



**DARLINGTON**

Borough Council

# Adults Scrutiny Committee Agenda

9.30 am, Tuesday, 27 August 2024

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT

**Members of the Public are welcome to attend this Meeting.**

1. Introductions/Attendance at Meeting
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 18 June 2024 (Pages 3 - 4)
4. CQC Assurance Framework - Update – Presentation by the Assistant Director, Adult Services (Pages 5 - 16)
5. Care Homes in Executive Strategy Measures / Arrangements – Presentation from the Head of Adults and Service Manager (Safeguarding and ACT)
6. Safeguarding – Presentation from the Head of Adults and Service Manager (Safeguarding and ACT)
7. Performance Indicators End of Year Report 2023/24 – Report of the Assistant Director, Adult Services (Pages 17 - 28)
8. Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024 – Report of the Assistant Director, Adult Services (Pages 29 - 76)
9. Work Programme 2024/25 – Report of the Assistant Director, Law and Governance (Pages 77 - 90)

10. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM(S) (if any) which in the opinion of the Chair of this Committee are of an urgent nature and can be discussed at this meeting.

11. Questions

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luke Swinhoe', written in a cursive style.

**Luke Swinhoe**  
**Assistant Director Law and Governance**

**Friday, 16 August 2024**

**Town Hall**  
**Darlington.**

**Membership**

Councillors Anderson, Crumbie, Donoghue, Layton, Mammolotti, M Nicholson, Renton, Storr, Toms and Tostevin.

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on this agenda please contact Paul Dalton, Democratic and Elections Officer, Operations Group, during normal office hours 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. Fridays

## ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18 June 2024

**PRESENT** – Councillors Donoghue (The Mayor), Anderson, Crumbie, Layton, Mammolotti, M Nicholson, Storr, Toms and Tostevin

**APOLOGIES** – Councillor Renton

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Councillor Curry

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Joss Harbron (Assistant Director - Adult Social Care) and Hannah Miller (Democratic Officer)

### **AD1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/2025**

**RESOLVED** - That Councillor Anderson be appointed Chair of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

### **AD2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/2025**

**RESOLVED** - That Councillor M Nicholson be appointed Vice-Chair of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

### **AD3 TO CONSIDER THE TIMES OF MEETINGS OF THIS COMMITTEE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/2025 ON THE DATES AGREED IN THE CALENDAR OF MEETINGS BY CABINET AT MINUTE C106/FEB/24**

**RESOLVED** – That meetings of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2024/25, be held at 9.30 a.m. on the dates, as agreed on the calendar of meetings by Cabinet at Minute C106/Feb/24.

### **AD4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

### **AD5 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 APRIL 2024**

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of this Committee held on 16 April 2024, be approved as a correct record.

### **AD6 WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

Members gave consideration to Work Programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during 2024/25, and to any additional areas that Members would like to be included.

A discussion was held in respect of the current items on the work programme and a number

of new items were proposed; these included an overview of the Shared Lives service; transitional services with a proposal for a joint piece of work with the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee; an update on actions undertaken in relation to recommendations from the Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic Task and Finish Review; exploration of a Darlington Care network for providers; and mapping of provisions within the borough including commissioned services.

Members also requested that the Performance Indicators included budgetary information; and Members requested an update on the Loneliness and Connected Communities task and finish group including work undertaken to date, with a view to reinstate the group.

**RESOLVED** – That the Work Programme be updated accordingly.

# Update on CQC Assurance framework

Adult Scrutiny Committee

August 20<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Joss Harbron

Assistant Director for Adult Services



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# CQC -Assessment framework for local authority assurance

The Health and Care Act 2022 gave CQC (Care Quality Commission) new regulatory powers to assess local authorities

CQC's role is to assess how well a local authority is delivering duties under part 1 of the Care Act.

The assessment framework for local authorities has 4 Themes which are further broken down into 9 quality statements .

Each Theme has quality statements set out which will be used by CQC for assessment and assurance. They consist of We and I statements.

- We statements are quality statements the local authority must commit to.
- I statements are what people expect.



# Care Quality Commission

## Four Key Themes and Quality Statements

- Assessing needs
- Supporting people to live healthier lives
- Equity in experience and outcomes

**Working  
With People**

**Providing  
Support**

- Care provision, integration and continuity
- Partnerships and communities

- Safe systems, pathways and transitions
- Safeguarding

**How we  
ensure  
safety within  
the system**

**Leadership**

- Governance, management and sustainability
- Learning, improvement and Innovation



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# Care Act Principles





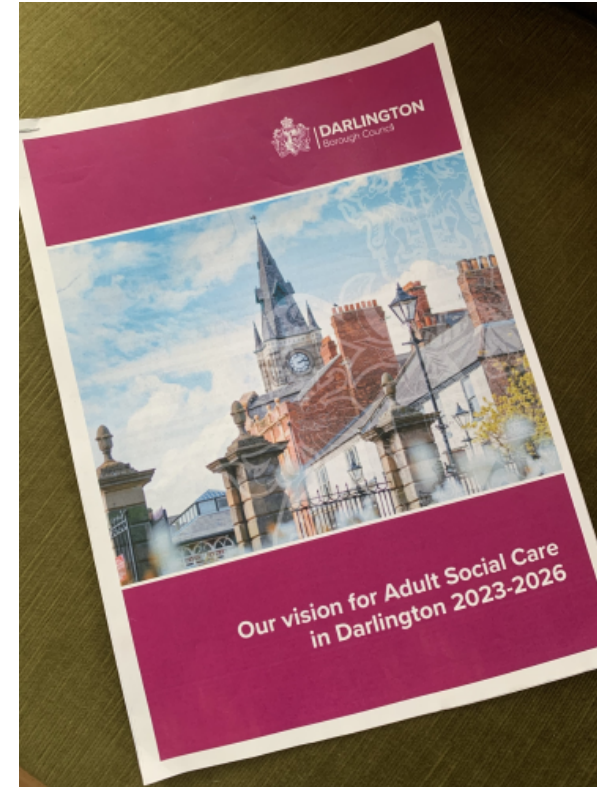
# Status of Inspections in North East ( July 2024)

Council	Current status	Date notified	On site visit to commence	Assessment Report Published	Overall Rating	How the local authority works with people, assessing needs	Supporting people to lead healthier lives	Equity in experience and outcomes	Providing support (care provision, integration and continuity)	Partnership and communities	How the local authority ensures safety in the system	Safeguarding	Leadership	Learning, improvement and innovation	Link to assessment report
County Durham	Awaiting Report to be published	30/01/2024	20/06/2024												
Northumberland	Awaiting on site visit	19/02/2024	05/08/2024												
Gateshead	Awaiting on site visit	18/03/2024													
Hartlepool	Awaiting on site visit	22/05/2024													
Middlesbrough	Awaiting on site visit	22/05/2024													
Redcar and Cleveland	Awaiting on site visit	22/05/2024													
Darlington	Awaiting on site visit	24/06/2024													
Stockton-on-Tees	Awaiting on site visit	24/06/2024													
Sunderland	Awaiting on site visit	24/06/2024													
Newcastle upon Tyne	Awaiting on site visit	15/07/2024													
North Tyneside	Awaiting notification														
South Tyneside	Awaiting notification														
Cumberland	Awaiting notification														



# Darlington Self-Assessment

- Our aim is to:
- “create a warm and welcoming town where adults and families stay as independent as possible for as long as possible”
- Our intention is to:
- “know ourselves and know our adults and families”
- Based on THRIVE principles and our Vision for adult social care in Darlington
- Our vision for Adult Social Care in Darlington 2023-2026



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# Self assessment strengths

## **Working with people**

Strength Based Practice Framework  
Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework  
Prevention approach  
Strong local partnerships with the Integrated care Board, County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust, Tees and Esk Wear Valley Trust, Care Providers and the local Voluntary and Community Sector  
Darlington Commitment to Carers Strategy 2023- 2028

## **Providing support**

Darlington's Market Position Statement (MPS) and Commissioning Strategy 2024 – 2027  
Revised Quality Monitoring and Assurance process  
Accommodation with Care and Support Needs Strategy  
Retendered outcome-based commissioning frameworks  
Developed effective hospital discharge arrangements  
Supported the VCSE in developing Darlington Connect hub  
TASC

## **Ensuring safety**

DSP website training offer is now up to date and clear navigation in relation to Making Safeguarding Personal  
Good governance systems in place for each stage of safeguarding decision-making  
Developed a risk notification process to enable identification of patterns and themes  
Practice Support Forum for high-risk decision making  
Risk Prioritisation Tool used to support allocations and managing risk

## **Leadership**

Governance framework  
Practice Support Forums  
Annual training needs analysis of the workforce  
Strength-based practice approach to workforce development.  
SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence) Strength Based Practice Training Relational and Strength Based Training  
Darlington Academy  
Community Care Inform licences for all staff  
The Validation Forum is used to assure progress in working in strength-based ways and that the Wellbeing Principle is being considered across all work within Adult Services



# Self Assessment Areas of Development

## Working with people

Improve monitoring performance on waiting lists levels and urgency  
Develop formal guidance around caseloads  
Reviewing and updating our internet pages to describe the person's journey  
Exploring the expansion of the Trusted Assessor processes  
Revising direct payment practice and process guidance  
Developing a new strategy and action plan for Promoting Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in practice

## Providing support

Strengthen our engagement and coproduction work  
Finalise the review of our current digital service directory offer  
Review the efficacy of Direct Payments  
Review the current day service offer and develop a clear model for future service provision  
Review the current community equipment contract  
Modelling of our costs to understand the financial value of the services  
Promote access to reablement among younger adults

## Ensuring safety

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership are reviewing and updating their website  
Plan to further develop the Preparing for Adulthood Pathway  
Early discussion has started around joint commissioning opportunities for young people transitioning in adult services  
Organisational Safeguarding pathway to be embedded  
Safeguarding procedures to be reviewed

## Leadership

Developing a co-production and engagement strategy  
Developing a vision and set of values for adult social care  
Implementation of the Carers Strategy  
A new Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025 is currently under development  
Developing learning and development opportunities for aspiring and newly recruited Registered Managers  
Proposed in 2024 to add peer review to case file audits  
Relaunch of Quality Practice Forums





# Outline of activity

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Notification  
of  
Assessment  
24<sup>th</sup> June  
2024

Preparation  
for  
Inspection.  
50 cases.

Late  
Sept/Early  
Oct 2024  
DBC Briefing  
session with  
CQC

Dec 24/Jan  
2025  
outcome of  
inspection  
published

Completion  
and  
submission  
of LAIR and  
Self  
Assessment  
12<sup>th</sup> July  
2024

Notification  
of onsite  
inspection  
September  
2024

October –  
November  
2024  
Onsite  
Inspection



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# Key Documents

[CQC Assurance Framework- Local authority assessments - Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk)

[Strength Based Practice in Darlington - Adults Social Care Services](#)

[ASC Engagement and Co-Production Stronger Together Strategy Final 2024-2028 \(darlington.gov.uk\)](https://www.darlington.gov.uk)

[Adult social care prevention strategy 2024-28 \(darlington.gov.uk\)](https://www.darlington.gov.uk)

[Promoting equality diversity and inclusion in adult social care practice \(darlington.gov.uk\)](https://www.darlington.gov.uk)

New webpages - [Darlington BC - Adult Social Care](#)



Any Questions

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ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
27 AUGUST 2024

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS YEAR END REPORT 2023-24

Purpose of the Report

- 1. To provide Members with performance data against key performance indicators for 2023-24

Summary

- 2. This report provides performance information in line with an indicator set and scrutiny committee distribution agreed by Monitoring and Coordination Group on 4 June 2018, and subsequently by scrutiny committee chairs.
- 3. The indicators included in this report are aligned with key priorities and the majority are used to monitor the Corporate Plan. Other indicators may be referenced when appropriate in narrative provided by the relevant assistant directors, when providing the committee with performance updates.
- 4. Twelve indicators are reported to the committee, ten on a 6 monthly basis and two annually.
- 5. Performance of 8 of the 12 indicators reported at the end of Quarter 4 of 2023/24:

(a) one indicator is showing performance is consistent to the same period last year:

ASC 019	Percentage of people who have no ongoing care needs following completion of provision of a reablement package.
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(b) three indicators are showing performance has declined in comparison to the same period last year, however they continue to be monitored and managed.

ASC 002	(ASCOF 2A-2) Older people aged 65+ admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care per 100,000 of the 65+ population.
ASC 003	(ASCOF 2A-1) Adults aged 18 - 64 admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care homes, per 100,000 population.
ASC 049	(ASCOF 1C (1a)) Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support

(c) one indicator's performance remains the same as this time last year.

ASC 050	(ASCOF 1C (1b)) Proportion of carers using social care who receive self-directed support
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(d) three indicators are not comparable and are reviewed as a point in time.

ASC 208	Number of Safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) started - year to date
ASC 209	Number of Safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) started – per month
ASC 211	Number of strategy meetings undertaken i.e. concerns progressed to strategy per month

(e) The 2 indicators that are recorded annually are ASC054 (The proportion of people who use Adult Care services who find it easy to find information about services) and ASC055 (The proportion of people who are carers who find it easy to find information about services). 2023-24 results will be released towards the end of 2024, therefore should be available to include in the mid-year scrutiny report.

ASC 054	The proportion of people who use Adult Care services who find it easy to find information about services
ASC 055	The proportion of people who are carers who find it easy to find information about services

(f) Due to recent ASCOF /CLD (Client Level Data) changes there are 2 indicators that are no longer being reported on. The new indicators which are to be replaced are currently under development, and therefore we are unable to provide figures at this moment in time.

ASC 045	Proportion of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family
ASC 046	Proportion of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment

6. More information relating to some of the indicators referenced in this report can be found in **Appendix 1**.

7. This Scrutiny Committee performance report is compiled by Sharon Raine. All queries regarding the format of this report should be addressed to [Sharon.raine@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Sharon.raine@darlington.gov.uk)

### Recommendation

8. It is recommended that performance information provided in this report is reviewed and noted, and relevant queries raised with appropriate assistant directors

**Joss Harbron**  
**Assistant Director of Adult Services**

### Background Papers

Background papers were not used in the preparation of this report.

Author: Sharon Raine  
Extension: 6091

Council Plan	This report contributes to the Council Plan by involving Members in the scrutiny of performance relating to the delivery of key outcomes with regards to Adult Social Care.
Addressing inequalities	This involves members in the scrutiny of the level to which Adult Social Care contributes to ensuring that opportunities are accessible to everyone, with a focus on ensuring a good job, home and/or social connections for all.
Tackling Climate Change	This report does not identify any issued relating to climate change.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report allows for the scrutiny of performance which is integral to optimising outcomes and ensuring efficient use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	This report supports performance improvement relating to improving the health and wellbeing of residents.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report supports the Councils Crime and Disorder responsibilities.
Wards Affected	This report supports performance improvement across all Wards.
Groups Affected	This report supports performance improvement which benefits all groups
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

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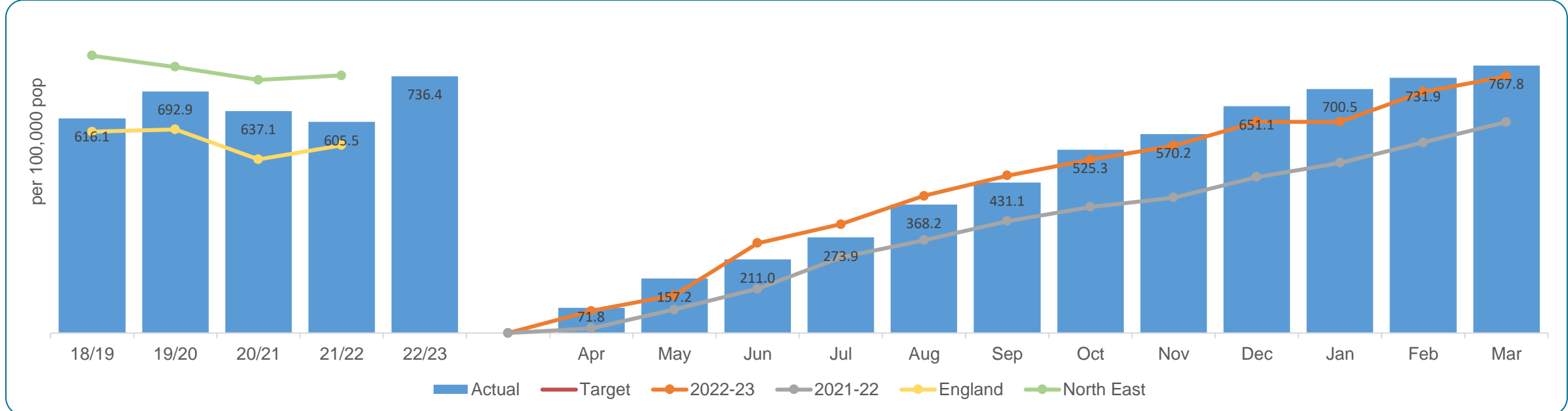
# **Adult's Social Care Performance & Practice Report**

**End of Year (April - March 2024)**

**Scrutiny**

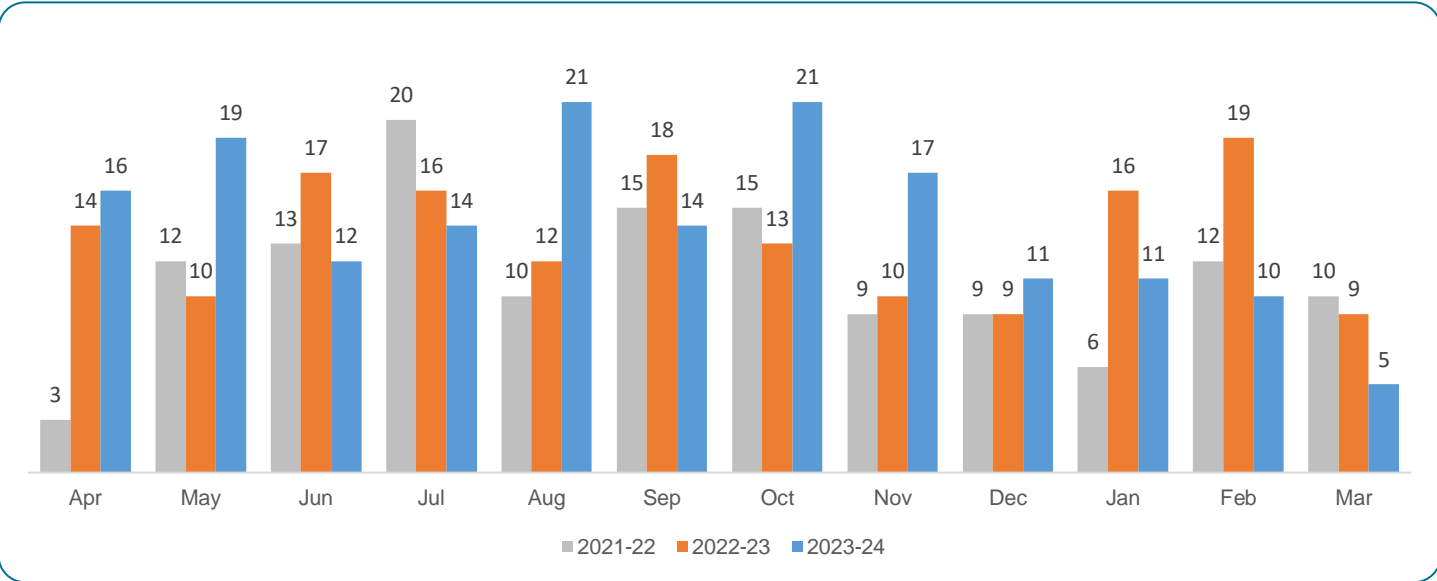
Independence	
Definition	<p>Avoiding permanent placements in residential and nursing care homes is a good indicator of maximising independence and delaying dependency. However, it is acknowledged that for some people drawing on care admission to residential or nursing care homes can represent an improvement in their situation. This indicator also captures efficiency. Residential and nursing care are often the most expensive forms of interventions. Relying on interventions that maximise independence - where appropriate - would represent a cost saving.</p> <p>Data source: Client level data, Office of National Statistics</p>
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>During 2023-24 the total number of individuals who moved into permanent residential or nursing care is 171. This is an increase from 164 in 2022-23 and 131 in 2021-22. The average age of individuals moving to permanent residential, or nursing care is 84, which is the same for the previous 2 years.</p> <p>Since April, 141 (82%) individuals moved into permanent residential or nursing care straight from an SBS. The current average length of stay in a SBS before moving to permanent care is 16 weeks, this is an improvement on the average figure of 19 weeks for 2022-23 and 20 weeks for 2021-22.</p> <p>ASCOF regional benchmarking data is now available for 2022-23, figures show that as it currently stands Darlington has the 6th highest proportion of individuals aged 65+ entering residential / nursing on permanent basis during 2022-23.</p>

ASC 002 (ASCOF 2C): The number of adults aged 65 and over whose long-term support needs are met by admission to residential and nursing care homes

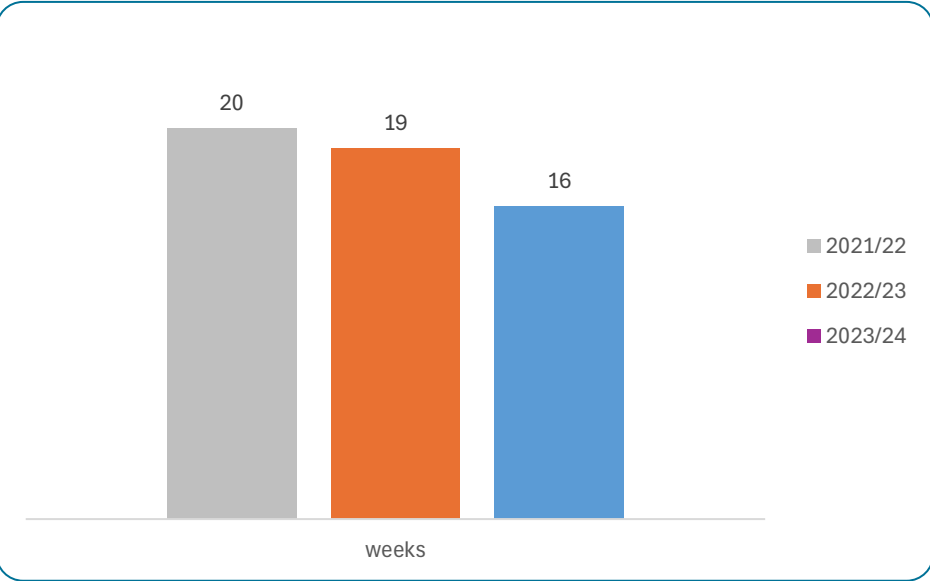


Darlington was ranked **130th** nationally for this indicator in 2022-23

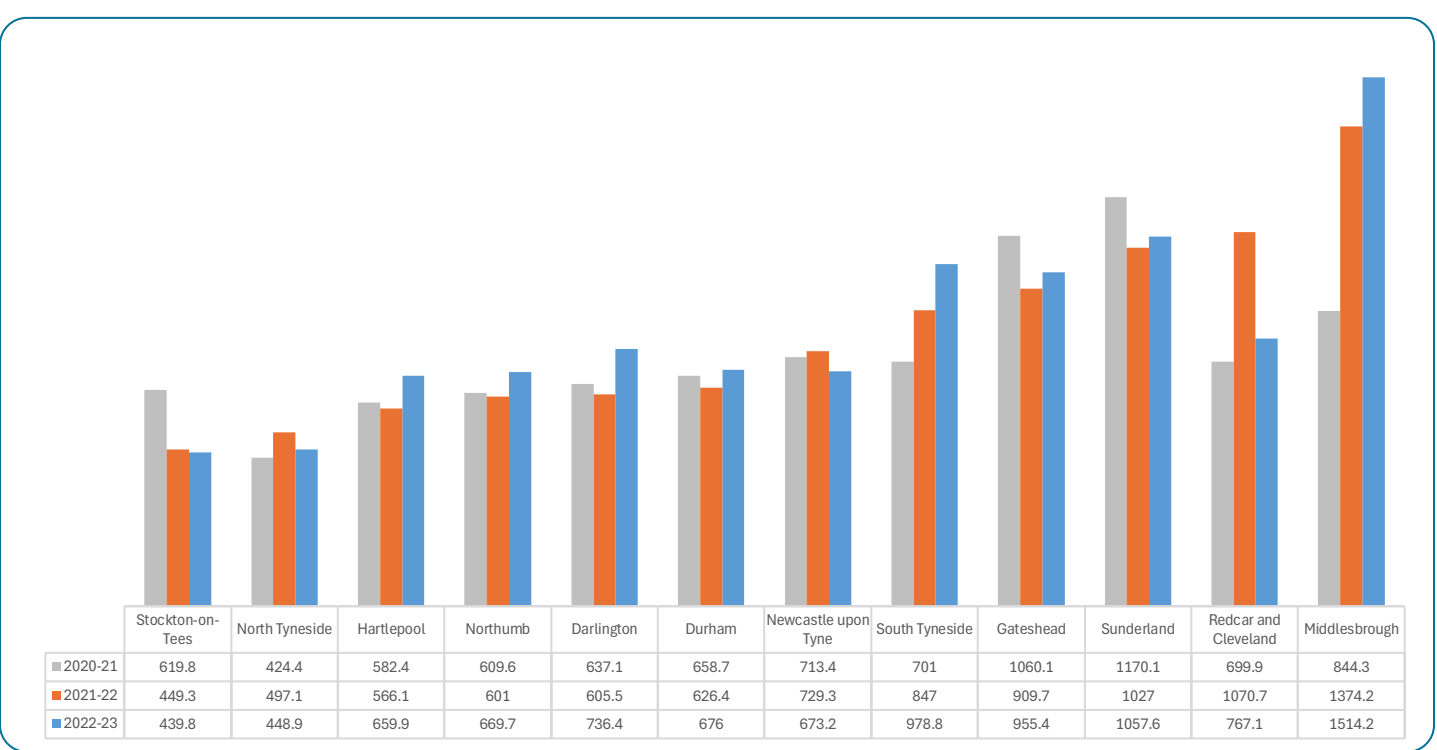
ASC 002a: Number of monthly permanent admissions



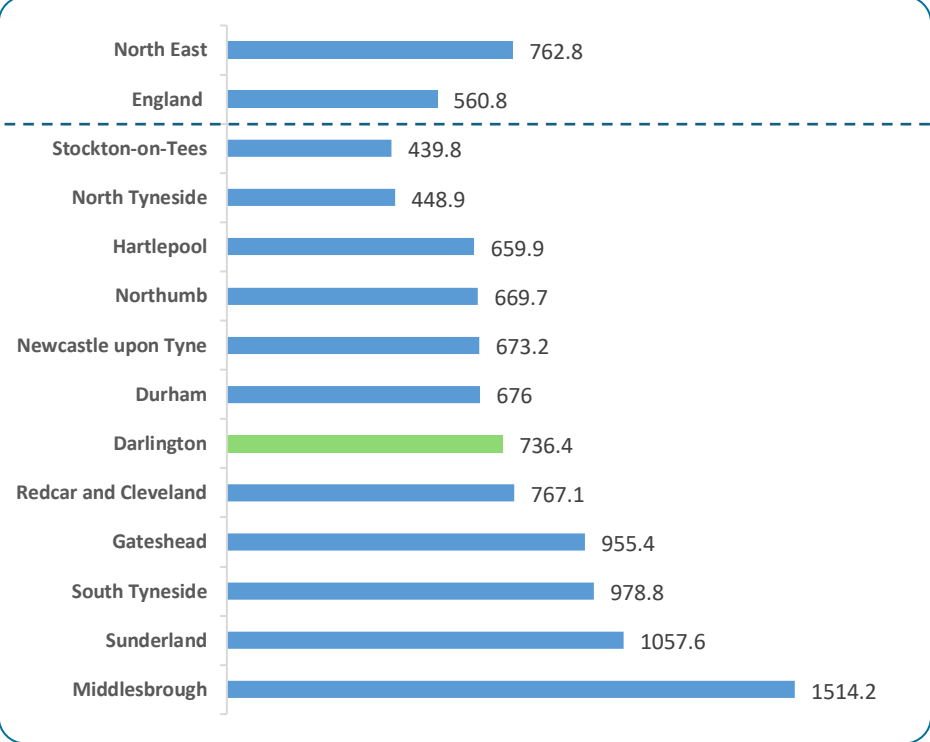
Average number of weeks in SBS prior to permanent care - YTD



Regional Performance (smaller is better) - 2022-23 Regional results

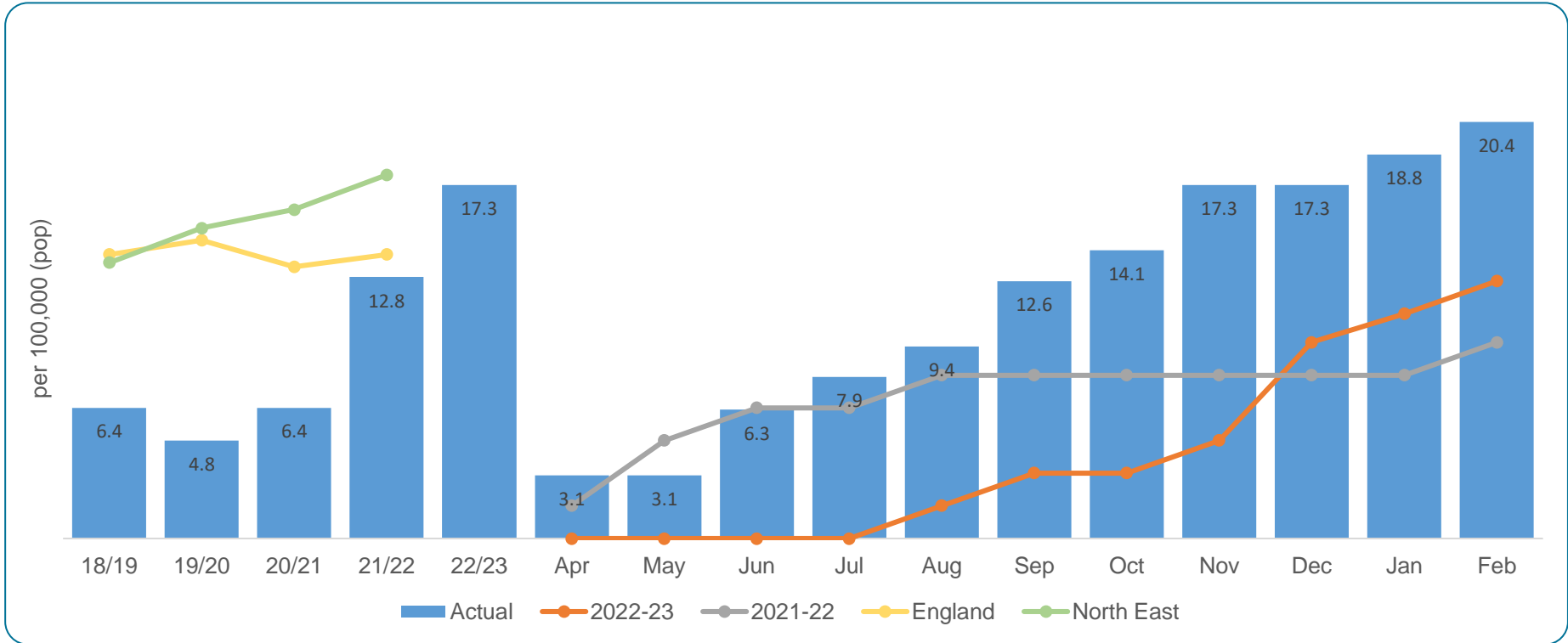


2022-23 Regional results (smaller is better)



Independence	
Definition	<p>Avoiding permanent placements in residential and nursing care homes is a good indicator of maximising independence and delaying dependency. However, it is acknowledged that for some people drawing on care admission to residential or nursing care homes can represent an improvement in their situation.</p> <p>This indicator also captures efficiency. Residential and nursing care are often the most expensive forms of interventions. Relying on interventions that maximise independence - where appropriate - would represent a cost saving.</p> <p>Data source: Client level data, Office of National Statistics</p>
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>There have been 13 18–64-year-olds who have entered permanent care since April 2023, this has resulted in the current performance figure of 20.4. 2023-24 has seen the highest number of 18–64-year-olds entering permanent care in the past 6 years.</p> <p>Since 2019-20 the proportion of 18-64-year-olds entering permanent care has increased year on year. During the whole of 2019-20, 3 18–64-year-olds moved to permanent care, whilst in 2021-22 it was 8 and last year increasing again to 11.</p> <p>Information gathered from the ADASS Spring Survey 2023 shows that more people are being impacted by social care providers closing or handing back contracts to councils. In the past 6 months 66% of councils that responded reported that providers in their area had closed, ceased trading, or handed back council contracts.</p> <p>Currently the average age of 18–64-year-olds in permanent residential or nursing care is 55. This is in the main due to complexity of people requiring care including early onset dementia.</p>

ASC 003 (ASCOF 2B):Adults aged 18-64 admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care

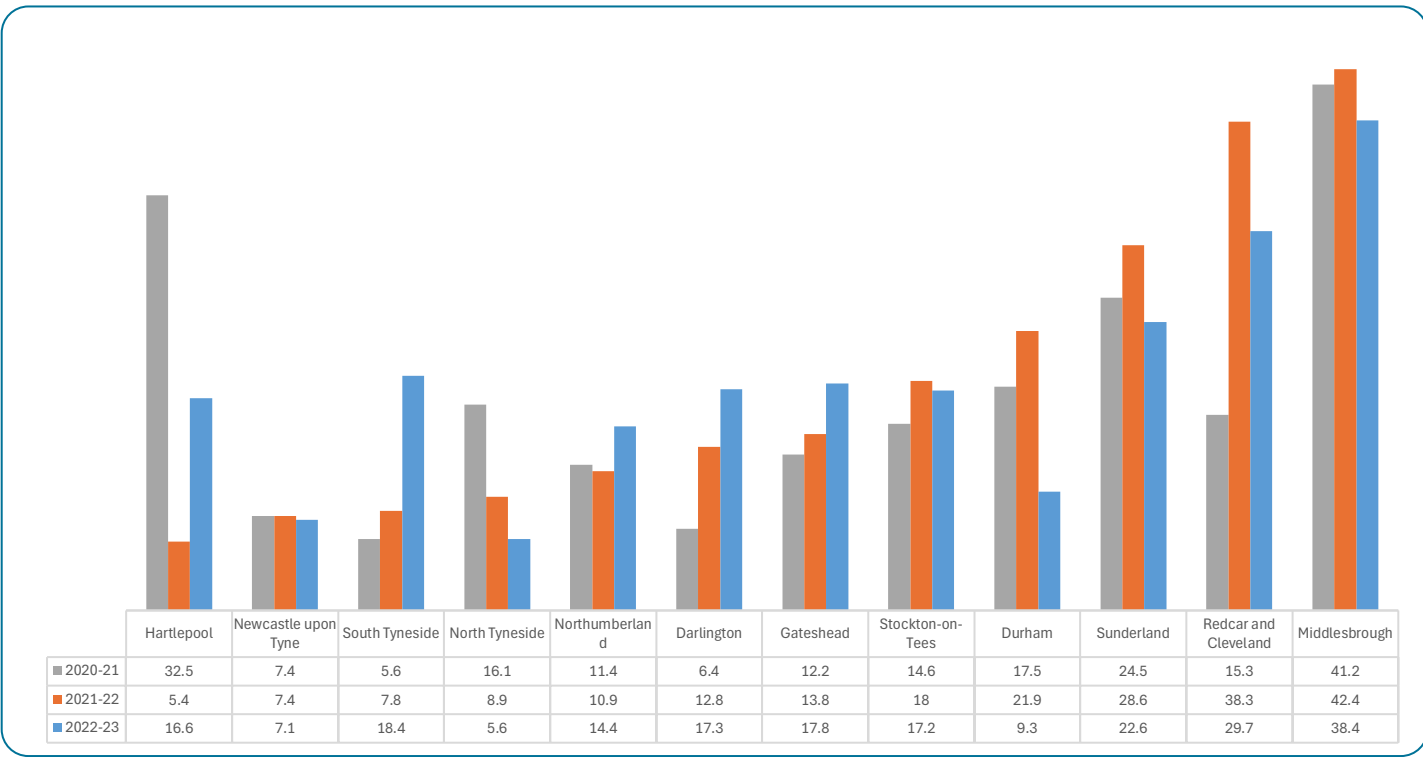


Darlington was ranked **109th** nationally for this indicator

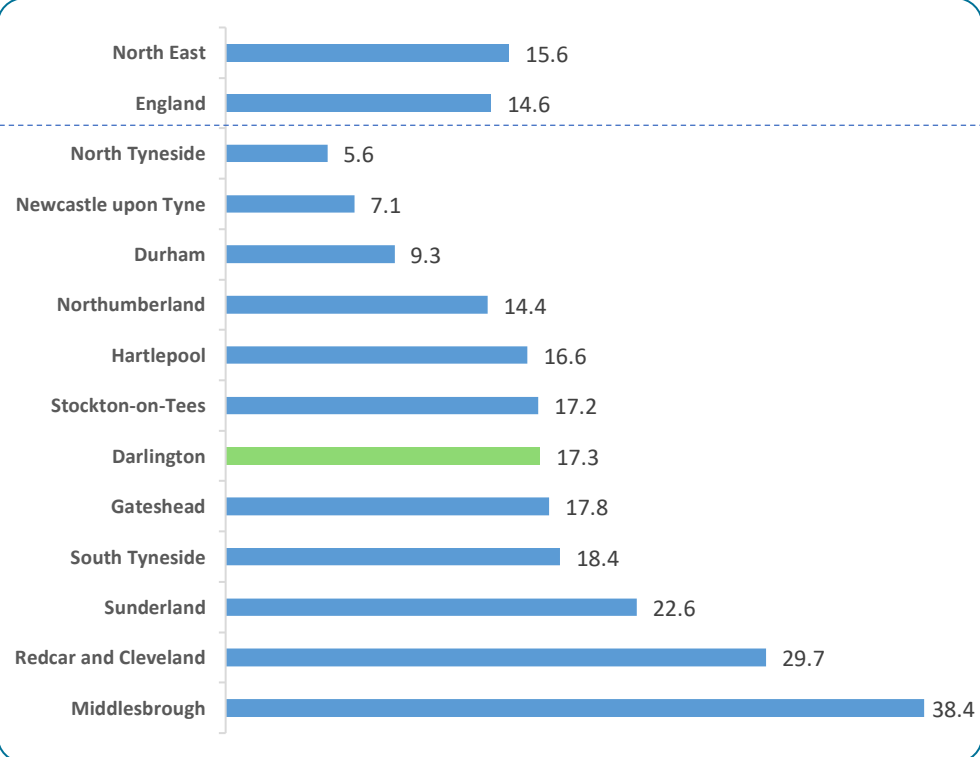
Age of individuals in 18-64

Age	Gender
40	Female
47	Female
47	Female
52	Male
55	Female
57	Male
61	Male
62	Female
63	Male
63	Female
55	Female
62	Female
56	Male

Regional Performance (smaller is better) - 2022-23 Regional results

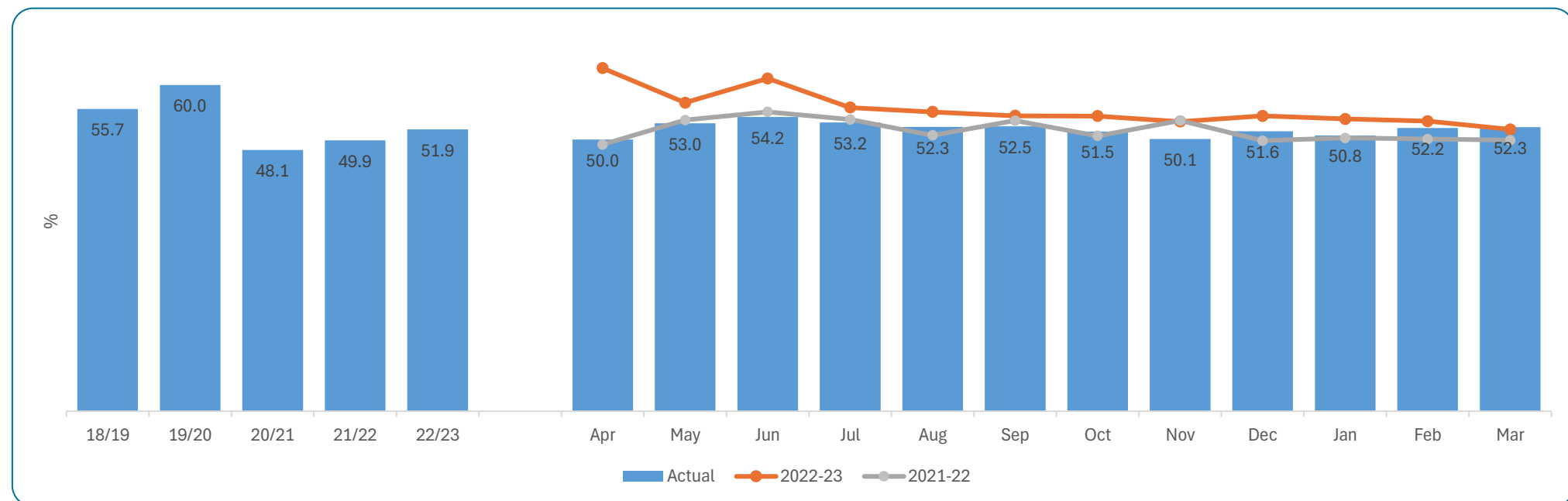


2022-23 Regional results (smaller is better)



Independence	
Definition	<p>Numerator: Of those in the denominator, those who have had a completed reablement review with outcomes of 'No services provided or identified', 'Long Term Support Ended', Universal Services/Signposted.</p> <p>Denominator: The total number of clients completing a reablement package during the period</p>
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>Performance for this indicator continues to stay consistent.</p> <p>At the end of 2023-24 it was reported that 29.3% client needs had decreased, 13.8% needs had increased and 4.6% stayed the same. The remaining 52.3% are those who no longer had ongoing care needs.</p> <p>The number of clients being referred to RIACT as part of a hospital discharge remains consistently high, with an average of 65 hospital discharges being received per month during 2023-24. Although not all these referrals progress to receive a service it does demonstrate the increase the service area is currently experiencing.</p> <p>We have a ranking in the top third of councils for reablement delivery and outcomes and although the number of hospital discharges has doubled over the last three years the proportion of people living at home 91 days after discharge from hospital remains high at 81%.</p>

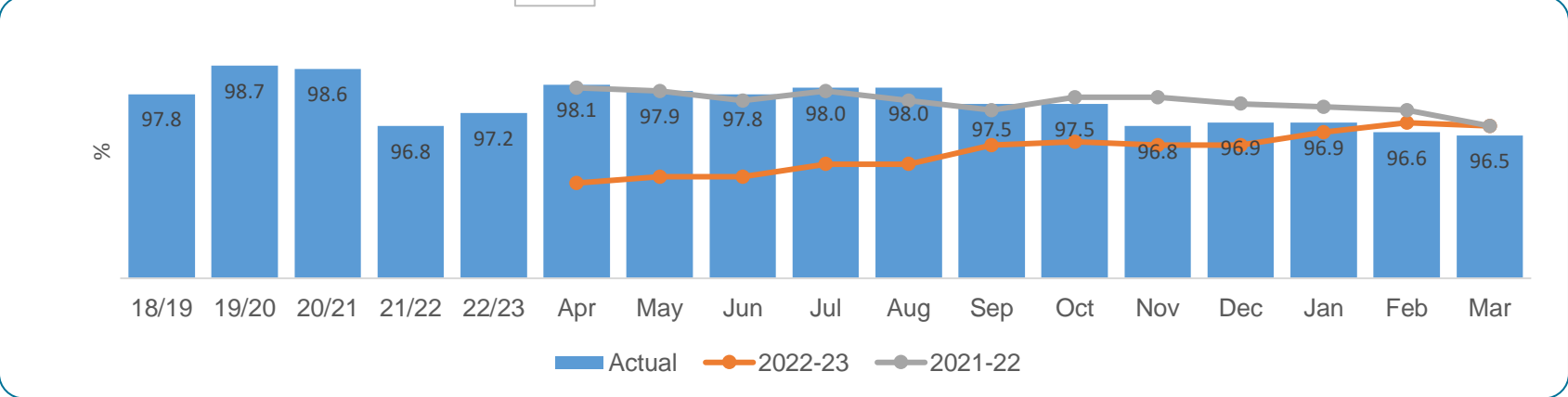
ASC 019: % of people who have no ongoing care needs following completion of provision of a reablement package at the end of the month.



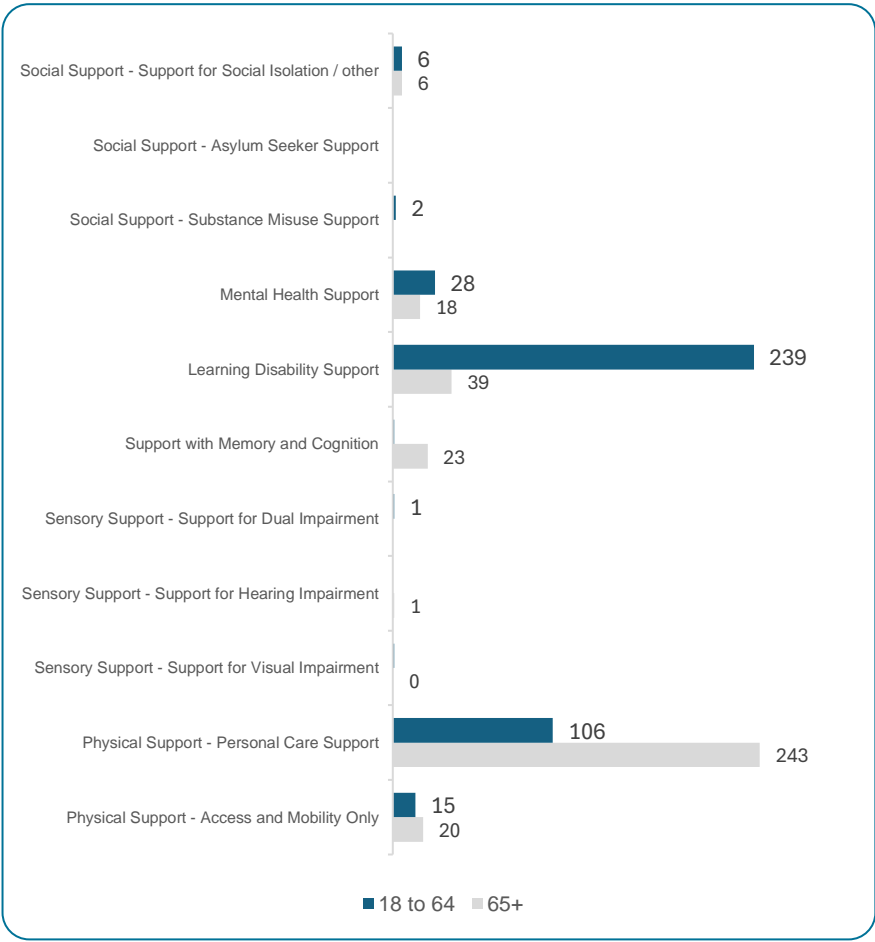


Empowerment	
Definition	Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support. Numerator - the number of users receiving either a) Direct Payments, b) Part Direct Payments or c) CASSR managed Personal Budget at the year end. Denominator - Clients (aged 18 or over) accessing long term community support at the year end.
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>The proportion of people using social care who receive self directed support is currently 96.5%, this equates to 747 individuals currently receiving self directed support.</p> <p>This indicator also includes those people using social care who received direct payments. The following narrative refers to the end of year figures for the proportion of people using social care who receive direct payments.</p> <p>With regards to people using social care who receiving direct payments we were ranked 22nd nationally for people using Direct Payments in 2022-23 at 35%. The proportion of service users accessing Direct Payments at the end of 2023-24 is 32%. This indicator has fallen from 42.2% in 2018-19 to the current figure of 32%. Currently there are 248 service users who are accessing Direct Payments compared to 252 during the same period last year. The decrease is in the main due to change in provider arrangements resulting in direct payments not being available.</p>

ASC 049: Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support

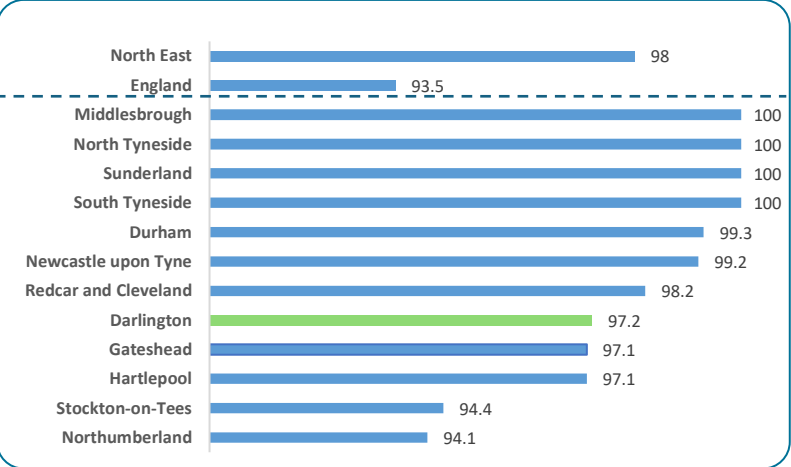


Primary Support Reason

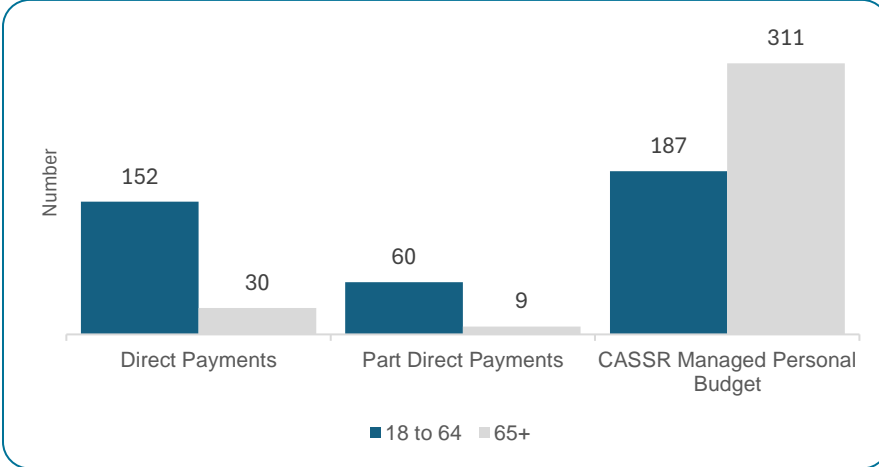


Darlington was ranked **102nd** nationally for this indicator in 2022-23

Provisional 2022-23 regional results

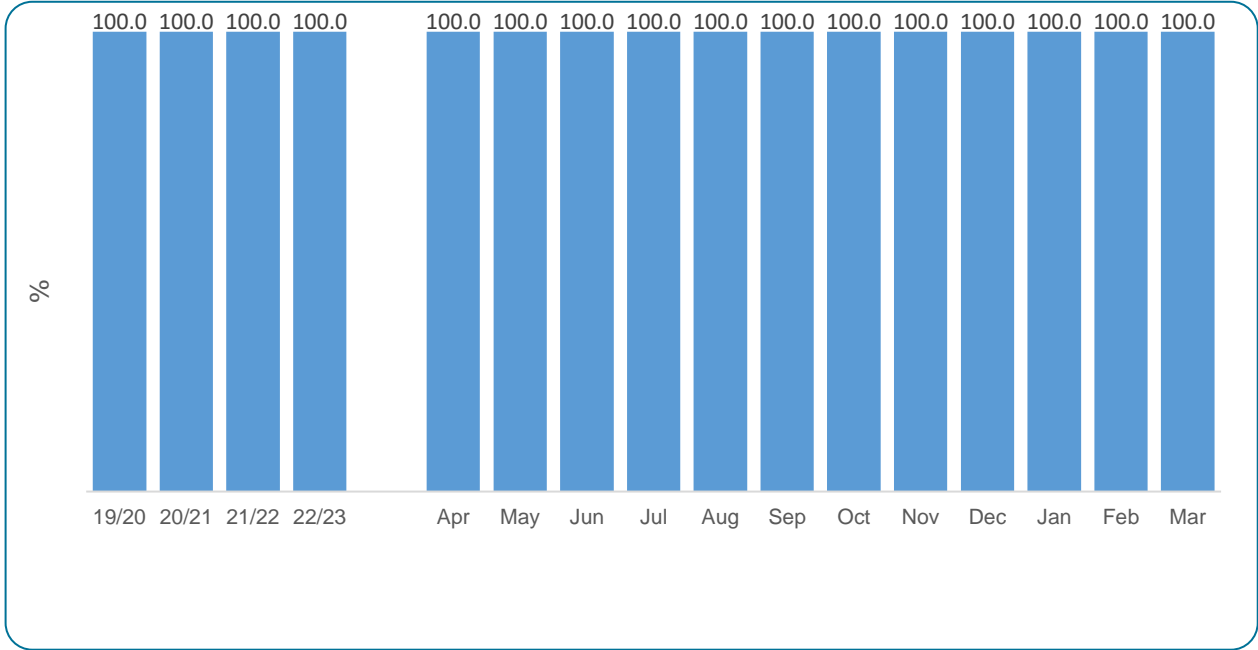


Breakdown of self-direct support

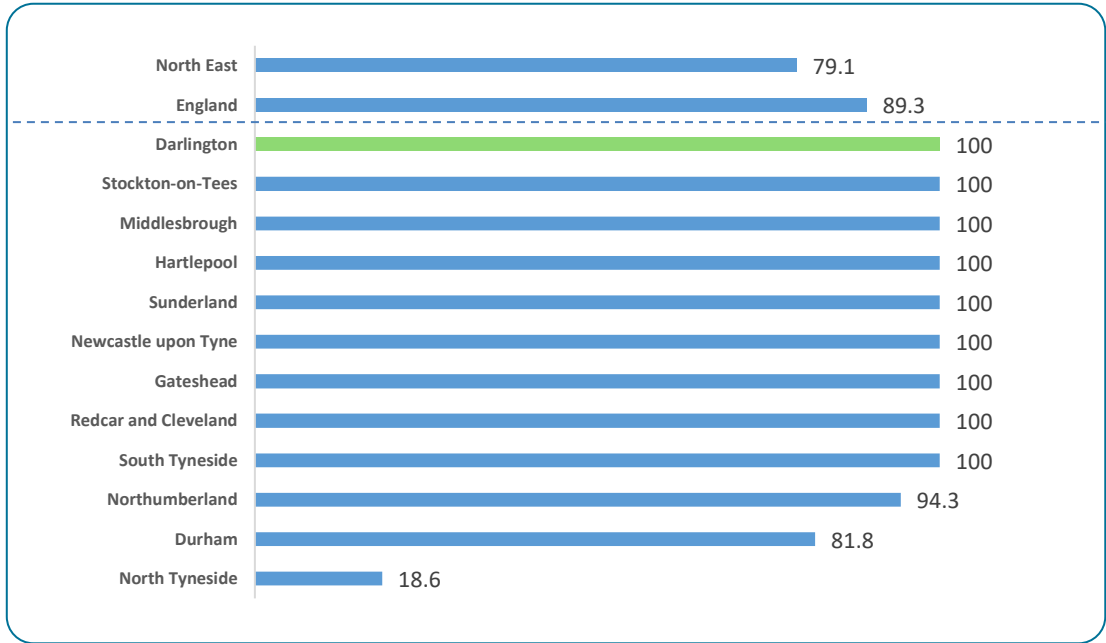


Empowerment	
Definition	Proportion of carers using social care who receive self direct support Numerator: The number of users receiving either a) Direct Payments, b) Part Direct Payments or c) CASSR managed Personal Budget at the year end Denominator: Carers (caring for someone aged 18 or over) receiving carer-specific services at the year end
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>During 2023-24 100% of carers received self direct support.</p> <p>This indicator also includes those carers who received direct payments. The following narrative refers to the end of year figures for the proportion of carers reciving direct payments.</p> <p>With regards to carers receiving direct payments we were ranked 91st nationally for this indicator in 2022-23. The proportion of carers accessing Direct Payments is currently 89.4%. Performance for this indicator, historically has been quite static, however, since October 2023 the proportion of carers accessing Direct Payments has fallen to current level. At the end of 2022-23 the figure was 94.7%, Currently there are 75 carers who are accessing Direct Payments compared to 90 during the same period last year.</p> <p>We hold a monthly oversight meeting on a regular basis to review the cases, the outcomes and ensure that the DP is still meeting the outcomes of the individuals and carers.</p> <p>Although still a high performing council on use of direct payments we wish to increase this usage, and we are undertaking a refresh of our offer to raise awareness within the population and support an increase in staff confidence in promoting DP as an offer.</p>

ASC 050: Proportion of carers using social care who receive self-directed support



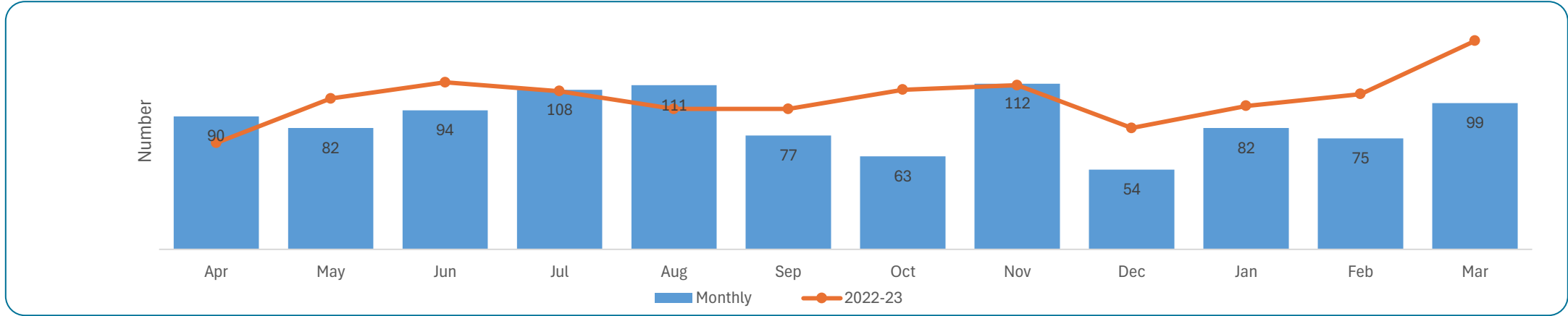
Provisional 2022-23 regional results



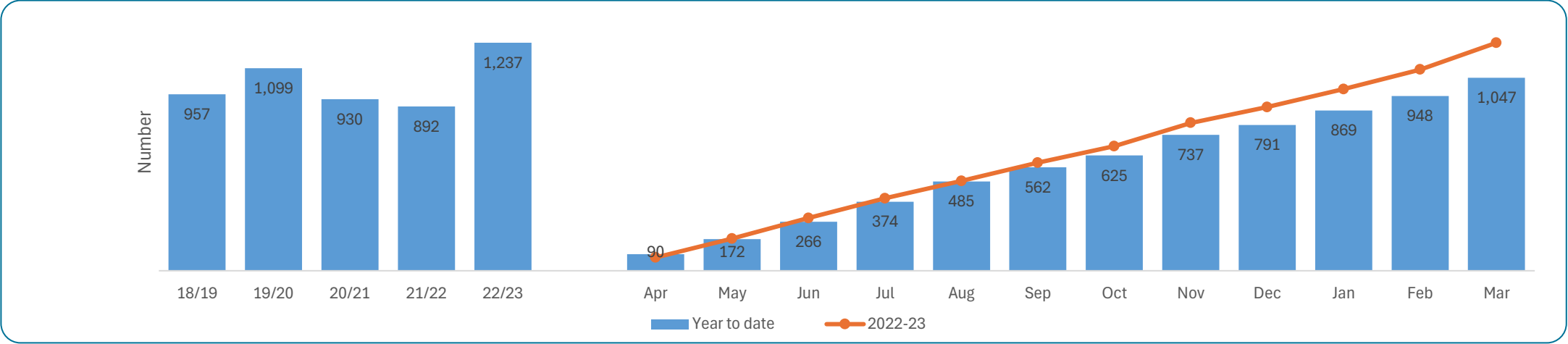
Darlington was ranked **1st (jointly)** nationally for this indicator in 2022-23

Safety	
Definition	Number of safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) started - per month
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	<p>There have been 1047 safeguarding enquiries started since April. The breakdown by team receiving safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries):</p> <p>Safeguarding - 575 (54.9%) Adult Learning Disability - 117 (11.2%) Adult Mental Health - 115 (11.0%) OAIT - 103 (9.8%) ACT - 96 (9.2%) RIACT - 41 (3.9%)</p>

ASC 209: Number of Safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) Started - Per Month

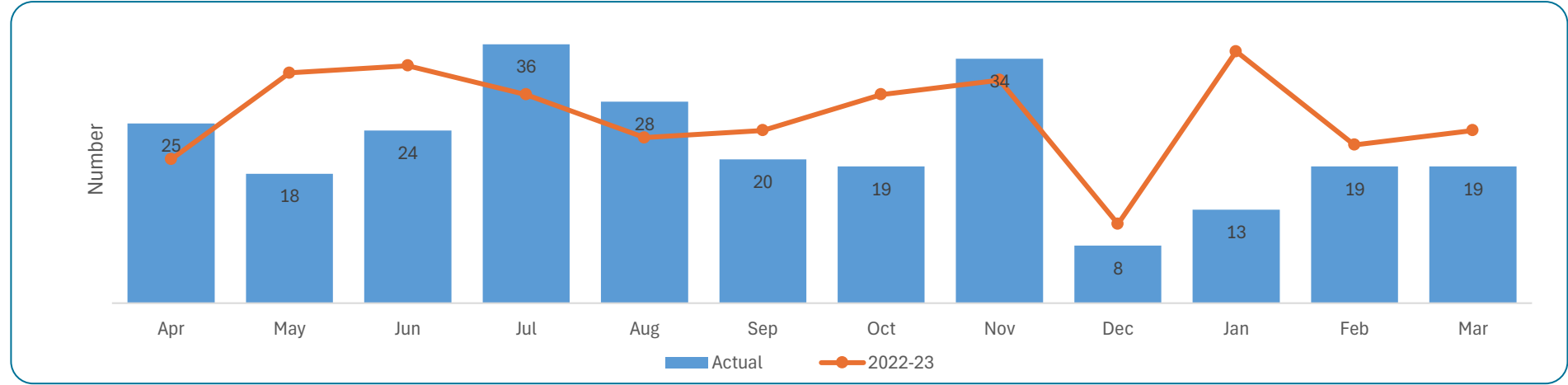


ASC 208: Number of Safeguarding concerns (initial enquiries) Started - Year to Date

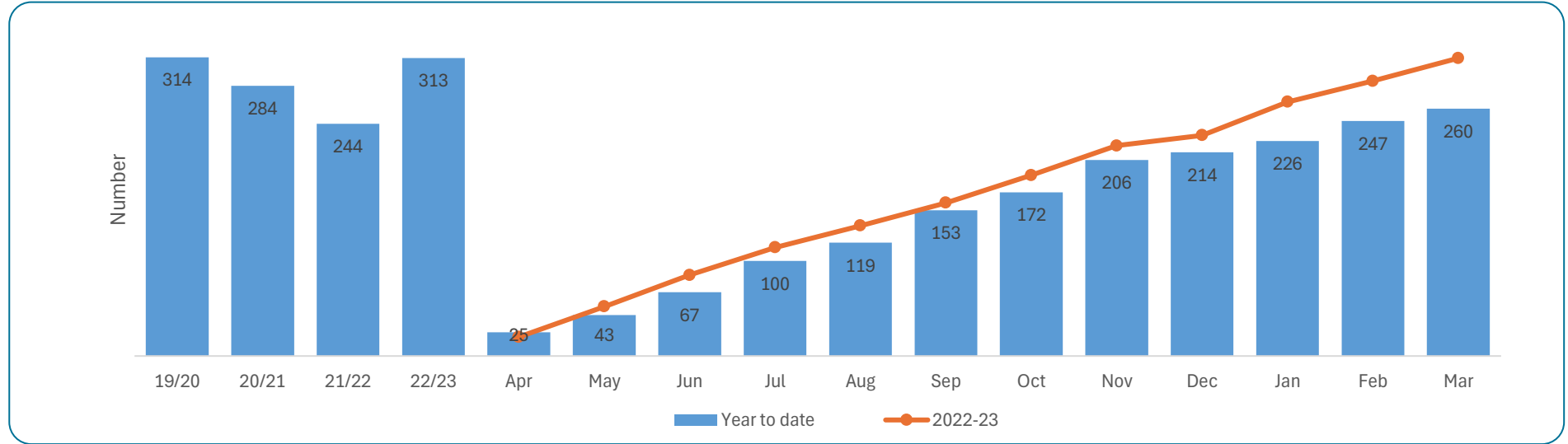


Safety	
Definition	Number of strategy meetings undertaken i.e. concerns progressed to strategy per month
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	Of the 1237 enquiries started during 2023-24, 260 have progressed to a strategy meeting which represents a 24.8% conversion rate, this is a slight fall from the same period last year where the conversion rate was 25.3%.

ASC 211: Monthly number of strategy meetings



ASC 211a: Year to date number of strategy meetings undertaken



## **ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 27 AUGUST 2024**

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### **ADULT SOCIAL CARE TRANSPORT POLICY 2024**

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#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the updated Adult Social Care Transport Policy.

#### **Summary**

#### **Introduction and rationale for change**

2. The Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024 has been redesigned and developed with the Transport Team service with regards to changes needed based on:
  - (a) The current and last Council Transport Policy is 2011 and therefore does not comply with current legislation including the Care Act 2014 and the national eligibility framework for adults and carers and therefore we are not compliant with our statutory duties.
  - (b) The Health and Social Care Act 2022 which local authorities must meet are aligned to the Care Act in particular in meeting and providing for people's needs and promotion of health, independence and wellbeing.
  - (c) A review of transport eligibility needs to be underpinned by Strength based practice approaches and promoting independence including access to Reablement and enabling people to decide their own travel options, where appropriate through provision of information and support.

#### **Strategic Overarching aims and ambitions.**

3. The ASC Transport Policy 2024 want to ensure people can access the right services, at the right time and links to the principles of:
  - (a) Meeting the ambitions of the Darlington Council Plan by:
    - (i) Addressing inequalities and a healthier and better quality of life for people enabling access.
    - (ii) Efficient and effective use of resources.
    - (iii) A clean, green borough that facilitates efficient movement and reduces carbon emissions across the borough.

4. The updated Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024 outlines:
  - (a) The principles and underlying strategic and operational arrangements, process and decision-making process and engaging people throughout the process.
  - (b) Highlights how options and assessments consider people's strengths, assets and community opportunities before application for assisted transport – with a revised adults referral application.
  - (c) Describes the process, risk management, making reasonable adjustments and if needs change.
  - (d) Outlines the Council charging process and our statutory duties.
  - (e) Provides information and advice, including local transport options and concessionary travel.
  - (f) Explains how people can appeal or complain regarding the outcomes of eligibility decisions regarding assisted transport resources.

### **Proposals**

5. The Adult Social Care Transport Policy proposes that assessors work closer with people to look at all options with the first option of looking at potential for independence and community resources and short-term support including:
  - (a) Reablement and Occupational Therapy support and personal equipment provision to increase mobility and social inclusion.
  - (b) Explores the preparation for adulthood pathways.
  - (c) Improved information and advice – Transport information including green travel, responsive travel and public transport concessions.
  - (d) Considering unpaid carers in their assessments and commitment to carers strategy to enable unpaid carers wellbeing in regularly transporting their cared to eligible services, e.g. day care.

### **Commissioning Transport and Charging**

6. The proposed Adult Social Care Transport Policy clarifies the responsibility under the Care Act eligibility decision process with regards enabling people to achieve their outcomes including access to day opportunities, volunteering, work and the community.
7. Therefore where an assessment identifies eligible needs and a person requires the provision of assisted transport then the local authority must arrange this. Currently there are inconsistencies and the current policy advises that people in receipt of the higher level of national disability benefits and mobility must use these benefits to pay for their own transport, e.g. to assessed internal day care.

8. Through Case Law and the Care Act outcomes where a person has assessed eligible needs, and having explored all alternative options e.g assisted transport or Direct payments, then people’s transport needs should be funded. Therefore, the new Transport Policy updates this so a consistent application made in future decision making.

**Recommendation**

9. It is recommended that scrutiny note the changes to the revised Transport Policy 2024.

**Reasons**

10. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons: -
- (a) The Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024 has been developed with regard to enhancing the current process of referral pathways and application and is required to be updated in line with Care Act and other legislation so we deliver our statutory duties.
  - (b) Application of the consistency of assessing and eligibility of funded transport arrangements (supported by the Legal advice) and financial assessments so people can more frequently access necessary resources and be less isolated.
  - (c) Promotion of people’s safe independence so less reliant on arranged transport services or on their unpaid carers or paid carers for transport.
  - (d) There is no anticipated impact to increased volume of reviews if implemented as new assessments and routine scheduled care and support reviews will be in compliance with the new policy.
  - (e) Ensuring that assisted transport and Council resources are targeted to people with the highest need.
  - (f) Improved joint working with the Transport Teams regarding maximising capacity and resources.

**Joss Harbron,  
Assistant Director Adults**

**Supplementary papers**  
Transport Policy 2024 (revised from 2011 version)  
Equality Impact Assessment

Joss Harbron: Extension 5278

Council Plan	All reports should detail the relevance of the proposed decision(s) to the Council Plan and its priorities (adopted by Council in July 2024).  LIVING WELL – a healthier and better quality of life for longer, supporting those who need it most- This policy will encourage and enable people to
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	<p>remain independent in their homes for longer and therefore reduce the need for larger packages of support or admission to residential care.</p> <p>COMMUNITIES – working together for safer, healthier and more engaged communities- Recommendations within this report will aim to improve the health and wellbeing of residents of Darlington</p>
Addressing inequalities	<p>This links to the core principle of addressing inequalities and efficient and effective use of resources, and specifically addressing health inequalities to narrow the gaps in health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Local authorities must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under S.149 of the Equality Act 2010. This requires local authorities to have ‘due regard’ to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;</li> <li>• advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;</li> <li>• foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</li> </ul> <p>There are 9 ‘protected characteristics’ - age, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, race, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. As a council we also consider people who are on a low income, carers, people who live in a rural location and care leavers. This policy has been subject to an equality impact assessment.</p>
Tackling Climate Change	<p>The Council is committed to being carbon neutral to 2040. We need to consider the carbon impact of the decisions we make. This refreshed policy will deliver positive impacts by supporting people to explore all transport options whilst promoting independence, potentially reducing climate related risks.</p>
Efficient and effective use of resources	<p>This policy will encourage and enable people to remain independent in their homes for longer and therefore reduce the need for larger packages of support or admission to residential care.</p> <p>There is no additional costs associated with this policy.</p> <p>The Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024 has regard to enhancing the current process and referral pathways and application requires updating in line with Care Act and other legislation so we deliver our statutory duties.</p> <p>It will encourage the promotion of people’s safe independence so less reliant on arranged transport services or on their unpaid carers or paid carers for transport.</p>



	<p>There is no anticipated impact to increased volume of reviews if implemented as new assessments and routine scheduled care and support reviews will be in compliance with the new policy.</p> <p>It will ensure that assisted transport and Council resources are targeted to people with the highest need.</p> <p>There will be Improved joint working with the Transport Teams regarding maximising capacity and resources.</p>
Health and Wellbeing	Recommendations will aim to improve the health and wellbeing of residents of Darlington
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and disorder.
Wards Affected	All wards are affected equally.
Groups Affected	Applicable to all people with care and support needs and their unpaid carers
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget or policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision, although is a policy change.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

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**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

# Adult Social Care

# Transport Policy 2024

**Principles, Process and Guidance**

## Contents

1. Introduction to the Adult Social Care Transport Policy
2. The Aims and Objectives of the Adult Social Care Transport Policy.
3. Completing Assessment and determining eligibility.
4. Determining transport requirements
5. Identifying suitable community transport and support.
6. Considering unpaid carers needs.
7. The process to determine eligibility for assisted transport.
8. Assisted travel – Young People
9. Financial Charging
10. Managing Transport absences and change of need.
11. Reviews/ reassessment of eligible need.
12. The Appeals and complaints process.
13. Governance and review
14. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

## Appendices

Appendix 1. Care Act Eligibility Adults Framework.

Appendix 2. Care Act Eligibility Carer Framework.

Appendix 3. Darlington Council Transport Referral Information Form

Appendix 4. Darlington Transport Resources Summary information.

Appendix 5. Transport decision appeal process.

## **1. Introduction to the Adult Social Care Transport Policy**

- 1.1. The Darlington Adult Social Care Transport Policy aims to provide people with consistent, and equitable guidance outlining under which criteria the local authority determines people's eligibility for assisted transport and its decision-making process.
- 1.2. The Adult Social Care (ASC) Transport Policy clarifies how Darlington Borough Council applies transport eligibility decisions and what evidence is considered to support a final decision with regards assisted transport access. We also ensure people are kept informed and involved, where possible, at all stages.
- 1.3. The ASC Transport Policy outlines the formal appeal process (Appendix 5) if people want to appeal against any assisted transport eligibility decision outcome where they feel the outcome or the Council's decision-making process has been unfairly applied. Also, if the Council have not fully considered supporting evidence or information supplied with the original application or referral.
- 1.4. The Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024 supersedes the Darlington Borough Council Transport Policy 2011. This is to comply with current national statutory legislative and policy duties that Adult Social Care need to comply with and in compliance and delivery of our standard operating practice model of strength-based practice. The Policy aims to align with the ambitions achieving the priorities of the Darlington Borough Council vision and objectives and Adult Social Care Vision.
- 1.5. The Care Act 2014 provides the local authority and Adult Social Care with statutory duties including assessing adults needs and application of people's eligibility with regards to the National Eligibility Framework for adults and unpaid carers (Appendix 1 and 2). Personal eligible areas of need are determined with a person during a strength-based Care Act assessment, reassessment, or review.
- 1.6. The Care Act assessment jointly identifies with people their eligible support needs and the personal outcomes they wish to achieve need and identify the eligible outcomes that the local authority has a duty to arrange and support people to achieve non eligible needs by providing people information and advice in accessible format to local community public facilities and options. People's eligible outcomes may include the need to access to assisted transport to enable them to be remain independent and safeguard their wellbeing.
- 1.7. The Health and Social Care Act 2022 outlined a 10-year vision and puts '**People at the Heart of Care**' with main ambitions including for Adult Social Care so:
  - **People can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support.**

- ***People find adult social care fair and accessible.***
- ***People have choice, control, and support to live independent lives***

1.8. The Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024 supports the Darlington Borough Council Plan 2024 by promoting the vision that Darlington is *a great place to live and work* and through travel and transport options have:

***“a borough that is green, clean. with transport that facilitates efficient movement and reduced carbon emissions in the borough.***

1.9. Therefore, the Darlington Adult Social Care Transport Policy promotes these core values and priorities of:

- (a) Addressing inequalities.
- (b) Efficient and effective use of resources.

1.10. By living well and being able to access the community and resources when needed the aim is for more people to have healthier and have a better quality of life for longer.

1.11. The Darlington Adult Social Care Transport Policy does not apply for people who need to attend National Health Service hospital appointments as this comes under the NHS responsibility through the NHS Patient Transport Service.

1.12. The ASC Transport Policy also does not apply for people living in long term residential or nursing care homes as it is expected that their service provider will support people's personal needs including their access to community resources and transport.

## **2. The Aims and Objectives of the Adult Social Care Transport Policy**

2.1. Darlington Borough Council Adult Social Care commits to principles of social inclusion which values and promotes people's potential based on the principles of:

- (a) Promoting people's maximum potential for independence and improved wellbeing.
- (b) Promoting equality and social inclusion recognising the diversity of people's needs.
- (c) Maximising people's ability for choice and control over their daily lives.
- (d) Improving people's quality of life so live the life in a way that matters to them.

- (e) Providing quality services which safeguard people's dignity, respect, and wishes.
- (f) Ensuring people's safety and have robust risk assessment systems in place.
- (g) Have sufficiency of local high-quality accessible transport provision.

- 2.2. The Adult Social Care (ASC) Transport Policy adopt these principles so people accessing assisted transport have arrangements and adaptation arranged to ensure their individual support needs.
- 2.3. The Transport Policy has regards to Darlington Borough's Equality Policy Council 2023 – 2027
- 2.4. We ensure that we make reasonable adjustments for people with legally protected characteristics.
- 2.5. Where people appear to have *significant difficulty* to understand the adult social care processes e.g. due to having a cognitive impairment, under the Care Act 2014 the local authority has a duty to arrange an independent advocate to support people during their assessment and support planning process. This enables people's views, wishes and choices to be expressed and understood.
- 2.6. Adult social care will jointly explore with people all community travel options including their potential for travel independence and what support can be arranged including travel training. This provides an opportunity to further assess people's mobility and road safety awareness and determine their future transport support needs.
- 2.7. By increasing the number of people able to safely travel independently with or without support including access to shared public transport this promotes people remaining or becoming more independent and self-resilient. This can reduce people being unnecessary reliant on assisted transport arrangements enabling the local authority to better manage their transport capacity and direct transport arrangement to those with the highest need.
- 2.8. Darlington Borough Council Travel advisors (Appendix 4) offer support to people to look at their best travel options and concessions, promoting greener travel options for journeys within and outside the borough and contributing to our *keep greener* ambition.



### **3. Assessment and determining Eligibility**

- 3.1. Adult Social Care delivers strength-based approaches through effective engagement and co production with people working together during their adult social care journey from their first contact, during their assessment process and reviews.
- 3.2. By working in partnership with people we will explore all appropriate options, for both eligible need and delivering our Care Act duty by the prevention of people's needs, reducing and delaying people requiring statutory support. Therefore, we will continually support people to explore all community options that promotes people's optimum independence and enable them to seek their own transport solutions and how we provide unpaid carers with a break from their caring role and promote their own wellbeing.
- 3.3. Adult Social Care also has a duty to provide people with tailored information, advice, and guidance in the right formats and languages which enables them to make informed choices to how they can best meet their needs including knowledge or the availability of universal community transport. This includes people who may be self-funding so they can be signposted to appropriate resources and can access service independently from the local authority.
- 3.4. Following a Care Act assessment a personalised care and support plans will clearly record a person's eligible care and support needs and how these will be met. These includes access to Council assisted transport or the commissioning of other modes transport based on their needs.
- 3.5. When considering people's needs for assisted transport Care Act assessments must consider the consequence of not meeting people's eligible needs including the prevention of needs from arising or escalating and the affect and overall impact to their health, independence, and wellbeing.
- 3.6. By providing Council assisted transport this enables people to meet their assessed needs and achieve their personal outcomes including their ability to access community services such as day care opportunities, attending college, volunteering, or accessing and maintaining employment.
- 3.7. The Care Act 2014 National Eligibility Framework domains for adults include:
  - (a) *accessing and engaging in work, training, education, or volunteering.*
  - (b) *making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport and recreational facilities or services.*

- 3.8. Unpaid carers (those supporting a person with necessary care and support but not being paid) must be offered a Carer Assessment, under the Care Act, to assess support to maintain their own personal health and wellbeing and being able to have a regular break from a caring role, as wished. By assessing for unpaid carer eligible needs, the arrangement of assisted transport for the person they care for to access their eligible services can also provide unpaid carers essential time out from caring to focus on their own health and wellbeing needs.
- 3.9. Providing people with tailored and accessible local information, advice and guidance formats includes signposting people via digital / online information including access to websites including the Darlington Borough Council and Living Well website. This links our ambition for people to be digitally included and confident as a priority ambition of Darlington Council's Digital Strategy 2023.
- 3.10. The Darlington Borough Council Digital Strategy 2023 priorities include more people being able to access digital platforms and being supported to navigate appropriate websites and apps including increased knowledge of local, available opportunities to find and apply for transport solutions at a time and arrangements that suits them.
- 3.11. Assessing how people can access transport will also provide an opportunity to consider what other options can be available to them and explore before referring for assisted transport. This includes understanding the options of transport support available to them.
- (a) Assistance needs when accessing local public transport e.g.travel buddies on buses
  - (b) Access to appropriate family transport driven by parents/carers as appropriate.
  - (c) Access to a personal Motability Car which also can be driven by family/ Personal Assistant
  - (d) Access to travel in a Personal Assistant's car with expenses reimbursed separately.
  - (e) Local Taxi Service – individually or shared with joint risk assessment and understanding the availability of local adapted taxi vehicles.
  - (f) Assisted Transport either Council supplied or commissioned vehicles which are wheelchair accessible with trained transport assistants.
- 3.12. There will be a joint exploration of appropriate opportunities for people with the potential for safe community travel independence including short term support or

travel training. This provides an opportunity to assess people's mobility, road safety and future support needs.

- 3.13. Reablement and Community Rehabilitation Services offer short term support interventions focused on people attaining independence goals including their potential ability to access transport. Providing a personal intensive support plan, especially for people who were previously functionally independent before an illness or injury can support people with the potential of regaining or gaining further independence, skills or adapting to any acquired impairment including use of personal equipment and walking support to promote people's independence.
- 3.14. Adult Social Care Occupational Therapists and Mental Health professionals can assess and provide information regarding a person's daily living skills and levels of mobility and social functioning including people's ability to safely access different forms of transport. Also, can offer advice to the likely impact on people's physical and mental health conditions which may arise if people travel on long travel routes or on shared transport and what other options are needed.
- 3.15. Where an unpaid Carer's assessment has identified their need for breaks from a caring role and need protected time to focus on their own wellbeing there will be consideration to the impact on an unpaid carer if are expected to or are regularly transporting the person, they care for to eligible resources to meet their needs and reasonableness of them continuing to undertake this.
- 3.16. Therefore, adults will be seen as eligible for funded assisted transport once all appropriate safe community options and access to personal independent travel, including independent travel training and access to local universal transport options have been explored. This includes considering the health and safety risk considerations for people and other passengers.
- 3.17. People will remain central and kept informed with regards any assisted transport accessibility decisions and other decisions made on their behalf, so people remain at the heart of all we do.

#### **4. Determining and meeting people' transport needs**

- 4.1. Where it is assessed that a person's priority outcomes include the need to access community resources, and their eligible needs can only be achieved through the provision of assisted transport then the local authority has a duty to explore a transport options.
- 4.2. An Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist can provide specialists reports which provide specialist advice regarding a person's ability to access types of transport

including any reasonable adjustments or requirements e.g. transport with hydraulic platforms, mobility equipment and advising what support is needed so effectively provide people support to manage potential anxiety and manage any behaviours that challenge.

4.3. Specialist Assessment reports can detail if a person has the:

- a) Ability to walk independently outside their home.
- b) Ability to access in/ out of their home safely.
- c) Ability to weight bear and transfer from their seat.
- d) Ability to walk short / longer distances with walking equipment or support from another person.
- e) Risk of falling – History of falls- have they been referred to the Falls Service?
- f) Ability to get in and out of different types of transport safely and support needed.
- g) Ability to safely use stairs, manage gradients and whether any ramps are needed.
- h) Energy levels relating to a health condition – making long travelling times difficult.
- i) Risks of harm to themselves or others relating to their health condition including uncontrollable movements and known triggers for them and how can be managed.

4.4. A functional assessment can then rate a person's mobility under three levels:

- a) No mobility impairment/ Independent with/ without walking equipment.
- b) Limited mobility impairment/ Needs support of another people or walking equipment.
- c) High / complex mobility impairment/ Full support and accessible transport need.

4.5. Specialist functional assessment reports can also provide advice to guide transport staff to make appropriate transport decisions including advice on people's requirements for personal equipment and support they needs during journeys. This enables the Council making specific reasonable adjustments and determining which type of assisted transport is needed.

- 4.6. Following the assisted transport eligibility decision Darlington Borough Council will consider the person's requirements for journeys required frequency and destination from home. By matching these needs against current transport availability and provision of the personal support needed then an offer can be made to allocate transport that enables a person to travel safely.

## **5. The process to determine the provision of Assisted Transport**

- 5.1. Once a Care Act assessment has determined a person is eligible for assisted funded transport to enable them to meet their care and support needs, and for an unpaid carer, people should be supported, request their assessor or an appropriate representative to make an application. (Appendix 3).
- 5.2. Darlington Borough Council will undertake an eligibility evaluation for a person to access assisted transport under their eligibility process. This determination will consider assessed priority eligible needs, management of risks, individual choice and the times, venues and journeys needing to be regularly needed and support needed.
- 5.3. In procuring transport Darlington Borough Council will access the Darlington Council Transport Framework considering the availability and suitability of current transport providers and journey routes matched to people's needs. This includes appropriateness of accessing shared transport vehicles as also enables efficiency within current transport capacity which is more cost effective.
- 5.4. If there are no current suitable or available assisted transport to meet a person's needs Darlington Borough Council will communicate to the assessor, referrer and person in a timely way so can discuss any temporary transport, e.g. current waiting list for a particular transport type or pursuit of alternative transport options of commissioned services in the short or longer term. If agreed a person can remain on the transport waiting list until a suitable transport place becomes available.
- 5.5. If during their transport evaluation Darlington Borough Council identifies any other personal issues or risks not already highlighted in the original referral, they will defer to the referrer/ assessor to clarify or request the consideration of meeting needs or making alternative transport arrangements which can be more appropriate for a person.
- 5.6. Adult Social Care and the Council Darlington Borough Council Transport will need to share appropriate personal and health information where necessary with transport providers to enable people's personal needs and safe travel to be arranged.
- 5.7. Transport providers also will need to have details of people's health contingencies plans, emergency contacts, best access to home properties information and

preferred communication needs. A consent form will be shared and signed detailing which persona information will need to be shared and for what purpose.

- 5.8. Any personal information sharing will be with regards to national statutory Data protection legislation and protocols.

## **6. Identifying suitable transport and support**

- 6.1. Once eligibility for assisted transport is agreed the Darlington Borough Council will consider the determined needs and what transport options are available and are appropriate for people's needs.
- 6.2. There is no single definition or measure determining what a reasonable distance or maximum travel time for people but determined by what appears "reasonable" for that person with regards to their wellbeing, circumstance, and needs.
- 6.3. Geographical isolation may be a factor when assessing an individual's ability to access community transport especially where they live in rural areas with limited transport. This can and can be a contributory cause of increased social isolation and poor physical and mental health.
- 6.4. People living in rural or outlying areas of the Borough may experience additional barriers in terms of the frequency of public transport and whether current transport such as the Council's Responsive Transport service can schedule regular transport routes nearby to people's homes. This includes the safety and risks of a person walking to 'virtual bus stops' to access public transport especially if have assessed cognitive or mobility impairments and need to be at a specific destination at certain times.
- 6.5. The availability of appropriate alternative and affordable means of transport will be considered during Care Act assessment eligibility determination as well as enabling people to exercise their right to choose and decide which arrangements works best for them and their family.

## **7. Considering Unpaid Carers needs**

- 7.1. Darlington Borough Council remain committed to valuing and recognising the needs of unpaid carers through delivering their Care Act 2014 responsibilities and promoting the objectives of the local partnership Darlington Commitment to Carers 2023- 2028 strategy.
- 7.2. Where it has been identified that an unpaid carer can provide personal transport through a carers assessment an assessor can consider whether an unpaid carer by

undertaking regular transport commitments for the person, they care for has an impact on their own wellbeing and sustaining a caring role and time sufficiency to enable them to have suitable breaks from caring.

- 7.3. If an unpaid carer's assessment determines that providing regular transport to a person they care for as would place an intolerable demand on them assisted transport for the person, they care for can be considered. It will also be considered to whether the cared for person may also be eligible for Disabled Bus and Rail concessions (appendix 4) and any transport training in the first instance.
- 7.4. If an unpaid carer, family/ friends are identified as being able to or continue to provide transport needs to enable a people to achieve their eligible outcomes this must be recorded on a person's electronic records and Care and Support Plan to how their transport eligible needs are being met and what the contingency plan is if replacement transport arrangements are needed.
- 7.5. Where the person's unpaid carer who are current meeting an adult's eligible needs including transport needs is under the age of 18, they will be considered as a Young Carer and should be referred to the Children's Service for an assessment under the Children's Act 1989.
- 7.6. DBC will assess the impact and appropriateness of a young person undertaking a caring role and the impact on them. This should also be considered as part of the Preparing for Adulthood pathway arrangements with a young person and family with regards to a young carer becoming an adult carer under a Whole Family approach.

## **8. Travel assistance- young adult's process.**

- 8.1. Travel assistance will be assessed for young adults following an application to Darlington Borough Council to review eligibility and decide on the most appropriate transport to meet a person's travel needs considering a range of options for the young person. This policy will also be used in conjunction with the Home to School Travel policy for younger adults.
- 8.2. Types of assistance will be based on looking at all available and least restrictive options with an emphasis on the promotion of independence, inclusion, choice, and value for money in ensuring needs are met underpinned by strength bases approaches.
- 8.3. Options for people to pursue may include:
  - a) Bus passes – advice on eligible concessions.
  - b) Travel training with an independent travel trainer using public transport.

- c) Minibuses, shared taxis with or without passenger assistance.
- 8.4. Journeys will only be from a permanent home address to any regular education establishment. If a young person has an Education, Health, and Care Plan this does not mean that transport will automatically be provided free of charge.
- 8.5. There remains a Council duty to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of passengers and staff so should a person's behaviours be likely to put themselves or others at risk. Therefore, Darlington Borough Council can reserve the right to withdraw travel at any time pending a review by the appropriate lead assessment or specialist team.
- 8.6. This includes linking to the SEND Co Ordinator to provide a copy of the Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) so be sent to the Darlington Borough Council with any medical or essential information.
- 8.7. Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Accessibility Strategy this supports inclusion in education and for children and young people to fulfil their full potential for independence and be active citizens within their community.
- 8.8. Travel assistance arrangements will be reviewed to ensure remain appropriate, cost effective and are regularly used. If ongoing participation in reviews are continually refused by a person or family, which is a statutory legal responsibility for the local authority to undertake at least annually, or if a change of needs the Transport service may reserve the right to withdraw the assisted transport meanwhile.
- 8.9. A younger person's mobility, equipment and support will be confirmed so ensure arrangements to support people on transport is in place. People's wheelchairs must be maintained for safety by the person and the Transport service will also undertake periodic risk assessments.
- 8.10. Seatbelts must be worn throughout journeys as a requirement when accessing assisted public transport, so people are safe and have successful journeys. Harnesses, car seats or alternative seating can be provided further to individual assessments so weight / height information will need to be ascertained.
- 8.11. Passenger assistants will have appropriate standard training including First Aid, Manual handling, so provide appropriate support to people during the journey experience balancing the needs of all those who travel with them.
- 8.12. If a young person's behaviour starts to impact on safety to themselves and others on transport journey, then the transport provider may need to stop the vehicle and pull over to safely to manage the situation. A review of the appropriateness of the continuation of current transport review may follows as



a person may need alternative transport meanwhile until a longer-term solution made.

- 8.13. Staff also have MIDAS training and emergency training, and all passengers will be advised to emergency exits and procedures on transport.

## **9. Financial Charging**

- 9.1 Where funded assisted transport is to be arranged for a person with assessed eligible care and support needs to meet their eligible personal outcomes it will be recorded in their care and support plans on electronic case records and will be part of a care and support plan which is subject to Council financial assessment and individual budget assessment.
- 9.2 When it is identified on a person's care and support plan that eligible services are being provided the plan should outline whether this is through a commissioned arrangement or self-directed care including Direct Payments.
- 9.3 Therefore, a person will be made aware in receiving eligible services the Council will undertake a financial assessment under the non-residential Council charging policy and will be liable for potential contribution. The financial assessment team will determine an individual weekly contribution based on circumstances and against which service.
- 9.4 Unpaid carers are not charged for their own carer's direct services.
- 9.5 The Council's Finance Team completing individual financial assessments will consider evidence of people's weekly income and necessary outgoings including Disability Related Expenditure which considering people's necessary additional costs related to their disabilities or illness which cannot just be met through any awarded national welfare benefits.
- 9.6 The Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 section 73 (14) states that local authorities when assessing a person's ability to pay, should ignore as income the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment if received as people cannot be directed to fund eligible Care Act 2014 needs from their national benefits.

## **10. Managing service absences or change of need.**

- 10.1 Once a person is assigned assisted transport including on shared transport but later do not need this place on one or more days this must be communicated to Darlington Borough Council at the earliest opportunity. Where these absences are

planned people should give 48 hours' notice to Darlington Borough Council. This enables another person to benefit on those days.

- 10.2 Where absences are unplanned and not communicated to Darlington Borough Council there may still be a financial charge for these transport days, unless waived by Adult Social Care under an exceptional circumstance basis, e.g. person was admitted as an emergency to hospital, an unforeseen home situation or sudden ill health.
- 10.3 It is essential assisted transport capacity is maximised and the Council effectively manage their transport demand. Where a person has been absent, without advice to a return, for more than four weeks, this will be reviewed by the Adult Social care assessment team to determine whether a person still has eligible needs for transport, or if their needs have changed. If an absence is likely to be long term the assisted transport allocation will be cancelled but can be reinstated later subject to review and immediate availability.
- 10.4 Where Darlington Borough Council receive concerns to the appropriateness of transport from their transport providers, especially where there are risks or concerns to the safety of others including drivers/ staff an urgent review will be needed.
- 10.5 A reassessment of a person's needs should consider all options or reasonable adjustments to see firstly if a person can remain travelling on current transport or may be able to consider other transport arrangements.
- 10.6 Reviews and reassessment of needs must balance the safety not just for the person travelling but for staff and other travellers' welfare under Health and Safety at Work 1974 legislation duties.

## **11.Reassessment of eligible needs / ceasing Assisted transport allocation**

- 11.1 Following a Care Act review or reassessment if it is identified that a person is now more personally independent including by using universal public transport, they may no longer have an eligible need that the local authority has a duty to meet. This will be discussed jointly with the person when reviewing their care and support plan.
- 11.2 If assisted travel may is no longer needed a written notice to cease their transport allocation with agreed timescales will be sent. People who are no longer eligible for assisted transport will be provided with tailored information and advice regarding how to access local public transport options and available community services and contacts.

- 11.3 When an existing assisted transport offer is to be cancelled people will be notified in writing and as appropriate to their unpaid carers or family in the right accessible formats. This will confirm the date assisted transport will cease and agreed timeframes.
- 11.4 If during the notice period a person requests an extension to this timeframe this will be considered on an individual basis with not exceeding a further four weeks as endorsed by the key Adult Social Care assessment team in liaison with Darlington Borough Council. This will be balanced against the priority of people waiting and complexity of needs and risks.
- 11.5 Adult Social Care may consider funding alternative temporary transport in a short interim period if any transport continuity gap will impact on a person being able to attend an assessed resource and gaps will impact on their wellbeing or that of an unpaid carer.
- 11.6 It is expected that a person will actively confirm when new arrangements have been made and when effective from so the local authority can cease assisted transport or temporary funded transport.
- 11.7 If Adult Social Care are no longer meeting a person's eligible transport needs, a person's care and support plan and electronic records will be amended to reflect these changes. The Brokerage and Finance Team will be advised to the effective date of the changes. This ensures people are not charged for this service and the provider contract ended.

## **12.The Appeals and Complaints process**

- 12.1 People have a right to appeal with regards to any Council decision including regarding determination when a person is not seen as or no longer eligible for funded Council services including assisted transport.
- 12.2 Where people are assessed under the Care Act are determined as not eligible for Council arranged services then will deliver our duty to provide information and advice and guidance and signposted to local available services including community transport. They will also be given information regarding Darlington Borough Council Complaints procedure.
- 12.3 Where people want to appeal against a decision that advises that they are not eligible for assisted transport they will need to provide medical evidence or information for consideration to determine any reversal of the original decision.
- 12.4 On the outcome of this appeal there may need to be a further Transport eligibility assessment, especially where people's needs appear to have substantially changed

so a reassessment of needs may be required. This should be within four weeks of the appeal representation or earlier based on the priority of need, e.g., the start of an education term or breakdown in a home situation risk.

- 12.5 If a person remains unsatisfied with the written response following an appeal review, they will be given details to how to make a complaint through the Darlington's formal Complaints procedure. If people remain dissatisfied to the Complaints investigation decision, they will be provided with details of the Local Government Ombudsman process.
- 12.6 When following a joint health and social care assessment a person is determined as having full *primary health needs*, they may be eligible for full NHS funding with regards to NHS Continuing Health Care. The local health Integrated Care Board (ICB) will be responsible for arranging and funding people's eligible needs including arranged transport. A person will not be liable to a financial assessment or contribute to services under full NHS Continuing Health Care funding. Adult Social Care will remain supporting the person and these arrangements will be jointly reviewed.

### **13. Governance, Review and Impact of the Adult Social Care Transport Policy**

- 13.1 The Governance and monitoring of the implementation and impact of this policy will be through the Adult Social Care Senior Management Team led by the Assistant Director who reports to the Directorate Management Team.
- 13.2 The implementation of the Adult Social Care Transport policy aligns to Darlington Council's key Policies and vision and enabling local authority to meet their statutory duties. This ensures more people have accessible social transport sufficiency and enables more people to remain in their own homes for longer and prevents premature admission to high-cost residential care, complex health and care packages or unpaid carers unable to continue in a carer's role.
- 13.3 The Adult Social Care Engagement and Co production' Stronger Together Strategy 2024- 2027 commits to working with people as equal partners including those with lived experience who are best placed to ensure we arrange and provide transport offers that meet people's needs now and in the future.
- 13.4 The implementation of this policy should not see an increase the demand or access for assisted transport as does not widen the current criteria but makes people more aware of transport options available to them and the process. There is no evidence of any increased financial impact through the implementation of this policy and any future applications will continue through new assessment and routine planned reviews process.

- 13.5 Strength-based practice approaches promote people's independence enabling them to access their own transport solutions so practitioners will consider all transport options with people including independent travel with the objective of promoting people's choices and options so assisted travel is targeted at people with the highest need. We also look at prevent, reduce and delaying people's needs through our Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy 2024-2027.
- 13.6 The Adult Social Care Transport Policy will be reviewed in the first year and then bi-annually.

## **14. Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion**

- 1.1 The Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024-2027 has regards to our duties under the Care Act 2014, so adults and unpaid carers are assessed, and their eligible needs determined by the national eligibility framework so are transparent decisions with people so meet their personal needs and aspirations.
- 1.2 We meet our Care Act duty to provide information and advice in the right accessible formats means we make reasonable adjustments in proving and signposting people to local resources and support them to make applications for assisted transport.
- 1.3 With regards to our Public Equalities Duty under the Darlington Council Equality Policy 2023-2027 Adult Social Care consider the needs of people with legally protected characteristics when making decisions in planning for transport support. Staff will have mandatory Equalities training and demonstrate that they seek to combat any inequality or disadvantage that people may face including when accessing transport.
- 1.4 We are committed through the new Adult Social Care Engagement and Co production' Stronger Together strategy 2024-2027 which involve people as equal partners when we are planning and developing new Policy or protocols which may affect them, so we are learning from their lived experiences to inform and co-produce future transport arrangements.
- 1.5 Adult Social Care are part of the Darlington Carers Strategy Steering Group and Learning Impairment Network engagement group and links to other community forums so together work in partnership with local people so engage them to jointly review the impact of the new policies. We will also take steps to engage with local community interest groups and engage seldom heard voices.
- 1.6 This Adult Social Care Transport Policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Adults National Eligibility Framework – Care Act 2014**

The Care Act 2014 replaces key previous adult social care legislation. The National Minimum Eligibility Threshold identifies those who are eligible for care and support or support. The Care Act 2014 promotes the principle of wellbeing and support to meet the daily living needs of adults.

#### **The three criteria that an adult must meet to have eligible needs are:**

1. The Adult is affected by a physical or mental impairment or illness.
2. There is a significant impact on their wellbeing.
3. The Adult does not have the ability to achieve at least 2 of the following outcomes.

#### **National Minimum Eligibility Threshold Outcomes**

1. Managing and maintaining nutrition.
2. Maintaining personal hygiene.
3. Maintaining toilet needs.
4. Being appropriately clothed.
5. Being able to make use of the adult's home safely.
6. Maintaining a habitable home environment.
7. Developing and maintaining family and other personal relationships.
8. Accessing and engaging in work, education or volunteering.
9. Making use of necessary facilities or service in the community (with transport)
10. Carrying out caring responsibilities for a child.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Carers National Eligibility Framework – Care Act 2014**

Unpaid Carers are eligible for support in their own right. The eligibility threshold is based on the impact their caring role has on their wellbeing. When determining carers eligibility Local Authorities must consider meeting needs under the following themes.

1. The carer's needs for support arise because they are providing necessary care to an adult.
2. As a result of their caring responsibilities, the carer's physical or mental health is at risk of deterioration.
3. The carer is unable to achieve any of the outcomes that the carer has identified as part of the carers assessment.
4. As a consequence of being unable to achieve these outcomes, there is or there is likely to be, a significant impact on the carer's wellbeing.

### **National Minimum Eligibility Threshold outcomes for carers:**

1. Providing care to other persons.
2. Maintaining a habitable home environment in the carer's home .
3. Managing and maintaining nutrition.
4. Developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships.

## APPENDIX 3 DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL TRANSPORT SERVICE REFERRAL

### ADULT SOCIAL CARE PASSENGER INFORMATION FORM

(please tick as appropriate)

New Request ☐

Updated Information ☐

No longer Required ☐

(The information provided on this form will enable Transport Services to provide the most appropriate mode of transport to meet people needs. Personal information in accordance with Data Protection legislation)

Passenger Details			
LL ID No.			Gender:
Title:		First Name:	
Surname:			
Date of Birth:			
Address:			
Post Code:			
Home Tel:			
Mobile:			

Unpaid Carer/Parent Representative Details	
Title:	
Name:	
Relationship:	
Address: (if different from above)	
Post Code:	
Home Tel:	
Mobile:	
Emergency Tel:	



Care Act Assessment/ Review (to be completed by Social Work Team)	
Date of Assessment/ Review	
Assessment	
Completed By	
Health and Safety Considerations	

Transport Requirements for Day/ Community Provision		
Day	Attending (AM) (drop off at)	Attending (PM) (pick up from)
Mon		
Tue		
Wed		
Thu		
Fri		
<p>If specific pick up or drop off times are required, please state time and reason/justification:</p>		
<p>Please provide details of any other potential transport issues</p>		

(e.g. travel companions, maximum time on transport)

**Date transport to start:**

### Mobility Details

**Is the passenger independently mobile?**

**Is assistance required to/from or into/out of the vehicle?**

**If 'Yes', please provide details**

**Does the passenger use a wheelchair?**

**If 'Yes' please provide Make, Model & Weight (kg's) of chair**

*Please note that H&S requirements state that all wheelchairs transported in vehicles must meet certain crash test criteria. It is the service user's responsibility to ensure that the criteria are met and if there is any uncertainty about whether the wheelchair meets the criteria the supplier should be contacted.*

**Please provide details of any walking equipment**

(e.g. walking stick, frame)

**Please provide details of any special seating requirements**

(e.g. harness, booster seat)

<p><b>Where more than a small bag is required to be carried on transport, please give details.</b></p> <p><i>(e.g. oxygen, foldaway wheelchair)</i></p>	
---	--

Emotional Support Details	
<p><b>Please provide details of any behaviours that challenge or other issues that the Driver/PA should be aware of:</b></p>	
<p><b>What action should be taken in response to the above issues:</b></p>	

Medical Details	
<p><b>Please provide details of any sensory impairment(s) / communication needs that the Driver/PA should be aware of:</b></p>	
<p><b>Please provide details of any condition where the use of wipes etc. may be required</b> <i>(e.g. travel sickness, nosebleeds, continence)</i></p>	
<p><b>Please provide details of any known medical condition(s) that the Driver/PA should be aware of:</b></p>	

<b>What trigger signs should the Driver/PA look out for:</b>	
<b>What action should be taken by the Driver/PA in response to health issues occurring:</b>	
<b>Please provide details of any medication carried whilst travelling and how to administer (inc dosage) in an emergency:</b>  <i>(only emergency medication will be transported)</i>	
<b>Name of Doctor:</b>	
<b>Tel No. in emergency:</b>	

Property Information	
<b>Type of property and access arrangements e.g. buzzer</b>	House <input type="checkbox"/>
	Flat (ground floor) <input type="checkbox"/>
	Flat (first floor) <input type="checkbox"/> Is a lift available? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input type="text"/>

<b>Access to and from the property/</b>	<div>Long Driveway <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Steps <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Slope <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Uneven surface <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Slippery surface <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Ramp (fixed) <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Ramp (portable) <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Adequate lighting <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Other <div></div></div>
<b>Provide details of any potential risks or hazards</b>  <b>How is this being resolved ( attached risk management plan where appropriate)</b>	
<b>Provide details of any parking restrictions outside the property</b>	

**Additional comments:**

Details of Person Completing this Request	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Post Title:</b>	
<b>Service/ Team:</b>	
<b>Contact Number:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

## **Appendix 4. Darlington Borough Council Transport Information Sheet**

### **1. Bus Ticket Discounts -**

- a) **Stagecoach Unirider**- available to all students in full time education either as an annual or term by term ticket used alongside student ID cards and available at University Contact : [www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/north-east/unirider/](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/north-east/unirider/)
- b) **Stagecoach under 19 card** – free stagecoach under 19 ID card for discounted travel for all Stagecoach buses in Tyne and Wear, Teesside and Hartlepool when you board a bus . Contact: [www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/north-east/under19](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/north-east/under19)
- c) **Arriva Student and Young person's saver** – available to anyone up to age 19 or in full time education for travel on Arriva Northeast buses available daily, weekly, 15 weekly or annual. Buy on bus, online or m-ticket app. Contact. [www.connectteesvalley.com/young](http://www.connectteesvalley.com/young) discounts.

### **2. Tees Flex- your bus, your way-**

On demand, shared bus service for Tees Valley connecting rural communities transporting to and from primary locations and wider local authority boundary area including healthcare facilities, educational establishments, retail clusters.

Technology directs you, through app algorithms to a 'virtual bus stop' within a short walking distance for pick up and drop up points. This matches your trip with others nearby enabling multiple passengers to seamlessly share the journey.

Tee flex has nine fully accessible minibuses and bookings are on a first come, first served basis and grouping passenger need in real time and assumes you want immediate travel and looks for availability for your requirements up to 30 minutes of your preferred booking time. People with a valid concessionary travel card can travel free after 9.30 Monday to Friday.

Download Tees Flex app or visit [teesflex.co.uk](http://teesflex.co.uk) and create an account with payment through paypal. contact number 0330 678 1545.

### **3. Darlington Walking and Cycling Hub- Teesvalley**

The Darlington Active Travel Club is open for people to choose green, healthier forms of travel around Tees Valley and offer guided bike rides, learn to ride training and bike maintenance courses. Dr Bike MOTs and secure cycle parking. All activities are no charge.

The hub assists you to find out more about active and sustainable travel locally to get to work, school, shops or leisure.

Free weekly guided routes a) Beginners Tuesday 10am b) Intermediate Wednesdays 1am.

Contact: [darlingtonactivetravel@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:darlingtonactivetravel@sustrans.org.uk) Tel: 07720 158 704.

### **4. Travel Advisors – travel greener and healthier.**

Travel advisors support people to take full advantage of all available travel options for your day-to-day journey needs including using latest transport Apps and planning tools and access the best ticket offers and information.

Supports connections with the Wheels 2 work e-bicycle and electric motorbike hire scheme and taking advantage of Darlington's Active Travel hub and includes Bike Buddy journey accompanied by a trained instructor.

Contact: [traveladvisors@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:traveladvisors@darlington.gov.uk) Tel 07966 883805/07958 963646.

#### **5.Home to School Transport**

Contact: [schooltraveltransport@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:schooltraveltransport@darlington.gov.uk)

#### **6. Let's go Tees Valley- travel and transport**

Contact: [info@letsgoteesvalley.co.uk](mailto:info@letsgoteesvalley.co.uk)

#### **7.Volunteer Driver Service**

Supported SRC Ltd. Contact: <https://www.supportive.org.uk/transport/#volunteer>

#### **8. Disabled Person's Railcard**

For people with difficulty travelling on transport.

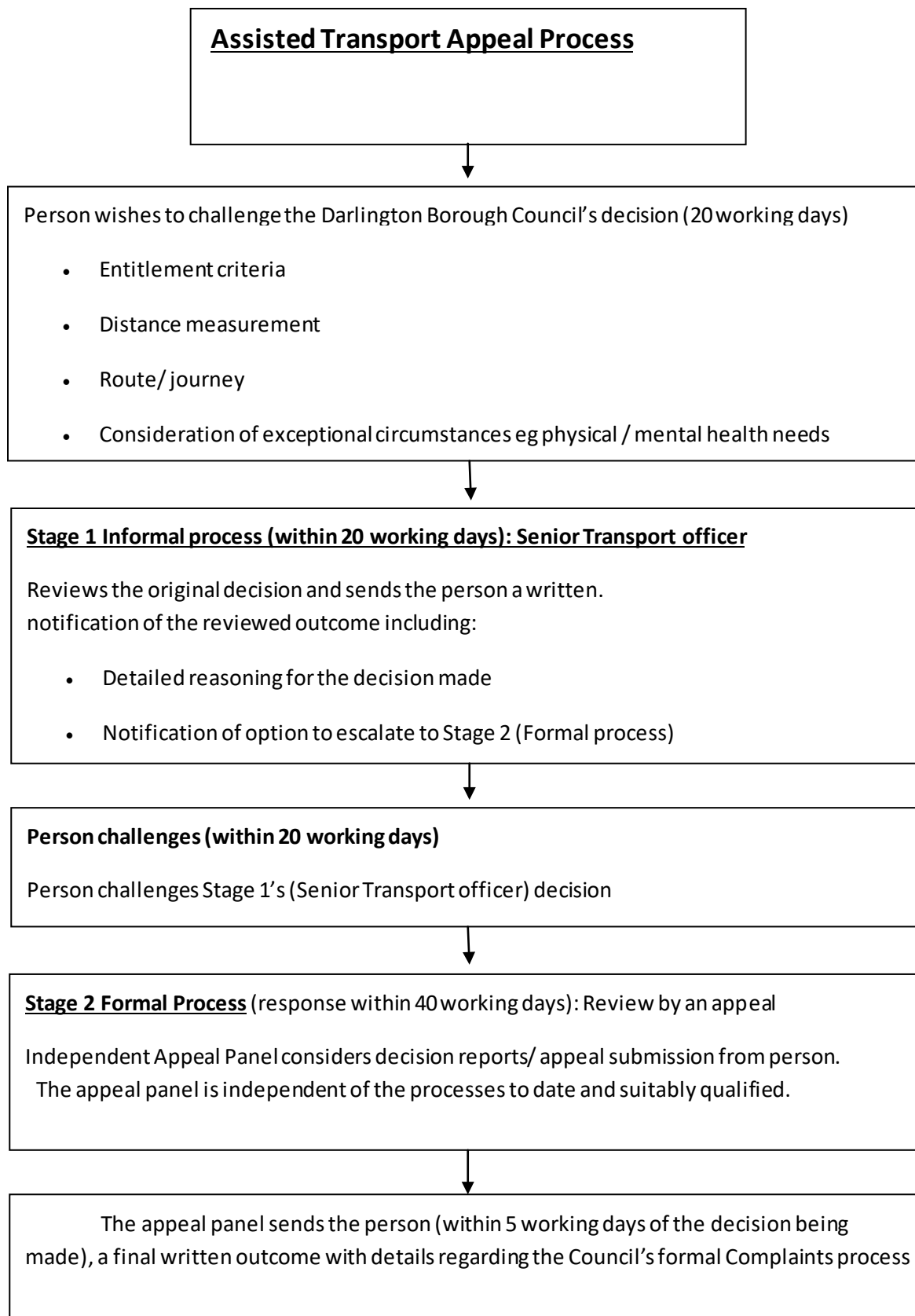
Contact: Tel: 0345 605 0525 and <http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/>

#### **9. Home to Hospital – NHS Patient Transport Service (PTS)**

This is for planned, non-emergency patient transport where people need additional support due to difficulties in walking or / and managing gradients.

Please contact the hospital where you will be attending for guidance and booking.

## **APPENDIX 5**





## Equality Impact Assessment Record Form

This form is to be used for recording the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of Council activities. It should be used in conjunction with the guidance on carrying out EIA in **Annex 3** of the Equality Policy. The activities that may be subject to EIA are set out in the guidance.

EIA is particularly important in supporting the Council to make fair decisions. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Using this form will help Council officers to carry out EIA in an effective and transparent way and provide decision-makers with full information on the potential impact of their decisions. EIAs are public documents, accompany reports going to Councillors for decisions and are published with committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting.

<b>Title of activity:</b>	Adult Social Care Transport Policy	
<b>Name of Directorate and Service Area:</b>	People's Group -Adult Social Care	
<b>Lead Officer and contact details</b>	nerissa.cole@darlington.gov.uk	
<b>Assistant Director accountable for this EIA</b>	Joss Harbron	
<b>Who else will be involved in carrying out the EIA:</b>	As above	

<b>When did the EIA process start?</b>		<i>December 2023</i>
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## Section 2 – The Activity and Supporting Information

<p><b>Details of the activity</b> (describe briefly - including the main purpose and aims) (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)</p>
<p>Redesign and update of the Adult Social Care Transport Policy to align with national statutory legislation and practice and to ensure better promotes Strength Based Practice and Equalities under the Equality Act.</p> <p>This is to supersede the current DBC Transport Policy 2011 which is not in line with our duties under the Care Act 2014.</p>
<p><b>Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the Council hope to achieve by it?</b> (e.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things more efficiently)</p>
<p>To ensure we have a legally defensible clear service Transport Policy and improved referral, process and appeal processes and clear eligibility and decision-making processes.</p> <p>To maximise assisted transport allocations and occupancy for those that need it the most, including unpaid carers and ensuring people are aware of all universal options and information and can make informed choices when safely accessing transport and maintaining their wellbeing.</p>
<p><b>What will change? What will be different for service users/ customers and/ or staff?</b></p>
<p>Clearer awareness of the process to determine need for assisted transport and more flexible transport offer using strength-based approaches to see people's assets and potential for independence and options before applying for arranged and commissioned Council transport.</p> <p>Ensure people with Care Act assessed eligible requirements for assisted transport to meet their needs have arrangements made so can achieve their outcome so consistent decision making and not based on the level of received disability benefits.</p>
<p><b>What data, research and other evidence or information is available which is relevant to the EIA?</b></p>
<p>There has been case law and consultation with our Corporate Legal Team regarding the current policy guidance that it is unlawful for a local authority to request people fund their assessed eligible needs through their national disability benefits including if receiving the higher level of Mobility Allowance.</p> <p>The Darlington Commitment to Carers partnership strategy 2023-2028 promotes increase breaks for unpaid carers who need to focus on a life apart from caring for their own wellbeing, and therefore, we should assess the needs of carers and reasonableness to continue to transport the person they care for to access eligible resources.</p>
<p><b>Engagement and consultation</b> (What engagement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)</p>
<p>There has been meetings and discussions with staff and users of our in-house day care services with regards to views to transport and pursuit of travel training with a positive example of where travel training enabled a person independence from assisted transport.</p>

**What impact will this activity have on the Council's budget?** (e.g. cost neutral, increased costs or reduced costs? If so, by how much? Explain briefly why this is the case)

There is no evidence that there will be any increased demand for assisted transport or one to one support, as will be better streamlined and targeted to those with the highest need but will ensure there is a more preventative and strength-based approaches to explore all transport options, travel concessions and potential for independence before assisted transport is applied for.

The new referral process will provide improved tailoring and reasonable adjustments are in place to ensure people can access local resources to reduce social isolation and carer breakdown, so enables more people to remain at home and less reliance on high care package costs or premature admissions to 24 hours longer term residential care.

By implementation of the ASC Transport Policy those now eligible either current or new applicants will have a personalised assessment , reassessment or review during the service routine case management and statutory annual review processes but there is no evidence this will inflate new demand or costs or cause waiting lists , as assisted transport will be allocated to those with priority needs.

### Section 3: Assessment

How will the activity affect people with protected characteristics?	No Impact	Positive impact	Negative impact	Why will it have this effect? (refer to evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information, etc.)
Age	x			
Disability (Mobility Impairment, Visual impairment, Hearing impairment, Learning Disability, Mental Health, Long Term Limiting Illness, Multiple Impairments, Other – Specify)	x			
Sex (Gender)	x			
Race	x			
Gender Reassignment	x			
Sexual Orientation	x			
Religion or belief	x			
Pregnancy or maternity	x			

<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	x			
<b>How will the activity affect people who:</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>Why will it have this effect?</b> (Refer to evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information, etc.)
<b>Live in a rural location?</b>	x			
<b>Are carers?</b>		x		<b>Carers assessments should now better consider the wellbeing of carers in providing necessary care for a person , and being provided with extended time out from caring.</b>
<b>Are on a low income?</b>	x			
<b>Are a Care Leaver?</b>	x			

## Section 4: Cumulative Impacts

**Cumulative Impacts – will the activity affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics?** (E.g. older women or young gay men – state what you think the effect might be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information, etc.)

**Are there any other activities of which you are aware which might also impact on the same protected characteristics?**

None highlighted.

## Section 5: Analysis

### **A. How will the activity help to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?**

The ASC Transport Policy ensures that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the Equality Act 2010 is embedded throughout the application, eligibility and assisted transport decision making or access to other transport, with the duty to make reasonable adjustments including duties and risk assessments under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 with duties to people accessing assisted transport including all passengers and staff.

### **B. How will the activity help to advance equality of opportunity?**

As above and enables a more holistic approach with regards to working in co production with people and family using strength-based practice and providing transport information in accessible formats and signposting to websites to explore local transport and travel opportunities.

### **C. How will the activity help to foster good relations?**

Building positive relationships and collaboration between the ASC professionals, Children's Service and Transport Providers so work in partnership with a person, family and those that support people to ensure people's needs and preferred communication and wishes are considered. Transport Provider specifications promote continuity of staff who build mutual supportive trust arrangements.

**During the engagement/ consultation process were there any suggestions on how to avoid, minimise or mitigate any negative impacts? If so, please give details.**

**There will be no disruption to current transport arrangements and applications and will only apply to new applications and applying eligibility during statutory reviews.**

**There is a newly revised assisted transport appeal process within the Transport Policy.**

## Section 6 - Sign-off when assessment is completed

Officer Completing the Form:		
Signed	Name:	Nerissa Cole
	Date:	26/2/2024
	Job Title:	Interim Head of Service Improvement
Assistant Director:		
Signed	Name:	Jocelyn Harbron
	Date:	07/06/2024
	Service:	Adult Services

## Section 7 – Reporting of Findings and Recommendations to Decision Makers

<p><b>Next Steps to address the anticipated impact</b> (Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen – remember we have a duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)</p>
<p>A. <b>No negative impact on people because of their Protected Characteristics and therefore no major change is needed to the activity</b> (There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified)</p>
<p>B. <b>Negative impact identified – recommend continuing with the activity</b> (Clearly specify the people affected and the impacts, and providing reasons and supporting evidence for the decision to continue. The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. Officers will advise to change the proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or the Council will achieve its aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. There must be compelling reasons for continuing with the proposal which will have the most adverse impacts.)</p>
<p>C. <b>Negative impact identified - adjust the activity in light of the identified impact to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impact</b> (The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. The Council will change the proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or it will achieve the aim in another way which will not make things worse for people)</p>
<p>D. <b>Actual or potential unlawful discrimination – stop and remove the activity</b> (The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It should be stopped.)</p>
<p><b>Explanation of why the option above has been chosen</b> (Including any advice given by legal services)</p>
<p><b>No negative impact on people because of their Protected Characteristics and therefore no major change is needed to the activity</b> (There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified)</p>



This is a redesign and update of the Adult Social Care Transport Policy to align with national statutory legislation and practice and to ensure better promotes Strength Based Practice and Equalities under the Equality Act.

This is to supersede the current DBC Transport Policy 2011 which is not in line with our duties under the Care Act 2014.

The ASC Transport Policy ensures that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the Equality Act 2010 is embedded throughout the application, eligibility and assisted transport decision making or access to other transport, with the duty to make reasonable adjustments including duties and risk assessments under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 with duties to people accessing assisted transport including all passengers and staff. It will enable a more holistic approach with regards to working in co production with people and family using strength-based practice and providing transport information in accessible formats and signposting to websites to explore local transport and travel opportunities.

**If the activity is to be implemented how will you find out how it is affecting people once it is in place?** (How will you monitor and review the changes?)

There will be no disruption to current transport arrangements and applications and will only apply to new applications and applying eligibility during statutory reviews. Through the reviews and appeals process there will be an opportunity to monitor and review the changes.

## Section 8 – Action Plan and Performance Management

List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation reviews to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.

What is the negative impact?	Actions required to reduce/eliminate the negative impact (if applicable)	Who will lead on action	Target completion date
N/A			


Performance Management	
<b>Date of the next review of the EIA</b>	At next review of transport policy- 2026
<b>How often will the EIA action plan be reviewed?</b>	N/A
<b>Who will carry out this review?</b>	Head of Practice and Quality.



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**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**27 AUGUST 2024**

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**WORK PROGRAMME 2024-2025**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the 2024/25 Municipal Year and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be included.

**Summary**

2. Members are requested to consider the attached draft work programme (**Appendix 1**) for the remainder of the Municipal Year, which has been prepared based on Officers recommendations and recommendations previously agreed by this Scrutiny Committee.
3. Once the work programme has been approved by this Scrutiny Committee, any additional areas of work which Members wish to add to the agreed work programme will require the completion of a quad of aims in accordance with the previously approved procedure (**Appendix 2**).

**Recommendations**

4. It is recommended that Members note the current status of the Work Programme and consider any additional areas of work they would like to include.
5. Members' views are requested.

**Luke Swinhoe**  
**Assistant Director Law and Governance**

**Background Papers**

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

Author: Paul Dalton

Council Plan	The report contributes to the Council Plan in a number of ways through the involvement of Members in contributing to the delivery of the Plan. The Work Programme contains items which enable Members to scrutinise those areas that contribute the priority of Living Well – a healthier and better quality of life for longer, supporting those who need it most, and Communities - working together for safer, healthier and more engaged communities.
Addressing inequalities	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no issues which this report needs to address.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report has no impact on the Council's Efficiency Programme.
Health and Wellbeing	This report has no direct implications to the Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder.
Wards Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Ward is considered to be minimal.
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Group is considered to be minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

6. The format of the proposed work programme has been reviewed to enable Members of this Scrutiny Committee to provide a rigorous and informed challenge to the areas for discussion.
7. The Council Plan was adopted on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024, and outlines Darlington Borough Council's long-term ambitions for Darlington and priorities for action over the next three years. It gives strategic direction to the Council and Council services, defining priorities, identifying key actions, and shaping delivery.
8. The Council Plan identifies six priorities, one of which is 'Living Well', which states that more years in good health leads to more fulfilling lives, and a better standard of living, however the Plan highlights that are inequalities in Darlington across all stages of life which are influenced by broader social factors including education, employment, housing and income. Seven key deliverables are identified as part of this priority.
9. The Council believes that all residents should have the opportunity to live longer, healthier lives, and wants to support residents of every age to live well. The Council has committed to improving our contact with carers and working to create a network of support for better health and wellbeing outcomes. The Council will support those who need it most and signpost for access to other provision and support, where appropriate.

### Forward Plan and Additional Items

10. Once the Work Programme has been agreed by this Scrutiny Committee, any Member seeking to add a new item to the work programme will need to complete a Quad of Aims.
11. A copy of the index of the Forward Plan has been attached at **Appendix 3** for information.

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**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Link to PMF (metrics)</b>	<b>Scrutiny's Role / Notes</b>
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Joss Harbron		
Care Homes in Executive Strategy Measures / Arrangements	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Rachel Watt / Joss Harbron / Barbara Beadle		Recommendation from the 'Nursing Care Homes in Special Measures Task and Finish Group' – six monthly report to this Committee.
Safeguarding	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Rachel Watt / Barbara Beadle		
Performance Indicators End of Year Report 2023/24 (including budgetary information)	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Joss Harbron / Sharon Raine / Wendy Excell	ASC 002 ASC 003 ASC 019 ASC 045 ASC 046 ASC 049 ASC 050 ASC 208 ASC 209 ASC 211	To monitor Key Performance Indicators.  To receive six-monthly monitoring reports and undertake any further detailed work into particular outcomes if necessary.
Adult Social Care Transport Policy 2024	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Joss Harbron		
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024	Joss Harbron		
Commitment to Carers	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024	Carers Support	Alison Donoghue ( <a href="mailto:alison.donoghue@darlingtoncarers.org">alison.donoghue@darlingtoncarers.org</a> )	

Domestic Abuse	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024	Lorraine Hughes / Christine Shields		To receive an overview to understand what actions the Council are taking in relation to their responsibilities under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and coercive control.  <i>(Deferred at the request of Officers whilst a Policy is drafted. Policy will be brought to Scrutiny at a future date for consultation. Permission granted by Chair).</i>
Darlington Care Network for Providers	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024	Christine Shields / Sukhdev Dosanjh		Request from the Chair (Councillor Anderson)
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Joss Harbron		
Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic – Update on Task and Finish Group Recommendations	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Joss Harbron		An update on the actions recommended by the Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic Task and Finish Group.
Transitional Services	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	<i>Tony Murphy / Jo Littler and Barbara Beadle / Kevin Kelly? TBC</i>		Potentially joint with CYP Scrutiny Committee
Hospital Discharges - Update	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Barbara Beadle / Sarah Appleby, with CDDFT and TEWV		

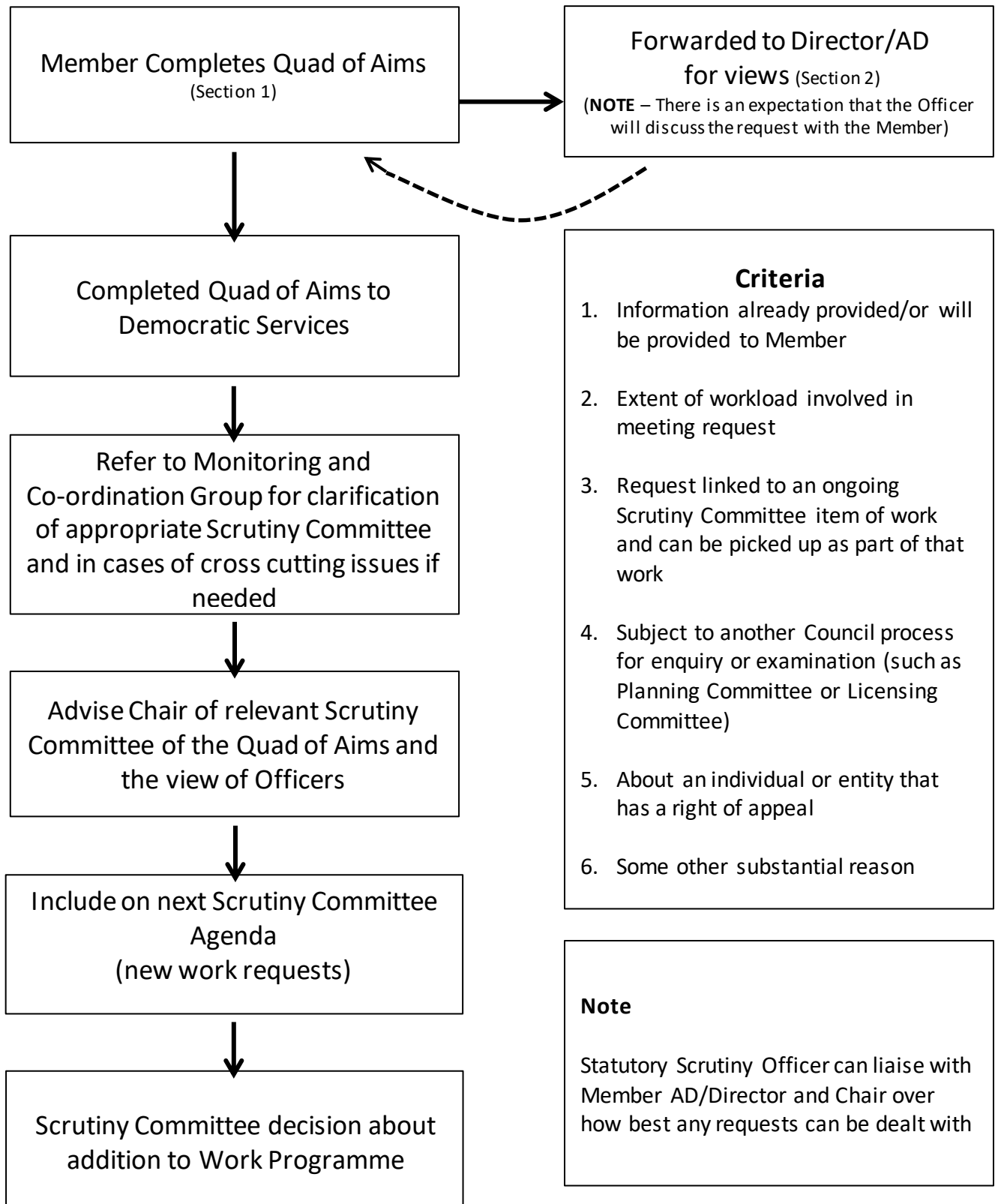
Autism Strategy and Action Plan Update	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Jamie Tood and Dominic Gardener, TEVW and Martin Short and John Stamp, ICB and DBC (via Joss Harbron as rep.)		
Performance Indicators Quarter 2 2024/2025 (including budgetary information)	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Joss Harbron / Sharon Raine / Wendy Excell	ASC 002 ASC 003 ASC 019 ASC 045 ASC 046 ASC 049 ASC 050 ASC 208 ASC 209 ASC 211	To monitor Key Performance Indicators.  To receive six-monthly monitoring reports and undertake any further detailed work into particular outcomes if necessary.
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Joss Harbron		
Care Homes in Executive Strategy Measures / Arrangements	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Rachel Watt / Joss Harbron / Barbara Beadle		Recommendation from the ‘Nursing Care Homes in Special Measures Task and Finish Group’ – six monthly report to this Committee.
Hoarding and Self-Neglect	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Amanda Hugill / Marion Garland		

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership - Annual Report	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Ann Baxter / Amanda Hugill	ASC 028 ASC 029 ASC 059 ASC 061 ASC 062 ASC 199 ASC 200 ASC 201 ASC 202 ASC 203 ASC 204 ASC 205 ASC 206 ASC 207 ASC 209 ASC 210 ASC 213 ASC 214	To consider the Annual Report on the work of the Board and to receive reassurance that adult safeguarding is being addressed and an effective approach is in place.  To be advised of the key issues for the Board and funding.
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025	Joss Harbron		
Overview by Commissioning Services on Shared Lives	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025	Christine Shields		Requested by Councillor Toms.
Mapping of Provisions within the Borough including Commissioned Services	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025	Christine Shields		Requested by Chair (Councillor Anderson)
Reclaiming Our Communities	To be confirmed			Request from Councillor Toms. To be discussed by Chair outside of the meeting.

**Task and Finish Review Group(s)**

- **‘Loneliness and Connected Communities’ Task and Finish Review Group** – To recommence in 2024/25.

## PROCESS FOR ADDING AN ITEM TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WORK PROGRAMME



## QUAD OF AIMS (MEMBERS' REQUEST FOR ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED BY SCRUTINY)

### SECTION 1 TO BE COMPLETED BY MEMBERS

**NOTE** – This document should only be completed if there is a clearly defined and significant outcome from any potential further work. This document should **not** be completed as a request for or understanding of information.

REASON FOR REQUEST?	RESOURCE (WHAT OFFICER SUPPORT WOULD YOU REQUIRE?)
PROCESS (HOW CAN SCRUTINY ACHIEVE THE ANTICIPATED OUTCOME?)	HOW WILL THE OUTCOME MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Signed Councillor .....

Date .....

**SECTION 2 TO BE COMPLETED BY DIRECTORS/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS**  
**(NOTE – There is an expectation that Officers will discuss the request with the Member)**

<div>1. (a) Is the information available elsewhere? Yes ..... No ..... If yes, please indicate where the information can be found (attach if possible and return with this document to Democratic Services) ..... (b) Have you already provided the information to the Member or will you shortly be doing so? .....</div> <div>2. If the request is included in the Scrutiny Committee work programme what are the likely workload implications for you/your staff? .....</div> <div>3. Can the request be included in an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and picked up as part of that? .....</div> <div>4. Is there another Council process for enquiry or examination about the matter currently underway? .....</div> <div>5. Has the individual or entity some other right of appeal? .....</div> <div>6. Is there any substantial reason (other than the above) why you feel it should not be included on the work programme ? .....</div>	<div>Criteria</div> <div>1. Information already provided/or will be provided to Member</div> <div>2. Extent of workload involved in meeting request</div> <div>3. Request linked to an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and can be picked up as part of that work</div> <div>4. Subject to another Council process for enquiry or examination (such as Planning Committee or Licensing Committee)</div> <div>5. About an individual or entity that has a right of appeal</div> <div>6. Some other substantial reason</div>
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**Signed .....**    **Position .....**    **Date .....**



**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
FORWARD PLAN**

**APPENDIX 3**

**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

**FORWARD PLAN  
FOR THE PERIOD: 7 AUGUST 2024 - 31 DECEMBER 2024**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Decision Maker and Date</b>
Air Quality Strategy 2024/29	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Annual Review of the Investment Fund	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Climate Change	Council 26 Sep 2024
	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Reports 2023/24	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Complaints Made to Local Government Ombudsman	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Fees and Charges	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 1	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Public Consultation on Draft Appraisal for the Northgate Conservation Area including Proposed Boundary Extensions	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Treasury Management Annual Report and Outturn Prudential Indicators 2023/2024	Cabinet 10 Sep 2024
Annual Procurement Plan Update	Cabinet 8 Oct 2024
Environment Act 2021 – Waste Management Arrangements	Cabinet 8 Oct 2024
Offset Strategy	Cabinet 8 Oct 2024
Council Tax Support - Scheme Approval 2025/26	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Housing Services Tenant Engagement and Involvement Strategy 2024/29	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Land at Faverdale - Burtree Garden Village - Proposed Infrastructure Development Agreement (IDA)	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 2	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Proposed Middleton St George Conservation Area - Consultation	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Strategic Asset Plan	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Woodland Road Waiting Restrictions	Cabinet 5 Nov 2024
Housing Revenue Account - Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/27 to 2028/29	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Mid Year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Monitoring Report 2024/25	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024
Review of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	Cabinet 3 Dec 2024

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