

**REGENERATION AND PLANNING
SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM
AGENDA**



Friday 23 February 2007

at 10.00 am

**in the Community Room, Central Library
York Road, Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors RW Cook, S Cook, Gibbon, Laffey, London, A Marshall, J Marshall,
Richardson, Wallace, D Waller and Wright.

Resident Representatives:

Ted Jackson and Iris Ryder

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
3. **MINUTES**
 - 3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2007 (attached).
4. **RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.
5. **CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No items.

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 Corporate Plan (BVPP) 2007/08 – Proposed Objectives – *Assistant Chief Executive*

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- 7.1 Role of Council Representatives in Decision Making on the Local Strategic Partnership – Covering Report (Scrutiny Support Officer)
- 7.2 Youth Unemployment – Evidence from External Witnesses:
- (a) Youth Unemployment – Evidence from the Learning and Skills Council – Covering Report (Scrutiny Support Officer)
 - (b) Youth Unemployment – Evidence from Job Centre Plus – Covering Report (Scrutiny Support Officer)
 - (c) Youth Unemployment – Evidence from the Community and Voluntary Sector – Covering Report (Scrutiny Support Officer)
 - (d) Youth Unemployment – Evidence from Connexions – Covering Report (Scrutiny Support Officer)
- 7.3 Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment – Draft Research Report (Economic Development Manager)

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 22 March 2007 commencing at 10.00am at Owton Manor Community Centre, Wynyard Road, Hartlepool.

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

18th January 2007

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in Owton Manor Community Centre,
Wynyard Road, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Stephen Wallace (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob Cook, Shaun Cook, Steve Gibbon, Pauline Laffey, Frances London, Ann Marshall and Edna Wright

In accordance with Paragraph 4.2(ii) of the Council's Procedure Rules
Councillor Sheila Griffin attended as a substitute for Councillor
Dennis Waller

Resident Representatives:
John Lynch and Iris Ryder

Officers: Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Geoff Thompson, Head of Regeneration
Anthony Steinberg, Economic Development Manager
Paul Johnson, Employment Development officer
Denise Ogden, Head of Neighbourhood Management
Ian Jopling, Transportation Team Leader
John Lewer, Public Transport Co-ordinator
Richard Waldmeyer, Principal Planning Officer
Jonathan Wistow, Scrutiny Support Officer
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present Tom Brand, Nework Rail
Dave Kinney, Cleveland College of Art and Design
James Atkinson, Resident Representative
Bill Spowatt, Rossmere Community Forum
Martin Green, Coastliners

60. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dennis Waller and
resident representative Ted Jackson.

61. Declarations of interest by Members

There were none declared at this point in the meeting.

62. Minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2006.

Confirmed.

63. Matters Arising

At the previous meeting, a Member had requested a copy of the feasibility study which had been undertaken in relation to the suggestion that Hart Station be reopened. This was noted and would be forwarded direct to the Member.

64. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

66. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

67. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents – Budget and Policy Framework – Consultation Proposals 2007/08 (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

At Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 27 October 2006 it was agreed that the Executive's Initial Budget and Policy Framework consultation proposals for 2007/08 be considered on a departmental basis by the appropriate scrutiny forum. The Director was in attendance at meeting of the Forum on 13th November 2006 and presented the departmental pressures and priorities, grant terminations and proposed savings which were attached by way of appendix.

The comments/observations of each Forum were presented to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 17 November and were used to formulate the formal scrutiny response to Cabinet on 4 December 2006. Details of the comments/observations made by the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum were outlined in Appendix A.

The comments/observations made by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

were considered by Cabinet during the finalisation of its Budget and Policy Framework Proposals for 2007/08 on 18 December 2006. The Executive's finalised proposals were considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 19 December 2006 repeating the process previously implemented have again been referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Forum for consideration on a departmental basis.

The Scrutiny Support Officer referred Members to Appendices B to E of the report and sought comments and observations in relation to the Regeneration and Planning Services departmental pressures and priorities, grant terminations and proposed savings. Cabinet had not proposed any changes to the departmental grant terminations, pressures or priorities referred for Scrutiny in October. With regard to initial savings, Cabinet was proposing to only implement the 3% items previously identified but not the £10,000 saving from reducing the Economic Development Marketing budget which this Forum asked Cabinet to reconsider. Cabinet had also identified one-off proposals to be funded from the LPSA Reward Grant and available capital resources and the issues affecting this Forum were summarised in the report.

Members supported the pressures, priorities and grant terminations and accepted the proposed services as identified. However concern was raised in relation to the timescale of the refurbishment of Seaton Bus Station. The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services indicated that the funding for Seaton Bus Station would hopefully generate heritage lottery funding which would mean a bigger more aspirational scheme could be proposed. Officers were currently working on a bid for heritage lottery funding and the market was being tested for the sale of nearby land. However, if this additional funding was not available, the capital resource funding requested would be used for a maintenance-led approach to refurbishing the bus station.

A Member raised concern about the level of affordable housing within the town. The Director of Regeneration and Planning Services indicated that the Housing Needs Survey, proposed to be funded from the LPSA Reward Grant, would be used to quantify the housing needs within the town. It was added that the planning authority can take an active role in seeking affordable housing if necessary through Section 106 Agreements.

The Chair wished to convey the thanks for the Forum to the Mayor and Executive for its response to the Forum's initial comments on the budget process. The importance of the Regeneration and Planning Services Department was acknowledged in particular with regard to inward investment brought into the town.

Decision

1. That the Cabinet's decision to restrict the proposed savings as part of the Budget and Policy Framework for 2007/08 to 3% be welcomed.
2. That the Forum's comments and observations outlined above be presented to the meeting of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 19

January to enable a formal response to be made to Cabinet on 5 February 2007.

68. Railway Approaches – Evidence from External Agencies – Covering Report *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

As part of the on-going inquiry into Railway Approaches Cleveland College of Art and Design had been asked to look at the space within the railway station and present some preliminary ideas which were very much at the exploratory stage to provoke discussion around improving the area within the station. The idea presented involved the word Hartlepool along the facing wall to the entrance to the station with each letter being a different piece of artwork produced by students from the College. There were various other ideas discussed, including the possibility of changing the displayed artwork on an annual basis around specific events, ie the Tall Ships Race and the potential to invite sponsorship. The Mayor added that the potential for this project was huge with the key being community involvement possibly through public competition for the production of individual art pieces.

A discussion followed in which Members suggested the possibility of inviting school children to take part in producing some elements of the artwork as well as suggesting the inclusion of low level planting. The representative from Cleveland College of Art and Design was thanked for his presentation and for answering Members questions.

The Scrutiny Support Officer introduced a representative from Network Rail who had been invited to the meeting to provide verbal evidence in relation to their role in terms of Railway Approaches. The representative explained their role including the clearing of graffiti where reported and clearing rubbish, although there had been no reports of graffiti around Hartlepool for some time. Some Members were surprised that there had been no reports of graffiti or rubbish along the trackside in Hartlepool recently and argued that a more proactive approach should be adopted here. However, the representative of Network Rail argued that he had a limited annual budget of £500,000 to cover these costs in an area stretching from Hull to Northumberland and that the priority was to tackle vegetation and rubbish posing a danger along the trackside. He added that partnership working with local authorities and the community and voluntary sector was being examined.

Members raised concerns in relation to the state of repair of Hartlepool station and the fact that no improvements appeared to have been undertaken for a long time. The Network Rail representative indicated that there was a programme of improvements in place and that he would investigate where Hartlepool station was included on this programme. A Member referred to the previous meeting where the decision not to have Hart Station reinstated was discussed. The Network Rail representative indicated that he presumed a feasibility study had been carried out but could not answer any further as he did not have that information with him.

It was suggested that it may be beneficial for Network Rail to publicise the National Helpline for reporting graffiti as Members were unaware who should be contacted. This information could also be included in a future edition of Hartbeat once produced.

The representative from Network Rail was thanked for his attendance and for answering Members questions.

Decision

Members comments would be considered for inclusion into the Draft Final Report.

69. Railway Approaches – Draft Final Report (*Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum*)

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a draft final report to the Forum of the findings from the Forum's investigation into the Railway Approaches to Hartlepool. Detailed background information and the history of the inquiry were provided. The report also included an in-depth account of the inquiry. Members were reminded that the evidence gathering process included both written and verbal evidence, including that presented earlier in the meeting as well as site visits to explore the approaches into Hartlepool. The key findings from the inquiry were outlined in the report under the following headings:

- (i) Key Government Policy
- (i) Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in Hartlepool who have responsibility for the appearance of the railway approaches into the town
- (ii) To consider the impact of the railway approaches into Hartlepool on the town's image, particularly in terms of the ongoing regeneration of the town
- (iv) Exploration of railway approaches
- (v) Key 'problem spots' and areas of good practice on the railway approaches
- (vi) Condition of Hartlepool and Seaton Railway Stations
- (vii) To consider issues of accessibility, particularly in terms of pedestrian access to Hartlepool Station from the Marina
- (viii) To seek views of the public in relation to the railway approaches into Hartlepool

It was suggested it be noted that it was the Forum's view that maximum standards should be aimed for as the most desirable outcome for the approaches to the town.

Following the discussions with Network Rail earlier in the meeting Members wished to incorporate a recommendation about increased co-ordination by the Authority with Network Rail about graffiti and litter along the trackside into the final report.

Decision

1. That the draft final report and the detailed recommendations be approved by the Forum, subject to the additional comments outlined above; and
2. That the draft final report be approved by the Chair before submitted to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee for approval prior to submission to Cabinet in March.

70. Youth Unemployment – Scoping Report (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a scoping report for the Forum's investigation into Youth Unemployment.

The aim of the investigation

To gain an understanding of the issues around Youth Unemployment and to suggest areas for improvement.

The terms of reference for the investigation

- (a) To gain an understanding of why the level of Youth Unemployment has risen as a percentage of the overall unemployment level;
- (b) To gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in Hartlepool who have some responsibility for tackling Youth Unemployment;
- (c) To examine the role of the Authority as a non-statutory service provider in relation to Youth Unemployment, and in particular its role in Economic Development;
- (d) To gain the views of young people who are unemployed in relation to this issue; and
- (e) To identify suggested areas for improvement in relation to the Youth Unemployment rate.

Timetable of the investigation

18 January 2007 – 'Scoping and Setting the Scene of the Scrutiny of the Topic'

Late January / early February 2007 conduct focus group with a group of unemployed young people.

23 February 2007 – Evidence from key witnesses, including:

- (a) Portfolio Holder;
- (b) Connexions;
- (c) Job Centre Plus;
- (d) Learning and Skills Council;
- (e) CVS; and
- (f) Feedback from the focus group.

Early March 2007 – schedule an informal meeting of the Forum to consider contents of a Draft Final Report.

22 March 2007 – Agree Draft Final Report.

At this point in the meeting Councillor Ann Marshall declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item in relation to the Community Employment Network

Members were keen to see that a wide remit be applied to this investigation. The Scrutiny Support Officer indicated that there was only a limited amount of time remaining in the current Municipal Year, although he reassured Members that this investigation would be as thorough as timescales allow.

Decision

The remit for the Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment was agreed.

STEPHEN WALLACE

CHAIRMAN

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

23 February 2007



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Planning Services and
Assistant Chief Executive

Subject: CORPORATE PLAN 2007/08: PROPOSED
OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity for the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum to consider the proposed objectives and actions for inclusion in the Corporate Plan 2007/08.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Government introduced the Best Value regime as part of its programme to modernise local government and the Corporate (Best Value Performance) Plan for 2007/8 must be approved and published by the Council by 30 June 2007. This is the Council's top-level corporate plan. It sets out the Council's top priorities and contributions for delivering the Community Strategy aims in 2007/8.
- 2.2 The Corporate Plan is an important document because it formally communicates the council's vision and priorities. The process for producing the plan has been designed to ensure the risk is minimised and that the Corporate Plan is fit for purpose.
- 2.3 The focus of the Corporate Plan for 2007/8 is on priority activities for improvement at a strategic level rather than day to day service delivery objectives. The operational service delivery objectives are picked up through Departmental service plans which are reported to individual portfolio holders.
- 2.4 At a meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 19 January 2006 it was agreed that the Corporate Plan proposals should be considered by each of the Scrutiny Forums. Each Scrutiny Forum will see the proposals relating to the Community Strategy themes that fall under their remit.

- 2.5 The comments/observations of each Forum will be fed back to the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to be held on 19 March 2007 and will be used to formulate the formal Scrutiny response to Cabinet on 16 April 2007.

3 THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 3.1 As in previous years the plan will be produced in two parts. Part 1 describes the Council's overall aim, contributions to the Community Strategy aims and organisational development priorities.
- 3.2 Part 2 will continue to contain the detailed supporting information relating to performance statistics which the Council is required to publish. This will include the Best Value performance indicators for 2006/07 and targets for 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10. This information can not be collected until after 31 March 2007, and is therefore not available at present.
- 3.3 **Appendix A** details those objectives and actions that are proposed for inclusion in the 2007/08 Corporate Plan that fall under the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum remit.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum:-
- (a) considers the proposed objectives and actions for inclusion in the 2007/08 Corporate Plan as attached at **Appendix A**.
- (b) formulates any comments and observations to be presented to the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to be held on 19 March 2007 to enable a formal response to be presented to the Cabinet on 16 April 2007.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Appendix A – Regeneration and Planning Services - Proposed Objectives and Actions for inclusion in 2007/08 Corporate Plan

Jobs and the Economy

Ref	Objective	Actions	Responsible Officer	Associated PIs
JEO1	Increase skill levels of the population with clear reference to local business need	Work with partners to develop a skills development strategy for Hartlepool within the context of regional and city region strategies	Anthony Steinberg	LAAJE1
JEO2	To attract appropriate inward investors and support indigenous growth, making use of local labour resource and supporting local people in gaining maximum benefit from the economic regeneration of the town, including all people of working ages especially the young	Work with Tees Valley Regeneration and PD Ports for the redevelopment of Victoria Harbour within Hartlepool Quays	Stuart Green	LPIRP3 LPIRP7 LPIRP5 LPIRP6
		Continue development of targeted training and recruitment programmes to support disadvantaged residents into economic activity	Anthony Steinberg	
		Continue to work with partners to provide key manufacturing and service sector infrastructure, including appropriate sites and premises	Anthony Steinberg	
		Continue to work with partners to expand Further and Higher Education opportunities	Andrew Golightly	
JEO3	To support the sustainable growth, and reduce the unnecessary failure, of locally-owned businesses, promoting the growth and sustainability of enterprise and small businesses and to increase total entrepreneurial activity amongst the local population	Continued development of Hartlepool's Business Incubation System including the development of the visitor economy network	Anthony Steinberg	LAAJE9 LPIRP8
		Develop and facilitate entrepreneurial activities with particular reference to young people	Anthony Steinberg	
JEO4	For those living in the wards with the worst labour market position in areas in receipt of NRF, significantly improve their overall employment rate and reduce the difference between their employment rate and the overall employment rate for England	Establish Jobmart employment and skills consortium specifically targeted at the most disadvantaged wards and residents.	Anthony Steinberg	LAAJE2 LAAJE4 LAAJE6

Ref	Objective	Actions	Responsible Officer	Associated PIs
JEO5	Achieve Economic Well Being (Children and Young people will achieve the qualifications, develop the skills and be given the necessary life experiences to enable them to lead full and active adult lives)	Development of targeted interventions and commissioning approach for the delivery of integrated support for 16 to 24 year olds.	Anthony Steinberg	LPIRP5b LPIRP6b
JEO6	Improving training and employment prospects for targeted groups	Development of worklessness interventions to respond to employment rates and gross added value through economic participation.	Anthony Steinberg	LAAJE3 LAAJE5
		Support local businesses to improve the employment offer and assist in broadening the labour offer to business.	Anthony Steinberg	
JEO7	To promote Hartlepool's interests in economic regeneration policy making at the nation, regional and sub-regional levels	Secure due recognition of Hartlepool's economic role, needs and opportunities in national, regional and sub-regional policy	Geoff Thompson	LPIRP3 LPIRP7
		Ensure recognition of Coastal Arc as sub-regional and regional economic regeneration priority	Colin Horsley	

Community Safety

Ref	Objective	Actions	Responsible Officer	Associated PIs
CSO1	Reduce total crime (as measured by 10 BCS comparator crimes) and narrow the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal area and Hartlepool	Ensure all Council Departments understand their responsibilities to prevent and reduce crime and disorder when delivering their services and continue to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.	Joe Hogan	BVPI126 BVPI 127a BVPI 127b BVPI 128 LAA CS1
		Contribute to work in partnership to reduce levels of violence and disorder associated with the night-time economy in the town centre specifically, and alcohol – related crime and disorder more generally across the town.	Joe Hogan	
		Contribute to work in partnership to reduce levels of violence and disorder associated with the night-time economy in the town centre specifically, and alcohol – related crime and disorder more generally across the town.	Alison Mawson	
CSO2	Reduced harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol	Continue to work in partnership to implement the local drugs treatment strategy for all drug users and improve access to suitable accommodation for individuals with a priority need.	Chris Hart	BVPI 198 LAA CS10 LAA CS11
		In association with PCT and health providers, commission specialist services to tackle alcohol abuse	Chris Hart	
CSO3	Improved neighbourhood safety and increased public reassurance leading to reduced fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	Continue to develop local responses to the RESPECT Agenda	Sally Forth	LAA CS13
		Contribute to the success of Neighbourhood Policing by aligning the Council's response to ASB with 3 Neighbourhood areas.	Sally Forth	
		Improve two way communications between residents and Neighbourhood Police Teams	Alison Mawson	

Ref	Objective	Actions	Responsible Officer	Associated PIs
CSO4	Build respect in communities by reducing anti social and criminal behaviour through improved prevention and enforcement activities	Increase the support provided to children and families involved in ASB	Sally Forth	LAA CS38
		Implement the actions contained in the ASB strategy for 2007/08	Sally Forth	
		Continue to improve services for young people at risk of, or involved in, crime and ASB	Danny Dunleavy	
CSO6	Reducing incidents of Domestic Violence	Co-ordinate and encourage all partners to implement the actions contained in the Domestic Violence Strategy 2006-2009.	Joe Hogan	BVPI 225

Environment

Ref	Objective	Actions	Responsible Officer	Associated PIs
EO1	Delivering sustainable communities through protecting natural resources and enhancing the local environment and the community's enjoyment of it	Ensure spatial planning policies meet the appropriate sustainability principles	Amy Waters	LAA SC11
EO4	Make better use of natural resources, reduce greenhouse gases, minimise energy use and reduce the generation of waste and maximise recycling	Participate in the preparation of sub-regional Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document	Tom Britcliffe	
EO5	Improve the natural and built environment and ensure the proper planning of the area	Coordinate the preparation of the new Local development Framework	Anne Laws	BVPI 165 LPINS9 BVPI 200a BVPI 200b BVPI 200c LP1RP3 BVPI 219
		Support the Continuing Renewal of Housing Regeneration Areas	Mark Dutton	
		Implement Environmental Improvement Schemes within the Area Regeneration Programmes	Andrew Golightly	
		Support the implementation of the Tees Valley Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)	Ian Bond	
		Review and implement planning policy guidance relating to the historic environment	Sarah Scarr	

Housing

Ref	Objective	Actions	Responsible Officer	Associated PIs
HO1	As part of an overall housing strategy for Hartlepool, improve housing conditions within the most deprived neighbourhoods/wards, with a particular focus on ensuring that all social housing is made decent by 2010	To improve the quality and attractiveness of existing housing To enhance the standard of management of private rented housing		
HO2		To maintain and improve public health and safety through the enforcement of housing and nuisance legislation To develop a strategic supported living plan for older people		
HO3	Improving the advice and support provided to homeless people and helping them to access employment, training and educational opportunities	To provide and development excellent services that will improve the quality of life for people living in Hartlepool neighbourhoods		LAA JE22 BVPI 2 13
HO4	Improving the energy efficiency of houses	To improve the energy efficiency of existing housing and reduce the number of vulnerable households experiencing fuel poverty		New RP4 New RP5
HO5	Balancing Housing Supply and Demand	To ensure there is access to a choice of good quality housing to buy or rent, to meet the aspirations of residents and encourage investment		LPINS9 LAAH12 LAAH13
		To rebalance the supply and demand for housing		
		Pursue a programme of strategic housing market renewal in partnership with Tees Valley Living, and other key partners.	Mark Dutton	
		Ensure a fit for purpose local housing assessment	Amy Waters	

Strengthening Communities

Ref	Objective	Actions	Responsible Officer	Associated PIs
SCO1	To empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services	Ensure a fit for purpose LSP	Joanne Smithson	New RP1 New RP2 New RP3
		Coordinate a review of the Community Strategy	Joanne Smithson	
		Coordinate the implementation and monitoring of the Local Area Agreement	John Potts	
SCO3	To improve the quality of life for the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and ensure service providers are more responsive to neighbourhood needs and improve their delivery	Ensure the delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal in the Borough	Catherine Frank	
		Continue programme of Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) preparation and implementation.	Sylvia Burn	LAA E8 LPI RP7
		Coordinate key Regeneration Programmes	Derek Gouldburn	

Associated Performance Indicators

Reference	Description
New RP1	LAA overall assessment
New RP2	LAA direction of travel
New RP3	Retain LSP status (PI not confirmed – awaiting GONE clarification)
New RP4	Amount spent on energy efficiency measures (including matched funding from utility partners)
New RP5	Average SAP rating for all dwellings
LAA JE1	Number of adults who are supported in achieving at least a full first level 2 qualification or equivalent (Hartlepool)

Reference	Description
LAA JE2	Number of adults who are supported in achieving at least a full first level 2 qualification or equivalent (Neighbourhood Renewal narrowing the gap)
LAA JE3	Employment rate (Hartlepool)
LAA JE4	Employment rate (Neighbourhood Renewal narrowing the gap)
LAA JE5	Unemployment rate (Hartlepool)
LAA JE6	Unemployment rate (Neighbourhood Renewal narrowing the gap)
LAA E8	Increase the proportion of people satisfied with their local area as a place to live (Neighbourhood Renewal narrowing the gap)
LAA JE9	VAT Registrations (Hartlepool)
LAA JE22	Employment Rate (16-24)
LAA SC11	Increase the proportion of people satisfied with their local area as a place to live (Neighbourhood Element Area)
LAA CS1	Total Crime (10 BCS comparator crimes)
LAA CS10	Number of problem drug users in treatment
LAA CS11	Percentage problem drug users retained in treatment for 12 weeks or more
LAA CS13	Percentage residents who feel very or fairly safe out in their neighbourhood after dark (Viewpoint)
LAA CS38	Percentage residents who have high level of perceived ASB in their local area
LAA H12	Number of houses cleared in HMR intervention area
LAA H13	Number of new homes constructed in HMR intervention area
BVPI 126	Domestic burglaries per 1000 household
BVPI 127a	Violent crime per 1,000 population
BVPI 127b	Robberies per 1,000 population
BVPI 128	Vehicle crimes per 1000 population
BVPI 165	Percentage of pedestrian crossings for disabled people
BVPI 198	The number of drug users in treatment per 1,000 population aged 18-44
BVPI 200a	Plan-making: Development Plan
BVPI 200b	Plan-making: Milestones
BVPI 200c	Plan-making: Monitoring Report

Reference	Description
BVPI 213	Housing Advice Service preventing homelessness
BVPI 219	Preserving the special character of conservation areas
BVPI 225	Actions Against Domestic Violence
LPI RP3	The number of sites developed or improved
LPI RP5	The number of residents assisted into employment
LPI RP5b	The number of residents assisted into employment that were young unemployed people
LPI RP6	The number of residents assisted into training
LPI RP6b	The number of residents assisted into training that were young unemployed people
LPI RP7	The amount (£) of external funding deployed to support the council's economic regeneration activities
LPI RP8	The number of business start ups with council assistance
LPI NS9	Number of long term empty private houses

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

23 February 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: ROLE OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES IN
DECISION MAKING ON THE LOCAL STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIP – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Members' views in relation to the role of Council representatives in decision making on the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 On 10 November 2006 Constitution Working Group, and on 27 November 2006 Constitution Committee, considered a 'Preliminary Briefing Note' from the Head of Community Strategy in relation to the LSP, which has been attached to this report at **Appendix A**. Members of the Committee had requested this information at an earlier meeting of the Constitution Committee.
- 2.2 During discussions at both the Constitution Working Group and Constitution Committee Members expressed concern regarding the role of Council representatives on the Local Strategic Partnership. Members were concerned that members of the Council's Executive were effectively committing themselves to proposals considered by the LSP before any consideration was given to the proposals in their executive role.
- 2.3 It was highlighted, during discussions at Constitution Working Group, that issues associated with the Local Strategic Partnership had been the subject of an inquiry by the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum. It was considered that the Working Group should, therefore, refer the briefing note to the Scrutiny Forum and defer consideration of this item until the views of this Scrutiny Forum had been sought. Members should be aware that the Partnerships Investigation concluded at the end of the 2005/06 Municipal Year and that an Action Plan for this Investigation was considered by the Forum on 29 September 2006.
- 2.4 Consequently, Members of this Forum are being asked to feed their views back to the Constitution Committee in relation to the role of Council representatives in decision making on the LSP. In particular, the issue of

whether members of the Council's Executive are effectively committing themselves to proposals considered by the LSP before any consideration is given to the proposals in their executive role has been referred for Members consideration.

- 2.5 The Head of Community Strategy will be in attendance at today's meeting to outline the information in Appendix A and to answer any questions Members may have.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the preliminary briefing note (attached at Appendix A) and agree a response to Constitution Committee.

CONTACT OFFICER

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Constitution Working Group Minutes 10.11.06
- (b) Constitution Committee Draft Minutes 27.11.06

Preliminary briefing note for the Constitution Working Group in response to discussions within Constitution Committee where the view was expressed that members of the Council's executive were effectively committing to proposals considered by the LSP before consideration had been given to the proposals in their executive role.

Introduction

The Hartlepool Partnership is the town's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). It first met in July 1999 as an overarching town wide partnership with the remit to steer the preparation of Hartlepool Community Strategy and to provide leadership in its implementation. Following the publication of government guidance on LSPs in March 2001, the Partnership evolved to meet the new requirements and was formally established as the town's LSP.

The Hartlepool Partnership has a Board of 42 and is chaired by the town's MP. The elected Mayor is the Partnership's Vice Chair. The Board meets around eight times a year. Meeting agendas are structured with sections for presentations, items for decision and items for information.

The Hartlepool Partnership currently has accredited status (Audit Commission, 2004) and has been GREEN rated in each of its last three annual performance assessment by GONE. This has significant benefits for the authority and its partners.

The White Paper - Strong and prosperous communities (October 2006)

The proposals set out in the Local Government White Paper clearly strengthen the council's community leadership role and locality partnership working. It positions the local authority as a key player within the LSP and names key partners with a strengthened duty to cooperate to better meet the public's needs:

We will strengthen partnership working by placing a duty on the local authority and named partners to cooperate with each other to agree targets in the LAA.

We will (...) ensure that LSPs are accountable to local people by strengthening the involvement of elected members in both executive and scrutiny roles. (...) We place particular significance to in ensuring elected members are fully involved in the LSP process.

It is essential for local authorities to work constructively with the full range of local partners to fulfil their shared responsibilities.

The need to strengthen elected member involvement in the Partnership's work both at a Board and Thematic Partnership level was recognised in the recent Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Enquiry into Partnership Working.

Recommendation (k) set out:

That elected member involvement in Thematic and other partnerships be recommended.

The White Paper establishes a clear role for local authority leaders on LSP Boards and for executive portfolio holders on Thematic Partnerships. The implication of the White Paper for the Hartlepool Partnership will be discussed at its December meeting.

Decision Making

The LSP's decision making is required within a number of grant regimes and policy preparation processes. This however does not remove the need for statutory bodies including the Council to make decisions on matters related to their responsibilities and does not usurp their role or discretion.

The Hartlepool Partnership's Terms of Reference set out that the Partnership's business will be "conducted in the spirit of partnership and consensus will be sought without recourse to votes".

More precisely it states:

members should have the authority to take decisions and make commitments. However individual partners will remain responsible and accountable for decisions on their services and the use of their resources. The Partnership recognises that each partner has different mechanisms for their own decision making. In some cases decisions may be endorsed by the bodies or organisations from which members are drawn.

The Hartlepool Partnership is not a legal entity and will rely on its organisations represented on the Board to provide financial systems or a legal basis for decisions collectively supported.

What decisions does the Hartlepool Partnership take?

The decisions that the Partnership takes can be broadly categorised into three areas:

- Agreeing Strategy;
- Allocating funding;
- Strengthening the Hartlepool Partnership's own working arrangements

Agreeing strategy

Examples of strategies that the LSP has agreed in the last 12 months include:

- Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy (October 2006)
- Dyke House/Stranton/Grange Neighbourhood Action Plan (October 2006)
- Community Strategy – 1st consultation draft (September 2006)
- North Hartlepool NAP (June 2006)
- Public Health Strategy (December 2005)
- Social Inclusion and Mental Health (October 2005)
- Rossmere NAP (October 2005)

Agreeing funding

The Council acts as the accountable body for two funding streams that the Hartlepool Partnership delivers. These are the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and Neighbourhood Element (NE) Fund. Examples of decisions that the Hartlepool Partnership has made on funding in the last 12 months include:

- NRF Out-turn 2005/06 (June 2006)
- NRF programme 2006-2008 (April 2006, February 2006, December 2005)
- LAA 2006/09 (February 2006)
- LAA Delivery & Improvement Plan (July 2006)
- NRF programme 2005/06 (February 2006)
- Neighbourhood Element Funding 2006/2010 (February 2006)

Financial information and funding recommendations on NRF and NE funding are also taken to the Regeneration, Housing and Liveability portfolio holder for agreement.

In February 2006 Hartlepool signed a Local Area Agreement. LAAs are described by government as a:

a three year agreement, based on local (...) Community Strategies, that set out the priorities for a local area agreed between Central Government (..) and a local area, represented by the lead local authority and other key partners through Local Strategic Partnerships

The LAA came into effect in April 2006 and runs until March 2009. Government guidance (March 2006) indicates that:

The local authority is the accountable body for the financial management of the LAA and for ensuring that robust performance management arrangements are in place. (...) The LSP will be responsible for the overarching development and delivery of the LAA with lead partners accountable for the delivery of individual targets. It is expected increasingly to drive the delivery and implementation of LAAs.

In line with the new agreement, from April 2006 Hartlepool Borough Council has acted as the accountable body for Hartlepool's LAA. Financial information on interventions funded through the LAA pooled budget is reported to the Finance Portfolio Holder on a quarterly basis.

Decision Making Routes

Where the Hartlepool Partnership needs Hartlepool Borough Council to provide a legal basis for decisions collectively supported, custom and practice developed over the last seven years shows the favoured route to be decisions made first by the Hartlepool Partnership then taken by the appropriate Executive member or Cabinet.

This decision making route has enabled decisions to be taken in an open, transparent and inclusive way with input from a broad range of partners across the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. It enables executive members to hear a wide range of opinions and significantly informs the decision making process. Decisions taken by the Partnership at this point are not statutorily binding as the Partnership is not a statutory body.

It is significant that both Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Neighbourhood Element Funding grant determination reports set out that funding decisions must be taken in Partnership. The NRF Grant Determination 2006 states that:

The purpose of the grant is to provide support to certain local authorities in England to enable them, in collaboration with their Local Strategic Partnership, to improve services in their most deprived areas.

The recipient authority shall agree the use of the grant in 2006/7 with its Local Strategic Partnership.

Instalments of the pre-set main grant (...) shall be payable in full only where the recipient authority is working with and as part of an LSP that remains accredited and the LSP has met any criteria as have been specified by the Minister of State.

Neighbourhood Element Implementation Guidance 2005 states that:

Although the Local Authority will be the Accountable Body they should work through the LSP and utilise other partners, including community and voluntary sector organisations to deliver certain outcomes through Community Empowerment Networks (CENs) where they exist.

If the current established decision making route was reversed, with decisions taken by the Council's Executive in advance of Partnership meetings the dynamics of the Partnership's work would shift significantly. Practically, the council would be unable to comply with the conditions set out in the grant determinations above unless additional arrangements were put in place to ensure that partners views were sought, recorded and formally fed into the executive decision making process.

In addition, the reversal of current practice would change the nature of Partnership meetings with decision making effectively a "fait accompli" or "rubber stamping" exercise. The Partnership's ability to shape and influence decision making will have been, to all intents and purposes, removed.

A key part of the Partnership's accreditation and annual assessment is the extent to which key players are involved in decision making and it is likely that future assessments carried out by Government Office would reflect the change in procedure and any reduced formative partnership input into decision making.

Overall any decision related to the matter raised has considerable and complex consequences for how the LSP as a whole would work, its arrangements and dynamics and how effective and successful it is likely to be. The increased involvement and leadership of the LSP by primary local authorities appears to be the intention of the White Paper and this appears to be the expectation of civil servants. It is suggested that this matter needs to be considered as part of the wider consideration of the White Paper

This informal arrangement of decision making by the Partnership then by the Council has worked well during the Partnership's 7 years of operation and over 50 meetings. I have worked with the Partnership since 2001 and I am not aware that during this time Executive Members have felt constrained by decisions taken by the Hartlepool Partnership or that the decision making route has prevented them from effectively discharging their responsibilities.

Prepared by:

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9th November 2006

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

23 February 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT – EVIDENCE FROM THE
LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL – COVERING
REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that a representative from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will be attending today's meeting to provide evidence to the Forum in relation to Youth Unemployment.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 18 January 2007, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this Scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 Consequently, a representative from the LSC has been invited to today's meeting to provide evidence in relation to Youth Unemployment. In addition, at **Appendix A** a report from the LSC has been attached to this report.
- 2.3 Members may wish to question the representative of the LSC about the content of the report attached in **Appendix A**. In addition, Members may wish to refer to the Terms of Reference in questioning these witnesses. In particular, points b) and e) are relevant to these discussions:
- (a) To gain an understanding of why the level of Youth Unemployment has risen as a percentage of the overall unemployment level;
 - (b) To gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in Hartlepool who have some responsibility for tackling Youth Unemployment;
 - (c) To examine the role of the Authority as a non-statutory service provider in relation to Youth Unemployment, and in particular its role in Economic Development;
 - (d) To gain the views of young people who are unemployed in relation to this issue; and

- (e) To identify suggested areas for improvement in relation to the Youth Unemployment rate.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the representative from the LSC, and the contents of Appendix A, in the process of gathering evidence for the Investigation into Youth Unemployment

CONTACT OFFICER

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment – Scoping Report
(Scrutiny Support Officer) – 18.01.07

LEARNING and SKILLS COUNCIL

Response to

Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool

1.0 About us

1.1 We plan and invest in high quality education and training for young people and adults that will build a skilled and competitive workforce.

1.2 We help employers to get the training and skills they need for their business.

1.3 We are transforming the further education sector to meet the needs of employers and the local community.

1.4 We are committed to improving learning opportunities for everyone.

2.0 Our vision

2.1 By 2010, young people and adults in England will have the knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world and will be part of a truly competitive workforce.

2.2 We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to ensure we have a workforce that is of world-class standards.

2.3 We're responsible for planning and investing in high quality vocational education and training for everyone over 16 in England, other than in higher education. In 2004-2005 our budget is £9.3 billion.

2.4 We work at national, regional and local levels from a network of offices across the country.

3.0 North East Priorities

3.1 Regional priorities as detailed in the Tees Valley Learning and Skills Council Annual Plan 2006 – 07:

- Increase employer demand for, and investment in, skills.
- Raise individual aspirations and demand for learning and provide individuals with opportunities throughout life to achieve their aspirations and embrace change.
- Enable those excluded from the Labour market to access learning and sustainable employment.
- Ensure all individuals have the foundations for employability – the attainment of Skills for Life and a first level 2 qualification.
- Increase the achievement of intermediate and higher level skills to support growth, innovation and productivity.
- Enable colleges and learning providers to be more responsive to employers' and learners' needs

4.0 Cohort Group

4.1 When considering a reply to this Scrutiny Investigation it is important to understand that the LSC groups learners by age:

Young People 14 – 18/ Adults 19+. The Scrutiny Investigation therefore encompasses both category of learner who subsequently is governed by different sets of LSC funding criteria.

5.0 Range of LSC Mainstream Provision 16+ includes:

- Entry to Employment (E2E) – Programme aimed at young people aged 16 – 18 who are not involved in employment, education or training; aims to prepare the learner for employment in the apprenticeship programme through work placements and/or training.
- Apprenticeships - designed by employers for employers, an Apprenticeship is a work-based learning programme that allows you to train both your existing staff and any new young people you are thinking of recruiting (16 – 24).
- FE - Further education (FE) is the type of learning or training that takes place after the age of 16, but before degree level.

It can be full or part time, academic or vocational. There are around 450 FE colleges in England and Wales. They fall broadly into five categories: agriculture and horticulture colleges; art, design and performing arts colleges; general FE and tertiary colleges; sixth form colleges; and specialist designated institutions.

- **Train to Gain** - For businesses, getting the right skills advice is essential to choosing the best and most appropriate training. Train to Gain helps you to do this by using experienced Skills Brokers who can offer free impartial and independent advice to businesses match any training needs identified with training providers ensure that training is delivered to meet business needs.
- **ESF projects** - The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of four Structural Funds designed to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union. help unemployed and inactive people enter work:
provide opportunities for people at a disadvantage in the labour market
promote lifelong learning
develop the skills of employed people
improve women's participation in the labour market.
- **1st level 2 Entitlement** – Priority given to those learners who have not already achieved this standard.
- **Adult & Community Learning** - Adult and community learning (ACL) is the funding stream through which the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) supports primarily Local Education Authorities (LEAs). ACL supports a diverse range of community-based and outreach learning opportunities.
- **Skills for Life** – National LSC initiative for improving literacy, numeracy and language (ESOL) skills.

6.0 Range of LSC Provision 14+ includes:

- **Increased Flexibility** – IF is a collaborative vocational offer to young people at key stage 4. It creates enhanced, high-quality vocational and work related learning opportunities for pupils with good attendance and behaviour.
- **Young Apprenticeships** - Young Apprenticeships are a new initiative aimed at middle and higher level ability students. Young People aged 14-16 spend 2 days per week outside of school studying vocational qualifications in a range of occupational sectors.

The programme combines learning in a college or private training provider premises with extended work experience for a minimum of 50 days over the two years of the programme.

- **Specialised Diploma Lines (2008 onwards)** – Designed to meet skills needs of employers. A blend of sectors and general learning to learners aged 14-19 within applied settings and contexts.

All of the above are designed to ensure young people remain engaged in education, employment or training.

7.0 Gaps in Provision 14-19

7.1 Following a joint mapping exercise by the LSC and Hartlepool LA it was found that there was no significant gaps in provision in this age band with the exception of level 3 in Accounting and Horticulture.

8.0 NEET

8.1 Remains stubbornly high despite working in collaboration with Connexions on a number of projects. A review of the young people classified as NEET has highlighted that young people from vulnerable groups forms an higher than expected percentage of the NEET group. Local Area Agreements have identified these groups and projects have been introduced to target these vulnerable groups. Specific actions that will be taken, across the Tees Valley, to reduce the NEET group will include:

- Via ESF provide programmes of support for 500 13-17 year olds at risk of joining the NEET
- Provide 300 additional places on pre E2E programmes
- Deliver a programme of education business link activity to include 8,200 work experience places, 100 professional days for teachers and 250 employers engaged in work related activity

9.0 Projects currently funded by LSC

9.1 **Tees Valley Works in the Community / Works for Women** – To support local people, aged 16 to 65, into work or education/training who are currently excluded from or inactive in the local labour market. To develop and provide customised training opportunities delivered by the voluntary and community sector in a local setting which meet individual learner requirements and emerging skills needs.

9.2 **Wake up To Work (Recently started)** – The aim of this contract is to give young people aged 15-16 years old whose attainment in education is low and are at risk of disaffection or who are currently disengaged from school the opportunity to access and succeed on an alternative vocational education programme. Each beneficiary will be provided with an extended employer based work experience placement which is relevant to and will support the vocational qualification they are working towards.

9.3 **Gateway to E2E** is a an ESF project ran by HCFE, which will support beneficiaries aged 16 – 19 who have been unemployed for six months in the Hartlepool area and are not yet ready to enter either E2E or other learning programmes or employment. Project will run until December 2007 and aims

to work with 100 beneficiaries, who it is anticipated will progress onto mainstream E2 E or apprenticeship programmes.

9.4 HCFE is acting as the lead on behalf of the FE colleges within the Tees Valley on '**Second Chance Tees Valley**' an ESF contract for £1.8m which works with unemployed beneficiaries ages 19 – 24, who have completed elements of an apprenticeship framework or a vocational course but who have not achieved a full qualification. The programme will pay for them to complete a full framework at level 2 or 3, it is anticipated 1500 beneficiaries will be supported with 75% progressing into employment by late 2008.

10.0 Collaboration

- Job Centre+
- Connexions
- Local Authority
- Schools
- Colleges
- Work-based Learning Providers
- Sector Skills Councils
- Local employers

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

23 February 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT – EVIDENCE FROM JOB CENTRE PLUS – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that a representative from Job Centre Plus will be attending today's meeting to provide evidence to the Forum in relation to Youth Unemployment.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 18 January 2007, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this Scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 Consequently, a representative from the Job Centre Plus has been invited to today's meeting to provide evidence in relation to Youth Unemployment.
- 2.3 Members may wish to refer to the Terms of Reference in questioning this witness. In particular, points b) and e) are relevant to these discussions:
- (a) To gain an understanding of why the level of Youth Unemployment has risen as a percentage of the overall unemployment level;
 - (b) To gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in Hartlepool who have some responsibility for tackling Youth Unemployment;
 - (c) To examine the role of the Authority as a non-statutory service provider in relation to Youth Unemployment, and in particular its role in Economic Development;
 - (d) To gain the views of young people who are unemployed in relation to this issue; and
 - (e) To identify suggested areas for improvement in relation to the Youth Unemployment rate.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the representative from the Job Centre Plus in the process of gathering evidence for the Investigation into Youth Unemployment.

CONTACT OFFICER

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment – Scoping Report
(Scrutiny Support Officer) – 18.01.07

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

23 February 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT – EVIDENCE FROM THE
COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR –
COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that a representative from Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) will be attending today's meeting to provide evidence to the Forum in relation to Youth Unemployment.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 18 January 2007, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this Scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 Consequently, a representative from the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) has been invited to today's meeting to provide verbal evidence in relation to Youth Unemployment.
- 2.3 Members may wish to refer to the Terms of Reference in questioning this witness. In particular, points b) and e) are relevant to these discussions:
- (a) To gain an understanding of why the level of Youth Unemployment has risen as a percentage of the overall unemployment level;
 - (b) To gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in Hartlepool who have some responsibility for tackling Youth Unemployment;
 - (c) To examine the role of the Authority as a non-statutory service provider in relation to Youth Unemployment, and in particular its role in Economic Development;
 - (d) To gain the views of young people who are unemployed in relation to this issue; and

- (e) To identify suggested areas for improvement in relation to the Youth Unemployment rate.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the representative from the CVS in the process of gathering evidence for the Investigation into Youth Unemployment.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment – Scoping Report
(Scrutiny Support Officer) – 18.01.07

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

23 February 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT – EVIDENCE FROM
CONNEXIONS – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that it has not been possible to arrange for a representative from Connexions to attend today's meeting. However, attached to this report is a written submission prepared by Connexions in relation to Youth Unemployment.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 18 January 2007, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this Scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 Consequently, at **Appendix A** a paper from Connexions has been attached to this report.
- 2.3 Members may wish to consider the content of the report attached in **Appendix A** and refer to the Terms of Reference (outlined below) when discussing this report. In particular, points b) and e) are relevant to these discussions:
- (a) To gain an understanding of why the level of Youth Unemployment has risen as a percentage of the overall unemployment level;
 - (b) To gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in Hartlepool who have some responsibility for tackling Youth Unemployment;
 - (c) To examine the role of the Authority as a non-statutory service provider in relation to Youth Unemployment, and in particular its role in Economic Development;
 - (d) To gain the views of young people who are unemployed in relation to this issue; and

- (e) To identify suggested areas for improvement in relation to the Youth Unemployment rate.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the contents of Appendix A prepared by Connexions in the process of gathering evidence for the Investigation into Youth Unemployment.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment – Scoping Report
(Scrutiny Support Officer) – 18.01.07



RESPONSE TO REQUEST FROM REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To respond to the request for evidence to support the investigation into youth unemployment in Hartlepool.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CONNEXIONS

2.1 Mandates

Connexions is a relatively recent statutory service, created under the Learning & Skills Act 2000 in order to “*encourage, enable or assist, directly or indirectly, young people’s effective participation in learning*”(Section 114). It has been operational in Hartlepool since September 2002 and delivered as a subregional service across Tees Valley by a company wholly owned by the five local authorities. Teenagers are the client group. This company will disaggregate on 31/3/07 and each local authority in Tees Valley will then become directly independently responsible for service provision, as part of the differing developing landscapes for Integrated Children’s Services.

The Connexions service also totally subsumed the responsibilities and budgets of the previous Careers Service, created under the still extant 1973 Employment & Training Act in order to “*assist young persons undergoing relevant education to decide what employments, having regard to their capabilities, will be suitable for and available to them when they cease undergoing such education; and what training or education is, or will be required, by and available to them, in order to fit them for those employments.*” (Section 8 as amended by Trade Union Reform & Employment Rights Act 1993).

Additionally under the 1997 Education Act, all secondary schools became responsible for the provision of careers information and a careers education programme to all their pupils. Connexions staff play a specialist supporting role.

The DfES Connexions grant cannot be used to purchase provision of post 16 learning, nor to subsidise employment opportunities. Connexions role is one of supporting individuals, their families and also learning providers in their pastoral provision to teenagers. Responsibility for funding of appropriate learning opportunities is within the jurisdiction of the Learning & Skills Council, with whom Connexions try to work in partnership in terms of planning.

3. CONNEXIONS ROLE IN YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

3.1 Monitoring

Since 2002 Connexions partnerships have had a responsibility to report the current known destinations of all 16-19 year olds who have completed compulsory education. This is carried out on a **monthly** basis, as part of the suite of management information reports to DfES. No other organisation has this responsibility, as others only report on particular parts of the entire cohort. There are clear data currency rules related to how recently young people must have been contacted for a destination data to be regarded as valid. In the case of young people being recorded as unemployed, DfES rules state at least a contact in the past 12 weeks after which time the destination will lapse into the “not known” category. Connexions therefore has a great deal of historical data over the past 5 years which is analytically important, as the levels of youth unemployment fluctuate over a 12 month cycle, impacted each September by the inclusion of the previous summer’s year 11 completers.

3.2 Targets

Throughout its brief history, all 47 Connexions Partnerships have been set targets by DfES, via its annual planning guidance, to reduce the levels of youth unemployment amongst those aged 16-18 in particular. Initially all partnerships were asked to reduce youth unemployment by one tenth (10%) between November 2002 and November 2004, and subsequently by varying levels (depending on previous baselines) between November 2004 – November 2006.

These targets were the forerunners of the current national DfES PSA target 12 to reduce Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs) by 2 percentage points from 8% to 6% over the period 2004 to 2010. With the demise of subregional Connexions services, these targets have now manifested themselves, with an annual trajectory, as part of local authorities’ Local Area Agreement targets.

3.3 DfES Guidance

The following extract from the next operational year’s (2007-2008) DfES planning guidance for Connexions services contained in CXP 215(issued 03/11/06) outlines the continuing importance for Connexions of reducing youth unemployment :

Priorities for 2007- 08

*As in 2006-07, the Department’s priorities for 2007-08 business plans are to demonstrate that robust arrangements are in place to secure a continued focus on delivering the NEET and other Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets; **NEET targets (those Not in Education Employment or Training)***

(i). It is vital that Local Authorities, Connexions Partnerships and other local partners have a clear understanding of the reduction in the size of the NEET group that is required in their area. Business plans must be clear about the action to be taken to meet, or where possible exceed, these targets. Improving the planning of provision for those NEET (or not yet at level 2) is particularly important, and Local Authorities/Connexions services are encouraged to build on the checklist given in the ‘Aligning provision toolkit’ (action note CX 207) issued on 23 June 2006.

(ii). Action Note GO 168 gives provisional 2010 NEET targets for each Local Authority area. In areas that are not aligned to a Local Area Agreements (LAA), Government Offices (GOs) should negotiate interim milestones for 2007 and 2008 at a level which will put the Local

Authority on track to meet the 2010 provisional target. Plans should also set out the activities and services that will contribute to the achievement of these milestones, including arrangements for working with local partners - particularly the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and schools.

(iii). GOs should already have negotiated, or be in the process of negotiating, provisional 2010 targets and interim milestones in areas that are aligned to a LAA. Business plans should set out the agreed targets, and describe how the Local Authority or Connexions Partnership will contribute to their achievement. This should reflect the corresponding elements of the LAA.

4 ACTIONS TAKEN AS PART OF CONNEXIONS LOCAL NEET REDUCTION STRATEGY

Please see below

DFES/PMDU NEET REDUCTION LEVERS	FORENSIC USE OF MANAGEMENT INFORMATION, REFERRAL AND TRACKING	BEST PRACTICE & USE OF KEY WORKERS FOR BROKERAGE, ADVOCACY AND IAG	ALIGNMENT WITH PRE & POST 16 SUPPLY SIDE: CURRICULUM & PROGRESSION	IMPROVED INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION
EXAMPLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DEVOLVED LOCAL TARGET EARLY 2003 NEW CCIS DATABASE 2003 ALL TEENAGERS RECORDED& NEETS CASELOADED TO PERSONAL ADVISERS(PAs) INFORMATION SHARING ON NEET YP WITH VOLUNTARY SECTOR:VIA MILLENIUM VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATION USE OF "CALL DIVERT" AGENCY TO CONTACT 19 YEAR OLDS WHO WERE "NOT KNOWN" NEETS "BLITZ WEEKS" ALL STAFF DIARIED CONTACTING YOUNG PEOPLE ADDITIONAL "K.I.T" (KEEPING IN TOUCH) STAFF APPOINTED 2005 TO IMPROVE TRACKING OF YP. ASSESSMENT MODULES ON CCIS DATABASE FOR ALL PAS TO ENSURE RECORDING ACCURACY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STAFF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY TO UPSKILL ALL LEVEL 3 QUALIFIED PAs TO LEVEL 4 AND UNQUALIFIED STAFF TO LEVEL 3 & BEYOND TRAINING IN RICKTER/ SOLUTION FOCUSED & MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING SKILLS TO PROVIDE BETTER SUPPORT ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY BASED STAFF APPOINTED VIA FUNDED PROJECTS :KICKSTART / HARTLEPOOL ON TRACK TARGETED USE OF POSITIVE ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE PROGRAMME TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT STRATEGY WITH SCHOOLS COLLABORATIVE WORKING WITH YOUTH SEVICE TO REDUCE NEETS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHARING OF NEET DATA WITH LSC FOR PROVISION PLANNING ROLL OUT OF PRE E2E PROGRAMMES ARCHWAY & SUPPORT FOR HCFE "U PROJECT "FOR SUMMER PROVISION FOR THOSE AT RISK OF BECOMING NEET PARTNERSHIP WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON TO DELIVER CONNECT TO WORK ETHICAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECT WITH EMPLOYERS & VACANCIES"ON LINE" GOALZ PROJECT FOR YP ATTENDING P.R.U.MOST AT RISK OF BECOMING NEET PLACEMENT SUPPORT OFFICERS(YJB FUNDED) FOR THOSE MOST AT RISK IN CRMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE PILOTS "PURPLE ACCOUNT" WITH DARLINGTON BUILDING SOCIETY FOR THOSE UNABLE TO OPEN ACCOUNTS KICKSTART PROJECT GRANTS FOR EQUIPMENT & START UP FOR TRAINING & JOBS REBEL PAYMENTS PROMOTION OF "CARE TO LEARN" FUNDING FOR YOUNG MOTHERS

The above table outlines actions taken by Connexions in Hartlepool to help reduce NEETs, presented using the analytical model with the four potential reduction levers outlined in the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit document.

5 COMPARATIVE LEVELS OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

The pattern of youth unemployment in Hartlepool appears to be an issue which increases with age, even moreso so than the national trend. This issue was debated at some length with the inspectors from the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) & OFSTED during the recent Joint Area Review process.

5.1 16-18 COHORT

Unemployment rates for 16-18 years olds in late 2006 have been consistently above those in 2005 by about 2 percentage points and at the end of December were 11.5% compared to 9.3% in 2005. The key factor issue seems more to be what is available for young people locally once they have completed post compulsory education and or training, especially if they do not wish to progress to university.

The unemployment rates at the end of December 06 amongst the cohort were 6.8% of all 16 year olds, 10.2% of all 17 year olds & 13.7% of all 18 year olds. The increase is noticeable in 17 & mainly 18 year olds unemployed compared to previously.

During the period June 2005 to June 2006 the proportion of the 16-18 year old cohort in Hartlepool recorded as in employment fell from 12.7% to 7.0%- by almost a half. This indicates fewer local job opportunities for young people to take advantage of.

The replacement of the £40 training allowance by Education Maintenance allowance in April 2006 (which is routed via the family rather than paid direct to the young person) appears to have had an impact on the proportions entering & remaining within work based learning from 10.6% in December 2005 to 7.6% in December 2006.

5.2 SCHOOL LEAVERS WITHIN THE 16-18 COHORT

The good news is that, according to the latest data from November 2006, of all the twelve local authority areas in the north east, Hartlepool at 78.3% has the highest proportion of 2006 year 11 completers continuing in education post 16, well above the regional average of 73.6%. National data is not yet available.

However there has been a noticeable reduction in the proportion of school leavers progressing into non employed work based learning from 10.9% in 2005, when it was the second highest out of 150 local areas in the country to 5.6% in 2006. There were 84 (6.5%) school leavers who were not in education, employment or training as at 1 November 2006, lower than the 7.6% in 2005 & 7.5% in 2004, so progress with this key group is being maintained.

As from 2007 details on individual progression rates post 16 will be included in the annual DfES performance tables alongside proportions achieving 5 GCSE grades A-C.

5.3 POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

There are no panacea solutions for what is a complex problem. As well as continuing to work on simplifying progression routes from foundation & intermediate level qualifications, areas to consider include making the rewards for participation in work based training as comparatively attractive to young people as they were prior to the introduction of the Educational Maintenance allowance. More support for organizations to employ young people through the work based learning programme and pay employed status rates of around £80 per week direct to the young person may reinvigorate participation.

The proportion of young people in real jobs remains low. Whether this is more a reflection of the overall lack of buoyancy in the local labour market , as opposed to a potential relative lack of employability skills vis a vis other age cohorts needs to be more thoroughly investigated as this could shape potential solutions.

Terry Wilson , NEETFinder General

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

23 February 2007



Report of: Economic Development Manager

Subject: Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment –
Draft Research Report

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide evidence to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum in relation to the investigation into Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In November 2006, Hartlepool Borough Council's Economic Development service commissioned a consultant to explore a number of areas of work in relation to youth unemployment in Hartlepool. The purpose of the research was to assist the development of an additional range of employment and training projects that will assist in a reduction of youth unemployment and economic inactivity (Referred to as 'not in employment, education or training' (NEET)). There were five specific aims of this research:

1. Undertake desk based research into the factors that lead to 16 and 17 year olds becoming classified as NEET (Not in education, employment or training) and identify the real scale of the problem in Hartlepool.
2. Assess the impact of mainstream publicly funded employment and training programmes that are targeted at 16 to 24 year olds, with a particular focus on evaluating comparative data at a local, sub-regional, regional and national level.
3. Undertake a gap analysis of mainstream interventions identified in paragraph 2 above and identify and assess alternative interventions, including national best practice that have been instrumental in reducing youth unemployment and economic inactivity.

4. Undertake an evaluation into the perception of employers to recruiting young people and the level of investment in training and development deployed.
5. Facilitate a focus group with key stakeholders to address issues relating to youth unemployment.

The report has now completed and is presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum as evidence into the underlining issues relating to unemployment amongst young people in Hartlepool and will complement the evidence provided by the Learning & Skills Council; Job Centre Plus; Connexions Service and Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency.

The Consultant used a series of techniques in developing the research and completing the report, this included both qualitative and quantitative data, stakeholder consultation and a focus group of young people. The report also outlines the key mainstream provision available to young people and highlights the criteria and key elements of each programme as well as an overview of area based projects provided by Hartlepool Borough Council. Crucially the report also provides a gap analysis and suggests areas, which may be exploited to improve support structures, whilst part 5 outlines the reports conclusions and makes recommendations that members may wish to consider in concluding their investigation.

3. RECOMMENDATION

Members are recommended to consider the contents of the attached report (Appendix 1) as evidence presented by Hartlepool Borough Council as part of the investigation into youth unemployment.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN HARTLEPOOL
Developing an evidence base

FEBRUARY 2007

Tracy Elwin - Research and Consultancy

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1. Introduction

It is Hartlepool Borough Council's intention to develop an additional range of employment and training projects that will assist in a reduction of youth unemployment and economic inactivity. To this end the Council have commissioned research to provide an evidence base that will support the development of these additional initiatives.

1.1 The Brief

The research brief outlines a number of key areas for further exploration.

- What is the real scale of the NEET problem in Hartlepool and what are the factors that lead to 16 and 17 year olds becoming classified as NEET?
- What has been the impact of mainstream publicly funded employment and training programmes targeted at 16-24 year olds?
- Where are the gaps in mainstream provision?
- What are the perceptions of employers and young people?

It was also the intention that this work should build upon the research undertaken by CLES into unemployment in Hartlepool in 2001. This research brief posed a number of questions:

- Why had the unemployment rate for Hartlepool remained at the 10-11%?
- Why had success across a range of initiatives not translated into lower unemployment levels?
- What are the key groups or segments within the total group of unemployed and how are they faring within the overall statistics?
- Churn in the labour market - what does it say about the structure of the labour market?

The report concluded that the vast part of what was going on in the labour market ***"is a direct result of macro economic drivers and policies. Other problems are institutionalised or cultural and will not be easy to resolve"***.

The report highlighted in particular that:

- Unemployment rates had remained high due to macro economic pressures – Hartlepool's slack labour market meant that active labour market projects had had less impact. Employment opportunities were not impacting on those on JSA but were being taken up by those who were economically inactive and had a greater incentive to work.
- There was evidence of significant churn in the labour market – with many people coming on and off training courses and initiatives
- Barriers to employment for the 16-24 age group included:

- A lack of work experience and qualifications
- The inter relationship between work and parents' benefits (where the young person was living at home)
- Unrealistic expectations of work and wages
- These young people were often in a non working peer group.

This report aims to build on and update the findings of this research focussing on the 16-24 age group. Given the huge body of data and the breadth of provision available to this target group it has not been possible to provide an in depth analysis in the available timeframe. However, this research has begun the process of 'unpicking the headline data' on youth unemployment and undertaken some initial consultation with young people and key stakeholders. From this initial research it has been possible to build up a picture of youth unemployment in Hartlepool and to identify a number of key areas that require further and more detailed exploration and analysis.

1.2 Methodology

The research took place between November 2006 and January 2007. The first stage of the research involved a review of the existing data using NOMIS and JSU reports, comparing the data where possible, to the rest of Tees Valley and the UK; focusing on indicators in relation to claimant count, economic activity and inactivity, worklessness, the NEET group and destinations of school leavers.

This data has then been supplemented by qualitative anecdotal information from semi structured interviews with individuals and focus groups as well as responses to questionnaires. To date consultation has taken place with 18 representatives from the public, private and voluntary sector as well as interviews and focus groups with 10 young people. The young people ranged from 17-21 years of age. Five young people were on E2e programmes, two were on New Deal and had just been accepted on Hartlepool Borough Council's ILM project, one was in employment, and two were on placement with a voluntary sector organisation.

2. Background

Over the last 10 years Hartlepool has benefited from significant investment in the regeneration of the town, both physically and in its people.

- City Challenge
- Single Regeneration Budget
- New Deal for Communities
- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
- European Social Fund Objective 2 &3 and ERDF

Improving the employability of the town's residents has been a key priority for these regeneration initiatives.

2.1 Mainstream provision

Within the timeframe available it has only been possible to apply a 'light touch' approach to assessing mainstream provision and undertaking a gap analysis.

On this basis the mainstream programmes available to this target group include those funded by Job Centre Plus, Learning and Skills Council and Connexions Tees Valley (this sub regional service will be disaggregated in April 2007). Delivery of programmes can be via a range of contractors from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Provider	Provision	Key Elements
Job Centre Plus	<p>Support for people of working age</p> <p>Under 6 months unemployed –</p> <p>Over 6 months unemployed: New Deal for Young People 18-24 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory programme • Must have been claiming JSA for 6 months to be eligible for the programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active help from personal advisers to find work to meet individual needs • Jobseeker Direct is a job vacancy phone service • All young people assigned Personal Adviser • Assistance to draw up action plan • 'Gateway' for up to 4 months – regular meetings with Personal Adviser and then move into full time help/package of support • Option period: during this time the young person receives a training allowance equivalent to JSA and may also receive a £15.38 top up. • Options include: work experience, placements with employer or voluntary organisation, courses to develop skills employers want, help applying for jobs. • At end of option period if not found employment or moved into training the young person returns to JSA for 'follow through' period.
Learning and Skills Council	<p>Improving the skills of young people and adults to ensure a workforce of world-class standard.</p> <p>Apprenticeships -</p>	<p>A work-based learning programme that allows employers to train existing staff and new young people. The programme involves key skills</p>

	<p>Entry to Employment (E2E)</p> <p>Further Education</p> <p>1st level 2 Entitlement</p> <p>Adult & Community Learning</p> <p>Skills for Life – National LSC</p> <p>Train to Gain - for businesses,</p>	<p>qualification as well as technical certificate eg BTEC, City and Guilds. Lasts between 1-4 yrs.</p> <p>Programme aimed at young people aged 16– 18 who are not involved in employment, education or training; aims to prepare the learner for employment in the apprenticeship programme through work placements and/or training.</p> <p>Courses can be full or part time, academic or vocational. Providers fall broadly into five categories: agriculture and horticulture colleges; art, design and performing arts colleges; general FE and tertiary colleges; sixth form colleges; and specialist designated institutions.</p> <p>Priority given to those learners who have not already achieved this standard.</p> <p>Support a diverse range of community-based and outreach learning opportunities.</p> <p>Initiative for improving literacy, numeracy and language (ESOL) skills.</p> <p>Skills Brokers match any training needs identified with training providers ensure that training is delivered to meet business needs.</p>
Connexions Tees Valley	Offers a family of services Valley including impartial and accessible information, advice and guidance for 13-19 year olds	<p>Service delivered by teams of Personal Advisers located at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools and colleges • community locations • youth facilities • one stop shops in high street locations <p>As well as the Connexions Tees Valley website.</p> <p>Support offered includes: Support learning, removing barriers to progression, raising aspirations and creating opportunities to enter education, employment or training.</p>

The above agencies supplement their mainstream provision with a range of additional projects and initiatives funded from Europe as well as area based

regeneration programmes. This enables the targeting of additional resources to identified needs. However, these funding streams are fixed term but they enable pilot provision to be delivered and any subsequent good practice to be mainstreamed.

Hartlepool Borough Council provision

Hartlepool Working Solutions offers a range of employment related activities that facilitates a joined up approach to service delivery in the NRS area. Hartlepool Working Solutions has seven separate elements:

- Targeted Training
- Womens Opportunities
- Jobs Build
- Work Route (ILM)
- Enhancing Employability
- Progression to Work
- Work Smart

Each element complements each other and aims to:

- Provide support for residents furthest removed from the labour market by offering a cocktail of interventions, which help to overcome multiple barriers to employment.
- Employment focused training, which meets the needs of the local labour market.
- Intermediary activities, which offer NRS residents with paid employment through Hartlepool Borough Council and acts as a transition to unsupported employment.
- Incentives to improve the match between the needs of employers and the aspirations of residents.
- Focused activities to support lone parents wishing to return to the labour market or become self-employed.
- Build links with employers to improve job brokerage and enhance agency activities in the town through the sharing of best practice.
- Ensure that residents have access to effective information, advice and guidance in order that they can make informed decisions regarding the opportunities open to them.

In 2005-06 Hartlepool Working Solutions supported 157 residents into employment

2.2 Population

The table below shows the population of Hartlepool by age group. The cohort this report focuses on, the 16-24 age group, represent 10,600 of the overall population in Hartlepool in mid 2006 making up 12% of the overall population.

	Total Population	Population by Age Group:						
		0-4	5-15	16-24	25-44	45-ret*	Ret*-74	75 plus
Darlington	99,800	6,100	13,400	10,900	26,400	23,200	11,700	8,000
Hartlepool	89,600	5,200	13,000	10,600	23,400	20,400	10,600	6,500
Middlesbrough	137,300	8,200	19,800	18,000	37,600	29,700	14,600	9,600
Redcar & Cleveland	137,200	7,200	18,600	15,600	34,100	32,600	18,000	11,200
Stockton-on-Tees	187,100	10,500	26,400	22,000	51,600	43,700	20,500	12,500
Tees Valley	651,000	37,100	91,100	77,100	173,100	149,600	75,400	47,700
North East	2,529,000	132,700	334,000	305,500	662,400	592,200	302,000	200,200
England & Wales	53,463,000	3,070,000	7,131,000	6,219,000	15,128,000	11,813,000	5,942,000	4,160,000

Notes : * "Ret" - Retirement age is 60 for Women, 65 for Men. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source : TVJSU

2.3 Economic Profile of Hartlepool

This section provides a snap shot of the local economy for the year ended December 2005 (Economic Profile for Districts in the Tees Valley - October 2006 Edition, JSU).

- 71.7% of the working age population are economically active. Hartlepool has the lowest rate of economic activity across Tees Valley and is significantly lower than the rate for the region – 75.2% and nationally 78.4%. Since 1999 Hartlepool is the only area in the Tees Valley that has seen an overall reduction in the rate of economic activity.
- 67.2% of the working age population are in employment – 49.6% in full time and 17.7% in part time employment. Hartlepool has a lower rate than Tees Valley (only Middlesbrough is lower than Hartlepool at 66.4%), the region and nationally.
- 6.4% of the working population are in self employment – this is the second highest rate in Tees Valley. Hartlepool has seen a significant

increase in this rate since 1999 – almost 3% - the highest increase in Tees Valley. This rate compares favourable with Tees Valley and the region at 6% and 6.3% respectively but is still lower than the national rate at 9%.

- 16.1% of the working age population have an NVQ4 or above (the lowest in Tees Valley). This is significantly lower than the regional rate of 21.3% and the national rate of 26.5%. 20.2% have no qualifications (the second highest in Tees Valley) compared to 18.8% for Tees Valley, 15.6% for the region and 14.3% nationally.
- Unemployment has been steadily decreasing since 1997 – from 8% to a low of 3.8% in 2005. The rate is now increasing and had reached 4.5% in September 2006. This rate is higher than Tees Valley at 3.8%, the region at 3.2% and nationally at 2.6%.
- Worklessness can be used as an alternative view of unemployment by measuring the total percentage of people of working age without work. Hartlepool's workless rate in September 2006 was 34.8% - the second highest in Tees Valley – higher than both Tees Valley at 33% and Great Britain at 25.5%.
- Hartlepool's average weekly earnings (full time and resident based)) at £373 are lower than Tees Valley, the north East and Great Britain.
- The job density figure for Hartlepool (devised as an indicator of job demand whilst vacancy data was temporarily unavailable) was 0.64 in 2004. The national average was 0.8 – indicating Hartlepool has more people than jobs and therefore has a slack labour market.

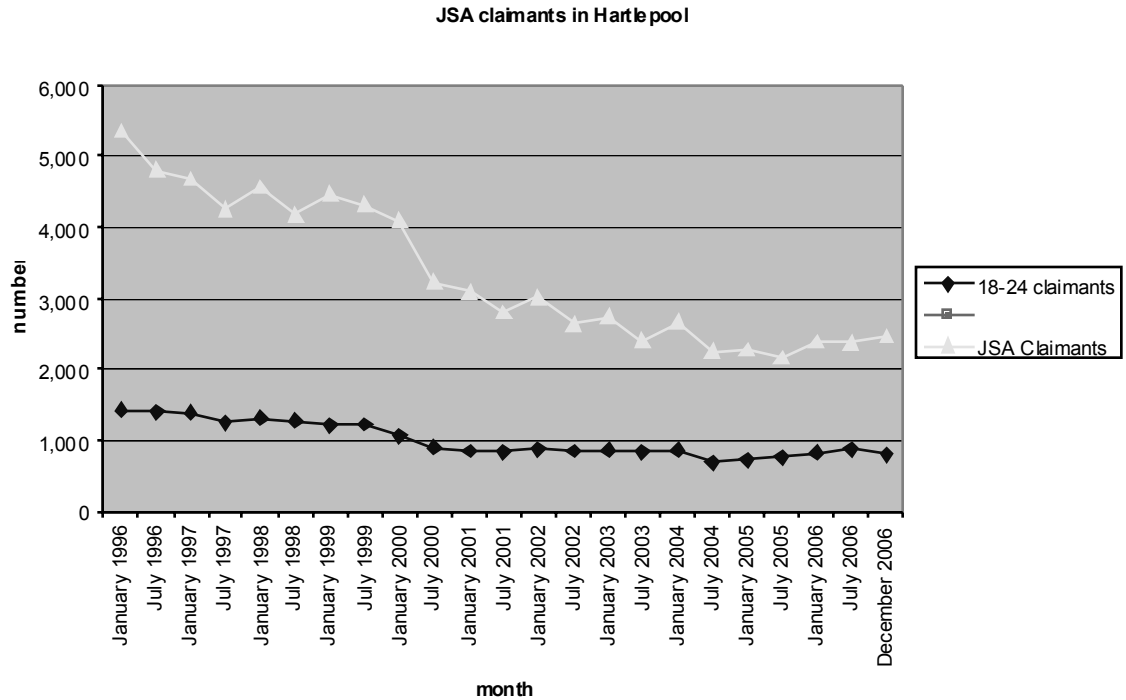
The CLES report provided a snapshot of the local economy in 2000 and found some similar characteristics:

- Slack labour market
- Low wage levels
- Lowered expectations of work and attainment
- High availability and provision of training

At this time unemployment was at 10.9% (February 2000). Over the last six years unemployment has reduced to 4.5% (September 2006) but the characteristics of the labour market remain similar.

2.4 Unemployment and worklessness

Youth unemployment is one of the key economic targets included in the Hartlepool Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and Best Value Performance Plan. The long term target established in 2002 is to reduce the overall rate to 29% in 2012 from a baseline of 30.7%



As can be seen from the chart, overall unemployment (as measured in terms of claimant count JSA) has declined from a high of 5357 in 1996 to just over 2500 in January 2004 with 18-24 claimants reducing from a high of over 1400 to fewer than 800. However, during this period, the rate of 18-24 claimants measured as a proportion of overall JSA claimants fluctuated between 27% and reaching a high of 35% in the same period. The overall number of Hartlepool residents claiming JSA has declined at a greater rate than that of the 18-24 year old age group.

This research seeks to understand what is the real scale of youth unemployment in Hartlepool and provide an evidence base that will support the development of additional targeted employment and training projects that will lead to a reduction in youth unemployment. This report will address a number of key issues as laid out in the research brief.

- Research into the factors that lead to 16 and 17 year olds becoming classified as NEET and identify the real scale of the problem
- Assess the impact of mainstream publicly funded employment and training programmes targeted at 16-24 year olds
- Undertake a gap analysis of mainstream interventions
- Ascertain employers and young peoples perceptions of the issues

3. Findings

In order to gain a better understanding of the factors that may have impacted on the youth unemployment rate in Hartlepool the following data has been analysed:

- Population trends of the target group.
- Key indicators for the 16-18 cohorts – to gain insight into the real scale of worklessness amongst this group: young people in learning and work, the NEET group and those whose destination is “not known”.
- Issues of unemployment and worklessness
- Claimant count and duration of unemployment

Feedback from consultations with young people, agencies and organisations and stakeholders has also been used to add value to the data and to explore barriers to young people taking up training and employment.

3.1 Population trends

The overall population of the town in this period has declined; however, there has been a 15% increase in those aged 15-24 compared to only a 7% increase in those aged 25-59. With the main increase in those young people aged 15-19.

Whilst an increase in the population in this age group may account for some of the rate rise in 18-24 year old JSA claimants, analysis of data and qualitative information in relation to the 16-24 target group highlights some further issues.

3.2 Key Issues – 16-18 cohort

	Hartlepool	Tees Valley	England
16-18 Cohort Profile	2950	21209	1125658
% In learning	70.2	71.2	75.2
% NEET	11.7	12.4	8.6
% In employment	17.2	15.5	17.9
% Not known	4.00%	4.8	5.4

Source: Connexions Tees Valley

(i) Young People in learning

Hartlepool compares well with Tees Valley and England in terms of the number of young people in learning with 70.2% of this cohort in learning in Hartlepool compared to 71.2% in Tees Valley and 75.2% in England. Of those in learning, 58.2% are in education – slightly lower than Tees Valley (59.4%) and lower than England at 65.6%.

3.3% of those in learning are in employment with training – consistent with Tees Valley but significantly lower than in England – 6.4%. 8.7 of those in learning in Hartlepool are on government supported schemes. Both Hartlepool and Tees Valley are significantly higher than England at 3.2%.

Data on qualifications from the JSU shows that Hartlepool has higher rates of people achieving NVQ level 1 and 2 than Tees Valley, the region or nationally, but lower rates of those achieving trade apprenticeships.

Qualifications of working age population – 2005 Annual Population Survey

	Percentage people of working age with at least the following qualification level -						
	NVQ4 and above	NVQ3	Trade apprenticeships	NVQ2	NVQ1	Other qualifications	With no qualifications
Darlington	25.5	14.0	4.9	16.3	13.6	5.0	20.8
Hartlepool	16.1	17.0	6.7	19.1	15.7	5.3	20.2
Middlesbrough	16.5	15.4	7.1	17.9	14.4	8.8	19.8
Redcar & Cleveland	18.8	16.8	7.4	17.8	14.7	7.2	17.2
Stockton-on-Tees	25.4	17.8	5.5	18.6	14.3	4.1	14.3
Tees Valley	18.4	14.7	8.5	17.0	16.5	6.2	18.8
North East	21.3	15.4	7.3	18.3	15.5	6.6	15.6
Great Britain	26.5	15.1	5.6	15.8	14.3	8.4	14.3

Source: Annual Population Survey/JSUTV

Data from Connexions Tees Valley also reveals that more young people currently in training in Hartlepool join the NEET group from work based learning (WBL), E2e or Government Supported Training (GST) than in England 5.1% and 3.6% respectively.

Young people's perception of the training they had undertaken or were currently undertaking raised a number of issues. 5/7 young people were currently on E2e provision in Hartlepool, but all ten young people had undertaken some training provision in the town. Those currently on e2e programmes were all in receipt of EMA.

- It was evident that all the young people were unclear about what they wanted to do when they left school. This appears to result in:

Training as a stop gap – it was evident that most of these young people had taken up training because they did not know what else to do or because “their mates were going on the

course". 6 out of 10 of the young people who had been on training all commented that they were unsure what they wanted to do when they left school and that the training course "was better than doing nothing". One young person was very clear that once they turned eighteen they would leave the course and "they would get a job or sign on".

Dropping out – many of the young people had started courses, usually straight from leaving school at 16 and had then 'dropped out' and then went on to start another programme at a different provider. Two of the young people interviewed said that they did not think they would complete the programme.

- The young people were keen to start the job related aspects of the programmes and were not keen on the classroom elements of the training.
- All the young people interviewed had had contact with a Connexions Personal Adviser with Personal Advisers referring young people to training provision.
- One young person who had undertaken a diploma course at a college, but dropped out after two years, felt that there was not enough vocational support and was unclear as to the available progression routes had he completed the course.
- Young people were keen to have more tasters of programmes to help them identify which course is 'for them'.

The issues raised were reinforced by the agencies and organisations consulted with:

- Concern was expressed that young people are dropping out of training, in particular this was felt to be an issue in relation to young people not completing programmes due to being unable to secure a placement.
- It was felt that academic pathways were not suitable for all and that more vocational routes incorporating different (individual) learning styles were needed to assist with keeping young people engaged in education and training.
- There needs to be "a stronger bridge between training and labour market" and in particular it was felt that there needed to be more input and support from employers for apprenticeships.

A number of further points were raised with reference to young people and learning:

- Introduction of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was seen as having both a positive and negative impact. Whilst it was recognised

the EMA may help some young people to take up training a number of concerns were expressed:

- It was not necessarily helping those young people wanting to progress along the work based learning route and its introduction had resulted in a reduction in numbers of young people on E2e and apprenticeships
 - The 'means test' element of the application was deterring some families from applying.
- The key to engaging and retaining young people in learning is identifying a 'spark' of interest – something that interests and inspires them.
- Mainstream funding can be too output driven and not always flexible enough to support the hardest reach young people. Additional funding streams (e.g. ESF, Co financing) have been targeted at the NEET and hard to reach groups to assist with engaging and retaining them in learning. However, as these short term funding streams come to an end – concern was expressed that Hartlepool may see an increase in these figures without sustained targeting of additional resources.

(ii) Young People and employment

The number of young people in employment in Hartlepool compares well with England and is higher than in the Tees Valley. However, data indicates that a significant proportion of this employment is part time (65%) (NOMIS Jan-March 2006).

Employment is not seen as an 'option' at 16/17, "once I turn eighteen I'll leave the course and get a job or sign on".. The young people interviewed all saw employment as the end goal and were keen to receive a wage –although many were unsure of what kind of job they would like. It was evident that some had unrealistic expectations of the world of work – one young person commented when he was on placement "I had to start work at 7am and didn't finish till 6.30pm and I didn't even get any backhanders".

Concerns were expressed that education and training were not closely enough linked to the labour market and employers and that the curriculum and training programmes do not prepare young people for the labour market.

(iii) NEET Young People

The NEET figures for Hartlepool are higher than England but lower than the Tees Valley at 11.7%.

The NEET group can be broken down into those available for work and those not available for work. In relation to Hartlepool, those NEETs available for work make up 7.9% of the overall 11.7% with those not available for work making up 3.6%. This is significantly higher than Tees Valley at 2.8% but almost three times the rate for England at 1.3%.

Consultation with agencies and organisations revealed a number of factors that lead young people to becoming NEET:

- Disengaging from learning at school
- Low skills and qualifications
- Low aspirations – linked to generational unemployment
- Lack of confidence to access support networks when things go wrong
- Wider social issues eg homelessness, dependency issues, mental health issues, teenage pregnancy, caring responsibilities, young people in care

Vulnerable young people

Further analysis of this group reveals that Hartlepool has the highest percentage of teenage parents of all local authority areas in England. Furthermore, the data indicates that only 50% of 19 year old care leavers in the town are in education, employment or training (EET), therefore, correspondingly 50% are NEET or not known. This trend replicated in Tees Valley (with the exception of Redcar and Cleveland) and England.

The consultation process with agencies and organisations identified very clearly that a significant amount of work and resources had been targeted at supporting the NEET group in Hartlepool and that headway had been made in working with this group. The focus for resources should now be directed towards those vulnerable young people within the NEET group: young people leaving care, teenage parents, young carers and those with other 'family issues', homeless young people, young people with mental health issues, dependency issues and learning difficulties and disabilities.

It was also felt that many NEET and vulnerable young people often have low aspirations, self esteem and motivation and further work is needed to address wider issues of social deprivation and generational worklessness. Many of the young people interviewed had eventually embarked on a particular training route because their Dad, Mum, brother, friend etc had worked in this field. However, the majority of their parents and siblings were currently not working.

(iv) The Not Knowns

Hartlepool has a lower number of not knowns than Tees Valley but is higher than England. Hartlepool in particular has made a significant improvement in reducing the numbers of not knowns at 16 – a reduction of 83% since June 2005 and has also made an impact on the 17 and 18 year olds, however, 18 year olds still make up 70% of those not known.

16-18 cohort – Not knowns	June 2006	June 2005	Reduction	% in age range
Not knowns	122			
Not known at 16	5	29	83%	4
Not known at 17	32	102	69%	26
Not known at 18	85	216	61%	70
16-18	122	347	65%	100

Discussions with Connexions highlighted that destinations of those aged 17 and 18 are much harder to trace at 18 as many sign on and 'shift' contact from Connexions, as a young people's service, to Job Centre Plus. The two agencies have started to share data to enable closer tracking of young people aged 17-18.

The higher numbers of not known at 17 and 18 can in part be explained by the difficulty in tracking them, however, this would also be consistent with a significant number of 17 and 18 year olds dropping out of training programmes as highlighted in the previous sections.

(v) Young People still at school

Although this is beyond the remit of this research, a number of issues were raised in relation to school aged young people and support available at school regarding training and employment:

- Disengagement from school (sometimes exclusion) due to curriculum issues, teaching and learning styles
- Options and route ways are not sufficiently explained to young people early enough. This was reinforced by the young people interviewed who indicated that they would have liked more information about courses and what they entailed and what they could expect
- Pressure at school to perform in course work and exams. Many young people feel they cannot live up to expectations. This was a feeling expressed by one young person interviewed "there was too much pressure to do well".

(vi) Impact of mainstream provision

From the data and qualitative information it is possible to conclude that mainstream support is impacting positively on young people aged 16-18 in Hartlepool:

- The majority of young people in this cohort are engaged in Education, employment or training (EET) - 87%.
- The NEET group and the not known have both seen reductions in Hartlepool.

However, the data and qualitative information highlights a number of areas for further consideration:

- There are vulnerable groups within the NEET group who require targeted and intensive support – in particular teenage parents and young carers
- Young people appear to be dropping out of training and potentially contributing to the significant number of 'not known' aged 17 and 18 in Hartlepool.

- Young people still seem unsure about progression routes and the need for more targeted vocational IAG linked to the local labour market was identified.
- There was a general consensus that training and education was not adequately preparing young people for the labour market. Whilst Hartlepool has high rates of people achieving NVQ level 1 and 2, how far is this training improving their employability and assisting them to get jobs?
- Young people are 'tuned off' by traditional learning styles, particularly if they have basic skills issues.
- The young people interviewed and feedback from agencies identified a very clear lack of aspiration and inspiration with some of the provision available

3.3 Unemployment and Worklessness

The brief poses a specific question in relation to the 18-24 cohorts: to assess the impact of mainstream publicly funded employment and training programmes targeted at 16-24 year olds. This needs to be considered in light of the fact that the overall number of Hartlepool residents claiming JSA declining at a greater rate than that of the 18-24 year old age group.

The following table shows a profile of young people in the town in relation to employment and worklessness (May 2006). Due to how data is collected and collated it is not possible to analyse the data consistently across age groups and categories, however, the data in the table below provides an indication of the numbers in each category.

Indicator	16-17 years	16-19 years	18-24 years	20-24 years	Total
Unemployment (JSA Claimants)			820		820
Employment		2300		3700	6000
Income Support	50		730		780
Incapacity Benefit	30		410		440
Workless/Not known (remainder of population)					2560
Total					10,600
Ward with highest unemployment	Stranton				

67% of the 16-24 age groups are in employment, with almost 8% unemployed. 7% of the cohort is claiming income support and 4% are claiming Incapacity Benefit. When this data is compared with the corresponding rates for the 25-retirement age group, (3.7% unemployed, 14% Incapacity benefit, 10% income support), the rates of unemployment and

income support would seem high – however, this concurs with the data indicating that youth unemployment has reduced at a slower rate than overall unemployment but it would also be anticipated that the high incidence of teenage pregnancy amongst this age group would impact on the income support rate.

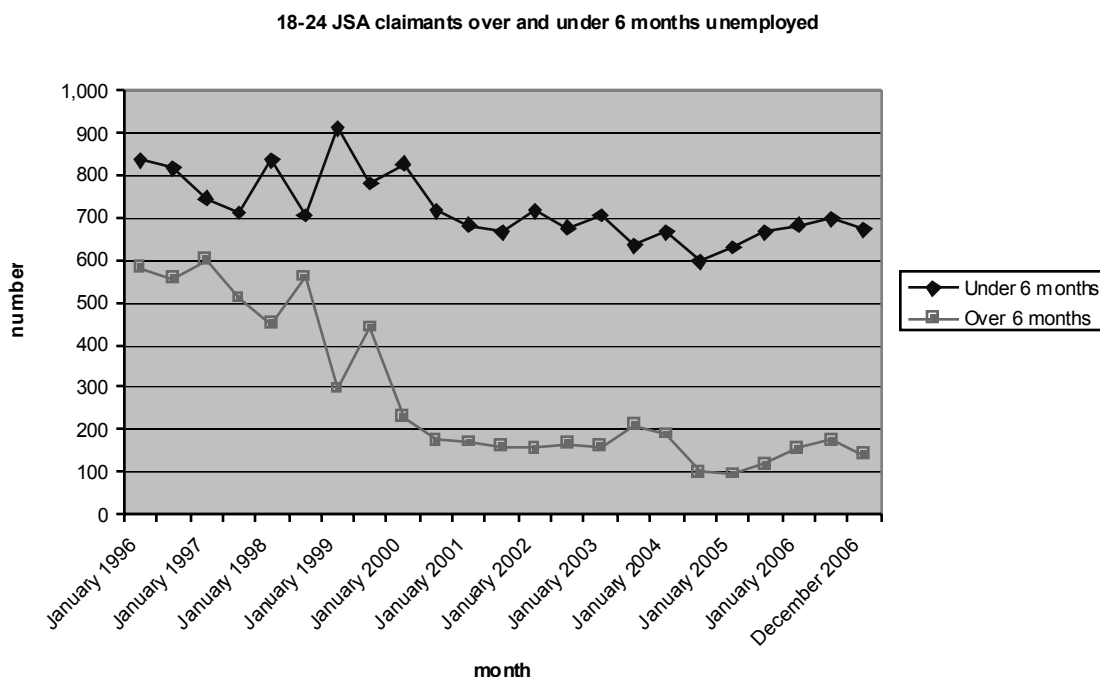
Furthermore, whilst the incapacity benefit rate for this group does not appear overly high in relation to the older age group – there are 440 young people on incapacity benefit – this figure does give cause for concern given the Government's green paper - A New Deal for Welfare Empowering People to Work (January 2006) which stated that "After two years on Incapacity Benefit, a person is more likely to die or retire than to find a new job". Does this mean that 4% of the 16-24 age groups could potentially be looking at long term benefit dependency?

(i) Claimant count and duration of unemployment

A closer look at the data reveals that the rate of unemployment is affected according to how long a young person has been unemployed.

Duration of unemployment

The following chart shows that those young people who have been unemployed for over 6 months have seen a significantly greater reduction in the numbers unemployed over the period than for those unemployed under 6 months.



Source: NOMIS

Those unemployed over 6 months are eligible for New Deal and it is this group that have seen a downward trend of 84% from its peak of 600 in January 1997 to its lowest point of 95 in January 2005. However, the numbers in this group have also started to increase steadily from this point, increasing to 175 in July 2006, although this figure has since come down to 140 in December 2006.

Those unemployed for less than 6 months have not seen the corresponding reduction in numbers. This group has seen a 35% reduction from its peak of 910 in January 1999 to its lowest point of 595 in July 2004. It would appear that the lower rate of reduction amongst this group is keeping the overall 18-24 rate at the 'high' identified in the baseline data. This trend is repeated across Tees Valley. Redcar and Cleveland have the lowest reduction in this claimant group of 33%. Further exploration of the factors impacting on the under 6 month unemployed group is required.

(ii) Churn

Churn is the number young people moving on and off the unemployment claimant count. The table below shows on and off flow for across Tees Valley, the region and nationally for those aged under 25 years.

	On flow		Off Flow		On flow under 25 years		Off Flow under 25 years	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Darlington	495	29.4	520	30.9	210	42.7	220	42.7
Hartlepool	585	24.4	590	24.7	280	48.2	245	41.6
Middlesbrough	945	23.5	1010	25.2	430	45.7	445	44.0
Redcar & Cleveland	835	27.3	860	28.2	415	49.7	400	46.7
Stockton	1130	29.1	1030	26.6	480	42.4	435	42.1
Tees Valley	3985	26.6	4015	26.6	1815	45.6	1750	43.5
North East	14060	28.2	14190	28.5	6375	45.3	6080	42.8
Great Britain	242735	26.0	233610	25.1	103445	42.6	90995	39.0

Source: JSU July 2006

Hartlepool has slighter lower numbers of those signing on and off the register than in Tees Valley, the North East or nationally. However, amongst those aged under 25 years, Hartlepool has a higher percentage (48%) signing on than that of the sub region, the region or nationally and for those signing off the register, Hartlepool's rate is lower than Tees Valley and the region but higher than the national rate. This indicates significant churn amongst this age group.

The following table provides the reasons why young people sign off the register.

Reason for leaving claimant count – 18-24 year olds	January 2006	April 2006	July 2006	October 2006
Found work	40	80	60	70
Increases work to 16+ hours/week	0	5	5	5
Gone abroad	0	0	10	0
Claimed Income Support	15	5	10	5
Claimed Sickness Benefit	-	-	-	-
Claimed Incapacity Benefit	5	5	15	20
Claimed another benefit	0	0	0	0
Gone to full-time education	0	0	0	15
Gone onto approved training	0	5	5	5
Transfer to Govt-supported training	15	45	20	40
Retirement age reached	0	0	0	0
Automatic credits payable	0	0	0	0
Claims back-to-work bonus	0	0	0	0
Gone to prison	0	0	0	0
Attending court	0	0	0	0
New claim review	0	0	0	0
Defective claim	0	0	5	0
Ceased claiming	0	0	0	5
Deceased	0	0	0	0
Not known	15	10	25	25
Failed to sign	90	120	90	110
Total	180	285	245	300

- These figures are missing. Data rounded to nearest 5.

Source: NOMIS

A snapshot of flow off the register in 2006 taken at quarterly intervals shows that by far the most common reason for leaving the claimant count is failure to sign amongst this age group – accounting for between 37-50%, with finding work second (22-28%), and transfer to government supported training programme next (8-16%) with not known accounting for between 3-10%. Those signing off JSA to claim another benefit (incapacity and income support) account for 3.5-11%. It is not clear from the data how many of those transferring to Government supported training are young people on New Deal transferring to the options period.

The data also indicates a slightly greater churn amongst those young people unemployed under 6 months. It has not been possible to analyse the data further but consultation suggests a number of reasons for the slower reduction in the rate of those under 6 months unemployed and the significant churn on and off the register:

- Avoidance of New Deal – ‘the threat effect’. Young people signing off the register before they are eligible for New Deal to take up employment or training, transfer to another benefit or fail to sign – only to sign on at a later date.

- This creates the potential for churn between those claimants unemployed for over 6 months and those unemployed for under 6 months. If a young person who is eligible for New Deal signs off or fails to sign for 13 weeks, they break their eligibility for New Deal and return to under the 6 months unemployed category. Given that failure to sign is the most common reason for claimants in this age group signing off the register, there is a significant possibility that this kind of churn is taking place. Without further in depth analysis – the extent of this is not possible to gauge. Those who complete the gateway, options and follow through parts of New Deal return to JSA and have to complete another 26 weeks on JSA before they are eligible again for New Deal however, they are still counted in the 6+ unemployed category. To reduce this incidence of ‘churn’ amongst the 25+ claimants on New Deal, the eligibility criteria was amended – claimants would be eligible for New Deal if they had claimed JSA for 18 months over a 21 month period.
- Young people dropping out of training and signing on. Discussions with young people and agencies indicate a number of possible reasons for this:
 - Young people completing the first year of their training who are then unable to secure a placement to complete their second year of training. These young people then join the claimant count when they are eighteen years old.
 - Young people leaving school and start training but have no clear direction or progression route in mind. They later drop out as this was not the appropriate progression route for them.
 - Young people leave school and embark on NVQ level 2 training. The progression routes available at this stage include level 3 training and university or employment. For those not ‘academically’ able to progress to a level 3 or University, the links to the labour market after completing their level 2 are not always visible or achievable. This may also link in with the high number of those at 18 who are ‘not known’ to Connexions.

(ii) Young people and the labour market

From discussions with young people, agencies, organisations and employers a number of key barriers were identified to young people accessing and progressing in the local labour market:

Employability skills – it was felt that many young people lack key employability and life skills. Those specifically mentioned included, communication skills, confidence, motivation – getting out of bed, personal hygiene, and an appreciation of ‘appropriate behaviour’ in relation to the workplace. From discussions with employers and training providers it is

possible to see their role developing into one of 'parent', providing 'life skills' support to young people e.g. help with managing money, personal hygiene, getting to work/training on time, taking responsibility for their actions.

Basic skills- concern was expressed that despite significant funding to support the improvement of basic skills, this was still a major barrier to young people accessing and progressing in training or the labour market. Changes to the New Deal programme in Hartlepool have seen the introduction of basic skills support in the gateway period to assist with job search and progression to training.

Generational unemployment

It was felt that young people lack role models in relation to training and employment and that this was limiting their aspirations. 7 out of 10 of the young people interviewed stated their parents and other family members were not working – a significant number of parents had caring responsibilities either for other siblings or relatives.

The issues was also raised that worklessness was increasingly concentrated in families and communities where a culture of worklessness and benefit dependency was the 'norm' and an accepted way of life. Since 1996 the number of families on benefits with children under 15 in the town has increased overall. However, single parent families have significantly decreased. This could be an indication that New Deal for Lone Parents is having an impact on lone parent's families.

Structural issues

Benefit dependency was felt to impact on this group, particularly in relation to a young person's status (e.g. in learning, unemployed working) and its impact on the family's benefits. It was also felt to be an issue where young people were claiming incapacity benefit, where minimum wage jobs are not that attractive in comparison.

Macro economic issues – there was felt to be a lack of jobs resulting in a significant number of young people taking up training

Recruitment and training of young people

Employers were not always clear about "how to go about" recruiting young people under the age of 18. Where recruitment and retention of young people had been successful this was attributed to:

- Good local networks – local businesses embedded in local communities
- Employer had employed the young person straight from school and invested significant training and support. One employer felt that when young people leave education/training at 18-20 they were less inclined to "learn a trade and more difficult to mould".
- Employer assumes the 'parent role' providing significant social and emotional support to young people.

The young people interviewed felt there were not enough jobs advertised for young people. Job adverts tended to ask for people with experience.

(iv) Impact of Mainstream Provision

From the data on claimant count and duration, there would appear to be a link between the introduction of New Deal in 1998 and the reduction in numbers claiming JSA who are over 6 months unemployed. However, young people can access additional training and employment support initiatives aimed at enhancing New Deal provision provided through the voluntary and community sector as well as the local authority and therefore, it is not possible to isolate the impact of New Deal.

Furthermore, data on young people on New Deal in Hartlepool in terms of destinations is not available. This means it is not possible to analyse the impact of New Deal on the flow of young people on and off the register to gauge the extent to which New Deal has supported young people into employment or training and how sustainable that destination has been. From discussions with JCP it would appear that:

- New Deal data recorded and collated by JCP is only available on a Tees Valley wide basis and cannot be interrogated for Hartlepool only
- Performance is measured by contractor not by area or cohort
- Targets and measures have changed over time making any form of time series analysis difficult.

Feedback from young people on New Deal was limited as only two young people had experience of New Deal. Both young people had completed the gateway elements of New Deal and were about to start 'employment' with Hartlepool Borough Council's intermediate Labour Market Programme as a result of joint working between Economic Development and the Leaving Care Team. Both young people would have liked more intensive support from New Deal. One of the young people had completed a short training course whilst on New Deal which he found useful but had then sourced employment himself and with the help of his social worker. The other young person would have liked more proactive job search support during the gateway period.

Evaluations of New Deal

An initial search for local evaluations of New Deal for Young People has revealed very little. There have been numerous national evaluations that comment on the performance of the programme and the experience of young people.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation- The New Deals: The experience so far (July 2000) found that just under a half of young people participating on the programme had found work and three quarters of these were sustained jobs. The report goes on to suggest that the programme had led to a reduction in youth unemployment by about 30,000 in the first year, but also raises the issues that some of these would have got jobs without the programme.

Research undertaken by David Wilkinson (2003) concludes that the New Deal programme has reduced youth unemployment, “a significant part of the impact has come from young people who no longer claim unemployment benefit for 6 months and hence do not qualify for New Deal. For those that did participate in the programme, the largest effect is an increase in the proportion of young people who left unemployment to go into GST”.

These findings are supported by a study undertaken by **Duncan McVicar and Jan M Podivinsky** in 2003 **‘Into Jobs or into the classroom’** which found that the New Deal for young people boosted exit rates to all destinations* at different durations of unemployment but identified a previously unidentified primary effect to “shift large numbers of young people out of unemployment and into education and training”.

*definition: employment, other benefits, education and training, other

This study went on to pose the further question “it is not yet clear whether these young people are subsequently more employable as a result of the intervention”. Without data on the destinations of young people in Hartlepool on New Deal, it is not possible to comment on the impact on exit rates or employability.

There exists a consensus that job search programmes work best in dynamic labour markets and that whilst “active labour market policies can assist the long term unemployed, the key to widening the opportunities available to the unemployed and work poor is sustained employment growth” (CLES report pg 8).

With reference to learning and training provision for the 18-24 age group, many of the issues raised in the section 4.1 apply:

- Provision is not closely enough linked to the labour market and ‘real jobs’.
- Young people completing NVQ level 2 training who are not ‘academically’ able to progress to a level 3 or University are struggling to make the transition to the labour market.
- Impact has been curtailed due to young people ‘dipping in and out’ of provision. This fragmented nature of support often dilutes any positive outcomes.

Whilst assessing the impact of mainstream provision has proved a very difficult exercise, it has raised a number of important issues:

- Additional data and further interrogation of available data is needed in relation to:
 - () Claimant count and duration of unemployment – in particular flow on and off the register to investigate further the potential links between claimant flow and :

- Avoidance of New Deal
- Young people dropping out of training

(ii) Incapacity benefit claimants – further understanding is needed of this group to ensure support can be targeted to prevent long term dependency on this benefit.

- In order to ensure the development of new and existing training and employment projects in Hartlepool can benefit from the experience of New Deal, systems for recording, collating and sharing data need to be developed and implemented.

4. Gap Analysis

From discussions with young people, agencies and organisations it is possible to identify a number of areas where additional resources could be targeted.

1. Links to the local labour market. Training and employment support must be closely linked to current and future opportunities in the local labour market. Employers are central to this and need to be:

- Involved in the design and delivery of programmes.
- Enabled and supported to provide work experience and placements to young people. The brokerage of placements is crucial to ensure young people complete their programmes.
- Enabled and supported to provide more waged apprenticeships.
- Involved as earlier as possible. Employer involvement needs to start in schools with clearly identified progression routes with training.

Specialised Diploma Lines will be available from 2008 onwards to learners aged 14-19 within applied settings and contexts. They are designed to meet skills needs of employers and on this basis should assist in bridging the gap between learning and the labour market.

2. Sustained support for those with multiple barriers. Mentoring was seen as an initiative that could provide sustained support to this target group.

3. More Intermediate Labour market provision – in linking points 2 and 3 together, ILM type activity can provide intensive support clearly linked to the labour market, engaging local employers and leading to real jobs. This provision would need to be available across the age range 16-24.

4. More training and vocational tasters. This would provide more opportunities for young people to gain a real insight into different courses and areas of work before making decisions as to which training/vocational route they would like to go down.

5. Information, advice and guidance

- Additional support needed for those that drop out of training or are in danger of dropping out of training. Once a progression route had been identified additional support is needed to ensure that young person does not become NEET.
- More focused and clearly linked to progression routes to the local labour market

6. More intensive and focused support for those young people unemployed under 6 months

- To ensure they identify an appropriate progression route and that their engagement and retention in that provision/opportunity is supported to prevent them returning to the claimant count.

7. Funding

- Funding needs to be more flexible to respond to the needs of those hardest to reach
- More provision needs to include flexible grants to support young people to overcome barriers to accessing and staying in training and employment

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Young People 16-18

The majority of young people at 16 are identifying progression routes – the vast majority of these into further learning (71.7%). However, for a significant number of these young people this is not a sustained outcome and they are disengaging from learning for a variety of reasons:

- Lack of direction – “I don’t know what I want to do” and many seem unsure about progression routes
- Unable to secure a placement
- Inappropriate provision often due to:
 - basic skill needs
 - ‘academic’ teaching and learning styles

The majority of young people are signposted to education and training at 16 as they cannot claim JSA. Employers and young people rarely saw employment between the ages of 16-18 as a possible option.

There was a general consensus that training and education was not adequately preparing young people for the labour market. Whilst Hartlepool has high rates of people achieving NVQ level 1 and 2, how far is this training improving their employability and assisting them to get jobs?

The NEET Group

There are vulnerable groups within the NEET group who require targeted and intensive support – in particular teenage parents and young carers. The wider issues of social deprivation and generational unemployment also need to be addressed before issues relating to learning or employability can be addressed. It was evident that training providers and employers were confronting many of these issues on a daily basis and in some instances assuming the role of 'parent' to provide these young people with the necessary level of support.

Barriers to training and employment

Young people face particular barriers in relation to their engagement and retention in training and employment:

- Lack of employability skills
- Lack of basic skills
- Structural barriers, including benefit dependency and a lack of jobs in the local labour market

Impact of mainstream provision

Over the last 10 years Hartlepool has seen a reduction in the number of 18-24 year old claimants. But there is insufficient data available to ascertain the impact of New Deal on this reduction or to analyse the destinations of these young people. Within this cohort there is significant 'churn' on and off the claimant register which would be consistent with feedback from young people, agencies and organisations that young people are dropping out of provision or avoiding New Deal, however, without further data and analysis this cannot be confirmed.

The young people interviewed and feedback from agencies identified a very clear lack of aspiration and inspiration in relation to some of the provision available. However, there was a general consensus that mainstream provision had the potential to make a difference to young people's training and employment opportunities and to their lives in general, but it was felt that this was down to how individual providers delivered the programmes and that due to the sometimes fragmented nature of provision the support to ensure their learning and experience gained from various programmes of support was translated into positive outcomes, was often lacking.

Recommendations

Data

There are a number of data issues that need to be addressed

- More in depth analysis of 18-24 claimant count and flow
- Data on the delivery and outcomes of New Deal for Young People in Hartlepool.

In order to gain as full an understanding of these claimant group systems for recording, collating and sharing data between agencies need to be developed and implemented.

Potential projects areas

Extending ILM type activities across the age range to provide intensive support that can effectively address issues of basic skills, employability and wider social issues. Consideration needs to be given to extending current provision to 12 months and introducing increments as incentives. Particularly with the 'hard to reach' groups a significant amount of resources and multi-agency working is required to remove more fundamental barriers eg care, financial/benefit, health, housing, aspirations

Support for those young people unemployed under 6 months to ensure they identify an appropriate progression route and that their engagement and retention in that provision/opportunity is supported to prevent them returning to the claimant count.

Support for young vulnerable young people – ensure existing and new provision can be targeted to the needs of vulnerable young people as identified in this report: young people leaving care, teenage parents, young carers and those with other 'family issues', homeless young people, young people with mental health issues, dependency issues and learning difficulties and disabilities. This also touches on the need for **support for those young people on incapacity benefit**. A greater understanding of this group and the support they require to move into training or employment is needed.

More training and vocational tasters to provide young people with the opportunity to gain a real insight into different courses and areas of work

IAG must be focused and clearly linked to progression routes in the local labour market and provide targeted support for those that drop out of training or are in danger of dropping out of training.

Explore the potential for social enterprise activities to support young people in training and employment opportunities

Further consultation with young people, agencies and organisations

The research brief 'threw a very wide net' over the issues to be explored. This initial report has highlighted some of the key areas that require further exploration.

Other issues

Impact of the EMA needs to be monitored in terms of how far it assists young people to engage and stay engaged in learning.

Appendix 1

Interviewees

Tom Argument, Hartlepool Borough Council – 14-19 Coordinator

Rick Wells, Principal, Hartlepool Sixth Form College

Terry Curren, English Martyrs Sixth Form College

Trevor Mortlock and Susan Alderson, Job Centre Plus

Dave Waddington and Paul Marshall, Hartlepool College of Further Education

Marjorie James, Community Empowerment Network

Miriam Robertson and Terry Wilson, Connexions Tees Valley

Sue William, Denise Taylor and Paul Johnson, Hartlepool Borough Council,
Hartlepool Working Solutions

Dane Mills, Managing Director, Flexability

Leo Gillen,

Gill Dunn, Call Centre Manager, Garlands

Respondents to Questionnaires

Stephen Wright, Partnership Manager Learning and Skills Council

Chris Wise, West View Project