



DARLINGTON

Borough Council

Adults Scrutiny Committee Agenda

9.30 am, Tuesday, 7 January 2025

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT

Members of the Public are welcome to attend this Meeting.

1. Introductions/Attendance at Meeting (Pages 3 - 4)
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 22 October 2024 (Pages 5 - 10)
4. Autism Strategy and Action Plan Update – Report of the Assistant Director, Adults (Pages 11 - 30)
5. Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 - 2028/29 – Report of the Assistant Director, Resources (Pages 31 - 98)
6. CQC Assurance Framework - Update – Report of the Assistant Director, Adults (Pages 99 - 114)
7. Hospital Discharges – Report of the Assistant Director, Adults (Pages 115 - 124)
8. Transitional Services (Preparing for Adulthood for Young People with Care and Support Needs) – Report of the Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion, and the Assistant Director, Adults (Pages 125 - 152)
9. Adult Social Care Services during Covid - Update on Task and Finish Group Recommendations – Report of the Assistant Director, Adults (Pages 153 - 164)

10. Work Programme 2024/25 – Report of the Assistant Director, Law and Governance (Pages 165 - 178)
11. 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.
12. Questions



Luke Swinhoe
Assistant Director Law and Governance

Friday, 27 December 2024

Town Hall
Darlington.

Membership

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

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

Briefing for scrutiny committees

Climate change can affect anyone, but some people have the potential to be more affected than others. How badly a person or group will be affected will depend not just on their exposure to the event, but on their social vulnerability – that is, how well they are able to cope with and respond to events like floods and heatwaves. People and communities experiencing multiple causes of vulnerability are the most extremely socially vulnerable.

Tackling climate change is a shared responsibility. It is deeply connected to other policy issues and local action is necessary for sustainable solutions. We need to be clear how any proposal/project impacts on our carbon emissions and how it affects our resilience. It is also important that the decisions we make do not prevent other people from reducing their own emissions or improving their own resilience.

Scrutiny has a critical role to play in these cross-cutting issues. Climate change as a stand-alone issue sits in the purview of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, but everything we do either has an impact on, or is impacted by, climate change so it is important for all scrutiny committees to also ensure that everything that comes in front of them has considered it.

The Council Plan now includes climate change as a key principle underpinning everything we do. The guidance notes for cabinet and decision papers have also been updated so the “carbon impact” box should never say no impact. Clearly, proposals or projects will differ, depending on what is being discussed, and not all of the questions below will apply to everything that comes to a scrutiny committee, but they should help to tease out how the officers have come to that decision.

Questions for scrutiny committee members to ask

1. Will the proposal/project result in an increase in carbon emissions?
 - How have you ensured that energy is not wasted or lost through poor insulation, heating the wrong areas or inefficient lighting?
 - Will there be an increase in business travel or commuting?
 - How easy will it be for people to travel by public transport, bicycle or walking?
 - Is there a need for travel at all?
 - Will there be an increase in waste disposal?
2. How will you reduce emissions?
 - How can you reduce energy use?
 - How can you reduce use of natural resources?
 - How can you ensure suppliers are working in a sustainable way?
 - How can you reduce waste?
 - How can you improve energy efficiency?
3. Will the proposal have any impacts on biodiversity (positive or negative)?
 - Will there be a net reduction in trees?
 - Are there opportunities for planting?
 - Are there other habitats or wildlife considerations?

4. Does the proposal incorporate/promote the development of renewable energy?
 - How can you increase the use of renewable energy in your project?
5. How can you minimise emissions from transport?
 - How can your project enable and encourage active travel?
 - How can you reduce the need for travel at all?
6. How will you make the proposal/project resilient to the impacts of climate change, such as more frequent severe weather, floods and heatwaves?
 - How can your project be designed to be resilient to these occurrences?
 - How can you ensure the building does not overheat in summer?
 - How will your service travel during these events?
 - How can communities using your service be protected?

Supplementary questions

- Does any procurement consider the impact on the environment?
- How does the project/proposal support the climate change strategy, tree and woodland strategy and sustainable communities strategy?
- How does the project/proposal support local businesses and employers to be sustainable?
- How can the project/proposal help develop local skills?

ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 22 October 2024

PRESENT – Councillors Anderson (Chair), Crumbie, Layton, Mammolotti, M Nicholson, Toms and Tostevin.

APOLOGIES – Councillors Donoghue, Renton and Storr.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Joss Harbron (Assistant Director - Adult Social Care), Christine Shields (Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance and Transformation), Lisa Holdsworth (Commissioning Officer), Jenni Wood (Chief Executive, Durham County Carers Support), Liz Johns (Operations Manager, Durham County Carers Support) and Paul Dalton (Democratic and Elections Officer).

AD15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

AD16 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 27TH AUGUST 2024

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 27 August 2024, be approved as a correct record.

AD17 CQC ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK - UPDATE

The Assistant Director, Adult Services, advised Members that there had been no further progress in relation to a date for this authority's inspection under the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance Framework. It was reported that Officers had attempted to confirm a date for the inspection, however no response had been received to date.

The Assistant Director, Adult Services, reassured Members that casework had been prepared in readiness for inspection, and that this was continually kept under review to ensure that it remained up to date.

RESOLVED – That the content of the update be noted.

AD18 DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance and Transformation submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with an overview of the requirements of the Local Authority under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and an update on how this authority is supporting victims of domestic abuse and adhere to the Act.

The submitted report outlined that the Domestic Abuse Act came into force in 2021 and introduced new requirements which Local Authorities must fulfil. It was stated that the Act created the first statutory definition of domestic abuse to ensure that "domestic abuse is properly understood, considered unacceptable and actively challenged across statutory agencies and in public attitudes". The submitted report identified examples of behaviour

which constituted domestic abuse; highlighted the statutory requirements placed on the local authority by the Act; and outlined the priorities contained within the 'Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-2024'.

Concerns were raised in relation to future funding of support services, and whilst it was noted that funding had previously been made available to the Local Authority via the Burdens Fund, Members sought to ascertain what contingency arrangements were in place should such future funding not be forthcoming. Members also sought reassurances in relation to the role of the Domestic Abuse Housing Options Officer, the level of actual housing stock available, the level of emergency accommodation available and provision under the sanctuary scheme.

Members were eager to learn more in relation to the actions undertaken in terms of early identification and intervention (Priority Two), the work undertaken to encourage reporting of domestic abuse and to understand the barriers to reporting domestic abuse, and establish what more could be done to ensure that the voices of the victims of unreported domestic abuse could be heard. Members were also keen to ensure that all reporting and disclosure of domestic abuse was correctly recorded to support any future action.

Members entered into discussion on the role that Adult Social Care staff play in identifying domestic abuse, the training provided to allow staff to identify the signs of domestic abuse, and how this identification was integrated into social work practice. Members also expressed an interest in scrutinising the performance data in relation to commissioned partners, specifically in terms of waiting times for dedicated one-2-one therapy, the sanctuary scheme and accommodation.

Discussion returned to the uncertainty around the future funding of services, with reference made to the funding of the refuge by Public Health. It was acknowledged that, whilst work was being undertaken to maximise charitable trusts and manage the existing resources, there were potential risks to services.

RESOLVED – (a) That the Adults Scrutiny Committee await the completion of the Needs Assessment and that this be provided to Scrutiny, where appropriate.

(b) That the services commissioned by Darlington be monitored and scrutinised by the Adult Scrutiny Committee, and that this Scrutiny Committee support the re-evaluation following completion of the Needs Assessment.

(c) That the joint working arrangements on domestic abuse be noted.

(d) That an annual update report be submitted to this Scrutiny Committee.

AD19 DARLINGTON CARE NETWORK FOR PROVIDERS

The Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance and Transformation submitted a report (previously circulated) to review and consider the provider engagement arrangements that are in place for Adult Social Care Providers.

The submitted report stated that the Council's duties and responsibilities for Adult Social

Care were set out in key legislation such as the Care Act (2014), the Mental Health Act (1983) and the Mental Capacity Act (2005), and that commissioned services support and meet a wide range of adults needs such as frailty, learning disabilities or autism, mental illness and substance misuse. It was highlighted that the Care Act (2014) placed a legal duty on the Council to shape the care market and ensure that there was sufficient care provision to meet the care needs of the people in Darlington. In addition, the Council was obliged to “promote diversity and quality of provision of services”, and that these objectives could only be met through active engagement with care providers which promoted effective communication, consultation and co-production.

The submitted report outlined that the Council had a successful track record of effectively engaging, consulting and communicating with its independent and voluntary sectors, and utilised a number of key forums, programme areas and information sharing approaches that the Council to ensure that effective communication and engagement continued. The key objective of these engagement arrangements was to build and sustain positive and productive relationships, which in turn ensured that the Council and its partners were sighted on the whole system issues and challenges and how they affected vulnerable people in its care.

Members welcomed the report and noted the high level of work undertaken to develop and maintain the relationships with our care providers, and reflected on the value that these relationships had during the Coronavirus pandemic. A question was raised in relation to the support provided for grant applications.

A discussion took place on the level of influence the authority had in relation to our providers, and whilst it was acknowledged that the authority could not impose, shared social values were encouraged.

RESOLVED – That the effectiveness of the consultation and engagement arrangements with Adult Social Care Providers be noted.

AD20 DARLINGTON'S COMMITMENT TO CARERS 2023-28

The Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance and Transformation submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide information in relation to Darlington's Carers' Strategy ('Darlington's Commitment to Carers 2023-28') and progress in implementing the Strategy.

The submitted report advised that Darlington's Commitment to Carers was launched on 17 April 2024 at a well-attended launch event, during which presentations were given by representatives from Darlington Carers Support, Family Action Darlington Young Carers and Darlington Borough Council, outlining Darlington's Commitment to Carers and the support available to all groups of carers in Darlington. It was reported that attendees were also asked to identify actions they would take as their own Commitment to Carers, including participation in the social media campaign, and good progress has already been made in implementing the actions identified.

Members also received a presentation from the Commissioning Officer, the Chief Executive, Durham County Carers Support, and the Operations Manager, Durham County Carers Support, which provided Members with an overview of the key objectives of the Darlington's

Carers' Strategy, the progress made under the Strategy to date, the focus of social media campaigns, and the support available for unpaid carers.

Discussion ensued on the reasons why someone may become an unpaid carer, with it noted that many might feel a 'loving obligation' to take on the caring responsibilities for a loved one or relative, with reference also made to those carers in full-time employment, child carers and elderly carers. Members were also keen to learn how Darlington Carers Support promoted the organisation, and whether there was scope for Councillors themselves to promote the organisation.

Members entered into discussion on the number of people who accessed the service, and the factors that qualified carers to receive Carers Allowance.

Members were also keen to learn more in relation to the Hospital Discharge Project, whether any work was undertaken with other hospitals in Darlington and whether the work undertaken with the Darlington Memorial Hospital facilitated a quicker discharge process. Focus was also given to individual needs, the sustainability of discharge and the safety of discharge, especially in light of potential winter pressures.

RESOLVED – (a) That the content of the report be noted.

(b) That Members give consideration as to how they can support the delivery of the actions identified in Darlington's Commitment to Carers.

AD21 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 1 2024-25

The Assistant Director, Adult Services, submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with performance data against key performance indicators for Quarter 1 of 2024-25.

The submitted report provided performance information in line with an indicator set and Scrutiny Committee distribution agreed by the Monitoring and Coordination Group on 4 June 2018, and subsequently agreed by Scrutiny Committee Chairs. It was stated that the indicators were aligned with key priorities. Twelve indicators were reported to this Committee, and the performance of eight of the twelve indicators as at the end of Quarter 1 2024/25, were reported on.

It was reported that, of the eight indicators reported at this point, one of the indicators showed performance better than at this time last year (ASC002); four indicators were comparable with the same time last year (ASC003, ASC019, ASC049 and ASC050); and three of the indicators were not comparable and were reviewed at a point in time (ASC208, ASC209 and ASC211).

It was reported that the two indicators recorded annually (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) were not included within the report as the 2023-24 results would be released towards the end of the year, and would appear in the Mid-Year Scrutiny Report.

Discussion ensued on the number of younger adults (aged 18-64 years-old) who were placed in residential care and the challenging complex needs and comorbidities within this cohort. Members were informed that such placements were utilised as appropriate, however were not necessarily a placement for life, with regular reviews undertaken and alternative options explored. Members were keen to understand the complex needs of such individuals, and whether these were primarily physical or mental needs, with Members advised that it was a combination of both.

RESOLVED – That the performance information provided within the submitted report be noted.

AD22 CLIMATE CHANGE

The Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Economy submitted a report (previously circulated) to encourage the Adults Scrutiny Committee to give consideration to the revised briefing note for Scrutiny Committees drafted by the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer, in relation to the Council's commitment to tackling climate change.

The submitted report stated that, following the Local Government elections in 2023, the Climate Emergency Declaration was re-affirmed, and the Council's carbon neutral target was brought forward to 2040. Further aims to increase engagement with residents and businesses were included with the intention of reducing wider borough emissions. It was noted that a revised briefing note had been drafted by the Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer, which reminded Members that tackling climate change was a shared responsibility, and that Scrutiny had a critical role to play in these cross-cutting issues.

The submitted report highlighted that climate change as a stand-alone issue sat within the remit of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, however it was stated that everything that the Council did either had an impact on, or was impacted by, climate change, so it was important that all Scrutiny Committees ensure that everything that came before them had considered this.

Members entered into discussion on the use of on-line meetings and whether this was a proactive decision to support tackling climate change or a legacy from the coronavirus pandemic; the attendance of Members at the recent Climate Change Conference; the potential for learning from providers in terms of climate change initiatives, and the influence the authority had in terms of encouraging providers to adopt climate change schemes and initiatives.

RESOLVED - a) That Members note the advice and guidance provided by Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer in the revised briefing note.

b) That the questions outlined in the revised briefing note appear as an appendix to our Agenda, and form part of any submitted Quad of Aims, to ensure that these questions remain in the forefront of Members' mind when scrutinising reports.

c) That all internal reports coming to this Committee have a small section at the end of each report entitled 'Climate Considerations', with a brief note about any considerations which have been given, where appropriate (this can come with the qualification that the staff

within the department are not qualified in climate action).

AD23 WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

The Assistant Director, Law and Governance, submitted a report (previously circulated) which requested that Members gave consideration to the 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.

It was noted that the Agenda for the next meeting of the Adults Scrutiny Committee had a number of substantial items, and it was suggested that those items involving the attendance of external partners be taken first at the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the content of the report be noted.

ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 JANUARY 2025

AUTISM STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN UPDATE

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Adult Scrutiny Committee on the progress in relation to the National Autism Strategy and the subsequent actions within Darlington.
2. This is a joint position statement from Integrated Care Board, Tees and ESK Wear Valley Foundation trust and Darlington Borough Council, Peoples Group.

Summary

National Context

3. Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how people perceive, communicate and interact with others, although it is important to recognise that there are differing opinions on this and not all autistic people see themselves as disabled. With an estimated 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK – most people probably know someone who is autistic. In addition, there are an estimated 3 million family members and carers of autistic people in the UK ([National Autistic Society](#)).
4. Autistic people see, hear and feel the world differently to other people. Autism varies widely and is often referred to as a spectrum condition, because of the range of ways it can impact on people and the different level of support they may need across their lives. While autism is not a learning disability, [around 4 in 10 autistic people have a learning disability \(Autistic\)](#).
5. Some autistic people will need very little or no support in their everyday lives while others may need high levels of care, such as 24-hour support in residential care. People may need help with a range of things, from forming friendships, coping at school, managing at work, or being able to get out and about in the community. In this strategy, we also talk about neurodiversity, which refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. It is estimated that around 1 in 10 people across the UK are neurodivergent, meaning that the brain functions, learns and processes information differently ([Embracing Complexity Coalition, 2019](#)).
6. Legal Obligations / Statutory Framework: Autism Act 2009; Two strategies published in 2010 and 2014. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/think-autism-an-update-to-the-government-adult-autism-strategy>; 2019 - inclusion of Autism as a priority within

the NHS Long Term Plan; 2021-26 Autism Strategy; 2022 Health and Care Act.

7. The prevalence of Autism in adults is about 1.1%, with relative consistency across studies.
8. The proportion of males to females diagnosed with ASD varies across studies but always shows a greater proportion of males to females, mostly ranging from 3:1 to 5:1.
9. Almost 8 out of 10 autistic people experience mental health difficulties (Cassidy and Rogers, 2017).
10. % of autistic people with mental health problems is 4 x higher (51%) than people without (11%) (Taylor 2021).
11. More than 25% of autistic people receive two or more diagnoses of mental health problem (Taylor 2021).
12. Around 15% of autistic people (compares to 2.8% of non-autistic people) are hospitalised due to a mental health problem (Taylor 2021).
13. The prevalence of autism within an adult psychiatric outpatient service was 19% with another 5 - 10% having just sub threshold symptoms (Nyrenius et al 2022).
14. More than 6 out of 10 autistic people have considered suicide (Cassidy and Rogers) (2017).
15. More than 3 out of 10 autistic adults have attempted suicide. (Cassidy et al) (2022).
16. Autism and autistic traits are risk factors for suicidal behaviour - study showed that evidence of autism was significantly higher in those who died by suicide (11.8%) than the 1.1% prevalence of autism in the UK. When autistic traits were taken into account this rose to 41%.
17. The management and support of an autistic people and their families, partners, and/or carers incurs substantial costs to the health and social care services and the wider public sector (National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health, 2012).
18. Autism costs the country an estimated £32 billion per year, making it the single most expensive health condition, exceeding cancer, heart disease, and stroke (Buckley, 2017).
19. The total cost, including accommodation, treatment, loss of earnings, and health care, for an autistic person over their life span has been estimated to range between £1.5 million to £0.92 million for a person with or without intellectual disability, respectively (Howes, 2018).

Darlington Context:

20. The partners have developed a position statement and future actions to ensure the objectives of the National Strategy are delivered within Darlington.

Recommendation

21. It is recommended that: -

- (a) Scrutiny Members note the content of the report.
- (b) The report is shared with Children’s scrutiny.
- (c) Deliver an annual update to Scrutiny.

Joss Harbron
Assistant Director of Adult Social Care

Background Papers

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

Joss Harbron, Chris Bell, Tony Murphy, Dominic Gardner, Martin Short
 Extension: 5278 (Joss Harbron)

Council Plan	This report and activities are consistent with the aims of the council plan.
Addressing inequalities	This report and actions aim to address inequalities.
Tackling Climate Change	No impact within this report but will continue to be considered.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The report and activities will consider the effective and efficient use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	The objectives of the Darlington response to the National Autism Strategy relates to the Health and Wellbeing Priorities.
S17 Crime and Disorder	N/A
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	People with Autism, Family Carers.
Budget and Policy Framework	No impact on budget currently.
Key Decision	N/A
Urgent Decision	N/A
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers, however there may be leavers or looked after children who have autism.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

22. Not applicable.

Outcome of Consultation

23. Not applicable at present. The report is an update on the previous position from 2023. Subsequent reports will demonstrate feedback and consultation from stakeholders.

National Context

24. Autism is a lifelong developmental condition that affects how people perceive, communicate and interact with others, although it is important to recognise that there are differing opinions on this and not all autistic people see themselves as disabled. With an estimated 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK – most people probably know someone who is autistic. In addition, there are an estimated 3 million family members and carers of autistic people in the UK ([National Autistic Society](#)).
25. Autistic people see, hear and feel the world differently to other people. Autism varies widely and is often referred to as a spectrum condition, because of the range of ways it can impact on people and the different level of support they may need across their lives. While autism is not a learning disability, [around 4 in 10 autistic people have a learning disability \(Autistica\)](#).
26. Some autistic people will need very little or no support in their everyday lives while others may need high levels of care, such as 24-hour support in residential care. People may need help with a range of things, from forming friendships, coping at school, managing at work, or being able to get out and about in the community. In this strategy, we also talk about neurodiversity, which refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. It is estimated that around 1 in 10 people across the UK are neurodivergent, meaning that the brain functions, learns and processes information differently ([Embracing Complexity Coalition, 2019](#)).
27. Legal Obligations/Statutory Framework: Autism Act 2009; Two strategies published in 2010 and 2014.
 - a) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/think-autism-an-update-to-the-government-adult-autism-strategy>.
 - b) 2019 - inclusion of Autism as a priority within the NHS Long Term Plan; 2021-26 Autism Strategy; 2022 Health and Care Act.
28. The prevalence of Autism in adults is about 1.1%, with relative consistency across studies.
29. The proportion of males to females diagnosed with ASD varies across studies but always shows a greater proportion of males to females, mostly ranging from 3:1 to 5:1.
30. Almost 8 out of 10 autistic people experience mental health difficulties (Cassidy and Rogers, 2017).
31. The percentage of autistic people with mental health problems is 4 x higher (51%) than people without (11%) (Taylor 2021).
32. More than 25% of autistic people receive two or more diagnoses of mental health problem (Taylor 2021).
33. Around 15% of autistic people (compares to 2.8% of non-autistic people) are hospitalised due to a mental health problem (Taylor 2021).

34. The prevalence of autism within an adult psychiatric outpatient service was 19% with another 5 - 10% having just sub threshold symptoms (Nyrenius et al 2022)
35. Cassidy and Rogers (2017)
 - a) More than 6 out of 10 autistic people have considered suicide.
 - b) More than 3 out of 10 autistic adults have attempted suicide.
36. Cassidy et al (2022)
 - a) Autism and autistic traits are risk factors for suicidal behaviour - study showed that evidence of autism was significantly higher in those who died by suicide (11.8%) than the 1.1% prevalence of autism in the UK. When autistic traits were considered, this rose to 41%.
37. The management and support of an autistic people and their families, partners, and/or carers incurs substantial costs to the health and social care services and the wider public sector (National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health, 2012).
38. Autism costs the country an estimated £32 billion per year, making it the single most expensive health condition, exceeding cancer, heart disease, and stroke (Buckley, 2017).
39. The total cost, including accommodation, treatment, loss of earnings, and health care, for an autistic person over their life span has been estimated to range between £1.5 million to £0.92 million for a person with or without intellectual disability, respectively (Howes, 2018).

Priority Areas of Focus for the 2021-26 National Autism Strategy

40. Improving understanding and acceptance of autism within society.
41. Improving services for autistic children and young people, access to education and supporting positive transitions into adulthood.
42. Investment in Preventing Mental Health Crisis for People with Autism
43. Supporting more autistic people into employment.
44. Tackling health and care inequalities for autistic people.
45. Building the right support in the community and supporting people in inpatient care.
46. Improving support within the criminal and youth justice system.

Improving Understanding and Acceptance of Autism Within Society

47. What the strategy sets out:

- a) We will significantly improve the public's understanding and acceptance of autism and show that autistic people feel more included and accepted in their communities.
- b) We also want the public to understand how autism can affect people differently, including the difference in how autistic women and girls present, and to help change people's behaviour towards autistic people and their families.
- c) We want many more businesses, public sector services and different parts of the transport system to become more autism-inclusive, so that autistic people can access these spaces and services, just like everyone else.

48. What we are doing:

- a) Within Darlington Borough Council (DBC) Children and Young People Services we have a multi-agency steering group who have driven the changes to date and will continue to meet. This group can support the development of a multi-agency strategy.
- b) DBC People's Group have promoted Autism Awareness, Dementia Awareness and Mental Health Awareness training to ensure staff development across the directorate and wider council/wider partnership. Using Strength Based Methodologies, including [MINDSPACE - WFD Team Intranet](#) and [Relational Practice - WFD Team Intranet](#) we try to provide training, tools and resources to support the workforce.
- c) DBC People's group are currently working with staff in both Children and Adults Services, HR, the Parent Carer Forum, NEAS, and colleagues from North Yorks (in an advisory capacity) regarding the development of our own bespoke Autism Training Programmes:
 - i. Autism Awareness programme for Darlington – which will include an Ac10 module, Autism Podcasts (that include the voice of staff, Autism specialists, and the real voice of Adults, Families and Children we work with) and tools/resources.
 - ii. Autism Training for Practitioners – bespoke / advanced training for practitioners working with Adults/Children/Families.
 - iii. Content Creation – Podcasts, short films, vlogs – all capturing and promoting the voice of Darlington people.
 - iv. Experts in Practice (EXiP) – EXiP is a unique programme designed by DBC and Newcastle University research unit. It is a funded internship for staff to develop as research and training experts in chosen fields, of which Autism is a key area chosen by Darlington. We also have existing training, resources and

platforms that staff/partners have accessed/can access. Please see [page 16](#).

- v. DBC has a Welcome to the Workforce Development 'Autism' Intranet Page. Here you will find information, training, links, tools, and resources that will help DBC staff members, to help others. The page gives a direct link to the national Oliver McGowan Autism Training, which is also mandatory training in the ICB, as well as access to locally developed content.

Improving services for autistic children and young people, access to education and supporting positive transitions into adulthood

49. What the strategy sets out:

- a) We want the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) system to enable autistic children and young people to access the right support, within and outside of school.
- b) We want schools to provide better support to autistic children and young people, so they can reach their potential, and to show that fewer autistic children are permanently excluded or suspended from school due to their behavior.
- c) We will make improvements to the support autistic people get in their transitions into adulthood, so that more autistic people can live well in their own communities, find work or higher education or other opportunities. This is important in preventing more young people from avoidably reaching crisis point or being admitted into inpatient mental health services.

50. What we are doing:

- a) We are working with young people and adults to develop life skills and be able to access apprenticeships and employment – through support from Project Choice, Learning and Skills and large firms offering apprenticeships e.g. Amazon.
- b) A new free school will be built in Darlington to ensure children with special educational needs and disabilities can get the help that they need earlier. The local authority's bid for the new facility was approved by the Government and will support pupils with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Up to 48 full-time places will be provided for pupils aged 11-19 with autism and will see them benefit from a specific environment tailored to their needs with dedicated staff.
- c) **Training of education and other front-line professionals** – Working with the local authorities to determine how training can be accessed and rolled out to LA staff and education professionals – Autism in Schools is a national programme – Positively, Darlington has the highest number of schools involved in this initiative across the region and has been involved since the earliest phases of this project. A review of the commissioned SEND Outreach Services has been undertaken through 2023/24, this has included the social, communication and outreach service and is focused upon how the service respond to individual child level needs and have an integral role in the upskilling of a range of professionals. There is a growing prevalence of

Emotional Based School Avoidance for children and young people with neurodivergent needs. The needs of this group of young people will be considered as part of the broader outreach service review work.

- d) **Commencing a programme of review of the current SEND education resources bases** - Through the review programme the base at Heathfield from September 2024 will have a primary remit of supporting reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children with communication and interaction needs in response to the changed needs of children with SEND in Darlington. The base will be filled on an incremental basis each year by 8 places up to a maximum capacity of 24 places. Further joint review work in respect of the remaining basis will be undertaken throughout 2024/25, with a particular focus on the secondary school provision and opportunities for expansion in line with the presenting needs of Darlington children and young people.
- e) **Increase in public awareness through a national campaign** – the steering group in place for Children & Young People (CYP) will work collaboratively to support this national campaign. Links are already in place for promotion of services available.
- f) **Expansion of the Disabled Facility Grant Regulatory Reform Fund Policy** to widen the support that can be provided for children and adults with autism/behaviours that challenge, including the provision of safe spaces.
- g) **Multi-Agency Sleep Service** across Tees Valley and via hosting of a Sleep Service website.
- h) **CYP Neurodevelopmental pathway - Professional Consultation Line and Increase in Specialist Assessments** - Following review of the Waiting List Initiatives commissioned by the ICB and delivered by TEWV which included Reducing the backlog of Screenings by introducing a Pre-Referral Consultation approach to manage the increasing demand for referrals which evidenced the positive impacts on referrals and positive responses from the wider children's system (professionals have access to bespoke advice, support and guidance in making referrals and recommending needs-led support).

Preventing Mental Health Crisis for People with Autism

51. What the strategy sets out:

- a) **Improving Access to Mental Health Services.** The strategy emphasises the importance of timely and tailored access to mental health services for individuals with autism. It sets out plans to ensure that mainstream mental health services, including crisis care, are better equipped to support people with Autism.
- b) It includes a commitment to reduce waiting times for mental health support, particularly through **increasing early intervention** options to prevent crises from occurring or worsening.

- c) **Training and Awareness for Mental Health Professionals.** A key part of the strategy is to **enhance autism training** for mental health professionals, particularly those involved in crisis response, such as emergency care staff and crisis intervention teams. This training aims to improve professionals' understanding of autism-specific needs and communication styles, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings, and ensuring that autistic people in crisis receive compassionate and appropriate care.
- d) **Personalised Crisis Care Plans.** The strategy advocates for **personalised crisis care plans** for autistic people. These plans are meant to be developed in collaboration with individuals and their families or caregivers, considering sensory sensitivities, communication preferences, and specific stressors or triggers that may contribute to crisis situations. The goal of these personalised plans is to have a predefined response in place, helping healthcare providers better support individuals with autism in a crisis.
- e) **Autism-Friendly Crisis Intervention Services.** The strategy encourages the development of autism-friendly crisis intervention options, which may include quiet spaces, alternative modes of communication, or the option for family or a trusted person to be present during a crisis intervention.
- f) Some localities have begun implementing *safe spaces* or specific crisis services tailored for people with autism, and the strategy calls for these types of supportive interventions to be more widely available.
- g) **Community-Based Crisis Alternatives.** The strategy highlights the need for more community-based crisis alternatives, such as crisis houses, helplines, or peer support networks, where people with Autism can receive support outside of a traditional clinical setting. By expanding the types of crisis response services available, the strategy aims to reduce the need for inpatient care and to provide support in less restrictive and more comfortable environments for individuals with autism.
- h) **Support for Comorbid Mental Health Conditions.** Recognising that people with Autism often experience higher rates of comorbid mental health conditions (like anxiety and depression), the strategy calls for better screening and early intervention for these conditions within autism services.
- i) Early identification and treatment of mental health needs can reduce the likelihood of a mental health crisis, providing preventive support that addresses underlying issues before they escalate.
- j) **Data Collection and Monitoring.** The strategy includes goals to improve data collection and monitoring of mental health outcomes for people with autism, especially those who experience crises. Better data allows policymakers and service providers to understand the prevalence and causes of mental health crises within the autistic community and to make targeted improvements.
- k) This data collection extends to monitoring the outcomes of crisis interventions to ensure they are effective and appropriate for people with Autism.

- l) **Collaboration with Families and Carers.** Family members and caregivers play a crucial role in supporting autistic people, especially during crises. The strategy highlights the importance of **involving families and carers** in mental health crisis planning and intervention. It also calls for greater support for families and carers themselves, recognising that they may need guidance or respite when managing the complex needs of a loved one in crisis.

- m) **Reducing Hospital Admissions and Avoiding Inappropriate Detentions.** The strategy aims to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions and inappropriate detentions under the Mental Health Act for people with autism. By focusing on community-based care and specialised crisis intervention, the goal is to avoid situations where individuals are inappropriately held in inpatient settings, which can often exacerbate stress and anxiety.

52. What are we doing:

- a) We have recognised the high percentage of children and young people (CYP) who come onto the Neurodevelopmental pathway with needs associated with anxiety. Within DBC, CYP services have aligned the 0-19/MHST offer to the triage element of the pathway for earlier support.

- b) Darlington has a sensory offer (Sunflower programme) which is available to parents of CYP from 4-12 – increased sensory difficulties can cause anxiety. A programme is being developed for a sensory offer to the under 5's and over 12's.

- c) The Dynamic Support Register for CYP with Autism and/or a Learning Disability is now in place across the TV. Monthly multi agency meetings happen to review all CYP. All CYP on the DSR have a Key Worker.

- d) Adults Dynamic Support Register is in place across Darlington with a Care and Treatment Review process (CTR).

- e) Key Worker project – commenced August 2021 to work with families of children who have a Learning Disability and or Autism from 4-12 or who have needs associated with either diagnosis. These are more complex families whose needs are greater than those who can access support through the Family Support Service.

- f) Complex Commissioning workstream – multi agency approach to supporting the needs of our most complex CYP. Significant ACE's, trauma and behaviour underpin the needs of this cohort. The adverse experiences pilot, operated through the neurodevelopmental pathway panel has been very successful and family feedback is strong. This has now been extended for another year. Last year, 10% of children who were diverted to the adverse experience pathway returned to the neurodevelopmental pathway at the point they initially applied and underwent an assessment for ASD/ADHD. This pilot is a **Joint Commissioning** between health, social care, and education.

- g) The ICB is investing £2 million across North East and North Cumbria to work with all local authorities on a draft proposal for a MDT Team of professionals supporting children and young people at risk of out of area placement/first time entrants into care/first time entrant in youth justice (from an early point) where there is significant attachment and trauma.
- h) There is a **Professional Consultation Line** that is now well established. This means that schools can discuss cases at the request of families and ensure that referrals are appropriate and timely. This is now being funded on a recurrent basis.
- i) TEWV have developed a Trustwide Autism Service. The team have a range of functions including; training (mandatory and specific/bespoke); supervision and consultation for clinicians across all specialities; support for pathway development/reasonable adjustments; input into patient safety and risk management processes; sensory / environmental work; policy development
- j) The TEWV Autism Service have also been engaged in specific projects with inpatient services, crisis and liaison psychiatry services.

Supporting More Autistic People into Employment

53. What the strategy sets out:

- a) We will make progress on closing the employment gap for autistic people, ensuring that more people who are able and want to work can do so and that those who have found a job are less likely to fall out of work.
- b) We want more employers to be confident in hiring and supporting autistic people, and to improve autistic people's experiences of being at work.
- c) We will drive improved employer awareness of autism, so they better understand the benefits of employing autistic people and are able to make the adjustments needed to recruit and properly support them.
- d) Continue to promote better access to employment support programmes for autistic people and move forward with our plans to improve the benefits system for disabled people to ensure these better supports autistic people who are unable to work.
- e) We will continue to engage with employers through the Disability Confident Scheme. This provides advice and support to employers, and to promote the skills, talents, and abilities of autistic people, as well as other disabled people.
- f) We also want to ensure that autistic people who are unable to work can access the benefits and support they might need.

54. What we are doing:

- a) Encouraging employers through the disability confidence scheme.

b) Utilising and raising awareness of the Access to Work scheme through the Department of Work and Pensions.

c) Intensive Personalised Employment Support Programme (IPES).

Tackling Health and Care Inequalities for Autistic People

Darlington Context

55. Adults: Number and Time Waited for Diagnostic Assessment.

0-1 Month	1-2 Months	2-3 Months	3-6 Months	6-9 Months	9-12 Months	1 – 2 Years	2-3 Years	Over 3 years	Total
20	11	7	22	27	33	106	54	4	284

56. Children and Young People: Number and Time Waited for Diagnostic Assessment.

0-1 Month	1-2 Months	2-3 Months	3-6 Months	6-9 Months	9-12 Months	1 – 2 Years	2-3 Years	Over 3 years
4	5	3	18	26	90	258	63	16

57. Darlington Borough Council Adult Social Care (People with Autism Diagnosis on caseload).

Primary Support Reason	Clients
Learning Disability Support	82
Mental Health Support	15
No PSR	3
Physical Support – Personal Care Support	4
Sensory Support – Support for Visual Impairment	1
Social Support – Support for Social Isolation / Other	1
Support with Memory & Cognition	2
Total	108

58. Of the 108 people with Autism known to Adult Social Care, 63 also have an additional health condition.

59. The strategy says:

a) We will work towards our vision by tackling long diagnosis waiting times for children and young people, as well as adults.

b) We will work to improve the quality of post diagnostic support.

- c) We will take actions in the first year to improve health and care staff understanding of autism. Subject to evaluation, we will move forward with our commitment to develop Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training for all health and care staff.
- d) We will improve professionals' ability to identify autistic people across the health service so they can make necessary adjustments and develop programmes intended to improve autistic people's physical health, such as trialling autism health checks.
- e) Better understand the health inequalities faced by people with autism – to enable this LeDeR will include deaths of all autistic adults where they are notified to the programme which will enable the death to be reviewed.
- f) We want to reduce the health and care inequalities that autistic people face throughout their lives, and to show that autistic people are living healthier and longer lives.
- g) In addition, we want to have made significant progress on improving early identification, reducing diagnosis waiting times and improving diagnostic pathways for children and adults, so autistic people can access a timely diagnosis and the support they may need across their lives.

60. What we are doing:

- a) **Investment in finding new ways to reduce waiting times** – ICB investment in TEWV to double the MAAT's, national interest in our needs led pathway and use of triage, discussions on an ICB footprint around best practice. The neuro-development pathway has been exceptionally impactful supporting children to receive time support through a range of different multi-agency interventions tailored to the child and their needs.
- b) A procurement process has been underway to procure a service for 16+ pre and post diagnostic (needs led) service. In place from the first of April 25.
- c) Support the commitment to develop and roll out Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training for all health and care staff.
- d) Investment from the ICB service development fund to develop a framework for accredited providers to carry out assessment to reduce the long waiters and overall waiting list.
- e) We will improve professionals' ability to identify autistic people across the health service so they can make necessary adjustments and develop programmes intended to improve autistic people's physical health, such as trialling autism health checks.
- f) Better understand the health inequalities faced by people with autism – to enable this LeDeR will include deaths of all autistic adults where they are notified to the programme which will enable the death to be reviewed.

- g) We will continue to focus on preventing avoidable admissions, increasing the use of our Dynamic Support Register for adults.
- h) We will ensure intelligence and themes from CTRs, and Oversight Visits is used to improve people's experience of inpatient care and address gaps.
- i) Working with our Provider Market we will support the social care workforce and service design to ensure services are able to meet the needs of autistic people, embedding co-production into planning and commissioning.
- j) As part of our forward planning, we will continue to work across the wider system to maximise development and investment opportunities for both crisis and long-term community support.

Building the Right Support in the Community & Supporting People in Inpatient Care

61. The strategy says:

- a) We will achieve the targets set out in the NHS Long Term Plan to reduce the number of autistic people and people with a learning disability being admitted into inpatient mental health services.
- b) We will do so by improving the treatment of autistic people in mental health legislation to prevent people from being avoidably admitted to inpatient care and improving the provision of community mental health and crisis support.
- c) We will also improve the suitability and availability of housing support and social care.
- d) In addition, for people who do need to be in inpatient mental health settings, the quality of care will be better and more tailored to their individual needs and people
- e) will be discharged back into their communities as soon as they are well enough to leave.
- f) Investment through the LTP to prevent avoidable admissions and improve community care – including multidisciplinary teams, Keyworkers (CYP), Community Discharge grants to LA's, improving respite support for CYP.
- g) We will move forward with a number of actions to improve the quality of inpatient care, including reducing the use of restraint, seclusion, and segregation.
- h) We will invest £4 million in 2021 to 2022 to roll out the Transforming Care for Children and Young People accelerator programme. The latter involves NHS local systems, local authorities, parent carer forums and the voluntary sector working together to put in place appropriate support to reduce the number of children being permanently excluded from school.

- i) We will work with the National Body for Home Improvement Agencies to offer support to LA Disabled Facilities Grant teams and will reach out to autism charities to raise autistic people's awareness of how DFG can support autistic people.
- j) We are committed to sustainable improvement of the adult social care system and will bring forward proposals in 2021. The objectives for reform are to enable an affordable, high quality adult social care system that meets people's needs, while supporting health and care to join up services around them.
- k) We need a better understanding of the types of community support that meet autistic people's needs before and during crisis.
- l) We are also taking actions specifically aimed at improving the quality of inpatient care for autistic people who often find these settings distressing.

62. What we are doing:

- a) We will aim to reduce the number of people with autism or a learning disability in an inpatient setting. There is ICB project group whose focus is on reducing hospital admissions for people with autism or a learning disability.
- b) Investment through the LTP to prevent avoidable admissions and improve community care – including multidisciplinary teams, Community Discharge grants to LA's.
- c) We have reviewed the national guidance on Disabled Facilities Grant and widen the offer to provide adaptations as identified for children and adults with Autism to support their independence at home.
- d) To improve the culture of care across Tees Valley is commissioning training around Gloriously ordinary lives; this will include inpatient care alongside community care. The Training and subsequent training would look to improve the quality of lives for people across the region with a learning disability and autistic people. The offer will look at offering 140 places of training followed by a train the trainer's course to implement change across the region as 'Gloriously ordinary lives change maker'. The aim is to support a range of organisations who offer support to people across Tees Valley the chance to embody the essence of Gloriously Ordinary Lives and with the train the trainer, build organisations own ability and capacity to do this, rather than needing to buy more training and support every year.

Improving Support into the Criminal and Youth Justice Systems

63. The strategy says:

- a) We are clear that autistic people who come into contact with the criminal justice system should have equal access to healthcare and social care. Health and justice partners will continue to work together to improve access to assessments and referrals for support for autistic people in contact with the criminal and youth justice systems.

- b) We will improve the police and wider criminal and youth justice system staff's understanding of autism so that autistic people are more able to receive the right support, adjusted to their needs, as well as ensuring that different parts of the justice system - from prisons to courts – become more autism-inclusive.
- c) Training will be rolled out across all front-line staff.
- d) Encourage more prisons and probation areas to undertake the National Autistic Society's Autism Accreditation scheme.
- e) Explore how we can find alternatives to prosecution and custody for autistic adults and those with other vulnerabilities.

64. What we are doing:

- a) Durham Constabulary's Autism Association has funded wellbeing boxes to help support victims and witnesses who are neurodiverse when they find themselves in the unfamiliar surroundings of a police station.
- b) Liaison and Diversion (L&D) services exist in all police custody suites to identify people who have mental health, learning disability (including autism), substance misuse or other vulnerabilities when they first come into contact with the criminal justice system as suspects, defendants, or offenders. The service can then support people through the early stages of criminal system pathway, refer them for appropriate health or social care or enable them to be diverted away from the criminal justice system into a more appropriate setting, if required.
- c) Neurodiversity Managers have been employed in all NE public sector prisons.
- d) A Reconnect Service exists in all Northeast Prisons to provide care after custody for people leaving prison who have ongoing health vulnerabilities, including autism. We are also piloting a Reconnect Hub outside HMP Durham.

Improving Understanding and Acceptance of Autism within Society

65. The strategy says:

- a) We will develop and test an autism public understanding and acceptance initiative, working with autistic people, their families, and the voluntary sector. We want this initiative to help the public adapt their behaviour towards autistic people and recognise the diversity of the autistic community; that every autistic person is different.
- b) To raise the profile of neurodiversity including autism, across the Civil Service we will encourage the establishment of a neurodiversity priority for Disability and Inclusion Champions within government departments.

- c) We resumed our [‘it’s everyone’s journey’](#) campaign on 25 May 2021, which is aimed at helping the public to be more mindful of passengers, including those who are autistic, and the challenges they may face when using transport.
- d) We want to encourage businesses and organisations across the country to take steps to become more autism friendly.

66. What are we doing:

- a) We will have reviewed the national strategy against progress within Darlington and propose that we will have a reset of the Autism Strategy within Darlington: within partners including Local Authority, TEWV, Providers, Voluntary Community Sector, Community Safety, Economic Regeneration, Schools, Parent Carers Forum, Carers Services and Young Carers etc.
- b) In 2024/5 we plan to commission Inclusion North to re-establish the Autism Local Working Group and support it to meet regularly with agreed priorities and focus. The intention is to ensure a diverse, committed, and stable group that is led by both partners e.g. TEWV, ICB and DBC and Darlington residents with lived experience of autism.
- c) Inclusion North exists to make inclusion a reality for all people with a learning disability, autistic people, and their families. Inclusion means everyone living good lives as valued members of society.
- d) We work to change society so that everybody can have a good life. We raise awareness of the barriers to inclusion for people with a learning disability or autism and their families, and work to remove them.
- e) We include people with a learning disability, autistic people, families, carers, the organisations that support them and communities in our work.

This work

67. The aim of this work is to re-establish the Autism Local Working Group and support it to meet regularly with agreed priorities and focus. The intention is to ensure a diverse, committed, and stable group that is led by both council officers and Darlington residents with lived experience of autism.

The focus of this work will be to:

- 68. Engage with existing members of the working group to bring them back together across the year.
- 69. Help to establish the Autism Local Working Group in regular meetings and communications, with members working closely together on shared priorities.
- 70. Co-create a three-year autism strategy for Integrated Care Board, Tees and Esk Wear Valley Foundation Trust and Darlington Borough Council. This strategy will be co-produced

by the Local Working Group and will lay out a plan for improving life of autistic people in Darlington.

This work will include:

71. Arranging and chairing bi-monthly in-person meetings for the Local Working Group.
72. Establishing a co-chair with lived experience of autism to ensure meetings are focused on the right things and that the voice of autistic people is amplified.
73. Working alongside the co-chair to establish agendas, prep for meetings and carry out follow-up.
74. Identifying and connecting with new potential members to join the Local Working Group.
75. Facilitating an initial session with previous members of the Local Working Group and new members to establish a plan for the year.
76. This will help Darlington to fulfil its responsibilities around the national autism strategy. It will ensure that the local autism strategy is rooted in the needs and hopes of autistic residents. It will also build a sense of collective endeavour and embed the plan in all council departments.

The Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage with existing Local Working Group members to arrange initial session.• Create a calendar for bi-monthly meetings, lasting 2 hours, and establish a venue for these dates.• Identify and collectively agree a co-chair from the Local Working Group. Create a plan for working together with the co-chair for effective collaboration.• Co-chair Local Working Group meetings, create agendas and follow up each meeting.• Support the Local Working Group in the creation of a 3-year autism strategy.• Identify ways to hold the council accountable on the strategy and set review dates.• Capture data and evaluation information to understand the impact of the Local Working Group and to understand how to improve its functioning.• Drafting autism strategy and any other documents required for the Local Working Group and Partners.• Capture data and evaluation information to understand the impact of the Local Working Group and to understand how to improve its functioning.• Drafting autism strategy and any other documents required for the Local Working Group and Partners.
Time Involved
<p>Across the year this would need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9 days project worker time• 5 days of regional manager time (this would drop to 3 days for year 2 & 3)• 3 days of administrator time <p>This would cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6 meetings a year (including prep, travel time, follow up, and co-chairing the meeting itself). Each meeting lasting 2- hours long.• Initial engagement to re-establish group• Engaging with potential new members• Drafting strategy and other documents in-between meetings• Working alongside the co-chair with lived experience.

Conclusion

77. In conclusion, the *National Autism Strategy* represents a significant step toward creating a more inclusive and supportive society for people with Autism. By setting out clear aims and objectives, the strategy seeks to address the specific needs of autistic people across multiple areas, including health, education, employment, and community inclusion. At its

core, the strategy aims to reduce inequalities, improve access to services, and promote a society where autistic people can lead fulfilling and independent lives.

78. Implementing this strategy at a local level is crucial for achieving these goals. Within Darlington the local authority, health and social care providers, education providers, and employers play a central role in translating national objectives into practical, community-based support.
79. Our responsibilities involve developing autism-friendly policies, ensuring adequate training for professionals, and collaborating closely with people with Autism and their families to create tailored support plans.
80. We must also commit to ongoing evaluation and adjustment of our approaches, recognising that meeting the diverse needs of autistic people requires flexibility, innovation, and an inclusive approach.
81. The success of the *National Autism Strategy* hinges on its consistent, compassionate application at a local level with joint accountability and ensuring as a community we drive meaningful change, ensuring that people with Autism have the support they need to thrive.

82. **Climate Considerations**

There should be no impact or increase in carbon emissions in relation to the actions of this reports.

All partners will consider how to reduce emissions as part of the development of the strategy and action plan.

The proposal will have no impacts on biodiversity.

The strategy will explore how to encourage and promote active travel, healthy lifestyles and wellbeing of people with Autism.

A key aim of the strategy is to support the employment opportunities for people with Autism. There will be active exploration to develop the opportunities locally.

**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
7 JANUARY 2025**

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025/26 – 2028/29

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2025/26 to 2028/29.

Summary

2. Attached at **Appendix 1** is the MTFP report which has been approved by Cabinet as a basis for consultation at their meeting on 3rd December 2024.
3. Members received a briefing on the MTFP by the Assistant Director Resources, on 11th December 2024.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that:
 - (a) Members are requested to consider the MTFP 2025/26 to 2028/29 and forward any views and comments, in particular those in relation to the services and finances within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee, to a Special meeting of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.
 - (b) That the Chair, in consultation with the Lead Scrutiny Officers supporting this Scrutiny Committee, be given authority to agree the Minutes of this Scrutiny Committee, to enable the Minutes to be considered at a Special Meeting of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee scheduled to be held on 20th January 2025.

**Brett Nielsen
Assistant Director Resources**

Background Papers

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

Brett Nielsen: Extension 5403

Council Plan	The Council’s MTFP contributes to all priorities in the Council Plan. Consultation with Members in the MTFP contributes to the delivery of the Plan.
Addressing Inequalities	The report does not contain any proposals that impact on equality issues.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no specific climate change impact issues in this report.
Efficiency & Resources	This report contains updated information regarding efficiency savings and use of resources contained in the MTFP.
Health and Wellbeing	There are no specific issues relating to health and wellbeing in this report.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for crime and disorder.
Wards Affected	This report has no specific impact on individual wards.
Groups Affected	This report has no specific impact on individual groups.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This report does not require a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This report does not require an urgent decision.
Impact of Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. Cabinet at its meeting held on 3 December 2024, approved the attached Medium Term Financial Plan as a basis for consultation.
6. As part of consultation process, the MTFP will be presented to each of the Council’s Scrutiny Committees to discuss and consider the overall contents of the MTFP, particularly those contents in relation to the services and finances falling within the remit of that Scrutiny Committee.
7. Members are asked to forward any views and comments from this Committee to a Special Meeting of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
8. Once all the Scrutiny Committees have met, a Special Meeting of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee will be held on 20 January 2025, to agree a formal response to Cabinet on behalf of all the Scrutiny Committees as part of the consultation process. The Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees will be invited to attend this meeting to present their findings and answer any questions.

9. In view of the timescales involved in responding to the consultation, it is not possible for the individual Scrutiny Committees to formally approve their Minutes prior to the Special Meeting of the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 20th January 2024, and it is therefore being suggested that authority be given to the Chairs, in consultation with the Lead Scrutiny Officers, to agree the Minutes in advance of the next Ordinary Meetings. The Minutes will still be an item on the agenda of the next meeting for formal approval as usual.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET
3 DECEMBER 2024

**MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP)
FOR CONSULTATION**

Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Stephen Harker
Leader and all Cabinet Members

Responsible Director - Chief Officers Executive

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To propose a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2025/26 to 2028/29 for consultation, including setting a budget and Council Tax increase for 2025/26.

Summary

2. The Council continues to face significant and unparalleled financial challenges stemming from reductions in public spending between 2010 and 2019 where the Council's budget was reduced by £46m in real terms, a 36% reduction in budget. This financial position was further compounded in the aftermath of covid as demand for services rose along with an unstable economic climate, where the country saw the cost of living increasing, high inflation, income deprivation and poverty rising. It is a challenge for everyone including the Council with a spiralling increase in cost and demand for services in particular adult and children's social care and homeless with numbers of people in temporary accommodation rising significantly over the last couple of years, all of which have a direct impact on the Council's contracted expenditure.
3. The Council has previously met the challenges faced head on through value for money service delivery, shared services, economic growth, and strong financial management and has utilised built up reserves to continue to provide vital services for the residents of Darlington. However, the significant additional demand for services is putting an unprecedented pressure on affordability and despite additional savings achieved our reserves will be fully depleted by the end of 2026/27.
4. The new Government administration has recognised the significant pressure in public services and additional funding for core services was announced in the budget along with a promise of fundamental reform of how local government is funded. However, this is not a panacea, we do not yet know what this will look like or the specific impact for Darlington and given the overall government finances is unlikely to fully fill the sustainability gap we are anticipating.

5. Over two thirds of our expenditure is on Adult and Children's social care, caring for our most vulnerable residents and children. Inflation, the national living wage and interest rate levels directly impact on our adult care contracts which increased by 7.93% over the last year, in addition, since the pandemic there has been a continual rise in the demand for children's care services. We are seeing more vulnerable children with increasingly complex needs requiring help and support, there has been a 50% increase in contacts from partner agencies and people concerned for a child's welfare, a 45% increase in referrals and an 11% increase in children in our care since pre pandemic levels. These are our largest budgets, and we have a statutory requirement to provide these services, this consequently impacts on the funding available for all other Council services in particular discretionary areas which keep our town clean, vibrant and safe.
6. Darlington currently has the second lowest Council Tax in the North East and as such we cannot raise sufficient income from Council Tax charges to fund the spending pressures we face, every 1% increase in Council Tax increases revenue by approximately £0.67m. Darlington has a low tax base with 44% of our properties in Band A and 79% Band A - C, this along with the Council Tax level means we generate significantly less Council Tax than some other more affluent areas. If Darlington had the average England Band D Council Tax level, we would generate an additional £8.7m per year. This highlights the disparity in how local government is funded.
7. To protect services as far as possible and push back the impending cliff edge, a significant review and challenge of all our services has been undertaken with savings of £3.649m achieved in 2025/26, totalling £21.494m across the MTFP through back office efficiencies, restructuring, and income generation which do not affect front line service delivery in 2025/26. The savings include a transformation programme to review Business Support to improve systems and processes, and to reduce the subsidy on our Leisure and Cultural offer and facilities, which will involve spend to save initiatives, service review and increased use of technology. In addition, a Council Tax increase of 2.99%, and a 2% social care precept to help fund adult social care, has been proposed which would generate £2.003m and £1.340m respectively to help continue to provide vital services.
8. The Council Plan vision is for Darlington to be one of the best places to live, learn, work and invest in the UK, with a strong and sustainable economy, healthy and thriving communities and opportunities for all. There are three core principles running through everything we do, addressing inequalities, tackling climate change and the efficient and effective use of resources. The Council's priorities are
 - (a) Economy – a strong and stable economy and highly skilled workforce with opportunities for all.
 - (b) Homes – affordable and secure homes that meet the current and future needs of residents.
 - (c) Living Well – a healthier and better quality of life for longer, supporting those who need it most.
 - (d) Children and Young People – the best start in life, realising the potential and raising aspirations.
 - (e) Communities – safer, healthier and more engaged communities.
 - (f) Local Environment – a well connected, clean and sustainable borough.

9. This MTFP is shaped to help meet these priorities despite the financial challenges faced, by directing the resources available to the area's where most impact can be made.
Darlington has some significant inequalities across the borough from a financial as well as a health perspective. The best thing you can do to improve health is to have a good home, a good job, and a good friend. The Council is determined to address inequalities, and to have the best possible chance of doing this we need to continue to grow the Darlington economy, attract businesses and companies to the area helping to create more better paid jobs and to provide a good mix and range of homes for our residents to benefit from.
10. However, this ambition is not an overnight fix, inclusive economic growth takes time, particularly in this economic climate. We have made a great start over the last 10 years, the structural landscape of Darlington has changed, new businesses and government departments have relocated to the town bringing high quality jobs, and 315 new Council houses have been built providing good quality affordable housing. There is significant investment going into Darlington station paving the way for improved rail services for the town and wider area as well as a significant development occurring across the borough all of which boosts regeneration, job opportunities and revenue. But more needs to be done and we will allocate the resources we do have into realising this ambition.
11. This report has necessarily been prepared before the 2025/26 Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS), however on the 30 October 2024, the Chancellors budget announced additional funding for local government including.
 - (a) Core spending power increasing by 3.2% in real terms.
 - (b) £1.3bn in additional grant including £0.600m for social care.
 - (c) A targeted approach to allocating the additional funding in 2025-26 anticipated to be towards deprivation and low Council Tax raising powers.
 - (d) Extended Producer Responsibility payments guaranteed for 2025-26 on central estimates.
 - (e) An additional £0.233m in 2025-26 to prevent homelessness.
 - (f) £1bn uplift in SEND funding and alternative provision.
12. The Local Government Finance Settlement is not anticipated until late December, consequently several assumptions have been made in this draft 2025/26 Budget, and the MTFP has an eye to future years but does not seek to presume what the future will look like. It aims to ensure that the Council can set a legal budget in 2025/26 and continue to provide our core offer level of services to the residents of Darlington.
13. The Council has performed well in responding to the financial challenges over the years, taking early action to ensure that it is ahead of the curve and not therefore pushed into short term decision making. However, the overwhelming demand for services, increased contract costs linked to inflation and living wage increases is making future budgets untenable without the funding reform promised.
14. Darlington is not alone in facing these pressures, Council's across the country are struggling with the same issues which have been widely reported in the media over the last year with a significant percentage indicating the inability to balance their books. Darlington's financial pressures have been raised with the Local Government Association and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) directly.

15. The Council operates a core offer which is at a statutory service level with a small provision for discretionary services and this is the base level the new MTFP has been prepared on. Reserves have been maintained for medium term stability and this is now a crucial component of the budget strategy given the pressures faced in the coming year. The reserves will be utilised to meet the 2025/26 funding gap allowing time to understand what the review of Local Government finances will bring. This is a prudent position to ensure our statutory services are maintained along with a small proportion of discretionary which are important to the vitality of the town and residents in the borough and continue some preventative services which stop the need for more costly service provision in the future. At this juncture it would be unwise to reduce much needed discretionary and preventative services which are key to enabling our Council Plan priorities before funding levels are clarified.
16. In summary, if the recommendations are agreed, the Council can deliver a 2025/26 budget which will allow net revenue investment in Darlington and its residents of £136m and new capital investment of £97m to add to the current capital programme of £332m. It also allows time for clarification of the Government's intentions for Local Government funding reform and the impact on Darlington.

Recommendations

17. It is recommended that Cabinet approve for consultation the Revenue MTFP as set out in **Appendix 6** and the Capital Programme as set out in **Appendix 7**, including the following:
 - (a) A Council Tax increase of 2.99% plus a 2% Adult Social Care Precept to help fund social care for 2025/26.
 - (b) The Schedule of Charges as set out in **Appendix 3**.
 - (c) The efficiency savings, transformation and services reviewed proposed.

Reasons

18. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons:
 - (a) The Council must set a budget for the next financial year.
 - (b) To enable the Council to continue to plan services and finances over the medium term.
 - (c) To ensure decisions can be made in a timely manner.
 - (d) To reduce the pressures on the MTFP in the medium term.
 - (e) To ensure investment in our assets is maintained.

Chief Officers Executive

Background Papers

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

Elizabeth Davison: Extension 5830

Council Plan	The MTFP proposals direct resources to the priorities of the Council Plan.
Addressing inequalities	The MTFP proposals direct resources to assist in reducing inequalities.
Tackling Climate Change	The MTFP proposals seek to continue to support the Council's responsibilities and ambitions to reduce carbon impact in the Council and the Borough.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The MTFP proposals include savings to ensure the efficiency and effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	The report contains proposals to continue to allocate resources in support of the Council's Health and Well Being responsibilities
S17 Crime and Disorder	The report contains proposals to continue to allocate resources in support of the Council's Crime and Disorder responsibilities
Wards Affected	All wards are affected
Groups Affected	All groups are affected by the Council Tax increase.
Budget and Policy Framework	The MTFP, Budget and Council Tax must all be decided by full Council
Key Decision	The MTFP, Budget and Council Tax must all be decided by full Council
Urgent Decision	The MTFP, Budget and Council Tax must all be decided by full Council
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	Children's social care continues to be resourced to provide good outcomes for Looked after Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Background and context

19. The Council continues to face significant and unparalleled financial challenges stemming from reductions in public spending between 2010 and 2019 where the Council's budget was reduced by £46m in real terms, a 36% reduction in budget. This financial position was further compounded in the aftermath of covid as demand for services rose along with an unstable economic climate, where the country saw the cost of living is increasing, and income deprivation and poverty rising. It is a challenge for everyone including the Council with a spiralling increase in demand for services in particular adult and children's social care and homeless with numbers of people in temporary accommodation rising significantly over the last couple of years, all of which have a direct impact on the Council's contracted expenditure.
20. The Council has previously met the challenges faced head on through value for money service delivery, shared services, economic growth, and strong financial management and has utilised built up reserves to continue to provide vital services for the residents of Darlington. However, the significant additional demand for services is putting an unprecedented pressure on affordability and despite further savings being achieved our reserves will be fully depleted by the end of 2026/27.
21. Over two thirds of our expenditure is spent on adult and children's social care, caring for our most vulnerable residents and children. Inflation, the national living wage and interest rate levels directly impact on our adult care contracts which increased by 7.93% over the last year, in addition, since the pandemic there has been a continual rise in the demand for children's care services. We are seeing more vulnerable children with increasingly complex needs requiring help and support, there has been a 50% increase in contacts from partner agencies and people concerned for a child's welfare, a 45% increase in referrals which must statutorily be responded to and an 11% increase in children in our care since pre pandemic levels. These are our largest budgets, and we have a statutory requirement to provide the services, this consequently impacts on the funding available for all other Council services in particular discretionary areas which keep our town clean, vibrant and safe.
22. Darlington is not alone in facing these pressures, Council's across the country are struggling with the same issues which have been widely reported in the media over the last couple of years with several Councils indicating the inability to balance the books and either requesting exceptional financial support or issuing a Section 114 notice.
23. A fundamental review of how local government is financed (the Fair Funding Review) was announced by government back in 2019 but it has continually been postponed. The new Government administration has recognised the significant pressure in public services and additional funding for core services was announced in the budget along with the promise of fundamental reform of how local government is funded with a redistribution and multiyear settlements from 2026-27.
24. The Council's core offer budget, which is based on statutory service provision along with a small discretionary provision, is the starting position for the 2025/26 budget. Back in 2014 it was recognised that strong economic growth was needed to help the Council's overall

financial position but that it takes time to realise so we needed to maintain reserves as far as possible. This strategy to preserve reserves has worked well to date allowing time for the financial impact of the economic growth strategy to come to fruition, however, the additional demands and increased costs have escalated the financial pressures faced to unprecedented levels and whilst further significant savings have been achieved our reserves will be fully depleted by the end of 2026/27. Fundamental funding reform is therefore vital to ensure the ambitions we all have for Darlington come to fruition.

25. Income and resource levels are discussed in detail later in this paper, however as the Local Government financial settlement will not be received until late December it makes it challenging to predict expenditure and income levels moving forward. Consequently, best estimates have been used and assumptions made on the impact of inflation and demand in 2024/25 going into 2025/26 and the income and resources we will receive in future years.

Financial Analysis

Projected Expenditure

26. As noted previously the core offer budget is the level of service provision the MTFP is based upon. Estimates attached at **Appendix 1** have been prepared based on current service levels and include known pressures and the savings proposed which are summarised below and detailed in **Appendix 2**. The most significant are discussed in the following paragraphs. The assumptions used when preparing the estimates are set out at **Appendix 4**.

<u>Summary of Pressures</u>	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
Service Demand	4.469	3.917	3.599	3.544
Price Inflation	0.038	0.569	0.843	2.413
Reduced Income	0.582	0.345	0.376	0.801
Pay award	0.761	0.782	0.811	0.828
Other	0.512	0.612	0.521	0.547
Total	6.362	6.225	6.150	8.133

Pressures

27. There are some significant pressures emerging which fall into one of five categories being increased demand, reduced income, pay award, price inflation and other.
28. **Service demand** – the largest pressure area regarding increased demand in 2025/26 is Adult Services, accounting for £1.557m of the pressure, and £3.972m across the MTFP. This is a continuation of the pressure we are seeing in the 2024/25 budget in particular the growth in mental health and older people where the cases are more complex and expensive.

29. The second largest pressure is in the homelessness budget due to a substantial increase in demand and the lack of move on accommodation in Darlington. There has been a significant increase in the nights spent in emergency and temporary accommodation and consequently our contracted temporary provision is fully utilised, with the need to place people in alternative hotels and bed and breakfast provision. The shortfall in housing benefit subsidy and rent allowance is anticipated at £1.326m and £5.304m over the MTFP.
30. The Council is not alone in facing this challenge with homelessness widespread across the country. The Council is looking to build more Council housing and the recent announcements by government to remove discounts on right to buy housing will help retain Council stock. We are also looking to purchase and lease additional property to both help the financial position and give residents more stability. This however is a long term approach and will take time to implement.
31. A further demand pressure is concessionary fares which has increased by £0.373m in 2025/26 and £1.537m over the MTFP. This is an area the council has no control over.
32. **Price Inflation** – whilst the price inflation pressure in 2025/26 appears low this masks the significant increase built into last year's MTFP. In addition inflation increases significantly in future years with the largest element being mainly around ICT costs where software upgrades and the move to cloud based services for our major systems have increased substantially.
33. **Reduced Income** - the main area of reduced income in Financing Costs is due to a change in reporting requirements for the Minimum Revenue Provision and interest rates remaining relatively high. In addition there is a reduction in grant income in Local Taxation as residents move on to the universal credit system and a one off reduction in income at the Dolphin centre whilst the phase three mechanical and electrical works are completed. There has also been a reduction in cemetery and crematorium income due to market conditions and the rise of direct cremations.
34. **Pay Award** – the 2024/25 pay award was settled at a flat rate of £1,290 per full time employee (to spinal point 43 with all other employees at 2.5%). The percentage increase was therefore different depending upon base salary; however, the average increase was approximately 4.1%. The 2024/25 MTFP budgeted for a 3% increase in 2024/25 and 2% thereafter hence the pressure which is recurring each year. In addition, a provision of 3% has been included in 2025/26 given the recent above inflation increases in the National Living wage which impact on are lower pay scales.
35. **Other** – this includes several pressures across all service areas, including security which unfortunately is needed across a few of our premises to keep our staff and members of the public safe, including Customer Services, the Dolphin Centre, Crown Street Library and Hopetown due to the increase in violent presentations. There is a significant increase in external audit costs following the failure in the system and the need to rebuild the external audit function. In addition, there are the holding costs of the Wilko and former Northern Echo buildings whilst regeneration takes place.

Savings

Summary MTFP savings by Type	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
Back office efficiencies and process review keeping	-0.993	-0.861	-0.848	-0.854
Energy savings	-0.375	-0.375	-0.375	-0.375
Increased income	-1.617	-1.985	-2.023	-1.803
Other	-0.000	-1.453	-1.462	-1.462
Pressure offset	-0.133	-0.240	-0.240	-0.240
Transformation and service review	-0.531	-0.962	-1.071	-1.216
Net Summary by Type	-3.649	-5.876	-6.019	-5.950

36. To protect front line services to our residents as far as possible we continually work to maximise savings and efficiencies across the Council. In total £3.649m has been identified in 2025/26 totalling, £21.5m across the MTFP of which only a small proportion will impact on service provision.
37. **Back Office** - by reducing costs in management, back office, general housekeeping and process review, £0.993m has been identified in 2025/26, and £3.556m over the life of the MTFP. These savings come from staffing vacancies through redesign of service provision, removal of historic underspends and reduction in running costs due to partial closure of buildings and alternative ways of working.
38. **Energy** - usage has been closely monitored over the year given the substantial increase over the last few years and £1.500m in savings over the MTFP are anticipated following reduced rates and usage savings.
39. **Income** - income streams have been reviewed and anticipated an additional £1.617m in 2025/26, £7.428m over the MTFP. This includes additional grant income, fees and charges, appropriate overhead recovery, additional traded and SLA income, more efficient debt collection and rental income.
40. Included in the additional income is an increase to car parking tariffs. Given the significant financial pressure the Council faces, the difficult decision to increase car parking charges is being proposed. The proposal is to increase the rates as per the schedule in **Appendix 3**, including £1.20 per hour in short stay car parks up to a cap of £5.00 then reverting to a £1 tariff thereafter and £5 per day in long stay up to a £20 weekly ticket. This along with the additional patronage we have seen in the past year would generate an additional £0.500m per annum if introduced. This proposal is not taken lightly but will support ongoing provision of car parking services, highway maintenance works and highway schemes across the borough and is preferable to cutting discretionary services such as grass cutting, street cleaning, community safety and leisure provision.
41. **Other** – A provision for future increases in pension contributions has been released following a recent update from Durham Pension fund which indicated a healthy position with a rise in contribution rates unlikely following the forthcoming tri annual valuation.

42. **Transformation and service review** – our leisure and cultural offer and facilities are well used and loved by our residents. Our facilities have all enjoyed significant capital investment over the past few years and help Darlington be the vibrant and inclusive town it is. However, these facilities, being the Dolphin Centre, Eastbourne Sports Complex, Crown Street Library and the Hippodrome all run with a financial subsidy. A programme of transformation is looking at how this subsidy can be reduced, this will be a mixture of income generation, reducing the cost of the premises through spend to save initiatives and along with back office and process review.
43. Our successful Town Centre events programme is included in this transformation review with the aim being to maintain a full events programme by reviewing the whole budget area to see what can be done more efficiently and what adds value for money for the Town Centre and Darlington residents
44. In addition, a significant review of Business Support is currently ongoing looking to improve systems and processes through technology and automating where possible. This project is already bringing benefits to how we work and will deliver more savings over the MTFP period. Vacant posts are being held in the interim to avoid where possible redundancies. Work is ongoing on all the transformation areas and savings are profiled to increase across the MTFP period anticipated to be £0.531m in 2025/26 increasing to £1.216m in 2028/29.

Previous budget provision

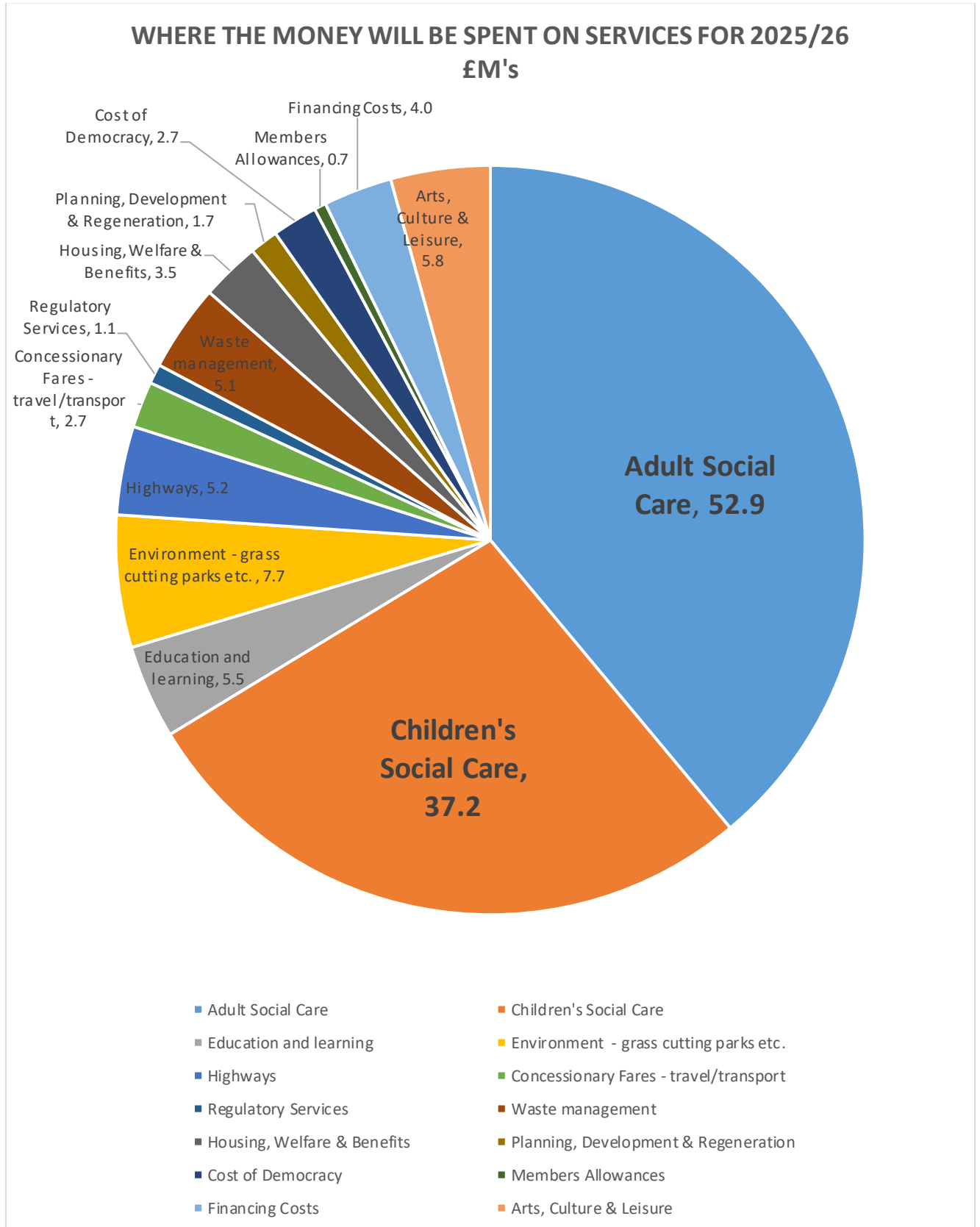
45. **Stronger Communities Fund** – the stronger communities fund was established in 2021/22 to assist in grass roots projects and initiatives in each of the elected members wards with £0.001m made available to each member to utilise as they see fit in their communities and reviewed on an annual basis. At this point no provision has been made in the estimates but the utilisation will be reviewed over the next few months with a recommendation on the future of the fund included in the final draft for recommendation in February 2025.

Total Expenditure

46. Taking the above savings, pressures and children’s sufficiency proposal into account the summarised projected expenditure is shown in the table below:

Service	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
People Services	89.070	91.748	94.301	97.510
Chief Executives Office & Economic Growth Services	1.770	1.714	1.669	1.749
Resources & Governance	26.240	26.270	26.886	27.437
Financing costs	4.028	3.706	3.632	3.925
Investment Returns - Joint Venture	(1.977)	(2.006)	(1.753)	(1.524)
Council Wide Pressures	0.663	0.677	0.693	0.706
Council Wide Contingencies	0.272	0.278	0.202	0.202
Total Expenditure	135.769	138.665	142.532	147.342

47. This proposed net investment in services of £136m in 2025/26 covers a wide range of areas from adult residential care to refuse collection, from Children’s Services to street lighting and grass cutting to our Leisure and Culture provision. The chart below shows the split of investment and as can be seen Social Care, both Children’s and Adults, are the most significant proportion of funding, accounting for two thirds of the overall budget.



Projected Income

Spending Review and Local Government Finance Settlement

48. This report has been prepared before the 2025/26 Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) which is likely to be received late December 2024, however on the 30 October 2024, the Chancellors announced additional funding for local government in the Budget including.
- (a) Core spending power increasing by 3.2% in real terms.
 - (b) £1.3bn in additional grant including £0.600m for social care.
 - (c) A targeted approach to allocating the additional funding in 2025-26 anticipated to be towards deprivation and low Council Tax raising powers.
 - (d) Extended Producer Responsibility payments guaranteed for 2025-26 on central estimates.
 - (e) An additional £0.233m in 2025-26 to prevent homelessness.
 - (f) £1bn uplift in SEND funding and alternative provision.
49. There was also a mention of a policy statement to follow in November, at the time of writing this policy statement has not been received. Consequently, several assumptions have needed to be made in this draft 2025/26 Budget, and MTFP has an eye to future years but does not seek to presume what the future will look like. It aims to ensure that the Council can set a legal budget in 2025/26 and continue to provide our core offer level of services to the residents of Darlington.
50. The draft 2025/26 – 2028/29 MTFP has therefore been based on the 2024/25 finance settlement along with assumptions made on the additional funding announced in the budget given it is the most up to date information available at the time of writing. The position will be updated for the final MTFP proposals in February. All assumptions are summarised in Appendix 4 and detailed in the sections below, however the overriding principle is that we will receive cash equivalent grant funding for all government funding streams unless otherwise stated.

Core Grant funding to Local Government

51. **Revenue Support Grant (RSG)** has become a reducing element of the Council core funding over recent years; however, it has been assumed this will continue into future years with a Consumer Price Index (CPI) linked rise in 2025/26 of 2%.
52. **Better Care Fund and Adult Social Care Support Grant**- these funds were in recognition of the significant challenges faced in the Adult Social care sector and were initially time based. They have however been included as core funding for the last couple of years so it has been assumed this funding will continue into future years on a cash equivalent basis.
53. **Services Grant** – was announced in 2021 as an un-ringfenced package of support for Local Government, the Council received £1.579m in 2022/23 reduced to £0.926m in 2023/24 and to £0.166m in 2024/25. It has been assumed this level will continue into future years on a cash flat basis.

54. **Social Care Grant** - this funding was announced in two tranches in the 2021 and 2022 spending reviews and can be spent on children's and adult social care. Whilst the 2022 grant was repurposed monies from delaying the charging reforms in 2023/24 and 2024/25 it is anticipated this funding will continue into future years given the significant pressures on the system.
55. **Additional budget funding** - £1.3bn of additional funding was announced in the budget which included £0.600m for social care. Based on the usual funding mechanisms Darlington's proportion of this would be £2.340m. There was also £0.233m for the prevention of homelessness for 2025/26 only of which on usual formula we would receive £0.140m.

Council Tax Income

56. Due to the reduction and reliance on Government funding over the last decade, Council Tax is now by far the largest single funding stream and will increase further as a percentage over the coming years representing 57% of projected resources anticipated by 2028/29. The ongoing increases reflect the Cabinet's view that income from Council Tax needs to increase to protect key service provision and enable investment in vital services. Members will recall that a 1% increase in Council Tax equates to an annual revenue of circa. £0.67m.
57. There was no announcement in the budget on either the council tax referendum limits or the social care precept however subsequently there has been a clear indication from civil servants and the government that the 3% and 2% for Council Tax and precept respectively will be maintained.
58. This MTFP assumes a Council Tax increase of 2.99% for 2025/26 reducing to 1.99% thereafter and an Adult Social Care precept of 2% for 2025/26 reverting to 1% thereafter. As can be seen in the chart in paragraph 47, Adult Social Care is by far our largest overall budget with a spend of £53m. The precept will raise circa. £1.3m which is crucial to meet the overall costs and pressure faced in this service area.
59. Darlington has the second lowest Council Tax in the North East, to put this in perspective if Darlington had the average North East Band D level the Council would generate an additional £3.3m per annum, and if we had the average England band D level, we would generate an additional £8.7m per annum.
60. Darlington has a low Council Tax Base with 44% of our properties in Band A and 79% of our homes in Band A – C, which means significantly less Council Tax is generated for each 1% raised than in some other more affluent areas and highlights the disparity in how local government is funded.
61. Despite some turbulent years in house building due to Covid, Nutrient Neutrality and high interest rates Darlington's house building remained stable, planning estimates anticipate growth levels to be an average of 514 Band D equivalent properties over the period of this plan which is a growth on the tax base of 1.4% per annum. This growth is helping to address the national housing shortage and the increasing demand for homes in Darlington. These figures have been used to prepare the estimates; clearly should this be any different

income levels will differ. The collection rate (of collectable debt) is anticipated to remain at 99% in 2025/26.

National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR)

62. The Council retains 49% of NNDR collected and can gain or lose depending on whether the net tax collected increases or decreases. The Government via the valuation office sets rateable values and the rate paid in the pound is increased each year in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The business tax-base is far more volatile than the Council Tax base and requires very close monitoring. In addition to the potential to “lose” income due to business closures, the Council also carries the risk of losing appeals by businesses against valuations.
63. Growing the economy is a key priority for the Council and the Economic Strategy gives priority to increasing business within the borough and significant effort has been put into achieving growth. This has been rewarded with a positive net increase in NNDR collection. Sites such as Symmetry Park and Central Park are all contributing to the growth and planning permission for the new Darlington Economic campus has been granted at Brunswick Street which will house His Majesty’s Treasury Department along with several other government departments including the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. This is providing a boost to the town with other employers looking to relocate to Darlington.
64. Notwithstanding these major developments, attracting businesses into the town by their very nature takes time and upfront investment and therefore is an area which needs continued prioritisation and pump prime funding so growth can continue. It needs to be remembered that net growth in NNDR collected relies on growth outstripping revaluations and reductions which can be very challenging in the current economic climate.
65. One area of uncertainty is the business rate reset. The business rates system changed in 2013, and Councils received 49% of the NNDR collected above the base level, this was to incentivise Councils to drive economic growth. The system was due to be reviewed in 2020, with the intention of resetting the baseline and a review of need across the board and a subsequent redistribution of funding. This was part of the Fair Funding Review which has been postponed for several years now.
66. The new Government have committed to a fundamental reform of local government funding system stating they will update and improve the approach to funding allocations within the Local Government finance settlement by redistributing funding to ensure that it reflects an up-to-date assessment of need and local resources. This will be a long-term programme of recovery and reform which will start with a deprivation-based approach in 2025-26 with additional funding targeted to the places that need it most. Broader redistribution of funding will follow through a multi-year settlement from 2026-27. It is anticipated these reforms will encompass business rates retention given they are a fundamental part of local government finance.
67. The in-year collection rate target for NNDR is 98.0% and as at the end of October 2024 is 68% and on track to achieve the target.

Collection Fund

68. The Collection Fund account reflects the statutory requirements for the Council to maintain a separate fund in relation to the operation of Council Tax and the Business Rates Retention Scheme (BRRS). The Fund records all the transactions for billing in respect of National Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) and Council Tax, exemptions and discounts granted, provision for bad debts and appeals and payments made to the Council's General Fund, the Police and Fire and Rescue precept authorities and Central Government.

Other Grants

69. Set out below are the estimated specific grants which as the title suggests are for specific areas of expenditure as dictated by the Government and cannot be used for other areas; the main areas being the Dedicated Schools Grant which funds Darlington's maintained schools, special educational needs and early years provision and Public Health Grant, both which are ring-fenced. These grants are included in service estimates at Appendix 1.

Description	2025/26 £m
Housing Benefits	0.421
Public Health Grant	9.523
PFI Grant	3.200
Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund	2.193
Youth Justice Board	0.285
Local Reform & Community Voices	0.057
Adult & Community Learning	1.370
Staying Put	0.056
Delayed Discharge	1.049
Garden Village	0.091
Pupil Premium	1.104
Dedicated Schools Grant	31.751
Virtual Headteacher	0.130
Heritage Lottery Fund	0.125
Domestic Abuse	0.051
Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children	1.358
Homeless	0.564
Safer Streets	0.065
Towns Fund	0.092
DFE Phonics	0.004
Bikeability	0.039
	53.528

Fees and charges

70. The proposed fees and charges of the Council are set out in Appendix 3 the increases proposed are based on the cost of providing the services and take account of inflation and market conditions. Overall, the proposed increases are anticipated to generate approximately £0.818m of income to help offset the cost of service provision.

Total Income

71. The table below summarises the Council’s estimated income for the period of this plan which thanks to continued economic growth and house building activity, and the subsequent increases in Council Tax and NNDR, confirms a much-needed increase in income given our expenditure pressures.

Resources - Projected and assumed	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
Council Tax	70.226	73.482	76.761	80.171
Business Rates retained/Top Up Grant	35.725	36.185	36.929	36.929
RSG	4.663	4.738	4.814	4.814
Better Care Fund	4.488	4.488	4.488	4.488
Adult Social Care Support Grant	3.753	3.753	3.753	3.753
Social Care Grant	7.153	7.153	7.153	7.153
Services Grant	0.166	0.166	0.166	0.166
Additional Resources In budget	2.340	2.340	2.340	2.340
Additional Homeless Grant	0.140	0.000	0.000	0.000
National Insurance Offset	1.476	1.522	1.498	1.515
Total Resources	130.130	133.827	137.902	141.329

Projected MTFP

72. Set out in the table below are the projections based on the income and expenditure analysis discussed in the previous sections, as can be seen there is a significant funding gap in each financial year. We are anticipating having £11m reserves which can be utilised to support the plan which would cover the position until 2026/27, however it is clear the financial position is unsustainable in future years if local government funding reform does not bear fruit.

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
Projected Total Expenditure	135.769	138.665	142.532	147.342
Projected Total Resources	(130.130)	(133.827)	(137.902)	(141.329)
Projected budget deficit	5.639	4.838	4.630	6.013

Revenue Balances

73. The projected revenue outturn for 2025/26 detailed at **Appendix 5**, after taking into account the Risk Reserve of £6.0m, it is anticipated we will have £11.0m of reserves which will be fully utilised at the end of 2026/27 and as previously mentioned not a sustainable position if funding is not forthcoming. Significant savings and efficiencies have been found £3.7m for 2025/26 as noted above, through service redesign, back office efficiencies, economic and income growth and a review of fees and charges, however without cutting all our discretionary and preventative services, those which help to keep our borough clean, safe, healthy and vibrant and which are a key tool in economic growth and prevent escalation of future costs we are unlikely to meet our funding gap in 2027/28.
74. The Council has reviewed its earmarked reserves, and £0.220m held as a contingency in Direct Payments for redundancies, which has not been called upon for many years, can be released.

Revenue Balances	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
Opening balance	10.979	4.910	0.072	(4.558)
Increase in Risk Reserve	(0.650)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Release of Earmarked Reserves	0.220	0.000	0.000	0.000
Contribution to/(from) balances	(5.639)	(4.838)	(4.630)	(6.013)
Closing balance	4.910	0.072	(4.558)	(10.571)

Capital Expenditure

75. The Council has an extensive capital programme with significant resources invested to purchase, improve, protect, and maintain our assets, to enable the Council to deliver its priorities, for example purchasing land to enable road improvements or investing in modernising school buildings and housing. The Council continues to deliver a significant capital investment programme in the main funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and grant or other external funding which is targeted at specific schemes and programmes such as Transport and Schools. Furthermore, investment from the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) along with other external funding sources are being used for economic growth initiatives.
76. The Council can also supplement these funding sources with its own resources such as capital receipts or prudential borrowing where there is a need, however as capital receipts are limited, and prudential borrowing comes with future revenue implications there must be a strong case for doing so.
77. In recent years there has been acceleration of economic investment some of which is funded or has been pump primed by the Council; examples of such schemes include key road infrastructure that facilitated developments at Symmetry Park, and Central Park that now houses the College, two University buildings, the National Biologics Centre and two

Business Incubator buildings. The Council owned and funded Feethams House in the Town Centre has been the catalyst in attracting the Darlington Economic Campus, and recent Town Centre investment funded from the Towns Fund and Indigenous Growth Fund are both reinvigorating key parts of the Town Centre and importantly enabling the Council to be well positioned for the future and to reshape the Town through its next phase of private sector redevelopment. The Council’s Investment Fund and Economic Growth Investment Fund are vital in helping to stimulate more private sector economic investment across the town that ultimately increases business rates and contributes to the finances of the Council thereby helping to fund vital services

78. The current capital programme stands at £332m as summarised in Table 1 below. The programme is monitored monthly and reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis; the latest available monitoring report for 2024/25 was presented to Cabinet on 5 November 2024 and noted there was a projected £0.485m underspend on the approved capital programme.

Table 1

Area	Construction				Non construction	Capital investment fund	Housing New Build not yet allocated	Total
	Live Schemes 75k & Over	Annualised Schemes	Completed Schemes awaiting review	Live Schemes under 75k				
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Housing	43.842	35.633	0.000	0.033	1.705	0.000	11.840	93.053
Economic Growth	49.491	0.080	0.440	1.034	7.010	49.223	3.476	110.754
Highways/Transport	65.912	13.501	10.081	1.347	1.741	1.877	1.512	95.971
Leisure & Culture	25.040	0.125	2.545	0.297	0.000	0.550	0.000	28.557
Education	0.000	0.225	0.000	0.307	0.079	1.124	0.290	2.025
Adult Social Care	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.071	0.000	0.000	0.071
Other	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.771	0.000	0.000	1.771
Total	184.285	49.564	13.066	3.018	12.377	52.774	17.118	332.202

79. In addition to the current agreed programme the Council looks ahead to future capital requirements based on the principles of the capital strategy. A four-year timeframe has been adopted to fall in line with the revenue Medium Term Financial Plan. Attached at **Appendix 7** are the priority proposals for addition to the plan along with the funding methods. Most schemes are focused on ‘Housing and Transport, funded via the HRA and government grants respectively; there are also a number of Council funded corporate schemes that have already been approved.

80. The following paragraphs describe the major elements of the capital programme priorities for approval. Specific scheme funding release will be subject to detailed reports to Cabinet.

Corporate Schemes – funding required.

81. As noted previously the Council can supplement government capital funding, albeit options are limited in the current financial climate. Funding can come from prudential borrowing, repaid via revenue, which puts additional pressure on the revenue account or from capital receipts. Given the financial position of the Council only schemes that are a

health and safety risk or that are self-funding have been considered while there is uncertainty over the overall funding envelope.

82. The risk assessed usable capital receipts over the next four years are in the region of £13m although they are not guaranteed so caution needs to be taken when allocating.
83. There are likely to be many competing priorities against the available resources for both regeneration and refurbishment these schemes will emerge over the coming year/s. At this stage Members are requested to make capital provision for one scheme with a total value of £0.250m, which will be subject to a full report to Cabinet in due course, this is:
- (a) **Capitalised repairs - £0.250m** – £0.250m is required for repairs on the Council building stock in 2028/29 to ensure it is fit for purpose. This is a rolling programme, and funding has already been agreed for 2025/26 – 2027/28. Details on specific areas of spend will be brought to Cabinet for consideration.

Government Funding

84. Set out below are details of the levels of Government funding available for investment by the Council in 2025/26 and an outline of the proposed use of these funds.

	2025/26 £m
Children’s Services	
School Condition Allocation	0.067
Transport	
Local Transport Plan	3.068
Other	
Disabled Facilities Grant	1.160
Total Capital Grant Available	4.295

School Condition Allocations

85. The Local Authority now only receives school condition funding for Maintained Schools. Maintenance funding for Academies is available through other routes. The funding received by the Local Authority will be spent in line with key priorities identified with each maintained school through the locally agreed asset management planning (LAMPA) process, carried out each January. There are no strict spend deadlines for these small-scale condition related projects which are prioritised and completed as funding becomes available.

Transport and Highways

86. A new Local Transport Plan for the Tees Valley was endorsed by the Tees Valley Cabinet in 2021. This will help set the spending plans for the funding allocations from the Department for Transport and from the Devolution deal. The Integrated Transport Programme (ITP) of TVCAs Investment plan identifies £256.7m of investment over the next 10 years. There will be projects and initiatives delivered in Darlington from this fund.
87. The new Tees Valley Local Transport Plan has a number of accompanying documents that set the strategy and vision for different modes of transport. Each Local Authority is required to produce a Local Improvement Plan, which will effectively replace the local authority Local Transport Plan. These plans will cover local priorities and maintenance requirements. Prior to this year the Council received funding via TVCA that was based on needs formula. However, all the funding has now been merged into the new City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), which is a 5-year allocation of funding. The Tees Valley have been allocated £310m. The details of this allocation have been finalised and the Council has been awarded £15.340m over the 5 years to 2026/27. The annual amount of £3.068m is based on the following breakdown which includes £0.893m for the Integrated Block, £1.206m for the Highways Maintenance Block plus £0.969m for the Pothole action programme. In the Budget 2024 a further £500m was pledged nationally for Road Maintenance, the detail of the allocation to Darlington is yet to be announced.

Disabled Facility Grants

88. These grants are available if you are disabled and need to make changes to your home with examples being:
- (a) Widen doors and install ramps,
 - (b) Improve access to rooms and facilities – e.g., stair lifts or a downstairs bathroom,
 - (c) Provide a heating system suitable for your needs, and
 - (d) Adapt heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use.

Housing

89. All Housing capital schemes are funded fully from the Housing Revenue Account. The priorities identified through the Housing Business Plan will be funded from the estimated capital resources for 2025/26. Further detail is given in the Housing Revenue Account financial plan but in summary includes:

- (b) Adaptations and lifts - £0.150m
- (c) Heating Replacement - £1.325m
- (d) Structural Works - £0.400m
- (e) Lifeline Services - £0.310m
- (f) Repairs before Painting - £0.068m
- (g) Roofing and Repointing work - £1.000m
- (h) Garages - £0.050m
- (i) External Works - £0.210m.
- (j) Pavements - £0.028m
- (k) Window & Door Replacement - £1.495m
- (l) Internal planned maintenance (IPM) - £3.600m
- (m) Communal Works - £0.200m
- (n) Energy Efficiency Improvements - £4.020m
- (o) New Build housing - £4.090m
- (p) Fees - £0.312m

Consultation

90. This report will be available for public viewing from the 25 November with official consultation running from 3 December 2024 to 19 January 2025.

Conclusion

91. The Council has faced significant financial challenges over the last decade, with significant reductions in government funding followed by the financial instability during the pandemic, but to date has risen to these challenges well which has previously enabled a balanced MTFP.
92. 2024 has presented further challenge with increased demand for services particularly in social care where complexity and costs are rising significantly and homelessness which has seen an unprecedented demand with nights spend in temporary accommodation rising by 137% year on year.
93. The future of Local Government financing is still uncertain; there have been several Councils issuing a Section 114 notice and even more requesting Exceptional financial support with evidence of more to come if funding isn't fundamentally reviewed and a reset undertaken to match need with resource. The Government have committed to do this during 2025/26 with a multi year settlement promised in 2026/27.
94. The Council can deliver a balanced position until 2026/27 utilising reserves as per our financial strategy, however there is a significant annual budget deficit which is not sustainable. Unless additional government funding is forthcoming the Council will need to make some very hard decisions on the future of our discretionary services which residents value and preventative services which could lead to the escalation of costs in statutory service provision, and decisions on how and what will be delivered in the coming years.
95. Planning beyond the current year is extremely difficult, given the uncertainty around future funding and the review of the new Local Government financial system. Current planning suggests reserves will be depleted in 2026/27 and there will be a budget deficit of £4.6m the year after, however for the reasons above, this will certainly change. At this

stage it is not possible to know whether this will be a positive or negative position.

96. In summary, the Council continues to face significant financial challenges. The savings identified in this MTFP and the estimated additional funding from the Budget announcement have reduced the ongoing annual sustainability gap. Due to the previous actions to protect reserves where possible, the Council can afford a 2025/26 budget and have reserves available to meet the funding requirement while the Government's review of local government finance takes place. If no funding is forthcoming making savings to meet the gap will be extremely challenging, there are no easy options without significantly reducing our discretionary services and preventative services which as previously highlighted assist towards making our Town, clean, safe, vibrant and a place where people want to live and work, and businesses want to relocate to.
97. As the Council's Statutory Chief Financial Officer, the Executive Director of Resources and Governance must advise the Council on the robustness of the budget and adequacy of reserves. In assessing the robustness of the estimates, the Chief Finance Officer has considered the general financial standing of the Council; the underlying budget assumptions in the financial strategy; the adequacy of budget monitoring and financial reporting in place; the assumptions made on budget pressures and savings proposals; the adequacy of the council's internal control systems relying on the assurance statements provided in the Annual Governance Statement for the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts; and the level of reserves to cover any potential financial risks faced by the Council.
98. The budget presented to Members in this report has been based on the most accurate information available at the time of writing and the assumptions made based on the interpretation of the Budget 2024 announcement, on that basis the Director is confident that they are an accurate reflection of the Council's financial position. Notwithstanding this there is a significant degree of uncertainty about the future economic position and Local Government funding so the position presented whilst as accurate as possible will change, however at this juncture I cannot be sure if that will be for the better or worse.
99. General Fund reserves are adequate for the coming financial year; however, the Council is carrying a significant financial risk over the lifetime of the plan with an unsustainable annual deficit which will need to be met from changes in service provision and/or increased income if no further government funding is realised. It is essential we maximise income where possible, ensure we are providing our services in the most efficient manner, and address the growing pressures in social care through transformation, as the Council needs to preserve reserves and allow as much time as possible to reduce the ongoing annual funding gap.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Detailed Revenue Estimates 2025/26
Appendix 2	Budget Pressures/Savings
Appendix 3	Fees and Charges Proposals 2025/26
Appendix 4	Assumptions used to prepare estimates
Appendix 5	Projected Revenue Outturn 2024/25
Appendix 6	Proposed MTFP 2025/26 to 2028/29
Appendix 7	Capital Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2028/29

This page is intentionally left blank

REVENUE ESTIMATES 2025/26 -SUMMARY

Appendix 1

	2024/25	2025/26			
	Net Budget	Gross Budget	Income	Grants	Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
People Group	85,498	158,154	(16,993)	(52,091)	89,070
Services Group	26,965	64,590	(38,121)	(229)	26,240
Resources & Governance Group	14,355	48,369	(31,641)	(1,025)	15,703
Chief Executive Office & Economic Growth Group	1,980	4,259	(2,306)	(183)	1,770
Group Totals	128,798	275,372	(89,061)	(53,528)	132,783
Financing Costs	3,547	4,028	0	0	4,028
Investment Returns - Joint Ventures	(1,517)	(1,977)	0	0	(1,977)
Council Wide	871	663	0	0	663
Contingencies	202	272	0	0	272
Grand Total	131,901	278,358	(89,061)	(53,528)	135,769

PEOPLE GROUP - Revenue Estimates 2025/26

	2024/25	2025/26			
	Net Budget	Gross Budget	Income	Grants	Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Executive Director of People	611	636	0	0	636
Children & Adult Services					
Transformation & Performance	920	865	(55)		810
Business Support	1,722	1,758	(12)		1,746
Children's Services					
Children's Services Management & Other Services	659	672	0	0	672
Assessment Care Planning & LAC	4,548	5,007	0	(389)	4,618
First Response & Early Help	3,452	3,623	(31)	0	3,592
Adoption & Placements	21,186	21,968	0	(1,025)	20,943
Disabled Children	1,484	1,858	(239)	0	1,619
Youth Offending	294	737	(132)	(285)	320
Quality Assurance & Practice Improvement	138	240	(101)	0	139
Development & Commissioning					
Commissioning	2,447	2,412	(215)	(94)	2,103
Voluntary Sector	293	349	0	(57)	292
Education					
Education	772	36,501	(2,228)	(33,404)	869
Schools	0	4,155	0	(4,155)	0
Transport Unit	3,111	3,413	(52)	0	3,361
Public Health					
Public Health	0	9,523	0	(9,523)	0
Adult Social Care & Health					
External Purchase of Care	36,276	53,102	(10,616)	(3,076)	39,410
Intake & Enablement	727	3,208	(2,473)	0	735
Older People Long Term Condition	1,839	2,393	(303)	0	2,090
Physical Disability Long Term Condition	14	33	(27)	0	6
Learning Disability Long Term Condition	2,253	2,350	(19)	0	2,331
Mental Health Long Term Condition	1,227	1,702	(474)	0	1,228
Service Development & Integration	1,049	1,060	0	(83)	977
Workforce Development	476	589	(16)	0	573
Total People Group	85,498	158,154	(16,993)	(52,091)	89,070

SERVICES GROUP - Revenue Estimates 2025/26

	2024/25	2025/26			
	Net Budget	Gross Budget	Income	Grants	Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Executive Director Environment, Highways & Community Services	184	189	0	0	189
<u>Transport & Capital Projects</u>					
AD Transport & Capital Projects	111	115	0	0	115
Building Design Services	63	601	(622)	0	(21)
Capital Projects	440	689	(295)	0	394
Car Parking R&M	612	613	0	0	613
Concessionary Fares	2,297	2,713	(2)	0	2,711
Flood & Water Act	291	90	0	0	90
Highways	4,461	5,306	(1,153)	(39)	4,114
Highways - DLO	(437)	7,867	(8,230)	0	(363)
Investment & Funding	494	171	(74)	0	97
Sustainable Transport	194	172	(73)	0	99
<u>Community Services</u>					
AD Community Services	99	155	0	0	155
Allotments	19	29	(8)	0	21
Building Cleaning - DLO	47	394	(365)	0	29
Cemeteries & Crematorium	(821)	1,157	(1,873)	0	(716)
Dolphin Centre	1,000	4,686	(3,634)	0	1,052
Eastbourne Complex	36	270	(237)	0	33
Hopetown Darlington	380	2,598	(2,004)	(125)	469
Hippodrome	228	5,718	(5,560)	0	158
Indoor Bowling Centre	31	20	0	0	20
Libraries	946	1,077	(41)	0	1,036
Move More	31	157	(118)	0	39
Outdoor Events	522	495	(30)	0	465
Community Catering - DLO	82	265	(265)	0	0
Culture and Heritage Fund	124	125	0	0	125
Street Scene	6,428	8,942	(2,160)	0	6,782
Transport Unit - Fleet Management	57	67	(82)	0	(15)
Waste Management	4,117	4,662	0	0	4,662
Winter Maintenance	618	667	(25)	0	642
<u>Community Safety</u>					
CCTV	284	507	(199)	0	308
Community Safety	891	919	(100)	(65)	754
General Licensing	0	195	(195)	0	0
Parking	(2,049)	222	(2,681)	0	(2,459)
Parking Enforcement	17	314	(294)	0	20
Private Sector Housing	139	152	(27)	0	125
Stray Dogs	53	104	(15)	0	89
Taxi Licensing	36	218	(218)	0	0
Trading Standards	260	281	(6)	0	275
<u>Building Services</u>					
Construction - DLO	(366)	6,873	(7,235)	0	(362)
<u>Corporate Landlord</u>					0
Corporate Landlord	4,841	4,585	(300)	0	4,285
<u>General Support Services</u>					
Works Property & Other	76	78	0	0	78
<u>Joint Levies & Boards</u>					
Environment Agency Levy	129	132	0	0	132
Total Services Group	26,965	64,590	(38,121)	(229)	26,240

Resources & Governance Group - Revenue Estimates 2025/26

	2024/25	2024/25			
	Net Budget	Gross Budget	Income	Grants	Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Executive Director Resources & Governance	136	234	(94)	0	140
Resources					
AD Resources	120	127	0	0	127
Financial Services	1,663	2,120	(512)	0	1,608
Financial Assessments & Protection	336	403	(43)	(40)	320
Xentrall (D&S Partnership)	2,028	2,806	(699)	0	2,107
Human Resources	809	872	(161)	0	711
Health & Safety	200	252	(47)	0	205
Head of Strategy Performance & Communications					
Communications & Engagement	1,177	1,243	(188)	0	1,055
Systems	1,281	1,229	(3)	0	1,226
Law & Governance					
AD Law & Governance	136	140	0	0	140
Complaints & FOI	380	344	0	0	344
Democratic Services	1,381	1,594	(37)	0	1,557
Registrars	(26)	270	(310)	0	(40)
Administration	550	692	(94)	0	598
Legal	1,768	2,079	(179)	0	1,900
Procurement	195	293	(40)	0	253
Coroners	321	334	0	0	334
Xentrall Shared Services					
ICT	811	1,016	(204)	0	812
Maintenance					
Maintenance DLO	(684)	7,448	(8,166)	0	(718)
Housing & Revenues					
Local Taxation	473	1,060	(554)	0	506
Rent Rebates / Rent Allowances / Council Tax	(132)	20,092	(19,031)	0	1,061
Housing Benefits Administration	606	1,157	(20)	(421)	716
Customer Services	324	457	(201)	0	256
Homelessness	347	1,797	(904)	(564)	329
Service, Strategy & Regulation and General Services	155	310	(154)	0	156
Total Resources & Governance Group	14,355	48,369	(31,641)	(1,025)	15,703

CHIEF EXECUTIVES OFFICE & ECONOMIC GROWTH - Revenue Estimates 2025/26

	2024/25	2025/26			
	Net Budget	Gross Budget	Income	Grants	Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Chief Executive					
Chief Executive	216	222	0	0	222
Darlington Partnership	101	196	(81)	0	115
AD Economic Growth					
AD - Economic Growth	155	194	0	0	194
Building Control	192	392	(223)	0	169
Consolidated Budgets	194	46	0	0	46
Development Management	52	786	(721)	0	65
Economy	317	361	0	(92)	269
Emergency Planning	105	97	0	0	97
Environmental Health	351	402	(28)	0	374
Place Strategy	724	713	(26)	(91)	596
Property Management & Estates	(427)	850	(1,227)	0	(377)
Total Chief Executives Office & Economic Growth	1,980	4,259	(2,306)	(183)	1,770

Analysis of Pressures/Savings	Estimate 25/26 £m	Estimate 26/27 £m	Estimate 27/28 £m	Estimate 28/29 £m
Savings - Back Office				
Learning Disabilities - Reduced contingency needed within Direct payments	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.100)
Economic Growth - Reduced running costs across services	(0.125)	(0.126)	(0.126)	(0.126)
People Services - Reduced running costs across services	(0.091)	(0.060)	(0.060)	(0.064)
Council Wide - Reduced running costs across services	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.054)
Customer Services - Reduced running costs	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.049)	(0.047)
Resources & Governance - Reduced running cost across services	(0.073)	(0.062)	(0.045)	(0.049)
Secretarial Support - Reduction in staffing through natural wastage	(0.021)	(0.043)	(0.044)	(0.044)
Mayoral Budget - Efficiencies in running costs	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Communications - Changes to the Community Survey	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Town Hall & Central House - Savings in cleaning & waste disposal	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.046)
Refuse Collection - 26/27 no additional round and no borrowing for wheeled bins	(0.280)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.100)
Services - Reduced running costs across services	(0.138)	(0.205)	(0.207)	(0.207)
	(0.993)	(0.861)	(0.848)	(0.854)
Savings - Energy				
Corporate Landlord - Reduced utility prices	(0.325)	(0.325)	(0.325)	(0.325)
Highways - Reduced utility prices	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.050)
	(0.375)	(0.375)	(0.375)	(0.375)
Savings - Increased Income				
Adults - Invest to save increased recovery of bad debt	(0.087)	(0.089)	(0.091)	(0.092)
Estates - Increased income from Feethams House	0.0000	(0.044)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Building Control - Increase in fees & charges	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.030)
People Services - Changes in grant funding	(0.201)	(0.207)	(0.214)	(0.214)
Housing - Changes in grant funding	(0.042)	(0.043)	(0.044)	(0.044)
Children's - Matching of other LA charges for placements in DBC services	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.067)
Investment Returns - Reprofile JV income	(0.149)	(0.256)	(0.301)	(0.072)
Revenue & Benefits - Additional income	(0.098)	(0.113)	(0.128)	(0.137)
Revenue & Benefits - Increase in fees & charges	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Resources & Governance - Increased recharges for services	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Communications - Additional income from billboard	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Registrars - Increase in fees and charges	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Car Parking - Continued strong patronage to reflect current income	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.050)
Services - Additional building cleaning service level agreement income from schools	0.0000	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.024)
Central Park - Service charge recovery	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.050)
Building/Highway Design - Increased recovery from schemes	(0.118)	(0.119)	(0.120)	(0.120)
Highways - Increased fees and charges to developers	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.045)
Highways - Increased funding for highway schemes	(0.250)	(0.250)	(0.250)	(0.250)
Car parking - Increase in fees and charges	(0.298)	(0.450)	(0.450)	(0.450)
Community Safety - Increased collection of income	(0.075)	(0.093)	(0.088)	(0.086)
	(1.617)	(1.985)	(2.023)	(1.803)
Savings - Other				
Contingency - Release of pension fund contingency for three years	0.000	(1.453)	(1.462)	(1.462)
	0.000	(1.453)	(1.462)	(1.462)
Savings - Offset Pressures				
Homeless - Increased accommodation for homeless people	(0.133)	(0.240)	(0.240)	(0.240)
	(0.133)	(0.240)	(0.240)	(0.240)
Savings - Transformation Projects				
People Services - Business Support review of practices	(0.085)	(0.170)	(0.170)	(0.170)
Hippodrome - Reduction in subsidy	(0.150)	(0.250)	(0.275)	(0.300)
Dolphin Centre - Reduction in subsidy	(0.200)	(0.350)	(0.400)	(0.500)
Eastbourne Sports Complex - Reduction in subsidy	(0.020)	(0.050)	(0.080)	(0.100)
Libraries - Service review and efficiencies	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Events - Service review and efficiencies	(0.068)	(0.133)	(0.136)	(0.136)
	(0.531)	(0.962)	(1.071)	(1.216)
TOTAL SAVINGS	(3.649)	(5.876)	(6.019)	(5.950)
PRESSURES				
Increased Demand				
Adults - Packages of Care - Increased overall packages costs	1.476	1.070	0.757	0.540
Adults - Other service demand pressures	0.081	0.016	0.016	0.016
Children's - Packages of Care - Increased overall packages costs	0.440	0.353	0.249	0.427
Children's - Other service demand pressures	0.102	0.119	0.152	0.100
Education - Education Psychology, net of traded income	-0.027	0.009	0.057	0.056
Education - Additional SEND Transport routes	0.122	0.072	0.062	0.062
Homeless - Increase in Board & Lodgings	0.005	0.082	0.082	0.082
Revenues & Benefits - Increased postage requirements	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035
Homeless - Loss of Housing Benefit Subsidy	1.326	1.326	1.326	1.326
Children's Legal Fees - Increased complexity and demand of cases	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.050
Postage - Increase postage requirements	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040
Concessionary Fares - Increased patronage and inflationary pressures	0.373	0.380	0.388	0.396

Waste Disposal - Increased growth from new builds	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.024
Waste Disposal - Changes in legislation and increased waste tonnages	0.320	0.329	0.339	0.350
Street Scene - Increased service to new build property	0.010	0.020	0.030	0.040
Tree Team - Additional borough wide tree inspections.	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000
	4.469	3.917	3.599	3.544
Price Inflation				
Adults - Change in budgeted inflation from 24/25 MTFP	(0.200)	(0.094)	(0.046)	1.213
Economic Growth - Contractual inflation & fixed rental income	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.040
Children's - Change in budgeted inflation from 24/25 MTFP	(0.067)	0.050	0.048	0.226
Contingencies - Pay inflation impact on Apprentice Levy	0.070	0.076	0.000	0.000
Education - Contractual inflation	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006
Resources & Governance - Contractual inflation	0.025	0.025	0.026	0.026
Xentrall ICT/Agresso - Contractual Inflation	0.080	0.380	0.680	0.680
Services - Contractual inflation & fixed rental income	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.090
Waste Disposal - Contractual inflation	0.091	0.093	0.096	0.099
Stray Dogs - New requirement for kennelling fees	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.033
	0.038	0.569	0.843	2.413
Reduced Income				
Estates - Rent reviews and rent slippage	0.000	0.000	0.031	0.031
Children's - Ending/Change of distribution of grants	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.051
Financing Costs - Lower investment income	0.306	0.167	0.164	0.457
Revenues & benefits - Reduction in Government Grant	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.181
Cemeteries & Crematorium - Changes in market, more local facilities and direct cremations	0.074	0.076	0.079	0.081
Dolphin Centre - Lost income during Phase 3 M&E works	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000
	0.582	0.345	0.376	0.801
Other				
Economic Growth - Restructure of management	0.035	0.035	0.036	0.037
Economic Growth - Short term holding costs of NEB/Wilko Buildings	0.185	0.260	0.150	0.150
Revenues & Benefits - Staff changes	0.030	0.040	0.046	0.059
Audit Fees - Increases following PSAA procurement	0.150	0.158	0.165	0.172
Legal & Procurement - Staff changes	0.026	0.029	0.030	0.031
Services - Additional security at Leisure & Cultural premises	0.086	0.090	0.094	0.098
	0.512	0.612	0.521	0.547
Pay Award				
Pay Award 2024/25 - Additional cost of agreed award	0.049	0.056	0.070	0.072
Pay Award 2025/26 - Additional 1% to cover estimated pay award	0.712	0.726	0.741	0.756
	0.761	0.782	0.811	0.828
TOTAL PRESSURES	6.362	6.225	6.150	8.133
Total Net Pressures	2.713	0.349	0.131	2.183

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES 2025/26				
Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
LEARNING SKILLS - LEARNING FOR LIFE				
Fees Policy: August 2024 to July 2025 (Next Review July 2025) Full Fees (including enrolment and tuition fees) per hour	L	3.00	3.00	NIL
Please see APPENDIX 3a for full Fees Policy 2024 - 2025				
REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS				
The following fees do not incur VAT				
Marriages				
Entering a Notice of Marriage or Civil Partnership	N			
For a Registrar to attend a Marriage at the Register Office	N			
Civil Partnership Registration	N			
Incumbents for every Entry Contained in Quarterly Certified	N			
Copies of Entries of Marriage	N			
Registrars fee for attending a marriage at a registered building or for the housebound or detained	N			
Superintendents Registrar fee for attesting a notice of marriage away from his office for housebound or detained	N			
Superintendents Registrar fee for attending the marriage of the housebound or detained	N	These charges set nationally by Statute and will be charged at the advised rate for 2024/25	These charges set nationally by Statute and will be charged at the advised rate for 2025/26	
Certification for Worship and Registration for Marriages				
Place of Meeting for Religious Worship	N			
Registration of Building for Solemnisation of Marriage	N			
Certificates issued from Local Offices				
Standard Certificate (SR)	N			
Standard Certificate (RBD) (at time of Registration)	N			
Standard Certificate (RBD) (after Registration)	N			
Short Certificate of Birth (SR)	N			
Short Certificate of Birth (RBD)	N			
Certificates of Civil Partnership (at time of Ceremony)	N			
Certificates of Civil Partnership (at later date)	N			
General Search fee	N			
Each Verification	N			
Civil Partnership Ceremony				
All Ceremonies – Approved Premises				
Application Fee for licence as an approved venue (valid for 3 years)	N	1,750.00	1,925.00	
Fee for Attendance - All days including Bank Holidays	L	610.00	670.00	
Non-refundable booking fee (inclusive of VAT)	L	50.00	55.00	
All Ceremonies – Town Hall				
The Oak Room (Monday to Saturday)	L	325.00	360.00	
The Council Chamber Foyer (Monday to Saturday)	L	147.00	165.00	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
REGISTER OF ELECTORS, OPEN REGISTER AND MONTHLY UPDATES - SALE				
The following fees do not incur VAT.				
Register – Printed Form	N	10.00	10.00	
Per 1,000 Names – Printed	N	5.00	5.00	
Register – Data Form	N	20.00	20.00	
Per 1,000 Names – Data	N	1.50	1.50	
LIST OF OVERSEAS ELECTORS – SALE				
The following fees do not incur VAT.				
List – Printed Form	N	10.00	10.00	
Per 1,000 Names – Printed	N	5.00	5.00	
List – Data Form	N	20.00	20.00	
Per 1,000 Names – Data	N	1.50	1.50	
MARKED COPY OF THE REGISTER OF ELECTORS AND MARKED ABSENT VOTERS LIST - SALE				
The following fees do not incur VAT				
Register – Printed Form	N	10.00	10.00	
Per 1,000 Names – Printed	N	2.00	2.00	
Register – Data Form	N	10.00	10.00	
Per 1,000 Names – Data	N	1.00	1.00	
Proof Life Certificate - for those who claim pension abroad	L	N/a	20.00	
				16,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
TOWN HALL				
Hire of Committee Rooms – all charges shown exclusive of VAT. Charges will be made plus the appropriate VAT rate.				
All rooms are to be charged by the hour, rather than by session				
Committee Rooms per hour	L	33.00	38.00	
				Minimal
LAND CHARGES				
The following fees are inclusive of VAT				
Search Fees				
Standard Search – Residential Property	L	93.50	102.10	
Standard Search – Commercial Property	L	143.50	153.70	
Con 29 Required				
Residential Property				
CON29	L	80.00	87.60	
Additional Parcels	L	25.00	26.28	
Commercial Property				
CON29	L	130.00	139.20	
Additional Parcels	L	25.00	26.28	
Con 29 Optional				
Optional Questions	L	6.00	8.40	
Own Questions	L	6.00	8.40	
Official Search – LLC1	L	13.00	14.50	
Personal Search	L	No charge	No charge	
				Minimal

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
FINANCIAL PROTECTION SERVICES				
Category				
Work up to and including the date upon which the court makes an order appointing a deputy for property and affairs	N	745.00	944.00	
Annual management fee where the court appoints a local authority deputy for property and affairs, payable on the anniversary of the court order:				
a) for the first year	N	775.00	982.00	
b) for the second and subsequent years	N	650.00	824.00	
c) where the net assets are below £20,300, the local authority deputy for property and affairs will take an annual management fee not exceeding 3.5% of the net assets on the anniversary of the court order appointing the local authority as deputy	N	See Description	See Description	
d) Where the court appoints a local authority deputy for health and welfare, the local authority will take an annual management fee not exceeding 2.5% of the net assets on the anniversary of the court order appointing the local authority as deputy for health and welfare up to a maximum of £703.	N	See Description	See Description	
Annual property management fee to include work involved in preparing property for sale, instructing agents, conveyancers, etc or the ongoing maintenance of property including management and letting of a rental property	N	300.00	380.00	
Preparation and lodgement of an annual report or account to the Public Guardian	N	216.00	274.00	
Conveyancing Costs	N	See Description	See Description	
Travel Rates are allowed at a fixed rate per hour for travel costs	N	40.00	51.00	
Please note that these rates are set by The Office of Public Guardian and are the rates as of 1st April 2024, these may be amended during 2025/26				
Adminstration Fee				
Adminstration fee for arranging the care and support needs for those with capital in excess of the upper capital limit or those who have chosen not to disclose their financial information.	L	127.00	133.00	
Minimal				
DEFERRED PAYMENT FEES				
Administration cost for setting up a Deferred Payment Agreement	L	390.00	410.00	
plus cost of valuation (this will be dependant on property type)	L	Actual cost of valuation	Actual cost of valuation	
Minimal				

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
LIBRARIES				
Fines On Overdue Items				
Adults – per day	L	No charge	No charge	
Maximum charge per book	L	No charge	No charge	
Senior Citizens – per day	L	No charge	No charge	
Children – per day	L	No charge	No charge	
Reservation Fees for Books Obtained from Outside the Authority				
Single charge for all books obtained from other libraries	L	6.00	6.00	
Repeat Fee for Renewal of Books from Outside the Authority				
Single Charge for all books obtained from other local authorities	L	6.00	6.00	
Replacement Tickets				
Adults	L	1.50	1.50	
Senior Citizens	L	1.50	1.50	
Children/Unemployed	L	1.50	1.50	
Local History Research				
Look Up Service	L	5.00	5.00	
Photocopies				
A4 B&W	L	0.20	0.20	
A3 B&W	L	0.40	0.40	
Printing				
Text Printouts				
A4 B&W	L	0.20	0.20	
A3 B&W	L	0.40	0.40	
Test Printouts				
A4 colour	L	0.60	0.60	
Reproduction of Images from Stock				
Digital copies for Private/Study purposes – per photo	L	5.50	5.50	
Digital copies for small local commercial use – per photo	L	5.50 + 2 copies of publications	5.50 + 2 copies of publications	
Digital copies for local commercial use - per photo	L	10.50 + 2 copies of book	10.50 + 2 copies of book	
Digital copies for national/international commercial	L	110.00	110.00	
Internet Use				
Library members First 60 minutes FREE, £1.00 per 30 minutes hereafter	L	1.00	1.00	
Lost & Damaged Items	L	Full current Replacement Cost (non- refundable)	Full current Replacement Cost (non- refundable)	
Room Hire				
Per hour	L	20.00	20.00	
Partner organisations per hour	L	15.00	15.00	
				NIL

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
PLANNING FEES				
Planning fees are set nationally				
PLANNING – PRE APPLICATION ADVICE				
All charges include VAT at 20%				
Large Major Development (200+) for a written response, including up to 2 meetings	L	1,200.00	2,500.00	
Small Major Development (10-199) for a written response, including up to 2 meetings	L	600.00	800.00	
Minor Development for a written response to include a meeting if necessary	L	400.00	400.00	
Other Developments				
Minerals Processing	L	Based on areas above	Based on areas above	
Change of use for a written response to include a meeting if necessary	L	50.00	50.00	
Householder developments	L	36.00	50.00	
Advertisements	L	25.00	25.00	
Listed Building consents (to alter/extend/demolish)	L	Free	50.00	
Certificates of lawful development	L	Application advice not appropriate	Application advice not appropriate	
Telecommunications Notifications	L	126.00	126.00	
Other Charges				
Pre-Application meeting involving Planning Committee Members	L	1,000.00	2,000.00	
				11,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
LICENSING The following fees do not incur VAT				
Prosecution Costs				
Hourly rate for Preparation of Case Reports	L	60.00	62.00	
General Licensing				
Pavement Café Licence, per person				
1-20	L	100.00	210.00	
21-40	L	100.00	242.00	
41-60	L	100.00	273.00	
61-80	L	100.00	305.00	
81-99	L	100.00	320.00	
100 or over	L	100.00	350.00	
Duplicate licence fee	L	50.00	53.00	
Transfer of licence	L	50.00	53.00	
Change of detail	L	30.00	32.00	
Variation of Covers	L	100.00	105.00	
Goods on Highway Licence	L	155.00	163.00	
Sex Shop Grant of application	L	3,885.00	4,080.00	
Sex Shop Renewal	L	1,260.00	1,323.00	
Sex Shop transfer	L	1,260.00	1,323.00	
Cosmetics				
Premise Grant	L	294.00	309.00	
Personal Grant	L	68.00	71.00	
Variation	L	68.00	71.00	
Scrap Metal Dealers				
Collectors Licence (3 years) - grant	L	158.00	166.00	
Collectors Licence (3 years) – renewal	L	158.00	166.00	
Major Variation	L	53.00	56.00	
Minor Variation	L	16.00	17.00	
Site Licence (3 years) Grant	L	368.00	386.00	
Additional Sites (per site per year of licence)	L	205.00	215.00	
Site licence (3 years) – renewal	L	284.00	298.00	
Additional sites (per site per year of licence)	L	205.00	215.00	
Minor Variation Site	L	16.00	17.00	
Major Variation Site	L	53.00 + 68.00	56.00 + 72.00	
		per additional site per year	per additional site per year	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Caravan Sites				
New Application for a permanent residential site licence;	L			
1-5 pitches	L	210.00	220.00	
6-20 pitches	L	236.00	248.00	
21-50 pitches	L	252.00	265.00	
Greater than 50 pitches	L	273.00	287.00	
Annual Fees associated with administration and monitoring of site licences;				
1-5 pitches	L	No charge	No charge	
6-50 pitches	L	231.00	243.00	
Greater than 50 pitches	L	273.00	287.00	
Cost of Laying Site Rules	L	26.00	27.00	
Cost of Variation/Transfer	L	105.00	110.00	
Zoo Licensing Act				
New Application (4 years) or renewal (6 years) for a Zoo Licence (excluding the inspection costs of appointed inspector)	L	473.00	497.00	
Animal Welfare				
Breeding of Dogs - Grant of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	258.00	271.00	
2 Year Licence	L	305.00	320.00	
3 Year Licence	L	352.00	370.00	
Breeding of Dogs - Renewal of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	226.00	237.00	
2 Year Licence	L	273.00	287.00	
3 Year Licence	L	320.00	336.00	
Pet Vending Commercial - Grant of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	265.00	278.00	
2 Year Licence	L	312.00	328.00	
3 Year Licence	L	359.00	377.00	
Pet Vending Commercial - Renewal of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	233.00	245.00	
2 Year Licence	L	280.00	294.00	
3 Year Licence	L	327.00	343.00	
Pet Vending Home - Grant of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	258.00	271.00	
2 Year Licence	L	305.00	320.00	
3 Year Licence	L	352.00	370.00	
Pet Vending Home - Renewal of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	226.00	237.00	
2 Year Licence	L	273.00	287.00	
3 Year Licence	L	320.00	336.00	
Keeping or Training Animals for Exhibition - Grant of Licence				
3 Year Licence	L	247.00	259.00	
Keeping or Training Animals for Exhibition - Renewal of Licence				
3 Year Licence	L	226.00	237.00	
Hiring Out of Horses - Grant of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	278.00	292.00	
2 Year Licence	L	325.00	341.00	
3 Year Licence	L	372.00	391.00	
Hiring Out of Horses - Renewal of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	247.00	259.00	
2 Year Licence	L	294.00	309.00	
3 Year Licence	L	341.00	358.00	
Boarding of Dogs and Cats Commercial - Grant of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	321.00	337.00	
2 Year Licence	L	368.00	386.00	
3 Year Licence	L	415.00	436.00	
Boarding of Dogs and Cats Commercial - Renewal of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	289.00	303.00	
2 Year Licence	L	336.00	353.00	
3 Year Licence	L	383.00	402.00	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Boarding of Dogs and Cats Home - Grant of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	258.00	271.00	
2 Year Licence	L	305.00	320.00	
3 Year Licence	L	352.00	370.00	
Boarding of Dogs and Cats Home - Renewal of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	226.00	237.00	
2 Year Licence	L	273.00	287.00	
3 Year Licence	L	320.00	336.00	
Boarding of Dogs Day Care Up to 7 Dogs - Grant of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	258.00	271.00	
2 Year Licence	L	305.00	320.00	
3 Year Licence	L	352.00	370.00	
Boarding of Dogs Day Care Up to 7 Dogs - Renewal of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	226.00	237.00	
2 Year Licence	L	273.00	287.00	
3 Year Licence	L	320.00	336.00	
Boarding of Dogs Day Care 8+ Dogs - Grant of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	320.00	336.00	
2 Year Licence	L	367.00	385.00	
3 Year Licence	L	414.00	435.00	
Boarding of Dogs Day Care 8+ Dogs - Renewal of Licence				
1 Year Licence	L	289.00	303.00	
2 Year Licence	L	336.00	353.00	
3 Year Licence	L	383.00	402.00	
Dog Boarding Franchise in Darlington - Grant of Licence	L	137.00 + 11.00 per host + 68.00 per host inspection fee + 47.00 annual enforcement fee per year	144.00 + 12.00 per host + 71.00 per host inspection fee + 49.00 annual enforcement fee per year	
Dog Boarding Franchise in Darlington - Renewal of Licence	L	105.00 + 11.00 per host + 68.00 per host inspection fee + 47.00 annual enforcement fee per year	105.00 + 11.00 per host + 68.00 per host inspection fee + 47.00 annual enforcement fee per year	
Dog Boarding Franchise out of Darlington - Grant of Licence	L	63.00 + 63.00 per host	66.00 + 66.00 per host	
Dog Boarding Franchise out of Darlington - Renewal of Licence	L	58.00 + 63.00 per host	61.00 + 66.00 per host	
Additional Fees				
Cost per additional licensable activity - Grant and Renewal (each)	L	68.00	71.00	
Mandatory mid licence inspection fee - Grant and Renewal (each)	L	32.00	34.00	
Variation of licence where no inspection is required (each)	L	37.00	39.00	
Variation of licence where inspection is required (each)	L	95.00	100.00	
Application for Re-Rating (each)	L	74.00	78.00	
Copy Licence	L	16.00	17.00	
Administration Fee	L	37.00	39.00	
Dangerous Wild Animals (not including vets fee)	L	126.00	132.00	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Street Trading				
November / December - Full Calendar Month	L	1,024.00	1,075.00	
- Week	L	404.00	424.00	
- Day (minimum of 4 days)	L	89.00	93.00	
January / October - Full Calendar Month	L	693.00	728.00	
- Week	L	284.00	298.00	
- Day (minimum of 4 days)	L	63.00	66.00	
Note- The above to apply to Itinerant traders. For regular all year round traders - fees as follows				
Annual Consent - Town Centre	L	7,350.00	7,717.00	
If Paying Monthly	L	651.00	684.00	
If Paying Weekly	L	179.00	188.00	
Buskers selling CD's – Half Day	L	25.00	26.00	
Full Day	L	45.00	47.00	
Mobile vehicles (moving or lay-by)	L	273.00	287.00	
New Vendor Permits	L	35.00	37.00	
Skips, Scaffolding and Hoardings				
Place a skip on the highway (less than 3 days notice)	L	40.00	42.00	
Place a skip on the highway (more than 3 days notice)	L	25.00	26.00	
Erection of scaffolding	L	60.00	63.00	
Hoardings	L	60.00	63.00	
Administration Charge (per hour or part thereof)	L	37.00	39.00	
Statutory Fees				
Petroleum Licences				
Less than 2,500 litres	L	45.00	48.00	
2,500 – 50,000 litres	L	61.00	65.00	
More than 50,000 litres	L	128.00	137.00	
Gambling Act				
Statutory Fees- The following gambling fees are set within statutory bands and will be revised as changed nationally.				
Adult Gaming Centres – Annual Fee	N	600.00	600.00	
New Application	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Variation	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Transfer	N	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Provisional Statement	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Licence Reinstatement	N	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Betting Shops - Annual Fee	N	550.00	550.00	
New Application	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Variation	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Transfer	N	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Provisional Statement	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Licence Reinstatement	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Bingo Halls - Annual Fee	N	600.00	600.00	
New Application	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Variation	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Transfer	N	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Provisional Statement	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Licence Reinstatement	N	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Family Entertainment Centres – Annual Fee	N	550.00	550.00	
New Application	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Variation	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Transfer	N	950.00	950.00	
Provisional Statement	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Licence Reinstatement	N	950.00	950.00	
Betting (tracks) – Annual Fee	N	550.00	550.00	
New Application	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Variation	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Transfer	N	950.00	950.00	
Provisional Statement	N	1,300.00	1,300.00	
Licence Reinstatement	N	950.00	950.00	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
<i>Permit Type – The following fees are set by statute and will be revised as changed nationally</i>				
Small Society Lottery Registration	N	40.00	40.00	
Small Society Annual Fee	N	20.00	20.00	
FEC gaming machine – Renewal fee	N	300.00	300.00	
FEC gaming machine – Change of name	N	25.00	25.00	
Prize gaming – Application fee	N	300.00	300.00	
Prize gaming – Renewal fee	N	300.00	300.00	
Prize gaming – Change of name	N	25.00	25.00	
Prize gaming – Copy permit	N	15.00	15.00	
Gaming machines (3 or more) - application Fee	N	100.00	100.00	
Gaming machines (3 or more) - variation Fee	N	100.00	100.00	
Gaming machines (3 or more) - transfer Fee	N	25.00	25.00	
Gaming machines (3 or more) - annual Fee	N	50.00	50.00	
Change of name	N	25.00	25.00	
Copy Permit	N	15.00	15.00	
Notice of intent 2 or less gaming machines available	N	50.00	50.00	
Club Premises cert (S 72f Licencing Act 2003) application fee	N	100.00	100.00	
Club Premises cert (S 72f Licencing Act 2003) renewal fee	N	100.00	100.00	
Other applicants - application fee	N	200.00	200.00	
Other applicants - renewal fee	N	200.00	200.00	
Variation fee	N	100.00	100.00	
Annual fee	N	50.00	50.00	
Copy permit	N	15.00	15.00	
Initial fee	N	40.00	40.00	
Annual fee	N	20.00	20.00	
Temporary use notice	N	500.00	500.00	
Copy/replacement/endorsed copy of notice	N	25.00	25.00	
Licensing Act Fees				
Statutory Fees- The following gambling fees are set within statutory bands and will be revised as changed nationally.				
Premises Licences				
Band A (RV £0 - £4,300) - Initial fee	N	100.00	100.00	
- Annual fee	N	70.00	70.00	
Band B (RV £4,301 - £33,000) - Initial fee	N	190.00	190.00	
- Annual fee	N	180.00	180.00	
Band C (RV £33,001 - £87,000) - Initial fee	N	315.00	315.00	
- Annual fee	N	295.00	295.00	
Band D (RV £87,001 - £125,000) - Initial fee	N	450.00	450.00	
- Annual fee	N	320.00	320.00	
Band E (RV > £125,001) - Initial fee	N	635.00	635.00	
- Annual fee	N	350.00	350.00	
Band D with Multiplier - Initial fee	N	900.00	900.00	
- Annual fee	N	640.00	640.00	
Band E with Multiplier - Initial fee	N	1,905.00	1,905.00	
- Annual fee	N	1,050.00	1,050.00	
Club Premises Certificates				
Band A (RV £0 - £4,300) - Initial fee	N	100.00	100.00	
- Annual fee	N	70.00	70.00	
Band B (RV £4,301 - £33,000) - Initial fee	N	190.00	190.00	
- Annual fee	N	180.00	180.00	
Band C (RV £33,001 - £87,000) - Initial fee	N	315.00	315.00	
- Annual fee	N	295.00	295.00	
Band D (RV £87,001 - £125,000) - Initial fee	N	450.00	450.00	
- Annual fee	N	320.00	320.00	
Band E (RV > £125,001) - Initial fee	N	635.00	635.00	
- Annual fee	N	350.00	350.00	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Large Scale Events				
5,000 to 9,999 - Initial fee	N	1,000.00	1,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	500.00	500.00	
10,000 to 14,999 - Initial fee	N	2,000.00	2,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	1,000.00	1,000.00	
15,000 to 19,999 - Initial fee	N	4,000.00	4,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	2,000.00	2,000.00	
20,000 to 29,999 - Initial fee	N	8,000.00	8,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	4,000.00	4,000.00	
30,000 to 39,999 - Initial fee	N	16,000.00	16,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	8,000.00	8,000.00	
40,000 to 49,999 - Initial fee	N	24,000.00	24,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	12,000.00	12,000.00	
50,000 to 59,999 - Initial fee	N	32,000.00	32,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	16,000.00	16,000.00	
60,000 to 69,999 - Initial fee	N	40,000.00	40,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	20,000.00	20,000.00	
70,000 to 79,999 - Initial fee	N	48,000.00	48,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	24,000.00	24,000.00	
80,000 to 89,999 - Initial fee	N	56,000.00	56,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	28,000.00	28,000.00	
> 90,000 - Initial fee	N	64,000.00	64,000.00	
- Annual fee	N	32,000.00	32,000.00	
Other Licensing Act 2003 Fees & Charges				
Minor Variations	N	89.00	89.00	
Personal Licence	N	37.00	37.00	
Provisional Statement	N	315.00	315.00	
Temporary Event Notice (TEN)	N	21.00	21.00	
Theft / Loss of Licence / Notice	N	10.50	10.50	
Variation of DPS	N	23.00	23.00	
Transfer of Premises Licence	N	23.00	23.00	
Change of Name / Address	N	10.50	10.50	
Notification of Interest	N	21.00	21.00	
Notification of Alteration of Club Rules	N	10.50	10.50	
Interim Authority Notice	N	23.00	23.00	
Explosives Act/Fireworks Annual Registration	N	52.00	52.00	
				2,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
HACKNEY CARRIAGES				
Taxi Licencing				
Taxi licensing fees are agreed annually by licensing committee normally between January to March and will be published separately as part of this process. Existing licence holders will be notified accordingly.				
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH				
Pest Treatment Charges – All charges shown exclusive of VAT. Charges will be made plus the appropriate VAT rate				
Insects – per Treatment	L	58.50	58.50	
Rodents in Private Premises	L	8.33	8.33	
Re-rating Food Hygiene Inspections	L	150.00	150.00	
Prosecution Costs				
Hourly Rate for preparation of case reports and carrying out works in default of legal notices	L	60.00	62.00	
Environmental Searches				
Environmental search 1 or 2 report includes environmental information held by the Council on a site (additional charges apply for sites larger than 10,000m2 and distance buffer greater than 250m radius)	L	65.00	90.00	
Additional photocopying for example copies of site investigation reports;				
A4 B&W	L	0.10	0.10	
A3 B&W	L	0.20	0.20	
A4 Colour	L	1.00	1.00	
A3 Colour	L	2.00	2.00	
Scanned Copy	L	Free	Free	
LAPPC and LAIPPC Permits				
Charges are annually set by Defra in March and are subject to change. Current charges as known are;				
LAPPC Charges				
Application Fee;				
Standard process (includes solvent emission activities)	N	1,650.00	1,650.00	
Additional fee for operating without a permit	N	1,188.00	1,188.00	
PVRI, SWOBs and Dry Cleaners	N	155.00	155.00	
PVR I & II combined	N	257.00	257.00	
VRs and other Reduced Fee Activities	N	362.00	362.00	
Reduced fee activities: additional fee for operating without a permit	N	71.00	71.00	
Mobile plant**	N	1,650.00	1,650.00	
for the third to seventh applications	N	985.00	985.00	
for the eighth and subsequent applications	N	498.00	498.00	
Where an application for any of the above is for a combined Part B and waste application add an extra to the above amounts	N	310.00	310.00	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Annual Subsistence Charge;				
Standard process Low*	N	772.00	772.00	
Standard process Medium*	N	1,161.00	1,161.00	
Standard process High*	N	1,747.00 (+207.00)	1,747.00 (+207.00)	
*the additional amounts must be charged where a permit is for a combined Part B and waste installation				
PVRI, SWOBs and Dry Cleaners Low	N	79.00	79.00	
PVRI, SWOBs and Dry Cleaners Medium	N	158.00	158.00	
PVRI, SWOBs and Dry Cleaners High	N	237.00	237.00	
PVR I & II combined Low	N	113.00	113.00	
PVR I & II combined Medium	N	226.00	226.00	
PVR I & II combined High	N	341.00	341.00	
VRs and other Reduced Fees Low	N	228.00	228.00	
VRs and other Reduced Fees Medium	N	365.00	365.00	
VRs and other Reduced Fees High	N	548.00	548.00	
Mobile plant, for the first and second permits Low**	N	626.00	626.00	
for the third to seventh permits Low	N	385.00	385.00	
eighth and subsequent permits Low	N	198.00	198.00	
Mobile plant, for the first and second permits Medium**	N	1,034.00	1,034.00	
for the third to seventh permits Medium	N	617.00	617.00	
eighth and subsequent permits Medium	N	316.00	316.00	
Mobile plant, for the first and second permits High**	N	1,551.00	1,551.00	
for the third to seventh permits High	N	924.00	924.00	
eighth and subsequent permits High	N	473.00	473.00	
Late payment fee	N	52.00	52.00	
Where a Part B installation is subject to reporting under the E-PRTR Regulation add an extra to the above amounts	N	104.00	104.00	
Transfer and Surrender;				
Standard process transfer	N	169.00	169.00	
Standard process partial transfer	N	497.00	497.00	
New operator at low risk reduced fee activity	N	78.00	78.00	
Surrender: all Part b activities	N	0.00	0.00	
Reduced fee activities: transfer	N	0.00	0.00	
Reduced fee activities: partial transfer	N	47.00	47.00	
Temporary transfer for mobiles;				
First transfer	N	53.00	53.00	
Repeat following enforcement or warning	N	53.00	53.00	
Substantial change;				
Standard process	N	1,050.00	1,050.00	
Standard process where the substantial change results in a new PPC activity	N	1,650.00	1,650.00	
Reduced fee activities	N	102.00	102.00	
**Not using simplified permits				
LAPPC mobile plant charges (not using simplified permits)				
Number of permits 1 to 2;				
Application fee	N	1,650.00	1,650.00	
Subsistence fee Low	N	646.00	646.00	
Subsistence fee Medium	N	1,034.00	1,034.00	
Subsistence fee High	N	1,506.00	1,506.00	
Number of permits 3 to 7;				
Application fee	N	985.00	985.00	
Subsistence fee Low	N	385.00	385.00	
Subsistence fee Medium	N	617.00	617.00	
Subsistence fee High	N	924.00	924.00	
Number of permits 8 and over;				
Application fee	N	498.00	498.00	
Subsistence fee Low	N	198.00	198.00	
Subsistence fee Medium	N	316.00	316.00	
Subsistence fee High	N	473.00	473.00	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
LA-IPPC charges				
Every subsistence charge below includes the additional £104 charge to cover LA extra costs in dealing with reporting under the E-PRTR Regulation				
Application	N	3,363.00	3,363.00	
Additional fee for operating without a permit	N	1,188.00	1,188.00	
Annual Subsistence Low	N	1,447.00	1,447.00	
Annual Subsistence Medium	N	1,611.00	1,611.00	
Annual Subsistence High	N	2,334.00	2,334.00	
Late Payment Fee	N	52.00	52.00	
Variation	N	1,368.00	1,368.00	
Transfer	N	235.00	235.00	
Partial Transfer	N	698.00	698.00	
Surrender	N	698.00	698.00	
Subsistence charges can be paid in four equal quarterly instalments paid on 1st April, 1st July, 1st October and 1st January. Where paid quarterly the total amount payable to the local authority will be increased by £38.00				
Newspaper adverts may be required under EPR at the discretion of the LA as part of the consultation process when considering an application. This will be undertaken and paid for by the LA and the charging scheme contains a provision for the LA to recoup its costs				
				Minimal
TRADING STANDARDS				
Please note that VAT may be added to some charges. Check with the service before the work is agreed.				
Prosecution Costs				
Hourly rate for Preparation of Case Reports	L	60.00	62.00	
Measures				
Linear measures not exceeding 3m each scale	L	16.50	16.50	
Not exceeding 15kg	L	44.00	44.00	
Exceeding 15kg but not exceeding 100kg	L	76.50	76.50	
Exceeding 100kg but not exceeding 250kg	L	91.50	91.50	
Exceeding 250kg but not exceeding 1 tonne	L	159.00	159.00	
Exceeding 1 tonne but not exceeding 10 tonnes	L	254.50	254.50	
Exceeding 10 tonnes but not exceeding 30 tonnes	L	533.50	533.50	
Exceeding 30 tonnes but not exceeding 60 tonnes	L	792.00	792.00	
Charge to cover any additional costs involved in testing incorporating remote display or printing facilities based on the above fee plus a charge per hour (minimum charge of 2 hours)	L	76.00 per hour	76.00 per hour	
Measuring Instruments for Intoxicating Liquor				
Not exceeding 150ml	L	25.50	25.50	
Other	L	29.50	29.50	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Measuring Instruments for Liquid Fuels and Lubricants				
Container Type (un-subdivided)				
Multi-grade (with price computing device):	L	110.50	110.50	
Single Outlets	L	151.00	151.00	
Solely Price Adjustment	L	275.50	275.50	
Otherwise				
Other Types – Single Outlets				
Solely Price Adjustment	L	121.00	121.00	
Otherwise	L	164.00	164.00	
Other Types – Multi Outlets:				
1 Meter Tested	L	176.00	176.00	
2 Meters Tested	L	288.50	288.50	
3 Meters Tested	L	394.00	394.00	
4 Meters Tested	L	502.00	502.00	
5 Meters Tested	L	606.50	606.50	
6 Meters Tested	L	712.50	712.50	
7 Meters Tested	L	805.00	805.00	
8 Meters Tested	L	929.50	929.50	
Charge to cover any additional costs involved in testing ancillary equipment such as payment acceptors based on the above fee plus a charge per hour (minimum of 2 hours)	L	76.00 per hour	76.00 per hour	
Special Weighing and Measuring Equipment				
For all specialist work undertaken by the service which is not included above a charge per hour on site (minimum charge of 2 hours) plus cost of provision of testing equipment applies				
	L	76.00 per hour	76.00 per hour	
<p>Discounts</p> <p>Fees from Measures to Certification Calibration will be discounted as follows :-</p> <p>a) Where more than a single item is submitted on one occasion the second and subsequent fees will be reduced by 20%</p> <p>b) Where tests are undertaken using appropriately certified weights and equipment not supplied by the Borough Council the fees will be reduced by 20%</p> <p>c) Special rates can be negotiated for multiple submissions or where assistance with equipment or labour is provided</p> <p>NB – Where different fees are involved the highest fee will be charged in full and any discounts calculated from the remaining lesser fees</p>				
Licensing – VAT not applicable				
Explosives and Fireworks Licences (Statutory Fee)				
Licence for the storage of explosives	N	**See Note	**See Note	
Licence for the sale of fireworks all year round	N	**See Note	**See Note	
**These are statutory rates that are set centrally in April				
				Minimal

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
PARKING – all off-street charges are inclusive of VAT at 20%				
Car Parks (Short Stay) – per hour (Mon to Sun)				
Abbotts Yard, Commercial Street East & West, Feethams MSCP, Winston Street North & South & West				
1hr	L	1.00	1.20	
2hrs	L	2.00	2.40	
3hrs	L	3.00	3.60	
4hrs	L	4.00	4.80	
5hrs	L	5.00	5.00	
6hrs	L	6.00	6.00	
7hrs	L	7.00	7.00	
8hrs	L	8.00	8.00	
9hrs	L	9.00	9.00	
10hrs	L	10.00	10.00	
Car Parks – (Long Stay) (Mon to Sat)				
Archer Street, Garden Street, Kendrew Street East & West, Hird Street, St Hilda's & Park Place East & West				
1hr	L	1.00	1.20	
2hrs	L	2.00	2.40	
3hrs	L	3.00	3.60	
All day	L	4.00	5.00	
2 days	L	8.00	10.00	
3 days	L	12.00	15.00	
7 days	L	16.00	20.00	
Sunday	L	1.00	2.00	
Car Parks – Long Stay (Mon to Sat)				
Park Lane				
All day	L	5.00	5.00	
Sunday	L	1.00	2.00	
East Street MSCP				
Per hour	L	1.00	1.20	
All day	L	2.00	3.00	
Sunday	L	1.00	2.00	
Chestnut Street				
All day	L	2.00	2.00	
7 days	L	8.00	8.00	
Sunday	L	1.00	2.00	
On Street Parking Mon to Sun (up to 2 hours no return within 1 hour EXCEPT for Grange Road & Northumberland Street up to 3 hours no return within 1 hour and East Row 30 minutes maximum no return within 1 hour)				
Per 30 mins	L	0.50	0.70	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Car Parks – Contract Parking – all charges are inclusive of VAT at 20%				
Parking locations as determined by the Director of Services.				
Per year one space	L	950.00	950.00	
Per year two spaces	L	900.00	900.00	
Per year three spaces	L	860.00	860.00	
Per year four spaces	L	830.00	830.00	
Per year five to nine spaces	L	800.00	800.00	
Per year ten or more spaces	L	700.00	700.00	
Four Riggs				
Per calendar month	L	64.00	64.00	
Morton Palms				
Per year one space	L	300.00	300.00	
Silver Street				
Per year one space	L	600.00	600.00	
Car Parks – Staff & Members per year	L	173.04	173.04	
Residents Parking Permits (excluding Town Centre)				
3 month temporary permit	L	12.00	12.00	
6 month permit	L	24.00	24.00	
12 month permit	L	40.00	40.00	
Residents Parking Permits (Town Centre only)				
12 month permit	L	350.00	350.00	
Tradesmen Parking Permits				
Daily Waiver	L	5.00	5.00	
3 month permit	L	100.00	100.00	
6 month permit	L	150.00	150.00	
12 month permit	L	250.00	250.00	
				298,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
BUILDING CONTROL				
Items inclusive of VAT at 20%				
Letter confirming exemption	L	20.00	20.00	
Letter confirming enforcement action will not be taken	L	20.00	20.00	
Copy of historic completion/approval certificates	L	20.00	20.00	
Decision/Approval Notice (Building Control)				
Responding to request for historical information from electronic databases (email response)	L	20.00	20.00	
Responding to request for historical information from electronic databases (letter response)	L	20.00	20.00	
Responding to request for historical information from manually recorded data (email response)	L	20.00	20.00	
Personal searches (email response)	L	20.00	20.00	
The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 plus VAT at the appropriate rate				
Work charged on individual job basis	L	As agreed with client	As agreed with client	
				NIL

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
DOLPHIN CENTRE				
Pricing based on the introduction of a leisure card.				
Swimming				
Adult swim				
Card holder	L	4.60	4.85	
Non card holder	L	5.25	5.40	
Concession	L	3.50	3.70	
Junior Swim	L	3.00	3.10	
Family swim junior rate discount (up to 4 children accompanying 1 adult)				
Per card holder	L	2.10	2.45	
Per non card holder	L	2.65	2.75	
Under 12 months	L	Free	Free	
Lessons	L	52.50	55.00	
Fitness Areas				
The Gym				
Card holder	L	5.75	5.95	
Non card holder	L	6.25	6.55	
Concession	L	4.30	4.60	
Junior Gym	L	4.30	4.60	
Concession	L	3.35	3.50	
Health & Fitness Classes				
Health & Fitness Classes				
Card holder	L	4.75	5.15	
Non card holder	L	5.50	5.70	
Concession	L	3.65	4.30	
Half Main Hall				
Adult				
Card holder	L	47.00	49.50	
Non card holder	L	53.50	55.00	
Junior (1 hour courts only)	L	32.50	33.50	
Weekday lunchtime				
Card holder	L	39.00	40.00	
Non card holder	L	43.00	45.00	
Badminton				
Adult				
Card holder	L	9.15	9.65	
Non card holder	L	10.40	10.70	
Concession	L	6.90	8.05	
Junior (1 hour courts only)	L	5.15	5.65	
Concession (1 hour courts only)	L	4.00	5.00	
Equipment Hire				
Footballs	L	Free	Free	
Footballs – Deposit (FOC for card holders)	L	5.00	5.00	
Badminton	L	Free	Free	
Badminton – Deposit (FOC for card holders)	L	5.00	5.00	
Table Tennis Bats	L	Free	Free	
Table Tennis Bats – Deposit (FOC for card holders)	L	5.00	5.00	
Pram Lock	L	Free	Free	
Pram Lock – Deposit (FOC for card holders)	L	5.00	5.00	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Children's Activities				
Soft play admissions	L	5.75	5.95	
Parent/toddler (Soft play)	L	5.75	5.95	
Other Activities				
Showers				
Card holders	L	2.25	3.00	
Non card holders	L	2.25	3.00	
Fit 4 Life Packages				
12 month Full Membership	L	299.40	299.40	
12 month Seniors	L	228.00	228.00	
12 month Student	L	180.00	180.00	
6 Month Full	L	195.00	195.00	
12 Month Upfront	L	275.00	275.00	
Swimming Pools				
Main Pool - per hour	L	110.00	120.00	
Diving Pool - per hour	L	63.00	70.00	
Teaching Pool - per hour	L	63.00	70.00	
Gala - per hour				
Swimming Galas - whole complex				
Normal opening hours - per hour	L	352.00	370.00	
Outside normal opening hours - per hour	L	185.00	195.00	
Swimming Galas - Schools, Junior Clubs and Organisations				
Main Pool - Peak	L	247.00	257.00	
Main Pool - Off Peak	L	175.00	185.00	
Main Pool and Teaching Pool - Peak	L	206.00	216.00	
Main Pool and Teaching Pool - Off Peak	L	212.00	222.00	
Electronic Timing	L	104.00	110.00	
Ten Pin Bowling				
Adult Standard - 1 game	L	7.70	7.95	
Juniors (under 16) - 1 game	L	6.15	6.30	
Students & Seniors - Off Peak - 1 game	L	6.15	6.30	
Family Package - Peak - 1 game	L	25.00	26.00	
Family Package - Off Peak -1 game	L	23.00	24.00	
Adult, Students, Seniors - Peak - 2 game	L	15.40	15.90	
Adult, Student, Seniors - Off Peak - 2 game	L	11.80	12.30	
Juniors (under 16) - Peak - 2 game	L	12.30	12.60	
Juniors (under 16) - Off Peak - 2 game	L	11.80	12.10	
Disabled and carer - Off Peak - 1 game (per person)	L	5.25	5.50	
Disabled and carer - Off Peak - 2 game (per person)	L	10.50	11.00	
Dry Sports Hall				
Main Sports Hall - per hour	L	115.50	121.00	
Special Events - per hour Weekends	L	367.00	385.00	
Preparation - per hour Weekends	L	194.00	204.00	
Special Events - Schools - per hour off peak	L	52.00	55.00	
Function Room	L	28.00	30.00	
Seminar Room/Stephenson Suite meeting rooms	L	38.00	41.00	
Pease Suite/Studio	L	48.00	51.00	
Central Hall				
All Events (except commercial, exhibitions and local societies)	L	121.00	127.00	
Exhibitions - commercial - per hour	L	157.50	165.00	
Local Societies event - per hour	L	84.00	88.00	
				50,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
PARKS				
Football - Hire of Hundens Park Pitch Seniors' Match	L	26.00	30.00	
Juniors Match	L	16.00	20.00	
				Minimal
EASTBOURNE SPORTS COMPLEX				
3G Pitch				
Non Charter Standard Pay and Play				
1/2 3G Pitch - Adult (1 hour)	L	50.00	55.00	
1/2 3G Pitch - Junior (1 hour)	L	40.00	45.00	
Full 3G Pitch - Adult (1 hour)	L	80.00	85.00	
Full 3G Pitch - Junior (1 hour)	L	55.00	60.00	
Charter Standard and Partner Clubs				
1/2 3G Pitch (1 hour)	L	25.00	30.00	
Full 3G Pitch (1 hour)	L	50.00	60.00	
Grass Pitch Matches - Club				
Adult per match 11 v 11	L	26.00	30.00	
Junior per match 9 v 9	L	16.00	20.00	
Junior per match 7 v 7	L	16.00	20.00	
Junior per match 5 v 5	L	10.00	15.00	
3G Matches - Club				
Junior per match 5 v 5	L	15.00	20.00	
Junior per match 7 v 7	L	20.00	25.00	
Junior per match 9 v 9	L	25.00	30.00	
Junior per match 11 v 11	L	25.00	30.00	
Changing room	L	20.00	20.00	
3G Matches - Adults				
AGP 1 without changing rooms	L	40.00	45.00	
AGP 1 with changing rooms	L	60.00	65.00	
AGP 2 without changing rooms	L	60.00	65.00	
AGP 2 with changing rooms	L	100.00	105.00	
Athletics Track				
Non club rate				
Adult	L	5.00	5.50	
Junior	L	4.00	4.50	
Full track per hour	L	120.00	120.00	
Club rate				
Adult	L	4.00	4.50	
Junior	L	4.00	4.50	
Full track per hour	L	75.00	85.00	
Other				
Shower	L	2.40	2.60	
Function room and pavilion hire per hour (exclusive of VAT)	L	23.00	24.00	
Multi Purpose Studio per hour (exclusive of VAT)	L	17.00	18.00	
				25,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
HIPPODROME & HULLABALOO				
Restoration Levy (per ticket excluding children's shows)	L	2.00	2.00	
Booking Fee (per ticket)	L	1.00	1.00	
Hire & Conferencing (all pricing exclusive of VAT)				
John Wade Group Lounge - max capacity 40 (theatre style) - per hour	L	38.75	38.75	
John Wade Group Lounge - max capacity 40 (theatre style) - day hire**	L	231.75	231.75	
Living Water Tower Room - max capacity 18 - per hour	L	33.25	33.25	
Living Water Tower Room - max capacity 18 - day hire**	L	198.50	198.50	
Hippo Lounge - max capacity 70 - per hour	L	46.25	46.25	
Hippo Lounge - max capacity 70 - day hire**	L	277.75	277.75	
Hippo Education Space - max capacity 40 (workshop of approx. 25) - per hour	L	38.75	38.75	
Hippo Education Space - max capacity 40 (workshop of approx. 25) - day hire**	L	231.75	231.75	
Hullabaloo Rehearsal Space - max capacity 35 - per hour	L	38.75	38.75	
Hullabaloo Rehearsal Space - max capacity 35 - day hire**	L	231.75	231.75	
Hullabaloo Café - max capacity 70 - per hour	L	46.25	46.25	
Hullabaloo Café - max capacity 70 - day hire**	L	277.75	277.75	
Hippodrome Theatre Hire - max capacity 1,000 - w/end full day	L	2,200.00	2,310.00	
Hippodrome Theatre Hire - max capacity 1,000 - w/end half day	L	1,100.00	1,155.00	
Hippodrome Theatre Hire - max capacity 1,000 - w/day full day	L	2,025.00	2,126.25	
Hippodrome Theatre Hire - max capacity 1,000 - w/day half day	L	1,015.00	1,065.00	
Hullabaloo Theatre Hire - max capacity 150 - per hour	L	72.00	75.00	
Hullabaloo Theatre Hire - max capacity 150 - day hire**	L	520.00	546.25	
**day hire - 9am to 5pm				
Community Rate may be applicable for charities, NHS, children's groups and local artists if qualifying criteria met. This equates to 30% reduction on the above charges.				
				124,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
HOPETOWN DARLINGTON				
General Admission Donations welcome	L	Free	Free	
Wagon Woods Adventure Play Children over 1 - 1 hour peak (weekends & school holidays)	L	5.00	5.00	
Children over 1 - 1 hour off peak (weekdays term time)	L	3.50	3.50	
Experiment! immersive ride (opening November 2024)	L	5.00	5.00	
Private Hire The Stephenson Room - per hour	L	50.00	50.00	
The Pease Room - per hour	L	38.75	38.75	
The Carriage Works - half day	L	300.00	300.00	
The Carriage Works - full day	L	500.00	500.00	
The Carriage Works - per hour, after hours	L	100.00	100.00	
The Goods Shed/Clocktower Café - 3 hours 6-9pm	L	500.00	500.00	
The Goods Shed/Clocktower Café - per hour after 9pm	L	100.00	100.00	
Charity/Partner rate on all above hires - 30% discount	L			
Study at The Stores Historical research by Collections Manager - per hour	L	30.00	30.00	
Family history short research - up to 10 mins (including scans)	L	5.00	5.00	
Photographic reproduction - private use	L	6.50	6.50	
Commercial Photographic Reproduction Small local charitable, educational incl. websites	L	6.50	6.50	
Local commercial incl. websites	L	15.00	15.00	
Specialist magazines, journals & newspapers incl. websites	L	30.00	30.00	
Regional TV/Video/Film/DVD	L	50.00	50.00	
National/international TV/Video/Film/DVD	L	100.00	100.00	
School Visits Package 1 - Price per pupil Includes led workshop, Wagon Woods play, self guided time in museum and stores plus dedicated lunch area	L	4.00	4.00	
Package 2 - Price per pupil Includes led workshop, Wagon Woods play, Experiment! immersive ride, self guided time in museum and stores plus dedicated lunch area	L	7.50	7.50	
Both packages reduced by £2 per child for Darlington school children on free school meals				
				NIL
STRAY DOGS				
Dog held at Allington Way Statutory Fee	L	N/a	25.00	
Kennelling Fee	L	N/a	20.00	
Dog held offsite Fees incurred at Allington Way (as above) plus				
Kennelling Fee per day	L	N/a	30.00	
Handling Fee	L	N/a	50.00	
				14,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL				
Refuse sacks (per 25) (Exclusive of VAT)	L	126.80	131.50	
Garden Waste Sacks (Non VATable) (for collection of 10 bags)	L	13.70	14.20	
Bulky Household Collection up to 6 items	L	22.90	23.80	
Garden Waste Service	L	45.00	47.00	
Cost of replacement (inclusive of 20% VAT)				
360L Wheeled Bin	L	64.80	67.20	
240L Wheeled Bin	L	25.60	26.60	
Caddie	L	8.50	8.80	
Glass Box	L	6.25	6.50	
55L Box	L	6.25	6.50	
Lid for recycling box	L	2.50	2.60	
Lid for 240L bin	L	7.50	7.80	
Wheeled bin wheel	L	2.00	2.10	
				19,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
CEMETERIES				
Burial fees without exclusive right of burial (these fees will be tripled where the deceased is a non-resident of Darlington at time of death)				
Individual foetal remains	N	No Charge	No Charge	
Stillborn or child not exceeding 12 months	N	No Charge	No Charge	
Person over 12 months up to 18 years	N	No Charge	No Charge	
Person over 18 years	L	1,050.00	1,160.00	
Burial fees with exclusive right of burial (these fees will be doubled where the deceased is a non-resident of Darlington at time of death)				
Individual foetal remains	N	No Charge	No Charge	
Child not exceeding 12 months	N	No Charge	No Charge	
Person over 12 months up to 18 years	N	No Charge	No Charge	
Person over 18 years	L	1,050.00	1,160.00	
Cremated remains	L	230.00	250.00	
Exclusive rights of burial (these fees will be doubled if the purchaser is a non-resident of Darlington if not purchased at time of first interment).				
Exclusive burial rights (50 years) - Full Plot	L	1,040.00	1,200.00	
Exclusive burial rights (50 years) - Half Plot	L	520.00	600.00	
Exclusive burial rights (50 years) - Quarter Plot	L	260.00	300.00	
Exclusive burial rights for a bricked grave	L	2,080.00	2,400.00	
Other charges				
Scattering of cremated remains	L	50.00	50.00	
Indemnity form (to produce duplicate grant)	L	50.00	50.00	
Use of Cemetery Chapel	L	125.00	150.00	
Use of Crematorium Chapel for burial/memorial service	L	250.00	300.00	
After post mortem remains	L	230.00	250.00	
Exhumation of a body (excl. re-interment)	L	2,215.00	2,500.00	
Exhumation of cremated remains (excl. re-interment)	L	565.00	600.00	
Grave Maintenance (inclusive of 20% VAT)				
Initial payment	L	55.00	60.00	
Annual Maintenance	L	40.00	45.00	
Memorials (fees will be doubled where the deceased to whom the memorial/inscription refers was non-resident of Darlington at time of death)				
Memorial rights including first inscription (30 years)	L	230.00	250.00	
Provision of kerbs – traditional sites only	L	100.00	120.00	
Vases not exceeding 300mm	L	85.00	100.00	
Additional inscription	L	85.00	100.00	
Total financial effect for Cemeteries				30,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
CREMATORIUM				
Crematorium fees (inclusive of certificate of cremation, use of organ and scattering of remains in Gardens of Remembrance at an unreserved time)				
Individual foetal remains	N	No charge	No charge	
Hospital arrangement – foetal remains	L	230.00	250.00	
Stillborn or child not exceeding 12 months	N	No charge	No charge	
Person over 12 months up to 18 years	N	No charge	No charge	
Person over 18 years	L	1,050.00	1,160.00	
Direct Cremation	L	550.00	580.00	
After post mortem remains	L	230.00	250.00	
Other charges				
Postal Carton	L	20.00	25.00	
Metal Urn	L	40.00	60.00	
Wooden Casket	L	50.00	70.00	
Biodegradable Urn	L	N/a	85.00	
Baby Urn	L	10.00	10.00	
Extended use of Crematorium Chapel	L	125.00	300.00	
Scattering of remains at reserved time	L	50.00	50.00	
Webcasts (inclusive of VAT at the appropriate rate)	L	55.00	60.00	
Tributes (inclusive of 20% VAT)				
Single Photo	L	15.00	15.00	
Basic Slideshow	L	45.00	55.00	
Slideshow set to music	L	80.00	85.00	
Themed Tribute to music	L	N/a	100.00	
Family supplied Tribute	L	N/a	30.00	
For every additional 25 images	L	20.00	25.00	
Tribute Download link	L	N/a	20.00	
Webcast Keepsake (DVD, Blu-ray, USB or audio CD)	L	60.00	60.00	
Extra copies	L	30.00	30.00	
Video Book	L	N/a	100.00	
Extra copies	L	N/a	60.00	
Memory Box	L	N/a	130.00	
Extra copies	L	N/a	70.00	
Book of Remembrance (inclusive of 20% VAT)				
Single Entry (2 lines)	L	75.00	80.00	
Double Entry (3 or 4 lines)	L	115.00	120.00	
Additional lines	L	25.00	25.00	
Crest or floral emblem	L	120.00	120.00	
Memorial Cards (inclusive of 20% VAT)				
Single entry card (2 lines)	L	30.00	35.00	
Double entry card (3 or 4 lines)	L	35.00	45.00	
Additional lines	L	5.00	10.00	
Crest of floral emblem	L	80.00	100.00	
Other Memorial Schemes				
Replacement kerb vase plaque	L	300.00	300.00	
Replacement flower holder	L	5.00	5.00	
Wall plaques	L	250.00	270.00	
Planter plaques	L	370.00	380.00	
Lease of space for memorial plaques (per annum)	L	26.00	27.00	
Total financial effect for Crematorium				140,000

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
ALLOTMENTS & STABLES				
Rent per year	L	200.00	200.00	NIL
HIGHWAYS				
Private apparatus in the Highway (Section 50 Licence, new installations)	L	550.00	550.00	
Private Road Openings (repair existing)	L	225.00	225.00	
Vehicle Crossings – estimate fee (taken as part of payment if go ahead with the works)	L	25.00	25.00	
Vehicle Crossings (plus actual construction costs)	L	100.00	100.00	
Vehicle Crossings if planning permission required on a classified road (plus actual construction costs)	L	150.00	150.00	
Section 184 Application for private vehicle crossings		125.00	150.00	
Temporary Traffic Regulation Notices (road closures etc)	L	184.00	214.00	
Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (road closures etc) (plus advertising)	L	302.00	332.00	
Emergency Traffic Regulation Orders	L	143.00	173.00	
Application to Secretary of State for TTRO extension (plus advertising)	L	105.00	135.00	
Personal Search - Highways (by email) per question	L	6.00	6.00	
Street Naming Royal Mail Income (per address, Nationally agreed price LGIH)	L	1.00	1.00	
Street Naming & Numbering of Properties:				
- Per road name (developer suggests)	L	182.00	186.00	
- Per road name (council names)	L	221.00	226.00	
- Per plot	L	16.00	16.50	
Street Naming & Numbering of Properties:				
- Per plot or renaming of a property	L	37.00	38.00	
Rechargeable Works	L	Actual cost + 10%	Actual cost + 10%	
Temporary Traffic Light Applications	L	No Charge Individually priced based on requirements	No Charge Individually priced based on requirements	
Section 50 Licence associated bond costs	L	No charge	No charge	
Access protection markings	L	£75.00 + VAT	£75.00 + VAT	
Tourist Sign (plus actual cost of sign)	L	£75.00 + VAT	£75.00 + VAT	
Accident Data Requests	L	75.00	75.00	
Traffic Count Data	L	Individually priced based on charge out rate	Individually priced based on charge out rate	
Street Lighting Design Service	L	No charge	No charge	
Oversailing Licence	L	No charge	No charge	
Banner Licence	L	No charge	No charge	
Placing Goods on the Highway	L	155.00	155.00	
Deposits upon the Highway	L	No charge	No charge	
Temporary Development Signs – Admin Fee	L	200.00	200.00	
Temporary Development Signs – DBC undertake work on behalf of developer	L	Actual costs	Actual costs	
Switch off / on traffic signal / pelican crossings – per visit	L	150.00	150.00	
Unauthorised marks or affixing of signs to street furniture	L	No charge	No charge	

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Section 278 Highway works agreement	L	8% of works + legal if delivered by developer	8% of works + legal if delivered by developer	
Section 116 Stopping Up of the Highway	N	Actual Costs	Actual Costs	
Section 38 Road Adoption agreement	L	8% of works + legal if delivered by developer	8% of works + legal if delivered by developer	
NRSWA Defect Charges	N	Nationally set scale of charges	Nationally set scale of charges	
NRSWA Road Opening Inspection Charges (sample)	N	Nationally set scale of charges	Nationally set scale of charges	
Section 74 – charges for overstays	N	Nationally set scale of charges	Nationally set scale of charges	
				49,000
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY				
Public Path Orders (HA 80 S 118 and 119, TCPA 90 s247, 257)				
Actual cost based on charge out rate plus advertising and legal costs		3,000.00	3,066.00 (minimum)	
PROW Temporary Closures – as Highways fees and charges				
Landowner Rights of Way Statement and Declaration s31.6				
One parcel of land, includes 2 notices	L	250.00	256.00	
Additional parcel	L	50.00	51.00	
Additional notice	L	50.00	51.00	
Authorisation for installing a new gate or stile (HA 80 s147)	L	100.00	102.00	
Path Orders under Deregulation Act				
Actual cost based on charge out rate plus advertising and legal costs, to include but not restricted to pre-application advice, processing the application, resolving objections, making the order, confirmation of the order, and any subsequent Public Inquiry or Hearing				
				Minimal
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT				
Charges for Concessionary Travel (ENCTS);				
Replacement pass for lost/stolen without a CRN	L	10.00	10.00	
Production, placement and retrieval of notices when bus stops are temporarily per bus stop	L	60.00	60.00	
Production and placement of bus timetable information when bus services have to be re-registered due to road closures – up to 6 timetables	L	84.00	84.00	
				NIL

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
TRANSPORT SERVICES				
Charges for Taxi Licensing;				
Taxi Vehicle Test	L	56.00	56.00	
Taxi Vehicle Test and MOT	L	66.00	66.00	
Failure to attend (less than 48 hours' notice)	L	56.00	56.00	
Re-test	L	27.00	27.00	
Re-test including emissions	L	39.00	39.00	
Re-test emissions only	L	12.00	12.00	
Charges for General Public;				
MOT for Standard Car Class IV	L	37.00	38.00	
MOT for Class V Vehicles	L	42.00	45.00	
MOT for Class VII Vehicles	L	42.00	45.00	
				Minimal
PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING				
Works in default & statutory activities per hour	L	60.00	62.00	
Housing inspections & consultancy per hour (inclusive of VAT)	L	60.00	62.00	
Charge for the service relevant Housing Act 2004 legal notice	L	450.00	465.00	
Administration cost for the securing empty homes (addition of VAT if completed by agreement)				
	L	300.00	310.00	
Houses in Multiple Occupation Activities;				
HMO licence fee per letting/let/tenancy	L	187.00	N/a	
Part A Licence Application	L	N/a	217.00	
Part B 5 year HMO licence per letting	L	N/a	155.00	
Other relevant HMO activities per hour	L	60.00	62.00	
Variation of HMO licence	L	60.00	124.00	
Housing Immigration Inspections;				
Within 10 working days (excluding VAT)	L	150.00	155.00	
Fast Track within 5 working days (excluding VAT)	L	200.00	217.00	
General Enforcement Activities;				
Hourly rate for preparation of case reports/prosecutions	L	60.00	62.00	
Additional copies of legal notices via post	L	10.00	10.00	
Additional copies of legal notices - Scanned copy by Email	L	Free	Free	
Energy Company Regulation				
ECOflex declarations (excluding VAT)	L	50.00	93.00	
The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022				
Fines for failing to provide a working smoke or carbon monoxide alarm. Offence by the same individual or organisation;				
First	N	500.00	500.00	
Second	N	1,000.00	1,000.00	
Third	N	2,000.00	2,000.00	
Fourth	N	3,000.00	3,000.00	
Fifth or more	N	5,000.00	5,000.00	
The Redress Schemes for Letting Agency Work and Property Management Work (England) Order 2014;				
Fines for failing to join an approved letting and management redress scheme;				
Businesses that have been served with a notice of intent and failed to join an approved scheme				
	N	5,000.00	5,000.00	
Businesses that have joined an approved scheme following the service of the notice of intent				
	N	4,000.00	4,000.00	
Businesses that have joined an approved scheme prior to enforcement action being taken, after the 1st October 2014				
	N	3,000.00	3,000.00	
**The Redress Scheme is currently undergoing a national review and may be replaced prior to April 2024 by a new civil penalty policy				

Description	Type*	Existing Charge £	New Charge £	Financial Effect £
*KEY for basis of fee and charges setting, L - Locally Agreed, N - Nationally Agreed				
Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015				
Penalty (less than 3 months in breach) renting a non-compliant property	N	Up to 2,000.00 and/or publication penalty	Up to 2,000.00 and/or publication penalty	
Penalty (3 months or more in breach) renting out a non-compliant property	N	Up to 4,000.00 and/or publication penalty	Up to 4,000.00 and/or publication penalty	
Providing false or misleading information on the PRS Exemptions Register	N	Up to 1,000.00 and/or publication penalty	Up to 1,000.00 and/or publication penalty	
Failing to comply with a compliance notice	N	Up to 2,000.00 and/or publication penalty	Up to 2,000.00 and/or publication penalty	
Housing and Planning Act 2016				
Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice (under section 30 of the Housing Act 2004)				
Failure to comply with a Prohibition Order (under section 32 of the Housing Act 2004)				
Breach of a banning order made under section 21 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016	N	Civil penalties of up to 30,000 per offence as an alternative to prosecution	Civil penalties of up to 30,000 per offence as an alternative to prosecution	
Using violence to secure entry to a property (under section 6 of the Criminal Law Act 1977)				
Illegal eviction or harassment of the occupiers of a property (under section 1 of the Protection from Eviction Act 1977)				
				11,000
COST OF REVENUE COLLECTION				
Council Tax – All Charges do not incur VAT				
Issue of Summons for Liability Order	L	40.00	41.00	
Issue of Liability Order	L	50.00	51.00	
Issue of Summons for Committal Hearing	L	105.00	264.00	
Issue of Statutory Demand	L	184.00	187.00	
Schedule 3 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992				
Penalty where				
- A person is requested to supply information and fails to	L	70.00	70.00	
- A person knowingly supplies inaccurate information	L	70.00	70.00	
- A person fails to notify a material change without a reasonable excuse	L	70.00	70.00	
Where a penalty has been imposed and there is a further request for the same information a further penalty				
- A person fails to supply information	L	280.00	280.00	
- A person knowingly supplies inaccurate information	L	280.00	280.00	
				15,000
Business Rates (NNDR) – All Charges do not incur VAT				
Issue of Summons for Liability Order	L	40.00	41.00	
Issue of Liability Order	L	50.00	51.00	
Issue of Summons for Committal Hearing	L	105.00	264.00	
Issue of Statutory Demand	L	184.00	187.00	
				14,000

APPENDIX 4

**KEY ASSUMPTIONS USED IN PROJECTED
RESOURCES, EXPENDITURE AND INCOME 2025/26-2028/29**

Factor	Assumption
Resources	
Council Tax base	Variable depending on projected additional properties.
Council Tax	2.99% increase in 2025/26 and then 1.99% to 2028/29
Adult Social Care Precept	2% increase in 2025/26 and then 1% to 2028/29
Council Tax collection	99% collected
Government Grants	Government grants, as indicated in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25 and indicative figures for 2025/26 – 2028/29.
	Increase in Business Rates Scheme Top Up Grant of 3.0% in 2025/26, 1% to 2028/29. No reset. Increased for projected growth in new business premises.
	Revenue Support Grant per final settlement 2% uplift in 2025/26 and then 1.16% to 2027/28, flatlined 2028/29.
	Continuation of Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) at 2024/25 rates.
	Continuation of Adult Social Care Support Grant of £3.753m as per 2024/25 final settlement, flatlined and assumed to continue to 2028/29.
	Services Grant 2024/25 as per final settlement, flatlined and assumed to continue until 2028/29.
	Social Care Grant, per 2024/25 final settlement at £7.153m flatlined and assumed to continue to 2028/29.
	Additional Local Government Funding announced in the Budget split based on Darlington's usual percentage.
	Assumed National Insurance for directly employed staff offset.
Expenditure	
Pay inflation	2025/26 3% and thereafter 2% in line with national scheme.
Price inflation	Only contractual inflation on running costs
Local Government Pension Scheme	Contribution rate of 18.3% for 2025/26 and until next triennial revaluation in 2028/29.
Financing Costs	
Interest rates payable	Average rate on existing debt 2025/26 of 4.07%, 2026/27 of 3.38%, 2027/28 of 3.23% and 2028/29 of 2.34%
Interest rates payable on new debt – 10 year rate	2025/26 of 4.23%, 2026/27 of 4.03%, 2027/28 of 3.90% and 2028/29 3.90%.
Interest rates receivable	3.35% in 2025/26, 3.10% in 2026/27, 3.25% in 2027/28 and 3.25% in 2028/29.
Income	
Inflationary increases	Various based on individual service considerations

REVENUE BUDGET MANAGEMENT 2024/25

Projected General Fund Reserve at 31st March 2025	
	2024-28
	MTFP
	(Feb 2024)
Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) :-	£000
MTFP Planned Opening Balance 01/04/2024	16,384
Approved net contribution from balances	(4,041)
Planned Closing Balance 31/03/2025	12,343
Increase in opening balance from 2023-24 results	1,321
Projected corporate underspends / (overspends) :-	
Council Wide	(11)
Financing Costs	0
Joint Venture - Investment Return	0
Contingencies	0
Additional Income Received	0
Services Rebase	0
People Rebase	0
Contribution from general fund reserves to Housing Benefits	(155)
Pay Award 2024/25	0
Projected General Fund Reserve (excluding Departmental) at 31st March 2025	13,498
Planned Balance at 31st March 2025	12,343
Improvement	1,155

Departmental projected year-end balances	
	Improvement / (decline) compared with 2024-28 MTFP
	£000
People	(457)
Services	(575)
Resources and Governance	(1,487)
Chief Executive & Economy	0
TOTAL	(2,519)

Summary Comparison with :-	
	2024-28
	MTFP
	£000
Corporate Resources - increase in opening balance from 23/24 results	1,321
Corporate Resources - additional in-year Improvement/(Decline)	(166)
Quarter 1 Budget Rebase	0
Departmental - Improvement / (Decline)	(2,519)
Improvement / (Decline) compared with MTFP	(1,364)
Projected General Fund Reserve at 31st March 2025	10,979

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL TERM 2025 TO 2029

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	£m	£m	£m	£m
People Group	89.070	91.748	94.301	97.510
Chief Executives Office & Economic Growth	1.770	1.714	1.669	1.749
Services Group	26.240	26.270	26.886	27.437
Resources & Governance Group	15.703	16.278	16.902	17.337
Financing costs	4.028	3.706	3.632	3.925
Investment Returns - Joint Venture	(1.977)	(2.006)	(1.753)	(1.524)
Council Wide	0.663	0.677	0.693	0.706
Council Wide Contingencies	0.272	0.278	0.202	0.202
Contribution to/(from) revenue balances	(5.639)	(4.838)	(4.630)	(6.013)
Total Net Expenditure	130.130	133.827	137.902	141.329
<u>Resources - Projected and assumed</u>				
Council Tax	70.226	73.482	76.761	80.171
Business Rates retained locally	27.080	27.454	28.110	28.022
Top Up Grant	8.645	8.731	8.819	8.907
Revenue Support Grant	4.663	4.738	4.814	4.814
Better Care Fund	4.488	4.488	4.488	4.488
Adult Social Care Support Grant	3.753	3.753	3.753	3.753
Social Care Grant	7.153	7.153	7.153	7.153
Services Grant	0.166	0.166	0.166	0.166
Additional Funding in the Budget	2.340	2.340	2.340	2.340
National Insurance Offset	1.476	1.522	1.498	1.515
Homeless Grant	0.140	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Resources	130.130	133.827	137.902	141.329
<u>Balances</u>				
Opening balance	10.979	4.910	0.072	(4.558)
Release of Earmarked Reserve	0.220	0.000	0.000	0.000
Transfer to Risk Reserve	(0.650)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Contribution to/(from) balances	(5.639)	(4.838)	(4.630)	(6.013)
Closing balance	4.910	0.072	(4.558)	(10.571)

Capital Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 - 2028/29					Appendix 7
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children, Families & Learning					
School Condition Allocations	<i>67</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>67</i>	268
	<i>67</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>67</i>	268
Housing					
Adaptations / Lifts	150	153	156	159	618
Heating replacement programme	1,325	1,351	1,378	1,406	5,460
Structural works	400	408	416	424	1,648
Lifeline Services	310	203	214	217	944
Repairs before painting	68	69	134	136	407
Roofing	1,000	663	676	690	3,029
Garages	50	50	26	27	153
External Works (footpaths, fencing, etc.)	210	214	218	223	865
Pavement Crossing	28	28	29	30	115
Window and Door Replacement Programme	1,495	2,025	2,065	1,607	7,192
IPM works	3,600	3,672	3,745	3,820	14,837
Energy Efficiency	4,020	3,917	3,917	1,500	13,354
Communal Works	200	204	208	212	824
Capital Schemes approved in previous years	12,835				12,835
New build (net of HE grant)/regeneration	4,090	1,000	1,000	1,000	7,090
Fees	312	318	325	331	1,286
	30,093	14,275	14,507	11,782	70,657
Transport					
Highway Maintenance	<i>1,206</i>	<i>1,206</i>	<i>1,206</i>	<i>1,206</i>	4,824
Integrated Transport	<i>893</i>	<i>893</i>	<i>893</i>	<i>893</i>	3,572
Pothole Funding	<i>969</i>	<i>969</i>	<i>969</i>	<i>969</i>	3,876
	<i>3,068</i>	<i>3,068</i>	<i>3,068</i>	<i>3,068</i>	12,272
Other Capital Programmes					
Disabled Facility Grants	<i>1,160</i>	<i>1,160</i>	<i>1,160</i>	<i>1,160</i>	4,640
	<i>1,160</i>	<i>1,160</i>	<i>1,160</i>	<i>1,160</i>	4,640
Council funded Schemes					
Advanced Design Fees (Already approved to 2025/26)	150	-	-	-	150
Economic Growth Investment Fund (Already approved to 2025/26)	500	-	-	-	500
Capitalised Repairs (Already approved to 2025/26)	250	250	250	250	1,000
Total Council Funded Schemes	900	250	250	250	1,650
Self Financing Scheme					
Development of Office Block at Prestigate (Already approved to 2025/26)	8,000	-	-	-	8,000
Total Self Financing Schemes	8,000	-	-	-	8,000
Total Spending Plans	43,288	18,820	19,052	16,327	97,487
Funded by:					
Capital Grants	4,295	4,295	4,295	4,295	17,180
HRA Revenue Contributions	15,948	13,975	14,207	11,482	55,612
HRA Capital Receipts	300	300	300	300	1,200
Borrowing	13,845		-	-	13,845
Corporate Resources	900	250	250	250	1,650
Self Financing	8,000	-	-	-	8,000
Total Resources	43,288	18,820	19,052	16,327	97,487
Commitments - see above	43,288	18,820	19,052	16,327	97,487
Resources Available for Investment	-	-	-	-	-

Figures shown in italics are estimates, awaiting confirmation of funding streams.

**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
7 JANUARY 2025**

CQC ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK – UPDATE

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update members on the CQC Assurance Framework.

Summary

2. The CQC Assurance Framework for Local Authorities in England, introduced by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), is a structured approach to evaluating the performance of local authorities in delivering Adult Social Care services. It aligns with the goals of the Health and Care Act 2022, which aims to ensure high-quality, equitable, and sustainable care for individuals in need.
3. The framework evaluates how local authorities:
 - a) Assess needs: Identify and understand the care and support needs of their population.
 - b) Provide support: Deliver timely, effective, and personalised care.
 - c) Ensure safety: Protect adults at risk from harm and ensure high standards of care.
 - d) Leadership and workforce: Exhibit effective leadership and maintain a skilled, motivated workforce.
4. Assessment Criteria: The CQC uses four key themes:
 - a) Working with people: Involves engagement with service users, families, and carers.
 - b) Providing support: Focuses on commissioning and direct service provision.
 - c) Ensuring safety: Covers safeguarding and risk management.
 - d) Leadership: Examines strategic direction, governance, and staff wellbeing.
5. Methods of Evaluation:
 - a) Data and Evidence: Review of qualitative and quantitative data from local authorities and service providers.

- b) Inspection Visits: On-site evaluations to observe practices and gather insights from stakeholders.
 - c) Stakeholder Feedback: Input from people using services, their carers, and partner organisations.
6. Outcome Ratings:
- a) Local authorities are rated on their performance, using categories such as Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement, or Inadequate.
7. Improvement Focus:
- a) The framework emphasises continuous improvement by identifying strengths and areas for development, supporting local authorities to enhance service quality.

Conclusion

- 8. The CQC's assurance process aims to create transparency, foster accountability, and drive better outcomes for individuals relying on adult social care services.
- 9. This report seeks to update Scrutiny members on the requirements of the CQC assurance framework, the duties and responsibilities of the Local Authority and provide an updated timeline of the inspection.

Recommendation

- 10. It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report in the form of a presentation

Joss Harbron
Assistant Director of Adult Social Care

Background Papers

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

Joss Harbron: Extension: 5278

Council Plan	The report and the activity to support the preparation for regulation and inspection is aligned to the Council Plan priorities.
Addressing inequalities	This programme has no specific impact on protected groups.
Tackling Climate Change	All consideration was undertaken with sustainability in mind and aim to reduce the carbon footprint, and re-use energy and environmental resources where possible.
Efficient and effective use of resources	Key aims with Adult Services is to deliver efficient, effective and person-centred care which supports a strength based approach aligned to the requirements of the Care Act and includes effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	The strategy outlined in this report will continue the Council's drive to deliver services and support that enhance people's life chances and opportunities to thrive.
S17 Crime and Disorder	N/A
Wards Affected	All Darlington Wards.
Groups Affected	All adults with social care needs in Darlington.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This report is an update.
Urgent Decision	N/A
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The proposed projects have no specific impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

Climate Considerations

11. This report has considered climate impact and change. All consideration was undertaken with sustainability in mind and aim to reduce the carbon footprint, and re-use energy and environmental resources where possible. The feedback and evidence for CQC assurance framework has been developed electronically and shared via emails, Teams or in the main through virtual events. Adult Services have appointed practitioners to lead on climate change within the service and develop literature and information to share with people who access services.

This page is intentionally left blank

Update on CQC Assurance Framework

Page 103

Adult Scrutiny Committee

7th January 2025

Joss Harbron

Assistant Director for Adult Services



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

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



Care Act Principles

Page 106



Status of Inspections in North East (November 2024)

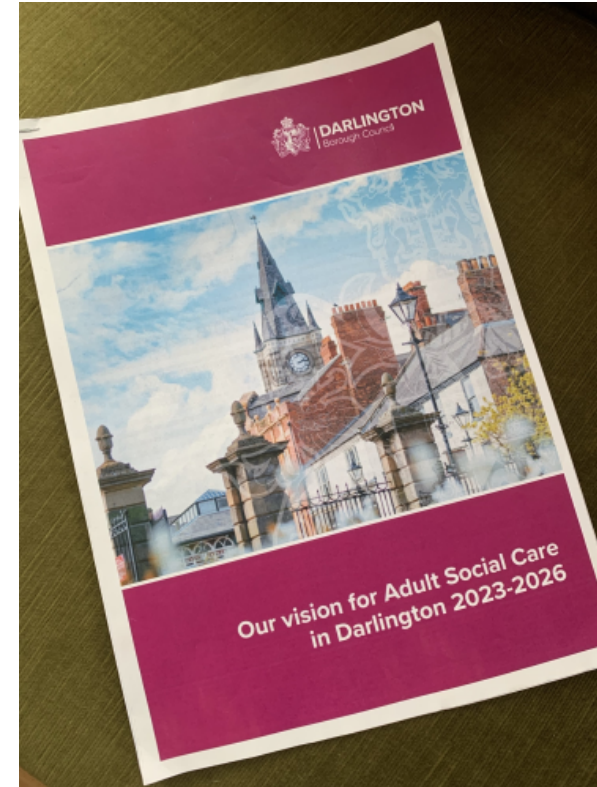
Council	Current status	Date notified	On site visit to commence	Deadline for on-site activity (6 month rule)	Assessment Report Published	Overall Rating
County Durham	Complete	30/01/2024	20/06/2024	30/07/2024	County Durham: local authority assessment - Care Quality Commission (cqc.org.uk)	GOOD
Northumberland	Awaiting Report to be published	19/02/2024	05/08/2024	19/08/2024		
Gateshead	Site visit completed	18/03/2024	28/10/2024	18/09/2024		
Middlesbrough	Site visit completed	22/05/2024	28/10/2024	22/11/2024		
Redcar and Cleveland	Site visit completed	22/05/2024	04/11/2024	22/11/2024		
Hartlepool	Site Visit completed	22/05/2024	11/11/2024	22/11/2024		
Sunderland	Site visit completed	24/06/2024	25/11/2024	24/12/2024		
Stockton-on-Tees	Site visit completed	24/06/2024	25/11/2024	24/12/2024		
Darlington	Site Visit planned	24/06/2024	20/01/2024	24/12/2024		
Newcastle upon Tyne	Awaiting date of site visit	15/07/2024		15/01/2025		
North Tyneside	Awaiting date of site visit	09/09/2024		09/03/2025		
South Tyneside	Awaiting notification			30/06/1900		
Cumberland	Awaiting notification			30/06/1900		



Darlington Self-Assessment

Page 108

- 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.



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

Notification
of
Assessment
24th June
2024

Preparation
for
Inspection.
50 cases.

December
11th 2024
DBC Briefing
session with
CQC

March 2025
outcome of
inspection
published

Page 111



Completion
and
submission
of LAIR and
Self
Assessment
12th July
2024

Notification
of onsite
inspection
November
2024
Submission
of cases.

20th-24th
January
2025
Onsite
Inspection



Outline of Inspection Activity - January 2025

Page 112

Prep meetings with specific members (undertaken in Sept/October 2024)

Onsite 20th Jan for up to 4 days.

Meet with DASS (James on 20th)

27th Jan Feedback session with DASS (James)

March 2025 outcome of inspection published



Contact from CQC to partners and people/carers (Nov - Jan 2025)

Focus Groups with the social care teams and managers 20th - 24th Jan

Initial feedback submitted to DBC - Feb 2025



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



Any Questions?



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 JANUARY 2025

HOSPITAL DISCHARGES

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the requirements on the Local Authority to support hospital discharges and to provide an update on how Darlington is performing on hospital discharges.

Summary

2. In the UK, local authorities (LAs) play an essential role in supporting hospital discharges to ensure people transition smoothly from hospital care to appropriate community or home settings. This involves close collaboration with the NHS to prevent delayed discharges and to support people's recovery and well-being after their hospital stay. Local authorities' involvement in hospital discharges is part of the broader health and social care integration effort in the UK, aiming to provide joined-up, patient-centred care across settings.
3. Below is a summary of the key duties of local authorities in this process:

Assessment and Planning

4. **Needs Assessment:** We must assess a person's needs before discharge. This includes determining care, rehabilitation, and support needs.
5. **Discharge Planning:** We must collaborate with NHS staff to develop a discharge plan, ensuring continuity of care by identifying the necessary support services post-discharge.
6. **Integrated Discharge Teams:** Our approach is to work as part of an integrated discharge team with County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) to streamline discharge assessments and decisions.

Provision of Services

7. **Community Support Services:** We are responsible for arranging community-based support services, such as home care, reablement (short-term rehabilitation at home), and equipment to facilitate independent living.
8. **Reablement and Intermediate Care:** In cases where people need extra support to regain independence, we provide short-term reablement services, enabling people to recover in their own homes or community-based settings.

9. **Continuing Care Arrangements:** For people with ongoing health needs, we work with the NHS to arrange Continuing Healthcare (CHC) assessments and long-term care placements, if necessary.

Funding and Financial Assessments

10. **Financial Eligibility Assessments:** We conduct financial assessments to determine if people qualify for costs towards their care.
11. **Funding Contributions:** For people eligible we will coordinate payment and support arrangements. Funding can also include temporary "interim care" packages if people are unable to return home immediately.

Supporting Timely Discharge

12. **Collaborating on Discharge Timelines:** We coordinate with hospital discharge teams to avoid "delayed transfers of care" (DTOCs), ensuring people don't stay in hospital longer than needed.
13. **Discharge to Assess (D2A) Models:** Under this model, we support people to be discharged home (or to an interim setting) quickly, with assessments and care planning taking place post-discharge to prevent hospital bed blocking.

Safeguarding and Well-being

14. **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults:** We are responsible for ensuring people, particularly vulnerable adults, are discharged to safe environments and that safeguarding measures are in place if necessary.
15. **Mental Capacity and Advocacy Support:** For people who may lack the mental capacity to make decisions, we provide advocacy and make best-interest decisions related to discharge planning, sometimes through appointed advocates or representatives.

Monitoring and Follow-up

16. **Post-Discharge Support and Monitoring:** We monitor people's well-being after discharge, especially for those receiving community or reablement services, to adapt support as needs change.
17. **Feedback and Quality Assurance:** We are ensuring continuous improvement in discharge practices by gathering feedback from people and families, which is shared with health partners to refine discharge processes.

Key Legislation

18. The Discharge to Assess (D2A) model in the UK primarily operates under the framework of the following legislation and policy guidelines:

Care Act 2014

19. The Care Act 2014 is the primary legislation governing social care in England and outlines the duties of local authorities in assessing and meeting adults' care and support needs.
20. Section 9 of the Act mandates that local authorities conduct a needs assessment for any adult who may require care, which forms the basis of the "discharge to assess" model.
21. Section 2 emphasises the duty of prevention, meaning that we must provide services to prevent, reduce, or delay care needs. Under D2A, we can conduct assessments after discharge to facilitate faster transition out of hospital, aligning with the Act's preventative focus.

National Health Service Act 2006 (as amended by the Health and Care Act 2022)

22. The National Health Service Act 2006 (amended by the Health and Care Act 2022) empowers NHS England and NHS Trusts to collaborate with local authorities in supporting hospital discharges.
23. The 2022 amendments emphasise integration between health and social care, further promoting the D2A model by encouraging partnership approaches to discharge, assessment, and care planning.

Health and Social Care Act 2012

24. This Act underpins integrated care systems and coordination between health and social care, which is central to D2A. It promotes collaborative care and streamlined assessments for patient discharge and care continuity.

Mental Capacity Act 2005

25. The *Mental Capacity Act 2005* plays a role in discharge planning under D2A when people may lack the capacity to make decisions about their care or residence.
26. Local authorities have the responsibility to conduct a best interests assessment for such people, potentially after they are discharged, to determine the most appropriate care setting.

COVID-19 Hospital Discharge Service Requirements (March 2020)

27. During the COVID-19 pandemic, guidance from the UK government on *Hospital Discharge Service Requirements* supported the adoption of D2A as a means to free up hospital beds quickly. This guidance formalised the D2A approach, creating four pathways for post-discharge care and assessment:
 - a. **Pathway 0:** Simple discharge with no additional support.
 - b. **Pathway 1:** Support in a home setting.
 - c. **Pathway 2:** Rehabilitation or recovery support in a community setting.
 - d. **Pathway 3:** Support in residential care, for people unable to return home.

28. This guidance, though temporary, laid the groundwork for a formalised D2A approach by emphasising community-based assessments post-discharge.

Health and Care Act 2022

29. This Act introduced further measures for health and social care integration, focusing on hospital discharge improvements. It promotes D2A by encouraging Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) to support more collaborative approaches between hospitals and local authorities for timely discharge and post-discharge assessments.

30. The combination of the *Care Act 2014*, amendments to the *NHS Act*, and *COVID-19 guidance* provides the legislative basis for the D2A model, enabling local authorities and the NHS to assess people's long-term needs in the community, facilitating faster and safer discharges.

Recommendation

31. It is recommended that: -

- a. Scrutiny members note the contents of the report.
- b. Adults Services to provide an annual update to Scrutiny.

Joss Harbron
Assistant Director of Adult Social Care

Background Papers

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

Barbara Beadle: Extension: 5125

Council Plan	This report contributes to the priorities agreed in the Council Plan.
Addressing inequalities	There are no implications arising from this report.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report supports the efficient use of resources through shared partnership priorities.
Health and Wellbeing	This plan supports priorities set out in the Health & Wellbeing Strategy.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no implications for the Budget or 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

Purpose of the Report

32. This report provides an overview of:

- a. Darlington demographics and interface with increased demand.
- b. The Hospital Discharge pathway for DBC Adult Social Care (ASC) including Discharge to Assess.
- c. Home from hospital and carer offer.
- d. Performance and data overview.
- e. Current BCF short term funded development- improving experiences and outcomes.
- f. Current transformation plans and ambitions.

Overview

Darlington Demographics

33. Darlington has a growing elderly population, with increasing numbers of people aged 85 and over, who are more likely to require social care. A significant proportion of older adults live with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and dementia, increasing the demand for health and social care services.
34. Within a population of approx. 108,000 (2021 census) within borough **818** people are open to ASC aged 65-84 and **502** aged 85+.
35. Demand for Health and Adult Social Care has increased nationally following the pandemic as people were reluctant to seek medical support, alongside difficulties accessing appointments and lengthy delays for onwards referrals and surgeries alongside a significant increase in post viral autoimmune syndromes such as 'Long Covid'.
36. Darlington experiences pockets of social and economic deprivation, which correlates with higher demand for social care services, particularly for older people and those with mental health issues.
37. Life expectancy in some deprived areas of Darlington is lower than the national average; 78.6 male and 82.6 female, leading to increased social care needs earlier in life; 73.1 85.9 male and 76.2 - 90.3 female.
38. The Hospital Discharge pathway for DBC Adult Social Care (ASC) includes the Discharge to Assessment Model, Home from hospital and carer offer.
39. The Responsive, Integrated Assessment and intervention team (RIACT) is based at Hundens Lane. The team have hospital-based social workers who support ward discharge leads with discharge advice, information, and guidance to enable individuals to return home

without/with support. These social workers cover both the Darlington Memorial Hospital and the outlying community hospitals.

40. Referrals are triaged and determined as to whether support aligns to health or social care and at times overlap and joint support provided.
41. **RIACT Adult Social Care** offer includes reablement as well as the hospital social workers and community Occupational Therapists. This forms part of Darlington's integrated intermediate care offer.
42. **RIACT Health** offers community nursing and rehabilitation including physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Discharge Pathways

43. Government discharge guidance changed frequently during and following the pandemic and following launch of [Hospital discharge and community support guidance - GOV.UK](#) in January 2024 ASC developed and implemented an internal *Hospital Discharge (Discharge to Assess D2A) Practice Guidance* launched in June 2024.

Delayed Transfers of Care (DTC)

44. CQC published their annual report [The state of health care and adult social care in England 2023/24 - Care Quality Commission](#) identified where people required Local Authority support to enable safe discharge from acute physical health beds people often experienced delays in allocation, difficulties in sourcing domiciliary care and bed based care resulting in significant Delays in transfer of Care (DTC).
45. In Darlington we are proud of our hospital discharge offer and rarely experience delayed transfers of care from acute physical health settings. This is due to our positive provider position in terms of capacity, quality and relationships as well as our strong reablement offer and ability to interface with RAPID. Our RAPID and reablement offer supports a D2A pathway.
46. RAPID is an immediate response from a care provider to meet need until a provider can be sourced or reablement aligned. We aim for RAPID to support up to 72 hrs and Making Space is the provider. We block contract 250 hrs per week, and this is flexed when experiencing periods of heightened demand to 300 hrs per week. (Funded via Better Care Fund).

Discharge To Assess (D2A)

47. It is recognised that assessing an individual's needs within an acute health setting does not achieve positive long-term outcomes. Individuals are often medically optimised; able to leave hospital as treatment has concluded but are not well enough to return home and/or require additional support whilst their recovery journey continues. All the discharge pathways are funded for up to six weeks from the Discharge Funding (BCF).
48. This national guidance identifies **four pathways** to support discharge – outlined below with DBC's Adult Social Care ASC and Integrated Health Board's (ICB) offer:

Pathway	Discharge destination	DBC ASC Offer
0	<p>Discharge Home with no support or support of family</p> <p><i>No referral received into ASC Identified as simple discharge coordinated by ward staff.</i></p>	<p>Hospital based Social Workers to offer advice to discharge leads on ward including assistive technology such as falls detectors and lifeline, onward referral options if needs change as well as signposting to carer support and resources.</p> <p><i>It is recognised nationally this is a group that experiences a high level of delayed discharge due to reliant on family to support with appropriate arrangements.</i></p>
1	<p>Discharge Home</p> <p><i>Referral received into ASC to support discharge</i></p>	<p>Supported largely by reablement to support a period of rehabilitation and intermediate care which aims to support people to return to their optimum level of independence.</p> <p>This is a time limited intervention usually up to 6 weeks.</p> <p>Reablement capacity is bolstered with RAPID response hrs (Block contract with Making space)</p>
2	<p>Bed based Intermediate care</p> <p><i>No referral received into ASC until discharge planning is needed from these beds</i></p>	<p>The ICB contract with Rydal to support this discharge pathway including intermediate care beds, step up beds (to prevent hospital admission) and nursing beds.</p> <p>Additional spot purchased beds are at times required where Rydal criteria isn't met, or capacity isn't available.</p> <p>RIACT Health in reach into these beds and provide therapy to support recovery and rehabilitation.</p> <p>Weekly Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings are held involving ASC and referrals are discussed when appropriate for ASC</p>
3	<p>Nursing care / complex discharges</p> <p><i>No referrals received for ASC to support this pathway as led by health.</i></p>	<p>Spot purchased beds assessed by health and sourced by the DBC commissioning and brokerage team.</p>

Home from Hospital

49. Supports individuals discharging home from Hospital and is non chargeable and available to those aged 18+ and those individuals who have low level need as the service is not

regulated to provide personal care. The individual will need to live within Darlington. The service can support for a period of six weeks. The provider contracted to deliver Home from Hospital within Darlington is Making Space.

Carers support service hospital discharge

50. This service works closely with adult social care, ward staff and other health professionals to identify and support those who provide informal support to individuals whether this be a new role or existing. The aim of the service is to identify unpaid carers much earlier to improve support for them sooner. The professionals involved will refer prior to hospital discharge and dependent on the unpaid carer the service may provide one to one support up to four weeks post discharge prior to further involvement being provided by the wider Durham County and Darlington Carers Service. The support being offered can range from financial advice including benefits and grants, information and advice, emotional support, and counselling services.

Performance Overview

51. The data table below identifies in the period April-October compared between 2023 and 2024 Adult Social Care have received an increase of 66 referrals (840 in 2024) (774 in 2023). This is an increase of 8.53%.

Month	Hosp Disch	Month	Hosp Disch
Apr-23	111	Apr-24	144
May-23	113	May-24	118
Jun-23	109	Jun-24	109
Jul-23	120	Jul-24	133
Aug-23	110	Aug-24	119
Sep-23	106	Sep-24	86
Oct-23	105	Oct-24	131
Nov-23	141	Total	840
Dec-23	113		
Jan-24	113		
Feb-24	123		
Mar-24	134		
Total	1398		

52. Data taken from BCF Qtr2 return (June – Sept 2024):

Number of ASC Hospital Discharge Short Stays since Apr24	184
Individuals who have had ASC Hospital Discharge Short stay since Apr24	170
Number of Hospital Discharges to Rapid Response during Apr-Sep24	204

ASCOF 2B – Older people still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital Jul-Sep24	82.1%
--	-------

53. Number of people supported per month in a period of reablement (up to six weeks):

Month	Apr-Sep23	Apr-Sep24
April	41	45
May	43	33
June	35	32
July	38	36
August	34	36
September	39	22
Total	230	204

Current BCF short term funded development-improving experiences and outcomes

In-reach reablement

54. The aim is to provide in-reach support from RIACT Social Care to the spot-purchased beds and intermediate care beds to support people home with a reablement approach prior to discharge. Care home staff often deliver from a task-based approach delivering care and ‘doing for’ whereas reablement ‘support with’ to support outcomes and optimising independence. This will be delivered through additional capacity for 12 months x1 full-time equivalent Occupational Therapist and 30 hrs Reablement Support Worker.

RIACT early opportunities for review

55. Pressures to review people within short stays following discharge have increased due to the impact of demand and complexity alongside our approach to allocate quickly to support discharge. Therefore, people may have longer stays in short term residential due to the need to provide a Care Act assessment to determine if the ongoing support is required and/or end support. The model within Darlington is currently to provide up to six weeks funded care through the Discharge to assess model. If ongoing support is needed following this a financial assessment is required and assessed client contributions begin from this point.

56. It can be appropriate for individuals to be assessed early within the ‘up to’ six-week funding timeframe to inform next steps, e.g. short-term residential placement to home with reablement or at times it is clearly known that an individual has reached their optimum and required a longer-term residential placement and therefore the discharge funding alignment can end.

57. We have recruited through the BCF an additional x2 full time equivalent Social Workers (12-month FTC) who will provide additional capacity to undertake the assessments and reviews for people within short stays. They will also provide an additional resource to increased pressures around referrals when needed to prevent Delayed transfers of care and early discharge.

58. This approach aims in turn reduce spend within the Adult Social care budget alongside earlier identification of next steps in an individual's discharge journey with the aim of return home.

Current Transformation plans and ambitions

59. We are currently reviewing the discharge to assess approach in development. The aim will be to enable a proportionate assessment to be completed to support safe discharge identifying specific assessed areas of impendence to enable a measure to be applied at the review. This development also supports an approach of not determining eligibility under the Care Act from an acute health setting.

60. We are working with housing colleagues in DBC to look at opportunities to utilise an Extra Care Housing (ECH) property with the ability to provide short term stays for people unable to return home due to inappropriate housing, awaiting adaptations or no fixed abode to support a period of assessment outside of a bed-based health and/or care environment to determine long term needs and next steps. This is hoped to also provide the opportunity for people to 'experience' ECH and aims to increase onward referrals to this housing and care model.

61. We are working with County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust to develop a portal to enable online referrals to populate into the client data system to reduce stages of business support and administration time as well as omitting and Data governance risk. This will enable the person to tell their story once, build the quality of the information within the referral and develop further the trusted assessment model.

Outcome of Consultation

62. Not applicable.

Climate Considerations

63. This report has considered climate impact and change. The services leading on the hospital discharges work within the parameters of the organisations corporate plans which incorporate climate change considerations. On individual basis, each team member will work with the person and their families to support a return home where possible. Part of this approach is to assess the home environment for suitable occupancy, energy, lighting, and ability for the person to access their home and local environment. Opportunities to explore sustainable options will be considered by the practitioner.

**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
7 JANUARY 2025**

**TRANSITIONAL SERVICES
(PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS)**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update to Scrutiny on the responsibilities for the Local Authority in relation to support young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to prepare for adulthood.

Summary

2. The Care Act 2014 places several duties on Local Authorities in England to ensure young people with care and support needs are well-prepared for adulthood. This includes young people with disabilities or those who may need ongoing care as they transition from Children's to Adult Services.
3. Summary of Key Areas for Preparing Young People for Adulthood:
 - a) Transition assessments to evaluate current and future needs.
 - b) Continuity and planning for Adult Care Services.
 - c) Multi-agency collaboration for seamless transitions.
 - d) Information and advice on adult life, employment, housing, etc.
 - e) Preventative support to promote independent living and well-being.
 - f) Advocacy services to aid participation in transition processes.
4. Local Authorities in Britain have specific duties under the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) framework to ensure that children and young people with SEND receive the support necessary to achieve their potential and participate fully in society. These duties are primarily established by the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice 2015, and supporting legislation, such as the Equality Act 2010. Below is a summary of the key duties:
5. Summary of Key SEND Duties of Local Authorities:
 - a) Identification and Assessment of SEND needs.
 - b) Provision of EHC Plans and securing necessary resources.
 - c) Publishing and Maintaining a Local Offer of available services.
 - d) Coordinating Health, Education, and Social Care for holistic support.
 - e) Transition Planning for young people preparing for adulthood.
 - f) Inclusion and Accessibility in educational settings.
 - g) Engaging with Families and Young People in SEND planning.

- h) Providing Mediation Services for dispute resolution.
 - i) Reviewing SEND Provisions to improve services.
6. These duties aim to give young people a stable, supportive framework for moving into adult life, with a focus on well-being, independence, and meaningful community engagement.

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that Scrutiny members note the contents of the report.

Tony Murphy
Assistant Director of Education & Inclusion

Joss Harbron
Assistant Director of Adults

Background Papers

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

TonyMurphy: Extension:5637

Council Plan	This report contributes to the priorities agreed in the Council Plan.
Addressing inequalities	There are no implications arising from this report.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report supports the efficient use of resources through shared partnership priorities.
Health and Wellbeing	This plan supports priorities set out in the Health & Wellbeing Strategy.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	All.
Groups Affected	All.
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no implications for the Budget or 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 both Looked After Children and Care Leavers are considered within the actions to support transitional planning.

MAIN REPORT

Context

Duties under the Care Act 2014

8. The Care Act 2014 places several duties on Local Authorities in England to ensure young people with care and support needs are well-prepared for adulthood. This includes young

people with disabilities or those who may need ongoing care as they transition from Children's to Adult Services. The key provisions are outlined below:

a) Duty to Promote Well-being (Section 1)

- (i) Local Authorities must consider the well-being of the individual in all decisions, which includes preparing them for adulthood.
- (ii) Well-being encompasses personal dignity, physical and mental health, emotional well-being, protection from abuse, participation in work, education, and social activities, and the suitability of living accommodation.

b) Transition Assessments (Sections 58–66)

- (i) The Care Act mandates that Local Authorities conduct a transition assessment for young people likely to have ongoing care needs as they approach adulthood. This also applies to young carers.
- (ii) Transition assessments should be conducted when it is of “significant benefit” to the young person and should consider their current and future needs.
- (iii) The assessment covers needs, outcomes, and the support required as they enter adulthood and should involve the young person, their family, and relevant professionals.

c) Planning for Transition and Continuity of Care

- (i) Planning: Following the transition assessment, Local Authorities must develop a plan that details the services and support needed for the individual to transition smoothly into adulthood.
- (ii) Continuity of Care: For young people receiving children's services, the Care Act requires a plan to ensure continuity of care as they transition to adult services. If there is a delay in assessment completion at age 18, Children's Services must continue until adult services can take over.

d) Integrating with Other Services

- (i) Local Authorities are required to work collaboratively with health services, education, and other relevant bodies to create a seamless transition. This is particularly relevant for young people with Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plans, ensuring that care needs align with educational and health goals.

e) Information and Advice (Section 4)

- (i) The Care Act mandates that Local Authorities provide accessible information about the transition process, including advice on employment, housing, community inclusion, and other areas critical to independent living.

- (ii) Information must be tailored to the needs of young people and their families to empower informed choices regarding adulthood.

f) Preventative Services (Section 2)

- (i) Local Authorities must provide or arrange for preventive services aimed at reducing, delaying, or preventing the development of needs for care and support among young people transitioning to adulthood. This includes helping young people build skills for independent living and ensuring they have access to resources that promote health and well-being.

g) Advocacy (Section 67)

- (i) If a young person has substantial difficulty in participating in transition assessments or care planning, the Care Act requires Local Authorities to provide independent advocacy to support their active involvement in decisions about their care and support.

Duties under the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) framework

9. Local Authorities in Britain have specific duties under the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) framework to ensure that children and young people with SEND receive the support necessary to achieve their potential and participate fully in society. These duties are primarily established by the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice 2015, and supporting legislation, such as the Equality Act 2010. Below is a summary of the key duties:

a) Identification of SEND Needs

- (i) Local Authorities must identify and assess the needs of children and young people who may have SEND in their area. This includes collaborating with health services, early years providers, schools, and parents to ensure early identification and intervention.

b) Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Needs Assessments and Plans

- (i) EHC Needs Assessment: Local Authorities are responsible for carrying out EHC needs assessments for children and young people (up to age 25) who may need additional support. This assessment considers the educational, health, and social care needs of the individual.
- (ii) EHC Plans: If an assessment determines that a young person has significant needs that cannot be met through standard resources, the local authority must develop an EHC Plan. This plan sets out the child or young person's needs, the support required, and specific outcomes to be achieved. Local Authorities must regularly review and update EHC Plans, usually on an annual basis.

c) Provision of Appropriate Support and Resources

- (i) Local Authorities must ensure that appropriate support is in place to meet the needs of children and young people with EHC Plans. This includes securing educational placements and, where necessary, additional resources for special educational provisions.
- (ii) For children and young people without EHC Plans, Local Authorities must ensure that mainstream educational settings provide quality support and reasonable adjustments to meet their needs.

d) Local Offer

- (i) Local Authorities are required to publish a Local Offer, a directory of information on available education, health, and social care services for children and young people with SEND and their families. The Local Offer should be accessible, regularly updated, and developed in consultation with young people, parents, and service providers.
- (ii) The Local Offer also includes information on transport, employment services, support in moving to adulthood, and leisure activities.

e) Coordination with Health and Social Care Services

- (i) Local Authorities must work closely with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), health providers, and social care services to ensure that children and young people with SEND receive coordinated care across education, health, and social sectors. This duty is essential for delivering holistic support, particularly for those with complex needs.
- (ii) Joint commissioning arrangements should be in place to plan, deliver, and review services that meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.

f) Preparing for Adulthood (Transition Planning)

- (i) Local Authorities must support young people with SEND in preparing for adulthood from age 14 onwards. This includes planning for further education, employment, independent living, and community participation.
- (ii) EHC Plans must contain a focus on outcomes that help the young person transition to adult life, such as skills for work, independent living skills, and maintaining good health.

g) Supporting Inclusion and Accessibility

- (i) Local Authorities have a duty to promote the inclusion of children with SEND in mainstream education wherever possible. This aligns with the Equality Act 2010, which mandates reasonable adjustments in educational settings to prevent discrimination.
- (ii) They must ensure accessibility in schools and other educational facilities, allowing students with SEND to participate fully in school activities alongside

their peers.

h) Parent and Young Person Participation

- (i) Local Authorities are required to actively involve parents, children, and young people in decisions regarding SEND provisions, including the development of their Local Offer and EHC Plans. The SEND Code of Practice emphasizes co-production, where parents and young people have meaningful input into service design and planning.

i) Mediation and Dispute Resolution

- (i) Local Authorities must provide access to independent mediation services for families who disagree with SEND decisions, including decisions related to EHC needs assessments and provisions. These services aim to resolve disputes between parents (or young people) and the local authority in a constructive, less adversarial manner.

j) Duty to Keep Under Review

- (i) Local Authorities must continuously monitor and review the special educational and care needs provision within their area, identifying gaps and areas for improvement. They are expected to work with parents, young people, schools, health providers, and other stakeholders to enhance and develop SEND services.

Introduction

10. Preparing for adulthood is a critical step for young people requiring social care. We believe that a strategy is essential to ensure early planning, coordinated support, and a person-centred approach. With the right strategies in place, we can ensure young people can make this transition with greater ease and success gaining the confidence, skills, and resources they need to thrive in adulthood.

11. We know through feedback from young people and their families that transitions, specifically that of children into adulthood, does not currently produce the best outcomes for all young people and families supported through this process. It was identified as an area of specific need to be addressed under the local area SEND written statement of action i.e.:

“Poor Preparation for Adulthood and post 19 opportunities for children and young people with SEND”

12. The development of this strategy, is therefore intrinsically interlinked with the SEND Written Statement of Action (WSOA), SEND Strategy and the Children and Young People's Plan.

Our key objectives

13. Share with young people and families the responsibilities and statutory duties of Adult Services within Darlington Borough Council.
14. To provide information on the key stages when planning for adulthood, who is involved, duties, responsibilities and expected outcomes to ensure that young people and their families/carers are fully informed and that expectations managed about changes across transition points, with clear co-produced plans.
15. To refresh and reinforce the progression approach used to support young people as they prepare for adulthood.
16. To identify what we need to do to improve our preparation for adulthood approach.
17. Work with young people and families to improve this journey and achieve improved outcomes.
18. To share key information with young people and families.
19. Support consistency, continuity and improved outcomes at every stage of a person's life.
20. The key aims within the strategy include:

a) Early Planning and Person-Centred Approach

- (i) **Start Planning Early:** Begin transition planning by age 14 or earlier through the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) review process. This allows time to identify goals, explore options, and address needs in areas like education, employment, housing, and healthcare.
- (ii) **Person-centred Planning:** Focus on the young person's individual aspirations, abilities, and preferences. Involve them in the decision-making process to ensure the plan reflects their personal goals and gives them a sense of ownership.
- (iii) **Involve Key People:** Include the young person's family, carers, and relevant professionals (e.g., social workers, health care providers, educators) in planning discussions to provide comprehensive support.

b) Education and Employment Pathways

- (i) **Access to Education:** Ensure that the young adult has access to suitable locally provided post-16 education, training, or work opportunities. This could include further education, vocational training, or apprenticeships.
- (ii) **Supported Internships and Employment:** Explore supported employment programs, such as *Supported Internships* or *Access to Work*, which offer tailored support for young people with disabilities to find and sustain employment.

- (iii) **Skills Development:** Equip young people with life skills, such as budgeting, time management, communication, and self-advocacy, to foster independence and confidence in the workplace.

c) **Social Care and Health Transitions**

- (i) **Adult Social Care Assessment:** At age 18, young people who need ongoing support will be assessed by Adult Social Care services to determine their eligibility for support under the Care Act 2014. This assessment should ensure continuity of care from children to adult services, focusing on their needs in adulthood.
- (ii) **Transition to Adult Health Services:** For those with complex health needs, seamless transition from children's health services to adult services (e.g., mental health, learning disabilities) should be planned and coordinated to avoid gaps in care.
- (iii) **Personal Budgets and Direct Payments:** Where appropriate, young people and their families can explore personal budgets or direct payments, giving them more choice and control over how their care is provided.

d) **Independent Living and Housing Options**

- (i) **Explore Housing Options:** Discuss housing options early, such as supported living, shared lives schemes, or independent living with community-based support. These options can provide varying levels of independence based on the young person's needs and preferences.
- (ii) **Daily Living Skills:** Encourage the development of practical daily living skills, such as cooking, cleaning, and personal care, so the young adult can live as independently as possible.
- (iii) **Assistive Technology:** Consider using assistive technology (e.g. smart home devices, apps, or communication aids) to promote autonomy and enhance safety in independent living settings.

e) **Building Social Networks and Community Participation**

- (i) **Social Engagement:** Encourage participation in social and community activities to help build friendships, reduce isolation, and foster a sense of belonging. This could involve joining clubs, community groups, or volunteer work.
- (ii) **Transitioning to Adult Relationships:** Support young people in understanding adult relationships, boundaries, and social expectations. Help them navigate relationships in adult life, including friendships, intimate relationships, and professional interactions.
- (iii) **Advocacy Support:** Ensure access to advocacy services, to help young people voice their concerns, make informed choices, and safeguard their rights.

f) **Mental and Emotional Wellbeing**

- (i) **Support Emotional Resilience:** Transitioning to adulthood can be emotionally challenging. Offer access to mental health services or emotional support programs tailored to young people with additional needs, such as counselling or peer support groups.
- (ii) **Promote Self-Esteem and Confidence:** Encourage activities that build self-esteem and personal achievements, whether through education, hobbies, sports, or volunteering, to promote a sense of purpose and identity.

g) **Legal Rights and Responsibilities**

- (i) **Understanding Legal Changes:** Educate young people and their families about the legal changes that occur at 18, such as the Mental Capacity Act (2005), which outlines the young person's rights to make their own decisions, and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) if required.
- (ii) **Financial Independence and Benefits:** Provide guidance on managing finances, including access to benefits like Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), to ensure financial security in adulthood.
- (iii) **Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA):** If appropriate, discuss setting up an LPA so that a trusted person can help make decisions on health or financial matters if the young adult lacks capacity to do so in the future.

h) **Monitoring and Reviewing Progress**

- (i) **Regular Reviews:** Conduct regular reviews of the transition plan to ensure it remains aligned with the young person's evolving needs and aspirations. Adjustments should be made as necessary to address any emerging challenges.
- (ii) **Ongoing Support Network:** Ensure that the young adult continues to have access to a network of support, including social workers, healthcare providers, and peer groups, as they progress through adulthood.

i) **Collaboration Between Services**

- (i) **Multi-Agency Working:** Encourage close collaboration between education, health, and social care services to ensure a coordinated approach to the young person's transition. Regular communication between agencies can help prevent gaps in service and provide a holistic support network.
- (ii) **Designated Social Worker:** A designated social worker should act as a key point of contact to help navigate the complexities of the system, providing personalised guidance to both young people and their families.

Our statutory duties

21. Under the Care Act 2014, young people preparing for adulthood and who may require Adult Social Care support are assessed through a transition assessment process. This assessment aims to determine what care and support they will need as they move into adulthood and whether they are eligible for Adult Social Care Services. The process is designed to ensure a smooth transition from Children's Services to Adult Services, ensuring that their needs are met without any gaps in care. Here's how the assessment works:

a) Identifying the Need for a Transition Assessment

The transition assessment under the Care Act 2014 applies to three groups of young people:

- (i) **Young people approaching 18** who may have needs for care and support as adults.
- (ii) **Young carers** who might need support once they turn 18.
- (iii) **Adult carers of children** with disabilities, if the child is likely to need care and support once they turn 18.

We have a **duty** to carry out a transition assessment when:

- (i) It is likely that the young adult will have needs for care and support after turning 18.
- (ii) The assessment would be of significant benefit in planning for those future needs.
- (iii) The young person, or their family, requests an assessment.

Timing of the Transition Assessment

22. The **timing** of the assessment is important. It should happen early enough to allow for proper planning and prevent any disruption to care when the young adult turns 18.
23. The Care Act emphasises the importance of starting the assessment when it will provide the greatest benefit to the young person. This is often around the time that the young person's needs, and future aspirations are becoming clearer (usually between ages 16 and 18).

What the Transition Assessment Involves

24. The assessment is **person-centred**, meaning it focuses on the individual's unique needs, circumstances, and goals. It takes into account both the **current needs** of the young adult and any **future needs** they might have as they transition into adulthood.
25. Key areas covered in the transition assessment include:

- a) **Current Needs for Care and Support:** An evaluation of what care and support the young adult currently requires, including personal care, social support, and any health needs.
- b) **Future Needs:** Consideration of how these needs might change as they grow older and move into adulthood.
- c) **Outcomes and Aspirations:** Identifying the young person's goals, such as their aspirations for education, employment, independent living, and social inclusion.
- d) **Care and Support Options:** An exploration of the adult services, support systems, or care arrangements that might be suitable for meeting these needs and achieving the young person's goals.
- e) **Skills for Independence:** Identifying opportunities for developing independent living skills, such as budgeting, self-care, and managing daily tasks.

Key Considerations in the Assessment

26. The transition assessment should also consider broader aspects of the young person's life:

- a) **Wellbeing:** The assessment must promote the young person's wellbeing, considering both their physical and mental health, social relationships, personal dignity, and autonomy.
- b) **Family and Carers:** The impact of the young person's needs on their family, including any carers, is also considered. If the family or young carers will need additional support when the young adult turns 18, this is assessed too.
- c) **Involvement of the young adult and Family:** The young adult and their family or carers should be fully involved in the process. Their views, wishes, and preferences are central to shaping the care and support plan.
- d) **Advocacy:** If the young adult has difficulty understanding or engaging with the process, they may be entitled to advocacy support to ensure they can participate meaningfully in their own assessment.

Eligibility for Adult Social Care

27. After the transition assessment, we will determine whether the young adult is **eligible for Adult Social Care** under the Care Act. The eligibility criteria consider:

- a) **Whether the young person's needs arise from a physical or mental impairment or illness.**
- b) **Whether these needs prevent the person from achieving key outcomes** like managing and maintaining nutrition, maintaining personal hygiene, or developing and maintaining personal relationships.
- c) **Whether the impact of not meeting these needs would significantly affect the young person's wellbeing.**

28. If the young adult is eligible, a care and support plan will be developed to ensure their needs are met once they turn 18.

Developing a Care and Support Plan

29. If the assessment finds that the young adult will need support as an adult, the next step is creating a **care and support plan**. This plan will detail:
 - a) The **types of support** the young adult will receive (e.g. personal care, assistive technology, or community support).
 - b) The **outcomes** the young adult wants to achieve (e.g. living independently, gaining employment, or participating in social activities).
 - c) How the support will be provided (e.g. through services funded by the local authority, a personal budget, or direct payments).

Continuity of Care

30. The Care Act ensures that there should be **no gap in care** when a young adult turns 18. If they are receiving children's services (such as support under the Children Act 1989), those services must continue until adult services are in place. This prevents any disruption in care during the transition period.

Reviewing the Plan

31. The care and support plan should be regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the young person's needs as they progress into adulthood. Reviews can adjust support if needs change or if the young person's circumstances evolve.

Conclusion

32. The transition assessment under the Care Act 2014 is a critical process for young people requiring social care as they prepare for adulthood. It ensures that their current and future needs are identified early, and that appropriate adult care and support is in place when they turn 18. The assessment is personalised, considers wellbeing, and is designed to facilitate a smooth transition into adult life, with a focus on promoting independence and achieving personal goals.

The Progression Model

33. Darlington Borough Council Adult Services supports the progression model for young people requiring social care as they enter adulthood is followed. This is a framework designed to help young adults transition from childhood services to adult life, ensuring they receive the appropriate support to lead as independent and fulfilling a life as possible. The model emphasises gradual development of independence and focuses on key areas such as health, education, employment, social participation, and independent living. It

also ensures continuity in care and support across services during this period of change.

34. The progression model emphasises a gradual shift from dependence on childhood services to independent adult life, with support in key areas such as education, employment, housing, and health. It is a flexible, person-centred framework that ensures young people with care needs are empowered to take control of their futures, develop independence, and achieve their personal goals while receiving the appropriate support.
35. The progression model can be broken down into five key stages:

a) **Preparation and Early Transition (Ages 14-16)**

Objective: Begin planning for the future, identifying long-term goals, and understanding the needs of the young adult as they move towards adulthood.

- (i) **Early Planning:** Discussions about adulthood should start as early as possible (around 14), often during reviews of the Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). Key conversations revolve around aspirations, interests, and the type of support needed as they move into adulthood.
- (ii) **Person-centred Transition Plans:** A person-centred approach is used to ensure that the young person's preferences, interests, and goals shape the planning process. This includes their future education, work aspirations, and housing.
- (iii) **Involvement of Professionals and Families:** Professionals such as social workers, educational staff, healthcare providers, and families begin to collaborate to ensure everyone understands the young person's needs and is prepared to support them through the transition.

Key Focus Areas:

- (i) **Exploration of Options:** Discussion about future educational and employment pathways (e.g., further education, supported internships, or vocational training).
- (ii) **Starting Life Skills Training:** Encourage learning practical life skills, such as self-care, communication, and personal safety.

b) **Transition to Adult Services (Ages 16-18)**

Objective: Continue planning while starting the gradual shift from children's services to adult services, with increasing emphasis on independence and decision-making.

- (i) **Review of Social Care Needs:** Young people receive a transition assessment to determine the type of Adult Social Care support they will need under the Care Act 2014. This can involve a reassessment of the individual's care needs and preferences for adult life.

- (ii) **Engagement in Education and Employment:** Young people are encouraged to engage in post-16 education, vocational training, or supported internships. Employment goals and pathways are prioritised during this stage.
- (iii) **Transfer to Adult Health Services:** For those with ongoing healthcare needs, the shift from children's health services (e.g. CAMHS) to Adult Health Services (e.g. mental health, disability services) is planned and coordinated.

Key Focus Areas:

- (i) **Trial Periods for Adult Support:** Where possible, trial periods with adult services (social care, housing, health) may help the young adults and their family get used to the change.
- (ii) **Developing Independence:** Further emphasis on daily living skills and learning to manage aspects of life such as personal finances, transport, and self-care routines.
- (iii) **Legal Rights Awareness:** Teaching young people about their rights and responsibilities as adults, including decision-making rights under the Mental Capacity Act.

c) Becoming an Adult (Ages 18-21)

Objective: Young people now legally become adults and fully transition to Adult Social Care and other adult services, with a focus on increasing independence and managing their own care.

- (i) **Assessment Under the Care Act:** At 18, a formal assessment of the young person's care and support needs is conducted under the Care Act 2014. This assessment will determine the support they will receive as an adult, and how it aligns with their goals for adulthood.
- (ii) **Personal Budgets and Direct Payments:** Eligible young adults may receive personal budgets or direct payments, allowing them to choose how their care is provided and giving them more autonomy over their lives.
- (iii) **Further Education or Employment:** The young adult may continue into further education, training, or supported employment programs designed to help those with additional needs achieve meaningful work.

Key Focus Areas:

- (i) **Independent Living:** Young adults explore different housing options, such as supported living, shared housing schemes, or fully independent living arrangements, depending on their capabilities.
- (ii) **Navigating Adult Health Services:** For those with health needs, engaging with adult health services becomes crucial to managing long-term health conditions.

- (iii) **Social Participation:** Social engagement and inclusion are emphasised, encouraging participation in community life, social groups, and adult relationships.

d) **Consolidation and Growing Independence (Ages 21-25)**

Objective: Continue developing independence and refining adult life roles, with appropriate support in place to ensure stability and long-term wellbeing.

- (i) **Ongoing Support:** Young adults continue receiving support based on their needs, which may include social care, supported employment, or assistance with independent living.
- (ii) **Further Skill Development:** As young people settle into their adult roles, they continue to develop skills such as financial management, communication, and self-advocacy. For some, this may involve learning how to manage personal assistants or navigate housing and employment issues.
- (iii) **Monitoring and Reviewing Progress:** Regular reviews are conducted by social care workers to ensure that support remains appropriate and reflects any changes in needs or goals.

Key Focus Areas:

- (i) **Stabilising Adult Roles:** Employment or long-term education pathways are stabilised, with individuals achieving greater independence in their professional or personal lives.
- (ii) **Managing Health and Social Needs:** Health and social care support should be well-established and tailored to ensure long-term physical and mental wellbeing.
- (iii) **Building Long-Term Relationships:** Developing adult friendships, romantic relationships, and community connections is a focus to enhance social integration and personal fulfilment.

e) **Full Adult Life and Long-Term Planning (Post-25)**

Objective: By this stage, the young adult should be living as independently as possible with their long-term care needs met, focusing on sustainability in health, employment, housing, and relationships.

- (i) **Adult Social Care Plan:** Ongoing support is provided based on a formal Adult Social Care plan that addresses the individual's needs as they evolve in adulthood. This may involve personal assistants, supported employment, or community-based services.
- (ii) **Stable Living Situation:** The young adult has typically found a stable and suitable housing arrangement that promotes independence, safety, and comfort.

- (iii) **Employment and Community Engagement:** Employment or other meaningful daily activities are well-established, whether through supported employment, volunteering, or other community roles.

Key Focus Areas:

- (i) **Long-Term Stability:** The focus shifts to maintaining independence and ensuring the young adult has access to resources and support for continued growth and stability in all areas of life.
- (ii) **Health Management:** Ongoing health needs are managed through adult services, ensuring that the young adult’s physical and mental health are supported for the long term.
- (iii) **Social and Emotional Wellbeing:** Continued participation in social, recreational, and community activities is encouraged, with support for building and maintaining relationships.



36. The Progression Model is an empowering framework for helping young adults with care and support needs prepare for adulthood. By focusing on personal growth, independence, and self-determination, it ensures that young people are supported to achieve their full potential. Through tailored, person-centred support, families, care workers, and multi-agency teams can collaborate to help young adults transition smoothly into independent living, employment, education, and active community participation.

Supporting the use of Direct Payments for a Young adult with Care and Support as They Enter Adulthood

37. Direct payments offer significant benefits to a young adult with care and support needs as they enter adulthood. These payments allow the individual (or their family) to receive a budget from Darlington Borough Council to arrange and pay for their own care services, rather than relying solely on services provided by the Council. This approach provides a more flexible, person-centred form of care that can enhance independence, choice, and control.

38. There are a number of benefits of the use of Direct Payments for young people transitioning into adulthood:

a) Greater Choice and Control

- (i) **Tailored Support:** Direct payments empower young people to tailor their care arrangements to better meet their specific needs, preferences, and lifestyles. For example, they can hire their own personal assistants or choose service providers that they feel comfortable with, rather than using services selected by the local authority.
- (ii) **Flexibility:** They can decide when, where, and how their care is provided. This is especially important as young people enter adulthood and may have changing schedules due to work, education, or social activities.

b) Promoting Independence

- (i) **Development of Life Skills:** Managing direct payments can help young people develop important life skills, such as budgeting, decision-making, and managing employment responsibilities if they hire personal assistants. This promotes independence, a key goal during the transition to adulthood.
- (ii) **Personal Responsibility:** By managing their own care and support arrangements, young people gain experience in taking responsibility for important aspects of their lives. This fosters a sense of empowerment and autonomy, helping them feel more confident as they progress towards adulthood.

c) Customising Support for Specific Goals

- (i) **Achieving Personal Goals:** Direct payments allow young people to arrange support that aligns with their personal goals, whether that is pursuing education, employment, social inclusion, or independent living. For example,

they can use direct payments to hire someone to help them travel to college or work, attend social activities, or develop daily living skills.

- (ii) **Adaptability:** As young people's needs and goals change over time, direct payments provide the flexibility to adjust their support accordingly. This is particularly useful in helping them transition through different stages of adulthood, such as moving out of the family home or starting a job.

d) Personalised Care and Support

- (i) **Consistency of Care:** With direct payments, a young adult can choose to hire the same personal assistants over time, ensuring they receive consistent care from people they trust. This can be particularly important for young people with complex needs, where familiarity with caregivers is crucial.
- (ii) **Cultural and Social Preferences:** Young people can ensure that their support reflects their personal or cultural preferences, such as hiring someone who speaks their preferred language or shares similar interests, enhancing their comfort and satisfaction with their care.

e) Supporting Social Inclusion and Community Engagement

- (i) **Enabling Social Activities:** Direct payments can be used to hire support workers or personal assistants to help young people engage in social and community activities, attend events, or take part in recreational activities. This can reduce isolation and promote social inclusion, which is critical for wellbeing as they transition to adulthood.
- (ii) **Improving Access to Opportunities:** They can use the payments for practical support that facilitates their involvement in education, work, or leisure activities, helping them to build new relationships and integrate more fully into their communities.

f) Supporting Transition to Independent Living

- (i) **Housing and Personal Assistance:** For young people moving into independent or supported living arrangements, direct payments can be used to hire personal assistants or arrange care services that help with household tasks, personal care, and daily living activities. This flexibility helps them live more independently while receiving the support they need.
- (ii) **Choice of Supported Living Services:** Rather than relying on a set package of care from the local authority, young people can choose the type of supported living service that best suits their needs and preferences.

g) Family Involvement

- (i) **Supporting Family Caregivers:** Direct payments can also benefit the young person's family. For instance, they can hire a personal assistant to provide respite care or additional help at home, relieving pressure on family caregivers.

This can allow the young adult to remain at home for longer or ease the transition into independent living by sharing responsibilities.

- (ii) **Shared Decision-Making:** Where appropriate, direct payments can be managed in partnership with the young person's family or another trusted person. This ensures that support arrangements reflect both the young person's wishes and their family's insights, creating a balanced approach to care.

h) **Continuity in Transition from Children's to Adult Services**

- (i) **Seamless Transition:** Direct payments can help ease the transition from children's services to Adult Social Care by allowing the young adult to maintain continuity in the support they receive. Instead of switching to a new service provider when they turn 18, they can continue working with familiar care workers or services that have supported them during childhood.
- (ii) **Gradual Shift to Full Control:** If a young adult feels overwhelmed by managing direct payments alone, they can gradually take on responsibility. This process allows them to learn how to manage their care and support over time, with help from family members or local authority support, before fully taking charge.

i) **Maximising Outcomes for Health and Wellbeing**

- (i) **Holistic Approach to Care:** Direct payments enable the young adult to address not just their immediate personal care needs but also aspects of their broader wellbeing, such as mental health, social interaction, and physical health.
- (ii) **Preventing Crisis Situations:** By having more control over their care, young people can proactively address issues as they arise, avoiding delays that might happen if they were relying on standard service providers. This could prevent crises and help maintain their wellbeing.

The Purpose of the Strength-Based Approach to Support Young People Preparing for Adulthood.

39. The **strength-based approach** focuses on identifying and building upon an individual's strengths, abilities, and resources, rather than concentrating solely on their needs or limitations. This approach is particularly effective in supporting young people with care and support needs as they transition into adulthood, as it empowers them to take control of their lives and promotes independence, resilience, and social inclusion.
40. The strength-based approach is a powerful framework for supporting young people with care and support needs as they enter adulthood. By focusing on their abilities, resources, and potential, it helps them build confidence, develop life skills, foster independence, and achieve personal goals. This approach promotes a future-oriented, person-centred plan that supports young people in leading fulfilling, independent lives as they transition into adulthood.

Empowering the Young Person

41. **Building Confidence and Self-Esteem:** By focusing on what the young adult *can* do, the strength-based approach boosts their confidence and self-esteem. Recognising and celebrating their skills, talents, and achievements helps the young adult feel more capable of managing adulthood.
42. **Promoting Self-Determination:** This approach encourages young people to take an active role in shaping their future, fostering self-determination. They are empowered to set their own goals, make decisions, and take ownership of their transition into adulthood, which can enhance motivation and engagement.

Personalising Care and Support

43. **Individualised Plans:** A strength-based approach ensures that care and support plans are personalised to the individual's unique abilities, interests, and aspirations. Rather than a one-size-fits-all service, the plan focuses on leveraging the young person's strengths to address their needs and achieve their goals.
44. **Flexible Support:** Support is tailored to enable the young adult to make the most of their strengths. For example, if they have strong communication skills but need help with mobility, their support can be designed to foster independence in communication while providing assistance with physical tasks.

Fostering Independence

45. **Skill Development:** A key focus of the strength-based approach is building on existing abilities to develop new skills that promote independence. This could include life skills like cooking, managing personal finances, or navigating public transportation, enabling the young adult to live as independently as possible.
46. **Maximising Potential:** The approach helps young people reach their full potential by recognising and nurturing their capabilities. Rather than focusing on deficits, it looks for ways the young adult can contribute to their own care and daily life, fostering a sense of autonomy.

Supporting Transitions to Education, Employment, and Housing

47. **Enhancing Employability:** By identifying strengths such as creativity, problem-solving, or teamwork, the strength-based approach can help young people explore suitable career paths or educational opportunities. Support is then tailored to help them achieve these goals, whether through vocational training, internships, or supported employment.
48. **Preparing for Independent Living:** For young people transitioning to independent or supported housing, the strength-based approach can identify and build on practical skills they already have - like managing personal care or basic housekeeping - and offer support where needed, such as learning to manage a household budget.

Building Resilience

49. **Coping Strategies:** This approach helps young people build resilience by developing strategies to handle challenges. By focusing on strengths, young people learn to overcome obstacles and develop a positive mindset when facing difficulties in adulthood.
50. **Resourceful Problem-Solving:** Strength-based planning encourages young people to think creatively about how they can use their abilities and resources to solve problems, whether that involves managing their care or navigating social situations.

Strengthening Relationships and Social Networks

51. **Social Inclusion:** The strength-based approach promotes the development of meaningful relationships by encouraging young people to engage with their communities, participate in social activities, and build supportive networks. By focusing on their social strengths - such as communication or teamwork - it helps them to integrate more fully into society.
52. **Support Systems:** The approach also looks at the strengths within the young person's support network, such as family, friends, and community resources, and leverages these to provide holistic support. It encourages collaboration and co-production, where the young adult works alongside their support network to achieve their goals.

Enhancing Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

53. **Positive Focus:** Shifting the focus from what's "wrong" to what's "right" in the young person's life fosters a positive self-image and emotional wellbeing. The emphasis on strengths and achievements can reduce anxiety, depression, and feelings of helplessness, which are often barriers to a successful transition into adulthood.
54. **Self-Advocacy:** As the young adult recognises their own strengths, they are more likely to become effective self-advocates. This enables them to communicate their needs, preferences, and aspirations to service providers and others, ensuring their voice is central to decision-making.

Building a Future-Oriented Perspective

55. **Aspirational Planning:** The strength-based approach encourages young people to think beyond their immediate care needs and envision their future. It helps them identify what they want to achieve in adulthood - whether that's finding a job, forming relationships, or living independently - and works backwards from those goals to create a pathway that builds on their strengths.
56. **Long-Term Goals:** By focusing on what the young adult is good at and enjoys, the strength-based approach helps them set realistic long-term goals, which are broken down into achievable steps. This promotes a future-oriented perspective, motivating them to take proactive steps towards building a fulfilling adult life.

Collaborative Support

57. **Co-Production:** The strength-based approach emphasises collaboration between the young person, their family, social workers, and other professionals. Everyone involved works together to identify and build on the young person's strengths. This partnership ensures that the support provided is aligned with the young person's own goals and values.
58. **Multidisciplinary Input:** By considering the strengths that arise from various aspects of a young person's life, this approach encourages input from multiple sources, including education, health, and social care professionals. This ensures a well-rounded, holistic approach to planning and support.

Promoting Long-Term Sustainability

59. **Sustainable Outcomes:** A focus on strengths helps ensure that the care and support provided is sustainable in the long term. Rather than fostering dependence on services, the strength-based approach encourages the young adult to build the capacity to manage their own care needs as much as possible, ensuring a smoother transition into adulthood and reducing the likelihood of crises later in life.

Next steps

60. **Darlington Borough Council Adult Services** pledge to improve the transition of a young adult with care and support needs when becoming an adult.
61. **We have identified Key areas for improvement i.e.:**
 - a) Refresh our commitment to the progression model.
 - b) **Aim:** ensure we begin transition discussions around age 14 (Year 9) to give young people and their families enough time to plan for adulthood.
 - c) **Outcome:** Early planning allows for a smoother transition by identifying the young person's strengths, preferences, and support needs. It also gives enough time to address gaps.
62. **Ensure we are utilising a Person-Centred Strength-Based Approach**
 - a) **Aim:** Ensure we are using person-centred/strength-based planning approach that focuses on the young person's aspirations, strengths, and choices. The plan should be tailored to their individual goals, rather than a one-size-fits-all service.
 - b) **Outcome:** Focusing on strengths and personal goals empowers the young person, encouraging self-determination and greater engagement. A holistic view that includes health, education, employment, and social relationships ensures comprehensive support.
63. **Improve Collaboration Between Agencies**
 - a) **Aim:** Strengthen communication and coordination between children's and adult services (social care, health, education, housing), ensuring a multi-agency approach.

- b) **Outcome:** Young people and their families often report frustration with gaps or delays in services when transitioning from child to adult services. Seamless coordination ensures that care is continuous, and the transition is less overwhelming.

64. **Provide Clear Information and Guidance**

- a) **Aim:** Ensure we offer families and young people accessible, clear, and up-to-date information about available services, legal entitlements, and funding options, such as Direct Payments or Personal Budgets.
- b) **Outcome:** Many families and young people find it difficult to navigate the complexity of the social care system. Providing clear guidance reduces confusion and helps them access appropriate support.

65. **Focus on Skill Development for Independence**

- a) **Aim:** Increase access to life skills training and real-world experiences that promote independent living, such as managing finances, cooking, personal care, and using public transportation.
- b) **Outcome:** Practical skills are key to ensuring a young adult can live independently. Structured training programs or supported internships can bridge the gap between school and adult life

66. **Increase Employment and Education Opportunities**

- c) **Aim:** Work in partnership with supported employment, apprenticeships, and educational pathways to ensure they are tailored to young people with care and support needs.
- d) **Outcome:** Many young people with additional needs face challenges in finding work or continuing education. Offering more vocational training, supported internships, or flexible education options allows them to pursue meaningful employment or further learning.

67. **Support Mental Health and Wellbeing**

- a) **Aim:** Provide advice on how to access to ongoing mental health support, especially as young people face increased stress and uncertainty during transitions.
- b) **Outcome:** Transitions can be emotionally challenging, leading to anxiety, depression, or social isolation. Mental health services that cater to young adults can ensure better emotional wellbeing.

68. **Strengthen Family Involvement and Support**

- a) **Aim:** Collaboration and engagement with families to ensure they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to support their young adult through training, support groups, and peer networks.

- b) **Outcome:** Families are often the most consistent source of support, so ensuring they have the necessary resources, and information helps them provide effective care and advocacy during the transition.

69. **Ensure Inclusivity and Representation**

- c) **Aim:** Provide information in formats that suit the participants, including easy-read documents, translated materials, or visual aids for people with communication needs.
- a) **Outcome:** Diverse Representation: Make sure the voices of those often underrepresented - such as individuals from ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ groups, and people with disabilities - are included and considered in the process.

70. **Improved Housing Options**

- a) **Aim:** Develop more housing options for young people, including supported living, independent living, and shared housing approaches that are flexible and cater to individual needs.
- b) **Outcome:** Many young adults with care needs desire independence but still require varying degrees of support. Expanding housing options provides them with more choices that align with their levels of independence.

71. **Ongoing Support Beyond Transition**

- a) **Aim:** Continue support services beyond the initial transition to ensure young people can sustain their independence. This includes regular reviews and adjustments to care plans as their needs evolve.
- b) **Outcome:** Needs may change as young people age, and ongoing support ensures that the transition is not just a one-time event but a continuous process of growth and adaptation.

72. **Measuring Progress and Outcomes**

- a) **Outcome Tracking:** Regularly monitor and assess the young adult's progress against their goals. This helps to ensure that they are moving forward in a meaningful way and that the support they receive is making a positive impact.
- b) **Celebrating Milestones:** The Progression Model emphasises the importance of acknowledging and celebrating each step forward, whether it's mastering a new skill, gaining more independence, or successfully entering employment or education.

- 73. By implementing these improvements, we will ensure young people with care and support needs can have a smoother, more empowering transition into adulthood, giving them greater control over their futures and ensuring better outcomes in terms of independence, wellbeing, and social inclusion.

Climate Considerations

74. When preparing young adults with learning disabilities for adulthood, climate impact considerations are increasingly important, as these individuals will live in a world facing profound environmental challenges. The preparation process should address their unique needs while empowering them to adapt to and contribute to a sustainable future e.g.
- a) Awareness and Education
 - b) Relevance to Daily Life
 - c) Skills for Sustainable Living
 - d) Eco-Friendly Habits
 - e) Use of public transport
 - f) Adaptive and Resilient Thinking
 - g) Vocational Training in Green Industries
 - h) Green Job Pathways: Offer vocational training in roles that align with sustainability, such as recycling programs, renewable energy industries, or sustainable agriculture.
 - i) Supported Employment Opportunities
 - j) Community Involvement
 - k) Accessible Climate Initiatives: Encourage participation in community climate projects, such as clean-up drives or tree planting, tailored to their abilities.
 - l) Advocacy Training: Empower individuals to advocate for sustainable practices within their families, workplaces, and communities.
 - m) Health and Well-Being in a Changing Climate
 - n) Building Support Networks
 - o) Peer Support Groups

By integrating climate impact considerations into the transition process, young adults with learning disabilities can not only adapt to the challenges posed by a changing climate but also become active contributors to a more sustainable future. Tailoring these strategies to individual strengths and needs ensures their long-term success and well-being.

Appendix 1

Support for young people preparing for adulthood in Darlington

- 1) In Darlington, various resources are available to support young people with care and support needs as they transition into adulthood. The Darlington Borough Council offers a range of services designed to help young people prepare for independent living, higher education, employment, and involvement in the community. These include transition planning for individuals with special educational needs (SEND), typically starting at age 14, and may extend up to the age of 25 depending on the individual's needs.
- 2) Key services include:
 - a) **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Team:** The team supports young people with SEND and their families by providing tailored transition plans that incorporate education, health, and care needs.
 - b) **Ongoing Assessment and Intervention Team (OAIT):** For young people over 18 with Care Act eligible needs, this team provides long-term support, including assessments and reviews to help individuals maintain independence and access necessary services.
 - c) **Occupational Therapy and Reablement Services:** These services help young people develop practical skills and independence through short-term goal-focused support. The aim is to maximise independence by providing equipment and adaptations if necessary.
 - d) **Darlington Association on Disability (DAD):** This is commissioned to offer advocacy services, helping young people and their families understand their rights and access appropriate support. It also provides a Direct Payment Support Service.
 - e) **Adult Learning Disability Social Work Team:** This team provides longer term casework including assessments, re-assessments, scheduled reviews and safeguarding for people with learning disabilities who require long term support. This includes supporting carers to sustain their carer's role. Casework includes responding to Legal Challenge, enabling people to access Independent Advocacy commissioned by DBC with Darlington Association on Disability (DAD), or Direct Payments. The team work closely with children's social work teams and education (SEND) to ensure that young people, and their families, are supported to prepare well for transition to adulthood.
 - f) **Transition to Adult Social Care (TASC) Forum:** this helps plan the shift from children to Adult Social Care Services. This planning covers vital aspects such as independent living options, employment, education, health management, and legal rights.
 - g) **Occupational Therapy and Sensory Support (Adult Social Care):** Darlington Borough Council through Adult Services assess functional ability to support people to participate in the activities of everyday life. Occupational Therapists provide equipment and adaptations for people to maximise independence and observe opportunities to prevent, reduce, and delay the need for ongoing support. The team also undertake the assessment and rehabilitation for individuals with a hearing or visual impairment or dual

sensory loss. Both Occupational Therapy and Sensory Impairment teams support both Children and Adults with long term physical or sensory assessment and interventions.

- h) **The Local Offer:** For young people with SEND, specific resources are available under the local offer, which includes guidance on education, employment, health services, and legal rights to support the transition into adulthood.
- 3) These services aim to create an inclusive environment where young people are encouraged to become active participants in society while receiving the care and support, they need to thrive as adults.
- 4) For more detailed information, you can explore Darlington Borough Council's resources on their website [Darlington Borough Council](#)
- 5) For further information or to contact specific teams, you can visit the Darlington Borough Council's [Preparing for Adulthood page](#) or reach out to the SEND team directly through their local offices.

This page is intentionally left blank

ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 JANUARY 2025

ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES DURING COVID - UPDATE ON TASK AND FINISH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Covid Task and Finish Group recommendations submitted to Scrutiny on 16 April 2024 in relation to Adult Social Care Services

Summary

2. The intention of this Task & Finish Group work was to assess the view of both Adult Social Care (ASC) staff and end users of the changes that were required to be made because of Covid and its lockdowns. Also, if there were new ways of working that staff and care recipients particularly liked, so the council can consider if they should continue to be used / offered as an option even now the period of Covid lockdowns has ended.

Recommendations from the report (presented at scrutiny 16 April 2024)

3. It is recommended that the following is relevant learning for Darlington Borough Council Adult Social Care services, Commissioning and Contracting and the wider care market:
 - 3.1 Communication is key to ensure processes are set up to contact end-users & families promptly / at regular "touchpoint" intervals, to keep them informed of what's going on & how their relative is - essential to feel connected, especially for those placed out of town when visits were not allowed.
 - 3.2 Regular updates to those awaiting care & facing delays.
 - 3.3 Social workers must check back to ensure care is (fully) meeting end-users' needs, if they need further care or referral, and that they're aware of the choices available.
 - 3.4 Care must be holistic and cohesive, seeking to keep people well physically & mentally, not just address their immediate, e.g., personal care, needs. More types of care may need to be offered.
 - 3.5 Review of Care Home capacity to ensure people remain close to family and friends.
 - 3.6 Monitoring of the care sector to support ways to meet demand and support the development of recruitment issues to avoid significant delays in obtaining care packages.
 - 3.7 Improved integrated ways of working across departments / teams including NHS to achieve outcomes for people.
 - 3.8 Explore preventative offers to reduce need for longer term care and support needs.

- 3.9 Improve information available via Darlington Borough Council Adult Social Care website, and telephone call handlers – factsheets, referral pathway etc. Provide factsheet on extra or additional help on the website, should people need top-up care.
- 4 Staff appreciated the mental health & HR support in place and acknowledgement that this helps with staff retention.
- 5 For the commissioned care services sector:
 - 5.1 Communication is critical, to service users and their families, to inform of any changes, or if carers cannot attend.
 - 5.2 Maintenance of end-of-life visits could be managed safely and was greatly appreciated by service users and their families.
 - 5.3 Care tasks should be clearly & fully described, with regular supervision/review to ensure carers know what is expected, to avoid misunderstanding.
 - 5.4 Request feedback from service users to check care is meeting their needs.
 - 5.5 End users/families recommend making a “snag list” to work together to improve care.
 - 5.6 Ensure adaptations are developed to support a service users’ communication needs, e.g., wearing a visor / face shield to care for someone who is hard of hearing rather than a mask.
 - 5.7 Urge best practise sharing for best quality and cost-effective care, and good staff morale, particularly around care home resident engagement, reducing isolation and associated deterioration.
 - 5.8 Continue to work closely with Council on recruitment issues.
- 6 In general:
 - 6.1 Much appreciation was shown to all the staff who worked through this period despite everyone being frightened: care home workers, domiciliary staff, Lifeline, council social workers & voluntary organisations such as Age UK.
7. Work with local care providers to disseminate the learning.

Key Legislation

1. During the COVID-19 pandemic, significant legislation and policy changes impacted adult social care in the UK. These measures were designed to address the pressures on health and social care systems while maintaining essential care for vulnerable adults. Below are some of the key legislative actions and their implications:

a) **Coronavirus Act 2020**

The Coronavirus Act 2020 was the primary legislative response to the pandemic in the UK, including provisions specific to adult social care. Key aspects included:

- i. Easements to the Care Act 2014 (England):
- ii. Allowed local authorities to prioritise resources, temporarily suspending certain statutory duties to conduct detailed needs assessments, reviews, and care plans.
- iii. Focused on ensuring critical services to those with the most urgent needs.
- iv. These easements, known as "Care Act easements," were only to be implemented when absolutely necessary.
- v. Health and Social Care Workforce Support:
- vi. Enabled the deployment of retired healthcare workers and volunteers.
- vii. Relaxed registration rules to increase workforce capacity.
- viii. Streamlining Processes:
- ix. Simplified hospital discharge processes to free up NHS capacity.

b) **The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020**

These regulations:

- i. Restricted movement and gatherings, significantly impacting care homes and domiciliary care.
- ii. Imposed measures to protect vulnerable adults from infection, such as restrictions on visits to care homes.
- iii. Led to the development of robust infection prevention and control guidelines for social care settings.

c) **Public Health Acts and Emergency Regulations**

- i. Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 provided the legal basis for imposing lockdowns, quarantine, and other public health measures, affecting Adult Social Care

providers' operations.

- ii. Powers under this act were used to enforce isolation and manage outbreaks in care settings.

d) Workforce and Vaccination Regulations

- i. Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2021.
- ii. Introduced mandatory vaccination requirements for care home staff (later extended to wider social care settings before being revoked in 2022).
- iii. Aimed to protect vulnerable residents from COVID-19.
- iv. Relaxed visa and immigration rules under the Health and Care Worker Visa scheme to address workforce shortages in Adult Social Care.

e) Infection Control and Testing Measures

- i. Allocations of funding through the Infection Control and Testing Fund, which was tied to strict compliance with testing and infection prevention protocols in care settings.
- ii. Legal requirements for regular staff and resident testing were introduced under various statutory instruments.

f) Local Authority Circulars and Guidance

While not legislation, key guidance documents had significant influence:

- i. Guidance on Care Home Visiting: Set out the conditions under which care homes could facilitate visits while adhering to COVID-19 restrictions.
- ii. Hospital Discharge Service Requirements: Streamlined the discharge process from hospitals to care homes.

Recommendation

7 It is recommended that Scrutiny members note the contents of the report.

Joss Harbron
Assistant Director of Adult Social Care

Background Papers

<https://democracy.darlington.gov.uk/documents/s21597/Adult%20Social%20Care%20during%20the%20Covid%20Pandemic%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf>

Joss Harbron: Extension: 5278

Council Plan	This report contributes to the priorities agreed in the Council Plan.
Addressing inequalities	There are no implications arising from this report.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report supports the efficient use of resources through shared partnership priorities.
Health and Wellbeing	This plan supports priorities set out in the Health & Wellbeing Strategy.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no implications for the Budget or 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

Purpose of the Report

- 8 To provide a response to Scrutiny members of actions undertaken following the submission of the main report to scrutiny in April 2024.

Overview

- 9 At a meeting of the Adults Scrutiny Committee held on 16th April 2021, Members gave consideration to a Quad of Aims submitted by Councillor Holroyd, which aimed to ascertain how Adult Social Care services coped during the pandemic, how service users and their families felt about the services provided, and identify any changes needed in relation to future waves of Coronavirus and associated restrictions / lockdowns, or any other future disease outbreak response which may be required, or identify any ongoing need.
- 10 Members of the Scrutiny Committee agreed that a Task and Finish Group be established to examine the areas identified within the Quad of Aims.
- 11 An initial meeting of the Task and Finish Group was held on 21st May 2021, with further meetings being held on 11th June 2021, 9th July 2021, 14th January 2022, 11th March 2022, 9th August 2022, 4th November 2022 and culminated in a series of hearings held on 24th February 2023.
- 12 The final report of the Review of Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic Task and Finish Group is added as a link within the background papers

- 13 The main report advised on a number of recommendations as outlined below.
- 14 Communication is key to ensure processes are set up to contact end-users & families promptly / at regular “touchpoint” intervals, to keep them informed of what’s going on & how their relative is - essential to feel connected, especially for those placed out of town when visits were not allowed.
- 15 Regular updates to those awaiting care & facing delays.
- 16 Social workers must check back to ensure care is (fully) meeting end-users’ needs, if they need further care or referral, and that they’re aware of the choices available.
- 17 Care must be holistic and cohesive, seeking to keep people well physically & mentally, not just address their immediate, e.g. personal care, needs. More types of care may need to be offered.
- 18 Review of Care Home capacity to ensure people remain close to family and friends.
- 19 Monitoring of the care sector to support ways to meet demand and support the development of recruitment issues to avoid significant delays in obtaining care packages.
- 20 Improved integrated ways of working across departments / teams including NHS to achieve outcomes for people.
- 21 Explore preventative offers to reduce need for longer term care and support needs.
- 22 Improve information available via Darlington Borough Council Adult Social Care website, and telephone call handlers – factsheets, referral pathway etc. Provide factsheet on extra or additional help on the website, should people need top-up care.
- 23 Staff appreciated the mental health & HR support in place and acknowledgement that this helps with staff retention.
- 24 For the commissioned care services sector:
 - a) Communication is critical, to service users and their families, to inform of any changes, or if carers cannot attend.
 - b) Maintenance of end-of-life visits could be managed safely and was greatly appreciated by service users and their families.
 - c) Care tasks should be clearly & fully described, with regular supervision/review to ensure carers know what is expected, to avoid misunderstanding.
 - d) Request feedback from service users to check care is meeting their needs.
 - e) End users/families recommend making a “snag list” to work together to improve care.

- f) Ensure adaptations are developed to support a service users' communication needs, e.g., wearing a visor / face shield to care for someone who is hard of hearing rather than a mask.
- g) Urge best practise sharing for best quality and cost-effective care, and good staff morale, particularly around care home resident engagement, reducing isolation and associated deterioration.
- h) Continue to work closely with council on recruitment issues.

25 In general:

- a) Much appreciation was shown to all the staff who worked through this period despite everyone being frightened: care home workers, domiciliary staff, Lifeline, council social workers & voluntary organisations such as Age UK.
- b) Work with local care providers to disseminate the learning.

27. Updates and actions from the recommendations are outlined below:

Recommendation	Update/actions November 2024
Adult Social Care	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication is key to ensure processes are set up to contact end-users & families promptly / at regular "touchpoint" intervals, to keep them informed of what's going on & how their relative is - essential to feel connected, especially for those placed out of town when visits were not allowed. 	<p>This recommendation was particularly relevant to the lockdown rules during the pandemic whereas family members were unable to visit their relatives/loved one. However, learning taken from this has related to ensuring the needs of carers are considered, and carers assessments are offered to all unpaid carers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular updates to those awaiting care & facing delays. 	<p>ASC have introduced a system of providing updates to people awaiting assessments and/or care provision to ensure they are regularly updated. Positively there are very few delays in providing urgent care.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social workers must check back to ensure care is (fully) meeting end-users' needs, if they need further care or referral, and that they're aware of the choices available. 	<p>Once care is provided, the social worker or team will undertake a review with the person at 6 weeks and then a yearly review is arranged. However, if care needs change, a review will be undertaken asap explore with the person the choices available.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care must be holistic and cohesive, seeking to keep people 	<p>All ASC teams have undertaken a refresh of strength-based practice, Care Act</p>

<p>well physically & mentally, not just address their immediate, e.g., personal care, needs. More types of care may need to be offered.</p>	<p>training and person-centred approaches This ensures care is holistic, person centred, acknowledges and considers the person’s wellbeing as well as their eligible care needs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Care Home capacity to ensure people remain close to family and friends. 	<p>There is consistently sufficient capacity within Darlington Care Homes to provide care and support within the Borough.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of the care sector to support ways to meet demand and support the development of recruitment issues to avoid significant delays in obtaining care packages. 	<p>It is recognised that since the pandemic there has been significant recruitment pressures in the care market nationally and locally. This has however stabilised in Darlington, and whilst there is completion for care staff, there is sufficiency within providers to deliver care and support without major delays.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved integrated ways of working across departments / teams including NHS to achieve outcomes for people. 	<p>Throughout the pandemic ASC held daily meetings with the NHS. Multidisciplinary meetings continue to be held daily with the Hospitals in relation to discharge planning. There are also weekly systems meetings across partners including primary care, Mental health and County Durham and Darlington Foundation trust.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore preventative offers to reduce need for longer term care and support needs. 	<p>ASC are working with public health on several initiatives including suicide prevention, health lifestyles, frailty. The service is also rolling out Making every Contact Count Training (MECC) and Assessment based Community Development Training- to support teams and people to consider how they can explore healthier, inclusive lifestyles to prevent and delay the need for care and support.</p> <p>The Disabled Facilities Grant guidance has also been reviewed to enable a great flexibility of use. This has resulted in a significant take up of the grant and supported over 200 applications for aides and adaptations within the last year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve information available via Darlington Borough Council Adult Social Care website, and telephone call handlers – factsheets, referral pathway etc. 	<p>The ASC webpages have undergone a complete review to ensure information is relevant, up to date, inclusive and easy to access.</p>

<p>Provide factsheet on extra or additional help on the website, should people need top-up care.</p>	<p>Feedback has been extremely sportive about the upgrades. All telephone contacts to Darlington Borough Council are now directly to Net call. This system enables the person to self-serve and therefore be directly efficiently and effectively to the relevant support or service.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff appreciated the mental health & HR support in place and acknowledgement that this helps with staff retention. 	<p>The Council continue to provide counselling and drop-in sessions for staff. Retention within Adult Social Care has now increased significantly, and the turnover is at 6.5% annually in comparison to 24% in 2021.</p>
<p>For the commissioned care services sector:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is critical, to service users and their families, to inform of any changes, or if carers cannot attend, 	<p>The Commissioning and Contracting Teams undertake a provider forum on a quarterly basis to ensure communication of best practice, improvements and sharing of information is continuous.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of end-of-life visits could be managed safely and was greatly appreciated by service users and their families, 	<p>It is an expectation of all care provider to deliver end of life care sensitively and with care. The contract team undertake annual contract visits to care providers to ensure that providers are complainant and deliver care safely and appropriately.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care tasks should be clearly & fully described, with regular supervision/review to ensure carers know what is expected, to avoid misunderstanding. 	<p>It is an expectation of all care provider to maintain care records. The contract team undertake annual contract visits to care providers to ensure that providers are complainant and deliver care safely and appropriately. ASC have also undertaken 3 executive strategies with providers this year where there has been concerns about their care and support. All 3 have seen significant improvements with this support and guidance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request feedback from service users to check care is meeting their needs. 	<p>Feedback is now routinely sought from people who uses ASC services. The findings are reporting within an annual performance report shared with Scrutiny.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End users/families recommend making a “snag list” to work together to improve care. 	<p>It is an expectation that through the assessment and support planning and review process, social workers and people/families will identify ways to continuously ensure the care provided is sufficient and appropriate.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adaptations are developed to support a service users’ communication needs, e.g., wearing a visor / face shield to care for someone who is hard of hearing rather than a mask, 	<p>ASC have implemented Equality, Diversity and Inclusion champions within the teams. In addition, there is a revised practise guidance which advises on reasonable adjustments to support the needs of the individual being cared for. We continue to review our practice and seek feedback from people.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urge best practise sharing for best quality and cost-effective care, and good staff morale, particularly around care home resident engagement, reducing isolation and associated deterioration. 	<p>The Commissioning and Contracting Teams undertake a provider forum on a quarterly basis to ensure communication of best practice, improvements and sharing of information is continuous</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work closely with council on recruitment issues. 	<p>This is ongoing and supported through regular Jobs fairs and social media.</p>
<p>In general:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local care providers to disseminate the learning. 	<p>The Commissioning and Contracting Teams undertake a provider forum on a quarterly basis to ensure communication of best practice, improvements and sharing of information is continuous. Providers have access to training and learning through the Darlington Xtra website.</p>

Outcome of Consultation

26 Not applicable

27. Climate Considerations

The intersection of climate change and adult social care, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, requires approaches that address both emerging environmental challenges and the vulnerabilities of individuals with care and support needs e.g:

- Resilient Care market such as supporting care providers to consider Energy-Efficient Facilities, Climate-Resilient Design and Green Spaces: Integrate gardens or outdoor

areas in care settings to support mental well-being, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration.

- Preparedness for Climate-Related Health Risks such as Heatwaves and Extreme Weather emergency protocols and training for staff to manage heat stress, poor air quality, or extreme weather events affecting vulnerable adults.
- Food Security: Ensure reliable supply chains for nutritious, climate-resilient foods to mitigate disruptions from extreme weather or environmental degradation.
- Waste Reduction: Implement robust recycling programs for medical and general waste, alongside training for staff and service users.
- Digital Innovation: Expand telecare and remote services where appropriate, reducing transportation-related emissions.
- Climate Education: Train care workers on climate-related risks and sustainable practices, emphasising their role in mitigating impacts.
- Involvement in Sustainability: Engage service users in eco-friendly activities, such as gardening, recycling, or energy-saving practices, tailored to their abilities and interests.
- Accessible Information: Provide clear, simple information to service users and families about climate risks and sustainable practices.
- Collaborative Networks: Foster partnerships between social care providers, local governments, and environmental organisations to address shared climate challenges and encourage community-based care solutions to reduce transportation emissions and enhance local resilience.
- Supporting adaptations for Home-Based Care including energy efficiency in homes:
- Promote low-carbon transportation: Transition to electric or hybrid vehicles for care workers making home visits.

By integrating these climate change considerations into adult social care, providers can create a more resilient, sustainable, and equitable care system that addresses the dual challenges of a post-pandemic world and an evolving climate landscape.

This page is intentionally left blank

**ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
7 JANUARY 2025**

WORK PROGRAMME 2024-2025

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 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.

Climate Considerations

12. Pursuant to Minute AD22/Oct/2024, any matters pertaining to climate considerations will be outlined in the individual reports submitted to Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank

ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role / Notes
Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	7th January 2025	Brett Nielsen		Annual Scrutiny Consultation on the Medium Term Financial Plan.
CQC Assurance Framework – Update	7 th January 2025	Joss Harbron		
Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic – Update on Task and Finish Group Recommendations	7 th 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 th January 2025	<i>Tony Murphy / Jo Littler and Barbara Beadle / Kevin Kelly? TBC</i>		Potentially joint with CYP Scrutiny Committee
Hospital Discharges - Update	7 th January 2025	Barbara Beadle / Sarah Appleby, with CDDFT and TEWV		
Autism Strategy and Action Plan Update	7 th January 2025	Jamie Tood and Dominic Gardener, TEWV and Martin Short and John Stamp, ICB and DBC (via Joss Harbron as rep.)		

Performance Indicators Quarter 2 2024/2025 (including budgetary information)	25 th 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 th February 2025	Joss Harbron		
Care Homes in Executive Strategy Measures / Arrangements	25 th 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 th February 2025	Amanda Hugill / Marion Garland		

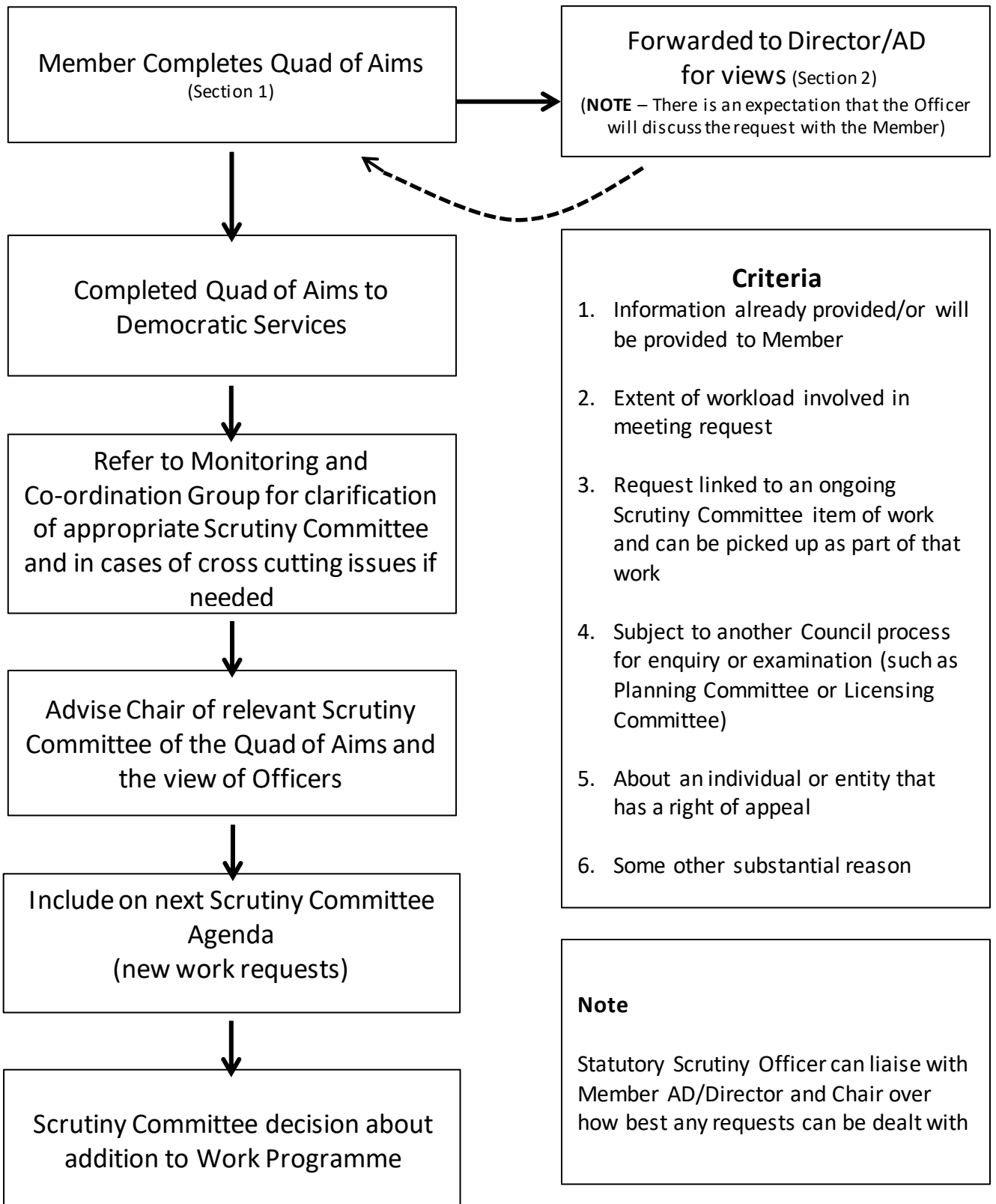
Darlington Safeguarding Partnership - Annual Report	25 th February 2025	Ann Baxter / Amanda Hugill	ASC 028 ASC 029 ASC 059 ASC 061 ASC 062 ASC 199 ASC 200 ASC 201 ASC 202 ASC 203 ASC 204 ASC 205 ASC 206 ASC 207 ASC 209 ASC 210 ASC 213 ASC 214	To consider the Annual Report on the work of the Board and 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 st April 2025	Joss Harbron		
Overview by Commissioning Services on Shared Lives	1 st April 2025	Christine Shields		Requested by Councillor Toms.
Mapping of Provisions within the Borough including Commissioned Services	1 st 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.

This page is intentionally left blank

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)

	Criteria
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)	1. Information already provided/or will be provided to Member
(b) Have you already provided the information to the Member or will you shortly be doing so?	2. Extent of workload involved in meeting request
2. If the request is included in the Scrutiny Committee work programme what are the likely workload implications for you/your staff?	3. Request linked to an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and can be picked up as part of that work
3. Can the request be included in an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and picked up as part of that?	4. Subject to another Council process for enquiry or examination (such as Planning Committee or Licensing Committee)
4. Is there another Council process for enquiry or examination about the matter currently underway?	5. About an individual or entity that has a right of appeal
5. Has the individual or entity some other right of appeal?	6. Some other substantial reason
6. Is there any substantial reason (other than the above) why you feel it should not be included on the work programme ?	

--	--

Signed **Position** **Date**

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
FORWARD PLAN**

APPENDIX 3



**FORWARD PLAN
FOR THE PERIOD: 4 DECEMBER 2024 – 30 APRIL 2025**

Title	Decision Maker and Date
Annual Statement of Accounts 2022/23	Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Climate Change Progress	Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Council Plan Performance Reporting Update	Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Darlington Indoor Market	Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Environment Act 2021 - Waste Management Arrangements	Council 30 Jan 2025 Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Maintained Schools Capital Programme - Summer 2025	Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Release of Capital for Children's Play Area - West Park	Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Schedule of Transactions	Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Calendar of Council and Committee Meetings	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Capital Strategy	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Council Tax Calculation of Tax Base 2025/26	Council 30 Jan 2025 Cabinet 7 Jan 2025
Customer Services Strategy 2025/30	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Digital Darlington Strategy 2025-30	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Housing Revenue Account - Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/27 to 2028/29	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Land at Coniscliffe Road, Darlington	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Land at Faverdale - Burtree Garden Village - Proposed Infrastructure Development Agreement (IDA)	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025/30	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 3	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Review of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	Council 27 Mar 2025 Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Schools Admissions 2025/26	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Strategic Asset Plan	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Woodland Road Waiting Restrictions	Cabinet 4 Feb 2025
Darlington Transport Plan	Cabinet 4 Mar 2025
North East Smokefree Declaration	Cabinet 4 Mar 2025
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)	Cabinet 4 Mar 2025
Annual Procurement Plan Update	Cabinet 8 Apr 2025
Physical Activity Strategy	Cabinet 8 Apr 2025

This page is intentionally left blank