



Chief Executive's Department
Civic Centre
HARTLEPOOL

5th April, 2007

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond)

Councillors Akers-Belcher, D. Allison, S Allison, Barker, Brash, Clouth, R W Cook, S Cook, Coward, Cranney, Fenwick, Fleet, Gibbon, Griffin, Hall, Hargreaves, Henery, Hill, Iseley, Jackson, James, Johnson, Kaiser, Laffey, Lauderdale, Lilley, London, A Marshall, J Marshall, Dr. Morris, Payne, Preece, Rayner, Richardson, Rogan, Shaw, Sutheran, Tumilty, Turner, Wallace, D Waller, M P Waller, R Waller, Wistow, Worthy, Wright, and Young.

Madam or Sir,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the COUNCIL to be held on THURSDAY, 19th April, 2007 at 7.00 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool to consider the subjects set out in the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

P Walker
Chief Executive

Enc

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

COUNCIL AGENDA



Thursday 19th April 2007

at 7pm

in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre

1. To receive apologies from absent members.
2. To receive any declarations of interest from members.
3. To deal with any business required by statute to be done before any other business.
4. To receive questions from and provide answers to the public in relation to matters of which notice has been given under Rule 10.
5. To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Council held on 1st March 2007, as a correct record (copy attached) and the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 22nd March 2007 (copy attached).
6. Questions from Members of the Council on the minutes of the last meetings of the Council.
7. To answer questions of members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 11;
 - (a) Questions to members of the Executive about recent decisions of the Executive (without notice)
 - (b) Questions to members of the Executive and Chairs of Committees and Forums, for which notice has been given.
 - (c) Questions to the appropriate members on Police and Fire Authority issues, for which notice has been given. Minutes of the meeting of the Cleveland Police Authority held on 23rd November 2006 are attached. Minutes of the meetings of Cleveland Fire Authority held on 26th January 2007, 9th February 2007 and 16th March 2007 are attached.

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

8. To deal with any business required by statute to be done.
9. To receive any announcements from the Chair, the Mayor, members of the Cabinet or the head of the paid service.
10. To dispose of business (if any) remaining from the last meeting and to receive the report of any scrutiny forum or other committee to which such business was referred for consideration.
11. To receive reports from the Council's committees and working groups other than any overview and scrutiny committee and to receive questions and answers on any of those reports;
 - 11(i) Financial Procedure Rules – Report of Constitution Committee
 - 11(ii) Internal Audit Charter – Report of Audit Committee
 - 11(iii) Gambling Act Licence Fees – Report of Licensing Committee
12. To consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, including consideration of reports of the overview and scrutiny committees for debate and to receive questions and answers on any of those items;
13. To consider reports from the Executive:-
 - (a) Proposals in relation to the Council's budget and policy framework
 - Youth Justice Plan 2007/08
 - Tees Valley Structure Plan – Saved Policies
 - (b) Proposals for departures from the budget and policy framework
 - None
14. To consider any motions in the order in which notice has been received.
15. To receive the Chief Executive's report and to pass such resolutions thereon as may be deemed necessary.

<p style="text-align: center;">COUNCIL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 March 2007</p>

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm in the Civic Centre

PRESENT:-

The Chairman (Councillor C Richardson) presiding

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

COUNCILLORS:

Akers-Belcher	S Allison	Brash
R W Cook	S Cook	Cranney
Fleet	Gibbon	Griffin
Hall	Hargreaves	Hill
Jackson	James	Johnson
Laffey	Lauderdale	Lilley
London	A Marshall	Dr. Morris
Payne	Preece	Shaw
Sutheran	Tumilty	Wallace
D Waller	M Waller	R Waller
Wistow	Worthy	Wright

OFFICERS:

Paul Walker, Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Peter Scott, Director of Regeneration and Planning Services
Sue Johnston, Assistant Director, Children's Services Department
Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor
Chris Little, Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Alastair Rae, Public Relations Officer
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Pat Watson, Democratic Services Officer

148. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENT MEMBERS

Councillors D Allison, Barker, Coward, Henery, Iseley, Rayner, Turner and Young.

149. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Councillor Wallace (Chair of the Primary Care Trust) declared a non-prejudicial interest in minute 164.

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

None.

151. PUBLIC QUESTION

(i) Question from Mr Norman Robertson to the Mayor

Can you confirm that ALL citizen taxpayers on the electoral roll, under the HBC Constitution of 03.09.02 have the right to “contact their local councillor and elected mayor about any matters of concern to them”.

In responding to the question, the Mayor stated that although Mr Robertson quoted from Part 1 of the Constitution with regard to People’s rights, the actual rights were set out in more detail in Part 2, Article 3. Although the actual rights did not include a right of contact, councillors contact details were available on the Council’s website

In a supplementary question, Mr Robertson asked if written instructions had been issued from the former Chief Executive, the present Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer strongly advising Members and officers to deny him the right of contact with them and therefore contravene the law.

The Mayor stated that a note had been sent to all Councillors in relation to correspondence from Mr Robertson advising that all such correspondence should be passed to the Chief Solicitor. However, Councillors should decide for themselves if they wished to take this course of action. The Mayor informed Members that when Mr Robertson had contacted him in 2002, he had looked into his query and had felt satisfied that everything had been dealt with in the proper manner.

152. MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

The Minutes of Proceedings of the Council held on 22 February 2007, having been laid before Council.

RESOLVED – That the minutes be confirmed.

153. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL ON THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

None.

154. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(a) Questions to Members of the Executive about recent decisions of the Executive

None.

(b) Questions to Members of the Executive and Chairs of Committees and Forums, for which Notice has been given

(i) Councillor Salison to The Mayor

Could the Mayor outline any plans his Council may have to commemorate the 25-year anniversary of the Falklands War?

The Mayor stated that the Council currently had no plans to arrange an event to commemorate the 25-year anniversary in June 2007 of the Falklands War. However, the Council was willing to consider any suggestions that were put forward by voluntary and community groups for either the Falklands War commemorations or the Veterans Day celebrations that also fall in June.

In relation to Veterans Day celebrations, officers were in discussion with the Combined Ex-Service Association to consider what support, if any, can be provided for the events that they were organising.

(ii) Councillor Lilley to the Mayor

How many planning applications had been received for planning permission on allotment sites in Hartlepool since 1990?

The Mayor stated that after an investigation of the Council's records by address, there had been six planning applications on or for allotment sites since 1990. These were:

- fencing, landscaping and access at Haswell Avenue (1991)
- new site at Burn Valley (relocation from Briarfields) (2002)
- fencing and gates at Waverley Terrace (2005)
- reinstatement of allotments at Briarfields (2006)
- CCTV cameras at Burn Valley (2007)
- storage facilities at Waverley Terrace (2007)

In supplementary questions, Councillor Lilley questioned if it was correct that under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 planning permission was not required if the development was classed as for agricultural use? If this was

correct, would the Council consider reimbursing any planning application fees paid since 1990 and ensure that no fees would be required in the future?

The Mayor responded that he would ensure that this issue would be looked into. As a point of information, The Mayor indicated that as part of the recent decision to reinstate the allotments at Briarfields, a condition was included that no sheds or outbuildings could be erected on this site without the prior written consent of the local planning authority. Consultation would be undertaken by the local planning authority with nearby residents to ensure they had no concerns before any decision would be taken.

(iii) Councillor S Allison to The Mayor

Could the Mayor confirm if it is true that at least two Councillors and a number of HBC staff travelled to Brighton last year in the hope of collecting an award? If this trip was made then what was the total bill for the trip? Including accommodation, expenses, travel, literature, exhibition stand etc and the little mascot monkeys I have been told were made for the occasion?

The Mayor indicated that Councillor Payne would answer this question as he took part in the trip. Councillor Payne stated that this trip had taken place with accommodation being procured through the appropriate Local Government Contract at a cost of £2,186 and vehicle hire through the Council's Vehicle Hire Contract at a cost of £561. This ensured that the most favourable rates were obtained. The literature needed was produced at a cost of £982, although some of this cost would have been incurred normally. The exhibition stand/entrance cost was £500 with the promotional Hartlepool monkey mascot costing £72. The total cost of the trip amounted to £4,301 and it was noted that no individual had made any claims.

In supplementary questions, Councillor S Allison asked what quantifiable benefits had been gained from the trip? Councillor Payne responded that ensuring council tax benefit claims were processed as quickly and efficiently as possible was of great benefit to the residents of the town. The Mayor added that it was important not to get stuck on the detail of the budget when there were much bigger issues causing concern, for example the floor damping introduced in relation to council tax. He also referred to recent allegations made in the press in relation to the finances of the UKIP party. Councillor S Allison requested that this statement be minuted as he felt it was a slanderous attack.

(iv) Councillor S Allison to Councillor Richardson (Chair of the Council)

As one of our representatives on the North East Assembly could the Chairman of Hartlepool Council please report on recent articles in some sections of the press that the unelected NE Regional Assembly has recently moved from prestigious buildings on the Newcastle Quayside to the Team Valley Trading Estate in Gateshead. In doing so they have left behind many 100's of £1,000 in unpaid bills, including six years unpaid rent of £150,000. If this is true does this have implications for the council tax-payers of Hartlepool? who for several years

have been contributing to the assembly. Will we have part responsibility for the unpaid bills?

As Councillor Richardson was not a Council representative on the North East Regional Assembly (NERA), The Mayor responded to the question informing Members that there were no unpaid bills and no financial implications for Hartlepool due to the relocation of the NERA offices.

In supplementary questions Councillor S Allison requested information on the matters discussed at NERA during the last 12 months. The Mayor responded that the minutes would be provided if requested. Councillor Payne added that unfortunately due to work commitments, he had been unable to attend the meetings. The Mayor indicated that he would approach the Executive to and discuss membership of the NERA as the Council's representative was an Executive appointment.

(c) Questions to the appropriate Members on Police and Fire Authority issues, for which notice has been given.

None.

155. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

None.

156. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman of the Council informed Members that he had arranged a Charity Evening to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society on 16th March 2007 in the Belle Vue Social Club, Kendal Road. Tickets were available from the Tourist Information Centre, Christ Church, Church Square, Hartlepool and were priced at £5.00.

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

The Minutes of Proceedings of the Council held on 8 February 2007, having been laid before Council.

The Minutes of Proceedings of the Council held on 15 February 2007, having been laid before Council.

RESOLVED – That the minutes be confirmed.

Councillor Lilley indicated that he was disappointed the letter from the Labour Group to the Prime Minister in relation to the closure of the University Hospital of Hartlepool had only been sent out on 28th February 2007, nearly 3 weeks after it was agreed at the Council meeting on 8th February 2007. Councillor Ray Waller responded that he wanted to ensure that the letter was absolutely correct in conjunction with the minutes from the meeting and was therefore only able to write the letter this week.

158. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS OTHER THAN ANY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON ANY OF THOSE REPORTS

None.

159. TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS SPECIFIED IN THE SUMMONS TO THE MEETING, INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES FOR DEBATE AND TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON ANY OF THOSE ITEMS

None.

160. TO CONSIDER REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

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

Formal Council Tax Setting 2007/2008 – Incorporation of Fire and Police Authority Precepts

At Council on 8th February, 2007, Members considered and approved the proposed 2007/2008 Budget and Policy Framework and this Authority's own Council Tax level. Council now needed to approve the overall Council Tax, inclusive of the Police and Fire Authority precepts. The Fire Authority set its precept and Council Tax on 9th February 2007, and the Police Authority set its precept and Council Tax on 23rd February 2007.

The determination of the overall Council Tax level is a statutory function, which brings together the individual Council Tax levels determined by this Council, Cleveland Police Authority, Cleveland Fire Authority and where applicable Parish Councils. A detailed schedule of the statutory Council Tax calculation incorporating the Police and Fire Authority Council Tax levels for 2007/2008 attached by way of Appendix and detailed below.

TABLE 1 - Council Tax For Parish Councils 2007/2008

	Precept (1)	Parish Tax Base (2)	Parish Council Tax (3) [=(1)/(2)]	Basic Council Tax (4)	Billing Authority's Council Tax (5) [=(3)+(4)]
<u>Parishes</u>	£ p		£ p	£ p	£ p
Dalton Piercy	4,717	107.9	43.72	1,282.15	1,325.87
Elwick	4,930	384.2	12.83	1,282.15	1,294.98
Great ham	2,800	667.8	4.19	1,282.15	1,286.34
Hart	2,500	294.9	8.48	1,282.15	1,290.63
Headland	6,000	1,020.4	5.88	1,282.15	1,288.03
Newton Bewley	270	30.1	8.97	1,282.15	1,291.12

TABLE 2 - Council Taxes For Each Property Band 2007/2008**(Excluding Police Authority & Fire Authority)**

	Council Tax Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<u>Parishes</u>	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Dalton Piercy	883.91	1,031.23	1,178.55	1,325.87	1,620.50	1,915.14	2,209.78	2,651.73
Elwick	863.32	1,007.21	1,151.10	1,294.98	1,582.75	1,870.52	2,158.31	2,589.96
Great ham	857.57	1,000.49	1,143.42	1,286.34	1,572.19	1,858.05	2,143.91	2,572.69
Hart	860.42	1,003.82	1,147.23	1,290.63	1,577.43	1,864.24	2,151.05	2,581.25
Headland	858.69	1,001.80	1,144.92	1,288.03	1,574.26	1,860.48	2,146.72	2,576.06
Newton Bewley	860.75	1,004.21	1,147.66	1,291.12	1,578.03	1,864.95	2,151.87	2,582.24
Areas without a Parish Council	854.77	997.23	1,139.69	1,282.15	1,567.07	1,851.99	2,136.92	2,564.30

TABLE 3 - Council Taxes (Police Authority & Fire Authority) 2007/2008

	Council Tax Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Police Authority *	105.40	122.97	140.54	158.10	193.24	228.37	263.51	316.21
Fire Authority **	37.30	43.52	49.73	55.95	68.38	80.82	93.25	111.90

* Police Authority approved Council Tax increase 4.9% on 23/02/07.

** Fire Authority approved Council Tax increase 4.5% on 9/02/07.

TABLE 4 - Council Taxes For Each Property Band 2007/2008**(Including Police Authority & Fire Authority)**

Parishes	Council Tax Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Dalton Piercy	1,026.61	1,197.72	1,368.82	1,539.92	1,882.12	2,224.33	2,566.54	3,079.84
Elwick	1,006.02	1,173.70	1,341.37	1,509.03	1,844.37	2,179.71	2,515.07	3,018.07
Great ham	1,000.27	1,166.98	1,333.69	1,500.39	1,833.81	2,167.24	2,500.67	3,000.80
Hart	1,003.12	1,170.31	1,337.50	1,504.68	1,839.05	2,173.43	2,507.81	3,009.36
Headland	1,001.39	1,168.29	1,335.19	1,502.08	1,835.88	2,169.67	2,503.48	3,004.17
Newton Bewley	1,003.45	1,170.70	1,337.93	1,505.17	1,839.65	2,174.14	2,508.63	3,010.35
Areas without a Parish Council	997.47	1,163.72	1,329.96	1,496.20	1,828.69	2,161.18	2,493.68	2,992.41

The Mayor reminded Members that as a point of order, they needed to declare if their council tax bill was not paid up to date. The question was then asked whether a councillor who did not contribute to council tax or business rates in Hartlepool should be precluded from participating in this making this decision. Members had concerns about whether a councillor who did not pay council tax or business rates in Hartlepool could participate in the decision to set the level of council tax increase. The Chief Solicitor advised that the payment of council tax or business rates was not a pre-requisite of membership of the Council. The Chief Financial Officer was requested to write to the Government with these concerns and to suggest that this loophole be closed.

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

None.

161. TO CONSIDER ANY MOTIONS IN THE ORDER IN WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN RECEIVED

None.

162 CO-OPTION OF RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CONSULTATIVE FORUMS

The Chief Executive reported that two Resident Representative vacancies existed on the North Neighbourhood Consultative Forum, one position vacant since the elections in October 2006 and one due to a recent resignation. Two new Resident Representatives had been selected as follows:

Don Davison (Brus Ward)
Irene Nelson (Dyke House Ward)

RESOLVED – That the co-option of the elected resident representatives be confirmed.

163. COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The public announcement of the results of the national CPA reassessment for 2006 was made on 22nd February 2007. The Council had again been rated as 4* (the highest possible rating) and improving well.

The Council had also recently undergone a full Corporate Assessment and Joint Area Review. The results of this exercise would not be reported until 13th March 2007/.

RESOLVED – That the results of the national CPA reassessment for 2006 be welcomed and the congratulations and appreciation of the Council be conveyed to all those who have contributed to that success.

**164. EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 8TH FEBRUARY 2007 -
MOTION**

As agreed at the Extraordinary Meeting held on 8th February 2007, the Chief Executive has written to the Secretary of State expressing the concerns of the Council, as set out in the motion, in relation to the proposed closure of the University Hospital of Hartlepool. A copy of that letter was attached to the agenda by way of appendix as a public record.

C RICHARDSON

CHAIRMAN

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

22 March 2007

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

PRESENT:-

The Chairman (Councillor C Richardson) presiding

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

COUNCILLORS:

Akers-Belcher	Barker	Brash
Cranney	Fleet	Gibbon
Hall	Hill	Jackson
James	Lilley	A Marshall
J Marshall	Payne	Preece
Richardson	Shaw	Tumilty
Turner	Wallace	R Waller
Worthy	Wright	

OFFICERS:

Paul Walker, Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Mike Ward, Chief Financial Officer
Joanne Machers, Chief Personnel Officer
Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor
Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services
Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
Alistair Rae, Public Relations Officer
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

165. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENT MEMBERS

Councillors D. Allison, S Allison, Clouth, R W Cook, S Cook, Fenwick, Griffin, Hargreaves, Iseley, Johnson, Kaiser, M P Laffey, Lauderdale, Dr. Morris, Rayner, Sutheran, Wallace, DWaller M P Waller, Wistow and Young.

166. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None

167. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs detailed below in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 168. – Para 4 (information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority) and Para 5 (information in respect of which claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings).

168. EQUAL PAY DECISIONS ARISING OUT OF A CABINET DECISION

Details and the decisions reached by Council are set out in the Exempt section of the minutes.

C RICHARDSON

CHAIRMAN

Member questions for Council

Meeting: 19th April 2007

1.	From: Councillor J Brash
	To: The Mayor, Stuart Drummond
	<p>Question:</p> <p><i>The recent Corporate Assessment Report was both extremely positive and a clear indication that this is an authority of which we should all be rightly proud. However, in order to strive for continuous improvement we must be honest and open about our weaknesses. What, from your perspective Mr Mayor, were the weaknesses highlighted by the Corporate Assessment Report?</i></p>

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Public questions for Council

Meeting: 19th April 2007

1.	From: Evelyn Leck
	To: Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee
	<p>Question:</p> <p><i>As a member of the public and a Resident Representative for Burn Valley Ward who speaks on behalf of residents at Forums, I would like to put my question to Councillor Marjorie James, the Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee. If the Administration Group says that the Scrutiny system is "useless" and they would totally reform the Neighbourhood Forums, how will the public be informed about health, education, police issues etc?</i></p>
2.	From: Mrs Margaret Goulding
	To: The Mayor, Stuart Drummond
	<p>Question:</p> <p><i>Why if a full council meeting February 2006 decided on the tapered closure of Eldon Grove Sport Centre, were the public not informed of the decision?</i></p>
3.	From: Mrs Margaret Goulding
	To: The Mayor, Stuart Drummond
	<p>Question:</p> <p><i>I would like to know why Eldon Grove Centre was not a recipient of some of the £300,000 from the community pool, which was allocated to Belle View and Owton Fens Community Association etc?</i></p>

CLEVELAND POLICE AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE

A meeting of Cleveland Police Authority Executive was held on Thursday 23 November 2006 in the Members Conference Room at Police Headquarters.

PRESENT: Councillors Barker, Coombs, Coppinger, Lowes, McLuckie, Thompson, Wallace and Womphrey.

Magistrate Members
Mr Cox JP, Mr Fisher JP and Mr Illingworth TD JP

Independent Members
Miss Andrews-Mawer, Mr Gardner, Mr Hanif, and Mr Race

OFFICIALS: Mr McCarthy, Mrs Llewellyn and Mrs Leng (CE)
Mr Price, Mr Hogg and Mr Briggs (CC)
Mrs Andrews and Mr Nicklin (District Auditors)
Mr Wallace (Internal Auditor)

122 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Nath.

123 **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interests.

124 **QUESTION TIME**

No questions were received from the public.

125 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

The Chief Constable presented this the Authority's first Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). This was part of the process introduced by the Authority to establish sustainable annual and long term financial plans and maintain prudent financial management. This was the first time that the Authority's financial strategy would be defined over a four year period.

ORDERED that:-

1. the projected balanced financial position over the period 2007/08 to 2010/11 taking cognisance of the underpinning financial assumptions, particularly on the levels of formula funding be

- noted.
2. in view of the significant improvement in the Authority's financial position over and above what was envisaged in January 2005, a valid business case cannot be made for requesting from the Home Office the £2 million investment in 2007/08 as envisaged when the original 'action plan' was originally produced.
 3. the proposal to fund any growth in 2007/08 and beyond the reinvestment of Gershon savings, the ongoing process of Modernisation and review of Council Tax levels on the working hypothesis of no more than 5.0% increase in precept annually be agreed.
 4. the Chief Executive of the Police Authority in consultation with the Chair and the Chief Constable be authorised to make representations, if any were required, in respect of the forthcoming financial settlement be agreed.
 5. further development of the draft revenue and capital plans for 2007/10, including the proposal for growth, for presentation to the February meeting of the Authority – any proposal for growth would be the subject of further briefings over the next three months. In accordance with our Financial Strategy, sustainable growth would over the plan period require funding by sustainable savings be agreed.
 6. the proposals would be the subject of consultation be agreed.
 7. the Chief Executive and the Chief Constable be authorised to progress the potential relocation of Police Headquarters and other Police / Support functions to the Wynyard Business Park. A further report would be brought to the Authority no later than the meeting of 22 February 2007.

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER – 2005/2006

The District Auditor presented the Draft Annual Audit Letter for 2005/2006. The Annual Audit letter summarised the key issues arising from the work that the District Auditor had carried out during the year.

This letter had been prepared in the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission.

The District Auditor informed Members that the report provided a consistent message throughout that improvements had been made in all areas.

ORDERED that:-

1. the report and the recommendations be noted.

127

POLICE USE OF RESOURCES EVALUATION FEEDBACK

The District Auditor presented the results of the 2005/06 review of use of resources at Cleveland Police Authority which took place during the period April 2006 to June 2006, updated in September 2006 for financial reporting. The review was undertaken as part of the District Auditors responsibility to examine the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the Authority's use of resources and under section 5(1)(e) of the Audit Commission Act 1998, and in accordance with the Commission's Code of Audit Practice and Standing Guidance for Auditors.

The overall conclusion of the report was that the Authority and Force in aggregate perform well in financial reporting, financial standing and value for money and meet the minimum requirements in financial management and internal control. A detailed summary of the findings was provided within the report.

ORDERED that the report and the areas for improvement be agreed.

128

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE INSPECTION UPDATE

The Chief Executive presented the update report to Members. On 23 February 2006 the Authority received the results of the Corporate Governance Inspection conducted by the HMIC, the report required the Authority to implement 9 agreed recommendations. An update on progress against the inspection recommendations was reported to the Authority on the 19 May 2006. That report showed that 6 of the recommendations had been successfully implemented at that stage – the report clearly outlined timescales for the remaining 3 recommendations.

This report detailed progress against each of the recommendations and informed Members that the only outstanding recommendation was the Best Value Review of the Police Authority – this was scheduled to commence in December 2006 with a completion date prior to 1 April 2007.

ORDERED that progress against each of the recommendations be noted.

129

2007-10 CORPORATE POLICING STRATEGY AND 2007-08 LOCAL POLICING PLAN

The Chief Constable advised Members that this report had been prepared to provide background information regarding the production of the Local Policing Plan, the Chief Constables Annual Report and the three year Corporate Policing Strategy from 1 April 2007.

Appendix 1 detailed the publication schedule, Appendix 2 showed the National Community Safety Plan, strategic policing priorities for 2007-08 and appendix 3 showed the future issues impacting on planning.

ORDERED that the proposals included within the report be agreed.

130

END OF YEAR POLICE AUTHORITY CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive presented the findings of consultation activities undertaken by Cleveland Police Authority during 2005 – 2006.

ORDERED that:-

1. the Police Authority take cognisance of the Police Authority's consultation findings with a view to setting and approving the local policing priorities for 2007-2008.
2. this report be considered along with:
 - Cleveland Police Strategic Assessment and Control Strategy;
 - Local CDRP Community Safety Plans;
 - Main proposals of the Police and Justice Bill;
 - National Community Safety Plan Update 2006-2009;

- Strong and Prosperous Communities – Local Government White Paper.

**131 MINUTES OF THE POLICE AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2006**

ORDERED that the minutes of the Police Authority Executive held on the 21 September 2006 were approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

**132 MINUTES OF THE MODERNISATION PANEL HELD ON
19 OCTOBER 2006**

The Chair of the Modernisation Panel presented the Executive Summary from the meeting held on the 19 October 2006.

ORDERED that the following minutes of the Modernisation Panel held on the 19 October 2006 be noted.

MODERNISATION PANEL

A meeting of the Modernisation Panel was held on Thursday 19 October 2006 commencing at 10.00 am in the Mandela Room at Middlesbrough Town Hall.

PRESENT: Mr Krishan Nath (Chair), Mr Alf Illingworth TD JP (Vice Chair), Miss Pam Andrews-Mawer, Cllr Chris Coombs, Mr Ted Cox JP, Mr Keith Fisher JP, and Cllr Steve Wallace.

OFFICIALS: Mr Joe McCarthy, Mrs Julie Leng and Mrs Clare Hunter (CE)
DCC Ron Hogg, Mrs Andrea Crinnion and Mr Andrew Larkin (CC)
Mrs Lynda Turnbull, Unison

133 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Barry Coppinger, Cllr Dave McLuckie (ex officio), Mr Peter Race, Mr Norman Wright, CC Sean Price, ACO Ann Hall, PC Brian Docherty, Chief Superintendent Mark Braithwaite and Chief Superintendent Adrian Roberts.

134 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

135 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8 AUGUST 2006

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

136 OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

ORDERED that the Outstanding Recommendations be noted.

137

UPDATE ON WORKSTREAM 2 PROJECTS - ESTATES

The Chief Executive informed Members of the current status of the projects which make up Modernisation Workstreams 2.

ORDERED that:-

1. the report and the recommendations be noted.

138

UPDATE AND WORKSTREAM 3A POLICE STAFF STRUCTURES CONSULTATION

The Head of People and Organisational Development informed Members of the current status of the consultation process for Workstream 3a, Police Staff Structures.

ORDERED that:-

1. the consultation for all staff commenced in April 2006 be noted.
2. that the phase I (the Central Business Unit, Commissioning, Corporate Planning and Performance, Finance, Legal, ICT, People and Organisational Development and Professional Development) detailed consultation was now almost complete be noted.
3. the detailed staff consultation for Phase II (Hartlepool, Langbaugh, Middlesbrough and Stockton) has commenced and it was anticipated would be completed by the end of November / early December be noted.
4. the detailed staff consultation for Phase III (Communications Centre, Crime and Operations and Community Justice) would commence in October and should be completed by January 2007 be noted.
5. all of the above processes were being managed to the framework agreed with Unison. Unison is engaged in team meetings and, where requested, would be in attendance at individual preference interviews was noted.
6. the structure charts for those Service Units within Phase I of the consultation were attached to the report. These structures show the post title, scale and the number of fte employed in each post.
7. the summary of changes made to the original proposals during the consultation to date be noted.
8. the net saving of 12.71 fte detailed in the report identified the proposed reduction against the number of staff employed by the Force at the start of Modernisation. However, the establishment figure within the MTFP was 73.1 fte providing a current net saving of 44.88 fte against the

plan be noted.

9. although a number of posts had been reinstated during consultation, it was still anticipated that the final staffing reductions detailed would provide the £775k savings required in 2007/08. This new forecast was a more detailed review than the initial and highly prudent estimate developed within the MTFP.
10. against the current Police Staff turnover and the 21 applications for ER/VR it was anticipated that most changes could be managed within the financial year 2006/07. Only those individuals displaced from highly specialist posts may be unsuccessful in obtaining suitable alternative employment within the Force but would continue to be offered other roles which become vacant.

139

2005-06 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AND POLICE AUTHORITY

The Chief Executive presented the joint Annual Report for 2005-06 to members.

ORDERED that:-

1. the report be approved.
2. consideration be given to the inclusion of additional BME uniformed officer photographs next year.

140

PROPOSED INCREASE TO THE DISCLOSURE UNIT

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented the report to Members which outlined the growth bid for additional staff within the Disclosure Team, Professional Standards Unit. These staff would be responsible for carrying out vetting work on behalf of the Force.

ORDERED that:-

1. the recruitment of 1.5 fte Vetting Clerks (Scale 3) at a cost of £29,577 per annum to the permanent establishment of the Force be approved.

141

EMPLOYMENT ACT 2002 – STATUTORY DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The Personnel Advisor to the Police Authority advised members of the outcome of a joint Police Authority / Force review on discipline and dismissal, grievance handling including pay and grading procedures for Police staff.

This report outlined the appeal element of procedures where Police Authority Members would be involved and asked members to approve the revised Redundancy Policy for Police Staff.

ORDERED that:-

1. the updated Redundancy Policy for Police Staff be approved.
2. Force and Police Authority procedures for handling disciplinary matters, dismissal and grievance including pay and grading comply with the statutory disciplinary and grievance procedures contained in the Employment Act 2002 (effective from 1 October 2004) be noted.

142

EXEMPTIONS TO FORCE STANDING ORDERS – OCTOBER 2006

The Procurement Manager presented the quarterly report detailing the exemption requests to Force Standing Orders.

ORDERED that:-

1. Force Standing Orders had been waived and that the details of the exemptions included at Appendix A to the report be noted.

143

AIR SUPPORT CAPITAL FUNDING

The Chief Executive sought approval from members for the submission of a bid, on behalf of the North East Air Support Unit (NEASU), to the Home Office for capital funding for air support projects in 2007/2008.

ORDERED that:-

1. the bid of £164k to the Home Office for funding in 2007/2008 for a replacement surveillance system and helicopter upgrade be endorsed.
2. the Home Office be notified of an intention to bid for an estimated £142k towards the funding in 2008/2009 or 2009/2010 for digital microwave equipment be agreed.
3. a further report be submitted once the results of the Home Office bid was known be agreed.

144

MINUTES OF THE BEST VALUE STEERING GROUP

ORDERED that:-

1. the minutes of the Best Value Steering Group be noted.

145

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

ORDERED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, excluding the press and public from the Meeting under Paragraphs 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

Staff Update provided.

146 MINUTES OF THE COMPLAINTS PANEL HELD ON 26 OCTOBER 2006

The Chair of the Complaints Panel presented the Executive Summary from the meeting held on the 26 October 2006

ORDERED that the following minutes of the Complaints Panel held on the 26 October 2006 were submitted and approved.

COMPLAINTS PANEL

A meeting of the Complaints Panel was held on Thursday 26 October 2006 in the Stainsby Room at Middlesbrough Town Hall.

PRESENT: Mr Ted Cox JP, , Mr Keith Fisher JP, Mr Krishan Nath,

OFFICIALS DCC Ron Hogg, Supt Brian Dunn, Mrs Caroline Llewellyn (CC) Mrs Kath Allaway (CE)

147 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Caroline Barker, Miss Pam Andrews-Mawer, Cllr Chris Coombs, Mr Ken Gardner Councillor Dave McLuckie (ex officio), DCC Ron Hogg and Gary Garland IPCC

148 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

149 CIVIL CLAIMS STATISTICS

Caroline Llewellyn presented Civil Claims Statistics for the period 1 April 2006 to 30 September 2006.

ORDERED that members note:-

1. There had been a 12.9% increase in the number of claims received when compared with the same period last year. Public liability claims continued to be the leading category.
2. There had been a 37.83% increase in the number of claims finalised when compared with the same period last year.
3. 11.76% of finalised cases during the period were successfully defended which was to be compared with 16.21% successfully defended during the same period last year.
4. The 45 cases settled during the period cost the Force £571,804. This was to be compared with the 31 cases settled during the same period last year at a cost of £242,604.

5. Headquarters continued to be the area with most claims during the period.
6. It was agreed that in future reports the figures would be rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

150

COMPLAINTS STATISTICS

Supt Dunn presented the Complaints Statistics for the period 1 July 2006 to 30 September 2006, and highlighted the new format for the report. This was to comply with the national format.

There had been a 3% decrease in cases recorded during this period (118 compared to 122) with a 19% increase in the number of complaints (up from 156 to 185)

119 letters of appreciation had been received during this period.

ORDERED that:-

1. the contents of the report be noted.

151

DELIBERATE DAMAGE STATISTICS

DCC Hogg presented the statistics, for the quarter 1 July to 30 September 2006, which showed that 2236 searches were carried out with only 360 (16%) resulting in deliberate damage. The cost was £9794.43 but the value of property and drugs seized amounted to £252,951.

ORDERED that:-

1. the contents of the report be noted.
2. the operational benefits accruing to the Force in terms of property, drugs and cash seized, outweighed the cost of the damage claims be noted.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

ORDERED that pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Paragraph 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

152

RECORDED COMPLAINTS (Appendix A)

Members considered and noted a detailed appendix to the complaints report.

153

RECORDED CIVIL CLAIMS

Members considered and noted a detailed item relating to the Civil Claims report

CASES FROM THE COMPLAINTS REGISTER

154

Members of the Complaints Panel were shown the cases from the Complaints Register which they had previously selected.

155

MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT PANEL HELD ON THE 7 NOVEMBER 2006

The Chair of the Performance and Audit Panel presented the Executive Summary held on the 7 November 2006.

ORDERED that the minutes of the Performance and Audit Panel held on the 7 November 2006 were submitted and approved.

PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT PANEL

A meeting of the Performance and Audit Panel was held on Tuesday 7 November 2006 commencing at 10.00 am in the Oberhausen Room at Middlesbrough Town Hall.

PRESENT

Mr Peter Race MBE (Chair), Cllr Ron Lowes (Vice Chair), Councillor Chris Coombs (ex officio), Mr Keith Fisher, Mr Krishan Nath, Councillor Paul Thompson and Councillor Steve Wallace.
Additional Members – Mr Ted Cox JP.

OFFICIALS

Mr Joe McCarthy and Mrs Julie Leng (CE)
ACC Derek Bonnard, Mr Paul Baker (CC).

AUDITORS

Mr Ian Wallace (Bentley Jennison).

156

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dave McLuckie (ex officio), Mr Norman Wright and ACC Adam Briggs.

157

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

Action

158

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 3 AUGUST 2006

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and there were no matters arising.

159

OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

It was reported that the outstanding recommendations were all on target.

AGREED that:-

1. the Outstanding Recommendations be noted.

160

NATIONAL STANDARD FOR INCIDENT RECORDING

The Assistant Chief Constable informed Members of the Force's current position with regards to compliance with the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR).

Cleveland Police had gone live with the NSIR on 1 April 2006 to record all non-crime incidents using the National Incident Category List (NICL). The introduction of NSIR aims to ensure Forces adopt a similar approach to recording incidents so meaningful comparisons can be made.

The Force Incident Registrar (FIR) and Force Compliance Officer conducted 'Taking Stock' review after the first 3 months of operations under NSIR. The audit identified that whilst the Force had made an encouraging start with NSIR there was still some work in progress, which was detailed in the report, to ensure that the Force will be in good shape for an external audit.

AGREED that:-

1. the progress to date be noted.

161

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM PERFORMANCE IN CLEVELAND

The Assistant Chief Constable presented the overview of the performance of the criminal justice system in the Cleveland area.

The Cleveland Criminal Justice Board closely monitors the performance of all the CJS agencies in the area and seeks clarification from individual agencies where problems were identified.

It was reported that the performance of the criminal justice agencies in the area has improved over recent years, but there still remains some challenging targets for the months ahead. The key performance results were detailed in the report.

AGREED that:-

1. the content of the report be noted.
2. the outstanding recommendation from the Performance Panel held on 16 February 2006 be discharged.

162

ACTIVITY BASED COSTING (ABC) – THE WAY FORWARD

The Performance Development Officer updated members on current progress against HMIC's Corporate Governance inspection and Audit Commission's action plan, which both identified a need to develop the use of ABC within Cleveland Police.

To introduce a framework for the reporting of ABC information to the Police Authority, the Force, each District and Central Support Services. This report focused around the uses of ABC data, the challenge was to use the data to show how the Force is delivering value for money, to provide managers with information to improve performance, and account

for resource use and local policing priorities.

AGREED that: -

1. the report be noted.
2. the following recommendations be agreed: -
 - further steps to ensure the continued collection of accurate management information;
 - a framework for communicating activity data, including a timetable of reporting to stakeholders, along with specified formats;
 - this report demonstrated some of the current ways both activity and costed data had been used within the Force and identified areas of future use.

163

SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORTING

The Assistant Chief Constable provided a brief description of attendance management policy and practice specifically relating to sickness absence, including a year to date analysis of relevant trends.

The data provided within the report forms part of the Force's ongoing monitoring of sickness absence, which had in recent years delivered a significant downturn in overall absence figures. However, recent review of the data indicated that more focus on long term sickness was now required to manage the most recent stretch target of 8 days per employee.

This is a key focus of the HR and Occupational Health team in the 2006/07 guided by the Deputy Chief Constable and Force's Resourcing Group, and a range of initiatives are currently under review / in delivery to support this. Further updates to this report would be provided to the Performance and Audit Panel quarterly, including the initiatives implemented and performance improvements made as a consequence.

AGREED that: -

1. the report be noted.

164

STATEMENT ON THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL (SIC)

The Financial Accountant updated the panel on progress against significant internal control issues, and the action points for improvement in the control regime, identified in the 2005/2006 Statement (approved by the Police Authority on the 15 June 2006).

The report also set out a broad timetable to produce a near final draft of the Statement for consideration by the Police Authority Executive on the 22 February 2007. The final statement would be prepared for the year ending 31 March 2007 and up to the date of approval of the annual accounts, and formal approval sought then.

ORDERED that: -

1. the current progress against the significant internal control issues and action points for 2006/2007 identified in the 2005/2006 Statement on the System of Internal Control be noted.
2. the proposed timetable as outlined for review and production of the 2006/2007 Statement be agreed.
3. in consultation with the Chair of the Panel a series of training sessions specific to the role and remit of the Panel relating to governance matters (including Audit) be arranged, and that all Members of the Police Authority be invited be agreed.

165

POLICE AUTHORITY – RISK MANAGEMENT

The Financial Accountant presented the report to Members. The 2005/2006 Statement of Internal Control (SIC) identified the following as an action point:-

'To develop the risk profile of the CPA to assure the Authority that its own risks are being effectively managed'.

This report set out the result of work undertaken since May 2006 to review the risk profile of the Authority.

The review highlighted the following 5 potential areas where failure to comply would represent a reputational risk :-

Consultation
Efficiency and Effectiveness
Diversity and Equal Opportunities
Accounting Standards
Conduct and Complaints

ORDERED that:-

1. the schedule of risks relating to the Police Authority Risk Management arrangements and its regular review be agreed.

166

PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Assistant Chief Constable updated Members on force performance against the 2006-09 Corporate Policing Strategy and 2006-07 Local Policing Plan.

The report detailed actual performance from 1 April 2006 to 30 September 2006 and included:

- Recorded Crime and Detection Statistics
- Force Level Incident Statistics
- Force Level Arrest Statistics
- Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) Statutory
- Performance Indicators
- Time Series Performance Charts

The performance results up to the end of the second quarter show that

both overall crime and crime in the target areas of House Burglary, Robbery, Vehicle and Violent Crime continued to drop. Detections in all crime categories continue to improve with the Force currently achieving an overall detection rate of 30.6% and a sanction detection rate of 28.4%.

ORDERED that: -

1. the force performance against the strategic policing objectives set out in the 2006-09 Corporate Policing Strategy and 2006-07 Local Policing Plan be noted.
2. an update on the 'Don't Walk By' campaign be included in the next Performance Report

**ACC
Bonnard**

167

CRIME LEAFLET

The Assistant Chief Constable presented the draft crime leaflet for members consideration.

ORDERED that: -

1. Cllr Steve Wallace and Cllr Ron Lowes work in conjunction with ACC Bonnard to produce a final version of the Crime Leaflet.

168

OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

ORDERED that the Outstanding Recommendations were submitted and noted.

169

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

ORDERED that pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

170

CHIEF CONSTABLE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

ORDERED that the recommendations be approved.

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY



**MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
FRIDAY, 26 JANUARY 2007**

- PRESENT:**
- VICE-CHAIRMAN**
Councillor J Jones –Middlesbrough Council
- HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL:**
Councillors Payne, Waller
- MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL:-**
Councillors Biswas, Porley
- REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL:-**
Councillors Briggs, Cooney, Smith, Walker
- STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL:-**
Councillors Brown, Kirton, O'Donnell, Roberts, Salt, Woodhead
- PROPER OFFICERS:-**
Clerk, Deputy Legal Adviser, Treasurer
- FIRE BRIGADE OFFICERS:-**
Chief Fire Officer, Executive Director,
- APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- Councillor B Forster – Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Councillor G Dunning – Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Councillor T Mawston – Middlesbrough Council
Councillor G Clark – Middlesbrough Council
Councillor S Allison – Hartlepool Borough Council
Councillor G Henery – Hartlepool Borough Council

The Vice-Chairman informed members that the Chairman Councillor Mrs Brenda Forster was unable to attend due to a broken ankle and passed on her thanks to Members for their best wishes.

- 127 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2006.**

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority Meeting held on 24 November 2006 be confirmed

- 128 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEES:- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 1 DECEMBER 2006, 15 DECEMBER 2006; POLICY COMMITTEE – 5 JANUARY 2007**

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Executive Committee Meetings held on 1 December 2006 and 15 December 2006 and the Policy Committee on 5 January 2007, be confirmed.

129 TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATIONS SENT TO THE CHAIRMAN OR CLERK TO AUTHORITY

The Vice Chair reported that the Chairman had received a letter of thanks from Chief Fire Officer Des Pritchard from East Sussex following receipt of the Authority's letter of condolence following the tragic deaths of two firefighters.

The Vice-Chairman informed members that Councillor Gordon Henery had replaced Councillor Victor Tumilty and wished to place on record his thanks to Councillor Tumilty for his contribution in 2006/07.

**130 TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING – 1 DECEMBER 2006**

130.1 CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE FUNDING OF FIREBUY LIMITED

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members on the consultation exercise being carried out by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on the future funding of Firebuy Limited. He reported that the consultation paper sets out two options for collecting contributions from FRA's which are to top slice from RSG or the payment of subscriptions and that there would be a different impact on different authorities depending on which option they chose.

RESOLVED – that further clarification be sought as to the role and function of the RMB in national procurement strategy and Firebuy in general.

130.2 FIRE CONTROL/FIRELINK PROJECT UPDATE

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the Regional Control Centre (RCC) and FIRELink projects and sought Members approval for the financial resources in 2007/08.

Councillor Payne enquired if our staff relocation to the RCC was included in the original case and also raised the issue of what would happen to any excess staff once our Control Room transferred to the RCC. The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that each Authority would contribute to staff wages and that Staff costs were already built into the budgetary plans. He reported that our Control Staff carry out additional duties e.g. Home Fire Risk Assessment bookings and that when transferred the RCC will have the capability of looking after other controls. The Executive Director reported that the Authority hoped to transfer any excess staff into other parts of the Authority and various options would be offered to them at that time. Councillor Payne requested that all correspondence to LACC Directors be sent by post in future.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that a response be made to the draft final business case.
- (ii) that subject to confirmation of DCLG funding, options be submitted against each of these areas to the RMB and its constituent Fire and Rescue Authorities for consideration and approval.
- (iii) that all correspondence to LACC Directors be sent by post.

130.3 RMB BUDGET & CONSTITUENT AUTHORITY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2007/08 AND CHANGE TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the RMB Treasurer had advised that each of the constituent authorities were of the view that the present arrangements were efficient and should continue and that to change the basis could lead to an increase in administration costs. He also informed members that as a result of the change of the RMB Treasurer, it was proposed that the accounts be maintained in accordance with the Financial Regulations of Cleveland Fire Authority.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the current arrangements for the RMB Budget continue during 2007/08.
- (ii) that contributions per constituent authority be set at £12,000 for 2007/08
- (iii) that approval be given to the change in Financial Regulations of the RMB

130.4 RMB – FIRE AND RESCUE NOMINATION TO THE MEMBER REVIEW GROUP FOR IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY IN THE NORTH EAST

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that the RMB considered a request from ANEC to nominate a Member of the RMB to service on a small Member Review Group, in order that FRS perspectives and views are able to be represented and reflected. The Member Review Group is being established to provide an overview, to monitor progress and to generally advise the Association on the improvement and efficiency agenda.

RESOLVED – that an RMB members be nominated to the Member Review Group.

130.5 RMB REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the RMB meeting held on 6 October 2006 be noted.

131 TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

131.1 FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2007/08 CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

The Executive Director appraised Members of the Audit Commission's Performance Framework Consultation Document and the proposed authority's formal response which outlined the areas of concern relating to the frameworks and its implications to this Authority.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that contents and proposals of the draft FRS Performance Framework for 2007/08 be noted.
- (ii) that Members recognised the implications and issues arising from the Framework and considered the role of scrutiny in supporting the achievements of best outcome for the Authority.
- (iii) that the contents of the formal response to the Audit Commission be approved.
- (iv) that members will proactively engage to raise political and local awareness of the potential negative impacts of the proposed framework as it is applied to Cleveland Fire Authority.

131.2 ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Executive Director advised Members that the Asset Management Plan had been presented to the Policy Committee on 8 September 2006 and Members had requested a number of updates and amendments to the Plan. The amendments had been re-presented to the Policy Committee on 5 January 2007 and the Policy Committee now recommended the Asset Management Plan for approval.

RESOLVED – that the Asset Management Plan be approved.

131.3 PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

The Executive Director informed Members that the Partnership Framework Document had been presented to the Policy Committee on 5 January 2007. He reported that if approved the Authority would be able to deliver a complex, effective and efficient partnership methodology which would assist in maximising the Authority's bid income and reduce the organisations capability within Local Area Agreements.

Councillor Payne queried whether the Fire Authority had any plans to go into Partnership with Planning Departments. Councillor Waller added that the Police Authority had recently been involved with the planning and architectural design of new buildings to out design any potential areas which may attract crime and were there any plans for the Fire Authority to input at the same stage to out design fire risks, and would this be a more beneficial approach to fire prevention? The Executive Director informed Members that he currently had reservations in this area as a result of the Brigade enforcement role under the Regulation Reform Order.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that the Members approved the Partnership Framework Document as outlined at Appendix 1 of the report.
- (ii) that the Brigade involvement in the initial architectural and design stages be investigated further.

131.4 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY AND BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY

The Executive Director informed Members that the Equality & Diversity and Bullying & Harassment Policies had been revised to meet changes in legislation, policy, guidance and procedure and sought Members approval to these revised policies as outlined at Appendix 1 and 2.

Councillor Biswas commented on the Bullying & Harassment Policy, highlighting the difficulty in proving bullying, however he congratulated the Fire Authority in its efforts in providing an all round policy.

RESOLVED – that the Equality & Diversity and Bullying & Harassment Policies as outlined at Appendix 1 and 2 be approved.

131.5 CONSULTATION ON EXTENSION OF CHARGING ORDER

The Executive Director informed Members that the power to trade under Order 2307 was given to those Authorities who had expressed an interest comes to an end on 1 October 2007 and DCLG are seeking stakeholders opinions on extending the charging regime and seeking what level of support there is for undertaking further research on this (see appendix 1). He informed Members that the Policy Committee had recommended that the Authority continue to only charge for specific services and not to seek Power to Trade.

RESOLVED - that the Authority continue to only charge for specific services and agreed not to seek Power to Trade.

131.6 CLEVELAND FIRE SUPPORT NETWORK

The Executive Director appraised Members of the proposed activities of the Cleveland Fire Support Network and the anticipated involvement and relationships which are to be developed between Brigade Officers and the Network's volunteers. He advised Members of the requirement to have the Network registered as a charity and that there would be an initial recruitment of 20 volunteers. He reported that identification of suitable premises within the community, establishment of a Trustees Board and identifying partners and sources of funding was continuing.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that the Report be noted.
- (ii) that those actions taken to date by the Brigade Officers be approved.
- (iii) that the future action required to develop this initiative as outlined within the report, be endorsed.
- (iv) that the Executive Director provide future Reports on the progress of the development of the Network to the Fire Authority's Scrutiny Committee
- (v) that the appointment of the Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority, the Chief Fire Officer and the Executive Director to the Trust Board (for the purposes also of the Brigade Officers terms and conditions) be approved.

131.7 CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE FUNDING OF FIREBUY

The Executive Director informed Members of the Consultation on the Future of Firebuy Report, paragraph 6 and the Authority's suggested responses to the ten questions of the consultation exercise undertaken by the Department for the Communities and Local Government (DCLG). He sought approval with Members to instruct the Chief Fire Officer to formulate and submit a response on behalf of the Cleveland Fire Authority.

RESOLVED – that the Chief Fire Officer formulate and submit a response on behalf of the Authority as outlined at paragraph 6 to the report.

131.8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS INFORMATION PACK NO. 66

- 131.8.1 Fire and Rescue Circulars
- 131.8.2 National Joint Circulars

RESOLVED – that the report be noted

132 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY SCRUTINY CHAIR

Safety Improvement Plan 2006/07 (IRMP3) Monitoring Proposals

Councillor Cooney advised Members of the Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee's agreement to a revision for the availability of the monitoring and evaluation framework for the Safety Improvement Plan (SIP) 2006/07 (IRMP 3), and an amalgamation of the original three phases of the SIP into one phase.

RESOLVED – that Members note the report content

133 REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

133.1 EVALUATION OF AFTER THE FIRE QUALITY OF SERVICE SURVEY

Councillor Porley informed Members that following the 15 December 2006 meeting, Members had asked that the evaluation of the After Fire Quality service Survey be presented to all the Authority members for their information.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

133.2 PERFORMANCE SUMMARY REPORT – APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2006

Councillor Porley provided Members with a provisional summary of the Brigade's second Quarter performance against Best Value and IRMP Strategic Action Plans for 2006/07, informing Members that Bonfire Night had an impact on figures. The Executive Director added that deliberate F3 Fires were over target by 13% and that he would also be attending a meeting at Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council on the 12th February 2007 to discuss F3 fires and their prevention. The Executive Director also informed Members that although the sickness figures were well above target, that this was due to an unusual increase in longterm sickness.

RESOLVED – that the position up to 30th October 2006 be noted

133.3 PROGRESS AGAINST REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGETS 2006/07

Councillor Porley informed Members of the progress against Expenditure & Income Budgets up to 31st October 2006. The overall position for the first seven months of the financial year shows a favourable variance of £377,000. Appendix 1 summarises the variances between actual and expected expenditure and income. He also informed Members of the projected outturn which at the time is expected to produce an underspend of circa £500,000.

RESOLVED – that the position up to 30th October 2006 be noted

134 TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

134.1 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CHARTER

The Vice Chair welcomed Eleanor Haywood, Assistant Director of the North East Employers Organisation who outlined the Member Development Charter to enable the authority to consider making a Declaration of Commitment to the Member Development Charter.

Councillor Waller expressed his concerns that if Fire Authority's and Local Authority's take on board the Member Development Charter there would be a danger of a clash in training and would Members be expected to duplicate training even if they had already received it from a different Authority. Eleanor Haywood agreed to look into the duplicity of members training between Fire Authorities and Borough Councils.

RESOLVED – that the Member Development Charter be referred to the Member Development Group for further consideration and brought back to a future CFA meeting.

134.2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The Clerk informed Members of the intention to establish a Member Development Group comprising of 7 Members (4:1:1:1) to meet on an ad hoc basis. The group will enable Members to be further involved in the establishment, monitoring and evaluation of the Member Development strategies. The terms of reference were to be established and presented to a future Authority meeting.

RESOLVED – that a Member Development Group be established comprising of 7 Members (4:1:1:1).

134.3 CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY MEETINGS 2007/08

The Clerk sought approval of the Cleveland Fire Authority Meetings for 2007/08 for and sought Members views regarding the time and venues of the meetings. Councillor Waller informed Members that at the time of establishing the CFA, no other Councils met on a Friday and although this had now changed, council diaries are so full it would be a difficult to ascertain when all Councillors would be free at the same time. Councillor Kirton advised that no annual holiday breaks were included within the authority meeting as was the practice in local councils. The majority of Members agreed that the time day and venue should remain as outlined but members agreed this should be referred to the Member Development Group for further consideration.

RESOLVED – that the day, time, venue and possible recess regarding the Fire Authority Meetings be referred to the member development group for further discussion.

134.4 EMBRACING DIVERSITY EVENT – 28TH FEBRUARY 2007

The Clerk sought Members wishes regarding attendance at the Embracing Diversity Event on the 28th February 2007 at the Fire Service College.

RESOLVED – that Members contact the Head of Democratic & Member Services by 5th February if they wish to attend the Embracing Diversity Event

134.5 FIRE & RESCUE CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION – 22-24 MAY 2007

The Clerk sought Members wishes regarding attendance at the Fire & Rescue Conference & Exhibition 22-24 May 2007 at Birmingham.

Councillor Waller expressed concern at the timing of the conference due to the impending Election and uncertainty of Members availability.

RESOLVED – that the Chair, Vice Chair and one Minority member or substitutes attend the Fire and Rescue Conference and Exhibition in Birmingham on 22-24 May 2007.

134.6 GENDER EQUALITY DUTY – 30 JANUARY 2007

The Clerk sought Members wishes in respect of the Equality and Diversity member Champions attendance at the LGA/EOC/IDeA Conference on Gender Equality in London on 30 January 2007.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Biswas attend the Gender Equality Duty Seminar on 30 January 2007 in London.

134.7 CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY'S INFORMATION PACK

RESOLVED – that the report be noted

135 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT FROM THE TREASURER

135.1 DISCRETIONARY POLICY STATEMENT – LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS) REGULATIONS 1997 – AS AMENDED

The Treasurer informed Members of the implications of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (LGPS) as amended in Appendix 1. The LGPS regulations 1997 gives employers greater scope for local decision making and Cleveland Fire Authority officers have recently reviewed all its Discretionary Policies and this statement is applicable to all employees who are eligible to be members of the Local Government pension Scheme and will come into effect one month after the policy statement is approved.

RESOLVED – that the key discretionary policies contained within the Discretionary Policy Statement as outlined at Appendix 1 be approved.

136 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RESOLVED – Members passed the following resolution “That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as declined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of schedule 12A to the Act namely information regarding an individual; namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information)”.

137 TO CONFIRM THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF COMMITTEES: - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 1 DECEMBER 2006 AND 15 DECEMBER 2006

RESOLVED – that the confidential minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 1 December 2006 and 15 December 2006 be confirmed

138 RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

138.1 REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING – 1 DECEMBER 2006 NEFRA PROJECT: REPORT ON PROGRESS AND CONTINUITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**COUNCILLOR JOHN JONES
VICE CHAIR**



CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2007

- PRESENT:**
- VICE-CHAIRMAN**
Councillor J Jones – Middlesbrough Council
- HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL:**
Councillors Allison, Waller
- MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL:-**
Councillors Biswas, Clark, Mawston, Pearson, Porley
- REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL:-**
Councillors Briggs, Cooney, Dunning
- STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL:-**
Councillors Kirton, O'Donnell, Roberts, Salt,
- PROPER OFFICERS:-**
Clerk, Treasurer
- FIRE BRIGADE OFFICERS:-**
Chief Fire Officer, Executive Director,
- APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- Councillor R Payne – Hartlepool Borough Council
Councillor G Henery – Hartlepool Borough Council
Councillor B Forster – Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Councillor K Walker – Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Councillor V Smith – Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Councillor D Brown – Stockton Borough Council
Councillor W Woodhead – Stockton on Tees Borough Council

Councillor Pearson sent the Chairman her best wishes and a speedy recovery.

142 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE TREASURER

BUDGET STRATEGY 2007/2008 TO 2010/2011 AND 2007/2008 COUNCIL TAX LEVEL

The Treasurer advised Members that the outlook for public sector expenditure over the next few years was challenging and this position was reflected in the proposed budget strategy. He advised that the formula grant allocations for 2006/07 and 2007/08 brought forward a significant reduction in resources that will necessitate major changes but as a single purpose authority the CFA does not have the same opportunities to manage services and reduce costs as multi-purpose authorities. Furthermore the expectations and challenges within the Fire Service are increasing and Members need to ensure the Authority has the financial strength to respond to these challenges over the coming years. The Treasurer asked Members to consider the proposals within the Budget Strategy and advised Members that the Policy Committee had recommended a 4.5% increase which would result in a Band D Council Tax for 2007/2008 of £55.95. He reported that the Policy Committee had discounted a 4.95% increase as a result of notification of £88,000 surplus in the Collection Funds of the 4 constituent authorities.

142 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE TREASURER

BUDGET STRATEGY 2007/2008 TO 2010/2011 AND 2007/2008 COUNCIL TAX LEVEL (continued)

The Executive Director asked Members to consider a 4.9% Council Tax increase taking into account that Cleveland Fire Brigade is a high risk area with high deprivation especially in view of the reduction in grants from Central Government. He informed Members that there were mounting future pressures on the budget such as the 2003 pay agreement; the 2007 continuous personal development; £70,000 increase on the bill for pay protection on some staff; and the unknown cost of the Regional Control Centre replacement radio scheme. He reported that further investment was needed to continue our success and asked Member to approve a 4.9% increase rather than the proposed 4.5% which would generate an additional £42,000.

Councillor Roberts enquired what would happen with £42,000 should they agree the 4.9% increase and the Treasurer reported that the £42,000 would initially be placed in reserves and the Chief Fire Officer responded this would then be used for initiatives within the community.

Councillor Biswas stated that you cannot put a price on life, however, he did support the Treasurers proposals of 4.5%. Councillor Pearson agreed with the 4.5% rise adding that the Cleveland Fire Brigade were asking enough of the community of Cleveland and also took the opportunity to praise the work of the Firefighters. After a lengthy discussion Members unanimously approved a 4.5% increase for 2007/08.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that the proposed 2007/08 capital programme as detailed at Appendix A be approved.
- (ii) that the detailed prudential indicators identified at Appendix B be approved.
- (iii) that the phased use of balances over the four years commencing 2007/08 as detailed at paragraph 7.15 be approved.
- (iv) that a Band D Council Tax level for 2007/08 of £55.95 (a 4.5% increase on 2006/07) and supporting statutory calculations as detailed at Appendix F and the detailed revenue budget set out at Appendix D be approved.
- (v) that the following indicative Band D Council Tax levels for the following three years be approved:-
 - 2008/09 = £58.75
 - 2009/10 = £61.69
 - 2010/11 = £64.77

**COUNCILLOR JOHN JONES
VICE CHAIR**

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY



MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
FRIDAY, 16 MARCH 2007

PRESENT:	CHAIRMAN Councillor B Forster – Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL: Councillors Allison, Henery, Waller MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL:- Councillors Biswas, Clark, Jones, Mawston, Porley REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL:- Councillors Briggs, Cooney, Walker STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL:- Councillors Brown, Kirton, O'Donnell, Roberts, Salt, Woodhead AUTHORITY OFFICER:- Head of Democratic and Member Services FIRE BRIGADE OFFICERS:- Executive Director, Director of Performance
APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Councillor R Payne – Hartlepool Borough Council Councillor H Pearson – Middlesbrough Council Councillor V Smith – Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council Councillor G Dunning – Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Henery to the Authority.

145 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
145.1 CONSULTATION ON THE SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2007/08

The Executive Director informed Members that the Consultation Programme had been sufficiently extensive so as to enable any person or organisation, which may have had a legitimate interest in the Authority's proposals or may have been affected by those proposals, to express their views and that the scope of the consultation was proportionate to the nature and extent of the changes proposed and did not disadvantage any group or community served by the Authority. He reported that the Authority can demonstrate that adequate consultation had been undertaken and the responses collated and considered and that the Consultation Programme was based around a comprehensive Communication Plan which provided sufficient information to consultees to allow them to make informed decisions. The Communication Plan selected the most appropriate techniques for consultation and ensured that the subject matter was put into local context to improve understanding. A total of 161 staff and 15 public questionnaires were completed. 1779 questionnaires were completed through the Local Authorities Stakeholder panels and 110 responses were received through the 'Whatever it takes' initiative.

145.1 CONSULTATION ON THE SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2007/08 continued

The Executive Director reported that the Authority consultation included the general public, business organisations, stakeholders and other emergency services and that the 12 week consultation began on 27 November 2006 and ended 18 February 2007. He reported that a wide variety of methods were used to encourage staff, stakeholders and members of the public to engage in consultation process which included a questionnaire distributed to stakeholders, staff and members of the public and the Whatever It Takes Questionnaire. Only two letters were received from stakeholders supporting the changes out of the 1779 distributed. 161 staff and 15 public questionnaires were completed and 110 responses out of 8000 were received through the 'Whatever It Takes' initiative.

The Executive Director informed Members that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) had submitted a response to the Safety Improvement Plan and had expressed concerns about the introduction of the Medium Risk Band and whether this would change benchmark response times and whether fewer Firefighters would be sent to low risk F3 fires, as they carried the highest safety risk due to abuse. The Executive Director had assured the FBU that this does not mean a medium response and this was a positive indicator on the progress made by the Brigade in minimising risk when Cleveland has the highest level of risk in the country. He reported that there will be further consultation and specific proposals on the areas that are being reviewed.

Councillor Mawston commended the consultation process used this year and enquired as to why there was a difference in response between the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and the staff road show.

Councillor Allison referred to paragraph 9.6 Public Consultation Responses, where comments suggested that the Fire Brigade work closer with partners to remove rubbish and graffiti. The Executive Director informed Members that this was an interesting comment and wondered whether we had not got across what the Fire Brigade do and its aims, but recognises that a broader involvement with partners from this Authority may be needed, rather than Firefighters actually collecting rubbish and removing graffiti. The Chairman reported that as refuse is now going to be collected once per fortnight would this impact on small rubbish fires which are an increasing problem for the Fire Brigade. The Executive Director informed Members that the Authority deemed climate change to be a higher risk, with hotter summers and wetter winters.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that Members note the content of the report and consider the implications to the Authority's Safety Improvement Plan 2007/08**
- (ii) that the proposals as set out in the Safety Improvement Plan 2007/08 be approved.**

145.2 (DRAFT) FIRE SERVICE COMMUNITY PLAN 2007 – 2008

The Executive Director informed Members that the Draft Fire Service Community Plan 2007/2008 included the Cleveland Fire Authority's Strategic Plan 2005/08, the Best Value Performance Plan (subject to validation of projected Best Value indicators in June 2007) and the Safety Improvement Plan (the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan Year 4 Action Plan 2007/2008) which had been recommended for approval by the Policy Committee. He informed members that The Local Government Act 1999 requires FRA's to prepare an annual Best Value Performance Plan which should provide information on the Authority's Service Review Programme, efficiency achievements, finances and performance against key indicators.

RESOLVED – that Members approve the Draft Fire Service Community Plan 2007-2008 be approved

146. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RESOLVED - that under Section 100(A) (2) (3) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of confidential information as defined in paragraph 3a, namely information furnished to the Authority by a Government department upon terms (however expressed) which forbid the disclosure of the information to the public"

147. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman accepted a late report entitled 'Use of Resources & Direction of Travel Assessments 2006' which was discussed under the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 due to an embargo

**COUNCILLOR BRENDA FORSTER JP
CHAIRMAN**

COUNCIL
19th April 2007



Report of: CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

Subject: FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to invite the Council to approve amendments to the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council needs to have suitably robust financial arrangements in place both corporately and at a department level to demonstrate appropriate control procedures exist to manage services and risks, with the Financial Procedure Rules providing this framework.
- 2.2 As part of the evidence gathering process for the 2005/06 Statement on Internal Control, it was felt that in order to maintain the highest levels of financial probity and best practice the current Financial Procedure Rules would need to be updated. There are also new initiatives and challenges that face the Council, such as partnership working and the arrangements for dealing with grant income, that now need to be included.
- 2.3 The proposed amendments have been reported to and agreed by Corporate Management Team at their meetings of 23.10.06 and 4.12.06, and have also been reported to the Audit Committee at their meeting of 4.01.07.
- 2.4 The Constitution Working Group and the Constitution Committee, at their meetings on the 19.03.07 and 30.03.07 respectively, considered the changes proposed to the Financial Procedure Rules. The Constitution Committee approved the changes to the rules as set out in Appendix 1.

3. RECOMMENDED

That Council approve the Council's Financial Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1

2.2 Internal Audit

- 2.2.1 The Chief Financial Officer has a statutory responsibility for the overall financial administration of the Council's affairs and is responsible for maintaining an adequate and effective internal audit.
- 2.2.2 Internal Audit is an independent and objective appraisal function established by the Council for reviewing the authority's system of internal control. It examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of internal control as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources.
- 2.2.3 In undertaking its work, Internal Audit is independent in planning and operation and carries out its activities in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit and any other relevant guidance.
- 2.2.4 In carrying out the internal audit function the Chief Financial Officer, or their authorised representative, has authority, subject to any statutory limitations, to:
- i) Enter at all times any Council land or premises;
 - ii) Have access to all documents, correspondence and other records relating to the finances of the Council and apply any test or check deemed necessary;
 - iii) Require and receive from employees, Members or other persons, information and explanations concerning any matter under examination;
 - iv) Require any employee of the Council to produce any cash, stores or other property of the Council under the employee's control.
- 2.2.5 Chief Financial Officer's responsibilities:
- i) Maintain Strategic and Annual audit plans taking account of relative risk and in consultation with the Chief Executive, Directors and Chief Officers;
 - ii) Ensure that Internal Audit have access at reasonable times to all Council premises, records, documents and staff for information and explanations;
 - iii) Where appropriate report to Members on any audit recommendations the Chief Executive, Directors and Chief Officers have formally stated they will not implement or have not been implemented within six months of agreement;
 - iv) Report annually to the Audit Committee on the main issues raised by Internal Audit during the year;
 - v) Investigate promptly any fraud or irregularity brought to their attention and report to the Head of Paid Service.
- 2.2.6 Responsibilities of Directors and Chief Officers:
- i) To ensure that Internal Auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, records, documents and staff for the purposes of their work and liaise and co-operate with Internal Auditors on service specific issues;

- ii) To consider and respond promptly to audit recommendations, confirming in writing they have been implemented or formally stating why they will not be implemented.
- iii) Notify the Chief Financial Officer immediately of any suspected fraud or irregularity. Take all necessary steps to prevent further loss and secure records for any investigation.

2.8 Paying Staff and Members

2.8.1 Staff costs form the largest single element of the Council's expenditure and appropriate controls are necessary to ensure that payments are only made in accordance with the appropriate terms and conditions. Accordingly the Council has the following controls:

- i) The calculation of all payments to staff/Members must be done by the Chief Financial Officer supported by appropriate Personnel/Legal advice;
- ii) All appointments must be made in accordance with appropriate terms and conditions;
- iii) All appointments must have adequate budget provision;
- iv) All prime documents used to calculate pay must be signed by the individual and authorised by an appropriate budget holder or their nominee;
- v) All payments to Members must be in accordance with the approved scheme of allowances;
- vi) The Chief Executive authorises all changes in Chief Officer pay.

2.9 Preventing Financial Irregularities

2.9.1 In administering its responsibilities, the Council is committed to the prevention of financial irregularities and in its Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy, issued from time to time, Council makes it clear that the Council will not tolerate fraudulent or corrupt acts committed either by its officers, Members, or those companies or organisations with which it does business.

2.9.2 The Council's expectation on propriety and accountability is that Members and staff at all levels will lead by example in ensuring adherence to rules, procedures and Codes of Conduct.

2.9.3 The Council has in place a network of systems and procedures to cover its stewardship of public funds responsibilities and it maintains a continuous overview of the adequacy of its corporate governance arrangements through its Internal and External Auditors.

2.9.4 The Council's "Whistleblowing Arrangements" issued from time to time, provide the opportunity for issues to be raised in a confidential manner. In addition, the Council operates defined protocols, such as the procedures to comply with the Proceeds of Crime Act, setting out individual responsibilities for reporting and the subsequent investigation of irregularities.

2.9.5 Chief Financial Officer's responsibilities:

- i) Maintain adequate and effective audit arrangements;

- ii) Periodically review the Council's policies on Fraud and Corruption;
- iii) Ensure irregularities are appropriately investigated and are reported to the Head of Paid Service to determine what further action should be instigated.

2.9.6 Responsibilities of Directors and Chief Officers:

- i) Ensure all staff are aware of the Council's Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy;
- ii) Ensure that all suspected irregularities are reported to the Chief Financial Officer and if appropriate, the Monitoring officer.

3.3 Monitoring of Revenue Income and Expenditure

3.3.1 Having determined budgets that set out how the Council intends to achieve its objectives it is important to monitor the performance of actual income and expenditure against those budgets. This is a continuous process to ensure that resources are used to their best effect. In relation to income it is important to ensure that all income is accounted for and in relation to expenditure that differences are explained and understood. The analysis of differences should enable budget holders to ensure that appropriate action to bring budgets back on track is taken. Often at the detail level this may not be possible within the financial year and the relevant Director will need to consider transfers from other budgets within their control.

3.3.2 Responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer:

- i) To ensure that monitoring reports are available to budget holders;
- ii) To ensure that corporate level budgets are monitored;
- iii) To determine the format of monitoring reports for Scrutiny and or Executive;
- iv) To report on major differences or trends that have a significant impact on the overall finances of the Council;
- v) To operate and maintain an effective Financial Management system;
- vi) To provide Directors and Chief Officers with appropriate advice and guidance.

3.3.3 Responsibilities of Directors and Chief Officers:

- i) To ensure that adequate budget provision exists for all expenditure prior to it being incurred;
- ii) To ensure that each detailed budget has a nominated budget holder;
- iii) To monitor budgets within their service areas;
- iv) To ensure that where the approved budget for a service area under a single Directors control is anticipated to be insufficient to meet forecast commitments, to transfer resources between service areas in accordance with the budget transfer rules detailed in section 4.5 and where appropriate to seek approval of transfers within the quarterly monitoring reports submitted to Cabinet and also Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to ensure transparency.
- v) To inform the Chief Financial Officer of any major differences of actual from planned income or expenditure.

3.5 Monitoring of Capital Income and Expenditure

3.5.1 Having set a Capital Programme to achieve its Capital Strategy it is important to monitor the performance of actual physical progress, income and expenditure against the Programme. This is a continuous process to ensure that resources are used to their best effect and not lost, as some external funding is limited to specific financial years. In relation to Capital income, which can take the form of grants or credit approvals, it is important to ensure that all income is received and accounted for within the right financial year. Physical progress should be monitored, as this is a leading indicator of real expenditure on schemes. The analysis of differences between expected spends and actual should enable budget holders to ensure that appropriate action to bring budgets back on track is taken. If this is not possible then the relevant Director will need to consider transfers to or from other budgets within their control. If this is not possible then the Chief Financial Officer should be informed to enable the programme to be rebalanced.

3.5.2 Responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer:

- i) To ensure that monitoring reports are available to budget holders;
- ii) To determine the format of monitoring reports for Scrutiny and or Executive;
- iii) To report on major differences or trends that have a significant impact on the overall finances of the Council;
- iv) To ensure so far as possible the overall Programme is balanced and that the Council suffers no loss of resources;
- v) To provide Directors and Chief Officers with appropriate advice and guidance.

3.5.3 Responsibilities of Directors and Chief Officers:

- i) To ensure that adequate budget provision exists for all expenditure prior to it being incurred;
- ii) To ensure that each detailed budget has a nominated budget holder;
- iii) To monitor projects and their budgets within their service areas;
- iv) To ensure that where the approved budget for a specific scheme is anticipated to be insufficient to meet forecast commitments, to transfer resources in accordance with the budget transfer rules detailed in section 4.5 and where appropriate to seek approval of transfers within the quarterly monitoring reports submitted to Cabinet and also Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to ensure transparency.
- v) To inform the Chief Financial Officer of any major differences of actual from planned income or expenditure.

3.5.4 Responsibilities of Director of Neighbourhood Services:

- i) To manage the contracting process for building works;
- ii) To monitor projects physical and financial performance and take action as necessary;

iii) To manage the disposal of surplus land and buildings in accordance with the Capital Strategy.

4.5 Budget/Reserves Transfers & Contingencies

4.5.1 The Council sets budgets for both Revenue and Capital expenditure; equally the Council holds reserves for earmarked purposes. Circumstances can and do change that result in those detailed budgets becoming outdated. It is necessary, to ensure good financial management, that flexibility exists to allow transfers of resources.

All transfers must be notified to the Chief Financial Officer for their agreement prior to those transfers being actioned in the Accounting System. All transfers must leave the originating budget with sufficient funds to meet its commitments for the provision of that service at the level approved by Council within the budget and policy framework within the current financial year and not affect the sustainability of the service in future financial years.

4.5.2 These rules should be interpreted for both budget and reserve transfers and cover:

- i) Detailed transfers between service areas within a Director's/Chief Officer's control;
- ii) Transfers from Revenue to Capital;
- iv) Transfers of managed revenue underspends to the following financial year;
- v) Transfers of resources into and from Specific Reserves;

4.5.3 For Capital these rules cover:

- i) Transfers between projects;
- ii) Transfers from Capital to Revenue, which are subject to specific rules.

4.5.4 Revenue Transfers

In relation to budget transfers the following rules apply:

- i) Changes to staffing structures need to be approved in accordance with the relevant Council policy and be approved by the relevant Director, the Chief Executive, CPSO and CFO and must be wholly sustainable. No permanent staffing changes can be funded from reserves without Cabinet and Council approval. Approval to fill all vacant posts must be granted by the Monitoring of Vacancy Panel prior to the commencement of the recruitment process.

- ii) In relation to transfers between service areas under a single Directors control, the Director may transfer budgets as required up to £100,000.
- iii) In relation to transfers between service areas under a single Directors control of between £100,001 - £500,000, these must be authorised by the relevant Portfolio Holder.
- iv) In relation to transfers between service areas covering more than one Directorate, transfer of budgets up to £100,000 of a budget, must be authorised by the Cabinet.
- v) Budget transfers in excess of the above limits must be approved by the Council.

4.5.5 Transfers from Revenue to Capital are allowed subject to continued service delivery as determined in 4.5.1.

4.5.6 Transfers of managed revenue underspends from one year to the following are allowed subject to the transfer not exceeding 10% or £500,000, whichever is the lower, of the Departmental budget. Details of contributions to managed revenue underspend must be reported to Cabinet within the annual outturn report.

4.5.7 In addition, transfers into and from Specific Reserves and technical budget adjustments necessary to allocate grant resources and comply with grant conditions are allowed. Details of contributions to Specific Reserves must also be reported to Cabinet within the annual outturn report.

4.5.8 Capital Transfers

In relation to Capital, transfers of resources from one project to another subject to a maximum of:

- £5,000 or 10%, whichever is the higher, for projects up to £100,000,
- £20,000 or 10%, whichever is the higher for projects between £100,001 and £500,000,
- £100,000 or 10%, whichever is the lower for projects above £500,001, which must be approved by the CFO prior to being authorised by the relevant Portfolio Holder and reported with the quarterly budget monitoring report.

The Council must approve budget transfers in excess of the above limits.

4.5.9 Transfers between capital and revenue are allowed subject to the continued delivery of the capital program and compliance with capital accounting regulations and specific funding arrangements and approved by the CFO, Internal Audit and reported to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee.

4.5.10 Contingencies

In circumstances where action is required for which no or insufficient budget provision is available the Cabinet has authority to authorise the incurring of expenditure up to £100,000 in any one year from contingencies with maximum allocations for any one instance of £10,000, subject to the budget provision for Cabinet contingency.

4.5.11 Responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer:

To maintain and administer the scheme of budget transfers and contingencies.

4.5.12 Responsibilities of Directors and Chief Officers:

To ensure the Chief Financial Officer is informed of any changes, which require a budget transfer.



Report of: AUDIT COMMITTEE

Subject: INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to invite the Council to approve amendments to the Councils Internal Audit Charter.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In order to ensure that the purpose, authority and responsibility of Internal Audit is formally defined and consistent with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom, the Head of Audit and Governance must produce an audit charter.

2.2 The charter is effectively the terms of reference for Internal Audit and fulfils the following roles:

- Establishes the responsibilities and objectives of Internal Audit
- Establishes the organisational independence of Internal Audit.
- Establishes the accountability and relationships between the Head of Audit and Governance and those charged with governance.
- Recognises that internal audits remit extends to the entire control environment.
- Require and enables the Head of Audit and Governance to deliver an annual audit opinion.
- Establishes Internal Audits right of access to all records, assets, personnel and premises, including those of partner organisations, and its authority to obtain such information and explanations as it considers necessary to fulfil its responsibilities.

2.3 The Audit Committee considered the new Internal Audit Charter at its meeting of the 5.04.07 and gave its approval.

3. RECOMMENDED

That Council approve the Council's Internal Audit Charter as set out in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1



HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document establishes the role and terms of reference of the Internal Audit function within Hartlepool Borough Council.

It has been framed to provide an effective internal audit service, to meet the needs of the Council and to accord with the requirements and guidelines of;

- Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972;
- The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2006;
- The CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom 2006;
- The Standards of the Institute of Internal Auditors.

- 1.2 It is the intention to review these Terms of Reference annually to ensure their relevance is maintained. Amendments will be subject to the agreement of the Section 151 Officer and Members of the Audit Committee.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 Internal Audit is an assurance function that primarily provides an independent and objective opinion to the organisation on the control environment by evaluating its effectiveness in achieving the organisations objectives. It objectively examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of the control environment as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources (*CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the United Kingdom 2006*).

- 2.2 To fulfil this role Internal Audit within Hartlepool Borough Council is required:

- To provide an annual written report to the Audit Committee which includes an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisations control environment that supports the annual Statement on Internal Control;
- To review, appraise and report regularly on the soundness, adequacy and application of internal controls to management and the Audit Committee;
- To provide Management and Members of the Council with information, analysis, appraisal, recommendations, advice and assurance in order to assist them in the effective discharge of their responsibilities;
- To verify the existence and the means of safeguarding all assets;

- To plan audit work, having regard to this Charter, proper internal audit practices, the council's constitution and relevant statutes and regulations.

3 AUTHORITY

- 3.1 The authority of the Internal Audit function is derived from legislation mentioned in paragraph 1.1 and the Council's Constitution.
- 3.2 The requirement for an internal audit function for Local Authorities is implied by Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, which requires that Authorities "make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall ensure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs". The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2006 regulation 4, specifically require that "a review of the effectiveness of systems of internal control be considered by a committee of the relevant body" and regulation 6 requires relevant bodies to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal audit and for a committee of the body to consider the findings. Under the Council's constitution the Audit Committee undertakes this role.

4 SCOPE

- 4.1 The scope of Internal Audits remit covers the organisations entire control environment. This includes all of the Council's operations, resources, services and responsibilities in relation to other bodies.
- 4.2 The Head of Audit and Governance determines internal audit's priorities by preparation of a strategic audit plan based on assessed risk. This is translated into annual plans, which are reported to the Section 151 Officer, Corporate Management Team and the Audit Committee. In determining these priorities the Head of Audit and Governance takes into account the organisations assurance and monitoring mechanisms including risk management arrangements.
- 4.3 In order to fulfil its role and be able to carry out their duties effectively, audit staff shall have access at all reasonable times to:
- All assets, documents, accounts, property, vouchers, records, correspondence and other information and data of the Council which are necessary for the proper performance of their duties. Such access shall be granted on demand and not subject to prior notice;
 - Any Council employee or agency employee, to obtain information and explanations deemed necessary to form an opinion on the adequacy of systems and / or controls.
- 4.4 All officers and Members of Borough Council are required to render assistance to internal auditors in the conduct of their audits. These requirements are enshrined within the council's constitution.
- 4.5 It is management's responsibility to maintain the internal control system and to ensure that the Council's resources are properly applied in the manner and on the activities intended. This includes responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud and other illegal acts.

- 4.6 It is the internal auditor's responsibilities to have sufficient knowledge of fraud to be able to identify indicators that fraud might have been committed. This knowledge includes the need to know that characteristics of fraud, the techniques used to commit fraud, and the types of fraud associated with the activities audited. An internal auditor should have regard to the possibility of such malpractice and should seek to identify serious defects in internal control, which might permit the occurrence of such an event.

5 INDEPENDENCE

- 5.1 Internal Audit will remain sufficiently independent of the activities that it audits to enable auditors to perform their duties in a manner which facilitates impartial and effective professional judgements and recommendations. Internal auditors have no operational responsibilities.
- 5.2 Internal Audit is involved in the determination of its priorities in consultation with those charged with governance. The Head of Audit and Governance has direct access and freedom to report in his own name and without fear or favour to all officers and members and particularly to those charged with governance.
- 5.3 Accountability for the response to the advice and recommendation of Internal Audit lies with management, who either accept and implement the advice or formally reject it. The outcome of all recommendations is reported to the Audit Committee for their consideration.

6 RESOURCES

- 6.1 Internal Audit must be appropriately staffed in terms of numbers, grades, qualification levels and experience, having regard to its objectives and to this Charter and Standards. Internal Auditors need to be properly trained to fulfil their responsibilities and should maintain their professional competence through an appropriate ongoing development programme.
- 6.2 The Head of Audit and Governance is responsible in conjunction with the CFO and ACFO for appointing the staff of the Internal Audit Section and will ensure that appointments are made in order to achieve the appropriate mix of qualifications, experience and audit skills. The Section maintains an annually updated Training and Development Analysis Plan which sets out an ongoing development programme for Internal Audit staff.
- 6.3 The Head of Audit and Governance is responsible for ensuring that the resources of the Internal Audit Section are sufficient to meet its responsibilities and achieve its objectives. If a situation arose whereby he concluded that resources were insufficient, he must formally report this to the Chief Executive, the Section 151 Officer, and, if the position is not resolved, to the Audit Committee.

COUNCIL

19th April 2007



Report of: Licensing Committee

Subject: GAMBLING ACT LICENCE FEES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To enable Council to:-

- i) Agree the level of fees relating to Gambling Act 2005 premises licences; and
- ii) Consider delegating the power to determine future Gambling Act fees to the Licensing Committee.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Gambling Act became law on 7th April 2005. Its purpose is to update and consolidate outdated legislation that controls gambling activities such as bingo, lotteries, slot machines, sports betting and casinos. The new law also addresses recent advances in gambling technology such as internet betting.
- 2.2 Local authorities will assume responsibility for the licensing of gambling premises whilst the newly established Gambling Commission will administer personal and operators licences.
- 2.3 Applications for new premises licences may be made to the authority after 21st May 2007 with the Act taking full effect on 1st September 2007.
- 2.4 The Act automatically delegates most licensing responsibilities to the authority's Licensing Committee but the provision to determine fees remains with full Council unless it chooses to delegate to another body.
- 2.5 Regulations made under the Gambling Act stipulate that all licence fees must be charged on a cost recovery basis only and also prescribe the maximum level of fee that may be levied.

- 2.6 There are approximately 40 premises in Hartlepool that will require new licences under the Gambling Act. A further 200 alcohol licensed premises will require some administrative work relating to gaming machine permits but for which no fee is chargeable.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Licence applications may be made to Hartlepool Borough Council after 21st May 2007 and as such the level of fees to accompany such applications must be determined before this date.
- 3.2 A detailed costing exercise has been undertaken to ensure that fees equate to the costs associated with the administration of gambling licence applications and, in relation to annual fees, the cost of administering and enforcing licences that have been issued.
- 3.3 The level of fees considered appropriate by Licensing Committee is attached as Appendix I.
- 3.4 Licence fees and annual fees may be reviewed annually and Council may consider the Licensing Committee to be the most appropriate body to determine fees in future years.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That Council: -
- i) Approves the table of fees as attached as Appendix I with such fees to be reviewed annually; and
 - ii) Delegates the responsibility to set future Gambling Act fees to the Licensing Committee.

Appendix 1 to 11(iii)

Gambling Act 2005 - Table of Fees

Class of Premise	Fast Track Application (Statutory Fee)	Non-Fast Track Application	New application (premises hold a Provisional Statement)	New Application	Annual Fee	Variation	Transfer	Licence Reinstatement	Provisional Statement
	£	£		£	£	£	£	£	£
Bingo	300	1250 (1750)	1200 (1200)	1250 (3500)	600 (1000)	1250 (1750)	1200 (1200)	1200 (1200)	1250 (3500)
Adult Gaming Centre	300	1000 (1000)	1200 (1200)	1250 (2000)	600 (1000)	1000 (1000)	1200 (1200)	1200 (1200)	1250 (2000)
Betting (Tracks)	300	N/A	950 (950)	1250 (2500)	500 (1000)	1250 (1250)	950 (950)	950 (950)	1250 (2500)
Family Entertainment Centre	300	1000 (1000)	950 (950)	1250 (2000)	500 (750)	1000 (1000)	950 (950)	950 (950)	1250 (2000)
Betting (Other)	300	1250 (1500)	1200 (1200)	1250 (3000)	500 (600)	1250 (1500)	1200 (1200)	1200 (1200)	1250 (3000)

*Figures in brackets represent the maximum permitted fee

** All fees must be on a cost-recovery basis only

Casinos – Note: The Council has adopted a ‘No Casino Resolution’

Class of Premise	Fast track Application (Statutory Fee)	Non-Fast Track Application	New application (premises hold a Provisional Statement)	New Application	Annual Fee	Variation	Transfer	Licence Reinstatement	Provisional Statement
	£	£		£	£	£	£	£	£
Large Casino Premises	300	N/A	N/A	10000 (10000)	10000 (10000)	5000 (5000)	2150 (2150)	2150 (2150)	10000 (10000)
Small Casino Premises	300	N/A	N/A	8000 (8000)	3000 (3000)	4000 (4000)	1800 (1800)	1800 (1800)	8000 (8000)

The fee for permits for alcohol licensed premises has not yet been published but is expected to be a statutory annual fee of around £70

Report of: The Executive, to be presented by the
Regeneration, Liveability & Housing Portfolio
Holder

Subject: YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2007-08

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the Youth Justice Plan 2007-2008 for approval

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Youth Justice Board requires all Youth Offending Services to submit an Annual Plan. The format of the Plan is prescribed by the Youth Justice Board.
- 2.2 The Local Authority is responsible for the Youth Offending Service and is supported by other partners – Primary Care Trust, Police and Probation. The Youth Offending Service is a multi-disciplinary team and has secondments from all partners as well as a financial commitment to core funding.
- 2.3 The Plan must be submitted to the Youth Justice Board by 30th April 2007.

3. DECISION MAKING ROUTE FOR THE YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

- 3.1 The Plan is part of the Budget and Policy Framework for the authority. The programme has been fulfilled as follows:
1. An issues paper has been prepared and this was considered and approved by the Cabinet on 19th February 2007.
 2. The draft Youth Justice Delivery Plan was considered by the Regeneration & Planning Service Scrutiny Forum on 22nd March 2007.
 3. The final plan was considered by the Cabinet on 2nd April 2007 and has been recommended for approval.

- 3.2 A consultation event on the Youth Justice Plan has also been undertaken with partner agencies through the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's Young People's Group, the Youth Offending Service Management Board and Youth Offending Service staff.

4. THE YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2007/08

- 4.1 The attached Youth Justice Plan for 2007-2008 (**Appendix 1**) reviews performance for April-December 2006 against the Youth Justice Board's performance measures and identifies the plans for improvement in 2007-2008.
- 4.2 The number of first-time entrants to the youth justice system has increased in Hartlepool compared to last year, but this follows the trend nationally.
- 4.3 The re-offending rate for a group of young offenders, measured after 12 months, has reduced by 27.3% when the 2005 group is compared to the 2002 group
- 4.4 Although Hartlepool's performance for young offenders in Education, Training or Employment is below the target (of 90%) at 78.9%, this is above national, regional and family group average. For those young people of statutory school age, the performance is 88%, and for those 16-18 years it is 63.3%.
- 4.5 Support for parents has continued, but less formal interventions have been used during 2006/07 – this has led to a decrease in measured performance. This has been reviewed and a return to the more formal, structured interventions will be put in place.
- 4.6 The Safer Hartlepool Partnership's Youth Offending Service Management Board is responsible for the performance management of the Youth Justice Plan.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 The Council approves the Youth Justice Plan 2007-2008 for submission to the Youth Justice Board.



Hartlepool Youth Justice Plan

2007-2008

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Appendix B - Performance Measures

A. Summary

Please have the **chair of the Management Board** provide an **overview** of how the YOT delivers youth justice services in its area including a review of performance over the preceding year, making reference to Asset data, information on the performance measures, the results of EPQA self assessments, action on EPQA improvement plans and the main findings arising from the analysis of the re-offending cohort evaluation.

Please summarise the **key objectives** for the forthcoming year.

Overview:

I am pleased to report on the continued progress made by the Hartlepool Youth Offending Service (YOS) in preventing and reducing offending by children and young people. The overall re-offending rate has been reduced from 39% for the 2002 cohort to 28.8% for the 2005 cohort after 12 months this represents a 27.3% reduction.

The YOS has continued to perform well against the YJB performance measures, although some areas of performance still need to improve with priority given to Education, Training and Employment especially those over statutory school age.

The strategic governance of the YOS was reviewed during the year and a new management board was established. A restructure of the YOS has increased the management capacity to enable further development of YOS Services. A Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP) has been established in two areas of the town during the year with a further area to be developed in 2007.

The YOS was inspected in October 2006. The inspection report concluded that -“ Despite its relatively small size, we found the Hartlepool YOS to have established a broad range of relevant services for use in its work with children and young people, their parents and victims. Effective partnership arrangements were a strong feature of the work of the organisation.

The service has consistently performed well against its required targets and sound performance management systems were in place. Governance and leadership arrangements had been reorganised in the period leading up to the inspection.

We found a team culture that was positive and had a focus on effective engagements with children, young people and their parents. Services to and on behalf of victims had been developed through positive partnership work.”

The Inspectors did, however highlighted several areas that require improvement – including the quality of pre sentence reports supplied to Courts, the quality of initial and review supervision plans and the outcomes achieved in respect of the education, training and employment of children and young people subject to supervision. An action plan to address these issues has been devised.

Data from 134 start and end ASSETs (National Assessment tool of 12 risk factors) of young people worked with by the YOS identified key factors that contribute to offending. The top three were:

1. Lifestyle – 1.87
2. Thinking and behaviour – 1.67
3. Family and Personal Relationships -1.61

The average start asset score was 13.54 with an average end score of 11.24 representing a reduction of 17%.

All 12 risk factors showed decrease in scores comparing start and finish.

This data will be used by the Management Board to inform decision making.

The EPQA self assessment for substance misuse and mental health were undertaken during the year, with action plans developed to improve ratings.

The key objectives for 2007-08 are:

- Implement inspection Improvement Plan
- Further develop prevention services by establishing a further YIP area and supporting the work of the Family Intervention Project.
- Ensure high quality training and development opportunities for staff to meet individual personal and professional needs which assist the service to consolidate current good performance and effective practice.
- Strengthen partnership arrangements to enable improved performance in education, training and employment.

B. Local planning environment

In addition to planning for the YJB's performance management framework, Hartlepool YOS must also engage with a range of priorities and targets from local partners and agencies.

The YOS sits in the Community Safety and Prevention Division of the Regeneration and Planning Department in the Local Authority.

Within the current structure the YOS is connected directly to the Strategic Partnership responsible for Community Safety, Drug Action Team, Prolific and Priority Offender strategy and Anti Social Behaviour.

The YOS Manager is a member of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership and sits on the Prevention of Offenders Task Group (PPO) as well as the Anti Social Behaviour Task group and chairs the underage drinking 'Straightline' project. In conjunction with Children's Fund Manager the YOS Manager has developed the Hartlepool Intervention Project (HIP) to provide early interventions for those young people at risk of becoming involved in Anti Social Behaviour or Social Exclusion.

Three of the Tees Valley Youth Offending Services (South Tees, Stockton, Hartlepool) are represented on the Cleveland Criminal Justice Board by the Head of South Tees YOS. The Stockton YOS Manager represents the three YOS's on the Communications group whilst the Hartlepool YOS Manager sits on the Performance Group overseeing the Persistent Young Offenders pledge of 71 days from arrest to sentence and the end to end enforcement targets for breaches of community orders.

The YOS is represented at all levels of the Children's Safeguarding Board. The YOS Manager sits on the Safeguarding Board and chairs the Operational Sub group and is a member of the Performance and Quality sub group, whilst the YOS Deputy Manager is a member of the Training and Development sub group.

The YOS is represented on the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership, the Integrated Working and Information Sharing Steering Group (IWIS) and works closely with Children's Services to deliver services to young people at risk of becoming involved with crime, anti social behaviour and social exclusion. The HIP piloted the Common Assessment Framework alongside the ONSET during 2006. The accommodation needs of 16-18 year olds remains an issue for the YOS and the Young Persons Team of Children's Services, who work closely with the local authority's homeless section to secure suitable and affordable accommodation.

The YOS Manager is a member of the Hartlepool Vulnerable Persons Housing Panel steering Group whilst the deputy Manager sits on the panel.

The YOS Manager has been involved in the evaluation and review of the Children and Young People's Plan especially in relation to the making a positive contribution outcome as well as the preparations for the Joint Area Review.

<p>Education, Training and Employment targets are shared with Connexions who work closely with the YOS to support young people into Education, Training or Employment. The YOS Manager is a member of the Connexions Local Management Committee and the Connexions Locality Manager is a member of the Safer Hartlepool Young Peoples Group and the Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP) steering group.</p> <p>The Hartlepool YOS Manager represents the three Tees Valley YOS's on the Tees wide MAPPA strategic board, and chairs the MAPPA Procedures Sub Group.</p>	
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C. Drivers of Performance

C1. Governance and Leadership

Overview particularly looking at strategic management and leadership arrangements:

The Chief Executive of the Local Authority retains accountability through regular liaison meetings and linkage of the Youth Offending Service with the Safer Hartlepool Partnership.

During 2004/05, a more coherent and integrated approach to community safety was implemented bringing together the Crime Reduction and Disorder Partnership, the Drugs Action Team and the Youth Offending Service steering group to form the Safer Hartlepool Partnership.

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership Young People's group links to the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, with both the Chair and YOS Manager attending meetings. The 'Stay Safe' outcome from Every Child Matters is placed within the Community Safety section of the Local Area Agreement.

A specific focus on young people is maintained through the Young People's Group. This is chaired by the Head of Community Safety and Prevention at Hartlepool Borough Council, who is also the Safer Hartlepool Partnership co-ordinator and line manager of the YOS Manager. The membership of the Young People's group includes a range of voluntary sector organisations who provide services for young people. This has worked well at an operational level, but strategic direction, particularly from partner agencies outside the Local Authority, has diminished. The Youth Offending steering group had previously worked well together to ensure efficient and effective delivery of services by the YOS. Generally in Hartlepool there is excellent co operation, both strategically and operationally between agencies and the Safer Hartlepool Partnership builds on this experience and established relationships.

Members of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership recognised that the Partnerships priorities were changing, and initiatives such as the Prolific and Priority offender scheme brought more of a focus onto the prevention agendas specifically preventing crime and anti social behaviour being committed by young people.

The Partnership therefore reviewed its Partnership structures during 2006/07, and established a Strategic Management Board to provide strategic oversight and direction, and coordinate the provision of youth justice services. The Board met six weekly during 2006-07 and includes senior representatives from the funding agencies as well as representatives from the Court and the local authority Homeless section. The Board provides governance arrangements for the YOS including prevention and considers standing reports on performance, Effective Practice Quality Assurance (EPQA), Prolific and Priority Offenders (Prevent and Deter), finance, prevention and staffing issues.

The Tees Valley Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme Board meets quarterly and includes representatives from local authorities, health, probation, police, Learning and Skills Council, Connexions and the four Tees Valley YOSs.

Table A: Composition of Management Board

Name	Agency representing	Post in agency	Ethnicity	Gender
Alison Mawson	Community Safety and Prevention, HBC,	Head of Community Safety and Prevention.	White	Female
Steve Lawson	Police	Chief Inspector	White	Male
Phill Warriow	Children's Services, HBC,	Asst. Director	White	Male
Lynda Igoe	Housing HBC,	Housing Advice Manager	White	Female
Linda Watson	Primary Care Trust	Director of Operations	White	Female
Jean Bell	Hartlepool Magistrates Court	Court Legal Manager	White	Female
Tina Beckett	Probation	Asst Director	White	Female
Danny Dunleavy	Youth Offending Service	Youth Offending Service Manager	White	Male

C2. Performance and Quality Systems

Overview particularly looking at performance management and data quality:

The YOS disseminates all types of information using email, daily operational meetings and the monthly service meetings and development days.

The Careworks Information system has been operational since 2003 and is fully embedded into practice. The system has enabled the YOS to effectively collect management information and respond to performance issues as they arise. Information from the system is used by the operational managers during supervision to ensure correct recording of data. Issues relating to the system are raised by staff in the management and team meetings as well as the monthly development meetings. All staff have received training in Careworks.

The Information Officer is the lead for ensuring data is accurate and relevant and collected in accordance with the YJB counting rules. The data produced from Careworks is validated monthly by running secondary reports to cross match and check the data. A problem has been identified during the year in relation to parenting performance on further investigation this has proved to be a problem with the information system rather than a performance issue with the actual performance in relation to parenting interventions being 26.8% as opposed to the YJB quoted figure of 3.8%

The changeover to the web based version of Careworks was planned for December 2006 but there have been problems associated with the system and the migration of data which has meant a delay in implementation. The expected go live date is now April 2007.

The quarterly performance data is reported to the Management Board, the Safer Hartlepool Partnership, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership and to the Director of Regeneration and Planning with actions to address any areas where performance is not being met.

The EPQA action plans are reviewed quarterly within the team and with the steering group.

C3. Resources

C3 a - FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Overview of financial resources including any particularly significant changes in resources:

Contribution from Partner Agencies for 2007-08 is similar to the previous year with inflation added.

The YOS Budget has increased due to the additional YJB Prevention Funding.

NDC funding for a support worker for the HIP has been agreed for a further year.

The additional Children's Fund money for the HIP Key worker continues to March 2008.

Ring fenced funding has been developed in the relevant areas.

Table A1: Services planned for the financial year 2007/08

Core activity	Budget expenditure (£)
Preventive services	<u>369929</u>
PACE Services	<u>16566</u>
Pre-court services	<u>152381</u>
Court-based services	<u>106949</u>
Remand services	<u>141173</u>
Community-based services	<u>431255</u>
Through care / after care (including RAP)	<u>96000</u>
Other orders	<u>82489</u>
Total:	1396742

Table A2: Youth Offending Team Budget Financial Year 2007/08 Sources

Agency	Staffing costs (£)	Payments in kind – revenue (£)	Other delegated funds (£)	Total (£)
Police	42786		23800	66586
Probation (from Table A2c)	38571		9981	48522
Social Services	346682		15000	361682
Education				
Health (from Table A2b)	42215		23800	66015
Local Authority Chief Executive	135218		227914	363132
Additional Funding (from Table A2a)	249141		270821	519962
Total:	854613		571316	1396742

Table A2a: Additional sources of income

Additional source	Amount (£)
Single Regeneration Budget	
European Funding	
Youth Justice Board	<u>490775</u>
Other	<u>29187</u>
Total (for inclusion in Table A2)	<u>519962</u>

Table A2b: Health service contributions to the youth offending teams

Health contribution: Funding source	Amount (£)
Source 1: PCT	<u>66015</u>
Source 2 :	
Source 3 : (etc)	
Total (for inclusion in Table A2)	<u>66015</u>

Table A2c: Probation contributions to the Youth Offending Teams

Cash Contribution £	Payments in kind* 1 excluding staffing		Payment in Kind (Staffing*2)		Total (£)
(a)	Specify Items (b)	Cash Value £ (c)	Specify grade and number (d)	Cash Value including on costs £ (e)	(f) (a+c+e)
9981			Probation Officer (1)	38571	48552

C3 b PROGRAMME RESOURCES

Overview of programme resources including services to meet specialist needs:

Hartlepool YOS meet the Youth Justice Board Core Objectives in terms of basic and specialist programmes.

- Hartlepool Young Peoples Substance Misuse Service (HYPED) provide tier 2 & 3 interventions. The YOS also fund a Substance Misuse Nurse who is seconded to HYPED and works directly with young people who misuse alcohol and illegal substances.
- The YOS Health/ CAMHS Worker provides direct links to specialist services which offer; counselling self esteem building, bereavement and victim of abuse work.
- The Health worker also provides advice for both young men and women in terms of family planning and sex education.
- The Health worker was the first nurse to be qualified as a nurse prescriber in the north east region.
- The Children's Society provide Victim Offender Mediation.
- The Health Worker, along with a PCT worker provide 'straight line programme' offering early interventions to young people on the periphery of alcohol misuse.
- Eight members of staff are currently receiving training to deliver 'Pathway Plus'. This programme forms a key plank in the Effective Practice strategy in providing modular training to address key factors in offending.
- All case managers are trained to deliver 'Teen Talk', which is a package of cognitive offending based worksheets.
- Young people can also access Resettlement and Aftercare Programme. (RAP) – an intensive programme of support for young people who have substance misuse or mental health difficulties. The programme can include; accommodation, counselling, education/training/employment, constructive use of leisure, family support, substance misuse, mental health, health and life skills issues.
- The YOS have part funded an accommodation officer post. This worker is based at Hartlepool Housing Department and provides valuable links for the service.
- The YOS also have the advantage of having 3 remand foster carers – these carers often plug the gap in provision for difficult young people with accommodation problems.
- The service has access to Barnardo's Bridgeway Project which provides specialist interventions and therapeutic work with young people who

have sexually abused. Bridgeway also provides a service for young people who are also the victims of abuse.

- The YOS also has two workers who have received intensive training in working with young people who sexually abuse and 8 team members have undertaken basic assessment skills in working with young people who sexually abuse.
- Barnardo's Heartbeat Project provide mentoring programmes and sessions in; anger management, offending behaviour, self esteem and victim awareness. They also undertake the Lets Talk Parenting Programme and a programme to support parents of children and young people with ADHD.

C3 c - INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Overview of the use of ICT as an enabler to delivery of services (covering, within the “Wiring up Youth Justice” programme, electronic transfer of information across the YJS and the use of secure email. Also covering case management systems, ICT to support engagement of young people, any other ICT enablers, the benefits expected from use of IT and barriers to IT use and how these will be overcome):

The Careworks case management system is embedded into the work of the case managers. The system has been running since 2003 and the information obtained from the system is now being used to develop the services of the YOS. The web based version of the system will be implemented early in 2007/08. Data from the Asset information identifies the risk factors that need to be addressed to prevent further offending and the resources required.

A number of tablet computers with remote access have been purchased for staff to use in their recording and as a means of engaging young people to give their views, however the remote access to the system has not been successful and is the subject of ongoing discussion with IT providers.

The Tees Valley YOS's have purchased the Viewpoint What Do You Think for use with young people to assist the worker in undertaking an intervention and to allow further analysis of the data. However, the uptake in using Viewpoint has been poor due to technical problems. A live connection has now been put in place and Viewpoint have agreed to undertake some additional training with staff.

The Secure Email is live and being used to send Asset, Risk of Serious Harm and Vulnerability information to the YJB Placement Team, Assets and PSR information transferred between YOS's.

Video conferencing is available through South Tees YOS, however take up has been slow as many of the young people only see their families when reviews take place and the use of video conferencing would cut the contact between the young person and family, greater use can be made of the facilities by other agencies (Housing, Connexions etc) involved with the young person.

(WIRING UP / CONNECTIVITY. Tees Valley response)

People and Organisation

C4 a - WORKFORCE PLANNING

Overview of workforce planning including volunteers and staff in agencies providing service under contract:

Hartlepool YOS has a current workforce of 70. This includes outsourced workers within the voluntary and statutory sectors (Barnardo's, Children's Society, Substance Misuse Service, Hartlepool Housing Connections and Families First). The Service has 13 Referral Panel Volunteers, --- Sessional Workers, 2 students and 2 remand carers. The remaining staff are managers, practitioners, and admin workers.

At the end of March the YOS is awaiting CRB clearance on candidates to remit the following vacancies 1 F/T Social Worker/Case Manager 1 T/T Administrator 0.5 RAP Worker. An additional YIP Core Worker is to be recruited as soon as possible

There is currently a vacancy for a Remand Carer and a further carer is registering in April 2007. A recruitment campaign to replace the two carers will be undertaken with the Family Placement Team of Children's Services.

Table A3: Staff in the Youth Offending Team (by headcount)

	Managers Strategic	Managers Operational	Senior practitioners (FT)	Senior practitioners (PT)	Practitioners (FT)	Practitioners (PT)	Administrative	Sessional	Students/ trainees	Volunteer	Total
Permanent	1	1					2				4
Fixed Term					8	1	3	12	2	13	39
Seconded Social Services		2			7						9
Seconded Probation					1						1
Seconded Police					1						1
Seconded Health					1						1
Seconded Education						1					1
Seconded Connexions					3						4
Seconded Other											
Outsourced		3			9						12
Temporary											
Vacant					2	1	1				4
TOTAL	1	6			32	3	6	12	2	13	75
Gender/Ethnicity											
White Male	1	2			13	1		4		8	29
Black Male					1						1
Asian Male											
Mixed Race Male											
Chinese/Other Male											
White Female		4			16	1	5	8	2	5	41
Black Female											
Asian Female											
Mixed Race Female											
Chinese/Other Female											
TOTAL	1	6			30	2	5	12	2	13	71

C4 b - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Overview of workforce development including volunteers and staff in outsource agencies:

Hartlepool Youth Offending Service is fully committed to the Youth Justice Board Professional Framework and the YJB target of 80% enrolment or completion for either the Effective Practice Unit award (EPUA) or the Professional Certificate of Effective Practice (PCEP) has been achieved by the YOS.

The Foundation Degree in Youth Justice is available for all staff who have completed the PCEP and 5 have expressed an interest to participate in the October intake.

9 staff have completed and passed PCEP – (a further 3 did not complete or left the service) -3 are currently completing – and two members of a partner agency also completed and passed the certificate. There are a further 4 who have enrolled for the October cohort.

7 staff members, 1 Referral Order Volunteer and 3 partner agency staff have completed and passed the EPUA –

9 staff members undertook the Study Skills module.

The YOS committed to the Regional Training consortium (2006 – 2007) and staff received training in the following modules:

Introduction to Youth Justice – 16 staff members which included partner agencies, sessionals and volunteers.

Supervisory Skills for managers – 5 staff members – 4 of whom have completed the accreditation module with the ILM

Management of Risk – 20 staff members again including sessional, and partner agencies.

The YOS has further committed to the 2007 – 2008 Regional Consortium budget and it is expected that the following training will be offered to appropriate members of staff:

1. Management of Risk; 2. Youth Justice – Context ; 3. Youth Justice – APIS: 4. Target Setting. 5. Assessment Event: 6. Report Writing: 7. Engagement Skills: 8. YJ Managers:

It is planned that all new and recently appointed members of staff will participate in modules 1 to 7. New managers who will supervise staff will complete module 8.

In addition to the above the YOS commissioned bespoke training in: Race and Diversity Youth Justice – 28 staff members attended

The YOS staff also have the opportunity to participate in the monthly development meetings at which a variety of subjects has been 'visited'. Training and refresher training has been facilitated in a variety of subjects: Mental Health, APIS, Risk Management, Risk Policy, Policy and Procedures, National Standards and substance misuse. A local trainer has also been commissioned to deliver training at 6 of these half day sessions – subject matter will include: Race and Diversity, APIS, Quality Assurance, PSRs and Risk assessments. The same trainer has been commissioned to facilitate a two day training course in report writing with specific emphasis around diversity and risk. It is envisaged that 12 members of staff will participate.

The YOS also takes advantage of the Borough Council's training programme and all staff members, including sessional and volunteers are given training in corporate induction and child protection. All staff members are participating in the IWIS programme.

2 staff members have received ONSET training and it is envisaged that the training will be cascaded down to appropriate team members.

The Reparation Officer has received training in Health and Safety and COSHH.

The YOS has also taken advantage of training offered by other YOS's and 3 case managers attended training in 'Working with Sexually Abusive young person', case managers attended PSR training 3 attended 'Violence, Risk and Interventions'. All of this training was offered at Gateshead YOS and a further module will be attended by 3 staff members in working with vulnerable young person's who are at risk of prostitution.

PACE training has also been offered to 8 staff members.

The Operational Support Manager is the YOS representative on the Regional Workforce Development Group.

C5. Partnership Working

Overview of partnership working including complementary and conflicting targets:

Support from and effective engagement with partner agencies is critical to ensuring the delivery of Youth Justice Services. Hartlepool YOS is involved with a number of partner organisations which are summarised below:

Youth Offending Management Board – Made up of senior officers from all the statutory organisations to provide governance arrangements to the YOS.

Safer Hartlepool Partnership – This is the partnership between YOS, Drugs Action Team (DAT) and the Crime Reduction and Disorder Partnership. To enable the Partnership to achieve its aims and objectives, the partnership is supported by a series of task groups within which the YOS has representation.

Hartlepool Intervention Project (HIP) – This is a multi agency panel which is at the hub of all prevention activity.

Family Intervention Project (FIP) A steering group overseeing the development of FIP with representatives from Community Safety, Anti-Social Behaviour, Children's Services, Housing and YOS

Parenting Steering Group – multi-agency group developing the parenting Strategy.

Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) – This is the overarching Children's Strategic planning forum for Hartlepool and includes all those agencies and organisations involved in Children's lives.

Children's Fund – Along with YOS, co-ordinates prevention services. The YOS Manager plays a full part in the partnership board.

Safeguarding Children's Board – The YOS is represented on the board and the three sub groups.

Hartlepool Vulnerable Persons Housing Panel. The YOS plays a full part in this group.

Tees Valley Heads of Service – The four YOS's across Tees Valley, Hartlepool, Stockton, Darlington and South Tees collaborate where interests are aligned and sensible efficiencies can be realised. Meetings are held monthly.

Intensive Supervision and Support Programme (ISSP) – The partnership meets quarterly and includes representatives from local authorities, health, probation, police, connexions and the four youth offending services.

The ISSP Head of service report to the Tees Valley heads of service monthly meetings

Partnership with Children's Society and Stockton YOS to deliver Restorative Justice

Partnership with Barnardo's to deliver Parenting and mentoring Services

Partnership with Connexions to deliver Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP) and the education, training and employment performance measure.

DELIVERY PLAN

PREVENT OFFENDING

Reduce the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system by identifying children and young people at risk of offending or involvement in anti-social behaviour through a YISP or other evidence-based targeted means of intervention designed to reduce those risks and strengthen protective factors as demonstrated by using *ONSET* or other effective means of assessment and monitoring.

Following consultation with young people the Family Support Panel was re-named the Hartlepool Intervention Project (HIP). During the year the Fire Brigade have now been added to the Panel which consists of representatives from Children's Service (Education, Social Care, Youth Service and Children's Fund), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Local Authority Housing, Housing Hartlepool, Police, Community Safety, Anti Social Behaviour Unit, Connexions, Barnardo's, Families First and the Youth Offending Service. An additional member specialising in Family Conferencing will join the Panel in April 2007.

The HIP Panel; continues to be the main mechanism for the co-ordination and delivery of preventative services in Hartlepool. Early identification of those young people at risk of becoming involved in crime, anti social behaviour or social exclusion remains a priority, with the majority of schools having had presentations by the HIP team during the year. Closer working relationships have been established with the Anti Social Behaviour Unit to ensure that young people coming to their attention are given the appropriate support. All referrals accepted by the Panel are subject to ONSET assessments and an intervention plan drawn up following a Family Focus group, involving the young person and their family at all times. HIP have been involved in the pilot of the CAF during 2007.

The YJB Prevention Funding has enabled the establishment of a Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP) in two areas of the town. Due to recruitment difficulties these were not commenced as early as planned but are now up and running with positive engagement in both areas. The HIP Panel were involved in the identification process of the young people and will remain the route through which referrals are processed.

The additional Prevention Funding will be used to establish another YIP in the North Area of the town working closely with the extended schools partnership.

The Inspection Report comments positively on “HIP and YIP arrangements contributing to targeted community regeneration initiatives and providing a multi agency resource addressing the needs of referred families.”

Hartlepool was successful in applying for funding for a Family Intervention Project (FIP) from the RESPECT Unit during 2006. The HIP Panel will once again be the mechanism for the identification of appropriate families requiring a more intense level of support.

In addition funding to support parenting interventions has been secured and a parenting strategy is being developed covering the whole age range of children and young people. The Parenting Commissioner, Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and the YOS Manager worked closely together to develop these additional preventative services and The Children and Young People’s Plan making a positive contribution section.

Funding has also been secured to employ a Project Co-ordinator for the Straightline Project which delivers an alcohol awareness programme to young people found in possession of alcohol by the Police.

Despite the introduction of the YIP during 2006 the number of first time entrants has increased with April – December 2006 figure at 240 exceeding the March 2006 baseline of 234. Discussions with the Police have indicated that Police Officers now have less discretion relating to offences which has increased the number of Reprimands issued in the last year. The Offences Brought to Justice performance in the Hartlepool District has increased resulting in more reprimands. The police are to analyse what reprimands are being issued for and in what areas, so that more specific targeted interventions can be undertaken.

An event “Strengthening Preventative Services in Hartlepool” is planned for 4th May. The event will be aimed at all agencies working with children and young people to raise awareness of the preventive services focussing specifically on the HIP, YIP, FIP and Straightline Project.

Data:

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target	240 + 8.6%
Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	222

INTERVENE EARLY

Ensure that 100% of young people on a final warning are supported by an intervention if:

All young people receiving a Final Warning will receive an intervention regardless of their ASSET score. Final Warning surgeries involve an intervention by way of a presentation by the Prison Me No Way Project or the DVD.

Those young people meeting the criteria for an intervention on their ASSET score will receive appropriate intervention /support through the Heartbeat Mentoring Project.

The hundred per cent target was not met due to one young person refusing to engage in the Final Warning and subsequently referred to the Court by the Police.

It is intended to enhance the effectiveness of the Final Warning during 2007 by delivering the Final Warning Surgery, including a visit to the cell holding area, in the Magistrates Court. It is felt that this will give a much stronger message to the young people regarding their future conduct than the present system.

Data: Final Warnings

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target	93.8%	EPQA: 03 rating	1.31
Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	100%	EPQA: 05 result	2.44

PROVIDE INTENSIVE COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

Provide ISSP in line with ISSP managers' guidance 2005: 25 hours of supervision per week in the first 3 months reducing to 5 in the second 3 months, assumption of electronic tagging, 5 core elements covered throughout programme.

Provide Intensive Community Supervision

The Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) in Hartlepool has benefited during 2006 from the presence of an ISSP Case Manager based full-time in the YOS. The number of young people accessing ISSP has increased significantly as a result of YOS case managers having confidence in the service provided.

Numbers accessing ISSP April – December 2006 26

REDUCE RE-OFFENDING

Achieve a 5% reduction in the re-offending rate for 2007-08, when compared with 2002 cohort, with respect to: Pre-court, First tier penalties, Community penalties, Custodial penalties

And reduce the seriousness and frequency of re-offending.

NB. Cohorts are to be tracked for 12 months, not 24 months.

The overall re-offending rate after 12 months has reduced from 39.6% for the 2002 cohort to 28.8% for the 2005 cohort a percentage reduction of 27.3%.

Whilst there was a decrease in the re-offending rate overall there were increases in the first tier and community sentences of 12.7% and 18.4% respectively the pre-court re-offending rate decreased by 30.5 % whilst there were no custodial penalties in the 2005 cohort.

Data:

	Oct-Dec 2002 cohort - % reoffending after 12 months:	Oct-Dec 2005 cohort - % reoffending after 12 months (if available):	Oct-Dec 2006 cohort - % reoffending after 12 months:
Pre-court	23.3%	16.2%	Reduction of 5%
First tier penalties	36.1%	40.7%	Reduction of 5%
Community penalties	75%	88.8%	Reduction of 5%
Custody	57%	N/A	Reduction of 5%

REDUCE THE USE OF CUSTODY

Secure remands: Reduce the use of the secure estate for remands to 9% of the total number of remand episodes excluding unconditional bail.

Custodial sentences: reduce the use of the secure estate for Custodial sentences to no more than 5% of all sentences imposed.

Hartlepool YOS have struggled to meet the 30% targets for remands to custody, with the outcome for April – December being 33.3%. This compares favourably to the same period last year when the figure was 57.1%. The number of young people receiving remands has doubled from four to eight. The YOS Court Officers are pro-active in promoting alternatives to custody including bail with conditions. The YOS has available remand carers and a bail support scheme including ISSP.

The new target of 9% including conditional bail is welcomed by the YOS who are proactive with the Court in using conditional bail.

There is a good working relationship with the Courts and the YOS Manager attends the Youth Court Panel Meetings to update Magistrates on performance and YOS related issues which affect the Courts e.g. Parenting, Restorative Justice and remands. Custodial Sentences remain within the target.

Data:

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (remand) (old performance indicator)	Target 30% Actual 33.3%	Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (custody)	Target 5% Actual 4.1%	EPQA: 05 or 06 rating	2.19
Performance Indicator: 07/08 target (new performance indicator)	9%	Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	5%	EPQA: 07 or 08 target	3

ENFORCEMENT AND ENABLING COMPLIANCE

The YJB will consider issuing further guidance on assessing performance against a range of key national standards linked to enabling compliance, dependent on the outcome of the 2006/07 audit of national standards (summer 2007):

Hartlepool YOS Manager represents South Tees, Stockton and Hartlepool YOS on the Performance Group of the Cleveland Criminal Justice Board, as well as the COMET group which tracks timescales for enforcement of breaches.

The YOS's in the Cleveland have met the 35 day target for resolution of breaches in 8 of the 9 months from April-Dec with the December figure being 37 days. 67 % of cases were resolved within 25 working days against a target of 50%.

There is a new target of 65% of cases being resolved in 25 working days for 2007/08

DTO TRAINING PLANS

Ensure that all initial training plans for young people subject to DTO s are drawn up within the time-scales and the approach prescribed by National Standards for Youth Justice

Target for DTO Training Plans have been met during the year. There is a close liaison with Castington YOI with any issues of risk being forwarded electronically, through the 'Yellow Envelope' and by phone calls.

Data:

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target	100%

SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGING IN EDUCATION TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

Ensure that all initial training plans for young people subject to DTOs are drawn up within the time-scales and the approach prescribed by National Standards for Youth Justice.

Performance overall of 78.9% continues to be below the 90% target, but is above the performance level of Family Group, North East Region and National. However when split between those in Statutory Education the figures are 88% for those under sixteen and only 63.3% for those over sixteen.

During the first two quarters of 2006/07 there was no YOS Education or Connexions representatives, new staff come into post in September which has seen an increase in the performance target.

Work is ongoing with Connexions to monitor all young people more closely who are not in Education, Training or Employment (ETE). Funding for Projects supporting young people in ETE such as Kickstart and the Hartlepool 100 Project has been withdrawn, however, it is hoped to replicate these schemes with other funding. Work with Training providers to provide a wider range of placements for young people and support them in maintaining these placements is ongoing.

Data:

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target	79%	EPQA: 03 rating	1.00
Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	90%	EPQA: 05 result	2.06

SUPPORT ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION

The named Accommodation Officer for the YOS is the jointly funded Homeless Strategy Officer whose remit is to increase the accommodation available to young people aged 16-25.

In November 2006 a new supported accommodation complete with ten beds to support vulnerable young people was opened, whilst this has alleviated some of the longer term accommodation issues there are still problems with emergency accommodation for those 16 – 18 year olds who present as homeless. Discussions are ongoing with Children's Services and the Homeless Section of the Local Authority to address this issue and possibly develop a supported lodgings scheme.

Placements with remand carers are used if appropriate accommodation is not available.

Data:

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (named officer)	<u>100%</u>	Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (suitable accommodation)	95.1%
Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	<u>100%</u>	Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	100%

SUPPORT ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The YOS Health Worker continues to work jointly with CAHMS, undertaking the formal health assessment which enables the non-acute assessment target to be met. Relevant training support and supervision is given to the Health Worker by CAMHS staff.

Mental Health training for YOS workers by CAMHS has been arranged to take place during 2007.

Data:

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (Acute)	100% N/A	Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (non-acute)	100% 100%	EPQA: 05 or 06 rating	2.31
Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	100%	Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	100%	EPQA: 07 or 08 target	3

SUPPORT ACCESS TO SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES

Ensure that all young people are screened for substance misuse, that those who are identified with needs receive appropriate specialist assessment within 5 working days and, following the assessment, access the early intervention and treatment services they require within 10 working days

The YOS continues to work closely with the Hartlepool Young People's Drug Team (HYPED) to address the substance misuse needs of young people. Every effort is made to ensure young people receive assessment and interventions within the timescales but young people failing/refusing to attend appointments does affect performance.

Data:

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (Screening)		Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (specialist assessment)	97%	Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (early access to intervention)	92.9%	EPQA: 05 or 06 rating	<u>2.37</u>
Performance Indicator: 07/08 target		Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	100%	Performance Indicator: 07/08 target	100%	EPQA: 07 or 08 target	<u>3</u>

SUPPORT RESETTLEMENT INTO THE COMMUNITY

All young people in custody with an ASSET score of 2 or more for Substance Misuse are referred to RAP and workers are involved from the Initial Planning Meeting to support the young person through the custodial phase and on release into the community.

Similarly, young people on Community Orders with Substance Misuse issues are referred to RAP, which supports young people with their education, training and employment, accommodation and mental health issues as well as engaging them in constructive leisure activities.

Data: Resettlement

EPQA: 05 rating	2.19	EPQA: 07 target	<u>3</u>
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PROVIDE EFFECTIVE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SERVICES

The YOS has continued to achieve the performance targets in respect of Restorative Justice. Victim Offender mediation and victim impact work are delivered in partnership with Stockton YOS and the Children's Society. The work with the Children's Society was seen as a area of good practice by the YOS Inspection. "The YOS has addressed victim's issues and restorative justice issues from the onset. Services are well developed and good working relationships exist between the various groups of staff involved. The 'culture' of the YOS was sensitive to the needs of victims, and as appropriate range of restorative justice opportunities was being established"

Following the resignation of the Reparation Officer and the retirement of the Children's Society Victim Impact Worker the posts have been successfully filled. Reparation activities have been expanded during the year. We do not see the new targets as presenting any problems to the YOS.

Data:

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (intervention) (old performance indicator)	75% 86.1%	Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (satisfaction) (old performance indicator)	75% 95.5%
Performance Indicator: 07/08 target (new performance indicator)	25%	Performance Indicator: 07/08 target (new performance indicator)	85%

SUPPORT PARENTING INTERVENTIONS

Whilst the YJB Performance Framework as informed by the Careworks Management Information System shows parenting intervention for only 3.8% of cases further investigation of the figures has shown as error in the management information system and the true figure is 26.8% against the 10% target.

Parenting interventions are addressed at the ASSET assessment stage, these include interventions undertaken by the case managers and by the Barnardo's Parenting Programme which was viewed as an area of good practice during the YOS inspection.

The majority of interventions are agreed on a voluntary basis with parenting orders being requested where appropriate. Interventions are delivered individually, within a group setting or to couples depending upon the needs of the parent.

The satisfaction rate for parents completing an intervention programme remains high. Multi-agency work is ongoing at present to develop a parenting strategy for Hartlepool.

We will continue to work closely with parents to achieve the raised targets for parenting including prevention where the work with parents is currently undertaken and considered an area of strength during the YOS inspection.

Data:

Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (Interventions) (old performance indicator)	10% 3.8% (26.8)	Performance Indicator: 06/07 April – December actual and % against target (Satisfaction) (old performance indicator)	75% 100%	EPQA: 04 rating	2.25
Performance Indicator: 07/08 target (community interventions) (new performance indicator)	20%	Performance Indicator: 07/08 (prevention programmes) (new performance Indicator)		EPQA: 05 result	2.37

ENSURE EQUAL TREATMENT REGARDLESS OF RACE

The YOS has continued to monitor the ethnicity of young people coming into the Youth Justice System. Children and young people from black and ethnic minority groups are seldom features in the cases forming the work of the YOS.

E. Review and Approval

Please include your schedule for reviewing the actions set out in this plan and the Action Planning Tool. In addition, please ensure that the Chief Officers from the participating agencies, including the Chief Executive of the Local Authority sign the plan.

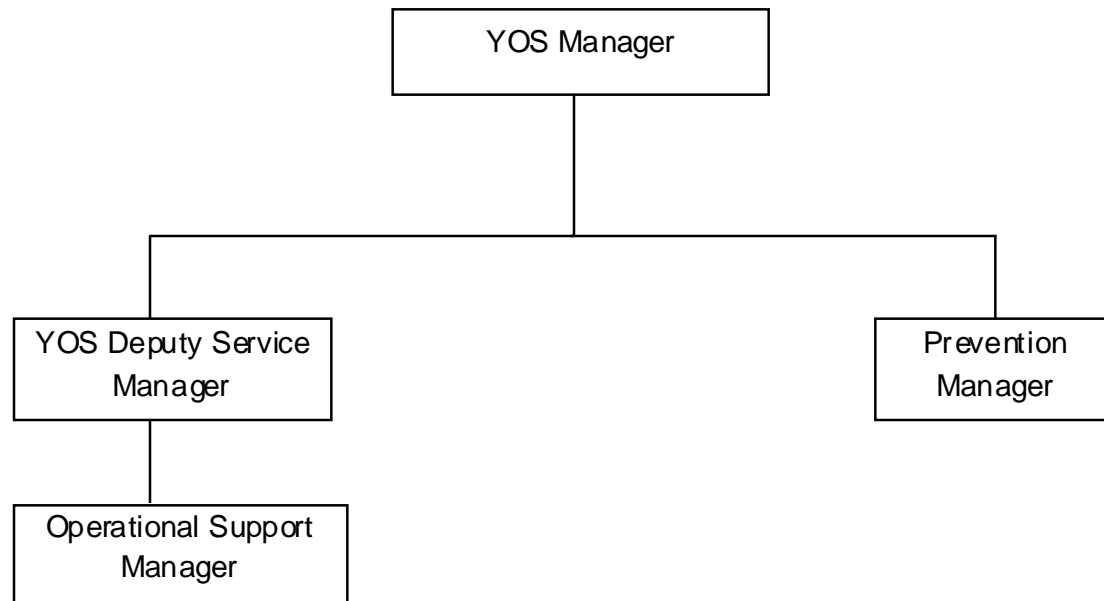
Table B: Schedule for review of plan :

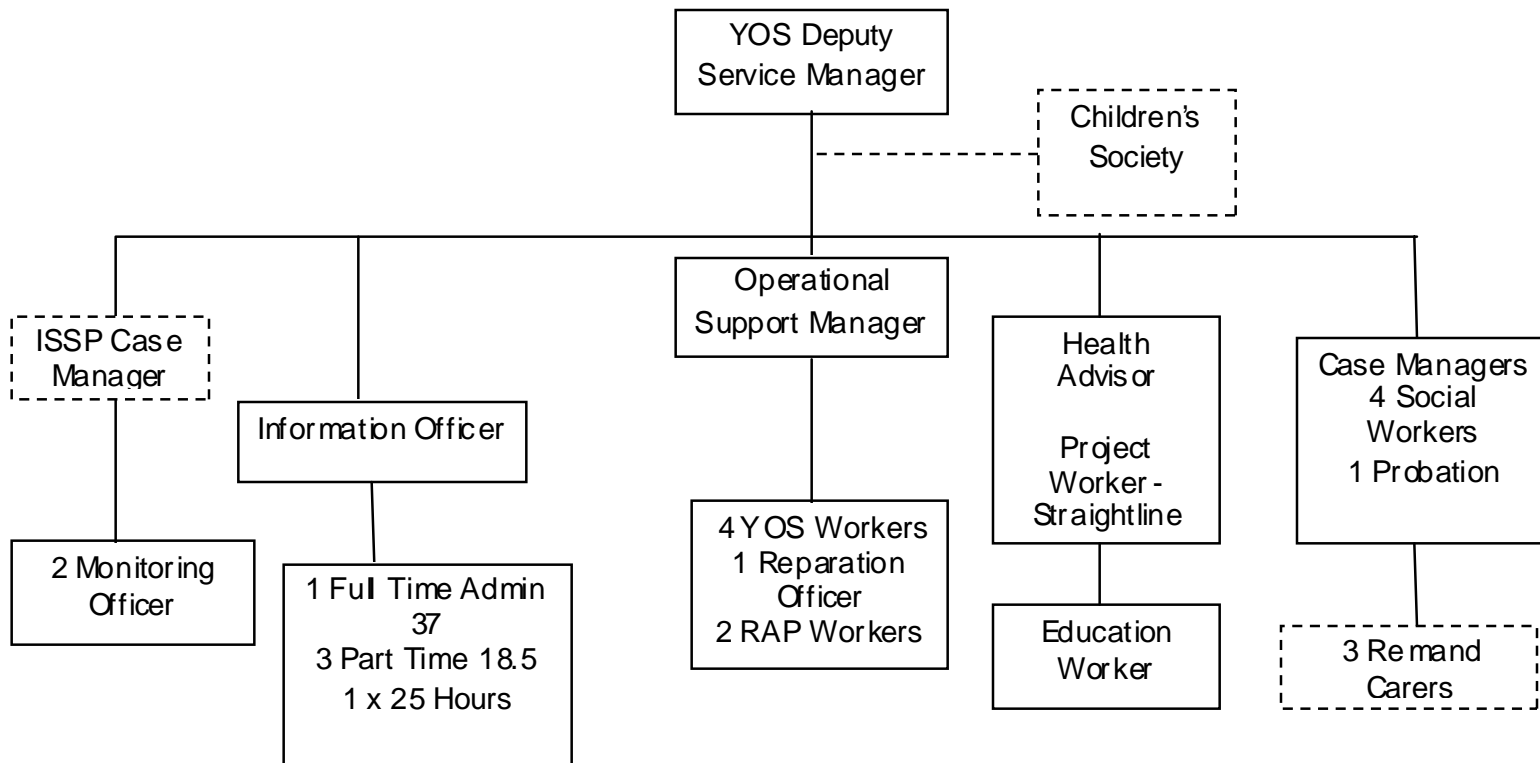
Review date	Reviewer
July 2007	YOS Management Board
October 2007	YOS Management Board
January 2007	YOS Management Board
April 2008	YOS Management Board

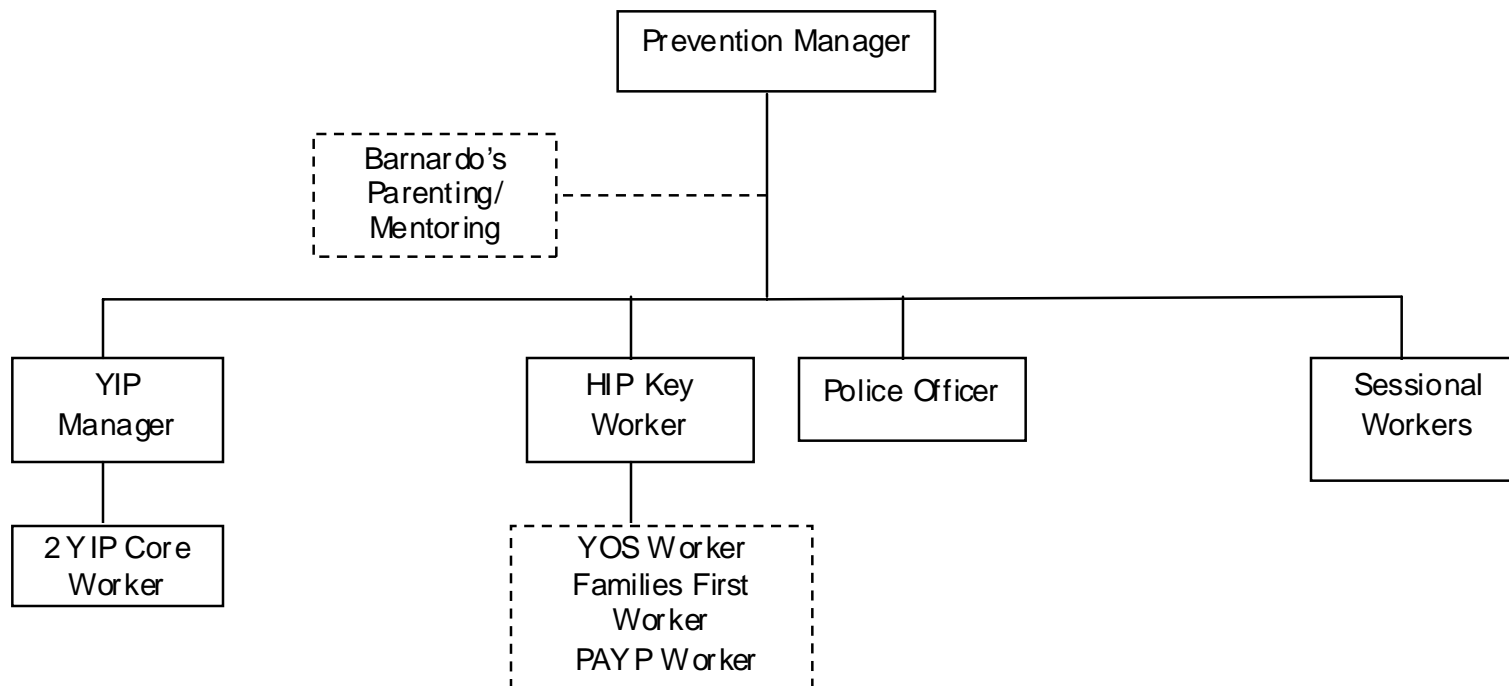
Table C: Signature of approval

	Name Of Chief Officer	Signature	Date
Chief Executive Of The Local Authority	Paul Walker		
Children's Services	Adrienne Simcock		
Health Service	Chris Willis		
Police Service	Steve Ashman		
Probation Service	Elaine Lumley		
Community Safety & Prevention	Alison Mawson		

Appendix A - Structure







Appendix B - Performance Measures

Performance Indicators

In the table below, please provide historical data against the performance indicators associated with the themes.

Theme and measure	2005/06 Outturn	2006/07 Apr-Dec Outturn	2007/08 Target
Prevent offending (target since 05/06): Reduce the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system by 5% by March 2008, compared to the 2005/6 baseline, by identifying children and young people at risk of offending or involvement in anti-social behaviour through a YISP or other evidence-based targeted means of intervention designed to reduce those risks and strengthen protective factors as demonstrated by using ONSET or other effective means of assessment and monitoring	234	240	222
Intervene early: Ensure that 100% of young people on a final warning are supported by an intervention if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - their Asset score is greater or equal to 12, or - there are any concerns of risk of serious harm to others, or - their score is less than 12 but any sections score 4 	N/A	93.8%	100%
Reduce re-offending: Achieve a reduction in re-offending rates by 5% in 2007/8, when compared with the 2002-03 re-offending cohort, with respect to each of the following four populations:	Oct-Dec 2002 cohort - % reoffending after 12 months:	Oct-Dec 2005 cohort - % reoffending after 12 months (if available):	Oct-Dec 2006 cohort - % reoffending after 12 months:
Pre-court	23.3%	16.2%	Reduction of 5%
First tier penalties	36.1%	40.7%	Reduction of 5%

Theme and measure	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 Apr-Dec Outturn	2007/08 Target
Community penalties	75%	88.8%	Reduction of 5%
Custody	57%	N/A	Reduction of 5%
Reduce the use of custody (secure remands) (new target): Reduce the use of the secure estate for remands to 9% of the total number of remand episodes, excluding unconditional bail.			9%
Reduce the use of custody (secure remands) (old target): Reduce the number of remands to the secure estate (as a proportion of all remand episodes excluding conditional / unconditional bail) to 30%	42.9%	33.3%	
Reduce the use of custody (custodial sentences): Reduce the number of custodial sentences as proportion of all court disposals to 5%	2.1%	4.1%	5%
DTO training Plans Ensure that all initial training plans for DTOs are drawn up within 10 working days of sentences being passed	100%	100%	100%
Support young people engaging in education, training and employment: Ensure that 90% of young offenders who are supervised by the YOTs are in suitable full-time education, training or employment	79%	79%	90%
Support access to appropriate accommodation: Ensure that all YOTs have a named accommodation officer and that all young people completing community interventions or on release from the secure estate have suitable accommodation to go to	96.7%	95.1%	100%
Support access to mental health services: Ensure that all young people who are assessed by ASSET or the Mental Health Assessment Framework as manifesting acute mental health difficulties are referred by YOTs to the CAMHS for a formal assessment commencing within five working days of the receipt of the referral, with a view to their accessing a tier 3 or other appropriate CAMHS tier service based on this assessment	100%	N/A	100%

Theme and measure	2005/06 Outturn	2006/07 Apr-Dec Outturn	2007/08 Target
Ensure that all young people who are assessed by <i>ASSET</i> or the Mental Health Assessment Framework as manifesting non-acute mental health concerns are referred by the YOT for an assessment and engagement by the appropriate CAMHS tier 1-3 service commenced within 15 working days of referral.	100%	100%	100%
Support access to substance misuse services: Ensure that all young people are screened for substance misuse	100%	100%	100%
Ensure that all young people identified with needs receive appropriate specialist assessment within 5 working days of referral, following screening.	85.3%	97%	100%
Ensure that all young people access the early intervention and treatment services they require within 10 working days of assessment	100.0%	92.9%	100%
Provide effective restorative justice services: (new target): Ensure that victims participate in restorative processes in 25% of relevant disposals referred to the YOT			25%
Ensure that 85% of victims participating are satisfied			85%
Provide effective restorative justice services (old target) Ensure that 75% of victims of youth crime referred to YOTs are offered the opportunity to participate in a restorative process	90%	86.1%	
Ensure that 75% of victims participating are satisfied	100%	95.5%	
Support parenting interventions (new target): Ensure that 20% of young people with a final warning supported by intervention, a relevant community based penalty or DTO, their parent/carer(s) receive a parenting intervention. Ensure that 20% of the young people on prevention programmes, their parent/carer(s) receive a parenting intervention			20% 20%
Support parenting interventions (old target): Ensure that 10% of young people with a final warning supported by intervention or a community disposal receive a parenting intervention	53.9%	3.8%	
Ensure that 75 % of parents participating in a parenting intervention are satisfied	100%	100%	

Theme and measure	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 Apr-Dec Outturn	2007/08 Target
Ensure equal treatment regardless of race: All YOTs should implement their action plan to ensure that any difference between the ethnic composition of offenders on all pre-court and post-court disposals and the ethnic composition of the local community is reduced year on year			

Report of: The Executive, to be presented by the Regeneration, Liveability & Housing Portfolio Holder

Subject TEES VALLEY STRUCTURE PLAN – SAVED POLICIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek agreement to the saving of specified policies of the Tees Valley Structure Plan pending the adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy..

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks replace structure plans and local plans. Structure plans are 'saved' for a period of three years from the commencement of the Act or adoption of the structure plan. In the case of the Tees Valley, the Structure Plan will cease to have effect as a development plan after 27th September 2007.
- 2.2 However the government has made provision for saving specified structure plan policies beyond the 3 year period to prevent a policy void until the Regional Spatial Strategy is adopted. Requests for saving structure plan policies must be made by the Regional Planning Body (the North East Assembly in the case of the Tees Valley Structure Plan) following discussion and consultation with the structure plan authority. In the Tees Valley all five Unitary Authorities are structure plan authorities, with the Joint Strategy Unit and Committee preparing the Tees Valley Structure Plan on behalf of the authorities.
- 2.3 The North East Assembly, as Regional Planning Body, must submit a statement to Government Office by 1st April 2007 requesting the extension of saved structure plan policies.

3. GOVERNMENT POLICY ON SAVING POLICIES

- 3.1 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 11 on Regional Spatial Strategies states that the following criteria will be taken into account by the Secretary of State when considering whether to extend specified structure plan policies:
- the saved policies are consistent with national planning policies published since the structure plan was adopted and are in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy,

- the saved policies address an existing strategic policy deficit and do not duplicate national or local policy, and
 - the operation of the structure plan policies to be saved for longer than three years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved.
- 3.2 PPS11 also states that even where policies are not compliant with one or more of these criteria, the Secretary of State may still consider it appropriate for the policies to be saved for longer than three years. This would normally be where the Secretary of State agreed with the reasons provided by the regional planning body on why these policies should be retained.
- 3.3 In August 2006 the Department of Communities and Local Government issued a protocol for handling proposals to save adopted local plan, unitary development plan, and structure plan policies beyond the three year period. The protocol identified the following additional criteria that the government will also have particular regard to:
- policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations, up to date affordable housing policies, policies relating to the infrastructure necessary to support housing
 - policies that support economic development and regeneration, including policies for retailing and town centres
 - policies for waste management, including unimplemented site allocations, and
 - policies that promote renewable energy, reduce impact on climate change, and safeguard water resources.
 -

4. **STRUCTURE PLAN POLICIES TO BE PROPOSED FOR SAVING**

- 4.1 Officers of the Joint Strategy Unit and the Borough Councils have considered the policies in the Tees Valley Structure Plan, and have identified a number of policies that should be saved beyond the three year period until the Regional Spatial Strategy is adopted. These policies conform to one or more of the criteria set out in PPS11 and the protocol, and are considered to be those policies that
- a) do not repeat national planning policies and guidance,
 - b) do not duplicate policies in the current Regional Spatial Strategy (RPG1),
 - c) do not duplicate saved policies in the Borough Local Plans, and
 - d) appear to conform with the emerging replacement Regional Spatial Strategy..
- 4.2 The Structure Plan policies proposed for saving beyond September 2007 are set out in the Schedule attached as **Appendix 1**. It is considered that extending the life of these policies will provide a strategic context for the consideration and assessment of major development proposals, and for

progressing work on the Borough Local Development Framework documents. The policy areas proposed for saving include

Locational Strategy – providing detail at sub-regional level on the priorities and broad locations of future development

Economy – strategic locations for prestige employment development

Environment – strategic gaps, as these are not covered in local plan policy

Housing – broad locations for strategic greenfield housing sites, and options for flexibility in housing density

Transport – providing a strategic context for certain major transport proposals and safeguarding appropriate corridors. Examples include an additional Tees Crossing, the East Middlesbrough Transport Corridor, and the Darlington Cross-Town Route

Town Centres and Shopping – retail hierarchy

Waste – to guide development and support waste management decisions until the Regional Spatial Strategy is published.

- 4.3 The Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee at its meeting held on 8th March agreed the schedule of policies to be saved and forwarded it to the five Tees Valley authorities for endorsement. Cabinet at its meeting on the 2nd April 2007 agreed the schedule and referred the matter to Council for endorsement.

5. THE NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The schedule of policies to be saved will be submitted to the Secretary of State and if it is agreed that these are appropriate policies to be saved beyond September 2007, then a Direction to this effect will be issued to the structure plan authorities.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1. That the Council agree the schedule of Structure Plan policies to be saved pending the adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Appendix 1

Schedule of Tees Valley Structure Plan policies to be 'saved' beyond September 2007

Policy	Subject	PPS11 criteria			Other criteria that the government will also have particular regard to				Comment
		Consistency with national planning policies and PPSs published since policies were adopted and are in general	Address an existing strategic policy deficit and does not duplicate national or local policy	The operation of policies to be saved for longer than 3 years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved	Policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations	Policies that support economic development & regeneration, including retailing & town centres	Policies for waste management	Policies that promote renewable energy; reduce impact on climate change; safeguard water resources	
CHAPTER 3: VISION AND STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT									
STRAT1	Locational Strategy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	The policy defines the locational strategy for the Tees Valley in the interim period until the emerging RSS is published. In particular the policy provides sub-regional level detail on the priorities and broad locations for future development.
CHAPTER 4: ECONOMY									
EMP6	Business Parks & Prestige	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	The policy defines

Policy	Subject	PPS11 criteria			Other criteria that the government will also have particular regard to				Comment
		Consistency with national planning policies and PPSs published since policies were adopted and are in general	Address an existing strategic policy deficit and does not duplicate national or local policy	The operation of policies to be saved for longer than 3 years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved	Policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations	Policies that support economic development & regeneration, including retailing & town centres	Policies for waste management	Policies that promote renewable energy; reduce impact on climate change; safeguard water resources	
	Employment Development								strategic locations for sub-regional prestige employment
CHAPTER 5: NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT									
ENV15	Strategic Gaps	✓	✓	✓					The policy needs to be saved in the interim until RSS is published because strategic gaps are not covered by local plan policy
CHAPTER 6: HOUSING									
H2	Strategic Greenfield Housing Sites	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	The policy defines broad locations for strategic greenfield housing sites and the criteria for their allocation in local plans
H6	Range of House Types	✓ (RSS	✓	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	The policy highlights

Policy	Subject	PPS11 criteria			Other criteria that the government will also have particular regard to				Comment
		Consistency with national planning policies and PPSs published since policies were adopted and are in general	Address an existing strategic policy deficit and does not duplicate national or local policy	The operation of policies to be saved for longer than 3 years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved	Policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations	Policies that support economic development & regeneration, including retailing & town centres	Policies for waste management	Policies that promote renewable energy; reduce impact on climate change; safeguard water resources	
		Panel Report)							the special circumstances for seeking lower density for some housing developments than national policy – the desirability of such an approach was acknowledged in the RSS Panel Report
CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORT									
T3A	New Tees Crossing	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	The new Tees Crossing is identified in both the current RSS (RPG1) and the emerging RSS. Policy T3A should be saved because it supports the principle of the Crossing and

Policy	Subject	PPS11 criteria			Other criteria that the government will also have particular regard to				Comment
		Consistency with national planning policies and PPSs published since policies were adopted and are in general	Address an existing strategic policy deficit and does not duplicate national or local policy	The operation of policies to be saved for longer than 3 years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved	Policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations	Policies that support economic development & regeneration, including retailing & town centres	Policies for waste management	Policies that promote renewable energy; reduce impact on climate change; safeguard water resources	
									provides the appropriate strategic context for safeguarding the road and rail approach corridors
T3B	Protection of LRT alignment as a public transport route	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	Tees Valley rapid transit/bus based solutions are included in the emerging RSS. Policy T3B provides an appropriate strategic context for safeguarding public transport corridors
T8	Protection of railway alignments as transport corridors	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	The policy needs to be saved because it provides a strategic context for safeguarding

Policy	Subject	PPS11 criteria			Other criteria that the government will also have particular regard to				Comment
		Consistency with national planning policies and PPSs published since policies were adopted and are in general	Address an existing strategic policy deficit and does not duplicate national or local policy	The operation of policies to be saved for longer than 3 years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved	Policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations	Policies that support economic development & regeneration, including retailing & town centres	Policies for waste management	Policies that promote renewable energy; reduce impact on climate change; safeguard water resources	
									transport corridors, including corridors associated with the new Tees Crossing
T15	East Middlesbrough Transport Corridor	✓ (RSS Panel Report)	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	The policy reserves this strategic corridor for transport use. In its Report the RSS Panel acknowledged that the East Middlesbrough Transport Corridor was a strategic corridor of sub-regional importance. As there are cross-boundary implications the policy needs to be saved to inform the preparation of LDFs

Policy	Subject	PPS11 criteria			Other criteria that the government will also have particular regard to				Comment
		Consistency with national planning policies and PPSs published since policies were adopted and are in general	Address an existing strategic policy deficit and does not duplicate national or local policy	The operation of policies to be saved for longer than 3 years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved	Policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations	Policies that support economic development & regeneration, including retailing & town centres	Policies for waste management	Policies that promote renewable energy; reduce impact on climate change; safeguard water resources	
									until superseded by RSS
T18A	Trunk and Primary Road Improvements	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	Both the A66 Long Newton interchange and the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor are included within the emerging RSS. Policy T18A should be saved because both schemes are of strategic importance
T18B	Trunk and Primary Road alignment protection	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	The schemes identified in policy T18B provide the strategic context for safeguarding appropriate transport corridors. The schemes are

Policy	Subject	PPS11 criteria			Other criteria that the government will also have particular regard to				Comment
		Consistency with national planning policies and PPSs published since policies were adopted and are in general	Address an existing strategic policy deficit and does not duplicate national or local policy	The operation of policies to be saved for longer than 3 years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved	Policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations	Policies that support economic development & regeneration, including retailing & town centres	Policies for waste management	Policies that promote renewable energy; reduce impact on climate change; safeguard water resources	
									important to support the economic regeneration of the sub-region
T19	Stainton Way to Swan's Corner alignment protection	✓ (RSS Panel Report)	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	The policy reserves this strategic corridor for transport use. As there are cross-boundary implications the policy needs to be saved to inform the preparation of LDFs until superseded by RSS
T23	Car parking management	✓	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	The policy should be saved as it provides an overall strategic framework until RSS is published; it supports work on the

Policy	Subject	PPS11 criteria			Other criteria that the government will also have particular regard to				Comment
		Consistency with national planning policies and PPSs published since policies were adopted and are in general	Address an existing strategic policy deficit and does not duplicate national or local policy	The operation of policies to be saved for longer than 3 years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved	Policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations	Policies that support economic development & regeneration, including retailing & town centres	Policies for waste management	Policies that promote renewable energy; reduce impact on climate change; safeguard water resources	
									emerging Demand Management Framework
CHAPTER 8: TOWN CENTRES AND SHOPPING									
TC3	Retail hierarchy	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	The policy defines the retail hierarchy in the Tees Valley in the interim period until RSS is published. The policy provides sub-regional continuity for defining centres
CHAPTER 11: WASTE									
W1 – W6	All Waste policies	✓	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	All waste policies require saving as there are no local plan policies (except in Hartlepool) to guide development

Policy	Subject	PPS11 criteria			Other criteria that the government will also have particular regard to				Comment
		Consistency with national planning policies and PPSs published since policies were adopted and are in general	Address an existing strategic policy deficit and does not duplicate national or local policy	The operation of policies to be saved for longer than 3 years is not materially changed by virtue of other policies in the old plan not being saved	Policies that support the delivery of housing, including unimplemented site allocations	Policies that support economic development & regeneration, including retailing & town centres	Policies for waste management	Policies that promote renewable energy; reduce impact on climate change; safeguard water resources	
									and support waste management decisions in the interim until RSS is published

COUNCIL
19th April 2007



Report of: Chief Executive

Subject: BUSINESS REPORT

1. Inspection Reports

Two major inspection reports have recently been published.

Corporate Assessment Report

The Corporate Assessment report, which forms part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, was published on 13th March 2007. The assessment for this had been undertaken in December 2006 and was based on the Audit Commission framework for Corporate Assessment "The Harder Test".

The report was made available for members at the time of publication. The authority received an overall score for this assessment of 3 (the highest being 4). The component scores make this the 3rd highest rating received by any authority assessed under this methodology.

There are a limited number of improvement actions identified by the Audit Commission

This score when combined with other scores which go to make up the star rating for CPA means that the authority will maintain the 4* rating it has had since CPA was introduced. The Corporate Assessment report is attached as **Appendix 1**.

Joint Area Review

The Joint Area Review (JAR) report was also published on the 13th March 2007. The JAR is an assessment of services for children and young people in Hartlepool.

The report was made available to members at the time of publication. The authority received an overall score for this assessment of 3 (the highest being 4).

The JAR rating forms part of the scoring for the star rating for CPA. The JAR report is attached as **Appendix 2**.

2. Emergency Planning Unit Awarded Beacon Status

The Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit has won national recognition for its innovative work to ensure the safety of local people. The unit, which is a joint arrangement operating on behalf of Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Redcar and Cleveland Councils, has been awarded Beacon status. Hartlepool Borough Council takes the role of "lead authority" for emergency planning. It is proposed that the formal presentation of the Beacon Status plaque to the Chief Emergency Planning Officer, Denis Hampson, will take place at the beginning of the meeting.

3. Provision of Health Services in Hartlepool

Members will recall my letter dated 22 February, sent to the Secretary of State, regarding the Provision of Health Services in Hartlepool. Please find attached as **Appendix 3** the subsequent response, for your information.

I also attach a copy of the response to Councillor R Waller's letter of 28 February 2007, also at **Appendix 3**

4. Notice of Decisions taken under Scrutiny Procedure Rule 18 – Call-in and Urgency

The following three decisions have been taken by the executive utilising the powers available under Scrutiny Procedure Rule 18. Scrutiny procedure Rule 18 allows that: -

"The call-in procedures [set out above] shall not apply where the decision being taken by the Executive is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests."

In each case, as required under Rule 18, the Chair of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee was consulted on the three issues and gave her agreement to the decisions being taken in accordance with the rule and thereby not being subject to call-in.

The three decisions are as follows: -

Cabinet, 19 March 2007, Minute No. 217 Equal Pay Risk Update

Details of this decision are exempt in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, Para 4 (information relating to any

consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority) and Para 5 (information in respect of which claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006. A copy of the decisions taken are set out in **Appendix 4** of the report on pink paper.

The reason for decision being taken under Scrutiny Procedure Rule 18 was to ensure that urgent discussions with staff and trade unions could continue without undue delay.

Cabinet, 26 March 2007, Minute No. 222 Equal Pay Risk Update

Details of this decision are exempt in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, Para 4 (information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority) and Para 5 (information in respect of which claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006. A copy of the decisions taken are set out in **Appendix 4** of the report on pink paper.

The reason for decision being taken under Scrutiny Procedure Rule 18 was to ensure that urgent discussions with staff and trade unions could continue without undue delay to allow the Council to reach agreement before a deadline of 31 March 2007

The Mayor's Executive Portfolio, 26 March 2007, Minute No.1 Durham and Tees Valley Airport Southside Development.

Decisions –

- (i) That agreement to the extension requested [to 31 May 2007] be approved and that the Chief Solicitor be authorised to sign an extension (letter of) agreement on the Council's behalf, or alternatively to duly authorise Stockton B.C., through their authorised officer, to sign such an agreement on the Council's behalf.
- (ii) The Mayor noted that the requirement for the urgent action was such that the decision was not subject to call-in in accordance with Part 4 of the Council's Constitution (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules).

The reason for decision being taken under Scrutiny Procedure Rule 18 was to ensure that Peel Airports Limited would not be in breach of its agreement with the shareholding local authorities.

Corporate Assessment

Hartlepool Borough Council

The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively, to achieve high quality local services for the public. Our remit covers around 11,000 bodies in England, which between them spend more than £180 billion of public money each year. Our work covers local government, health, housing, community safety and fire and rescue services.

As an independent watchdog, we provide important information on the quality of public services. As a driving force for improvement in those services, we provide practical recommendations and spread best practice. As an independent auditor, we ensure that public services are good value for money and that public money is properly spent.

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Introduction

- 1 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) is the means by which the Audit Commission fulfils its statutory duty under section 99 of the Local Government Act 2003 to make an assessment, and report on the performance, of local authorities. Corporate assessment is one element in the overall assessment that leads to a CPA score and category.
- 2 The purpose of the corporate assessment is to assess how well the Council engages with and leads its communities, delivers community priorities in partnership with others, and ensures continuous improvement across the range of Council activities. It seeks to answer three headline questions which are underpinned by five specific themes.

What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?

- Ambition
- Prioritisation

What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

- Capacity
- Performance management

What has been achieved?

- Achievement

Considered against the shared priorities of:

- sustainable communities and transport;
- safer and stronger communities;
- healthier communities;
- older people; and
- children and young people.

- 3 Corporate assessments are normally aligned with a joint area review of services for children and young people (JAR). In practice this means that the Council's achievements in relation to children and young people are assessed using the evidence provided from the JAR. In addition, examples of outcomes and activity, which are relevant to the other themes and which are identified through the JAR, are considered within the corporate assessment.

- 4** The JAR covers all services for children and young people that are directly managed or commissioned by the Council, as well as health and youth justice services provided by other bodies. It focuses on the contributions made by services to improving outcomes. The separate JAR report covers the leadership and management of services for children and young people and, in particular, the way that such services work together to improve outcomes. The description and judgement in respect of children and young people in this report is summarised from the JAR report.

Executive summary

- 5 Hartlepool Borough Council is performing well. Ambitions and action to achieve them are founded on a strong drive to improve life in Hartlepool. The Council has a very good understanding of the significant needs which have been generated by industrial decline and long-standing deprivation and of local people's priorities. There has been significant progress in improving outcomes for local people in Hartlepool, and the gap between the quality of life in Hartlepool and other areas has narrowed in most respects. The achievements are supported by excellent partnership working and by very effective community leadership by the Council.
- 6 While the quality of life in Hartlepool is still poorer than national averages, the Council and its partners share a determination to improve outcomes for local people. This commonality of purpose is very strong and informs the way the members of the Hartlepool Partnership work together to define and deliver the ambitions of the Community Strategy 2002-2015.
- 7 The priority aims of the Community Strategy are wide ranging and embrace the key issues for Hartlepool people. The Council works to these priority aims and there is a very clear link from the Community Strategy through the Council's Corporate Plan to departmental and service plans and staff objectives. Good communications help councillors, staff and partners to understand the Council's objectives and to work together very effectively for their achievement.
- 8 Excellent consultation and engagement with local people and good use of data enable identification of local needs and priorities. The Council's services all have a strong focus on their users and in particular on the needs of the more deprived and disadvantaged communities. Neighbourhood Consultative Forums directly involve local people in service planning and in some decision making. The Council is taking a thorough approach to developing its arrangements for equality and diversity and is making good use of new arrangements to engage directly with minority communities.
- 9 The Mayor and Cabinet provide very effective community leadership, facilitating the achievement of shared aims with partners. Scrutiny committees work well in providing appropriate challenge to the Cabinet and to partners. Some weaknesses in political arrangements, including insufficient delegation on planning and a lack of transparency for the public, partners and Council staff on the function and status of the Administration Group, do not prevent overall political management from operating effectively.
- 10 Officer leadership and management are good. Staff at all levels demonstrate very strong commitment to delivering quality services. Officers work productively across departmental and organisational boundaries and are well supported by training programmes. The Council is using innovative approaches to procurement including long term partnering, joint commissioning, joint tendering, and working with the voluntary sector and other local authorities but it is not fully realising the benefits of strategic procurement or of new ways of working.

- 11 Financial capacity is good and the Council has substantial reserves. The Council uses its budget processes effectively to ensure that priorities are funded. While there is no formal medium term financial strategy, the Council has practical arrangements for financial planning in the medium term. Overall financial capacity is greatly enhanced by the Council's ability to attract significant external funding, which is well managed. Day to day financial management is effective and the Council provides good value for money.
- 12 Good performance management enables the Council and its partners to monitor and drive progress. There is a strong focus on improvement. Councillors and officers are open about performance and take action to improve performance when they need to do so. Performance often ranks among the best in England.
- 13 Outstanding partnership working is achieving improved outcomes almost without exception across national and local priorities. The Council has a strong and thorough approach to regeneration as essential to improving the quality of life in Hartlepool. There is good integration of housing and environmental improvements as key components of the regeneration of neighbourhoods. The economic gap between Hartlepool and the rest of the country has narrowed. Environmental services are good, with effective action by the Council to keep the borough clean while reducing waste and increasing recycling.
- 14 Crime rates overall have risen but there have been reductions in some types of crime and fear of crime has fallen significantly. The Council and its partners have had significant success in narrowing the gap between crime levels in Hartlepool and national averages. The Hartlepool Partnership has made tackling anti-social behaviour a priority in response to local concerns. Good work to reduce drug addiction is bringing positive results. Accident levels are falling. The Council is sustaining and improving community cohesion.
- 15 The Council and its partners are working well together to tackle the health inequalities suffered in Hartlepool. Health is improving and life expectancy is increasing. Premature deaths from heart disease and cancer have reduced and are on track to meet local targets. The prevalence of smoking is still high but has reduced. Teenage pregnancy rates are also reducing. There is good work to improve health through housing and physical activity programmes. However in spite of this progress, the gap between health outcomes in Hartlepool and the rest of the country is widening.
- 16 There is a strong and inclusive strategic approach to services for older people. Older people in Hartlepool are increasingly involved in a wide range of activities and in the development of services. There is a focus on independence and well being. Social care for older people is very good.

- 17 Outcomes for children and young people are good, supported by strong partnership working. Health education and provision are good. Vulnerable children and young people are well safeguarded through effective action by all agencies. Early years and childcare provision are good, and educational attainment continues to improve, but the number not in education, employment or training remains high. Support for school improvement and provision for children with special education needs are particular strengths. Multi-agency work to reduce offending and anti-social behaviour is good.

Areas for improvement

- 18 There are a number of ways in which the Council can further improve the way it works.
- 19 The Council does not have a formal approach to medium term financial planning. While it has a very good framework for performance management, the Council could improve its financial and performance planning by developing and adopting a formal medium term financial strategy, clearly linked to Council objectives and funding streams and to its role in delivering the Community Strategy.
- 20 The Council could further enhance its capacity to deliver its objectives and further stimulate modernisation of the Council's functions by developing a strategic approach to working with the voluntary sector, including funding arrangements, which maximises the sector's potential to improve the quality of life in Hartlepool and to enable these organisations to plan ahead in support of the Council's objectives; and by reviewing its approach to strategic procurement and business process re-engineering to ensure that these produce the maximum gains in terms of outcomes for service users and efficiency.
- 21 The Council has effective political management, but it could further improve this by reviewing delegation arrangements for planning to ensure swift, transparent and efficient decision-making; and by clarifying the status and function of the Administration Group to make it transparent and understandable within and outside the Council.

Summary of assessment scores

Headline questions	Theme	Score*
What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?	Ambition	4
	Prioritisation	3
What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?	Capacity	3
	Performance management	3
What has been achieved?	Achievement	3
Overall corporate assessment score**		3
*Key to scores		
1 – below minimum requirements – inadequate performance 2 – at only minimum requirements – adequate performance 3 – consistently above minimum requirements – performing well 4 – well above minimum requirements – performing strongly		

**Rules for determining the overall corporate assessment score

Scores on 5 themes	Overall corporate assessment score
Two or more themes with a score of 4 None less than score of 3	4
Three or more themes with a score of 3 or more None less than score of 2	3
Three or more themes with a score of 2 or more	2
Any other combination	1

Context

The locality

- 22 Hartlepool is on the north east coast of England, at the northern end of the Teesside conurbation. It is a coastal town with a rural belt to the west. It experienced significant growth during the early nineteenth century to provide port facilities and associated industry for local entrepreneurs, becoming the fourth largest port in the country by 1850. The decline of the north east's coal mining and heavy industries and of the associated port trade during the last 50 years has had a significant impact on the town, which now suffers high levels of deprivation and has large areas of derelict land.
- 23 The population of 90,000 people includes a slightly higher proportion of both children and older people than the national averages. 1.2 per cent of the population are from black and ethnic minority communities; altogether 2 per cent of the total population are of groups other than white British. The borough is the 14th most deprived of the 354 English boroughs and over half of Hartlepool's residents live in areas which are among the 10 per cent most disadvantaged in the country.
- 24 More people in Hartlepool suffer poor health than the average for England. A quarter of the population have limiting long term illnesses, life expectancy for both men and women is lower than national averages and deaths from heart disease and cancer are significantly higher than average. There are health inequalities within Hartlepool, with a difference of 13 years in average life expectancy between the best and worst wards. Both the prevalence of smoking (34 per cent, rising to 44 per cent in the most deprived wards) and the incidence of teenage pregnancies are high. Hartlepool is a Department of Health Spearhead Authority in recognition of the significant and complex health issues in the local population.
- 25 Fewer people than average are in professional and managerial jobs and more people are in low skilled jobs than the average for Great Britain; employment in manufacturing and construction is relatively high, with fewer people employed in service industries. At 4.2 per cent, unemployment is higher than the national and regional averages. Fewer people are owner-occupiers of housing and more are in rented accommodation than the average for England and Wales. Crime levels are higher than national averages.
- 26 In spite of the decline in the local economy, Hartlepool remains an active port with sizeable facilities. It has several historic sites linked to its maritime heritage. Transport links to the region and beyond are via the A19 north-south trunk road, which suffers from congestion, and some east-west main roads. Direct rail links are currently confined to the north east region.

The Council

- 27 Hartlepool is the second smallest unitary council in England. It has 47 ward councillors and a Mayor who is elected on a borough-wide basis. Of the ward councillors, 27 are from the Labour party and six are from the Liberal Democrat party. There are nine Independent councillors, four Conservative councillors and one United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) councillor. A number of Independent councillors, the UKIP councillor and the Conservative councillors make up an 'Administration Group' which is not formally aligned to any of the party political groups.
- 28 The Council has an elected Mayor, Cabinet and Scrutiny political structure. The Mayor was first elected in 2002 and was re-elected in 2005 with a greatly increased majority. He is independent of any political grouping in the Council and leads a Cabinet of Labour, Liberal Democrat and Independent councillors. Cabinet portfolios are for Regeneration, Liveability and Housing; Culture, Leisure and Transportation; Performance Management; Children's Services; Adult Service and Public Health; and Finance. Portfolio holders have delegated decision making powers exercised through Portfolio meetings which are open to the public.
- 29 A Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee is responsible for the management of the scrutiny process and co-ordinates the work of the four Scrutiny Forums, for Regeneration and Planning Services, Adult and Community Services and Health, Neighbourhood Services and Children's Services. There are two regulatory committees, for Licensing and Planning, a General Purposes Committee and a Contract Scrutiny Panel. The Standards Committee includes three independent members, two of whom are the chair and vice-chair.
- 30 Three Neighbourhood Consultative Forums (for North, South and Central) include ward councillors and elected resident representatives and meet in public every two months within the areas. The Forums are responsible for Neighbourhood Action Plans in six deprived areas. They also provide information to local residents on services provided by the Council and its partners and act as forums for local consultation.
- 31 The Council has approximately 4,600 staff in five departments: Regeneration and Planning, Neighbourhood Services, Adult and Community Services, Children's Services and Chief Executive's. In 2006/07 it has a net revenue budget of just over £75.5 million, excluding school expenditure, its capital investment programme is almost £27 million and it has reserves of £31 million. Council Tax increased by 4.9 per cent for 2006/07, and its average level stands at 1 per cent below the average for unitary councils; in 2001/02 Hartlepool's Council Tax was over 5 per cent above that for unitary councils. The Council has significant external funding including Neighbourhood Renewal, New Deal for Communities and Housing Market Renewal grants; over half of its capital budget is from specific grants.

- 32** The Council works with a number of providers. In 2004 it transferred its housing stock to a new social housing organisation, Housing Hartlepool. All residential social care for adults and children and two thirds of domiciliary care for adults is provided by other organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors. ICT provision is by a private sector partner.
- 33** The local strategic partnership, the Hartlepool Partnership, draws together a range of partners from public, private and voluntary sectors in the development and delivery of the Community Strategy 2002-2015. The Partnership is chaired by the Member of Parliament for Hartlepool. The Community Strategy is reviewed every five years and has been reviewed and revised during 2006 for adoption in spring 2007. The revised Strategy incorporates the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and the Sustainable Development (Local Agenda 21) Strategy.
- 34** Hartlepool has a Local Area Agreement. The Council is a member of the Tees Valley Partnership, which focuses on the economic development of the area and prepared the business case for a Tees Valley 'city region' presented to the Government in autumn 2006.

What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?

Ambition

- 35 The Council is performing strongly in this area. Ambitions for Hartlepool are founded on a strong sense of the needs of local communities and of the legacy of industrial decline and impact of long-standing deprivation. A very strong Community Strategy focuses on narrowing the gap between the quality of life in Hartlepool and in the rest of the country. It drives the ambitions and actions of the Council and other partners. A widely shared clarity of purpose and outstanding partnership working drive action to deliver the shared ambitions.
- 36 The Council and its partners share a very strong determination to improve the quality of life in the borough. This commonality of purpose is expressed clearly and robustly in the Community Strategy 2002-2015 which, together with its action plan, sets out clear and challenging ambitions for the borough. Around a vision of 'a prosperous, caring, confident and outward looking community, in an attractive environment, realising its potential', the Community Strategy has seven 'priority aims': Jobs and the Economy, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Health and Care, Community Safety, Environment and Housing, Culture and Leisure, and Strengthening Communities.
- 37 The Community Strategy presents a challenging agenda for the partners in reducing inequalities for Hartlepool people. There are detailed objectives for each of the priority aims which recognise the gap in the quality of life for many Hartlepool residents and that experienced elsewhere in the north east and in the country as a whole. The Strategy's targets for improvement are clear, outcome-focused and identify what needs to be achieved in the medium and longer terms. The targets differentiate the more deprived areas of the borough; for example, the target to halve the 6 per cent gap in 2002 between the employment rate in Hartlepool and the national rate is accompanied by a target to reduce the gap between the most disadvantaged areas, where unemployment is significantly higher, and the town as a whole. Targets are based on good analysis of local issues and good baseline information. Ambitions are backed up by realistic long-term planning, for example in the 20-year, billion-pound scheme for Victoria Harbour.
- 38 Outstanding partnership working pervades the way the Council and its partners approach the delivery of the shared ambitions. Clear actions and responsibilities in the Community Strategy provide a very firm foundation for the way the members of the Hartlepool Partnership work together. There is a strong framework for mutual accountability in the way the Partnership works, with effective theme partnerships reporting to an active Board and very good performance management. The strength of the Community Strategy means that the Council and its partners have a sound common understanding of what needs to be done and why and are able to translate this into their own plans.

- 39** Strategies developed in partnership align well with each other as part of the integrated framework for the borough. These include the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, the Housing Strategy, the Children and Young People's Plan and the Public Health Strategy. Housing plans are designed to support improvements in the quality of life, the development of safer and stronger communities, and improvements in the local environment; and the inclusive approach to developing Building Schools for the Future proposals is placing benefit for the whole community at its heart.
- 40** The Hartlepool Partnership is very effective in monitoring progress against its priorities and in ensuring that it stays in touch with local needs. The Community Strategy is revised every five years to reflect changing needs and priorities but the Partnership is able to respond to changing local priorities outside planned major reviews, for example in prioritising anti-social behaviour in response to local concerns. The revision of the Community Strategy for 2007, carried out during 2006, has been based on wide-ranging consultation with local people and organisations. Housing has been given greater prominence in the revised Strategy because of its importance to local people. The revised health and care priority has more focus on improving general well being. The Hartlepool Partnership has also drawn on good performance information to reflect on the achievements of the first five years of the Strategy and to inform the revisions. The partners in the LSP, including the Council, are therefore able to be flexible in response to local circumstances and focus their efforts where need is greatest.
- 41** The Hartlepool Partnership and the Council have a strong evidence base for their actions. They have a thorough, inclusive and open approach to consultation with local communities. Use is made of surveys, the citizens' panel and area meetings and the Council regularly feeds back the results to local people. Detailed data to underpin needs analysis is provided through the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, which is funded by all five Tees Valley councils. There are specific arrangements for engagement with older and younger people. The Council is delivering on the results of consultation with black and ethnic minority groups in the town, for example it has established a dedicated team to support black and ethnic minority pupils. Effective use of consultation and research data means that the Council and its partners have a very good understanding of local needs.
- 42** The Council's Corporate Plan is a clear expression of the Council's contribution to the achievement of the ambitions of the Community Strategy. Updated annually, the Corporate Plan takes its lead from the Community Strategy and acts as a strong driver for planning and delivery by the Council's services. It interprets the ambition and objectives of the Community Strategy for action by the Council's services and includes longer term (five to ten years) objectives against each of the priority objectives of the Strategy. It contains specific outcome based targets for the next three years. The Corporate Plan is in effect the Council's delivery plan for the Community Strategy.

- 43** Ambitions and plans which have been developed with local people are communicated clearly to them. This approach has been particularly beneficial in the Housing Market Renewal area of the town, where the quality of communication and involvement, the clarity of vision and objectives, and the close partnership working of all stakeholders, including developers, has engendered local enthusiasm for radical changes to the area and very few objections to the Compulsory Purchase Orders. Children and young people were engaged effectively in the development of the Children and Young People's Plan and feel confident that their aspirations and views are taken fully into account.
- 44** Councillors and staff are well informed about what needs to be achieved and why. The objectives of the Community Strategy are cascaded within the Council through the Corporate Plan, departmental plans, service plans and staff objectives. Very good internal communications ensure that staff are clear about what the Council is trying to achieve and are aware of its progress. At the front line, services adopt a cross-cutting approach to deliver against economic, social and environmental objectives. An example of this approach is 'Operation Cleansweep', which as well as dealing with environmental issues includes measures to reduce crime and the fear of crime. This approach means that Council staff are very effective in crossing organisational and departmental boundaries for the achievement of the shared ambitions.
- 45** The Council demonstrates excellent community leadership. Its partnership working is highly regarded by partners including the business sector. The Mayor provides good leadership within and outside the Council, including his long-standing healthy eating in schools initiative and leadership of action under 'Pride in Hartlepool' and 'Operation Cleansweep'. He acts as an ambassador for the town, for example in securing the Tall Ships Race 2010 for Hartlepool and in work with other Tees Valley councils. Councillors of all parties are involved in good community leadership; for example, the five Scrutiny Committees are actively supported by resident representatives, and Neighbourhood Consultative Forums involve all ward councillors in effective engagement with local communities.

Prioritisation

- 46** The Council is performing well in this area. Service planning and delivery reflect and support corporately agreed priorities and objectives which are clearly linked to the Community Strategy's overall aim of improving the quality of life and to specific objectives and actions within the Strategy. Financial planning is informed by Council priorities. Partnerships identify their priorities and partners work well together to ensure that these priorities are resourced. Excellent consultation and engagement with local people enable understanding of their priorities and of where there is a need to take action to improve life in Hartlepool, particularly where inequalities are greatest.

- 47 Partnerships are very effective in identifying priorities and taking action on the basis of local needs and views and analysis of data. For example, housing needs analysis identified an oversupply of poorer rented housing and a shortage of executive housing; the Council is working with partners including Housing Hartlepool and the private sector to address these issues through Housing Market Renewal and developments of executive housing. The Safer Hartlepool Partnership uses the findings of research, crime statistics and local surveys to make decisions about priorities and resource allocation, for example in its response to an increase in alcohol-related crime in the town centre and in adopting tackling anti-social behaviour as a priority over burglary, a national priority, in response to local concerns. Similarly, the analysis of need which informed the Public Health Strategy is comprehensive and shared between stakeholders; the analysis has been used for the identification of ranked priorities. Prioritisation in the Children and Young People's Plan is good, supported by a strong sense of shared priorities and ownership by schools and external partners.
- 48 There is effective action to allocate resources for the achievement of partnership objectives. Although formal sharing of resources is limited, partners work together to ensure delivery. Financial resources to deliver partnerships' priorities, including external funding, are agreed between partners. There are some examples of more formal sharing of resources, for example the neighbourhood management arrangements share resources between the Council's neighbourhood wardens' service and the police. Shared workforce planning is developing including in children's and adult services, where the partners have implemented a major inter-agency change programme which includes workforce planning.
- 49 The Council responds clearly and robustly to the priorities of the Community Strategy, using them to define its own objectives and actions. There are strong linkages from the Community Strategy through the Corporate Plan to annual departmental and service plans. The Community Strategy's medium and long term approach is reflected in the Corporate Plan by objectives for a five to ten-year period, with specific targets for the next three years. In setting targets, the Council prioritises services which need to improve the most. Priorities in departmental plans have clear regard for national and local policy and there are good links between priorities, enabling the Council to deliver the cross-cutting objectives of the Corporate Plan. The Mayor's priorities support the Community Strategy and are well understood and acted upon by councillors and staff. The Mayor and portfolio holders are involved in regular checking of progress against priorities and targets. The Council is therefore able to identify, communicate, link and track its priorities.

- 50** The Council uses its budget processes effectively to ensure that priorities are funded. While there is no formal medium term financial strategy, the Council has practical arrangements for financial planning in the medium term. The budget process is an annual debate on priorities which links cuts and growth in service budgets to priorities; this year this process has been expanded to include discussion by the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums and debate in scrutiny committees to inform Cabinet decisions. The capital strategy has clear links to the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan. The Council's healthy financial position mitigates the risk of it not being able to fund priorities in the future, but it has ensured that exit strategies are in place for all major grant aid.
- 51** Annual budgeting is successfully linked to priorities. Service areas which are key to the delivery of local and national priorities have received additional funding, most notably in education and social care but also in waste reduction and recycling. The Council prioritised spending on education and social care in response to low performance, the expectations of shared ambitions and local needs. As a result, educational attainment has risen significantly (Hartlepool children perform better than national averages in a number of significant areas, despite high levels of deprivation), and social care for children and adults are now good. Additional resources to support improvement have included social care (an additional £1.2 million in 2004/05, plus £0.5 million for the Children's Fostering Service and £0.5 million for adult and older people's services in 2006/07), and £0.76 million to achieve waste reduction and recycling targets in 2006/07. The Council is able to focus its resources where need is greatest, to combat disadvantage or to improve performance.
- 52** The Council has made decisions which have significantly changed the traditional provision of services to better secure delivery of priorities. It transferred its housing stock to Housing Hartlepool (in 2004) to secure major investment for improvement. Its ICT contract has brought increased capacity and a £2 million investment fund provided by the contractor.
- 53** The Council is very effectively identifying and acting on the very local priorities of geographic areas within the borough. At neighbourhood level, the Council's strong community engagement and extensive use of survey evidence enable local priorities to inform local service planning based on needs analysis and community views. Ward councillors and local residents form the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums which between them cover the whole borough and are well attended. In the areas of greatest disadvantage six Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs) each identify priorities for their areas. The NAPs are written to the seven themes of the Community Strategy but prioritise neighbourhood issues. Residents in the most disadvantaged communities have a high level of satisfaction with consultation and opportunities for involvement.

- 54** The Council is engaging well with minority communities to identify their priorities but some of its arrangements to do so are at a relatively early stage. It has long-standing consultation arrangements with disabled people and new arrangements for consultation with the lesbian and gay community; it responds well to the needs of these groups. It is making new efforts to reach minority ethnic communities through its successful Talking with Communities initiative and is taking action to respond to needs arising from these consultations, for example in language coaching. It assesses the impact of its services on minority communities but does not have sufficient information about these communities to provide the baselines for target setting. While its awareness of local need is generally very good, the Council has not yet identified the overall priorities of the smaller groups within local communities.

What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

Capacity

- 55 The Council is performing well in this area. Political and managerial leadership and capacity are good and councillors and officers work well together to deliver improved outcomes for Hartlepool. Organisational development is progressing well. Financial management is good. Partnership working very effectively enhances capacity for the delivery of Hartlepool Partnership and Council objectives.
- 56 Political leadership and management are good. Councillors are united in acting in the best interests of Hartlepool and maintain a focus on outcomes for local people. The Mayoral function is very effectively delivered and the Mayor and Cabinet provide excellent community leadership. The Mayor leads a cohesive and focused Cabinet. Cabinet meetings are well run with good contributions by portfolio holders, who are clear about their roles. Regular 'portfolio' meetings are effective in briefing portfolio holders and enable delegated decision-making, with appropriate challenge and guidance to officers. Relationships between councillors and officers are good; codes of conduct are in place. Decision making is generally efficient and transparent and takes account of strategic and operational risks.
- 57 The scrutiny process is working well, with much improvement in the last two years. The executive and scrutiny functions work well together. Scrutiny forums have had impact in a number of areas, for example on approaches to the new rail interchange, flooding, and bus transport: resident satisfaction with bus services has improved and is now very high. Political leadership of scrutiny is very good, and there is very effective officer support for the scrutiny function. The Council is able to rely on its scrutiny function to provide appropriate and productive challenge to Cabinet and to the Council's partners.
- 58 The three Neighbourhood Consultative Forums operate well, building capacity to respond to local needs and combining councillors and residents in securing very local improvements. They have some delegated decision-making powers and budgets of £87,000 each (in 2006/07), which are mainly used for environmental improvements. The Forums are a key and effective element in the Council's capacity to maintain its strong community focus.

- 59** Some aspects of the political arrangements are not as effective, although they do not prevent overall political management from operating well. Delegation to officers for planning decisions is low and the impact of this is evident in the service's performance. Decisions on planning applications are slow compared to other Councils and in 2005/06 a large number (relative to other councils) of planning appeals against the Council were allowed. There is little transparency within and outside the Council around the operation of the 'Administration Group'. There is confusion particularly with regard to its leadership and its ability to address standards of conduct among its members, who are otherwise not aligned to a political group. While the councillor training programme is comprehensive and clearly linked to priority areas, attendance is often low and has fallen during 2006/07. The Standards Committee is not proactive. These weaknesses reduce the capacity, effectiveness and potential of the Council's political system.
- 60** Officer leadership is good and the Council is efficiently managed. There is a strong senior management team. Staff at all levels have pride in Hartlepool and demonstrate very strong commitment to delivering quality services. Some staff at the front line are empowered to make decisions to improve services in line with Council priorities; for example, neighbourhood environmental services staff and school cooks directly deliver the Mayor's priorities of a clean borough and healthy eating in schools. Turnover is low, including in the traditional staff shortage area of social care. The restructure of the Council into five departments (from six) in 2005 has increased services' ability to address cross-cutting priorities; officers work very productively across departmental and organisational boundaries.
- 61** The Council has a sound and pragmatic approach to organisational development, which forms an additional priority for the Council in the Corporate Plan. The priority and the actions to deliver it demonstrate a good awareness of key areas of focus to support the Council's capacity for the delivery of ambitions, including access by the public, training and development of councillors and staff, and efficiency and financial management. 'The Way Forward' change programme, led by the Chief Executive, drives organisational change and efficiency. Good human resource management includes the People Strategy and the Workforce Development Strategy. Good training and development of staff includes the 'Be the Difference' programme for managers. The organisational restructure in 2005 was facilitated by a very good change management process. There are excellent internal communications; consultation with staff is good. New approaches to reducing high sickness absence are beginning to have some effect.
- 62** Access to services is improving. The Council is implementing well founded plans for a co-ordinated approach to customer service, including a new contact centre and a customer charter. ICT is being used effectively to provide many e-enabled services, although the Council's website, which is a portal for the whole of Hartlepool, is not always easy to navigate. Translation and interpretation services are available for all the Council's services and communications.

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- 63** The Council does not have a strategic approach to procurement or to new ways of delivering services. The procurement strategy is weak and does not indicate how the Council will use procurement to increase its capacity. A five-year procurement plan sets out a range of tasks to be achieved and a programme of services to be reviewed in the medium term, but it does not take a strategic approach linked to the Council's ambitions and relies on departmental officers, rather than a corporate procurement function, to deliver it. E-procurement is not fully exploited. Similarly, the business process re-engineering programme is not ambitious; its projected outcomes are modest or not quantified. Pragmatically, the Council is using innovative approaches to procurement including long term partnering, joint commissioning, joint tendering, and working with the voluntary sector and other local authorities to deliver both savings and improved service delivery and to increase capacity, for example through the contract for ICT. However, it is not fully realising the benefits of strategic procurement or of new ways of working.
- 64** Operational financial management is prudent and effective and the Council provides good value for money. Since 1998/99 careful financial management and robust budget monitoring have enabled the Council to increase its reserves, which now stand at £31 million. The annual budget process supports significant growth in priority areas from these reserves while making cuts in areas no longer considered by departments to be priorities; the current allocation from reserves to revenue budgets is £7.2 million over four years. Financial capacity is greatly enhanced by the Council's ability to attract significant external funding, which is well managed; exit strategies are in place for major initiatives which are currently supported by external funding, for example New Deal for Communities. The asset management plan is thorough and links clearly to the Community Strategy themes. Financial capacity for the delivery of the Council's objectives is good.
- 65** Risk Management is fully developed within the Council and used effectively to inform key corporate and strategic planning. It is increasingly applied to partnership plans and objectives, for example the partnership arrangements with the Joseph Rowntree Housing Foundation and the local Primary Care Trust for the new Hartfields extra care village and for the provision of ICT services ensure risk is considered at every meeting.
- 66** The Council is taking concerted action to improve its arrangements for equality and diversity. It has achieved level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. A cross-departmental officer group is progressing a thorough action plan for the achievement of Level 3 in early 2008. Departments have equality and diversity objectives and action plans and are carrying out impact assessments. A member of the Cabinet is political champion for equality and diversity. The proportions of staff from ethnic minority communities or with a disability are low in relation to the proportion of ethnic minority and disabled people in the borough's population but are increasing.

- 67** The Council plays a full and often leading role in major partnerships which enhance the Hartlepool Partnership's capacity to deliver priorities. Relationships are mature and partners are clear about their roles; the Council is regarded as a very good partner. Partnership working gives the Council access to external funding and additional leadership capacity; notable examples are the Housing Market Renewal project and the new £34 million Hartfields extra care village. The extra care village is an example of the Council's willingness to innovate in partnership with others; a further example is the joint work of the Council's neighbourhood warden service and the Cleveland Police neighbourhood policing pilot in the New Deal for Communities area of the town.
- 68** The Council's approach to working in partnership with smaller organisations in the voluntary sector is underdeveloped at a formal and corporate level. The sector as a whole is well represented in partnerships and the Council works well with a network of organisations through the Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency. However there is currently no formal corporate approach to using the capacity and potential of voluntary groups. A Compact developed three years ago has been implemented only in part; it is now being revived and revised. Funding is generally short term and does not respond to the core funding needs of organisations. The Council's grant aid to voluntary organisations is normally only for one year, leading to uncertainty and to time spent re-applying for grants. The Council is not maximising the capacity of voluntary organisations to support its services and to respond to local need.

Performance management

- 69** The Council is performing well in this area. There is a strong performance management culture throughout the organisation and in its work with partners, with a focus on performing well and on improvement in outcomes. Councillors and officers are open about performance, are regularly engaged in monitoring and take action to improve performance or review Council policy where needed. There is a very good performance management framework which is well embedded in almost all services.
- 70** The performance management framework ensures that there is a strong link from the Community Strategy aims through the Corporate Plan to departmental plans, and from those to service plans and individual staff development and appraisal. Departmental and service plans are written to good corporate guidance which has become increasingly comprehensive in its approach, most recently adding risk management and equality and diversity to the service planning framework. Some weaknesses in departmental plans (they lack financial information and there is no consistent approach to setting out priorities) do not undermine the effectiveness of the performance management framework.

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- 71** Councillors and officers use performance management well. Awareness of its importance is high and responsibilities are clear. There is regular reporting of performance to individual portfolio holders, scrutiny forums and departmental management teams, to Cabinet on an exception basis and to the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums, which include resident representatives. The Cabinet portfolio for performance management has a high and active profile within the Council's activities. Project management techniques are used effectively.
- 72** In almost all services, councillors and officers make good use of performance information to track the achievement of targets and take remedial action where needed. The Council is taking action to address weaknesses in management information in children's social care. Portfolio holders agree action to address performance issues on a quarterly basis. Scrutiny forums and the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee play an active part. Feedback on performance is given to local residents through regular communications. Staff appraisal linked to Council objectives is well embedded and valued by staff. The result is a strong performance management culture, which permeates the organisation.
- 73** Financial and service performance management are not formally integrated in plans or in monitoring reports, but in practice the Council takes a comprehensive approach. Councillors and officers consider financial and performance monitoring reports at the same time and link the two. The results of consultation and analysis of complaints are also considered as part of performance management.
- 74** Good performance management extends to the Council's work with partners. The Hartlepool Partnership uses performance management well, with information openly shared and discussed between partners and robust arrangements for performance reporting and progress checking. The Council works with partner organisations including health, police and fire authorities to develop and consider performance information, including trends over time and comparisons with others, with a focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged groups. Examples include the joint work of partners including the Council and the voluntary sector to monitor and review progress against the Older People's Strategy.
- 75** The Council uses target setting and the monitoring of targets effectively. There is a focus on improvement particularly of poorer performance. The Corporate Plan contains a large number of specific targets for improved outcomes for local people. The Council focuses its efforts for improvement in line with priorities and performance. The Corporate Plan targets are challenging where there is room for improvement, for example targets relating to the Jobs and the Economy and Lifelong Learning and Skills themes, with less planned improvement for those services where performance is already very high, for example in housing and environmental services. The achievement of targets has improved from 40 per cent met in 2003/04 to 60 per cent in 2005/06. Improved performance management is helping the Council to focus its efforts with greater success.

- 76** Good performance management is bringing significant improvement. The performance of the Council's services and their rate of improvement as measured by national performance indicators are among the best in the country. Of the basket of 2005/06 indicators used for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, 42 per cent were among the best performing single tier and county councils and 73 per cent showed improvement on 2004/05 performance.

What has been achieved?

- 77 The Council is performing well in this area. There is very good delivery against the goal of the Hartlepool Partnership and the Council: 'to regenerate Hartlepool by promoting economic, social and environmental wellbeing in a sustainable manner'. This goal supports the shared vision of 'a prosperous, caring, confident and outward looking community, realising its potential in an attractive environment'.
- 78 The priority aims of the Community Strategy embrace the national shared priorities and strongly inform the activities of the Council. In practice the Council and its partners work to the broad themes of the national priorities while maintaining a local focus on the issues of key importance in Hartlepool, at borough-wide and local neighbourhood levels. Good links are made between priorities, for example between the quality of the environment and community safety and between the quality of housing provision and health.
- 79 Improved outcomes are being delivered almost without exception across both national and local priorities. Significant improvement has been achieved in areas which are fundamental to improving the quality of life and prospects for people in Hartlepool, particularly in education and social care. The aim of the Hartlepool Partnership and the Council to reduce inequalities is being realised. The gap between Hartlepool and the national average in the percentage of economically active adults in employment has halved since 2002; unemployment levels have reduced to within 2 per cent of the national average. Crime levels, while still relatively high, have reduced from 41 per cent to 25 per cent above average; domestic burglary and vehicle crime have halved in the last two years and are falling faster than national averages. Educational achievement is the third most improving in the country and is now very close to the national average at GCSE level. Care for older people is among the best in the country. Only the gap between the health of people in Hartlepool and in the rest of the country continues to widen, but most health outcomes are nevertheless improving in Hartlepool.
- 80 Improvements are evident in the most disadvantaged areas of the town. Unemployment rates, while still higher than in the rest of the borough, have reduced by the same amount as in Hartlepool overall; the crime rate in the most deprived wards dropped by about two thirds between 2003/04 and 2005/06 compared with a fall of about one third in Hartlepool overall.
- 81 Residents' satisfaction with many of the services provided by the Council has risen during the last three years and is often among the highest in the country. The way in which the Council provides high quality services is illustrated in the Audit Commission's 2006 School Survey, which measures schools' satisfaction with local education authorities; the Council obtained the best results in the country in this survey.

Sustainable communities and transport

- 82 The Council has a strong approach to regeneration as a key driver for improving the quality of life and supporting sustainable communities in Hartlepool. It focuses on physical regeneration as the foundation for economic regeneration and development, which are viewed by the Council and its partners as essential for the achievement of priority aims. The aims in regeneration strategies and plans are shared by the Council, its partners and by local communities. There is good integration of housing and environmental improvements as key components of the social and physical regeneration of neighbourhoods.
- 83 The Council works effectively with other local authorities in the Tees Valley to pursue common interests and secure economic benefit for the area, for example in the Business Case for a Tees Valley City Region recently submitted to the Government. It is a partner in the Tees Valley Regeneration Company. It negotiates with other organisations in the Tees Valley to bring benefit to Hartlepool itself, for example in housing allocations.
- 84 Very good preparation work and engagement with local communities contribute to the success of the Council's efforts. Regeneration work is supported by thorough planning and preparation by the Council on major planning applications, and by very good relationships with partners in the public and private sectors locally and across the sub-region. Communities are involved well in the development of plans and in the monitoring of their implementation, particularly in areas which benefit from external funding (currently mainly New Deal for Communities and Neighbourhood Renewal).
- 85 The Council combines a strategic approach to regeneration with a good awareness of its role in providing infrastructure and support for businesses. Current schemes for business premises sites include Queens Meadow, which is now being occupied. Ambitious plans for Victoria Harbour to bring a mix of uses to a large site alongside the working port reached outline planning permission stage in 2006. Earlier work to improve and revitalise the Marina area is now bringing the benefits of tourism to the town, with increases in the number of visitors and tourism businesses. The Council provides good support to local business; it provides grants, locations, incubation schemes and advice, working appropriately with other agencies. It works with partners including local colleges and construction contractors to improve access to local jobs for local people. It has provided specific assistance into employment for single parents and people with disabilities.
- 86 The impact of regeneration and economic development work on local communities is positive. The gap between Hartlepool and national employment rates narrowed from 15.6 per cent in 2002 to 7.3 per cent in 2005; self-employment increased from 3.8 per cent in 2002 to 5.8 per cent in 2005; small business start-ups increased by 40 per cent between the first quarters of 2005 and 2006, compared to a regional increase of 13 per cent; and 1,150 jobs have been created in the last three years. There was a 22 per cent increase in the number of tourism-related jobs between 2003 and 2004.

- 87 The strategic approach to housing is good, with good community and partner involvement and a good response to housing need. Tenant satisfaction is high. Relationships between the Council and Housing Hartlepool, the Registered Social Landlord to which the Council transferred its housing stock in 2004, are strong and productive, with commonly agreed aims and close working. Housing developments are integrated into regeneration and town-wide plans, with a strategic focus on housing market renewal and the provision of good quality affordable and executive housing. There is a good focus on the sustainability of developments.
- 88 The condition of housing in the borough is improving. The Council has secured additional funding for housing initiatives, including Housing Market Renewal and private sector housing. There is good progress in the Housing Market Renewal area of the town; the Council's thorough preparation and effective work with partners and local communities have ensured that work to demolish and rebuild is progressing with very few objections. Work to achieve the Decent Homes Standard and energy efficiency targets is on track to meet Government requirements. There is a good range of supported housing initiatives for vulnerable groups; the Council is taking effective action to address weaknesses identified in an inspection of Supporting People services early in 2006.
- 89 The Council has had significant success in its work to improve the local environment and has engaged well with local communities in doing so. The town is very clean, partly as a result of the Mayor's popular Operation Cleansweep and Pride in Hartlepool campaigns. Improvements in the town's environment include increased use of derelict (brownfield) sites for development; in 2005/06 almost all planning permissions for new dwellings were for previously developed land. An independent evaluation of the Neighbourhood Action Planning process concluded that the process helped to develop trust and confidence, enabling local communities to become active partners in improving the local environment.
- 90 The Council works effectively to deliver the Teesside waste management strategy. It has conducted information campaigns about waste reduction and about its new collection system which focuses on recycling. The Council's performance has improved year on year and it has already met its targets for 2010. Total waste is reducing and Hartlepool is among the best performing councils for reduction in waste to landfill. It has increased recycling, to over 22 per cent in 2005/06 and 25 per cent for the first half of 2006/07. The Council is reducing its own impact on the environment: its electricity is supplied from green sources and two of its services have won two 'green star' awards from the Energy Saving Trust.

- 91** There is a keen awareness of the importance of transport to jobs and the local economy. The Council has worked well with partners at local, regional and national levels to improve the transport infrastructure and access to public transport. The concessionary fares scheme goes beyond national requirements and has been extended to cover the whole of the Tees Valley, in collaboration with the other Tees Valley councils. A new high speed train will link Hartlepool with London from mid-2007 as a result of the efforts of the Council and its partners; external funding has been secured for improvements to the rail station and the construction of a new transport interchange to facilitate access to public transport.

Safer and stronger communities

- 92** The Council adopts a collaborative, pro-active and co-ordinated approach to tackling crime and the fear of crime. It works with its partners in the Safer Hartlepool Partnership, which is chaired by the Mayor, to deliver the Crime, Disorder and Drug Strategy. Crime levels overall have risen, as they have nationally, but within this overall rise there has been success in reducing some types of crime and the fear of crime has fallen significantly. The Local Strategic Partnership has made tackling anti-social behaviour a priority. Good work to reduce drug addiction is bringing positive results. Accident levels are falling. Arrangements for responding to emergencies are good. The Council is using a number of approaches to sustain and improve community cohesion, which is already good.
- 93** The Council and its partners have had significant success in narrowing the gap between crime levels in Hartlepool and national averages, which reduced from 41 per cent above average in 2003/04 to 23 per cent above in 2005/06. Crime is highest in the Neighbourhood Renewal areas of the town but the gap in crime levels between these areas and the town as a whole has also reduced from 113 per cent above the Hartlepool rate in 2003/04 to 42 per cent above in 2005/06. Overall crime rates rose in 2005/06 compared with the previous two years, but domestic burglary and vehicle crime both halved between 2003/04 and 2005/06 and have fallen faster than national averages, particularly in domestic burglaries. However, violent crimes have increased over the same period significantly faster than the national increase. Latest figures indicate that crime in Hartlepool is now reducing and that performance in comparison to similar areas is improving.

- 94 The Council and its partners have successfully used a range of evidence-based approaches to reducing crime. For example, the alleygating programme shows excellent use of evidence to produce a strategy that is user-focused and which has had a clearly evidenced effect on reducing domestic burglary and increasing feelings of safety. Responsibilities for reducing crime and the fear of crime are well understood by the Council's services. There are good links between local environmental services and community safety; Operation Cleansweep includes work to increase the safety of local neighbourhoods, and neighbourhood management in the New Deal for Communities area combines the work of the Council's team of wardens with Cleveland Police's neighbourhood policing pilot. The Council has responded to a high level of resident concern about environmental crime with strong enforcement, particularly on abandoned cars, fires and fly tipping. This has contributed to the reduction in deliberate fires by removing fly tips on the same day that they are reported.
- 95 These efforts are producing good results in local people's perceptions. Fear of crime has reduced, particularly on burglary and vehicle crime. In the New Deal for Communities area, the reduction in the fear of crime is significant: over the two years to 2006, fear of crime fell by about one third.
- 96 There are well developed measures in place to identify and respond to children at risk of offending. While the number of young people who enter the criminal justice system has increased during the last three years, re-offending among young people has reduced over the same period. There are effective arrangements to respond to domestic violence with good communication between the Council, the police and the voluntary sector.
- 97 The Partnership has responded well to local people's concerns about anti-social behaviour (ASB). This is now a priority for the LSP and the Mayor and partners have moved resources to action to tackle it, including educational programmes in schools. Some of the targets for overall levels of ASB are being missed but there has been recent improvement and the incidence of deliberate fires has reduced by 38.5 per cent in the last two years.
- 98 Drug services are effective. There are some good results on the number of drug users engaged in treatment, with this number almost doubling in the two years to 2006, and on retention in treatment, although this fell slightly in 2005/06. Hartlepool is among the top 20 drugs partnerships in the country for waiting time for service, with the average waiting time only 1.3 weeks in the second half of 2005/06. The Hartlepool Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) is assessed by Government Office as the best performer in Tees Valley; users accessing the DIP wait only two days for prescribing, compared with the national target of five days. The Dordrecht and HYPED programmes are examples of good practice. However there are no specific strategies for problematic drug users in ethnic minority communities, who may currently go out of the borough to access treatment.
- 99 Work to tackle alcohol related crime is recent, but the Council is making good links with the health service and has good analysis of the problems. However, there is a lack of treatment options for adults. While there are good examples of services for young people with drug or alcohol problems, there are significant problems with young people's use of alcohol in some communities.

- 100 Effective action on safety measures and education, focusing on younger and older people, has contributed to reductions in accidents. The Council has worked effectively with partners including the police, the Fire Brigade, health, coastguards, rail and British Energy to help reduce accidents amongst children. The 'Crucial Crew' accident prevention and personal safety awareness scheme involved over 1,300 primary school children last year. The 12 per cent reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents compared with the average for 1994-98 includes a reduction of 58 per cent for children. Each year 200 older people attend programmes aimed at avoiding falls; there was a 44 per cent reduction in injuries from falls between 2005 and 2006.
- 101 Emergency planning, including business continuity, is good. There are comprehensive arrangements for responding to emergencies in collaboration with partners in Teesside, through the Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit. Emergency plans contain some examples of good practice, for example in advice on the emergency accommodation of people from ethnic minority communities.
- 102 Formal work to promote community cohesion is at an early stage, but the Council has worked closely with the police to maintain good community relationships, reacting swiftly to national events and local anti-social behaviour to calm fears in local communities. There are very good arrangements for the involvement of local people and groups in the Hartlepool Partnership and in the Neighbourhood Action Planning process. The Council has recently completed a best value review of 'strengthening communities'; the improvement plan resulting from this pulls action together to form a coherent approach. It has a Race Equality Scheme in place and has recently agreed its Disability Equality Scheme.

Healthier communities

- 103 Health is improving in Hartlepool and people are living longer but they suffer more ill health and disability, higher death rates from cancer, heart disease and respiratory disease than in most other parts of the country. This gap is widening and there is also health inequality within Hartlepool itself: the most deprived areas suffer poorer health than the affluent areas, with a difference of 13 years in male life expectancy between the best and the worst wards.
- 104 The Council and its partners are actively tackling these challenges. There is strong leadership on health issues from councillors and Council officers. The Director of Public Health is a jointly funded post. Partnership structures are robust and there is good multi-agency working. There is a joint Public Health Strategy which has annual action plans (some of which are still in draft) which include tackling the determinants of health. The partners' approach is very clearly set out for local people in the 'Vision for Care' document, which emphasises the prevention of ill health and the priority given to those most in need. Current plans include service reconfiguration for locality working and health trainers and the first national pilot of Connected Care. For young people, there are good programmes for drug, alcohol and sex education and good services for those who have substance misuse problems.

- 105** Progress is being made in a challenging context. Premature deaths from heart disease and cancer have reduced and are on track to meet local targets, but the gap between Hartlepool figures and national averages is widening. The number of smoking cessation clinics has increased and the smoking cessation four-week quitter rates are among the best in the country; smoking prevalence reduced from 40 per cent in 2000 to 34 per cent in 2004. This prevalence is still very high compared to national figures, and is higher (44 per cent) in the Neighbourhood Renewal and New Deal for Communities areas. The incidence of teenage pregnancies is also very high but has reduced from 75.6 per 1,000 to 64 per 1,000, exceeding the target for Hartlepool (the England rate is 41 per 1,000).
- 106** Partners are working hard to address health inequalities and to improve access to health services. For example, the Owton Neighbourhood Action Plan includes a review of health and social care services and identifies areas for improvement, including a need to have outreach schemes, improved signposting to services, programmes to support healthier lifestyles, help for carers and assistance for those with complex deprivation. There are robust action plans for the delivery of this community's priorities. In the borough as a whole, more vulnerable people are receiving help to live at home, and between 2003/04 and 2005/06 there was an 83 per cent increase in the number of drug users receiving treatment.
- 107** There is very good awareness by the Council and its partners of the determinants of health and work to tackle these is based on strong partnership working between public, private and voluntary sector organisations in Hartlepool. Action includes smoking bans in a number of public places, including a ban in the main shopping centre which is shortly to be implemented, and in workplaces. The Public Health Strategy physical activity action plan is led by the Council's sports and recreation manager on behalf of the LSP's Public Health Strategy Group and leisure centre attendance, including by people living in the most deprived wards, has increased. Most schools have Healthy School status.
- 108** The Council is working well with housing and health partners to make good linkages between work to improve health outcomes and improvements to housing conditions. The number of households defined as suffering from fuel poverty more than halved between 1997 and 2003. During 2005/06, 88 private homes occupied by vulnerable people were grant assisted by the Council to achieve the Decent Homes Standard. The mobile benefits service is providing quicker access to benefits and benefits staff are able to provide advice, for example on grants for improving the energy efficiency of homes which includes referral to a voluntary sector agency. There was a significant decrease in the number of excess winter deaths (from all causes) between 1996 and 2003.

- 109** The Council and its partners have a good focus on the more deprived communities and vulnerable people in efforts to promote healthier lifestyles. The health needs of children and young people in ethnic minority and traveller communities are addressed well. There are 11 smoking cessation drop-in clinics in areas of greatest disadvantage. A Health Development Worker and a Community Nutritionist are based in the most deprived wards, developing healthy eating initiatives; these include two new food co-operatives and weight management schemes. There are programmes of support into work for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems. The Hartlepool Exercise for Life Programme (HELP) introduces people suffering from physical and mental health problems to regular physical activity to improve their wellbeing; the Council estimates that 70 per cent of the 300 people (half of all referrals) who completed this programme in 2005/06 continue to participate in the activities.

Older People

- 110** The Council and its partners have a strong strategic approach to older people. Older people in Hartlepool are increasingly involved in a wide range of activities and play a key role in the development of services.
- 111** The broad approach is demonstrated well in the Older People's Strategy, which aims to promote and support the independence and wellbeing of older people. Adopted in 2005, it has ten strategic objectives covering maximisation of income, participation in community life, community safety, choice and independence, access, transport, learning, information and involvement. An annual action plan, which includes a progress report, puts the Strategy into effect. It is supported by a comprehensive and well presented information publication, Ageing Well in Hartlepool, which promotes an active and healthy lifestyle.
- 112** The Older People's Strategy is founded on very good engagement with older people on a wide range of issues including citizenship and wellbeing as well as health and social care. The strategy and its action plan are produced by the Local Implementation Team for Older People which includes six representatives of older people and has the strong involvement of the Hartlepool 50+ Forum, which is funded by the Council and facilitated by the Anchor Community Development Trust. The Council's portfolio holder for adult service and public health acts as the Older People's Champion and meets regularly with the 50+ Forum to discuss services; this has resulted in changes such as to the policy for the removal of unwanted furniture to better meet the needs of older people. The Council's leisure and library services have consulted older people and shaped services to meet their needs.

- 113** Older people are also actively involved in the planning of new schemes. The 50+ Forum is a member of the Hartfields Extra Care Retirement Village Partnership (which also includes the Council, Hartlepool Primary Care Trust, North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust). The Village is an ambitious project for people over 60, involving £10m of Department of Health funding and partnership with Health Trusts and the Joseph Rowntree Trust to deliver new build housing scheme of 242 new dwellings and a comprehensive range of leisure, community and healthy living facilities, as well as extra care provision to those who need it. Older people are also influencing the Connected Care pilot and the development of the new Telecare scheme, which aims to facilitate older people's independence.
- 114** Services for older people have improved. The free older people's concessionary fares scheme, which covers Teesside and has resulted in a 40 per cent increase in bus journeys by older people in the first five months of operation. The number of older people receiving the Home Library Service, has more than doubled, up from 10 per cent of older people helped to live at home in 2001/02 to 25 per cent in 2005/06. There is intergenerational work between teenagers and residents of a care home. The Walks for All programme has a significant proportion of participants who are older: of the 134 participants in 2005/06, 70 per cent were over 50 and 34 per cent were over 65.
- 115** Social care for older people is among the best in the country and also benefits from good partnership working. The Assistant Director - Adults Commissioning is a joint PCT/Council appointment and joint commissioning arrangements are improving. There are year on year increases in the number of older people helped to live in their own homes. There was a significant increase in the number of people receiving direct payments and a 47 per cent increase in intermediate care between 2004 and 2006. The Council provides a top-rated service for supporting admissions of older people to permanent residential or nursing care, with no delayed discharges attributed to the Council.

Children and young people

- 116** The council is performing well overall. Strong political commitment to very effective partnership working has resulted in good outcomes for children and young people. Good levels of safety are maintained and vulnerable groups are generally well supported. There is a satisfactory youth service and the youth offending service is judged as good overall with adequate management.
- 117** There is exceptional unity of purpose in the authority to ensure that every Hartlepool child matters. Vision and ambitions are set out well in the Children and Young People's Plan with comprehensive priorities reflecting the Every Child Matters agenda. Key priorities include the continuation of impressive improvements in educational attainment, preventive work and inclusion. Planning is consistent and of a high quality, but financial implications are not explicit in plans. There is good value for money overall and very thorough arrangements for performance management.

- 118** The combined work of all local services in securing the health of children and young people is good. Health education and provision is generally good although there is a weakness in the provision of child and adolescent mental health services to those children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good services are provided for vulnerable groups, especially for looked after children and those with substance misuse problems. There is, however, a lack of capacity in some therapy services, such as speech therapy.
- 119** The combined work of all local services in keeping children and young people safe is good. Nearly all children responding to the inspection survey feel safe and a good road safety education programme has effectively reduced the numbers of injuries. Agencies work effectively together to promptly identify and safeguard those at risk of harm. Good child protection practice has resulted in a high number being removed quickly from the register with low re-registration rates.
- 120** The combined work of all local services in helping children and young people to enjoy their education and recreation and to achieve well is good. Parents and carers receive good support and guidance. Schools are very satisfied with almost all services and the support they receive while their response to the schools' survey is the best in the country. Standards of attainment are good overall, particularly given the socio-economic issues in the area. Pupil attendance and behaviour is good. A small number of permanently excluded pupils do not receive the level of education to which they are entitled and reintegration into mainstream schooling remains low. Good progress is made by vulnerable groups including black and minority ethnic pupils and looked after children. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into mainstream school provision. The high quality of school improvement services has reduced the number of schools causing concern with no schools currently in Ofsted categories. Children and young people are able to access a wide range of recreational and leisure opportunities.
- 121** The combined work of all local services in helping children and young people contribute to society is good. Services combine well to support the social and emotional development of children and young people. Although there are very good examples of challenging and promoting anti-racism, members of the black and minority ethnic groups have limited opportunities to help shape services. Children and young people are, however, routinely engaged in consultation and some do participate in decision-making at a high level. Support for care leavers and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good although the effectiveness of the complaints process is limited.

- 122** The combined work of all local services in helping children and young people achieve economic well-being is good. Childcare provision meets the needs of parents and carers, particularly given employment patterns. There is a wide range of beneficial work experience for Key Stage 4 pupils and partners combine well to ensure that 14-19 provision meets the needs and interests of young people. Monitoring the participation and progression of vulnerable groups is underdeveloped and the specific level of participation in education, employment or training by those young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is too low. Many aspects of the care leaving process are good, particularly pastoral and emotional support, but there are too many young people leaving education or training before completion.

Appendix 1 - Framework for Corporate Assessment

- 1** This corporate assessment was carried out under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999, under which the Audit Commission has power to inspect local authorities' arrangements for securing continuous improvement. The results of the corporate assessment contribute to the determination of the overall CPA category for an authority, which the Audit Commission is required to assess and report on under section 99 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 2** The Council's self assessment provided a key resource in focusing the assessment activity which included consideration of:
 - key documentation, including the Council's improvement plan;
 - updated performance indicators and performance data; and
 - interviews and meetings attended.
- 3** The assessment for Hartlepool Borough Council was undertaken by a team from the Audit Commission and took place over the period from 28 November 2006 to 8 December 2006.
- 4** This report has been discussed with the Council, which has been given the opportunity to examine the Audit Commission's assessment. This report will be used as the basis for improvement planning by the Council.



Joint area review

Hartlepool
Children's Services Authority Area

Review of services for children and young people

Adult Learning Inspectorate
Audit Commission
Commission for Social Care Inspection
Healthcare Commission
HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HM Inspectorate of Court Administration
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HM Inspectorate of Probation
Ofsted

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Introduction

1. This joint area review was conducted using the arrangements required under Section 20 of the Children Act 2004. It was carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of seven inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), the Healthcare Commission (HCC), the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) and the Audit Commission. The review was undertaken according to the requirements of the *Framework for the inspection of children's services*.

2. The review was linked to the contemporaneous corporate assessment of the local council by the Audit Commission and its findings are represented in the relevant part of the corporate assessment report.

3. This review describes the outcomes achieved by children and young people growing up in the Hartlepool area and evaluates the way local services, taken together, contribute to their well-being. Joint area reviews focus on the extent to which children and young people are healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and are well prepared to secure economic well-being.

4. The review evaluates the collective contribution made to each outcome for children and young people by relevant services in the area. It also judges the contributions made by the council's services overall and, specifically, its education and children's social care services. Particular attention is given to joint action by local services on behalf of those groups of children and young people who are vulnerable to poor outcomes. Two such groups are covered in detail: children and young people who are looked after by the council; and children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

5. The review took place in two stages consisting in total of three weeks over a six-week period. The first stage reviewed all existing evidence including:

- a self-assessment undertaken by local public service providers
- a survey of children and young people
- performance data
- the findings of the contemporaneous inspection of the youth service
- planning documents
- information from the inspection of local settings, such as schools and day care provision
- evidence gathered during the earlier Youth Offending Team inspection
- briefings from staff within inspectorates, commissions and other public bodies in contact with local providers.

6. The second stage involved inspection fieldwork. This included studies of how far local services have improved outcomes for a small sample of children and young people, some of whom have the most complex needs, and a study

of provision in one neighbourhood in Hartlepool. It also included gathering evidence primarily on six key judgements, selected because of their critical importance to improving outcomes for children and young people in the local area. This included discussions with elected members of the local authority and their equivalents in other public agencies, officers from these agencies, service users and community representatives. A review of case files for children and young people receiving support from a number of local agencies was also included.

Context

7. Hartlepool is a compact coastal authority and its population of nearly 90,000 is projected to decline slightly over the next decade. It is located at the eastern end of the Tees valley and, despite a port facility and being close to a major north-south trunk road route, Hartlepool remains relatively isolated from the national transport infrastructure and major markets. From a strong economic position in 1900, with a thriving port and associated industries, Hartlepool town and area had been in decline. However, there is now strong evidence of a growing renaissance supported by both public-sector and private-sector investment. Reinvestment in the docks area, for example, including The Maritime Experience and the marina, is generating tourism that will be further enhanced by Hartlepool's hosting of the Tall Ships event in 2010. Regeneration is also strongly evident in the town itself, particularly with ongoing large scale housing redevelopment.

8. The town of Hartlepool is densely populated, with the rest of the borough being predominantly rural. Nearly 2% of the population is of black or minority ethnic heritage, although this small percentage is growing. The 0-19 age group represents 27% of the population, which is higher than the national average, although this is projected to fall to around 15% of the overall total over the next 13 years. The area is socio-economically disadvantaged, with 40% of Hartlepool residents living within the category of the 10% most deprived areas in the country. Life expectancy is lower than national and regional averages, with wide variations between council wards. Unemployment rates are significantly higher than the national average, contributing to an underlying culture of disadvantage. Hartlepool Council became a unitary authority in 1996. Overall political control is held numerically by Labour, although there is an independent elected Mayor and an inclusive coalition cabinet.

9. There is a range of nursery settings in Hartlepool, together with 30 primary schools, six secondary schools, two special schools and three further education colleges, making this one of the smallest Local Education Authorities nationally. Tees Valley Learning and Skills Council (LSC) are partners with the local authority, post-16 colleges, training providers and schools in addressing the 14-19 strategy. Post 16 education and training is provided by one further education college, one sixth form college, one 11-18 Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided secondary school and 17 work-based training providers. Entry to Employment provision is managed by three providers within a local consortium

controlling 126 places. Adult and community learning, including family learning, is provided by the local authority and Hartlepool College of further education. Cleveland College of Art and design also provides education and training in Hartlepool.

10. Primary care for children in Hartlepool is provided by the Hartlepool Primary Care Trust. North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust is the main provider of acute health services. Other children's hospital services are provided by South Tees NHS Trust, which also provides services to surrounding areas. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are provided by the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust, which also provides services to surrounding areas. The trusts providing health services for the children of Hartlepool, with the exception of the Ambulance Service, fall within the North East Strategic Health Authority.

11. There are no young offender institutions (YOI) in the immediate area. Close liaison exists, however, with Castington YOI in Northumberland, since this institution caters for any remand requirements from Hartlepool. High levels of social deprivation contribute to higher than average levels of crime.

12. Services for children and young people are delivered by Hartlepool children's services, which incorporate early years, children's social care services, education, Children's Fund and the youth service. The council has corporate parenting responsibility for 125 looked after children and young people.

Summary Report

Outcomes for children and young people

13. **Outcomes for children and young people in Hartlepool are good.** The findings of this review corroborate most judgements reached by the authority and its partners in their self-assessment. There is, indeed, strong partnership working across all outcome areas, with good examples of flexible arrangements to meet specific individual needs. Health education and provision is generally good, although there is a weakness in the dedicated provision of CAMHS to those children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The most vulnerable children and young people are well safeguarded through effective action by all agencies. Good and improving early years and childcare provision is available to all who require it. Standards of educational attainment have continued to improve and are now generally good, which is commendable, particularly given the socio-economic factors involved. The reintegration of excluded school pupils, however, remains a concern. Particularly good support is offered to vulnerable pupils, who consequently achieve well, although there are poorer levels of progression and participation in extended education for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Consultation with children and young people is well developed, although the full participation of Black and minority ethnic groups in this respect is underdeveloped. Multi-agency work to reduce offending and anti-social

behaviour is generally good. Young people are increasingly prepared well for working life, although the numbers who are not in education, employment or training remains high. Hartlepool Borough Council and its partners are justifiably proud of what has been achieved to date, but are continuing with a clear and ambitious vision to further improve services for children and young people.

The impact of local services

14. The impact of local services in improving outcomes for children and young people is good.

Being healthy

15. The impact of all local services in securing the health of children and young people is good. Partnership working on health issues is good. Universal and targeted multi-agency services support parents and carers well in keeping children healthy. A well coordinated approach to promoting healthy lifestyles for schoolchildren and young people is effective, leading to good outcomes such as healthier eating in schools. Hospital services for children are generally satisfactory, with a very good environment for day-case surgery. Access to CAMHS is generally good, but the service for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is underdeveloped. Conversely, looked after children and young people enjoy priority access to CAMHS and receive a good service. There are good programmes for drug, alcohol and sex education and good services for young people who develop substance misuse problems. Healthcare for looked after children is good, and the particular needs of Black and minority ethnic groups and traveller families are addressed well.

Staying safe

16. The impact of all local services in keeping children and young people safe is good. Families and children in need of support, and children and young people at risk of harm, are well supported through a comprehensive range of preventative services, which also decrease the need for children to become looked after. Joint commissioning arrangements for looked after children, however, are underdeveloped. Local agencies share information well and make timely assessments and refer their concerns appropriately. Initial referral, assessment and case transfer arrangements in children's social care are well managed, and good multi-agency communication means that thresholds are mostly well understood. The quality of assessments varies from adequate to good. Child protection arrangements are robust, and protection plans are effective and are regularly reviewed. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is developing well with sound leadership, but it lacks capacity to undertake its wider safeguarding role. Serious case reviews are appropriately and thoroughly undertaken and action plans are implemented effectively, but not always within the required timescale. Vetting checks for staff in regular contact with children are adequate and improving. Children's services staff

receive good support from their managers and their access to training is at least adequate.

Enjoying and achieving

17. **The work of all local services in helping children and young people to enjoy their education and recreation and to achieve well is good.** Parents and carers are provided with good support and guidance, which is well targeted in the most disadvantaged areas. Support for early years and childcare providers is effective and there are enough places to give parents sufficient choice. The strategy for early years and childcare is good, using the existing SureStart programmes effectively to secure the expansion of children's centres to meet local need. The high quality work of school improvement services is reducing the number of schools causing concern and improving the quality of provision, particularly in primary schools and special schools. Effective use of national strategies is improving pupil performance in targeted schools. Standards of attainment are good overall. The achievement of 11 and 16 year olds is very good, compared to statistical comparators, but the proportion of pupils achieving good GCSEs in English and mathematics remains low. Children and young people of Black and minority ethnic heritage and those looked after by the council make good progress. The council has made good progress to reduce surplus places in schools, maintaining choice in local areas. Nearly all parents achieve their first choice of primary and secondary school. The guidance to parents for admissions to schools is fit for purpose. Pupil attendance and behaviour is good. Exclusions in primary and secondary schools have fallen, but remain slightly above the national average in secondary schools, and the rate of reintegration into mainstream schools is too low. There is very good support for the most vulnerable pupils, including children looked after by the council and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The council has an excellent policy for including pupils with special educational needs within mainstream schools. These pupils make good progress and achieve well. Parents have a real choice of schools for their children and relationships with the special educational service are very good. Children and young people access a good range of recreational, arts, sport and leisure opportunities, although some young people still believe that cost limits use.

Making a positive contribution

18. **The impact of all local services in helping children and young people to contribute to society is good.** Services have been developed well to meet local need and combine very well to support the social and emotional development of children and young people. Intervention programmes that focus on aspects of play and relationships are particularly effective in helping children's and young people's emotional and social development. Initial work to challenge and promote anti-racism is a model of good practice. The effectiveness of training and support for peer mentoring is variable. Children and young people are routinely engaged in consultation; they have been well prepared for this level of involvement and make a full contribution through

strategic forums leading to the shaping of services. Children and young people of Black and minority ethnic heritage are well supported in school and aspects of integration are good. Multi-agency work to reduce anti-social behaviour, offending and re-offending is generally good, although impact is variable. First-time offending is lower than similar areas, re-offending is reducing and specific initiatives targeted at local trouble spots are leading to reduced crime.

However, there remains a problem with young people's misuse of alcohol in certain areas. School exclusion and attendance rates are improving. The council's commitment to looked after children is a strong feature; there are opportunities for them to make their views known and they have helped to shape services. Support for care leavers is particularly good. Opportunities for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good and their views have helped to shape some council services. Services meet their needs in most cases and transitions are well managed, including most of those to adult services, although these options are limited.

Achieving economic well-being

19. The contribution of all local services in helping children and young people to achieve economic well-being is good. Childcare provision reflects well the employment patterns of parents and carers in Hartlepool, with an appropriate number of childcare places available in the evenings and weekends. Almost all Key Stage 4 pupils, including young people who are in special schools, take part in a wide range of beneficial work experience. Within the last two years, a wide range of good initiatives have been implemented to engage young people who are at risk of leaving education without any qualifications, some of whom have challenging behaviour or are disadvantaged by a family history of long-term dependency on the benefit system. All partners collaborate well to ensure that 14–19 provision more closely meets the interests of young people and supports the development of courses which reflect business growth in Hartlepool. However, the monitoring of participation and progression for more vulnerable groups, such as young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and care leavers, is insufficient. Although the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training has improved, it remains high, as is the case for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The authority has utilised regeneration projects well to provide a range of education and training opportunities for young people. Most vulnerable young people, including young parents at risk of homelessness, ex-offenders and care leavers, gain adequate access to supervised or semi-independent housing. Many aspects of the care leaving service, more especially the pastoral and emotional support, is good, but too many care leavers progress to employment without further training. The quality of learning support offered by the education and training providers for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is at least satisfactory, with some good provision.

Service management

20. **The management of services for children and young people is good, as is the capacity to improve.** There is a powerful commitment to achieving the very best for children and young people. Leadership is good and there is exceptional unity of purpose. There is a strong sense of shared priorities and ownership by schools and external partners. Engagement with children and young people is excellent. Priorities clearly reflect the outcomes of consultation with children and young people, parents and carers. There is consistency in planning at all levels and plans are of high quality. However, medium term financial planning is under-developed. Priorities explicitly identify children and young people from Black and minority ethnic communities as a vulnerable group, and there are some good examples of support for them. Positive action is taken to deliver key priorities, such as improving educational attainment, prevention and inclusion.

21. The quality and extent of partnership working is outstanding. There is effective use of the community and voluntary sector. Political and managerial leadership is strong, and scrutiny is increasingly focused on key issues. The universal level of staff commitment, enthusiasm and pride is outstanding. Overall, there is good value for money and good improvements are being made, but benchmarking of costs is not embedded in management practice. Schools are very satisfied with almost all services and the support they receive. Overall, their response to the schools' survey is the best in the country. However, there are deficiencies in ICT provision to schools and in the social care software system. There are very thorough arrangements for performance management in place at partnership, elected member, corporate and departmental levels. However, there are deficiencies in management information available to social care managers, which should be overcome with implementation of a new software system. The involvement of service users in performance management is not as well developed as other aspects of consultation and engagement.

Grades

Grades awarded:

4: outstanding; 3: good; 2: adequate; 1: inadequate

	Local services overall	Council services	Health services
Being healthy	3		
Staying safe	3		
Enjoying and achieving	3		
Making a positive contribution	3		
Achieving economic well-being	3		
Service management	3		
Capacity to improve	3	3	
Children's services		3	
The education service		3	
The social care services for children		3	
The health service for children			2

Recommendations

For immediate action

- Develop inter-agency guidance in relation to thresholds for referrals to children's social care.

For action over the next six months

- Improve the quality of provision for children and young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties in order to meet their needs.
- Improve the quality of provision for pupils excluded from secondary schools and the rates of reintegration into mainstream schools.

- When the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is reviewed, a high-level assessment of the financial implications should be incorporated.
- Undertake benchmarking of costs on a systematic basis.
- Improve joint commissioning and contracting arrangements in relation to out of authority placements for looked after children.
- Engage service users in the evaluation of services they receive on a systematic basis.

For action in the longer term

- Improve the provision of occupational therapy and speech and language therapy services.
- Develop a wider range of courses for post-16 young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Main Report

Outcomes for children and young people

22. Outcomes for children and young people in Hartlepool are good.

23. Children and young people are generally healthy. Most children and young people who responded to the survey conducted as part of the inspection reported positive views of feeling quite or very healthy. Parents, carers, children and young people are provided with good information, advice and support. Teenage pregnancy rates are falling but remain above the national average. Deaths of babies around the time of birth, infants in the first year of life and children up to the age of 15 are all in line with the national average. Immunisation rates have improved and are now around the national average. The reported incidence of measles is low. Oral health is good. Access to CAMHS is good for most young people and admission placements are appropriate. The healthcare of looked after children is good, with 95% having had annual health and dental checks in the last 12 months. Healthcare for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is generally good, but there is a lack of capacity in some therapy services.

24. The combined work of all local services in keeping children and young people safe is good, and Hartlepool is a safe place for children and young people to live. Almost all children and young people responding to the inspection survey feel safe in school and in their local area. Few serious injuries occur on roads and an effective road safety education programme has reduced the numbers of those slightly injured. Agencies work effectively together to provide prompt identification and safeguarding of children at immediate risk of significant harm, including children with learning difficulties

and/or disabilities. These children receive a service from a specialist team with appropriate knowledge and communication skills. Child protection arrangements are well managed and effective practice means that the number of children whose names remain on the register for more than two years is lower than in similar authorities, while re-registration rates are also low. However, more children are referred to initial child protection conferences and this is reflected in slightly higher numbers on the register. Most initial assessments and almost all core assessments are completed on time, but data in relation to their numbers is unreliable, although the council is taking appropriate steps to address this. All children in need who are on the child protection register and those looked after are allocated to a qualified social worker. A wide range of preventative support is offered in Hartlepool. Fewer children are looked after than in similar authorities and they live in safe and mostly stable placements. Almost all looked after children have annual health assessments, and numbers who contribute to their statutory reviews, while lower than similar authorities, are improving. Numbers of children adopted from care and the timeliness of achieving this are very good, and better than similar authorities.

25. Looked after children and young people feel safe in their placements and are able to report their concerns. Their carers receive good support, training and rewards, but there are not enough local placements, so some children are placed at a distance. Children's cases are regularly reviewed and their participation in reviews is improving. Prospective adoptive families, and children for whom the plan is adoption, receive an exceptional service, although the adoption panel does not have adequate legal and administrative support. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support. That promotes their inclusion. There is good partnership working for children with complex needs, but aspects of management and funding are preventing further integration.

26. **Children and young people achieve highly.** Almost all children and young people surveyed enjoy their education and feel they are doing very or quite well at school. The overall quality of childcare is in line with the national average. The quality of nursery education is at least satisfactory overall and more is good than found nationally. Children enter the initial stage in school with much lower than average abilities in key areas of learning. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with those in similar authorities and national averages at age seven. Pupils at age 11 perform above those in similar authorities in English and mathematics and the progress they make during their primary school education is well above that of children nationally. The majority of pupils aged 16 achieve five or more good GCSEs, in line with national averages, in 2006. The proportion of pupils achieving five or more good GCSE passes including English and mathematics is lower, but improving. Boys' achievement remains a concern, as it is nationally, but, at ages 11 and 16, schools are successful in narrowing the gender gap. The majority of vulnerable pupils, including those from Black and minority ethnic communities, children looked after by the council and young people with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities, achieve well when compared to their starting points and in comparison to similar groups nationally.

27. The proportion of schools causing concern to the council has reduced and is now low. The number of primary schools failing to meet the Government's targets for English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 has fallen significantly from eight to one over the last three years. All secondary schools met the Government's minimum targets at the end of Key Stage 3 and for GCSE achievement in 2006. The numbers of permanent and temporary exclusions of pupils has fallen in both primary and secondary schools, but the number excluded from secondary schools was slightly above the national average in 2005. Although the majority of pupils permanently excluded from school receive the hours of education to which they are entitled, a small number do not, and the percentage of children and young people re-integrated into mainstream schools remains too low. Attendance has improved and is now above national averages in primary and secondary schools while the rate of unauthorised absence remains low and below national averages.

28. **Children and young people have a good range of opportunities to make decisions and take personal responsibility and many make a very good contribution to their communities.** Most children and young people, including those looked after by the council and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, have the necessary skills and confidence to comment on and influence issues that matter to them. Almost all school children have been actively involved in the democratic process leading to the appointment of school council members and the UK Youth Parliament representative. All school children and young people involved in various participation forums are well prepared. They are bright and articulate and listen to others before arriving at a decision. They support and represent the views of others well and are becoming increasingly confident in their role.

29. Children and young people benefit from positive relationships with workers. Young parents and young carers are enjoying the support they receive and are gaining in confidence as a result. Children from Black and minority ethnic groups are achieving well at school and like living in the area. Children and young people are engaging with the programmes that exist to reduce anti-social behaviour, offending and re-offending. However, some young people are drinking excessive amounts of alcohol on Friday and Saturday nights. The number of first-time offenders is below that in similar authorities, and re-offending rates have reduced consistently over time and are now in line with similar areas. Opportunities to celebrate children and young people's successes are used well, with some very good examples for those who are looked after by the council. Care leavers are particularly pleased with the support services they receive and are very positive about their in-care experiences, although some have low aspirations for further and higher education. Children and young people who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities enjoy good levels of support to help them participate in decision making.

30. Children and young people are increasingly able to achieve economic well-being and most are well prepared for working life.

Outcomes for almost all young people have improved to good levels, with most above that of similar authorities or at national averages. For a small number of young people, however, outcomes are satisfactory or low. Participation rates of young people in education, employment and training have improved, since 2004, from below to above the national average, which is good. Participation rates in work-based learning are also good. Success rates for Levels 1, 2 and 3, including work-based learning courses, is satisfactory, with some good success rates on A-level courses. Almost all Key Stage 4 pupils gain good work experience, including young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All schools provide a satisfactory range of vocational courses and a good range of enterprise activities.

31. A significant number of young people have benefited from a wide range of good education and training courses through regeneration activities. Care leavers' participation in education, employment and training is satisfactory, but too many progress to employment without further training. Almost all these young people live in decent housing. The participation of young offenders in education, employment and training is low and below the national target. The proportion of young people who gain Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications by the age of 19 is satisfactory, but too many leave education and training at the age of 18, and do not progress to Level 3. Progression rates to higher education are low. The number of 16 to 18 year olds whose whereabouts is unknown has significantly reduced to below the national average. The number of young people who are not in education, employment or training, especially among young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, has reduced but remains high.

The impact of local services

Being healthy

32. The work of all local services in securing the health of children and young people is good. A good range of universal and targeted services helps parents and carers in keeping their children healthy. Access to childcare facilities is good and provided flexibly to meet identified needs. Health visitor contact rates are high. Very good multi-agency working is seen in the SureStart programmes, which promote healthy lifestyles for parents and pre-school children, particularly engaging those from hard to reach groups. A particularly good example is the Mams To Be course for pregnant teenagers. The level of smoking during pregnancy has reduced, and targets have been met, but is still high compared with the national average. The incidence of low birth weight is in line with the national average. Breastfeeding is actively promoted, and again health targets have been met, although initiation rates remain low.

Immunisation rates have improved to around the national average. There is a good, targeted health visitor service for travellers. The particular needs of Black and minority ethnic families are well addressed through, for example, a

SureStart project located in the Salaam Centre where a wide range of support, including health education, is provided for Asian families.

33. There is a well coordinated approach to promoting healthy lifestyles for children and young people. All schools are enrolled in the Healthy Schools initiative and at the time of inspection a creditable 29% had achieved New Healthy School status through meeting increased criteria. School nurses have begun to implement a good obesity strategy and are delivering comprehensive smoking prevention and cessation programmes in primary and secondary schools. Good programmes of drug, alcohol and sex education are delivered in imaginative ways in school and community settings, such as a mobile Youth Support bus which is well used and highly rated by users. Contraceptive services, including emergency hormonal contraception, are widely available and well publicised. There is a good forward-looking action plan aimed at tackling the high teenage pregnancy rate. Surveys indicate a good level of understanding of the factors important in living healthily, with some evidence that knowledge has been translated into practice in relation to healthy eating. There are good opportunities for sport and exercise, such as the popular FAST project football teams and the West View project involving young people in orienteering. Positive surveys show that a large majority of children and young people consider themselves to be quite or very healthy. Universal health screening is in place and all general practices offer child health surveillance. Access and waiting times for hospital in-patient and day care are good. Services for children in hospital are generally satisfactory, apart from the arrangements for emergency surgery highlighted in the Healthcare Commission Improvement review. The environment for day-case surgery is very good. There is good outreach provision through a hospital-based community paediatric nursing team.

34. A comprehensive self-assessment exercise has been undertaken to inform a new mental health strategy for children and young people. The length of wait for new cases to access CAMHS is satisfactory, though some parents say there are issues in relation to the timing of appointments and cancellations at short notice. Training and support provided by primary mental health workers for front line staff in health and other agencies are good. There are direct referral pathways agreed with various agencies, including the youth offending service and Connexions. There are good examples of services for young people with drug or alcohol problems, such as the Straightline project for young people found in possession of alcohol, which involves a multi-agency approach including the police, the A&E department and school. A positive survey shows that 96% of children and young people rate their lives as quite, or very, enjoyable. Management protocols for children and young people who self-harm are well developed and clear. There is a good diagnostic service for young children with possible autistic spectrum disorder. Transition of young people with mental health problems to the adult service is not always smooth as it lacks a specific policy.

35. There is a designated nurse for looked after children who, with help from the designated doctor/s, provides an excellent service undertaking and arranging health assessments and follow-up health care. Most health assessments are undertaken where children and young people live, enabling a user-friendly service and affording the opportunity for advice on other matters, such as sexual health and healthy living. The assessment service is also available to care leavers, and the nurse runs useful drop-in sessions for vulnerable young people living in supported housing. The nurse also provides good support and advice to carers; her input is very highly valued by looked after young people. Assessments are of good quality and are regularly reviewed. For looked after children who live outside Hartlepool, the nurse liaises with her counterparts in other areas to try and ensure an equally good service in relation to their health care needs. Looked after children and young people enjoy priority access to CAMHS and receive a good service.

36. The Care Coordination programme provides a good multi-agency approach to needs assessment for children under five who have learning disabilities. Care plans are developed and regularly reviewed, with good involvement of parents/carers. The process is now being rolled out to include children and young people up to the age of 18 years. The provision of short-break care and other family support for this group of children and young people is good. There is good clinical provision to meet their physical health needs, but this is not always well coordinated. There is no dedicated service for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities within CAMHS, which can result in a poorer service to families caring for children with the most challenging behaviour. The learning disability nursing service supports families well, but does not yet have sufficient help from a specialised psychiatrist or psychologist. A much appreciated social inclusion programme enables these children and young people to improve their health through a wide range of sport and leisure activities. The Healthy Schools project has an approach tailored to the particular needs of this group. Parents report an overall shortage of therapy services, with those that are available having long waits; this is particularly notable in respect of speech and language therapy and there is no paediatric occupational therapist. Some parents report difficulty in accessing appropriate equipment, including wheelchairs, for their children. Transition from paediatric care to adult health services is adequate but requires further development to provide a seamless progression.

Staying safe

37. **The combined work of all local services in keeping children and young people safe is good.** Almost all children surveyed for this review and who were interviewed during inspection said that they feel safe in school and in their local area. Good action is taken to ensure that children and young people and carers know about key risks to their safety and how to deal with them, and good quality information is available in a number of community languages. However, less information is available for children and young people in relation to the risks posed by some adults. Initiatives, such as the school-based Crucial

Crew programme, are appropriate, well focused and targeted, and the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's fire safety programme provides secure medical cabinets for storage of medication.

38. Policies and systems to identify, assess and manage risk of harm are sound and most staff are well supported and trained. Health and safety assessments of facilities are rigorous and good advice is provided. The council and its partners have, through the contributions by young people, rightly prioritised bullying in the CYPP and have strengthened coordination and monitoring arrangements. However, some young people are still concerned that the effects of mentoring schemes are short-lived and that school-based anti-bullying schemes are not always fully confidential.

39. There is an impressive and comprehensive response to domestic violence, and all organisations, including the LSCB and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), accord this a high priority. Incidents of domestic violence are routinely reported and appropriate responses are made. Innovative schemes are in place, such as the outreach pilot between North Tees Women's Aid and the police, which is increasingly having a positive impact on numbers of women and children supported.

40. Families and children in need of support and children and young people at risk of harm are effectively supported. A good and creative range of preventative services, including those commissioned from the voluntary and community sector, are well coordinated through the Hartlepool Intervention Panel. Staff are mostly well informed about this provision; however, the online directory requires further work to make it easily accessible, especially for children and young people.

41. All agencies understand their role in keeping children safe, and children at risk of harm or in need are suitably referred and their cases promptly investigated. The generic social care duty service provides a valued screening service, within which thresholds for the involvement of social care are appropriate and consistently applied. Good multi-agency communication means that thresholds are mostly well understood, but a lack of specific written guidance increases the risk of inconsistency. Initial referral, assessment and case transfer arrangements are safe, timely and well managed. The quality of assessments varies from adequate to good, but some case records do not analyse risks effectively or reflect fully the quality of practice. Appropriate action is being taken to replace the council's electronic data system, which does not routinely provide sufficiently reliable data to support the effective performance management of services to vulnerable children. All children in need, those on the child protection register and looked after children are appropriately allocated to a qualified social worker.

42. Agencies work well together to safeguard children; inter-agency safeguarding policies are comprehensive and have been recently revised and reissued in accordance with government guidance. Child protection

arrangements are sound. Meetings to review the cases on the child protection register are well attended and robustly managed. The length of time for which children's names remain on the register has also reduced. Parents and carers are appropriately involved in plans to safeguard their children, but their experiences are not used in the development and redesign of services. Arrangements for Criminal Records Bureau and other vetting checks are adequate and improving. Most files seen during the inspection comply with statutory requirements and firm action has been taken to ensure that outstanding checks are completed.

43. Staff and carers receive at least satisfactory guidance and training within their own agencies and within multi-agency programmes; training and support for designated staff in schools and health settings is sound. A comprehensive approach to progressing the Common Assessment Framework incorporates a good focus on change management and the accreditation of learning. Children's services staff are well supported by their managers and have access to good quality and regular supervision. Their work is regularly and consistently audited, but these audits have yet to fully address the quality of practice.

44. The LSCB is well led, has appropriate representation and is effectively linked to other strategic groups. Good attention is paid to enabling committed members to contribute effectively, but the LSCB has not yet secured sufficient permanent funding or capacity to undertake its wider safeguarding role, or to strengthen multi-agency training and quality assurance processes. Serious case reviews are appropriately and thoroughly undertaken and action plans are effectively implemented. However, reviews are not always completed within required timescales and arrangements for producing independent overview reports are underdeveloped. Children's services staff use MAPPA to make an appropriate contribution to the Tees-wide arrangements for managing offenders who pose risks to children.

45. Information sharing is well managed and prompt action is taken to make sure that children do not become lost in the education or care system or when moving across local authority boundaries. Sound policies are implemented to ensure that all children have a school place and attend school regularly; for some young people, targeted group work has improved their attendance and given them a more positive view of school.

46. Proactive and well-resourced inter-agency support and protection enable children and young people to remain safely at home. Children are not looked after until all alternative avenues have been explored and so there are lower numbers of looked after children than in similar authorities. Decisions in relation to becoming looked after are made by managers at the right level of seniority.

47. Children and young people in foster care feel safe and are well cared for by carers who receive good training and rewards. However, there are insufficient placements to meet local needs, so some are placed a considerable distance away. Placement stability is good and children who have settled in out

of area placements are enabled to remain there. Looked after children, including those placed out of area, are reviewed regularly and participation in reviews has recently improved to an acceptable rate with the introduction of the Viewpoint software. Looked after children told inspectors that they are able to report concerns about their care and treatment and enjoy a good independent advocacy service, although the children's complaints service is only adequate.

48. Kinship care placements are a regular feature, as extended family systems are common; these placements are now assessed and supported by the Family Placement Team to the same rigorous standard as other foster placements. Good action has also been taken to begin to identify, support and review children in private foster care. The Adoption Social Work Team provides an excellent service to prospective adoptive families, and to children for whom the plan is adoption, although the legal and administrative support to the adoption panel is inadequate. Joint commissioning arrangements are not well developed, and this is significant for Hartlepool as a council with no in-house residential placements.

49. The demand for short-break services for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has changed and a review of the reasons for this is underway, with good involvement of young people and their families. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support to access mainstream social and leisure opportunities which promote their inclusion. Parents and carers are offered assessments for services in their own right, in line with legal requirements, but the children's complaints service has not been sufficiently adapted for easy use by disabled children. The funding of placements for children with complex needs is successfully undertaken through good partnership arrangements, but differences in protocols, management and funding arrangements stand in the way of further integration of services.

Enjoying and achieving

50. **The impact of local services to help children and young people enjoy and achieve is good.** Clear and helpful information is available to parents and carers in brochures through the children's information service and the council website. Good information and guidance is available to parents of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities about the services provided, including how the annual statutory review process works. The parent advice line provides good support and the service is valued by parents who use it.

51. The strategy for early years and childcare is good. The range of early years and childcare provision is targeted appropriately at areas in most need. There are sufficient places for those parents who require them. Good advice and information is on offer from the children's information system about the availability of places to give parents and carers sufficient choice. The quality of provision is improving. For example, the quality of childcare has improved due to more effective quality assurance, good support and training. Foundation

Stage training, and support for meeting the needs of all young children, is increasingly effective. Early years and childcare providers value the good range and quality of advice, training and support.

52. There have been good improvements in the attainment of pupils aged 11 and 14, and at a faster rate than the national average. Exam results for 16 year olds have continued to improve at an impressive rate over the last three years and the gap to the national average has been closed. However, the percentage of 16 year olds achieving five good GCSEs at grades A*–C including English and mathematics, is too low compared to the national averages.

53. The council's strategy to support schools and intervene when necessary is very good. It is based on an excellent analysis of need and very good use of data. Partnership working with schools is highly effective and well planned, and targeted support and intervention is reducing the numbers of schools causing concern. The quality of leadership and management and educational provision inspected since September 2005 is good in Hartlepool. No schools are currently in Ofsted categories of concern. The council has taken effective action with schools causing concern. Experienced headteachers and advanced skills teachers are used to give effective support to other schools facing challenges.

54. The council has thorough and accurate data about the achievement of pupils across the borough. This information is used well with schools to target support and has resulted in increased attainment at Key Stage 2 and very good improvements in the percentage of pupils achieving five good GCSEs. The council is also making good use of the national strategies for primary and secondary education to improve educational performance for 11 and 14 year olds. Pupils' attainment has improved in schools receiving targeted support, particularly in narrowing the attainment gap between boys and girls at key points in their schooling, although as is the case nationally, more remains to be done.

55. The council has made good progress to reduce surplus places in schools, and planning for Building Schools for the Future is thoroughly integrated with plans to respond to declining pupil numbers. Admissions procedures prioritise places for children looked after by the council and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Nearly all parents get a place for their children at their first-choice school. There is appropriate guidance to parents for admissions to schools.

56. Attendance in primary schools has remained similar to the national average and that of other similar areas. Secondary schools have worked hard to improve attendance, with the result that absence levels are lower than those found nationally and unauthorised absence is well below the national average. Targeted and coordinated support and intervention by the attendance service and behaviour support programme, as well as encouraging parents not to take holidays in term time by negotiating a discount scheme with a local travel agency, have brought about this good performance. No pupil was permanently

excluded from special schools in 2004/2005 and the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs excluded from mainstream schools has also reduced significantly. The percentage of pupils permanently excluded from secondary schools remains too high and the rate of reintegration of permanently excluded pupils into mainstream schools is too low.

57. Almost all permanently excluded pupils get full-time education, but for a very small number of pupils the provision is not yet adequate. Concerns exist about the overall quality of provision at the pupil referral unit, coupled with the challenging nature of some pupil's behaviour. Protocols are in place to support managed moves and hard to place pupils, but as yet have not made sufficient impact. The council is aware of and shares these concerns. A constructive debate with headteachers about the way forward is underway as part of the developing Hartlepool Education Improvement Partnership.

58. The range of provision to support pupils who are unable to attend school is mainly effective. The home and hospital tuition service and the support for pregnant school girls are good. The monitoring of provision for children educated at home is thorough. The provision for pupils with statements of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties is under review and the council is aware of the need to improve the current arrangements which are unsatisfactory at present.

59. There is a good range of recreational, arts, sport and leisure opportunities for children and young people, including those looked after by the council and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The accessibility of these opportunities is good overall, particularly for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Schools provide a comprehensive range of family learning, study support and extended school activities. The community and voluntary sector makes a valuable contribution to improving the enjoyment and achievement of young people.

60. Looked after children are supported very well in their education and, although their attainment is low at the end of some key stages, they make better progress at age 11 than looked after children do nationally. Their attendance at school remains low but is improving and currently no looked after children are permanently excluded. The council makes strenuous efforts to ensure that children and their carers are involved in setting and reviewing the targets in their personal education plans, or the individual education plans of those with special educational needs. Most looked after children have good quality personal education plans. Every school has a designated teacher for looked after children and the council ensures there is good training and support for this role.

61. There is excellent support to enable pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to enjoy their education and achieve. Statements of special educational need (SEN) are timely, well written and meet needs, with parents and pupils involved in their development and review. The quality of information,

advice and support from SEN services to early years and childcare settings and schools is very good. Early identification and action ensure that support is targeted to young children who require it. Schools make good use of quality provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The achievement and progress of pupils with SEN is good. The council's commitment to inclusion is reflected in the high proportion of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are educated in mainstream schools; those who are not are educated in local special schools that meet their individual needs very effectively. Arrangements for the dual registration of children with SEN enable the two special schools to work supportively and flexibly with mainstream schools without the necessity for all children to have a statutory statement. Parents are very supportive of these arrangements and spoke highly of their choice of schools and the high quality of curriculum and extra-curricular activities available for their children as a result.

Making a positive contribution

62. The work of all local services in helping children and young people to contribute to society is good. Children and young people's social and emotional development is promoted effectively through early years settings and schools. Services have been developed to meet local need and agencies work well together to deliver effective responses. There is a wide range of opportunities for children and young people and parents to access support. Many of these programmes are of the highest quality. Mentoring schemes and parenting skills programmes which focus on developing aspects of play and relationships are particularly good at improving outcomes for some of the most hard to reach and at risk children. Actions to reduce bullying are embedded in school practice. The effectiveness of training and support to peer mentors is variable and therefore confidentiality is sometimes an issue.

63. Children and young people who face significant change and challenge in their lives are provided with good levels of support. For example, work with young parents, children who have witnessed domestic violence, and behaviour management programmes are all particularly effective. Support for Black and minority ethnic children and young people with their education and some aspects of integration are good. Some excellent work has taken place in challenging racism. Transition support through early years, primary and secondary schools is a strong feature. Learning mentors in schools and services for young carers are well developed. The youth service is providing a range of effective programmes, for example, work to raise awareness of sexual health and targeted work with specific groups such as deaf children.

64. The council has a strong commitment to encourage children and young people to participate. The Participation strategy provides a sound basis for this work. All agencies are committed to this agenda and are progressively empowering children and young people. Effective forums exist for local issues to be heard and prioritised from across the borough. The views and aspirations of children and young people are demonstrably helping to shape services. For

example, Young Voice ideas to provide solutions for reducing children and young people's anti-social behaviour have been implemented. Overall, children and young people who represent others demonstrate good social adjustment and responsible citizenship. Children and young people of Black and minority ethnic heritage are included in participation forums.

65. There is good multi-agency work to reduce anti-social behaviour by children and young people, for example, the Hartlepool Intervention programme and the Youth Inclusion programme. Improved school exclusion and attendance rates are having a positive impact. New methods of community policing are effective. Intervention programmes are well targeted and involve a broad range of coordinated activities, including family-based programmes. There is good take-up by young people of the community services provided, for example, youth clubs. The FAST football programme is effectively targeting and engaging hard to reach young people and supporting their social and emotional development. The youth service is working with many vulnerable and hard to reach young people. The relationships between workers and children and young people are good and attendance by young people is sustained over time. However, there are no concessionary rates for children under 16 to use mainstream sports and leisure facilities. There are problems with young people's misuse of alcohol in some communities, where interventions such as the community warden scheme have had limited effect.

66. Action to reduce offending and re-offending is good. Youth justice board targets are being met consistently in most areas. Action taken by the police to evaluate impact is good and there is evidence that community and neighbourhood policing initiatives are reducing crime in specific areas. The youth offending service provides a good range of activities and reparation projects for those young people who offend and are at risk of offending. Work with families and individual young people is particularly effective, helping to reduce offending behaviour and raise children and young people's self-esteem. The support to meet the mental health needs of children and young people is effective. Good arrangements are in place to support offenders on release from custody. Young people who have served their sentence are supported well in the community, resulting in good outcomes. Educational and training support to meet the needs of children and young people working with the youth offending service is variable. Work to support those over 16 years into employment, training and education, and mentoring schemes to support engagement in education for young offenders, are underdeveloped.

67. The council has a strong commitment to the involvement of looked after children. Corporate parenting is a strong feature. Opportunities for looked after children to make their views known are good and young people are helping to shape services, in particular placement stability. Participation in both statutory reviews and aspects of care planning has improved. The participation officer has helped looked after children to have a voice and develop their skills and confidence in speaking out. Young people have access to a good independent advocacy service. Representations made by young people are considered and

acted on. Looked after children's successes are being celebrated, leading to raised self-esteem. Arrangements for looked after children to have contact with their families are good. The support for care leavers is particularly good, including aspects of transition, and young people value the very good support provided by workers in the team. The aspirations of some care leavers for further and higher education is low, while the effectiveness of the complaints process is limited.

68. Opportunities for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make a positive contribution are good and their views have shaped some council services. For example, a DVD produced by young people at Catcote Special Needs School has helped to break down barriers in the community and raised the confidence of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Aspects of integration are good, for example, day care services and participation in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. The involvement of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in education reviews is good and they benefit from a full programme of social outings, including out of school activities and community leisure pursuits. Good provision is available to support disabled children and their families. Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities with severe communication difficulties cannot use the complaints procedure; Viewpoint software is being enhanced to enable this. The transition process to adult services is well managed in most areas, but service options are limited.

Achieving economic well-being

69. **The work of all local services in helping children and young people achieve economic well-being is good. Children and young people are prepared well for working life.** The authority's childcare strategy is very effective in removing barriers to employment and training for parents and carers. A wide range of good childcare provision, such as day care, sessional care, out of school day care and regulated child-minding provision, reflects the employment patterns in Hartlepool well. For example, with employment patterns in the call centre sector, the authority has been very successful in supporting childcare providers to offer more flexible provision, such as drop-in childcare and childcare provision in the evenings and weekends. Childcare provision, including respite care, for the carers of young people aged 5 to 18 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. A comprehensive range of information on childcare, childcare cost, health, financial support and employment is available to parents and carers. Partnership working between Jobcentre Plus, children's centres and voluntary and community venues that provide childcare is good in offering advice on employment and training opportunities. The range of family learning opportunities is satisfactory and is helping carers and parents to progress to training or employment.

70. A wide range of good strategies and initiatives prepares young people for working life. All schools provide a range of vocational subjects, which increasingly offer better progression routes to post-16 education and training. Almost all Key Stage 4 pupils, including those in special schools, take part in a wide range of beneficial work experience such as computer repairs. Learn2work, an education–business link organisation, and the schools collaborate well to provide activities for young people to gain an understanding of business and enterprise. In one special school, a wide range of enterprise and work-related projects provide particularly good and interesting opportunities for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A significant number of young people benefit from the arrangements to attend local colleges for part of their studies. The overall impact of these arrangements has improved achievement rates at Key Stage 4 and increased participation rates in post-16 education and training from below the national averages to above. Within the last two years, a wide range of good initiatives has been implemented to engage young people who are at risk of leaving education without any qualifications, have challenging behaviour or are disadvantaged by a family history of long-term dependency on the benefit system. Some of these young people improved their personal skills and self-confidence by spending part of a week with employers and the remainder of the week in school. In two schools, however, there are still too many young people who leave without gaining any qualifications. Advice and guidance for young people in schools is generally satisfactory, but for a few this advice is not sufficiently comprehensive.

71. The strategy for 14–19 education and training is effective in improving participation and success for young people. The Tees Valley LSC and the authority collaborate well to ensure that the provision more closely meets the interests of young people, for example, through the detailed analysis of 14–19 provision and by supporting the development of new courses that reflect the business growth in Hartlepool. Four groups take responsibility for implementing the various aspects of this strategy, including raising standards, staff development and quality assurance. Collaboration between Hartlepool College of further education and Catcote School has been effective in developing good provision for young people with moderate to profound learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This provision offers learners the opportunity to develop independent living skills in addition to basic vocational skills. However, the monitoring of participation and progression for the more vulnerable groups, such as young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and care leavers, is insufficient. The progression of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to work-based provision is low. Although the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training has improved, it remains high for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Connexions, the authority and other partners have been very successful in significantly reducing the number of young people whose whereabouts are not known. Young people have satisfactory access to provision at pre-entry and entry level.

72. A significant proportion of regeneration funds is allocated specifically to improve the education and employability of children and young people. Financial resources, including the neighbourhood renewal fund and the new deal for communities fund, are used effectively to provide very well-resourced learning centres within two of the most deprived areas. The authority has recognised the significance of regeneration projects in helping young people to gain training and employment, and good arrangements are in place to provide a range of education and training opportunities for young people. The authority has good strategies to consult the local community and the level of involvement of young people is good.

73. The authority is in the process of implementing plans to improve the availability of decent housing in general. Currently, the arrangements with the private and social housing sectors are generally satisfactory in providing a range of housing for young people. However, the sharing of up to date housing information between partners is insufficiently developed. Most vulnerable young people, including young parents at risk of homelessness, ex-offenders and care leavers, gain adequate access to supervised or semi-independent housing. However, at times there is insufficient appropriate accommodation for vulnerable young people, with some use of bed and breakfast accommodation.

74. The support for care leavers to achieve economic well-being is satisfactory. Many aspects of the care leaving service, more especially the pastoral and emotional support, are good. While the authority and Connexions are working well through a number of projects and initiatives to support these young people, too many leave education or training too early. There is effective support from all relevant agencies to help looked after children or young people who have substance dependencies, young parents or those who are involved with the youth justice system. The effectiveness of the care leaving service is compromised by the fact that its location is not readily accessible to the young people, and not within proximity of other services which these young people need to use.

75. The quality of learning support offered by the education and training providers for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is at least satisfactory, with some good provision. Connexions provide effective guidance for these young people. They have a good level of involvement in discussions to ensure better coordination of their education, health and social care support. The take-up of direct payments is low despite a user-friendly approach. The arrangements for transition planning are good, with appropriate representation from the relevant agencies.

Service management

76. **The management of services for children and young people is good.** Ambition is good. The council and its partners provide excellent leadership for children's services. There are clear and challenging ambitions for children and young people in Hartlepool, a strong shared commitment to them

and an exceptional unity of purpose. The community strategy places a strong emphasis on children and young people. Vision and ambitions are set out well in the CYPP and key outcomes for children and young people are incorporated in the Local Area Agreement.

77. Children and young people have been effectively engaged in an extensive consultation process about aims and priorities, and a children and young people's version of the plan was produced by Hartlepool Young Voices, a group of young people supported by Barnardos. There are two young people on the Local Strategic Partnership and they are well supported. There is further representation on the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. Children and young people feel confident that their aspirations and views are taken fully into account.

78. Prioritisation is good. Key priorities are clearly set out in the CYPP and there is a strong sense of shared priorities and ownership by schools and external partners. Strategic partnership meetings, for example, demonstrate an embedded pragmatic approach to committing resources across agencies. The approach to engagement of children and young people is excellent. There has been an extensive process of consultation with large numbers of children and young people, and intensive engagement with a smaller number, particularly through Diamond 9, a process of facilitated discussion leading to identification of priorities. The priorities clearly reflect the outcomes of consultation with children and young people, parents and carers and these are taken as the starting point for the CYPP. There is extensive ongoing consultation with children and young people underpinning children's services planning and decision making, including involvement in the appointment process for the Director, Assistant Directors and many other posts, as well as feedback on how their engagement can be made even more effective.

79. The CYPP incorporates a clear high level action plan and is underpinned by high quality lower level plans containing three-year priorities and a one-year action plan. There is consistency in plans at all levels. Resources are allocated appropriately to priorities, but medium term financial planning is underdeveloped as there is no reference in the CYPP or some key lower level plans to their financial implications.

80. The needs of Black and minority ethnic children and young people are prioritised and acted on effectively. The CYPP identifies this group as vulnerable, alongside looked after children and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are examples of good support for BME children and young people, for example, through the Salaam Centre and the Ethnic Minority Achievement Team.

81. There is good evidence of robust action to deliver key priorities. This includes excellent support for improving educational attainment in schools, widespread adoption of a preventative approach and a very effective approach to inclusion. These actions have had a very positive impact.

82. Capacity to deliver outcomes for children and young people is good. The fact that Hartlepool is the second smallest unitary council has been turned into a significant strength rather than a weakness. The quality and extent of partnership working at all levels in all outcome areas, and the strong personal networks which exist across all sectors, are outstanding. There is effective use of the very extensive community and voluntary sector. The exceptional quality of partnership working contributes significantly to the high quality of provision in almost all service areas.

83. There is very strong commitment to delivering the best possible services to children and young people from key elected members, such as the Mayor, portfolio holder and Scrutiny Forum chair. There are good reporting arrangements and clear roles, good leadership and appropriate challenge. The Corporate Parenting Forum is strengthening the input from children and young people and becoming more focused on the achievements of looked after children and their recognition. The contribution of the Scrutiny Forum is improving. Good engagement with children and young people is to be enhanced by direct representation of six young people on the forum. It is becoming more focused on making an impact on important issues.

84. There is good senior management capacity within the children's services department. The level of commitment, enthusiasm and pride in staff at all levels in delivering quality services to Hartlepool is outstanding. Vacancies are low. There is strong internal consultation and communication.

85. Overall, good value for money is being delivered and significant areas of overspend are examined rigorously, though benchmarking of costs is not embedded in management practice. Education costs are about average and social care costs a little above average, with mostly good and some outstanding services. The proportion of surplus school places is low and planning is underway to respond to projected longer term reductions in pupil numbers over the next 10 years. The community asset of schools is well recognised; Dyke House is an outstanding example of a community hub, and the inclusive approach to developing Building Schools for the Future proposals is placing benefit for the whole community at its heart. There is some pooling of resources across the five Tees Valley councils, for example, the emergency duty social work service is run by Stockton-on-Tees on their behalf. These all provide better value for money. Overall, management of financial, human and material resources is good.

86. Support for school improvement is strong, and the response to the Audit Commission's schools' survey is outstanding – overall the best in the country – with high satisfaction for 74 of the 76 aspects of support and service.

87. A good start has been made on developing a multi-agency workforce strategy. The Integrated Working Information Sharing programme is a major programme to deliver change, including a multi-agency modular NVQ Level 4 training programme for 550 staff across the sectors.

88. There are some significant capacity issues or deficits, but they are mostly being addressed effectively. There are high school budget surpluses, but the Schools Forum has agreed in principle that a clawback scheme should be introduced and tighter auditing of the use of surpluses has been introduced. High costs of home to school transport for special needs pupils, which are not attributable to the requirements of the excellent provision for such pupils, are being addressed through a corporate transport review. High levels of sickness within children's social care are being addressed by a series of management actions, supported and monitored corporately.

89. ICT infrastructure and support have some important deficiencies. The system does not provide effectively for modern school requirements and the social care system has poor analytical capability. A new children's software system has been purchased and, when fully operational, this should resolve the current deficiencies. The ICT contract is being reviewed to secure improvements but a solution which fully meets schools' requirements may be some time off.

90. Performance management is adequate overall. There are very thorough arrangements for performance management in place at partnership, member, corporate and departmental levels. Performance is reported quarterly to the portfolio holder, and this includes enhanced analysis for certain vulnerable groups and a review of progress with the departmental plan. There is good analysis of school performance, including support for self-evaluation, and effective challenge and support has contributed significantly to improved attainment in schools.

91. There are currently important gaps in performance management in social care, though these should be rectified shortly. There are deficiencies in the management information available to managers, with effective cessation over the past six months. Implementation of the new integrated children's system should provide much improved information. There are, however, several examples of good performance management: detailed reviews of external placements and increased fostering have led to better provision and substantial savings; re-registration rates have been reduced by introducing control points in decision making.

92. Looked after children are involved well in assessing the services they receive. However, overall the involvement of service users in performance management has not been developed in as consistent a manner as other aspects of consultation and engagement.

Annex: The children and young people's section of the corporate assessment report

1. The council is performing well overall. Strong political commitment to very effective partnership working has resulted in good outcomes for children and young people. Good levels of safety are maintained and vulnerable groups are generally well supported. There is a satisfactory youth service and the youth offending service is judged as good overall with adequate management.
2. There is exceptional unity of purpose in the authority to ensure that every Hartlepool child matters. Vision and ambitions are set out well in the CYPP, with comprehensive priorities reflecting the Every Child Matters agenda. Key priorities include the continuation of impressive improvements in educational attainment, preventative work and inclusion. Planning is consistent and of a high quality but financial implications are not explicit in plans. There is good value for money overall and very thorough arrangements for performance management.
3. The combined work of all local services in securing the health of children and young people is good. Health education and provision is generally good, although there is a weakness in the provision of CAMHS to those children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good services are provided for vulnerable groups, especially for looked after children and those with substance misuse problems. There is, however, a lack of capacity in some therapy services, such as speech therapy.
4. The combined work of all local services in keeping children and young people safe is good. Nearly all children responding to the inspection survey feel safe and a good road safety education programme has effectively reduced the numbers of injuries. Agencies work effectively together to promptly identify and safeguard those at risk of harm. Good child protection practice has resulted in a high number being removed quickly from the register with low re-registration rates.
5. The combined work of all local services in helping children and young people to enjoy their education and recreation and to achieve well is good. Parents and carers receive good support and guidance. Schools are very satisfied with almost all services and the support they receive, while their response to the schools' survey is the best in the country. Standards of attainment are good overall, particularly given the socio-economic issues in the area. Pupil attendance and behaviour are good. A small number of permanently excluded pupils do not receive the level of education to which they are entitled and reintegration into mainstream schooling remains low. Good progress is made by vulnerable groups, including Black and minority ethnic pupils and looked after children. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into mainstream school provision. The high quality of school improvement services has reduced the number of schools causing concern, with

no schools currently in Ofsted categories. Children and young people are able to access a wide range of recreational and leisure opportunities.

6. The combined work of all local services in helping children and young people contribute to society is good. Services combine well to support the social and emotional development of children and young people. Although there are very good examples of promoting anti-racism, members of the Black and minority ethnic groups have limited opportunities to help shape services. Children and young people are, however, routinely engaged in consultation and some do participate in decision making at a high level. Support for care leavers and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, although the effectiveness of the complaints process is limited.

7. The combined work of all local services in helping children and young people achieve economic well-being is good. Childcare provision meets the needs of parents and carers, particularly given employment patterns. There is a wide range of beneficial work experience for Key Stage 4 pupils, and partners combine well to ensure that 14–19 provision meets the needs and interests of young people. Monitoring the participation and progression of vulnerable groups is underdeveloped and the specific level of participation in education, employment or training by those young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is too low. Many aspects of the care leaving process are good, particularly pastoral and emotional support, but there are too many young people leaving education or training before completion.

CE X/PW/JAH

22 February 2007

Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt MP
Secretary of State for Health
Department of Health
Richmond House
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1

Dear Secretary of State

Members of the Council are extremely disappointed that following the recent review by the Independent Reconfiguration Panel into the provision of health services in Hartlepool, the report commissioned by your predecessor Secretary of State from Professor Sir Ari Darzi, will not be implemented in full. The Council remains firmly of the opinion that the residents of Hartlepool and our neighbours in Easington deserved the best possible health facilities, within easy reach of all.

A special Council meeting was held on 15 February and, following a full, frank and passionate debate, Council resolved as follows:-

"This Council deplores the decision of the Independent Reconfiguration Panel in respect of University Hospital Hartlepool and totally condemns the broken promises of the Blair Government. We demand that this decision be urgently reconsidered so that those promises, made by both the Prime Minister and the former Health Secretary John Reid, can be delivered in full.

Furthermore the Council reaffirms its commitment to health services that are accessible, accountable and of the highest quality in Hartlepool, for Hartlepool. It is vital that we resist any further migration of both jobs and services out of the town to Stockton and fight any downgrading of services at University Hospital Hartlepool.

Health services in Hartlepool must be both maintained and indeed improved. We need increased funding, better transport links, improved primary care in our communities, an immediate development of new and equipped health centres and improved terms and conditions for all health sector workers in the town. We must seek a full and comprehensive understanding of the NHS proposals for Hartlepool and a timetable for its investment programs.

The Council therefore resolve that the full powers of this Council's scrutiny process be employed to deal with these issues and that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee urgently set out a timetable for investigation, reporting back to Council at the earliest opportunity."

Hartlepool Borough Council respectfully requests that on the basis of the above resolution, you urgently consider re-instating the full range of health services within Hartlepool.

Yours sincerely

Paul Walker
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

cc Stuart Drummond, Mayor of Hartlepool
Councillor Carl Richardson, Chairman of the Council

Councillors D Allison, S Allison, Barker, Belcher, Brash, Clouth, R W Cook, S Cook, Coward, Cranney, Fenwick, Fleet, Gibbon, Griffin, Hall, Hargreaves, Henery, Hill, Iseley, Jackson, James, Johnson, Kaiser, Laffey, Lauderdale, Lilley, London, A Marshall, J Marshall, Morris, Payne, Preece, Rayner, Rogan, Shaw, Sutheran, Tumilty, Turner, Wallace, D Waller, M P Waller, R Waller, Wistow, Worthy, Wright, and Young

From the Rt Hon Rosie Winterton MP
Minister of State



Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS
Tel: 020 7210 3000

Your Ref: CEX/PW/JAH

PO00000189403

Paul Walker
Chief Executive
Hartlepool Borough Council
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY



Paul Walker

20 March 2007

Thank you for your letter of 22 February to Patricia Hewitt about provision of health services in Hartlepool.

I must stress that the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP) was in the best position to be able to review the conflicting conclusions of the earlier Teesside review and the recommendations made by Professor Sir Ara Darzi in relation to the location of these services, and suggest the most appropriate way forward.

The Secretary of State for Health, in accepting the recommendations made by the IRP in January, is confident that the best hospital services have been secured for the people of Teesside.

Finally, a new hospital facility should not be seen in isolation. It is not about closing down services; it is about changing the way services are delivered in order to ensure they continue to meet the high standards local people deserve. The changes to maternity and paediatric services will be supported by changes to transport systems and by new developments in services based in the community.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Rosie Winterton

ROSIE WINTERTON

Our ref: T000000196173



Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS

Tel: 020 7210 3000

Councillor Ray Waller
Leader of the Labour Group
Hartlepool Borough Council
153 Park Road
Hartlepool
TS26 9JB

23 March 2007

Dear Councillor Waller,

Thank you for your letter of 28 February addressed to the Prime Minister about North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals NHS Trust. As you will appreciate, the Prime Minister receives a large amount of correspondence daily and it is not always possible for him to answer all of his letters personally. The issues you raise fall within the remit of the Department of Health and your letter has been forwarded to me for reply.

Following referrals from local overview and scrutiny committees, at the request of the Secretary of State for Health, the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP) undertook what was a very thorough review of the proposals for maternity and paediatric services in North Tees and Hartlepool. This review involved all local stakeholders and considered a great deal of evidence.

Their conclusions represent the most appropriate way to ensure that local people continue to receive safe, effective and accessible maternity and children's hospital care.

All local NHS organisations are fully committed to implementing the Secretary of State's decision following the IRP's recommendations that there should be a new hospital accessible for the people of Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees, Easington and Sedgefield.

It is very important to note that a new hospital facility should not be seen in isolation and nor is it about closing down services. It is about changing the way services are delivered in order to ensure they continue to meet the high standards local people deserve.


The IRP recommended that in the interim and until a new hospital is open, to ensure safety and sustainability of services, consultant-led maternity and paediatric care will be centralised at University Hospitals of North Tees, with a midwifery-led unit and a hospital assessment unit for children at the University Hospital of Hartlepool. This is in line with independent advice and national policy.



The planning and delivery of modern community and primary care services is an essential part of healthcare improvement across the north east in line with 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' and Hartlepool is no different. I can reassure you that as things progress locally all stakeholders will be involved in the formal consultation process.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Larkin
Customer Service Centre
Department of Health



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Direct Communications Unit

5 March 2007

Councillor Ray Waller
153 Park Road
Hartlepool
Cleveland
TS26 9JB

Dear Councillor Waller

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your recent letter, the contents of which will be carefully noted.

Mr Blair has asked that your letter be passed to the Department of Health which has particular responsibility for the matter you raise so that they are also aware of your views.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. Davies'.

M DAVIES

