]. H410: Very toxic to aquatic life with long lasting effects [Warning Hazardous to the aquatic environment, long-term hazard] .“
(REF: https://webwiser.nlm.nih.gov/substance?substanceId=173&catId=242)

N.B. LC/50 tests quantify the amount of substance required to kill 50% of test animals. EC50 tests quantify the amount of substance require to initiate malfunction (not mortality) of 50% of test animals.

This report confirms that there is a major absence of E50 and LC50 Pyridine test data on marine species and that the great majority such testing has been carried out on mammalian and freshwater species. Additionally, the majority of the available LC50/EC50 data for Pyridine products was reported in the 1980s and 1990s. Information on the toxicity of Pyridine and its derivative compounds to aquatic organisms derived from these few earlier studies, are now considered insufficient to assess the hazards of Pyridine.

E:G… Pyridine LC50 tests for freshwater fish conducted in the 1980s found that the LC50 for Fathead Minnows was 99 mg/L **REF: “Acute toxicology of organic chemical mixtures to the fathead minnow” Broderius SJ & Kahl MD. Aquatic Toxicology 6: 307-322. 1985**

By contrast, more recent improved analytical techniques fid the following:

Fathead minnow 96 hour Pyridine LC50 = 73.6 mg/l

European carp 96 hour Pyridine LC50 = 26 mg/l

Rainbow trout 96 hour Pyridine LC50 = 4.6 mg/l

REF: “Safety Data Sheet (PYRIDINE): ThermoFisher Scientific”. Creation Date 02-0ct-2009.

Even more recent academic research published in 2013, on the toxicity of Pyridine based anti-foulings, has reported that the degradation products of Pyridine antifoulings may have an influence on marine organisms, at concentrations lower than the previously reported toxic values.

The 2013 study reported that initiation of Pyridine product acute toxicity, measured by 24hour EC50, for the marine crustacean shrimp T. japonicus, occurred at concentrations as low as 6.6 micro grams (O.OO6 mg) per litre.
REF: “**Toxicity of Degradation Products of the Antifouling Biocide Pyridine Triphenylborane to Marine Organisms.” Toshimitsu Onduka et al’. Arch’ Environ’ Contam’ Toxicol’. (2013) 65:724–732 (table 2 p.728)**

Chronic toxicity occurs at lower environmental concentration but longer term effects, often following the acute stage. Both acute and chronic toxicity also manifest as a group of symptoms including central nervous system damage, tremor, intoxication, weakness and fatigue similar to the reported behaviour of crustaceans. As a result of these symptoms mortality may occur.

As noted above, there is a consensus that bio-concentration of Pyridine and its derivatives has been observed. However, to date no research has been found on the potential for, or quantification of Pyridine (and derivatives) to bio-accumulate or bio-magnify in individual marine animals or through marine food chains. These issues will be of major relevance to NE coast crustacean stocks since both crabs and lobsters are recognised to be omnivores, with crabs consuming smaller items (worms, small molluscs, bacteria and algae) while lobster consume larger prey (mussels, sea urchins and other crustaceans).

Conclusion: It is clear that Crab samples from sites within the area of mass mortality along the NE cost of England show concentrations of Pyridine far in excess of those demonstrated to cause both mortality and acute and chronic Pyridine generated outcomes.

Inhalation of Pyridine vapour is a dose pathway leading to vomiting and fatigue etc: (and may be implicated in the widely reported health impacts reported for dogs on beaches). Pyridine is reported to be carcinogenic to animals but no dose data has been identified to date.

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Sources of Pyridine and derivatives to the marine environment of N.E. England.

Pyridine and its derivatives occur in many compounds used in industry, agriculture and the maritime industries. Historically Pyridine has been intentionally produced from coal tar or as a by-product of coal gasification, more recently it has been manufactured by a variety of processes and is also discharged to the environment as a waste product from a number of industrial activities.

It is evident that the urban, industrial, chemical and maritime industrial activities carried on around the Tees estuary, some of them longstanding over a century or more, will have been a major source of both Pyridine and Pyridine degradation products. A number of Tees side chemical works are believed to have been involved in the manufacture of Pyridine and its derivatives. Other sites, such as ship and marine structures breakers may have discharged Pyridine and derivatives waste products into the Tees estuary environment.

It is certain that, over the operating lifetime of these industries, the work will have involved the release of large quantities of Pyridine and its derivatives in both particulate and dissolved form. There is no evidence for long term chemical analyses of Tees Estuary/Seaton Channel sediment or marine organism analysis for Pyridine, nor of any attempt to quantify Pyridine inputs to the Tees estuary.

Despite the failure to collect, quantify and publicise relevant Pyridine data it is expected that much of that material, in liquid or particulate form, has been discharged, under permit from DEFRA Agencies, into the estuarine waters or has entered the estuary by way of un-planned "runoff" from contaminated land surfaces.

Dredge and dredge waste disposal plumes: As explained above, water soluble Pyridine products will quickly become adsorbed to estuarine sediments and, in that state, will deposit out in sub-tidal and inter-tidal sedimentary deposits and become sequestered in low/non degradation environments. This process means that ambient concentrations of Pyridine and its derivatives in the water column will be depleted while those found in regional sediments will be increased.

It is widely understood that, if such polluted sediments are disturbed from inter or sub tidal deposits by dredging activity, a local dredge plume of re-suspended sediment will redistribute the entrained adsorbed pollutants and rapidly, and substantially, increase the bio-availability of any chemical, heavy metal or hydrocarbon pollutants attached to the sediments. In the case of recent, current and ongoing Tees Port dredging there will be a dredge plume generated by every dredge, possibly on a daily basis. Such daily in-estuary dredge plumes will be transported by estuarine tides out of the estuary on the tidal ebb and distributed around the local marine environment.

Similarly, when the dredge hoppers are filled, the dredger will transport dredge wastes to the regional dredge waste disposal sites for dumping. Dumping of dredge wastes will then occur at some distance from the dredge site and create a second series of plumes of disposed dredge wastes, on an every-dump basis, which will impact more distant areas than the dredge plumes.

Water body movements: In addition to the effect of short term local tidal movements there are residual (non-tidal), long term single directional and relatively powerful water body movements. Authoritative sources report that the residual water body movements off the east coast of England and Scotland "are well documented" and chart the southerly flow of residual water body movements down the east coast. **REF: "Atlas of the Seas around the British Isles." Directorate of Fisheries: MAFF.1981 p2:16**

These residual current water body movements will carry dredge plume sediments and contaminants southwards from the Tees estuary while at the same time the dredge waste disposal plumes will also travel southward under the same influence.

It is proposed that the early concentration of Pyridine reported for Seaton crabs (203 mg/kg) may be a function of the in-estuary dredge plumes exiting the Tees estuary on local tides. It is proposed that the higher concentrations reported for Saltburn crabs (439.611 mg/Kg) may be a function of dredge waste disposal plumes + in-estuary dredge plumes transported southward by residual water body movements.

It is proposed that, the strong and coherent southward moving "residual" water may have the capacity to carry combined (dredge and dump) plumes, with their associated pollutants, towards Runswick and points further south exposing marine species, especially demersal "bottom" dwellers and feeders, to the pollutant contents of settling sedimentary material.

Dredging and disposal of Contaminated sediments: A 2001 report confirms that here is a broad consensus that dredged material is subject to varying degrees of contamination. A variety of harmful substances, including heavy metals, oil, PAHs, anti-fouling compounds, PCBs and pesticides, can be effectively 'locked into' the seabed sediments in ports and harbours. These contaminants can often be of historic origin and from distant sources. The dredging and disposal processes can release these contaminants into the water column, making them available to be taken up by animals and plants, with the potential to cause contamination and/or poisoning. The likelihood of this occurring depends upon the type and degree of sediment contamination, however, some remobilisation of low levels of pollutants would be expected during most dredging campaigns.

The highest levels of contaminants generally occur in silts dredged from industrialised estuaries. If contaminants are released into the water column during disposal, they may accumulate in marine animals and plants and transfer up the food chain to fish and sea mammals.

The 2001 report note that "When found in sufficient quantities in the food chain, contaminants may cause morphological or reproductive disorders in shellfish, fish and mammals" and "Generally young shellfish and crustaceans (oysters, shrimp, crab and lobsters) are much more susceptible to the toxicity of contaminants than adults".
Ref: http://ukmpa.marinebiodiversity.org/uk_sacs/activities/ports/ph5_2_5.htm

In the context of the proposal that dredging, dredge wase disposal and associated sediment "plumes" may have released and dispersed Pyridine or some other toxin, FoI requests were submitted to relevant DEFRA Agencies querying the precise timing, location and depth of dredge cuts of daily dredge activity. In particular that FoI submission has been directed to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), the organisation responsible for licensing/permitting both dredge and dump activity and TEESPORT management, the body which has conducted and overseen the dredge and disposal activity

It is hoped that this data will assist clarification of any chronological relationship between the start of dredge and disposal plumes and the initiation of marine species mortality at successive points on the relevant coast. As of 7th March, 2022, no response has been provided.

PYRIDINE and it's derivatives in TEES ESTUARY
The Empirical evidence and data sources:
Pyridine (C5H5N) is one of a number of chemicals which are closely related and derived from similar historical sources such as coal gasification, coal tar production and oil refining, these chemicals have similar molecular structures and are widely found in a wide range of manufactured chemical compounds derivatives used in many industries. Pyridie has many derivative compounds such as Pyrene (C21H15N) which has been reported in TEES estuary sediments.?

A 2013 Report firmly placed pyridine/pyrene and their derivatives among the petrogenic and combustion product PAHs observed during analysis of samples from the INNER and OUTER TEES dredge waste disposal sites. The study further confirmed that PAH concentrations in sediments from within and outside both sites were markedly elevated relative to the majority of the other English sites sampled and analysed.
(Ref: "Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons in sediments at dredge material disposal sites around England: Concentrations in 2013 and time trend information at selected sites 2008-2013". Heather S Rumney et al'. Marine Pollution Bulletin. Vol 30. 2015)

CEFAS reporting of Tees estuary contaminated sediment dredging: Through 2014 under a contractual agreement with the MMO, CEFAS undertook a review of dredge material disposal site monitoring at a number of disposal sites around the UK coast
in order to assesses the suitability of dredged material for disposal at sea in line with the OSPAR Guidelines for the management of dredged material (OSPAR 2014). These guidelines provide generic guidance on determining the conditions under which dredged material may (or may not) be deposited at sea and involve the consideration of alternative uses, disposal sites and the suitability of the dredged material for disposal to sea including the presence and levels of contaminants in the dredged material, along with perceived impacts on any sites of conservation value in the vicinity of disposal.
(Ref: "Dredged Material Disposal Site Monitoring Around the Coast of England: Results of Sampling (2014)": SG Bolam et al'. CEFAS CONTRACT REPORT: SLAB 5.)

The CEFAS monitoring at the two Tees disposal sites, (TEES INNER and TEES OUTER), had been conducted annually for a number of years and, as such, is claimed to offer a good temporal dataset to draw upon when making contemporary assessments.
The CEFAS Report notes that "Frequent monitoring here reflects the large amounts of material being disposed (especially to the Inner site) and the high concentrations of certain contaminants of the source materials relative to those dredged around other parts of the English coast." **(Ref: "Dredged Material Disposal Site Monitoring Around the Coast of England: Results of Sampling (2014)": SG Bolam et al'. CEFAS CONTRACT REPORT: SLAB 5.)**
(page 10)

Appendix 2 of the CEFAS SLABS report to the MMO confirmed that both Inner and Outer Tees disposal sites receive "large quantities" of material dredged from the Ports of the Tees estuary, and that at the time of the investigations the Tees Inner site was the destination "of most of the 2.7 million tonnes of maintenance dredged material per year from the Tees estuary, the Seaton Channel and Hartlepool" while "material disposed to Outer Tees is usually comprised of capital dredged material" because this is a "more mobile site". Material dumped at this site is more likely to disperse out of the site and therefore to be distributed "downstream" on the long term, southward moving residual current).

The Report also noted that, by 2014, there had been a number of high profile construction and disposal at sea applications made with regard to the Tees waterways over recent years and that, in addition to the annual 2.7 million tonne of maintenance dredge disposal, permission had also been granted for the Northern Gateway container terminal which would require dredging of turning circles and deeper berthing pockets requiring an additional 2 million tonne dredge.

These "deeper berthing pockets" would seem to have required designation as Capital Dredge efforts as it would appear the dredge work was new and not definable as Maintenance dredging. In addition, a number of smaller dredge proposals had also been received.

The CEFAS report confirmed that in 2014 the TEES estuary region had "a large quantity of chemical industries which are the source of contaminants within the dredged sediments" and also noted that "dredged material from the TEES has displayed some of the highest levels of Poly Aromatic Hydrocarbons found in UK marine sediments”. However, no results of analytical work were PAHs were presented.

Pages 18 & 19 of the CEFAS report summarised the methodology for analysis of PAHs and provided a list of PAH determinands to be investigated at dredge disposal sites, this list included Pyridine (C5H5N) and Pyridine derivatives.

Section 2.1.3 (page 32) of the CEFAS Report presented the results of the analysis of sediments from the two TEES disposal sites, but despite the CEFAS PAH comments reported above, did not report any analysis of TEES sediments for any of the PAH determinands, including Pyridine/Pyrene and derivatives.

N.B. It is relevant to note that at other English disposal sites covered by the CEFAS report, PAH analysis was conducted and reported in some detail. No explanation was provided for the absence of PAH analysis at the TEES site

In the context of the fate of material disposed of at TEES INNER and TEES OUTER, the CEFAS Report noted (page 29) that some results indicated that fine sediment material (silts and clays) accounted for about 66% of content, and that there were indicators that fine sediments were being dispersed out of both the TEES INNER (largely Maintenance dredge) site and the TEES OUTER (largely Capital dredge) site. However, no quantification of the extent of the dispersal of these fine sediments was provided.
(REF: “Dredged Material Disposal Site Monitoring Around the Coast of England: Results of Sampling (2014)”: SG Bolam et al’. CEFAS CONTRACT REPORT: SLAB 5.)

TEESPORT SEDIMENT ANALYSIS FOR PYRIDINE DERIVATIVES: A recent response to an FoI request submitted to the TEESPORT management has supplied the data from chemical analysis of Tees Estuary sediment samples, carried out in October 2021, after an (as yet) undetermined amount of sediment had already been dredged and the dredge wastes had been disposed of at the out-of- estuary disposal sites.
Ref: TEES ESTUARY SEDIMENT CHEMICAL ANALYSES **… “MMO_RESULTS_TEMPLATE MAR 01178”: SOCOTEC MARINE DEPT: Burton on TRENT**

N.B. It is not reported from what depth below the post dredge seabed surface the sediment samples were taken.
No explanation has been provided for the decision to undertake sampling in October 2021 AFTER the bulk of the dredging had been completed and significant volumes of potentially Pyridine contaminated dredge waste had been removed and disposed of.

Review of the TEESPORT data shows that a wide range of chemical determinands were analysed for, including the Pyridine derivatives “pyrene” and “ind pyr” (*indeno 1,2,3 CD pyrene).*

Page 15 of the PAH data print out reported the analysis of 11 samples for “ind pyr”. The results showed that 5 of the 11 samples held over 500 micrograms per kg and that 3 of those 5 held over 1000 micrograms per kg.

Page 16 of the PAH data print out reported the analysis of 11 samples for “pyrene”. The results showed that 7 of the 11 samples held over 500 microgram per Kg and that 5 of those 7 held over 1,000 micrograms per kg, and that 3 of those 5 held over 2,000 micrograms/kg

Page 19 of the PAH data print out reported the analysis of a further11 samples for “ind pyr”. The results showed that 4 of the 11 samples held over 500 micrograms/kg and that 1 of those 4 held a concentration above 1,000 micrograms/kg.

Page 20 of the PAH data print out reported the analysis of a further 11 samples of “pyrene”. The results showed that 9 of the 11 samples held over 500 micrograms/kg, that 6 of those 9 held over1,000 microgram/kgs, that 2 of those 6 held over 2,000 micrograms/kg and that 1 of those 2 held over 3,000 micrograms/kg of “pyrene”. **Ref:** TEES ESTUARYSEDIMENT CHEMICAL ANALYSES **… “MMO_RESULTS_TEMPLATE MAR 01178”: SOCOTEC MARINE DEPT: Burton on TRENT**

The PAH analysis data has confirmed that “pyrene” and “ind pyr” occurred at elevated concentrations (hundreds of micrograms/kg) in several areas across the TEES estuary. Areas where sediments are shown to hold over 500 micrograms/kg of “pyrene”, and/or “ind pyr”, include Seaton Channel, North Tees Berths, Navigator North Tees, Tees Dock, Phillips Terminal, Hartlepool Channel and Hartlepool Berths.

The highest reported concentrations of “pyrene” were found in and around the Hartlepool Channel and the maximum concentration of 3,630 micrograms/kg, was found in sediment samples from Hartlepool Berths (HP2).

The presence of detectable levels of Pyridine and its derivatives throughout the TEES sediments, and of Pyridine in crab flesh samples, clearly indicate that, to date, and in light of the currently available evidence, Pyridine remains the only potentially causative factor for the Mass Mortality of Crustaceans and other marine animals along the North East coast.

Conclusions (Pyridine):

Of the multiple chemical determinands in crab flesh analysed by DEFRA agencies, only the toxic chemical Pyridine was present at the relatively very high concentrations (up to 400+ mg/kg) reported.

It is clear that crab flesh samples from within the area impacted by the NE coast Mass Mortality hold up to 80 times greater concentration of Pyridine than “control samples” collected from outside the area of the MM (Penzance)

The empirical evidence of Pyridine toxicity tests on aquatic species clearly shows that low concentrations (less than 100 mg/kg) are highly toxic to aquatic species including an example of marine crustacea.

It is clear that Crab samples from sites within the area of mass mortality along the NE cost of England have concentrations of Pyridine far in excess of those demonstrated by empirical investigation to cause acute (mortality) and longer term chronic Pyridine toxicity outcomes.

It is evident that there are multiple potential sources of both historical and contemporary Pyridine and its derivative compounds in the industrial areas surrounding the TEES estuary waterways.

It is evident from data supplied by TEES ports contractors that Pyridine derivatives have been detected in sediments throughout the Tees estuary and that at a number of sites the concentrations exceed 1000 micrograms/kg (1 mg/kg) and peaked at 3600 micrograms/kg (3.6 mg/kg).

Highly relevant is the 2013 scientific data from Pyridine toxicity tests carried out on the only marine crustacean species for which such data is available which has reported that the initiation of Pyridine product acute toxicity, for the marine crustacean shrimp T. japonicus, occurred at concentrations as low as 6.6 micro grams (O.OO6 mg) per litre.

There is a consensus that Pyridine and its derivative compounds may bio-accumulate, or bio-concentrate, but there has been a lack of investigation into the quantification of the process and none for marine species.

Recommendations: It is noted that DEFRA have now committed to undertake further investigation in order to identify the cause of the Marine Mortality.

1: It is strongly recommended that the DEFRA agencies (Environment Agency, CEFAS etc) immediately undertake follow on research in order to further, and more comprehensively clarify the in-estuary distribution of the high levels of Pyridine and its derivative compounds reported in TEES estuary sediments in 2021 (see paras above), such work would also greatly assist the identification of the most likely source of the most significant Pyridine (and derivative compounds) input to the TEES estuary.

2: It is strongly recommended that the DEFRA agencies undertake a review of ALL sources of Pyridine (and derivative compounds) discharged to the TEES estuary. As highlighted in our January Review document the Environment Agency is expected to hold a comprehensive list of all licensed/permitted discharges of these substances to the TEES estuary and it should be a straightforward task for the EA to interrogate their record and produce this information

3: It is further recommended that the DEFRA agencies undertake a wide ranging assessment of regional marine wildlife species of all trophic levels in order to identify the full range of species impacted by the Mass Mortality. This assessment should include consultation with regional Wildlife Support Groups, consider apex predator species such as seabirds and common and grey seals and review the photographic and other records of the range of species stranded on the regional shorelines during the Mass Mortality.

4: It is additionally strongly recommended that regional inshore commercial fishermen, who by virtue of their daily work experience are custodians of vitally relevant local knowledge of the marine environment, fisheries and wildlife are consulted by the DEFRA agencies in order to enhance the effectiveness of the DEFRA investigations.

………..

The DEFRA Agency (CEFAS) hypothesised Harmful Algal Bloom (HB) causative factor:
In January 2022, having carried out parasitical/biological and chemical analysis of crab tissue in January 2022 and reported that they had found no evidence of chemical pollution impacts and thus no observed causative factor, CEFAS proposed a possible impact from a proposed Karenia mikimotoi bloom, on the basis of a reported satellite imagery observation of an algal bloom in the relevant sea area at around the relevant time. The CEFAS proposal reports identification of Karenia mikimmoi in regional water column. No report of any sampling for the concentration of Karenia spp in relevant water samples has been publicised or brought forward and it is thus concluded that no such sampling work was carried out.

Brief review of Karenia species blooms in UK & Irish Waters: English Channel Karenia spp bloom achieved levels of 100 micrograms per litre in sea water. North Wales Karenia spp bloom achieved 40.7 micrograms per litre. Roaring Water/Kinsale spp Karenia bloom achieved 32 micrograms per litre. Consensus that in general, algal "bloom" formation occurs at around 30 micrograms per litre.

Cape Cod (US), and multiple Irish examples of Karenia spp outbreaks occurred in sea loughs, inlets and enclosed embayments, where bottom water becomes anoxic after die off, NOT in open coastal waters. Open coastal waters are less likely to experience parameters likely to give rise to hypoxia following algal bloom die off, due to residual currents, lower sea surface temps, likelihood of more turbulent conditions in open sea than in estuaries and embayments.

Karenia blooms are reported to require high temps, fine calm weather and calm sea. US reporting of the Cape Cod incident noted that the optimal temperature range for Karenia mikimotoi is between 68 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit. Karenia mikimotoi blooms in Ireland were reported to commence in late May and die off through August.

It is concluded that end of September/early October water temps in North Sea are likely too low for Karenia spp to survive in heavy concentrations.

While toxic impacts on locally important commercial species are the major focus, Irish reports note mass mortality of multiple species in post bloom anoxic conditions as well as some possible toxic impacts. A Karenia bloom at Wexford caused reported mortalities of high numbers of lugworms, ragworms, bottom fish, rock pool fish, bi-valves echinoderms but no crustaceans. Echinoderms reported to be particularly sensitive. A dive survey of Killary Harbour noted mortality of the all of the above species but live hermit crab. Cape Cod reported similar mass mortality including Lobster and Crab.

Analysis of the DEFRA evidence for HAB: DEFRA agencies (CEFAS & Environment Agency) have proposed the hypothesis that the Mass Mortality of marine species along the north east coast has been caused by a harmful algal bloom (HAB) of Karenia mikimotoi species.The hypothesis was first introduced via the publication of a short extract from a Plymouth

Marine Laboratory (PML) paper containing satellite imagery of the regional sea surface during September and October of 2021.

Karenia input from Plymouth Marine Lab (PML): Subsequently, PML has put forward an additional short briefing paper "Analysis of Karenia mikimotoi HAB risk around Tees Estuary: (sept/oct 2021)" as a further contribution to the ongoing debate about the cause of the geographically and chronologically extended Mass Mortality (MM) of marine species (including commercial crustaceans) along the North East coast of England.

This more recent PML submission is a slightly more detailed version of the original CEFAS suggestion that a Karenia bloom was the causative factor for the MM. As was the case with the original CEFAS suggestion, the PML briefing is based on satellite imagery, but this more recent PML submission has been updated/extended by the addition of more satellite imagery which has been constructed from "7 day composite maps" of algal activity in the regional coastal waters of the N.E coast.

The PML input has not been able to supply any scientific/empirical evidence of a Karenia mikimotoi bloom. On the contrary, this Review concludes that the most recent PML input has raised further uncertainty on the DEFRA agency hypothesis.

Uncertainty of algal species identification: The PML briefing makes multiple reference to the "Karenia mikimotoi HAB risk" or "high risk" but does not provide any empirical evidence of the actual presence of any of the 12 recognised Karenia species *i.e., no evidence of sampling and/or analysis of marine algae taken from the proposed bloom. Neither PML, CEFAS or the Environment Agency reference any such sample analysis.*

However, the PML briefing does confirm that the observed algal concentrations **"may well be a dense bloom of another phyto-plankton species that resembles Karenia".**
The "may well" in this statement clearly illustrates a degree of uncertainty about the nature of the phenomenon recorded by the satellite images.

The PML submission is unusual in respect of the multiple repetition of un-evidenced, and therefore hypothetical only, phrases such as "Karenia mikimotoi HAB risk" or "high risk" compared to the strictly factual (single) admission that the observed algae "may well be a dense bloom of another phyto-plankton species that resembles Karenia".

N.B. No scientific evidence has been provided to justify the emphasis on "risk" and "high risk" in the context of the admission that there ""may well be a dense bloom of another phyto-plankton species that resembles Karenia".

Definition of algal blooming: My response to the initial CEFAS Karenia hypothesis noted that empirical, evidence based, reports of proven Karenia blooms in (Ireland, English Channel) have reported Karenia bloom densities of between 32 micrograms per litre and 100 micrograms per litre and noted that biological definitions of algal blooming quote 30 micrograms per litre as the concentration threshold usually recognised to define a "bloom".

By contrast, the most recent PML satellite imagery submission on Karenia appears to show that peak densities of algae in the proposed “bloom” off the N.E. coast are estimated at about 15 micrograms per litre.

Sea Surface Temperature parameters: My response to the initial CEFAS commentary on Karenia referenced the fact that algal blooms initiate in spring as sea surface temperatures begin to rise, and die off as sea temperatures decline in late summer/early autumn. US reporting of a Karenia caused mortality at Cape Cod (U.S) noted that the optimal temperature range for Karenia mikimotoi is between 68- and 75-degrees Fahrenheit.

In this context it is noted that the most recent PML submission does not discuss the ambient sea temperatures through the entire duration of the observation of the assumed “bloom”, and shows no satellite imagery beyond 21 October 2021.

I have not been able to I.D. precise data of day-to-day sea water temperatures along the NE coast through October, November and December 2021, but can confirm from official data that the average (Whitby) inshore sea water temperatures over recent years are: 59 degrees Fahrenheit for September, 55 Fahrenheit for October and 52 Fahrenheit for November. (This record may not be specifically correct for 2021 but I would expect that this year’s data should be available from a Whitby source.

My preliminary review report of the data provided by DEFRA agencies noted that the historical record of regional North Sea temperatures for September and October clearly indicates that they are generally far below the “optimal temperature” for Karenia blooming and thus imply that the likelihood of such an event on the NE coast is contra-indicated

N.B: the PML submission has provided no detailed evidence to indicate the presence of any presumed algal bloom at points further south than Staithes (Fig 2: Map C) let alone those points as far south as Whitby or beyond, where ongoing mortalities of crustaceans have been reported.

Geographical extent of the satellite imagery: the satellite imagery 7 day composite maps of the observed phenomenon show peak density of the imaged phenomenon centred on the TEES mouth marine area. It is clear from the available imagery that concentrations decline markedly to the south of the region imaged and that the relevant imaged area does not extend as far to the south as the reported mortalities.

Satellite imagery and the mis-identification of algal blooms: From the PML quotes above, it is evident that satellite imagery **“may well”** be unable to differentiate between algal species and specifically identify individual species of algae. It is evident that there is a considerable academic consensus that this can be an issue when attempting to interpret satellite imagery.

I have undertaken a desk review of scientific literature relevant to the interpretation of such imagery. This desk review has identified a body of peer reviewed research confirming that there is also clear scientific evidence that satellite imagery may generate false positive bloom detection, mistaking surface sediment plumes for algal blooms. Two examples of such research are summarised below.

1: On November 16, 2016, the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) on NASA's Aqua satellite captured a colour image of the Spencer Gulf of Australia which appeared to be an algal bloom. But, after a closer look at the image, the geography, and the scientific literature, ocean scientists began to formulate a different diagnosis and concluded that instead of algae, the colours in Spencer Gulf were likely to be the result of churning waters that have disturbed sea bed sediments, re-suspended them and distributed them into the surface waters of the Spencer Gulf.
REF:https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/89154/algae-bloom-or-swirling-sediment (recovered 11/02/2022).

2: A 2020 peer reviewed research paper reported that typical ocean Colour Dissolved Organic Matter (CDOM) algorithms developed for open ocean waters use blue and green spectral bands to determine chlorophyll-*a* concentrations and that these algorithms were shown to confuse CDOM and sediment as chlorophyll, which can lead to "high rates of false positive bloom detection". **REF: "Current and Future Remote Sensing of Harmful Algal Blooms in the Chesapeake Bay to Support the Shellfish Industry": Jennifer L. Wolny et al'. Front. Mar. Sci., 26 May 2020**

Responding to a query from Joe Redfern (Whitby Commercial Fishermen's Association), in an email of 8/02/2022, a Plymouth Marine Laboratory scientists confirmed that "The spectral properties of sediments should be similar to the spectral properties of Karenia HAB to produce ambiguities" and also confirmed that PML "did not conduct any experiments to identify sediment composition that may lead to ambiguities."
N.B. In this context the "ambiguities" referred to by PML are "false positive" identifications of algal blooms.

A possible relationship between satellite imagery and dredging? It is relevant to note that, as reported above, algal blooms tend to initiate in spring when sea surface temperatures (SSTs) begin to rise and that they tend to die off in late summer/early autumn as SSTs decline. The pattern of the evolution of the NE coast phenomenon recorded by the satellite imagery does not accord with the normally reported season life cycle of algal blooms.

In that context it is relevant to note that there may be a "chronological fit" with the peak of the imaged phenomenon and the TEES estuary dredge and disposal activity. This cannot be confirmed, or denied, until detailed FoI requests submitted to DEFRA agencies including the Marine Management Organisation (responsible for licensing and overseeing the dredge activity) and the TEESPORT management (overseeing the dredging and disposal work) have been responded too.

CONCLUSIONS (HAB):
It is concluded that, on the basis of the current evidence submitted by DEFRA agencies in support of the claim that HAB is the cause of the Mass Mortality of NE coast marine life, there is no empirical evidence to support that claim.

It is clear that the available Plymouth Marine Laboratory submissions on the issue of HAB confirm that there are a number of "doubts" and "ambiguities", surrounding the DEFRA claims, which militate against acceptance of the DEFRA claim.

It is evident that the DEFRA hypothesis has been concocted in the absence of "spectral property" analysis of satellite imagery which would haw clarified these "ambiguities"

It is concluded that the currently available evidence advanced by DEFRA sources confirms that the current level of analysis of the satellite imagery of the Tees mouth marine area "phenomenon" is not sufficient to clarify
a: whether the observed phenomenon was an algal bloom of Karenia mikimotoi
b: whether the observed phenomenon was a bloom of any other specific algal species

And that there is sufficient academic evidence to give some credence to an alternative hypothesis regarding the "observed phenomenon":
i.e. that there is a possibility that the observed phenomenon could even be a surface plume of suspended sediment

Recommendations:
1: ***It is recommended that independent academic (not DEFRA based) analysis of the TEES estuary sediments is undertaken in order to confirm whether or not the TEES estuary sediments have "similar spectral properties" to those of any algal bloom species (including Karenia mikimotoi).***

2: It is further recommended that independent academic (not DEFRA based) analysis of the PML TEES estuary satellite imagery is carried out, in order to provide empirical proof whether or not the imagery shows any indication that the "spectral properties" of TEES estuary sediments are causing "ambiguities".

Only when such work has been completed can it be empirically confirmed that the PML satellite imagery has not been mis-interpreted as a "false positive" identification of a Karenia spp Harmful Algal Bloom, when it may have been imagery of some other algal bloom or suspended sediment.

……..

Tim Deere-Jones (Marine Pollution Research & Consultancy) 08/03/2022

Appendix 3

Councillor Shane Moore
Leader of Hartlepool Borough Council
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Tel: 01429 523500
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Our Ref:
Your Ref:

Contact Email: shane.moore@hartlepool.gov.uk

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

22 September 2022

Dear Minister Spencer,

Mass Crustaceans Mortality Event in Tees Estuary

May I firstly congratulate you on your appointment and wish you well in carrying out your new role.

I am sure you will be aware that in September/October 2021 there was an event which resulted in the mass die-off of crustaceans around the Tees and North Yorkshire coastlines. This event has resulted in our local inshore fishing industry being absolutely decimated and, in many cases, it has put an end to an historic way of life for families that have fished these waters for multiple generations.

A report from DEFRA into the mass mortality event concluded that an algal bloom was the “most likely cause” though this conclusion has been challenged by another report put together by Tim Deere-Jones (commissioned by the local fishing industry) which pointed towards high levels of pyridine which may have been disturbed by dredging.

For clarity, I am not suggesting that I believe one of the above explanations is, without question, correct. However, acting as a critical friend, I do not believe the report that was published by DEFRA helped to put minds at rest as it was far too simplistic, did not do enough to evidence how the conclusion was reached nor did it reference the findings or opinions. It is my opinion that this led to the public reaction that the department simply dismissed the event and/or tried to whitewash it. This is not helpful for anyone.

It is because of the above that a motion was brought to my council that requested I write to you and request that this issue be investigated independently so that we might get closer to the actual cause of this mass mortality event and allow us to put measures in place to mitigate against the devastating impact this type of event has if, God forbid, it occurs anywhere else in the United Kingdom.

Whilst understanding what the most likely cause of this event is important, I personally believe that the most important thing must do right now is to put together a support package for the local fishing industry to enable it to survive during this difficult period. Sadly, it is going to take a number of years for our fishing grounds to recover from this disaster and if we don’t act now, we will lose an entire generation of workers and skills in this industry.

I certainly appreciate that a view may be taken that this event may have been a natural one or an ‘act of God’ and therefore the government is not required to intervene. I would however strongly push back against that stance as we, as a country, have just paid out billions of pounds to business and industries to support them during covid (a natural occurrence) and previous governments have financially assisted farmers during difficult periods such as foot and mouth and BSE. If we are not prepared to assist our local fishing industry at a time when they can prove they have been decimated by an act that is completely out of their control, then I would ask the question – Why are my local fishermen not as deserving as farmers?

Minister, providing financial support to our local fishing industry does not mean an admission of guilt nor any other negative connotation, it simply shows that this government will step up and assist hard working men and women when the chips are down through no fault of their own.

I am more than willing to discuss this matter further either in person or via telephone if you feel it may be beneficial. I would also offer to assist in trying to establish the level of support required alongside the Member of Parliament for Hartlepool, Jill Mortimer, if that would also be useful.

Please be assured that my request is sincere, and I care not for pointing a finger of blame; I simply want to ensure the historic and important fishing industry in Hartlepool is able to get back on its feet and continue for many more generations to come.

Yours Sincerely

Councillor Shane Moore
LEADER OF HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL