



Civic Centre
HARTLEPOOL

24 October, 2022

Councillors Allen, Ashton, Boddy, Brash, Brown, Buchan, Cassidy, Clayton, Cook, Cowie, Cranney, Creevy, Falconer, Feeney, Fleming, Groves, Hall, Hargreaves, Harrison, Howson, Jackson, Leedham, Lindridge, Little, Loynes, Martin-Wells, Moore, Morley, D Nicholson, V Nicholson, Reeve, Sharp, Smith, Thompson, Tiplady and Young.

Madam or Sir,

You are hereby summoned to attend the COUNCIL meeting to be held on THURSDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2022 at 6.00 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool to consider the subjects set out in the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

D McGuckin
Managing Director

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COUNCIL AGENDA



Thursday 3 November 2022

at 6.00 pm

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

- (1) To receive apologies from absent Members;
- (2) To receive any declarations of interest from Members;
- (3) To deal with any business required by statute to be done before any other business;
- (4) To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Council held on 29 September 2022 as the correct record;
- (5) To answer questions from Members of the Council on the minutes of the last meeting of Council;
- (6) To deal with any business required by statute to be done;

Proportionality Review – Report of Monitoring Officer (to follow)

- (7) To receive any announcements from the Chair, or the Head of Paid Service;
- (8) To dispose of business (if any) remaining from the last meeting and to receive the report of any Committee to which such business was referred for consideration;
- (9) To consider reports from the Council's Committees and to receive questions and answers on any of those reports;

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone.

The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

- (10) To consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, and to receive questions and answers on any of those items;
 - (1) Hartlepool Armed Forces Covenant – Progress (2021/22) – Address by the Armed Forces Champion
- (11) To consider reports from the Policy Committees:
 - (a) proposals in relation to the Council's approved budget and policy framework; and
 - (b) proposals for departures from the approved budget and policy framework;
- (12) To consider motions in the order in which notice has been received;
- (13) To receive the Managing Director's report and to pass such resolutions thereon as may be deemed necessary;
- (14) To receive questions from and provide answers to the public in relation to matters of which notice has been given under Rule 9;
- (15) To answer questions of Members of the Council under Rule 10;
 - a) Questions to the Chairs about recent decisions of Council Committees and Forums without notice under Council Procedure Rule 10.1
 - b) Questions on notice to the Chair of any Committee or Forum under Council Procedure Rule 10.2
 - c) Questions on notice to the Council representatives on the Police and Crime Panel and Cleveland Fire Authority
 - d) Minutes of the meetings held by the Cleveland Fire Authority and the Police and Crime Panel



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

29 September 2022

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

The Ceremonial Mayor (Councillor Cowie) presiding:

COUNCILLORS:

Allen	Boddy	Brash
Brown	Buchan	Cassidy
Cranney	Falconer	Feeney
Groves	Hall	Hargreaves
Harrison	Howson	Leedham
Lindridge	Little	Loynes
Martin-Wells	Moore	Morley
D Nicholson	V Nicholson	Reeve
Smith	Thompson	Young

Officers: Denise McGuckin, Managing Director
Hayley Martin, Chief Solicitor
Chris Little, Director of Resources and Development
Gemma Jones, Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Team
Amanda Whitaker, David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Ceremonial Mayor referred to the recent passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Members stood in silence as a mark of respect.

The Ceremonial Mayor welcomed Councillor Thompson to her first meeting of Full Council since she was elected at the recent by-election.

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENT MEMBERS

Councillors Ashton, Clayton, Cook, Creevy, Fleming, Jackson and Tiplady

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Councillor Cranney – agenda item 8.

36. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE TO BE DONE BEFORE ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

37. MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

The Minutes of Proceedings of the Council held on the 14 July 2022, having been laid before the Council.

RESOLVED - That the minutes be confirmed.

38. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL ON THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Further to minute 25(2), an update was requested on actions taken since the Motion had been agreed by Full Council in relation to deaths of crustaceans along our coast. The Chair of the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee advised that discussions had been held with the Member of Parliament and elected members and that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee. It was confirmed that a letter had been sent to the Minister of State for the Department for Environmental, Food and Rural Affairs.

An elected member sought clarification regarding the establishment of a joint Scrutiny Committee, proposed by Redcar and Cleveland Council, to monitor the death of crustaceans along our coast. The member expressed dismay at the decision that Hartlepool Overview and Scrutiny representatives would not be taking up positions on the joint committee. In response, the Chief Solicitor advised that the role and remit of Overview and Scrutiny within this Authority's Committee system of governance had been considered as key factor in considering Hartlepool involvement in the Joint Scrutiny Committee. The operation of a Committee system meant that this Council was only required to undertake 'statutory' scrutiny in relation to the areas of health and crime and disorder. The Managing Director, Leader of the Council, Statutory Scrutiny Manager and Chief Solicitor had agreed that the aim / purpose of the Joint Scrutiny Committee would be outside of the remit of Overview and Scrutiny in Hartlepool. On this basis, and the fact that the Council had already agreed a Motion, Hartlepool representatives would not be taking up positions on the joint committee.

39. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

None

40. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

Councillor Cranney left the meeting for consideration of the following item only.

Prior to consideration of the item relating to a breach of the Code of Conduct particularly in relation to Respect and Disrepute, Elected Members were requested to consider carefully any statements made on the item to ensure they complied with the Code of Conduct and refrained from saying anything that could be considered defamatory. Elected Members were also reminded of the Council Procedure Rules in respect of length of speeches.

41. TO DISPOSE OF BUSINESS (IF ANY) REMAINING FROM THE LAST MEETING AND TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF ANY COMMITTEE TO WHICH SUCH BUSINESS WAS REFERRED FOR CONSIDERATION.

1. Findings of the Committee Following the Hearing of a Standards Complaint Against Councillor Gordon Cranney – Report of Audit and Governance Committee

The Vice-Chair of the Committee, Councillor Smith, presented the report which informed Full Council of the outcome of the standards hearing that had taken place on 11th August 2022. At the Full Council meeting on the 25th May 2022, it had been agreed unanimously for the Chief Solicitor to be tasked with investigating the conduct of Councillor Cranney and report to the Audit and Governance Committee any findings and actions that may be taken. In accordance with the provisions of the 'Arrangements for dealing with Complaints' an investigating officer had been appointed, namely Neil Wilson (Assistant Chief Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer). An investigation had been instigated and involved the Standards Co-opted Independent Person. Details of the Assistant Chief Solicitor's investigation and its findings were outlined in the report, attached at Appendix A, which was considered by the Audit and Governance Committee at the hearing on the 11th August 2022.

The Committee had been unanimously satisfied that there had been a significant breach of the code of conduct and in response to the breach potential sanctions were considered. The Committee discussed the imposition of a range of sanctions and unanimously agreed as follows:-

1. That Full Council notes that the Audit and Governance Committee unanimously agreed that:-
 - i) Councillor Cranney had significantly breached the code of conduct;
 - ii) The following sanctions be immediately imposed:-
 - a) Councillor Cranney be asked again to consider resigning from his position as Councillor.

- b) Councillor Cranney be excluded from the Council's offices or other premises, with the exception of Full Council meetings, for the remainder of his term of office.
- c) All Councillors be discouraged from nominating him as their 'named' substitute for meetings.
- d) Facilities be withdrawn from Councillor Cranney (i.e. computer, website and/or email and Internet access) for the remaining term of office.
- e) Councillor Cranney attend Code of Conduct and social media training.
- f) The Chief Solicitor identify someone to act as a Mentor/Buddy to support Councillor Cranney for the remainder of his term of office.

2. That Full Council consider the imposition of the following sanctions:-

- a) That Councillor Cranney be formally censured for his conduct and bringing the Authority in to disrepute.
- b) That Full Council lobby Government, and write to Hartlepool's Member of Parliament, to request that legislation be amended to enable Councils to dismiss a Councillor where they have been convicted of an offence involving violence against another person.
- c) That Full Council resolves that Elected Members be required to inform the Monitoring Officer should they be convicted of any criminal offence involving violence against another person.

When presenting the report, it was proposed that additional wording be added to the sanction in relation to admission to Council buildings and Full Council was requested to agree that the words 'other than by invitation or with the approval of the Managing Director' be added.

It was moved by Councillor Young and seconded by Councillor Cassidy:-

"That the vote be put".

Following concerns expressed by some elected members that debate had not taken place, the Chief Solicitor advised that it was a matter for the discretion of the Chair of Council to determine if there had been sufficient debate.

Councillor Young withdrew his Motion.

Elected Members debated issues arising from the report. During the debate, a statement was read out by another Seaton ward councillor.

Following concerns expressed by a number of elected Members, the Managing Director advised that in compliance with the recommendations, she had liaised with Councillor Cranney and agreed she would contact him monthly. It had also been agreed that she would contact him electronically. Those Members who had expressed concern regarding the recommendation, to identify someone to act as a Mentor/Buddy to support Councillor Cranney, were satisfied by the assurances given by the Managing Director.

The recommendations, including the additional wording, were agreed, with no dissent.

42. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES

None.

43. TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS SPECIFIED IN THE SUMMONS OF THE MEETING

None.

44. REPORT FROM THE POLICY COMMITTEES

(a) Proposal in relation to the Council's budget and policy framework

1. MTFS update and determination of 2022/23 Council Tax level – Report of Finance and Policy Committee

The report enabled Full Council to consider the recommendations from the Finance and Policy Committee in relation to the 2023/24 budget and Council Tax level for Hartlepool Council services. Elected Members were advised that the report was the first phase in developing a sustainable budget and sought approval of the 2023/24 Council Tax level to provide a robust basis for developing a savings plan to address the remaining significant budget deficit. The report advised that annual national Council Tax referendum limits of 3% (including 1% Adult Social Care precept) had previously been set for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25, and as required by legislation would be confirmed annually.

In order to provide context to the financial challenges facing the Council it was highlighted that it was important to consider where the Authority was starting from and the significant changes that had occurred. The key issues were summarised in the report.

It was recommended that the Finance and Policy Committee consider the following recommendations to determine the proposals to be referred to Council.

- i) Note the significant inflation pressures now facing the Council and the risk these pressures will increase in 2023/24 and 2024/25;
- ii) Approve that the 2023/24 indicative 1.9% Council Tax increase and 1% Adult Social Care precept are confirmed.
- iii) Note recommendation (iii) reflects national Referendum Limits previously set by the Government for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The Chair of the Committee reported at the meeting of Full Council, the following additional recommendations and comments of the Committee:-

- (a) That the Member of Parliament for Hartlepool be invited to attend all the Policy Committee meetings (including Finance and Policy Committee) when the individual budget savings proposals were being considered.
- (b) That an additional 'in person' Members' Seminar be held at the earliest opportunity for focussed discussions on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/24 to 2024/25.
- (c) That the offer from the Joint Trade Unions Committee to work in partnership on a Transformation Board with Councillors and Officers be explored to assist in the development of potential solutions to the current financial situation.

During the debate following presentation of the report and recommendations, it was proposed that the letter to the Member of Parliament be sent by Policy Chairs. The proposal was agreed with no dissent.

Whilst moving the following amendment, Councillor Brash referred to unprecedented times which were being experienced and that the Labour Group had drafted a letter to the Member of Parliament for Hartlepool which requested she meet with elected members to lobby to make a case for funding changes:-

"That consideration of the decision be paused and all elected members sign the letter, drafted by the labour group, to the Member of Parliament"

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Harrison:-

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.5 of the Constitution, a recorded vote was taken on the amendment:-

Those for:-

Councillors Allen, Boddy, Brash, Feeney, Hall, Hargreaves, Harrison, Howson, Little, Morley, Smith and Thompson.

Those against:-

Councillors Brown, Buchan, Cassidy, Cowie, Cranney, Falconer, Groves, Leedham, Lindridge, Loynes, Martin-Wells, Moore, D Nicholson, V Nicholson, Reeve and Young.

Those abstaining:-

None.

It was announced that the vote was lost.

Full Council further debated issues arising from the report, during which all elected members were implored to be unified and work together to continue to lobby the Government for a fairer financial settlement

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.5 of the Constitution, a recorded vote was taken on the Committee's recommendations set out in the report to Full Council:-

Those for:-

Councillors Brown, Buchan, Cassidy, Cowie, Cranney, Falconer, Groves, Leedham, Lindridge, Little, Loynes, Martin-Wells, Moore, D Nicholson, V Nicholson, Reeve and Young.

Those against:-

Councillors Allen, Boddy, Brash, Feeney, Hall, Hargreaves, Harrison, Howson, Morley, Smith and Thompson

Those abstaining:-

None.

The vote was carried.

The remaining recommendations were agreed unanimously as follows:-

- That the Member of Parliament for Hartlepool be invited to attend all the Policy Committee meetings (including Finance and Policy Committee) when the individual budget savings proposals were being considered.
- That an additional 'in person' Members' Seminar be held at the earliest opportunity for focussed discussions on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/24 to 2024/25.
- That the offer from the Joint Trade Unions Committee to work in partnership on a Transformation Board with Councillors and Officers be explored to assist in the development of potential solutions to the current financial situation.

2. Local Council Tax Support 2023/24 – Report of Finance and Policy Committee

The report enabled Elected Members to consider the proposed 2023/24 Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme recommended by Finance and Policy Committee. A report had been considered by the Committee on 28th September 2022, a copy of which was appended to the report. The current LCTS scheme ensured that for working age claimants, those in receipt of full support paid no more than 12% of their Council tax liability for the year. The report provided options as to increasing this headline rate up to 20%, outlining the additional income that could be generated should such an increase be implemented. The consequential impact of such increases were also set out, including collection difficulty, the likelihood of increased and sustained arrears for those least able to pay, and that any increase would represent a significant percentage increase, e.g. an increase from 12% to 20% actually represented a 66% increase for those in full receipt of support. There were no proposed changes to any of the principles, and therefore the parameters of the scheme, nor were there any changes to the support provided to low income pensioners, these being protected to full support as per Government regulations.

The Finance and Policy Committee had agreed the following recommendation for referral to Full Council:-

- i) Approve the 2023/24 scheme continues as a 12% scheme.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.5 of the Constitution, a recorded vote was taken

Those for:-

Councillors Allen, Boddy, Brash, Brown, Buchan, Cassidy, Cowie, Cranney, Falconer, Feeney, Groves, Hall, Hargreaves, Harrison, Howson, Leedham, Lindridge, Little, Loynes, Martin-Wells, Morley, Moore, D Nicholson, V Nicholson, Reeve, Smith, Thompson and Young.

Those against:-

None.

Those abstaining:-

None.

The vote was carried, unanimously.

(b) Proposal for Departure from the Budget and Policy Framework

None.

45. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

None.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

46. SPECIAL URGENCY DECISIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Access to Information Procedure Rules included in the Council's Constitution, Full Council was informed that no special urgency decision had been taken in the period May 2022 – July 2022.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

47. RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLORS

The Managing Director reported that she had received notification from Stephen Picton that he had resigned as a Councillor. There was a consequent vacancy on Victoria and Jubilee Homes. A by-election had been held on 8 September when Councillor Carole Thompson had been elected.

Notification had also been received from Amy Prince that she had resigned as a Councillor. A by-election would be held on 13 October 2022.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the following appointments, arising from the resignation of Amy Prince be approved:-

Appointments Panel – Councillor Thompson
Finance and Policy Committee – Councillor Boddy
Licensing Committee – Councillor Thompson

Cleveland Police and Crime Panel – Councillor Thompson
Patrol (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London)
Adjudication Joint Committee – Councillor Clayton

- (ii) That as there were no nominations made at the meeting to the vacancy arising from Stephen Picton's resignation, the position on the Victoria and Jubilee Homes remained vacant.

48. COMMITTEE RESIGNATIONS

The Managing Director reported that she had received notification from Councillor Falconer that she had decided to resign from the Adults and Community Based Services Committee and Tees Valley Health Scrutiny

Committee. A report was considered by the Audit and Governance Committee, on 29th September, to seek replacement nomination in relation to the vacancy on the Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Committee.

Notification had also been received that due to the nature of his work, Councillor Leedham had decided to resign his seat on the Children's Services Committee.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the following appointments be approved:-

Adults and Community Based Services Committee – Councillor Fleming to replace Councillor Falconer (to be confirmed)

Children Services committee – Councillor Cowie to replace Councillor Leedham and appointed to the Vice-Chair vacancy.

- (ii) That the following appointment be approved:-

Tees Valley Combined Authority - Overview and Scrutiny Committee – outstanding independent vacancy - Councillor Little

49. MEMBER CHAMPIONS

Elected Members were reminded that at the last meeting of Full Council, it was agreed that Member Champions be the Chair or Vice Chair of the relevant Committee unless there was an interest from another Elected Member to fulfil the role, in which case, an appointment would be made by way of a vote at Full Council. The Chief Solicitor had written to all Elected Members requesting that they let her know of any expressions of interest in relation to the Member Champions. Replies had been received as detailed in the report.

The Chair of Adult and Community Based Services Committee and Councillor Brash were nominated to the position of Heritage Champion.

Councillor Brash withdrew his nomination.

The Chair of Adult and Community Based Services Committee was appointed Heritage Champion.

Mental Health Champion – the nomination of Councillor Little was agreed.

Older Person's Champion – the nomination of Councillor Buchan, the Chair of Adult and Community Based Services Committee, was agreed.

Refugee Champion – the nomination of Councillor Cowie was agreed.

The Chair of Children Services Committee and Councillor Harrison were nominated to the position of Looked after Children Champion.

Due to the nature of the role, Elected Members expressed support for both nominations being agreed. Councillor Harrison advised that she would be happy to work with Councillor Lindridge.

Councillor Lindridge addressed Full Council and presented the case for the Chair of the Committee being appointed the Member Champion.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.5 of the Constitution, a recorded vote was taken on the Chair of the Committee and Councillor Harrison being appointed Looked After Children Champion:-

Those for:-

Councillors Allen, Boddy, Brash, Brown, Feeney, Groves, Hall, Hargreaves, Harrison, Howson, Leedham, Little, Loynes, Martin-Wells, Morley, Moore, D Nicholson, V Nicholson, Reeve, Smith and Thompson.

Those against:-

Councillor Buchan, Cassidy, Cranney, Falconer, Lindridge and Young.

Those abstaining:-

Councillor Cowie

It was announced that the joint appointment had been carried.

50. APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY PARTNER MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE INTEGRATED CARE BOARD

It was reported that the membership of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) includes eight places for 'partner members': four from Local Authorities, two from Foundation Trusts and two from Primary Care providers, as detailed in a document appended to the report. Elected Members were requested to note that, following the Annual General Meeting of the Association of North East Councils, Councillor Shane Moore has been nominated to be one of the Partner Members on the Board.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

51. LOCAL PLAN PROCESS

In response to the query raised by an Elected Member at the last Full Council meeting when clarification was asked in relation to the approval process for the Local Plan, the Managing Director had agreed that she would provide an update to all elected members as soon as reasonably possible. This information had been emailed to all Members and was appended to the report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

52. COVID UPDATE

The Managing Director reported that case rates continued to follow the national pattern, whilst there had been a slight peak at end July beginning August. It was highlighted that testing numbers are low and the picture is therefore relatively vague therefore hospitalisations were relied on to advise on the severity of the situation. The figures for North Tees Hospital from 1st June to end of August were 22 cases and approximately one third related to Hartlepool cases.

It was noted that vaccination rates were comparable with all England national rates across all age ranges for first and second doses. There had been a positive increase in the vaccination rate for the booster programme which commenced 5th September in Hartlepool and there was access to the NHS mobile units in Supermarket car parks which continued to advertise them at every opportunity.

There were low numbers of Monkey Pox cases in Hartlepool and because of this the Managing Director was unable to share the exact details as individuals could be identified, however it was reported that there were fewer than 6 cases. Figures for the UK, England and the North East region were listed in the report

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

53. LEVELLING UP FUND ROUND 2

The Managing Director confirmed that the application to the Levelling up Fund Round 2 for 'Catalysing Hartlepool's Screen Industries Production Village' had been submitted. The bid was considered to be very comprehensive and transformational programme as outlined in the report. The total project costs are £18,567,891 with a request for capital grant of £16,453,891 and a match funding provision of £2,114,000. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had confirmed receipt of the submission.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

54. TOWN DEAL UPDATE

The Managing Director reported that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had advised that all five of the Town Deal projects i.e. the Health and Social Care Academy, the Civils Academy, the Waterfront Connectivity and Wesley Chapel had passed the review stage and funding should be released during September. It was noted that the Middleton Grange Business Case approval had been obtained from Finance and Policy 24th August, and had been submitted to DLUHC.

It was reported at the meeting that all of the five Town Deal business cases, submitted for consideration, had been approved.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

55. MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY UPDATE

Members are aware that the Tees Valley (TV) Mayor has been consulting on the establishment of a Hartlepool Mayoral Development Corporation (HMDC), consultation closed 4th August and the vast majority of responses were supportive. The Managing Director was currently in liaison with the TV Mayor and Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) Chief Executive regarding the final boundary, determining what powers / assets to transfer, the constitution and membership all of which will be developed and set before Council in November for Members consideration.

The Managing Director informed Council that a Members' Seminar on the MDC would be held.

Details were sought, at the meeting, of the TVCA consultation responses and numbers in support of the proposal.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and that the Managing Director circulate responses and numbers in support of the proposal.

56. PUBLIC QUESTION

None.

57. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

- a) Questions to the Chairs about recent decisions of Council Committees and Forums without notice under Council Procedure Rule 12.1

None.

- b) Questions on notice to the Chair of any Committee or Forum under Council Procedure Rule 12.2

- 1. Question from Councillor Brash to Chair of Neighbourhood Services Committee:-

The question was withdrawn for submission to the next Ordinary meeting of Full Council.

- c) Questions on notice to the Council representatives on the Police and Crime Panel and Cleveland Fire Authority

None

- d) Minutes of the meetings held by the Cleveland Fire Authority and the Police and Crime Panel

The minutes of the meetings held by the Cleveland Fire Authority on 25 March 2022 and the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel held on 31 March 2022 were noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.25 p.m.

CEREMONIAL MAYOR

COUNCIL

3 November 2022



Report of: Monitoring Officer

Subject: PROPORTIONALITY REVIEW

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To approve the revised political balance calculations and allocation of seats on Committees in accordance with statutory requirements, following recent changes which alter the political balance between the Groups.

2. BACKGROUND

The Proper Officer was notified in accordance with the requirements set out in the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 that Councillors Thompson and Sharp wished to be treated as members of the Labour Group.

Pursuant to Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the authority is under a duty to review the allocation of seats to Political Groups as soon as practicable following a change to the membership of a political group

3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

The revised composition of the Council is shown below:-

COUNCIL – POLITICAL COMPOSITION FOLLOWING RECENT BY-ELECTIONS					
Seats	Conservative & Independent Union	Labour	Putting Seaton First	Hartlepool People Group	Independent
	17	13	2	3	1
Change	-	+1	-	-1	-

Following the review, based on the above, the Committees upon which there is an impact are detailed below.

The membership of each Policy Committee should be as follows:-

POLICY COMMITTEES – MEMBERSHIP OF 7 COUNCILLORS					
Seats	Con/IU	Labour	Putting Seaton First	Hartlepool People Group	
Target Following Review	3	3	0	1	
Committees & Current Seat Allocations					Adjustment(s) Required
Children's Services	4	2	1	0	-1 Con/IU +1 Lab +1 HPG -1 PSF
Neighbourhood Services	2	2	1	2	+1 Lab +1 Con/IU -1 PSF -1 HPG

OTHER AFFECTED COMMITTEES AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – MEMBERSHIP OF 10 COUNCILLORS					
Seats	Con/IU	Labour	Putting Seaton First	Hartlepool People Group	
Target Following Review	5	4	1	1	

Committee & Current Seat Allocation					Adjustment(s) Required
Audit and Governance	5	3	1	1	+1 Lab -1 Overall*

* Members will note that the reviewed composition breakdown totals 11 members, there will need to be, therefore, an adjustment of 1 seat.

4. NOMINATIONS

The outcome of the review has been circulated to all the Leaders of all the Political Groups.

I have been advised by the Labour Group that it intends to nominate Councillor Sharp to the extra Labour space on Neighbourhood Services

Committee and Children's Services Committee, and to nominate Councillor Allen for Audit and Governance Committee.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

- Approves the political balance calculation set out in the report;
- Approves the allocation of committee seats to political groups and agrees the membership of Committees.

6. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that the council complies with its statutory obligations under the Local Government Housing Act 1989.



Report of: Armed Forces Champion (Councillor Brian Cowie)

Subject: HARTLEPOOL'S ARMED FORCES COVENANT -
PROGRESS (2021/2022)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on progress in relation to the implementation of the Armed Forces Community Covenant during 2021/2022.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2012 Hartlepool Borough Council signed the North East Armed Forces Community Charter and established its own Armed Forces Community Covenant, to encourage support from the Armed Forces Community in our town.
- 2.2 A further review of the Armed Forces Community Covenant was undertaken in 2019 and was approved by Council on the 31st March 2019. The basis for the Covenant being that
- "Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved."
- 2.3 The Community Covenant requires that the Armed Forces Champion report annually to Full Council outlining progress in relation to the implementation of the Covenant. In 2021/22, the Council has maintained its commitment to the Covenant aims. 2021/22 has, however, been a year like no other with communities across Hartlepool facing unprecedented challenges in terms of their physical, emotional and financial wellbeing.
- 2.4 The Council has worked tirelessly to maintain the continued provision of key services across communities throughout the pandemic, with valued contributions from our ex-services and reservist members of staff. The provision of targeted support for the most vulnerable in our communities through the Support Hub has also been an essential part of the Council's

Covid response. All of which has been available to the Armed Forces community in Hartlepool.

- 2.5 It must be said that significant support has also been provided throughout the pandemic by voluntary groups within the Armed Forces Community itself, including Hartlepool's Armed Forces Breakfast Club, Hartlepool United's Veteran's Hub and the Armed Forces Liaison Group. All of which has provided links and information for those seeking help and support, whilst providing essential emotional support and communication options for those who perhaps have had no one else to turn to.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 Over the last 9 years significant progress has been made in meeting the objectives and intentions of the Covenant and implementing the measures contained within it. This includes continued:-
- i) Prioritisation of armed forces personnel, their families and children, through the Council's allocations policies for Social Housing and in year school admissions;
 - ii) Disregarding of War Pensions, and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments, from Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support calculations.
 - iii) Representation on the Tees Valley Armed Forces Forum and Association of North East Councils Armed Forces Forum to ensure that the needs of our armed forces community are considered;
 - iv) Development of links with Armed Forces Associations across Hartlepool and cementing of relationships with the town's 883 Postal and Courier Squadron;
 - v) Support and participate in Armed Forces Events and Parades across the town and wider region, within the parameters of Covid restrictions, supported by our Culture and Information Team, Members Services Team, Public Relations Team and the Legal Service Team;
 - vi) Provision of Armed Forces Champion Surgeries on a monthly basis and a dedicated Armed Forces page on the Council's web site;
 - vii) Promotion of:
 - Reserves Day; and
 - Military Discount Schemes / opportunities.
 - ix) Support for the independently Chaired Hartlepool Armed Forces Liaison Group in its activities to bring together Armed Forces Associations from across Hartlepool to:

- Share information / best practice; and
- Assist in the implementation of the requirements of the Covenant and lead on (contribute to) the organisation of military / ceremonies in Hartlepool.

- x) Representation on the Tees Valley Armed Forces Forum and Association of North East Councils Armed Forces Forum.

3.2 Over and above our ongoing activities, we have continued to move forward in our support of the armed forces community in Hartlepool. The work of our Armed Forces Champions (past and present) resulting in:

- i) Receipt in 2019 of our Gold Award, from the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS), in recognition of our commitment to supporting the armed forces community across Hartlepool and our efforts to inspire others to do the same. Hartlepool Borough Council is now one of only two Tees Valley Local Authority to receive this accolade and we will in 2022/23 be working towards the re-submission for our application for Gold accreditation in January 2024 (as required every 5 years);
- ii) A refresh of the Community Covenant, originally signed in 2012, in partnership with our Military colleagues and partner organisations. As part of which the position of Veterans Champion was created to support the activities of the Armed Forces Champion;
- iii) The extension of the 'Get Hartlepool Active' card concession to Hartlepool residents (and their family living at the same address) who are currently serving in the regular armed forces, are ex-members of the armed forces with a discharge date within the last 5 years and those in the armed forces reservists. Further details of the scheme are available via the below link. The aim of this is to provide improved the health and wellbeing opportunities for the Armed Forces community and Hartlepool Borough Council is the first Tees Valley Local Authority to offer these concessions.

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20004/council_and_democracy/580/armed_forces_support/10.

- iv) Promotion through our Economic Regeneration and Tourism Forum to encourage businesses, suppliers, contractors and voluntary/community sector to engage with the Armed Forces Community. Resulting in:
 - Additional co-signatories to the Covenant from education, housing, voluntary/community sector and local/national businesses; and
 - Links between REED and local companies, increasing involved in the Armed Forces Business Forum.

- v) An expansion of the Reserve Forces Policy to support our Reservists through the following:
 - 10 days additional paid leave,
 - The ability to purchase additional leave and request additional unpaid leave; and
 - Information about pensions, pay, childcare and keep-in-touch days.
 - vi) Close working relationships with the 883 Postal and Courier Reservist Squadron to support their employment and engagement events and facilitate their involvement in the AFLG and AFD.
 - vii) Staff from key front line services actively volunteering for the RBL, establishing a constant presence in the town, enabling staff to receive ongoing RBC training and allowing cases to be opened directly with the RBL. This removed a delay to getting our armed forces community the help they need.
 - viii) The direct provision of mental health support services such as the veterans weekly Mental Health Group and the council's Drug and Alcohol Support Team.
 - ix) Front line staff receiving briefings from the RBL to help provide and enhanced understanding and appreciation of the Armed Forces with our non-military staff, combined with the inclusion of E-Learning modules for Frontline Staff' as part of the corporate training package.
 - x) Introduction to, and promotion of the Veteran Friendly GP Accreditation Scheme with Hartlepool GP's, through the GP Federation, with 8 Hartlepool GP's part of the scheme;
 - xi) Provision of other events, as and when required.
- 3.3 A considerable amount of work has been done so far; however, I recognise that there is still a long way to go in supporting our armed forces personnel and their families in the future. We need to continue to move forward in identifying our service personnel and their needs, looking at how we can as a local authority work with our partners to deliver services and maximise funding opportunities.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Note the report and presentation.

COUNCIL
3 November 2022



Report of: Managing Director

Subject: BUSINESS REPORT

1. CRUSTACEANS – REFERRAL FROM ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

During the course of discussions at the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee on the 18 October, concerns were reiterated regarding the absence of a voice to represent Hartlepool's fishermen as part of any proposed joint scrutiny arrangements and it was agreed that Redcar and Cleveland's request for involvement would be considered by Full Council. The Redcar motion is worded as follows:

The Tees Valley local authorities should work together in expressing concern to central government and commission a new independent report in the light of the inconclusive evidence. In addition, the ongoing situation should be monitored by a special Scrutiny Committee from each local authority.

Members are views are sought.

2. COVID UPDATE (To follow)

COUNCIL

3 November 2022



Report of: Managing Director

Subject: BUSINESS REPORT

2. COVID UPDATE

It is currently difficult to give a clear indication of the number of COVID cases in Hartlepool due to the current lack of testing. Those tests that are carried out are for specific reasons rather than general population testing and so are not an accurate indicator of prevalence. The most appropriate indicators, therefore, are hospital admissions and deaths and we use these to give us an indication of the prevalence at this time. It is important to still stress that COVID has not gone away as the (limited) data shows.

Cases

Current seven day case rate is 73 per 100,000 population. This is an increase of almost 50% on the rate two weeks previous. In October 1 in 3 cases has been a reinfection, which is comparable to the rates for August and September.

Testing

Hartlepool's testing positivity rate is at 11.4% in the latest figures (10/10/22). This is up from 3.2% at the beginning of October. Currently Hartlepool averages around 200 PCR tests a week.

Deaths

Hartlepool has had 0 Covid deaths since August.

Hospitalisation

Latest data (17/10/22) for Covid hospitalisations for NT&H NHS Trust are up 59% on the previous week, from 37 to 43. However there are still a low number requiring ventilation.

Vaccinations

Over 80% of the population have had at least 1 dose, which is comparable to the North East average. However Hartlepool's spring booster uptake is around 75%, which is below the regional average of 80%

3. RESIGNATIONS FROM COMMITTEE/OUTSIDE BODIES

I have been informed that Councillor Young wishes to resign from the Constitution Committee.

Councillor Young has advised also that he wishes to resign as the Council's representative on the following Outside Bodies:-

Hartlepool Power Station Community Liaison Committee
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust – I understand Councillor Martin-Wells has been nominated to replace Councillor Young.

Northern Consortium of Housing Authorities
Schools Admission Forum
Teesside International Consultative Committee
Teemouth Field Centre
Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust

Member questions for Council

Meeting: 3 November 2022

1.	From: Councillor Clayton
	To: Councillor Cassidy Chair of Neighbourhood Services Committee
	Question: "Can the chair of neighbourhood services explain why the policy of charging disabled people to park is being pursued?"

2.	From: Councillor Howson
	To: Councillor Cassidy Chair of Neighbourhood Services Committee
	Question: "At Full Council in December 2021 the Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Committee reported that work would be undertaken by Officers to look at the potential of the online reporting system to give members and the public estimates of when work would be done. There was also a statement to the effect that greater education was needed around fly tipping and litter. Can we have an update on these actions?"

3.	From: Councillor Harrison
	To: Councillor Moore Chair of Finance and Policy Committee /SHP
	Question: "A question was asked at March's full council meeting relating to Women's Safety in Hartlepool and council sought assurances that work would be extended to support this. I would like to ask that a report describing the various initiatives which have been put into place be brought to an appropriate committee meeting - and is there any more we as a council can do to support the work which is going on and even add to it?"