

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE AGENDA



Tuesday 21 January 2025

at 5.00 pm

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

MEMBERS: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Bailey-Fleet, Dodds (VC), Hargreaves (C), Lindridge, Male, Scarborough and Young

Parish Council Co-opted Members:

L Hurst (Wynyard Parish Council)
S Lee (Headland Parish Council)
S Smith (Greatham Parish Council)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2024 and 10 December 2024 (*previously circulated and published*).

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

None.

5. KEY DECISIONS

None.

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

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

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

None.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Jobs and Skills Update – *Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)*
- 7.2 Presentation – Mayoral Development Corporation Update – *Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 11 March at 9.30am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool



ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

21 January 2025



Subject: JOBS & SKILLS UPDATE

Report of: Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)

Decision Type: For Information

1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:
- Where people are enabled to live healthy, independent, and prosperous lives.
- Of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.
- That has an inclusive and growing economy.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Economic Growth & Regeneration Committee on the progress and impact of the Jobs and Skills Service.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Jobs and Skills Service is part of the wider Community Hubs and Wellbeing Service which is located within the Council's Preventative and Community Based Services function. The priorities of the Jobs & Skills Service are to provide access to high quality learning opportunities that respond to the needs of the whole community and meet the demands of employers and supporting residents to progress closer and into sustained employment across Hartlepool.
- 3.2 To deliver our priorities, the Service has developed Jobs & Skills Hubs which are located within Community Hubs. These are the front door for residents so they can access bespoke help and guidance from us or any of our partners such as employment support, impartial careers guidance, access to learning opportunities, qualifications, and work placements. This model of delivery has been highly effective with more than 2,200 unique people supported and over

5,000 interventions delivered in the last 18 months by our Jobs & Skills Hubs. This tailored support has helped hundreds of people to move into work within Hartlepool.

- 3.3 Jobs and Skills funding is made up of several elements including the Adult Education Budget, Multiply and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

4. ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET

- 4.1 In Tees Valley, the Adult Education Budget was devolved to Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) by Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

- 4.2 The principal purpose of the Adult Education Budget is to engage adults aged 19+ and provide them with the skills needed for entering and sustaining work, to enable them to access further learning or to deliver provision which meets the needs of our community. The service focuses funding through the Adult Education Budget on those who are disadvantaged and furthest away from the labour market within Hartlepool. There are two distinct elements within the Adult Education Budget:

- **Adult Skills** – This funds accredited qualifications from Entry Level to Level 3. Our curriculum offer is focused on local priorities including literacy, numeracy, digital skills and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). In addition, we offer flexible qualifications focused on the local labour market priorities including Health & Social Care, Education, Children & Young Peoples Workforce and Early Years.
- **Learning for Inclusion** – This funds informal non-accredited learning focused on addressing the priorities in our local community including social isolation, community cohesion, health and family learning. We have a wide range of learning opportunities which were based on comprehensive consultation with key stakeholders and partnership working closely with VCSE Organisations.

- 4.3 It should be noted that the Council is not the only provider of Adult Education Budget provision in the town, and we are working with the College of Further Education. This ensures that we maximise the funding locally to avoid competition, remove duplication and ensure provision meets the needs of the community and employers within Hartlepool.

4.4 2023/24 Academic Year

- 4.4.1 Hartlepool's allocation through the TVCA Adult Education Budget for 2023/24 was comprised of the following elements:

Adult Skills (including Level 3 Offer)	£240,000
Learning for Inclusion	£513,070
Learner Support Funding	£60,000
Total TVCA Adult Education Budget	£813,070

- 4.4.2 This was the first full academic year since Jobs & Skills was fully embedded in the Community Hubs and has been our most successful year in over a decade with 1,470 enrolments across all learning provision and a forecast achievement rate of 89%. This has subsequently led to over-delivery of over £30k against our original allocation of £818,070 for 2023/24.
- 4.4.3 Critically, our delivery also continues to meet our aim of engaging those disadvantaged and furthest away from the labour market with over two thirds of learners (66.6%) having low or no skills, nearly a third (29.2%) having a health problem or disability and over three quarters (77.4%) being unemployed. This demonstrates that we are focusing our provision on local need but there continues to be progress which can be made to further enhance our offer by working closely with community partners in Hartlepool.
- 4.4.4 The Adult Skills element of the Adult Education Budget allowed the service to deliver a wide range of accredited courses which provided opportunities for adults to engage in a course at a level that meets their requirements allowing them to improve their skills and learn new skills at their own pace. The table below breaks down the skills enrolments by subject area in 2023/24:

Subject	Enrolments	Unique Learners
Business & Admin	47	45
Childcare	20	20
Digital Skills	133	82
ESOL	287	160
Literacy & Numeracy	84	74
Health & Social Care	28	24
Hospitality & Catering	20	20
Independent Living	11	11
Teaching & Education	30	28
Total	660	464

- 4.4.5 The service delivered a range of courses as part of our Learning for Inclusion programme, these have included woodturning, family homework clubs, weight management, cooking, and horticulture activities from the Waverley Outdoor Community Hub. The table below provides a breakdown of the learning for inclusion enrolments in 2023/24:

Performance	Target	Actual	Variance
Unique Learners	570	583	+ 13
Enrolments	750	833	+ 83

- 4.4.6 Learning for Inclusion has significantly enhanced the offer within the Community Hubs as it has allowed us to engage with new people by delivering targeted activities in the hubs and other community venues whilst also providing an additional offer for those who are already actively engaged in the hubs and their activities. This has allowed provision to be co-created with internal and external stakeholders across Hartlepool.

- 4.4.7 The table below highlights the key performance indicators for the Adult Education Budget in 2023/24:

Key Performance Indicators	Actual	Target
Overall Achievement Rate	94.4%	95%
Retention Rate	97.5%	97%
Attendance Rate	91%	90%
Punctuality Rate	91%	90%

- 4.4.8 The above rates are based on all learners so the achievement rate with the individual rates being 98.7% for Learning for Inclusion which is nearly 6 percentage points above the national rate of 92.9%. For Adult Skills, our achievement rate was 89.4% which is nearly 3 percentage points above the benchmark achievement rate of 86.5% for England.

4.5 2024/25 Academic Year

- 4.5.1 The service initially received the same allocation of £818,070 through the TVCA Adult Education Budget for 2024/25.
- 4.5.2 There was significantly increased demand for our provision due to a range of factors including building on our success from last academic year and increased engagement through our delivery model via the Jobs & Skills Hubs. It meant that the Service had fully committed the Adult Skills element of our Adult Education Budget by the end of September 2024. This meant that if additional growth were not received then we would have needed to stop delivering new skills courses which would have impacted on key priorities such as the Hartlepool Literacy Task Force.
- 4.5.3 The Service therefore had comprehensive discussions with TVCA to confirm our current position whilst highlighting the local need within Hartlepool. In addition, an updated Delivery Plan was developed and submitted which reflected the increased demand for our Adult Education Budget.
- 4.5.4 In November 2024, the Council received confirmation that growth of £238k had been awarded to the Jobs & Skills Service. This means that our new TVCA Adult Education Budget allocation is £1.050m for 2024/25 which comprises the following elements:

Adult Skills (including Level 3 Offer)	£477,552
Learning for Inclusion	£513,070
Learner Support Funding	£60,000
Total TVCA Adult Education Budget	£1,050,622

- 4.5.5 There have already been over 850 enrolments across all provision to the end of November 2024 with 478 for Adult Skills and 378 for Learning for Inclusion. This is exceptional demand three months into the new academic year, which is testament to the curriculum offer within the service.

4.6 Ofsted

4.6.1 Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. It inspects services providing education and skills for learners of all ages to ensure that organisations providing education and training in England do so to a high standard for all students.

4.6.2 The Council's Jobs and Skills Service provides a range of learning and educational opportunities to adults across a range of programmes and is therefore subject to Ofsted inspection. The Inspectors use the following 4-point scale to make all judgements:

- Grade 1 – Outstanding
- Grade 2 – Good
- Grade 3 – Requires Improvement
- Grade 4 – Inadequate

4.6.3 The Council was last inspected by Ofsted in December 2023. The Ofsted inspectors provide a judgement in five key themes alongside making an overall effectiveness rating. The judgements received by the Service from Ofsted were as follows:

- Quality of Education – Good
- Behaviour and Attitude – Good
- Personal Development – Good
- Leadership and Management (including Safeguarding) – Good
- Adult Learning Programmes – Good

- Overall Effectiveness – Good

4.6.4 This was a positive recognition for the Council and particular with Ofsted recognizing that 'leaders and managers design a curriculum that is targeted effectively at the most disadvantaged residents in the borough'. This further highlights that provision meets local need within Hartlepool.

4.6.5 Ofsted inspectors highlighted some areas for further improvement which included enhancing our ESOL curriculum to include more vocational options and improving the learning aims which are set via Learning for Inclusion. Finally, Ofsted wanted the service's engagement work to be extended so that more learners are recruited onto English and Mathematics courses to meet the significant literacy and numeracy need within Hartlepool.

4.6.6 The service has developed a Post-Ofsted Action Plan which is ensuring that these improvements are being embedded within Jobs & Skills. The progress of the Action Plan and ongoing performance of the Adult Education Budget is being monitored by the dedicated Jobs & Skills Governance Group which incorporates key senior officers from the Council.

5. MULTIPLY

- 5.1 The Government announced the Multiply Programme, funded via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) in 2021 to support adults to understand and be able to use mathematics in their daily lives.
- 5.2 In December 2022, HBC was named by TVCA as the lead body for the Tees Valley Multiply Programme (Community Led). The programme aimed to support over 4,000 adults across Tees Valley in the period to March 2025 and incorporated two key elements:
- Bitesize Provision: short informal activities lasting up to two hours which are outside of a classroom and introduce numeracy using fun themes such as cooking, crafts, sports, or money management.
 - Substantive Provision: more formal learning sessions lasting over two hours which introduce key maths terms such as addition/subtraction with the aim of eventually progressing onto Functional Skills.
- 5.3 The programme is for adults who do not already have a formal maths qualification at Level 2 and is focused on delivering within local community venues so making activities accessible. To help deliver the Multiply Programme, we have launched grant opportunities each year for VCSE organisations to deliver the Bitesize Provision. Currently, there are 17 VCSE organisations contracted across the Tees Valley with 6 in Hartlepool.
- 5.4 Performance to the end of November against the contractual targets for the whole programme to March 2025 is highlighted below:

Provision Type	Contractual Target	Actual to Date
Bitesize Provision	3,816	3,671
Substantial Provision	642	423
Total	4,458	4,094

- 5.5 The service is on track to exceed targets for the bitesize provision which is due to the commitment and creativity of the VCSE organisations who between them have delivered a range of activities such as cooking on a budget, reuse and recycle, sewing, sign language, wreath making, family learning and making sense of money.
- 5.6 The Multiply Programme continues to be delivered in partnership with the other four Tees Valley Local Authorities who coordinate activities in their areas and deliver the substantial provision. The Local Authorities all employ dedicated Community Development Workers who work with partners and support individuals before, during and after they have engaged on Multiply to support them to progress onto the next stage of their journey including accessing further support such as Learning for Inclusion.
- 5.7 An in-depth internal evaluation was carried out at the end of March 2024 which identified that, at the time, 30% of individuals engaged across Tees Valley have already progressed onto accredited learning which was mainly

Functional Skills (Literacy, Numeracy and Digital) through the consortium led by the Council. This is an amazing achievement, given most learners supported had significant barriers including low attainment, a lack of confidence and had never accessed any adult learning prior to this. In addition, the Local Authorities have calculated that over 40% of learners have progressed onto Learning for Inclusion. This means they have continued with their learning and are being supported to overcome any barriers as this is the first step on their journey towards qualifications. It is also important to highlight that our delivery is still ongoing and those engaged are still being supported so these figures will increase across Tees Valley.

- 5.8 It has been confirmed by TVCA, in line with the national picture, that the Multiply Programme will end in March 2025. It is therefore important that the best practice gained and partnerships with community organisations are integrated into mainstream provision to support residents in Hartlepool.

6. UKSPF TEES VALLEY: MOVE FORWARD

- 6.1 The UKSPF is a central pillar of the Government's local growth agenda and provides investment to March 2025 across three priority areas:
- People & Skills
 - Communities & Place
 - Supporting Local Business
- 6.2 TVCA is the Lead Authority for UKSPF in Tees Valley and, in March 2023, launched two open calls under the People & Skills Theme aimed at supporting economically inactive individuals to move closer and into employment across Tees Valley. There was £4.8m available across the two open calls but the specification was clear multiple contracts were going to be awarded to test different approaches with funding for two years to March 2025.
- 6.3 The Council submitted a bid totalling £900,000 to lead on a programme in partnership with the other four Tees Valley Local Authorities. In June 2023, the Council received confirmation that we had been successful with our proposal which was focused on engaging individuals through each Local Authority's Hubs. For the service, it allowed us to fully integrate our model of Jobs & Skills Hubs across all our communities within Hartlepool. However, there were significant delays in receiving the funding agreement from TVCA which meant delivery could not commence until early 2024.
- 6.4 The Employment Team in Jobs & Skills manage the programme including contract management of the other four Local Authorities. The team are experts in project management with an excellent track record so are trusted across Tees Valley. The team already oversee a wide range of externally funded programmes in addition to UKSPF including Multiply and Youth Hub.
- 6.5 Tees Valley: Move Forward supports economically inactive adults aged 16+ across Tees Valley. They are supported throughout their journey by a

dedicated Key Worker who provides tailored help including overcoming any barriers they have such as health, finance, or transport. The model builds on the individual's strengths so individuals can move into employment including:

- One-to-one support through a named Key Worker
- Help with job searching, application forms, CVs, and interview skills
- Access to volunteering and social activities in the community
- Navigators to improve their digital skills including LinkedIn
- Training opportunities, including sector-specific qualifications
- Access to other specialist services through the Community Hubs

6.6 Despite the delays, the progress has been outstanding across Hartlepool and the wider Tees Valley. The performance to the end of November against the contractual targets for the whole programme to March 2025 is shown below:

Outcome	Contractual Target	Actual to Date
Number economically inactive people engaging with a Key Worker (Starts)	520	455
Number of people receiving the benefits that they are entitled	50	75
Number of people supported to access Basic Skills (Maths, English & Digital)	100	164
Number of people engaged in Job-Searching to increase Employability	100	191
Number of people in Employment, including Self-Employment	120	118

6.7 This is a fantastic achievement as in around nine months over 100 economically inactive people who were amongst the furthest away from the labour market have been supported to move into employment via the programme led by the Council's Jobs & Skills Service.

6.8 The programme is due to end on 31 March 2025. However, the Government confirmed in the October Budget that they were continuing to fund UKSPF at for a further year, although at a reduced level. The service is currently awaiting further information from TVCA but it is hoped that there may be an extension for a further year so the excellent work can continue to support more economically inactive adults into employment across Hartlepool.

7. YOUTH HUB

7.1 Another key offer through the service is the Hartlepool Youth Hub which is funded by Jobcentre Plus and was initially introduced following the launch of the Government's Plan for Jobs. This aimed to increase the intensive support offered to unemployed young people aged 18 to 24 with Youth Hubs being external spaces in the local community outside of Jobcentre to help unemployed young people access training and job opportunities, as well as a

range of services to address well-being needs following coronavirus such as support around mental health.

- 7.2 The service approached Durham and Tees Valley Jobcentre Plus and now has one of the longest running Youth Hubs. This is integrated within the Jobs & Skills Hub which is an ideal venue due to the location and the existing services based within Community Hub Central. There is an established consortium incorporating over twenty organisations who are working together to support young people into employment via the Youth Hub, led by the service. This includes key organisations, including National Careers Service, Groundwork North East, Let's Connect, West View Advice & Resource Centre, Hartlepool Sixth Form College and Hartlepool College of FE.
- 7.3 The primary focus of the Youth Hub is to address key barriers preventing individuals from finding or sustaining work and to support them to progress into employment. The comprehensive delivery model includes
- A named Careers Advisor
 - Specialist workshops so individuals can access the labour market
 - Employment routeways incorporating guaranteed interviews
 - Skills and training programmes, especially in Growth Sectors
 - Alternative provisions such as voluntary placements
 - Support to help individuals improve their Health and Well-being
- 7.4 The tailored support for young people is delivered through a dedicated team including a Youth Employment Coach employed by the Council alongside a full-time Jobcentre Plus Work Coach who is co-located within the service. Over the last three years, the Youth Hub has supported over 600 young people and over 200 have been helped into work across Hartlepool.
- 7.5 The current contract started in July 2024, and in just five months, the team are supporting 148 young people. There have already been 31 young people who have progressed into employment which is a significant achievement and testament to the collaborative partnership in place and the delivery model within Hartlepool. There has also been positive feedback from Jobcentre Plus who have identified our Youth Hub as best practice which has led to staff and funders from across the North East visiting Hartlepool.

8. PROPOSALS/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 8.1 Jobs & Skills has continued to make considerable progress since being embedded within the Community Hubs and Wellbeing Service.
- 8.2 We propose to continue this progress by expanding the Jobs & Skills Hubs to cover more areas of Hartlepool. This model has proven to be successful as, in the last 18 months, over 5,000 interventions have been delivered including jobsearch, CVs, interview techniques and applications. This had led to:
- 2,288 unique people accessing support via the Jobs & Skills Hubs

- 452 individuals being supported to progress into Employment
- 8.3 We propose to continue working closely with partners to ensure that our key provision such as the Youth Hub and Adult Education Budget meet the needs of our local community and reflects the priorities for Hartlepool. We also propose to continue working with Hartlepool College of Further Education to maximise opportunities for skills and qualifications across the town meeting the priorities of local people and demands of local employers.
- 8.4 We propose exploring and taking advantage of future external funding opportunities such as the forthcoming Connect to Work Programme which was announced in the Government Budget. This will provide the Council with funding to support adults with barriers to work or health problems and will allow a collaborative model to be delivered working closely with VCSE Organisations. This would build on the provision delivered within Jobs & Skills so that more adults can move into employment within Hartlepool.

9. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

RISK IMPLICATIONS	The UKSPF Tees Valley: Move Forward and Multiply Programmes are due to cease in March 2025. However, the potential extension of UKSPF and award of funding through Connect to Work will help ameliorate the impact of this loss, subject to funding being confirmed by TVCA.
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	<p>The majority of the Jobs and Skills Service is externally grant funded through funders such as DWP and TVCA. Funding provided through external sources have remained largely unchanged for a number of years with no additional funding provided to cover salary increases or cost of living rises which continues to create some challenges for the service.</p> <p>Multiply and UKSPF Tees Valley: Move Forward are funded to March 2025 whilst the Youth Hub is funded to June 2025.</p>
SUBSIDY CONTROL	This is being monitored and managed as relevant.
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS	There are no legal considerations with this report.
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	The provision available through Jobs and Skills aims to reach those people who need support to increase their skills and enhance their chances to maximise employment opportunities that might be available. By being community focussed, working closely with VCSE Organisation and

	based within the Community Hubs, the service can provide tailored solutions to people in places that are accessible for them and can draw on the other support that is available within the Hubs such as The Bread and Butter Thing.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	It is clear that the support provided by Jobs & Skills meet the needs of local people. In 2023/24, there were 33% of learners from ethnic minority backgrounds and nearly 30% had a disability or health problem. The service works closely with key groups to support the delivery of ESOL in community settings together and provide targeted activities including women-only sessions.
STAFF CONSIDERATIONS	<p>The cessation of the Multiply Programme in March 2025 and uncertainty around the UKSPF Tees Valley: Move Forward Programme may impact on staff within the service. It may also have a wider impact on VCSE Organisations who are commissioned through Multiply.</p> <p>The awarding of funding through the new Connect to Work Programme will help ameliorate the impact of these uncertainties for the Council.</p>
ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS	There are no asset management considerations associated with this report.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CONSIDERATIONS	There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations associated with this report.
CONSULTATION	Annual consultation takes place to plan the prospectus and ongoing consultation as relevant.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 It is recommended that the Economic Growth & Regeneration Committee notes the progress made and the proposed developments within the Jobs & Skills Service.

11. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The Jobs & Skills Service will continue to maximise opportunities to ensure that our local residents can access learning, qualifications and can progress closer or into employment.
- 11.2 The service will also continue to maximise external funding opportunities to expand our offer together with partners and community groups in Hartlepool.

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off: -

Managing Director	Date: 11/12/2024
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 12/12/2024
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 12/12/2024