



DARLINGTON

Borough Council

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Agenda

9.30 am

Monday, 6 January 2025

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT

Members of the Public are welcome to attend this Meeting.

1. Introductions/ Attendance at Meeting
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 28 October 2024 (Pages 3 - 6)
4. Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 - 2028/29 –
Report of the Assistant Director Resources
(Pages 7 - 74)
5. SEND Strategy 2025-2029 –
Report of the Assistant Director Education and Inclusion
 - a) SEND Strategy 2025-2029 main report (Page 75 - 134)
 - b) Dedicated School Grant and the Safety Valve update (Page 135 - 137)(Pages 75 - 138)
6. Home to School Transport –
Report of the Assistant Director Education and Inclusion
7. Transitional Services –
Report of the Assistant Director Education and Inclusion

(Pages 139 - 166)

8. Work Programme –
Report of the Group Director of Operations
(Pages 167 - 178)
9. 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
10. Questions



Luke Swinhoe
Assistant Director Law and Governance

Friday, 27 December 2024

Town Hall
Darlington.

Membership

Councillors Ali, Allen, Crudass, Dulston, Johnson, Layton, Renton, Storr, Toms and Dr. Riley

Statutory Co-optees

Carly Stonier

Non Statutory Co-optees

Maura Regan, Janet Woodcock, John Armitage and Sally Hudson

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 email: paul.dalton@darlington.gov.uk or telephone 01325 405805

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 28 October 2024

PRESENT – Councillors Allen (Chair), Crudass, Garner, Layton, Storr and Toms

APOLOGIES – Councillors Ali, Dulston, Johnson and Renton, ,

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Chris Bell (Assistant Director of Children's Services), Tony Murphy (Assistant Director Education and Inclusion) and Paul Richardson (Head of Skills and Employability)

CYP12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at this meeting.

CYP13 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2024

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 2 September 2024

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 2 September 2024 be approved as a correct record.

CYP14 ADOPTION TEES VALLEY ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

Members received the Adoption Tees Valley Annual Report 2023/24 as a written report.

RESOLVED – Members noted the contents of the report and agreed to forward any questions to officers for a response.

CYP15 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 1 2024/25

The Assistant Director Children's Services presented the report to provide performance information (April 2024- June 2024) in line with an indicator set agreed by Monitoring and Coordination Group on 2 July 2018.

Points of note included that at the end of Q1 2024/25, there were 205 families, 416 children open to the Building Stronger Families team. A further 60 families with 108 children were open to an external agency supporting the families. 115 children were subject to a Child Protection plan (CP) as at the end of June 2024 with a rate of 51.7 per 10,000 population with a CP plan. This is an increase on previous years and comparable to the increase in CiN plans open and decrease in Children in Care seen during the same period last year.

Areas for improvement were highlighted which included in Q1 2024/25, 81.0% of the children had their referral completed within 1 working day not meeting our 90% target. 7.5% of Child Protection statutory visits were completed within 10 working days in Q1 2024/25 and 94.9% of the visits were completed within 15 working days. Although below

target (90%), this is an improvement on Q1 2023/24 where 70.1% of visits occurred within timescale.

Discussion was held with regards to the volume of information being presented to members in performance indicator reports with a member suggesting that a review of many indicators KPIs would be useful as well as an analysis of trends or notable anomalies. Officers noted this input and reiterated to members that realistic additional indicators can always be requested by members.

Members also stated that performance figures paint a picture of the service as a whole and that they are useful in presenting the work and progress that officers are undertaking.

RESOLVED - Members noted the content of the report and performance information provided.

CYP16 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2024-2027

The Head of Service - Commissioning, Performance and Transformation provided members with an overview of the Children and Young People's Plan 2024-2027. The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is one of the identified delivery plans within the Council Plan and identifies what key actions will be taken to deliver the agreed priority for children – the best start in life, realising potential and raising aspirations while being driven by the children themselves.

This is a partnership plan which shows how organisations and agencies in Darlington will work together collectively to improve outcomes for all children and young people in Darlington. A multiagency Steering Group has been in operation since 2017 and will continue to be responsible for implementing the CYPP over the next three years.

Members were presented with the video that has been produced to support the plan (available on the Council's website) in which Children and members of our Youth Parliament outlined the purpose and priorities of the plan.

Questions raised included whether members will have access to updates on the progress of the plan with officers confirming that the website will be updated with the latest progress reports on a six-monthly basis.

A member asked if it would be possible to have a further video produced by the children solely for scrutiny members in the future with officers agreeing to look into the viability of this.

Members applauded the work being done around the plan, the quality of the video and the performance of the children who are involved. A member highlighted that signposting and raising awareness of the existence of the plan would be worth the time investment to draw attention to such a positive piece of work.

RESOLVED - Members noted the content of the report and support the recommended next steps for the plan.

CYP17 LEARNING AND SKILLS ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

The Head of Skills and Employability provided members with an update on the performance of the Learning & Skills Service for academic year 2023/24. Members were informed of the range of training provided by the service and those whom the service seeks to support.

Points of note included that the service was inspected by Ofsted in June 2022, retaining its assessment of 'Good' overall.

In 2023/24 the service had 1,501 across a wide range of programmes, including:

- (a) 73 16–18-year-olds on Study Programme
- (b) 1,370 people on Adult Skills courses
- (c) 58 Apprenticeship starts

Members asked questions that included whether the services we provide are the same as those offered by local Colleges with officers responding that a mix of provision is present and that the service works closely with Darlington College, with no curriculum issues being present.

Members also clarified TVCA funding – members were informed that although funding has not been cut, the final figures from last year's over-delivery have not been consolidated into this year's budget. Ideally the final figures from the previous year would be used as a baseline for the following year's funding but this has not been the case. Members expressed that greater funding-assurance from TVCA would be desirable.

RESOLVED - Members noted the content of the report and commended the service for the positive work being carried out.

CYP18 CHILDREN'S SERVICES SELF-ASSESSMENT - OVERVIEW

The Assistant Director Children's Services provided Scrutiny with the Annual Self- Assessment for Children's Services which aims to provide a constructive 'critical friend' challenge to drive improvement in public services.

The self-assessment draws on existing documentation and activity and reflects the local authority's business for children's services. It identifies what leaders are doing to maintain or improve good practice for children and their families, demonstrating the effectiveness of our actions and address weaknesses in practice, with clear, appropriate plans to improve services.

The self-assessment aims to address three questions:

- (a) What do we know about the quality and impact of social work practice in our local authority?
- (b) How do we know it?
- (c) What are our plans for the next 12 months to maintain or improve practice?

Members asked questions that included whether the assessment has highlighted any areas for improvement with officers noting the key challenges around the increased need and complexity of many cases on which the early-help service is focussing.

A member asked if the assessment is too time consuming for the service with officers

providing assurance that time spent on the assessment is worthwhile in order to solidify a shared understanding across the service and highlight areas for improvement. A member suggested that a six-monthly update on the most notable aspects of the assessment would be useful for the committee.

RESOLVED – Members noted the content of the report, and the information covered in the self-assessment.

CYP19 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

The Service Manager – Children’s Services presented the annual report which includes an overview of the work undertaken by Independent Reviewing Officers, who, in Darlington, provide independent reviewing and associated functions in relation to:

- (a) Children who are Looked After
- (b) Children who are the subject of Supervision Orders
- (c) Children who are the subject of Child Protection Conferences and / or multi-agency Child Protection Plans.

In addition to the contents of the report, we were informed that team structures are to be reviewed in the near future. Members were also reminded that due to low numbers involved in many statistics, percentage increase / decreases in can be misleading and do not generally represent trends in the short-term.

RESOLVED - Members noted the content of the report.

CYP20 WORK PROGRAMME

The Group Director of Operations submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee’s work programme and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be included in the previously approved work programme

RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
6 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 2025, 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.

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**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

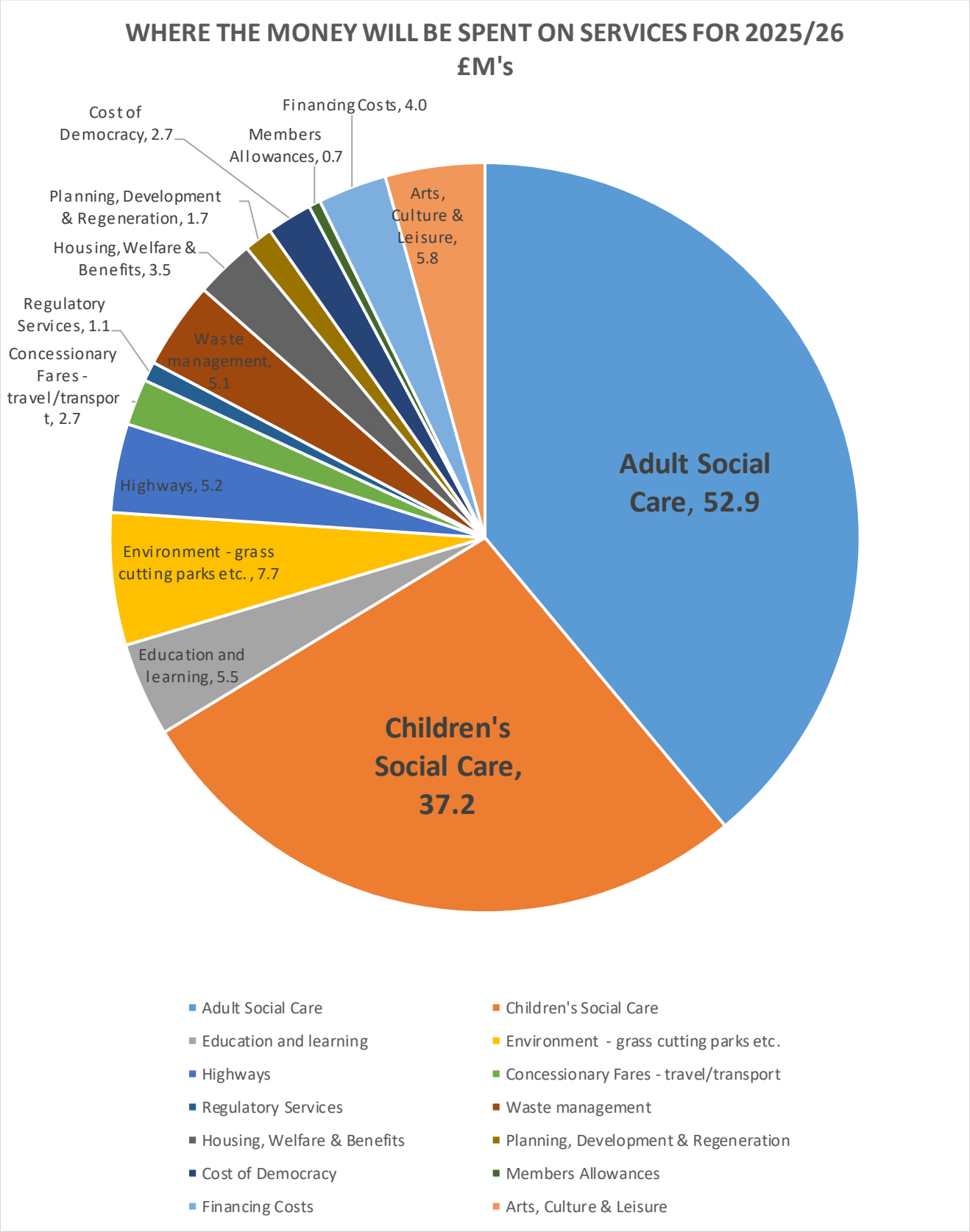
45. **Stronger Communities Fund** – the stronger communities fund was established in 2021/22 to assist in grass roots projects and initiatives in each of the elected members wards with £0.001m made available to each member to utilise as they see fit in their communities and reviewed on an annual basis. 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	1.770	1.714	1.669	1.749
Services	26.240	26.270	26.886	27.437
Resources & Governance	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 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 (NNDR) 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

	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				
Area	£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 (LAMP) 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

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REVENUE ESTIMATES 2025/26 -SUMMARY

Appendix 1

	2024/25 Net Budget	2025/26			
		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 Net Budget	2025/26			
		Gross Budget	Income	Grants	Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Executive Director of People	611	636	0	0	636
<u>Children & Adult Services</u>					
Transformation & Performance	920	865	(55)		810
Business Support	1,722	1,758	(12)		1,746
<u>Children's Services</u>					
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
<u>Development & Commissioning</u>					
Commissioning	2,447	2,412	(215)	(94)	2,103
Voluntary Sector	293	349	0	(57)	292
<u>Education</u>					
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
<u>Public Health</u>					
Public Health	0	9,523	0	(9,523)	0
<u>Adult Social Care & Health</u>					
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 Net Budget £000	2025/26			
		Gross Budget £000	Income £000	Grants £000	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

APPENDIX 2

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			
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	N			
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 Standard Search – Commercial Property	L L	93.50 143.50	102.10 153.70	
Con 29 Required				
Residential Property CON29 Additional Parcels	L L	80.00 25.00	87.60 26.28	
Commercial Property CON29 Additional Parcels	L L	130.00 25.00	139.20 26.28	
Con 29 Optional Optional Questions Own Questions Official Search – LLC1	L L L	6.00 6.00 13.00	8.40 8.40 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	
		53.00 + 68.00	56.00 + 72.00	
Major Variation Site	L	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				
<u>Permit Type – The following fees are set by statute and will be revised as changed nationally</u>				
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	1,747.00	
		(+207.00)	(+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	
Discounts				
Fees from Measures to Certification Calibration will be discounted as follows :-				
a) Where more than a single item is submitted on one occasion the second and subsequent fees will be reduced by 20%				
b) Where tests are undertaken using appropriately certified weights and equipment not supplied by the Borough Council the fees will be reduced by 20%				
c) Special rates can be negotiated for multiple submissions or where assistance with equipment or labour is provided				
NB – Where different fees are involved the highest fee will be charged in full and any discounts calculated from the remaining lesser fees				
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	L	4.00	4.00	
Includes led workshop, Wagon Woods play, self guided time in museum and stores plus dedicated lunch area				
Package 2 - Price per pupil	L	7.50	7.50	
Includes led workshop, Wagon Woods play, Experiment! immersive ride, self guided time in museum and stores plus dedicated lunch area				
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			
Access protection markings	L	No charge	No charge	
Tourist Sign (plus actual cost of sign)	L	£75.00 + VAT	£75.00 + VAT	
Accident Data Requests	L	£75.00 + VAT	£75.00 + VAT	
Traffic Count Data	L	75.00	75.00	
Street Lighting Design Service	L	Individually priced based on charge out rate	Individually priced based on charge out rate	
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	
NRSAWA Defect Charges	N	Nationally set scale of charges	Nationally set scale of charges	
NRSAWA Road Opening Inspection Charges (sample)	N	Nationally set scale of charges	Nationally set scale of charges	
Section 74 – charges for overstay	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 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2027/28 £'000	Total £'000
Children, Families & Learning					
School Condition Allocations	67	67	67	67	268
	67	67	67	67	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	1,206	1,206	1,206	1,206	4,824
Integrated Transport	893	893	893	893	3,572
Pothole Funding	969	969	969	969	3,876
	3,068	3,068	3,068	3,068	12,272
Other Capital Programmes					
Disabled Facility Grants	1,160	1,160	1,160	1,160	4,640
	1,160	1,160	1,160	1,160	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.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
6 JANUARY 2025**

SEND STRATEGY 2025-2029

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the draft Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2025-2029. It details the key elements of the Strategy and the planned implementation with partners.

Summary

2. The SEND Strategy establishes our strategic approach to the delivery of SEND services for children and young people in Darlington, ensuring the offer is coordinated and responsive to the needs of our community. The strategy sets out our shared local area vision, principles, and priorities to ensure that partners across the Darlington local area are working together effectively to identify, assess and meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) from birth to the age of 25. The SEND Strategy has been coproduced with partners across the borough, and is fundamental to implementing partners responsibilities under the Children and Families Act 2014. It reflects the ambitions and priorities of the Council Plan and other key strategic documents.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that the committee notes the priorities outlined in the strategy.

Reasons

4. The recommendations are supported by the following reason; the strategy is produced in the context of the statutory requirements set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 together with the guidance in the SEN Code of Practice that was issued alongside the 2014 Act. These provisions include the duty to keep under review the educational provision, training provision and social care provision made in its area for children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability and made outside its area for children and young people for whom it is responsible who have special educational needs or who have a disability (section 27 of the 2014 Act).

Tony Murphy
Assistant Director - Education And Inclusion

Background Papers

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

Tony Murphy: Extension 5637

Council Plan	The strategy supports the commitments for children and young people-supporting the best start in life, realising potential and raising aspirations.
Addressing inequalities	This strategy sets out our local plan for addressing inequalities faced by young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and ensuring that they can receive access to high quality educational provision and outcomes.
Tackling Climate Change	The effective delivery of this strategy will support the council's Climate Change priorities.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The strategy supports the commitments in the council's Safety Valve Agreement to ensure efficient use of the Designated School Grant High Needs Block.
Health and Wellbeing	Health lifestyles of children and young people is a key component of the SEND strategy.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no specific elements of the strategy which address crime and disorder.
Wards Affected	All wards are affected.
Groups Affected	Children, young people families and key stakeholders.
Budget and Policy Framework	2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice.
Key Decision	Yes.
Urgent Decision	No.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The effective delivery of the strategy will positively benefit looked after children and care leavers.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

- Darlington Council and its partners, including parents, schools, colleges, health and the voluntary sector, are ambitious for all children and young people and are committed to supporting them to achieve their best outcomes. For children and young people with special educational needs aged 0-25, this requires partners, to work together to ensure that there is high quality, integrated and inclusive education, and support that is flexible and responsive.
- The SEND Strategy provides the framework for partners to work together to achieve the vision and outcomes for SEND in Darlington. The draft strategy has been extensively co-produced with children and young people, the Darlington Parent Carer Forum and the Integrated Care Board (ICB). In addition, professionals from the council and education

providers have contributed to the development of the strategy. The voices of children and young people have been central to developing both the strategic objectives and outcomes in the strategy.

7. An extensive engagement exercise has been undertaken with young people. Officers have met with over 70 young people in early years, primary, secondary, Further education and specialist settings to ensure that young people's priorities have shaped the development of the strategy. The overarching themes included in the strategy have largely come directly from these discussions. In developing this strategy, what is important to children and young people and what they want to do and achieve in their lives now, and in the future, has been considered.
8. The Darlington Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2025–2029 describes the partners' collective vision and aspirations for children and young people with special educational needs and provides a framework for partners to collaborate to deliver shared priorities for the next four years and sets out how they will be implemented.
9. During the period of the Strategy there will be further changes to meet children's needs going forward, the context will evolve as the new government's priorities become clearer and the landscape of schools and providers will develop. The Strategy therefore needs to have sufficient flexibility to ensure that different or emerging issues can be incorporated.
10. Darlington has experienced an increase in the number of pupils with SEND, particularly those with EHCPs. There has been a 13.5% rise in requests for assessment compared to this same period in Dec 2022. The largest growth is in the under-fives and post 16/18 age groups. This growth mirrors the regional picture. All the local specialist provision is at capacity. The Council is working productively with local partners and national government to expand specialist capacity in Darlington and maintain a positive financial position through the implementation of the Safety Valve agreement to address the historic deficit on the High Needs Block.
11. The vision for SEND is ambitious and aspirational, it stretches beyond the boundaries of the Local Authority to all partners and children and young people with SEND, with or without an EHCP.
12. The implementation of the SEND Strategy will be guided by the following principles:
 - (a) Maximising the potential of a continuum of local provision in Darlington for children, young people and young adults from 0 to 25 years of age.
 - (b) Further developing partnerships with health, other agencies and parents/carers to ensure effective collaboration to meet the needs of children, young people and young adults.
 - (c) Developing an integrated approach in the development and delivery of personalised provision, that includes joint decision-making processes between education, social care and health.
 - (d) Prioritising early assessment of need and ensuring timely intervention and support.

- (e) Every provider, school, college or other setting, in Darlington to have good or outstanding provision for children, young people and young adults with additional needs and have access to high quality professional development and support.
 - (f) Using all data available effectively to identify issues to inform the strategy and monitor its effectiveness over time.
 - (g) Including parents/carers and young people's voice in the development of the strategy.
 - (h) Ensuring that current and future SEND Reforms are an integral element of the SEND Strategy and progress towards implementation is monitored by appropriate bodies.
13. Five key areas, building on the preparation for adulthood outcomes as outlined in the Code of Practice 2015, were used as headings in the consultation and form the framework for this strategy. This approach will encourage a more effective pathway into adulthood and enable young people to build on life skills and support their aspirations:
- (a) Being as healthy as possible;
 - (b) Having good education, training and opportunities;
 - (c) Family, Friends and Relationships;
 - (d) Into Adulthood towards independence;
 - (e) Darlington - our town, community and environment.

Financial Implications

14. The Council is delivering the outcomes outlined in the Safety Valve Agreement with the Department for Education to address the historic deficit on the Dedicated School Grant High Needs Block. The Council is on track to meet the projected deficit target in 2024/25. Based on current projections the council is on track to achieve a £0 DSG deficit by the end of the agreement, but this is subject to any increased demand pressures in the future.

Legal Implications

15. The Council also has duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 to make special educational provision for children and young people whose needs cannot reasonably be met from the resources normally available to schools and post-16 institutions. The Council has additional statutory duties under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to provide education for pupils needing alternative education and under the Children and Families Act 2014 to meet the needs of pupils and young people up to the age of 25 with special educational needs. Approval of the SEND Strategy contributes to the fulfilment by the Council of these obligations.

HR Implications

16. There are no direct HR implications associated with this report.

Estates and Property Advice

17. There are no direct estates implications associated with this report.

Procurement Advice

18. There are no direct procurement implications associated with this report.

Carbon Impact and Climate Change

19. The effective delivery of this strategy will support the council's Climate Change priorities. Specifically, by reducing the need to access specialist provision through the continued development of early intervention models. Specialist out of area provision often requires significantly longer travel to school.

Equalities considerations

20. Children and young people with SEND often experience inequalities of access and outcomes across the country. Each of the key priorities aims to address the inequalities experienced by children, young people and families. The core work, in strengthening mainstream provision will enhance the principles of inclusion and providing nurturing environments for all, regardless of their needs.

Consultation

21. Initial consultation on this strategy took place with a range of partners through 2024. The SEND Strategy has been co-produced with key stakeholders including children and young people and parents/carers. Plans are in place to start a conversation with the wider population, this will include further conversation with parents, carers, children, and young people and stakeholders about how best they can be supported to achieve the co-produced vision and outcomes. The consultation process will use a combination of electronic and online consultation and engagement events.

Outcome of Consultation

22. A public consultation to gather views on the strategy opened on 25 October 2024 and was due to finish on 31 December 2024. Following analysis of the consultation responses a final version of the strategy will be brought to a future cabinet for decision.

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Darlington Local Area Partnership

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



Self-Evaluation May 2024

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Introduction

The Darlington local area partnership works effectively to deliver better outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Our partnerships are strong and are based on transparency, support and challenge. SEND is a key priority for Darlington and is owned strategically and politically at the highest levels. The views of families, children and young people are actively sought and heard, informing ongoing improvements across services/agencies as well as service transformation. Darlington knows itself well and has a comprehensive multi-agency plan in place to monitor and report on the progress of our improvement journey. The mature partnerships Darlington Parent Carer Forum has developed enables the forum to be an effective strategic influence and voice for families in service development.

Leadership across the Local Authority and the ICB is strong, and a clear governance structure ensures that all stakeholders including young people, parents and carers are engaged, accountable, and part of the solutions. This ensures that all services take accountability for their delivery and performance as part of a broader SEND system.

We have completed work on our draft refreshed Local Area SEND strategy and we will be seeking views through a wide public consultation before the strategy is adopted. The SEND strategy has been coproduced with all stakeholders, including professionals, young people, and parent representatives, education settings, health services and the parent/carers forum. The strategy reflects collaboration across the Local Area and will set out our collective aspirations for the next three years.

Darlington is successfully implementing the Safety Valve programme to address the historic deficit on our High Needs Block. We remain on track with our Safety Valve recovery plan. The High Needs Block achieved a balance in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years and is predicted to do so again in 2024/25. This continued progress will support us to building a financially stable and sustainable SEND system.











The local area continues to face significant challenges in delivering our ambitious agenda. The level of suspension from school remains a concern although published data does show an improving performance for the SEND cohort. The Education Strategy Group, consisting of senior leaders from the council and Trusts, have developed Darlington's Inclusion Charter to support and challenge settings to improve their inclusive practice and increase parental confidence that their child's needs will be met through a consistent and inclusive 'ordinarily available offer' in a mainstream setting. Demand for EHCP assessment continues to rise however we currently maintain almost 65% of our EHCP cohort in mainstream settings and have reduced Darlington children and young people who have plans maintained by Darlington who are educated out of borough from 11% to 8.8%. 20-week

timescale compliance has remained effective despite increased demand with 86.5% of requests being completed within timescales.

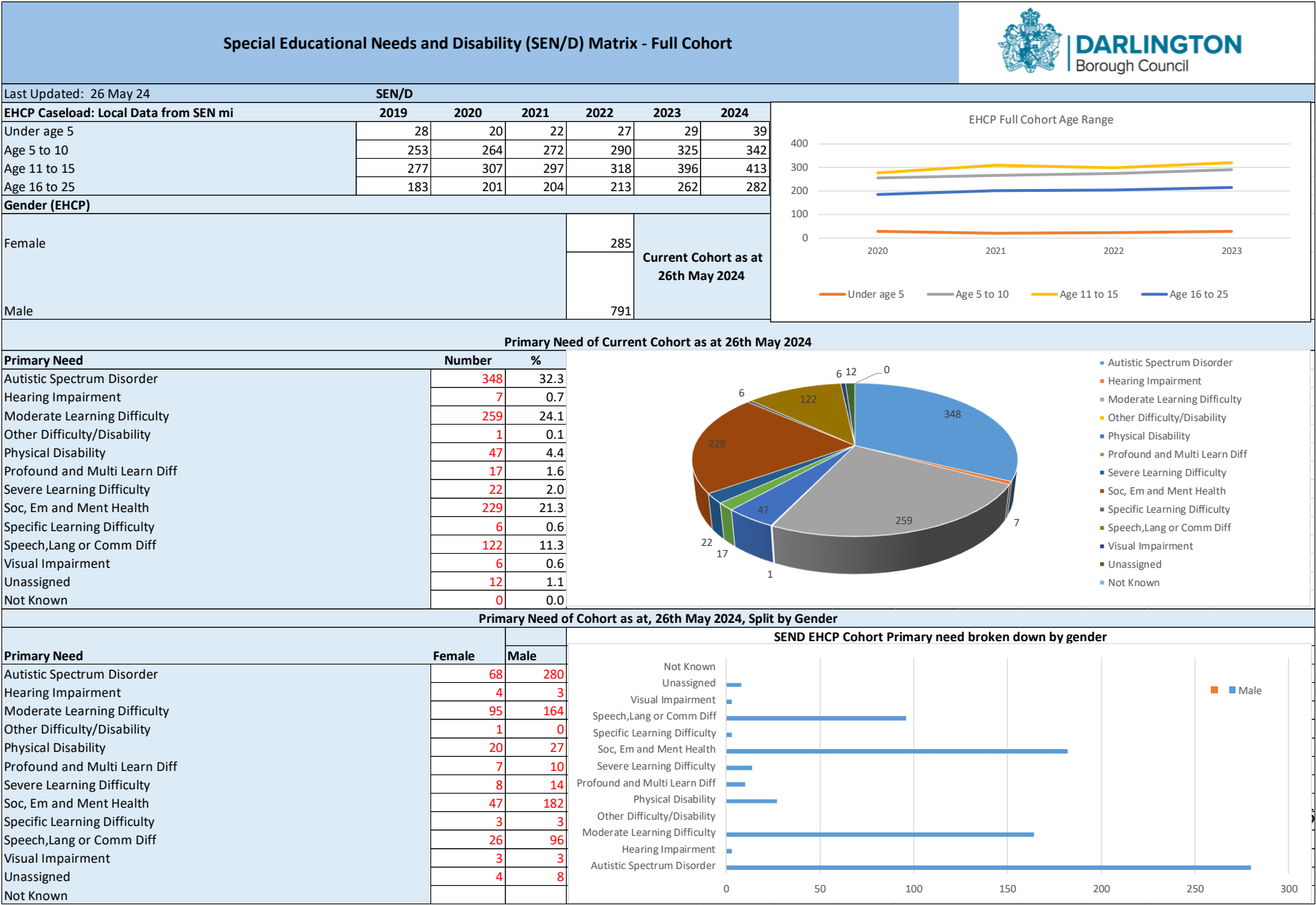
In this increasingly complex context local leaders remain determined to drive forward system improvements to ensure young people with additional needs can thrive and be, wherever possible, economically active and valued members of their community.

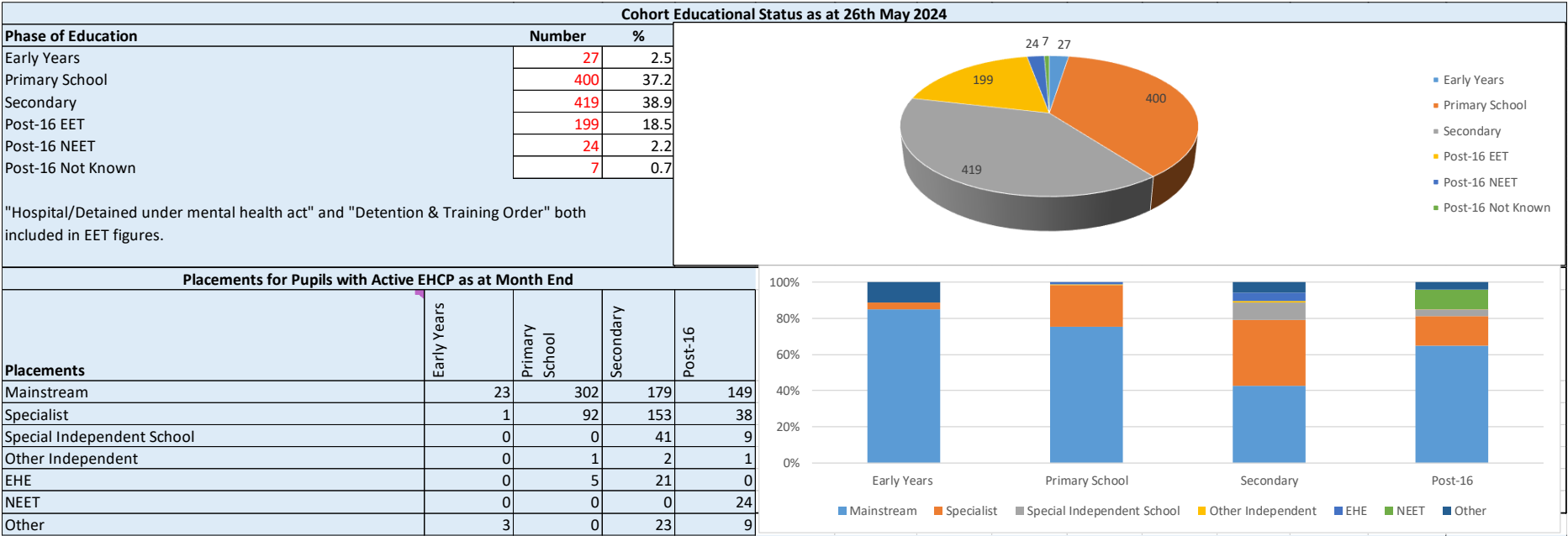


Local Context

 Population	<p>There are 107,799 people living in Darlington</p> <p>21.1% under 18 58.3% 18-65 17.8% 65 - 85 2.8% over 85</p>	 Education & skills	<p>16,972 people aged 16+ (19%) have no qualifications in Darlington compared with 18% across England.</p>
 Vulnerable groups	<p>6,070 children aged 0-19 (25%) are in relative low-income families in Darlington compared with 20% across England.</p>	 Economy	<p>31,324 people aged 16+ (36%) are in full-time employment in Darlington compared with 34% across England. Ranked 77th Most deprived (317 Councils)</p>
 Housing	<p>466 households (1.0%) lack central heating in Darlington compared with 1.5% across England.</p>	 Access & transport	<p>25% of households have no car in Darlington compared with 24% across England.</p>
 Crime & safety	<p>The overall crime rate is higher than the average across England. The rate is 120.9 in Darlington compared with 88.2 across England.</p>	 Communities & environment	<p>The % of people 'satisfied with their neighbourhood' (79.2%) is similar to the average across England (79.3%)</p>
 Health & wellbeing	<p>21,104 people (19.6%) have a limiting long-term illness in Darlington compared with 17.3% across England.</p>	 Carers	<p>There are approximately 9800 people in Darlington identified themselves as carers 4707 (48%) were in employment in the 2021 census.</p>

Local Insight OCSI - [Link](#)



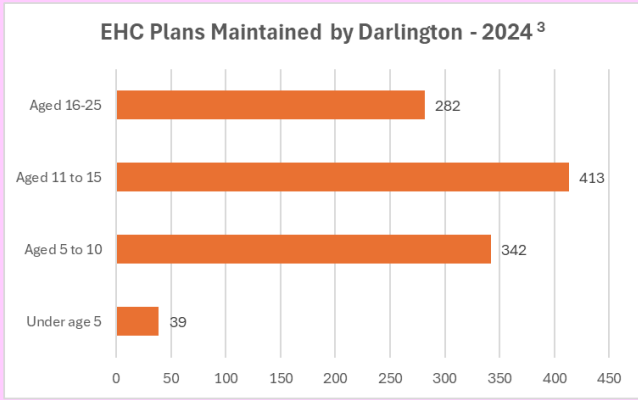
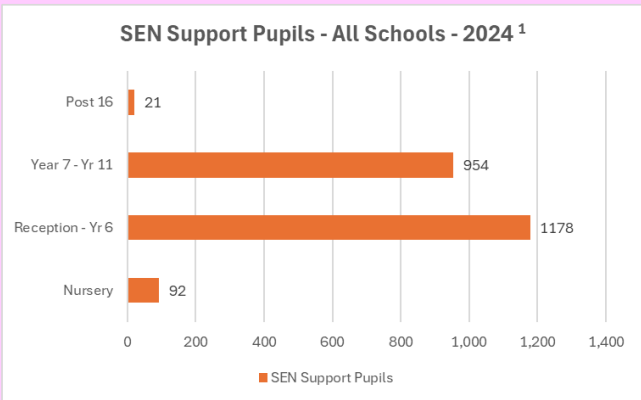
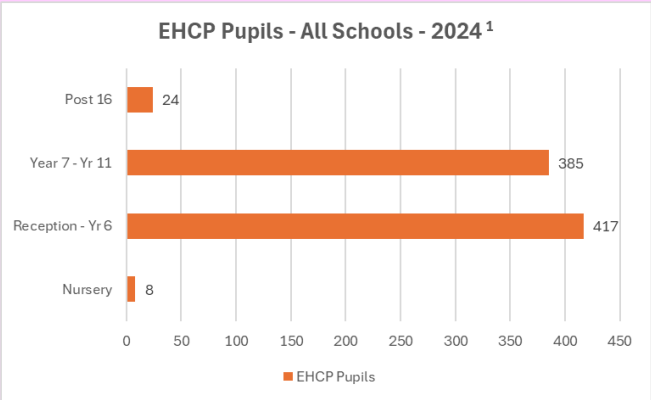
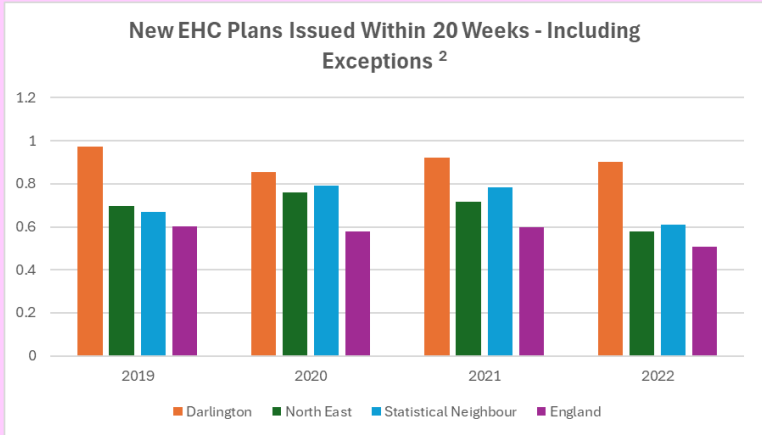
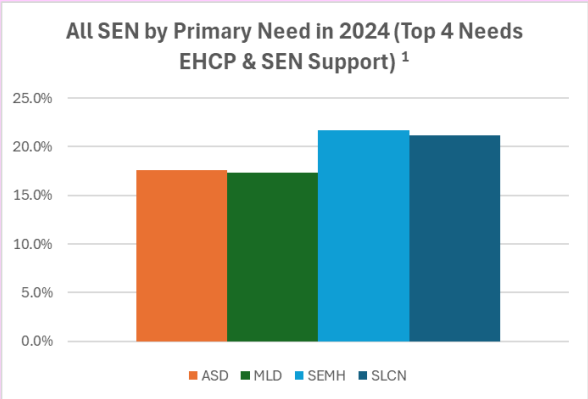
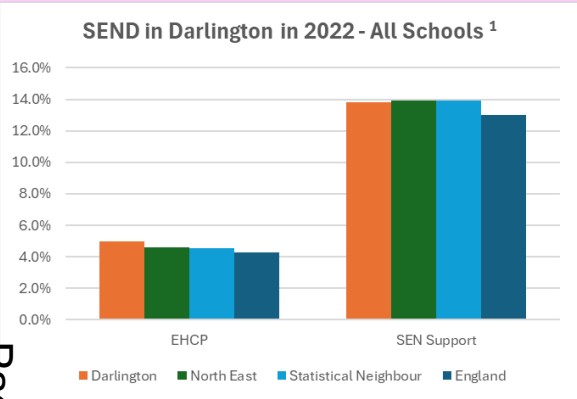


													01/09/2023 to 26/05/2024																												
2023/23 Academic Year, Month by Month	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August																													
No. of requests received	14	33	30	24	28	31	16	16	37				229																												
Source of request: Parental	2	9	6	1	2	5	6	4	6				41																												
Source of request: Professional	10	19	22	21	24	24	10	9	27				166																												
Source of request: Moved into Authority	2	5	2	2	2	2	0	3	4				22																												
No. declined or withdrawn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				0																												
No. declined - Request Refused (No. assessment carried out)	1	6	5	4	9	13	8	5	6				57																												
No. declined - Assessment Refused (Request declined after assessment)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0				1																												
No. of requests withdrawn (Assessment Stopped)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				0																												
Total number of EHCP issued/completed	16	10	22	6	10	23	14	26	7				134																												
Assessments to date for Academic Year 2023/24: 01/09/2023 to 26/05/2024																																									
Total assessments completed Total assessments completed within 20 weeks Total assessments completed in over 20 weeks Total assessments completed within 20 weeks excluding exceptions Total assessments completed within 20 weeks including exceptions Total assessments completed in over 20 weeks excluding exceptions Total assessments completed in over 20 weeks including exceptions	Number		%		<div>Assessments at Academic Year End</div> <table><thead><tr><th>Year</th><th>No. of requests received</th><th>No. declined or withdrawn</th><th>Total number of EHCP issued</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>2018/19</td><td>140</td><td>45</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>2019/20</td><td>120</td><td>42</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td>2020/21</td><td>165</td><td>32</td><td>95</td></tr><tr><td>2021/22</td><td>175</td><td>35</td><td>125</td></tr><tr><td>2022/23</td><td>185</td><td>35</td><td>175</td></tr><tr><td>2023/24</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>Note: Data up to and including 2018/19 collected from Service spreadsheets; 2019/20 onwards from Capita.</p>									Year	No. of requests received	No. declined or withdrawn	Total number of EHCP issued	2018/19	140	45	100	2019/20	120	42	55	2020/21	165	32	95	2021/22	175	35	125	2022/23	185	35	175	2023/24			
	Year	No. of requests received	No. declined or withdrawn	Total number of EHCP issued																																					
	2018/19	140	45	100																																					
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	2021/22	175	35	125																																					
	2022/23	185	35	175																																					
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134																																									
108		80.6																																							
26		19.4																																							
108		80.6																																							
108		80.6																																							
26		19.4																																							
26		19.4																																							
Reviews due in academic year 2023/24	Work in progress to provide review data																																								
Reviews received from Providers																																									
Reviews not received from Providers																																									
Reviews finalised by LA																																									
Reviews to be finalised																																									
Review date to be set																																									
Children and Young People Open to Other DBC Teams - All EHCPs Open and Under Assessment	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August																													
BSF	58	45	53	50	63	66	67	67	68																																
Children's Social Care	145	147	149	149	144	149	147	147	149																																
YPEAJS	9	11	13	9	5	7	2	3	8																																
Adults's Social Care	24	25	25	27	27	27	27	28	29																																
EHCP Only- Not open to any other service	748	766	766	776	779	790	796	813	822																																
Total	984	994	1006	1011	1018	1039	1039	1061	1076																																
Total no. of ongoing (in draft) assessments at month end	57	74	78	90	104	109	109	97	109																																

Darlington SEND Dashboard 2022/23 (last updated 12/06/2024)

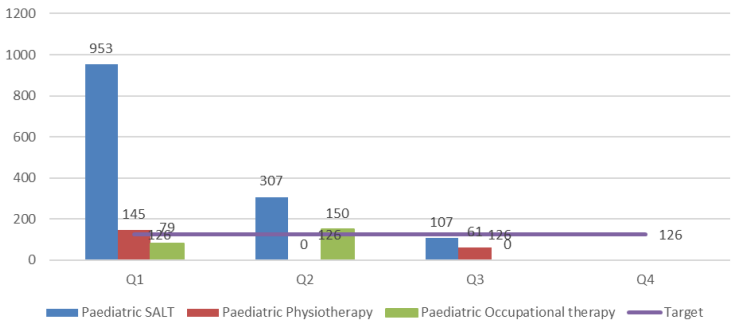
Summary & Local Area Population Information

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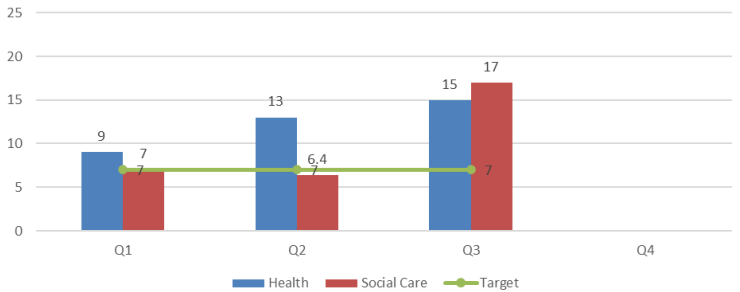


Waiting List Monitoring (Based on current shared information for individuals with EHC plans)

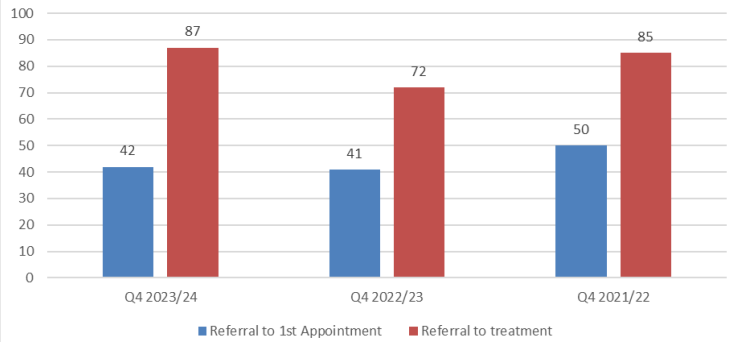
Average Health Waiting Times (Days) - 2023-24



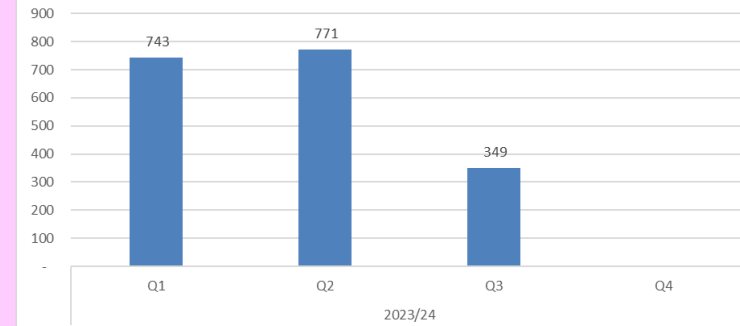
Average Length of Wait for Paediatric Equipment (Days) - 2023-24



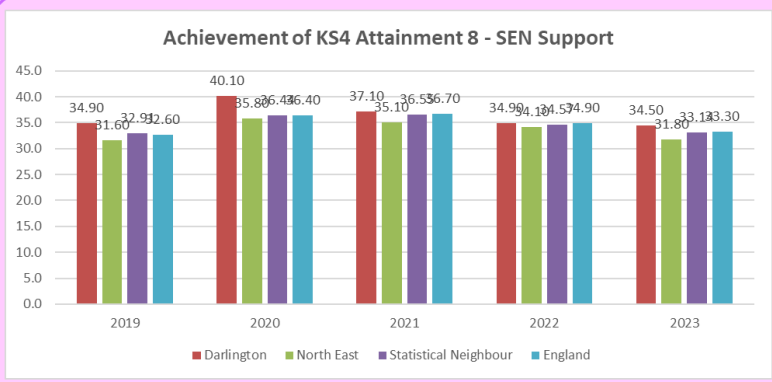
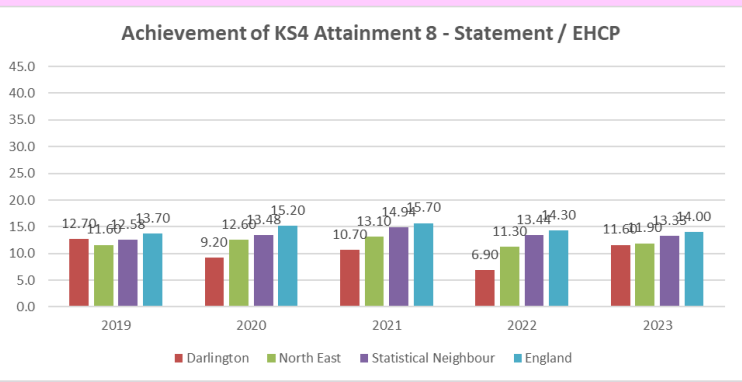
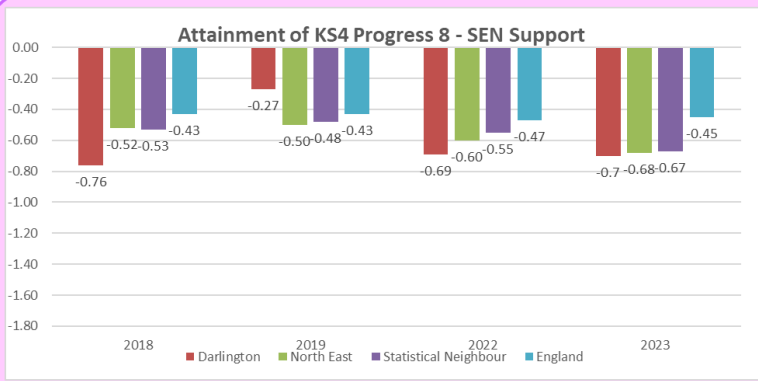
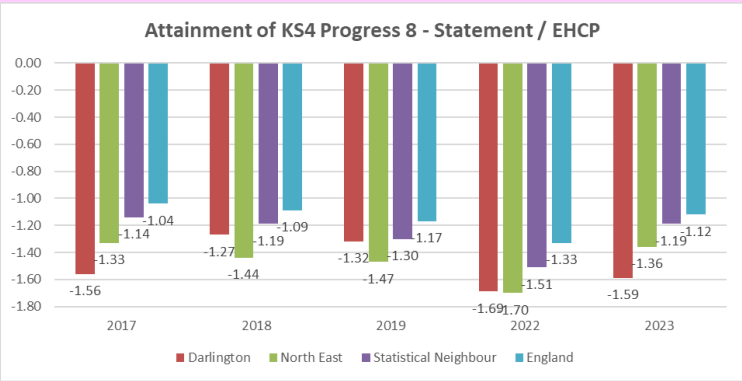
Average CAMHS Waiting Times (Days)



Autism: Average wait (days) for full assessment (Over 5s)



Sources: 1) LAIT; 2) SEN2 Return; 3) School Census January 2024; 4) Liquid Logic



Leadership and Governance

Governance

There are strong governance arrangements in place in the local area. The strategic SEND Assurance Executive oversees and scrutinises the delivery of Darlington's Written Statement of Action implementation plan and wider SEND work. The Executive is chaired by the Director of Children's Services and Leaders representing ICB, Parent Carer Forum, Mainstream and Specialist schools and the Further Education sector compose the membership. The SEND Implementation Group has responsibility for delivery of the implementation of the action plan and has representation from across the partnership.

North East and North Cumbria (NENC) ICB have acknowledge the importance of SEND within their governance creating the ICB SEND Assurance Committee to support the Quality and Safety Committee to discharge its duties relating to SEND for the ICB. It is noted that although the Assurance committee is ICB wide decision making will continue to take place at a placed based level. Darlington will continue to be one of the five local authorities within Tees Valley area.

Darlington has a Group Director of People who is Director of both Children's and Adults Services, Education & Inclusion and Public Health also fall within the Group Directors team. This is a way to support continuity across the local authority, which is seen as a high priority. Darlington received a Good with area of outstanding grading for the most recent full ILACS visit (October 2022) and were viewed positively during the November 2023 OFSTED focused visit.

Darlington PCF has a strategic role in local governance. The PCF leadership team have regular meetings with Senior Local Leaders to share information and identify emerging themes. The PCF is a very strong body with good leadership and has a wide and noticeable impact on planning and commissioning across both Health and the Local Authority.

https://www.facebook.com/TogetherforBetterDarlington/?locale=en_GB

Darlington Young Advisors have recently undergone a recruitment campaign with a new team of involvement officers in place. They hold a strategic role locally with some specific work on supporting representation both in the Care Leavers, SEND and corporate parenting.

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/young-darlington-advisors/>

Darlington's Health and Wellbeing board are central to the governance of the local area delivery and have recently held a number of well attended workshops as a means of developing a new draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The local area SEND leadership and representatives have been and will continue to be involved.

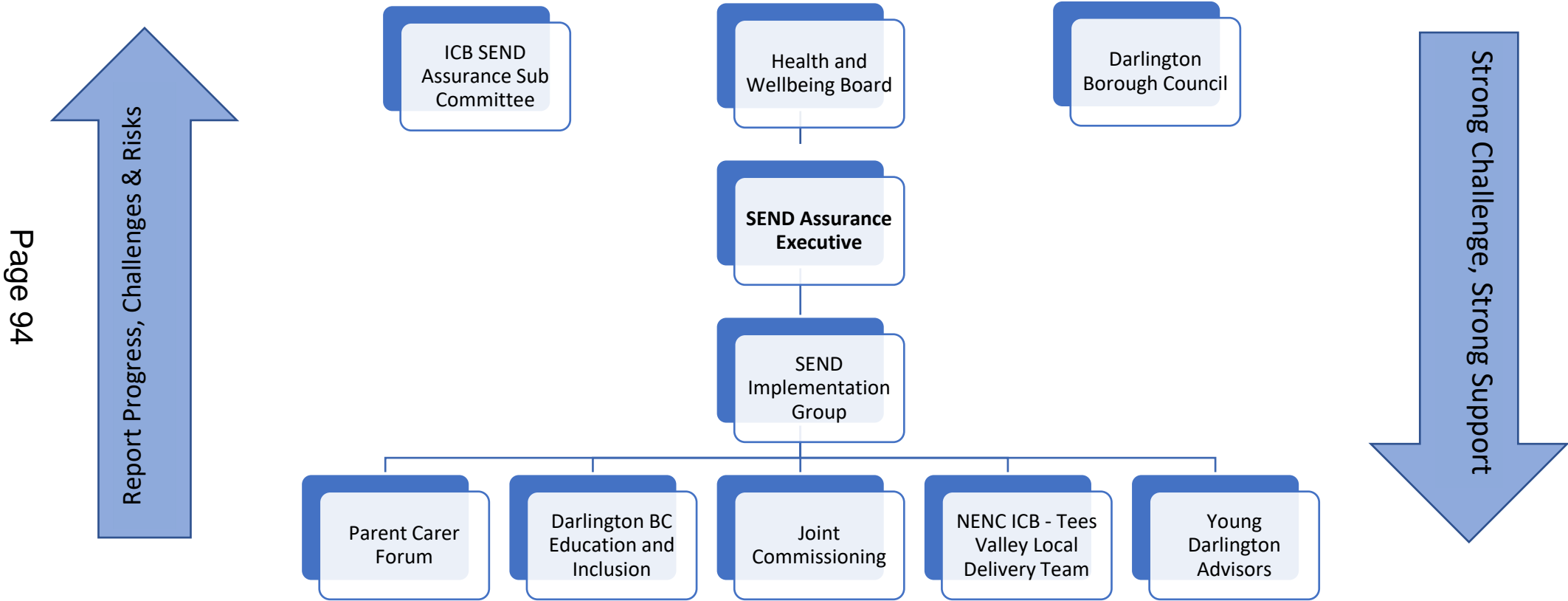
Corporate and political commitment to the SEND agenda is in place. The Council Plan due to be adopted in July 2024 following consultation has clear priorities on inclusion in schools and the introduction of the Special Free School. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is actively engaged on the agenda and receives updates on the progress on the implementation of the WSOA and Safety Valve plans.

There is effective management of the High Needs Block (HNB) in place. School Forum monitors the expenditure on the block closely alongside council officers. The council has established a High Needs Subgroup of the Forum to ensure that a detailed examination of High Needs expenditure can be undertaken outside of regular forum meetings.

There are a range of multi-agency panels that assist with decision making processes these include

- Multi-Agency Placement Panel SEND.
- Complex needs panel.
- Neurodevelopmental Pathway Panel
- Multi Agency Transitions Group for complex learners
- Transition to Adult Social Care Panel
- DSR multi agency panel
- Early Years Inclusion Panel

Local Area Governance structure



Leadership

The council entered into a Safety Valve agreement with the Department for Education in March 2023 to address the historic deficit on the High Needs Block. Strong and effective governance of the Safety Valve plan has ensured significant progress has been made. In year balance on the HNB has been achieved in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years and the block is on track to achieve a balanced position in 2024/25. Since entering the Safety Valve agreement, the deficit has been reduced from £6M to £2M and is on track to be eliminated during the lifetime of the agreement.

Darlington have progressed the co-production of a new **SEND Strategy 2024-27**. Work has been undertaken across many local schools (Primary, Secondary and nursery -mainstream and special provision) with over 70 children and young people. This work has been undertaken by participation officers independent of the SEND Implementation group. Darlington PCF have undertaken the role of working with parents and families again gaining input from over 45 families. The strategy will set the overarching aims for the coming years and are based around the themes within preparation for adulthood.

As part of the Local Area's ongoing commitment to increasing capacity for SEND in Darlington the council submitted a bid to open a **new Special Free School** in 2023, which was successful. We therefore move forward in the process of opening a new school that fits within our strategies for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

To complement our existing provision, we have identified the need for a secondary provision for those pupils with a primary need of autism/ASD. The new special free school will provide 48 full time places for pupils aged 11-19 with autism, who would benefit from a specific environment and staff dedicated to a holistic approach. The capital funding for the new school will be provided from the Government's Free School Programme. The council is working closely with the successful sponsor Trust to ensure the school is open to timescale.

Darlington invested in a **"Valuing SEND"** programme in partnership with Impower consulting during the Autumn term of 2023. In September to October 2023, we undertook an intensive eight-week programme, working with schools and partners across Darlington to:

1. Build consensus around a positive ambition for Darlington focused on inclusion.
2. Introduce and test new ways of working through application of IMPOWER's Valuing SEND tool to promote better outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
3. Use the evidence to demonstrate and build confidence in the ability of mainstream provision to meet need while also identifying learning and development opportunities for Darlington schools and settings.

This has led on to the creation of a local School Inclusion Charter led by Schools, which is due to be launched in the coming months. An improving consistency in how school colleagues understand and talk about need, to build confidence in mainstream provision and embed a strengths-based approach in

practice and a system-wide commitment to building independence into adulthood for children and young people in Darlington

Children's and Young Person participation officer is now recruited, who has led on a **Young Darlington Advisors** group being formed – with an emphasis on young people with a EHCP or SEN support plan aged up to 25. This group will have a role working with the local area SEND Agenda, report in to both Corporate Parenting and have links into the Health and Wellbeing Board. <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/young-darlington-advisors/>

“Talk about SEND” – termly open meetings - The LA has scheduled termly engagement drop ins sessions for any Darlington parent who registers. Questions are submitted prior to the meeting to ensure that any issues that parents want raising can be addressed at the meetings. This is shared via different mediums including social media to ensure as wide a base as possible is given the opportunity to participate. These sessions have been attended by leaders across the local area within Health, Education and Social Care. We are developing a series of post event podcasts in response to parents who, due to work or caring commitments are unable to attend the meetings in person.

Feedback: “Lovely meeting you both at the SEND event the other day at the Dolphin Centre! I was chatting to Olivia this morning about how useful and informative both myself and the other parents had found the session”

The **SEND Scorecard** (see attached document) provides leadership with Health and Local Authority data quarterly, this has been updated and developed in partnership with a mechanism in place to review quality and challenge anomalies. It is intended that this forms the basis for the development of the Local Area Data Dashboard to better capture information across the system in a more holistic and accessible way.

Data analysis on current and emerging SEND Needs matched with informed by public consultation has driven the ongoing resource base review.

- Our first redesignated resource base will open in September 24 at Northfield.
- Trust approval has been gained for planned expansion of Hurworth Secondary Social Communication Resource Base due to increasing need.

Ensuring the best use of and the potential expansion of our Resource Base offer will increase and further develop children and young people access to support in mainstream. This in turn will increase the capacity of special schools for those learners with the most complex needs within the local area and a reduction in out of area placements.

We have facilitated increased capacity at our special school through the High Needs Place Change Process. The LA are currently working with Beaumont Hill Special Academy to further increase capacity in the school by utilising Capital funding to facilitate the separation of the school's 6th Form.

Furthermore, we have reviewed our Outreach Services and are looking at an outcomes-based model of Outreach ensuring that services are effective in meeting need in a timely manner. Once this work is

complete, the alternative models of delivery ensure that services will report on positive outcomes in the most cost-effective way as well as establishing any gaps in provision we will need to fill.

One of the 4 Goals of **NENC ICB Forward Plan** is "Giving Children and Young People the Best Start in Life"

Improving health outcomes for children and young people requires a high level of partnership working, particularly with local authorities', including for example education, safeguarding and social care. Our Child Health and Wellbeing Network plays a valued role in bringing together partners across the system to have a clear focus on children and young people's health and wellbeing. Key areas of focus are mental health and well-being, long term conditions, vulnerable children and those with complex support needs (supported through the delivery of Core20plus5 to reduce health inequalities), to reduce waiting times for elective care and to meet the regulatory framework for SEND with partners, Best Start in Life, Pre-school and Peri-natal and a focus at place.

The local authority has a number of Capital Programmes underway addressing the SEND agenda this includes

- Beaumont Hill 6th Form (Special School Provision)
- New Free School
- Heathfield Resource Base
- Hurworth Expansion
- Creation of local Skills Centre (Northern Echo Building)

Local Area leaders take a relational approach to their work with schools. In an almost academised environment, Leaders endeavour to know schools well, build relationships and encourage a commitment to shared ownership of standards across the town. Through strong partnership structures Leaders promote honest and open dialogue with schools.

- The Education Strategy Group (ESG)
- The Primary Heads Forum
- 11 – 19 Partnership
- Vulnerable Pupil Panel (VPP) brings together representatives from primary and secondary schools and other agencies such as social care, the police and CAMHS to manage fair access protocols and maintain oversight of issues that affect vulnerable children.

Strengths and Developments

Strengths	Areas for Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Parent Carers Forum working clearly as part of local area leadership • Refresh of SEND strategy has been undertaken with clear linkage to local children's plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan • Advance stages of Schools Inclusion Charter lead by local schools • Multi-disciplinary Audit process in place • "Talk about SEND" termly open meeting bringing local leadership together with families, parents and carers • Darlington is part of DfE "Safety Valve Programme" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of New SEND Strategy • New implementation plan to ensure comprehensive delivery of the SEND Strategy • Safety Valve Programme (DfE) • Development of strategic young advisors group • Move from local data scorecard to a more accessible Data Dashboard • Development of portals to EHC plan System • JSNA being updated. • Consistency of graduated Response • 3 Tier model of AP is underdeveloped (capacity due to PEX) (to include Primary)

The impact of the local area partnership

Education, Health and Care Plans

The work of the **multi-agency EHC Panel** (MAPP) ensures the sharing of key information to promote accurate identification of need. The panel also ensures that there is a consistent and robust approach to decision making within key time frames. Darlington has seen an increase in the number of requests for statutory assessment since 2020, with 47% increase between 2021 and 2024. A significant majority of these being for children in the early years and foundation stage. The multi-agency panel is also used to inform further training and support for settings to ensure mainstream settings are knowledgeable and confident in dealing with a range of SEND issues. A statutory SEND Clinic has been set up to address any issues arising from submissions to MAPP offering advice, training & support to settings.

In 2023 83.9% of EHCPs excluding exceptions were issued in Darlington within the 20 week timescale compared to 50.3% nationally and 52.7% in the North East region.

EHC plans – clear voice of CYP and Parent Carers. Parent/Carer & CYP view forms routinely shared with requests for statutory advice. We have consulted with parent/carers & CYP on how they prefer their views to be collected and they have overwhelmingly told us that they prefer their views to be recorded in a conversation, preferably with someone with whom they are familiar. This has resulted in redesigning view forms to be a conversation prompt, rather than a questionnaire format, with particular focus on preparation for adulthood. The LA routinely offer a **“Making Sense Meeting”** to families undergoing assessment following the issue of a draft EHCP, where the contents of the plan are discussed and co-productively agreed. “Tell it once” approach is more consistent. Advice givers in statutory assessment have views to hand when speaking to parent/carers and CYP thus reducing the need to tell their story more than once.

100% of families surveyed indicate that they felt involved with the process, were heard and recognized co-production in EHCP's issued.

Quality of EHCP plans is seen as vital to achieving positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The Local Area has continued to develop practice to improve the quality of Education, Health and Care Plans. We have used the opportunity created through electronic EHCP's to refresh the format to ensure that plans are cleaner and focused on special educational needs, special provision and outcomes. All EHCP's have been transferred to a new format, based around Preparation for Adulthood and outcome focused.

Multi-agency deep dive analysis of new EHCP plans are undertaken on a termly basis. Deep dives highlight an inconsistency in the quality of statutory advice with take-up of training opportunities low. There is further developmental work required on a multi-agency level to facilitate the desired improvements. Recent deep dives identify that new EHCP's consistently have an overall rating of “Satisfactory” and above. As a result of this children and young people have EHCP's that are of a satisfactory standard, ensuring that their needs are clear, the provision to meet them is specific and that outcomes are smart and related to aspirations. Deep dives analyses support this.

Annual review procedures are embedded and robust within the SEND system and reviews are conducted in a timely manner and within statutory timescales.

In the 2024 Darlington Parent Carer forum feedback report

The overall rating of EHC plan application/ needs assessment process was:

-3.39 out of 5 for parent/carers

The overall rating of involvement in the annual review process was:

- 3.96 out of 5 for parent/carers

- 3.74 out of 5 for young people.

Ensuring clear timely advice from social care professionals is seen as a specific area of development in Darlington, this is part of our WSoA and was also highlighted during recent quality assurance activity. Traditionally in Darlington most advice has been via the Children with disabilities team. To improve the delivery of advice for EHC plans there is a DfE supported training programme underway to support the Children's Front Door Team to undertake more of this work.

Mediation & Tribunal - Early and systematic approach to analysing each potential tribunal case on a multi-agency basis is now embedded. Data on mediation & tribunal provides evidence of robust decision making.

"We've found Darlington's response to the SEND Mediation & Dispute Resolution service to be a really positive one. We're finding that requests for mediation are being responded to extremely quickly by the SEND team. Once the mediation sessions are in progress we find that Darlington's approach is always one of collaboration and the team seem to really understand and appreciate the benefits of the mediation process. The SEND Team Manager, and the supporting caseworker, bring great knowledge of the overall SEND process and are willing to share that with parents during the mediation session. We believe that every mediation has been a positive experience for parents and has left relations between Darlington SEND team and parent stronger than before." Joseph Mullrooney – Mediatelegal.

We have seen an increase in Tribunals but where agreement cannot be reached and cases have proceeded to court, tribunals involving Darlington have agreed with the issued EHC plan at a much higher rate than we see nationally.

Prior to January 2022 –	From January 2022 –
6 tribunals registered	14 tribunals registered
6 (100%) were ruled in favour of the appellant	7 were conceded by the LA prior to court 6 EHC plans were upheld 1 ruled in favour of appellant

Local Service and Provision

The Local Area SENDIASS has recently been enhanced with the ICB appointing a SEND Health facilitator, due to commence June 2024. This role compliments and will work closely with the LA SENDIASS which provides both an independent families officer and a young people SENDIASS officer to support children, young people and families to participate in decision making, individual support planning and assist navigation of the local system. The SEND Health facilitator will work at an individual level to support the development of individual health care plans.

Short breaks are available and can be for a short period of time, or longer periods such as overnight. The Council is a direct provider of residential short breaks through its Harewood Hill Lodge service which can provide short breaks for up to 5 children at any one time. If a family chooses to receive a Direct Payment, they will take control over identifying the provider of the short break and will organise their support directly with this provider. The provider may be a family friend or an extended family member or could be an agency or other private provider.

If a family does not feel that a direct payment is suitable to meet their needs, they may choose to access the Community Based Short Breaks Framework which is broken down into five 'lots', as follows:

- Lot 1 – Sport, Art/Craft, Drama, Recreational and Personal Development Activities
- Lot 2 – Holiday Play Schemes and Holiday Opportunities
- Lot 3 – After School Clubs
- Lot 4 – Promotion of Independence Skills, Befriending and Mentoring Services
- Lot 5 – Individual packages of support in the community

The short break offer also is complemented by a designated home care and support commissioned for children with disabilities requiring regulated care in the community.



CAMHS services are mapped around the I Thrive Framework and dedicated teams have been created around Getting Advice and Support (Single Point of Contact/CAMHS Front Door), Getting Help, Getting More Help and Getting Risk Support.

Together we have been committed to embed the I Thrive Framework, which has an emphasis on prevention promotion and earlier support for children's mental health and emotional wellbeing. We are seeing and hearing that many children and families are receiving support much earlier and are evidencing improved outcomes as a result of this. A consultation approach is held regularly with identified schools' mental health leads which

resulted in all Darlington schools having an identified lead to support system navigation, signposting and referrals into support. All schools have access to a whole school approach offer, multi-agency huddles, in-school consultations support case discussion and ensuring right support is given on an individual basis.

The Mental Health Support Teams are part of the overall I Thrive approach which has a focus on prevention, promotion and earlier support which will enable those children with more extensive needs to be supported much more effectively.

Mental Health Support in Schools – The ICB, local authority and schools have worked collaboratively to embed Mental Health Support Team (MHST) directly in schools. Darlington have been successful in attracting more funding resulting in the number of teams doubling in size and increasing its scope; meaning more children will be able to access their offer.

Mental Health Support Teams have a focus on a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, delivery of direct evidence-based interventions, supporting and developing CAMHS pathways. The implementation of I-Thrive and with a single point of contact, multi sector working helps to ensure children and young people are offered the most appropriate level of support at the earliest point. This is complimented by the single point of access (TEWV), commissioned mental health and learning disability service.

There is also a parent peer support offer as part of this service and feedback from children, parents/carers and school staff is consistently better than good. In particular, the “We Eat Elephants” programme has been accessed by a significant number of children in years 5 and 6, in preparation for their transition to secondary school. The feedback from children states that they will use the strategies they are taught and have found the sessions helpful and engaging.

CAMHS single point of contact has supported over 1000 requests for help in Darlington over the last 12 months and has evidenced through a triage process (offered within 1 week of referral) earlier access to support.

Average waiting times	Referral to 1 st Appointment	Referral to treatment
Q4 2023/24	42 days (6 weeks)	87 days (12 weeks)
Q4 2022/23	41 days (6 weeks)	72 days (10 weeks)
Q4 2021/22	50 days (7 weeks)	85 days (12 weeks)

Through a collaborative approach to support and through the integration of resources, we can evidence positive outcomes for children.

Neurodevelopmental (ASD/ADHD) is a national priority and a priority for NENC ICB. Darlington has a need led approach to supporting children and families with neurodevelopmental concerns (Autism and or ADHD) and committed to a **Neurodevelopmental Pathway** [Link](#). This approach means families and children are supported at the earliest possible opportunity, with or without a diagnosis. Professionals (usually education) complete a referral form with the child and parent or

carer. The referral form has been matched against ICD-11 and lists identifying features and criteria which supports a clinical decision for diagnosis. It has been developed with local feedback including parent carer forums. Following initial screening, a multi-agency panel meets fortnightly with representatives including Speech and Language Therapy, ASD clinicians, Education, EP's, Early Help and VSCE's to review the referral and share information to support decision making and to help determine need. Collectively, they make recommendations to either progress onto the specialist assessment pathway (where there is evidence to support a diagnosis) and or signpost children and families to services to meet their needs.

Local oversight is through a Strategic Tees Valley Neurodevelopmental Group and a joined-up Action Plan is in place which covers early identification of need through to post diagnostic support. However, demand continues to increase and waiting times have been impacted over the last 3 years. A full review taking place of neuropsychology covering Darlington and Durham.

Average waiting times for over 5's	Full Assessment
Q4 2023/24	800 days (26 months)
Q4 2022/23	784 days (26 months)
Q4 2021/22	365 days (12 months).

Evidence shows that almost half (48%) of all referrals do not progress to assessment - the main reasons are attributed to primary needs around; trauma and attachment (impacts of adverse childhood experiences and adversity), behaviour that challenge, mental health and family support.



As a response to this we piloted a consultation approach (pre-referral) via a **dedicated telephone hotline** to support professionals and the provision of evidence-based interventions to support with trauma, attachment and strengthening family relationships. Representation of children's mental

health services including Mental Health Support Teams and Getting Help Teams ensures swift access for any mental health support including anxiety, low mood and support with emotional regulation. Early evidence and impact shows family's needs are being met earlier through access and feedback of Family Support Services and Tees Valley Sleep Services. A pre-referral consultation line has been piloted with positive outcomes and referrers supported earlier, alongside developments of integrated pathways with CYP MH teams. However, demand is increasing.

Waiting List initiatives and support for parent carers and professionals include a new 'Waiting Well' process in place. This includes the offer of a telephone consultation pre-referral to discuss any concerns and support with strategies, advice, and guidance. Alongside this for SaLT there was a planned group intervention for those waiting due to a high level of demand from particular educational settings this pilot included a virtual offer of support and was targeted towards their needs. Impact and evaluation of this is being completed to agree next steps.

Bubble of support is jointly commissioned for CYP and families to access where there are concerns about neurodiversity. No diagnosis is required to access thus ensuring families can access help and support in a timely fashion.



Family Support Services – To support families where there are neurodivergent needs, a jointly commissioned service (provides support across all Tees Valley LA Areas) is due to end in November 2024 following a 3-year contract. Following review, there is clear evidence of positive impacts on family lives and experiences, so a further agreement to jointly commission the services for another 3 years is now in place.

Darlington Education Psychology Service (EPS) currently undertake work in all LA primary, secondary and special schools and the town's SEN Units. Each school is assigned an Educational

Psychologist (EP) or group of EPs who lead a consultation meeting with school SENDCos and SLT each term to identify priority cases for involvement. Comprehensive, individual assessments are undertaken of children both with SEN Support and who have an EHCP. Parent/ carer and school evaluations follow casework and annually.

The most recent evaluations in 2022/2023 found that 100% of schools strongly agreed or agreed that the involvement of an EP supports them in identifying and responding to CYP's needs and 94% of schools strongly agreed or agreed that EPs help them to include CYP more effectively.

Darlington EPS include parents / carers in all assessment work, with the majority of parents / carers consulting with the EP for a minimum of one hour. Parents / carers are asked to evaluate their experience of the EPS following each piece of work. A range of response formats are offered to aid accessibility and encourage responsiveness. Parents / carers are overwhelmingly positive in their evaluations of EP input.

In 2022/2023, over 90% indicated that they felt EP input would contribute to their child making progress in education.

School staff also complete annual evaluations regarding the service.

In 2022/23 97% of schools strongly agreed or agreed that EP involvement helps them to access and respond meaningfully to the voice of CYP and their parents / carers.

A series of guidance documents to support professionals across the LA share evidence-based practice and promote a graduated, consistent response to the needs of children, young people and their families. Such resources can be used to support all children in schools as and when required. Recent guidance includes the **Emotional Based School Avoidance** (EBSA) which is widely used and positively evaluated by schools and colleges, examples of which are outlined below.

'I've used the resources recently with a family whose work with Building Stronger Families was not enough to support the child back into school. I invited the family in to work together using the tools. We carried out the card activity, asking the child to place them into the columns on a large sheet of paper. Parents were shocked by the responses, noting that the child felt better at home as what was on offer was more motivating... Parents are way more accepting and the child is more willing to come in. Still struggling to separate from parents but we have strategies in place and are working with parents to devise the plan that follows the activities in the EBSA resources.'

Other guidance documents that have been developed and shared by the EPS include 'Supporting children with literacy difficulties and/ or dyslexia' and 'Supporting schools with loss, bereavement and critical incidents.'

Our **Early Help Team** work alongside the SEND Team and now share the same recording system. The team works across 0 – 25 ensuring that there is a smoother transition into adulthood for young adults and families the team supports, this is to mirror EHC plan 0 – 25 remit.

“X has settled in really well, and our family is also supported through Early Help. X now attends regularly and participates in lessons, which is a huge change from her old school.” Eldon House – Secondary SEMH Unit

The SALT commissioning group (now called **Darlington Talks**) identified that there was a gap in speech and language development in the Early Years. We have worked closely with early years settings and commissioning to embed the Early Talk Boost Programme across settings. It is available for all settings who have 3 and 4 year olds. A sustainable model has been developed through investing in two train the trainers in the local authority. As of May 2024, 100% of schools with a nursery unit have accessed or have the training planned for the summer term. 77% of the early years’ settings have also accessed the training. The settings who have not will be offered training onsite.

Trauma & Adversity - Rockpool Adverse Childhood Experiences Programme (Darlington) and Tees Valley therapeutic Offer - is a combined adult, children, and young people's Adverse Childhood Experiences Recovery Evidenced Based Programme. The programme aims to look at the impact of ACEs on individuals and how this affects them and their children. In April 2023 Darlington LA and Virtual Heads and ICB jointly funded this programme as part of a wider offer for early trauma and trauma informed support through virtual schools. 6 primary schools were identified, and 3 cohorts of support (2 primary schools in each) were planned over 12 months. Due to the success and positive outcomes across all schools and with the significant engagement and uptake of the programme agreements to continue jointly commissioning these services have been obtained. A further 6 primary schools are part of the Phase 2 into 2024/2025.

“I just really wish that this program had been available when everything started with E, it has done so much for her she is a lot calmer, starting to think things through more not as challenging and I am a lot better my anxiety is not as bad I am going out more and doing more things and doing a lot more with E as I am not as wound up all the time and feel more confident about myself and being a parent”

Parent from Darlington School, with E (Year 5).

Dynamic Support Register - There has been significant work undertaken across Tees Valley to establish a Dynamic Support Register (DSR) for children and young people with Autism/ Learning Disabilities. This multi-agency approach allows the local area to identify children and young people with complex needs that may be at risk of needing a high level of intervention such as Tier 4 services. Care, Education and Treatment Reviews (CETRs) have been established which are health lead and engage all partners involved with the child to plan the provision of support and services to meet need and prevent escalation. In addition, the ICB has commissioned key workers to support this process and offers Positive Behaviour training for parent/carers that have been identified

through the DSR process. In addition to the statutory DSR there has been the development of a Pre DSR register, developed for CYP without a diagnosis who present with complex needs that may be at risk of needing a high level of intervention such as Tier 4 services or residential out of area placement due to breakdown of placement. This process also adopts a multi- agency approach to identify needs and supporting at the earliest opportunity.

A Key Working Service has been developed as a response to the NHS England & NHS Improvement Long Term Plan (LTP) commitment that by 2023/24, children and young people with a learning disability, Autism, or both, who have the most complex needs have a designated Keyworker. This has been aligned to Community Pediatric teams and to the risk stratification (pre DSR) processes within the service to support both early intervention for longer term outcomes, and to address any gaps in support for children and their families already in the system, who experience a crisis or are identified as being at risk of a school exclusion. All children and young people highlighted through the DSR have been offered access to Keyworker support in Darlington.

We are currently seeing increased referrals for younger children into Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy and Community Pediatrics because of developmental delay, or perceived developmental delay, a contributing factor of this increase is a lack of socialisation for young children during the Covid pandemic. Work is ongoing with health partners to address these concerns as a system.

Multi-agency **Attendance Solution Panel** that includes School, LA Attendance Officer, Building Stronger Families worker, social worker, CAHMS and SEND has been established. Weekly panel meeting focused on pupils who are severely absent cohort (absence is below 50%).The panel agrees a plan of support for a young person and/or family where attendance is challenging and support plans to be implemented. Impact of these panels has not yet achieved its potential, but it is still early in its establishment.

SENCOs report a better understanding of good practice in SEN Support Plans. Following a SEN Support Plan moderation event 100% of participating schools (21 schools including all secondary schools and maintained nursery schools) said that they found the moderation helpful. 70% of schools said that they would examine their own approach as a result of the session having gained new ideas for improvement. In addition to the work with SENCOs above, all teachers from Reception to Y5 were invited to a moderation session where they brought pupil writing and SEN Support plans. Over 100 colleagues took part in the session. 79% of the evaluation responses said the session was excellent or above average with comments such as:

'Great to speak to colleagues from different schools about challenges and strategies to try.'
'Good to see tools they use and how they assess and move children along'.

We provide schools with an opportunity to undertake a full SEN audit to assist them to improve their whole school approach to SEN. The audit is focused on supporting a school to embed a targeted graduated response centred around timely assessment of need. Case studies show the

impact of the audits in schools where the school has undertaken audits at two different points, outcomes and improvements are clearly captured.

“Especially as a new SENCO they helped sharpen my focus and gave me clear targets and things to work on. I think they are useful for experienced and novice SENCOs as there is always something we need to improve and work on.” SENCO (Primary)

We provide support and challenge to schools and settings with guidance in the identification process for children with additional needs working at a SEN Support level in schools and settings. a quality assurance and monitoring function. One school using the Social Communication Outreach Service has expressed this in the following:

“As a result of the advice we were given by SCOS O now sits at the front of the class and has improved greatly at working independently. She still has the opportunity for TA help / check ins but a lot less than previously and this seems to be going well at the moment. She is also our class’ school councillor which is a big responsibility and she is very excited about this. She is also given jobs to do throughout the day which helps with her sensory breaks.”

Pupil led support is a strategy that is actively promoted and services such as the social communication outreach are working in innovative ways to support a pupil led approach. Regarding a small group of children who were referred for anxiety, and all had an ASD diagnosis:

“The pupils enjoyed the session. By the fourth session they had developed connections within the group and were talking about their days/ likes/ dislikes. A KS3 peer support group developed. They said that they felt more “relaxed” and that it was “fun”. They were able to be themselves without masking. School will continue to implement a ‘Drop In’ session moving forwards and the staff member feels confident doing this. The relationship between the staff member and the pupils also became more relaxed.”

Resource Bases and SEN Units are monitored on a termly basis and the experiences of families and children and young people are considered at each point in the year. One Resource Base for Primary aged children has noted the following from a family of a child who attends their base:

“With the help of trained staff and a highly adapted environment/curriculum, X has made huge strides. He is now successfully accessing some whole class learning with support when needed. X’s family are very happy with the support he has had since coming to our school.”

Education Outcomes

Education outcomes for pupils categorised as SEND support are showing an improvement in some areas. At KS2 SEND support pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing & Maths increased by 2.5% from 20.6% in 2021/22, to 23.1% in 2022/23.

At KS4 SEND Support pupils achieving English & Maths 5+ percentage has increased by 4.7% from 17.3% in 2021/22, to 22.0% in 2022/23. Attainment 8 score has decreased by 0.4 from 34.9 in 2021/22, to 34.5 in 2022/23. Progress 8 score has decreased by 0.01 from -0.69 in 2021/22, to -0.70 in 2022/23.

For the EHCP Cohort at KS2 pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing & Maths increased by 1.6% from 3.2% in 2021/22, to 4.8% in 2022/23.

At KS4 EHCP pupils achieving English & Maths 5+ percentage increased by 4.1% from 0.0% in 2021/22, to 4.1% in 2022/23. EHC Plan pupils achieving English & Maths 4+ increased by 10.2% from 0.0% in 2021/22, to 10.2% in 2022/23. Attainment 8 score has increased by 4.7 from 6.9 in 2021/22, to 11.6 in 2022/23. Progress 8 score has increased by 0.10 from -1.69 in 2021/22, to -1.59 in 2022/23.

Attendance for EHCP pupils is a strength for the Local Area. EHCP overall absence decreased by 0.8% from 10.4% in 2021/22, to 9.5% in 2022/23. Persistent absence decreased by 4.7% from 33.6% in 2021/22, to 28.5% in 2022/23. Severe persistent absence decreased from 3.5% in 2021/22, to 3.3% in 2022/23.

For the SEND support cohort overall absence remained unchanged at 9.8% in 2022/23. Persistent absence decreased by 2.3% from 34.1% in 2021/22, to 31.7% in 2022/23. Severe persistent absence increased by 0.5% from 2.7% in 2021/22, to 3.1% in 2022/23.

Suspension and exclusion rates remain a significant challenge for Darlington. There is evidence of some improvement for the SEND cohort. The permanent exclusion rate for SEND support pupils decreased by 0.13 from 0.81 in 2021/22, to 0.68 in 2022/23. For EHCP pupils the permanent exclusion rate decreased by 0.17 from 0.31 in 2021/22, to 0.14 in 2022/23.

Preparing for Adulthood

People Group Commitment, with DLT agreement and leadership, to improve Darlington offer for transition into adulthood including a Review of 19+ adult service inhouse and commissioned offer currently underway. Review based on progression models. This forms part of Adult Service Transformation Plan



Transition working group in place with membership from SEND Team, Beaumont Hill, Rise Carr, Darlington College, DCO, Children's service and adult service. The purpose of the group is for the attending professionals from a range of key services to collaborate, plan, advise and signpost in readiness for key transitions for young people with SEND and an EHCP, thus ensuring smooth and successful transitions into post 16 destinations, whether it be further education, higher education, day services packages or employment. The success of this work will be measured by the number of CYP's successfully transitioning and remaining in their destination placements following transition.

The Ready Steady Go transitions model being used to support CYP moving from Paediatric services to adult services to promote independence and achieve good health outcomes although impact of this to be determined. There is specific work currently underway to improve the transitions from CYP therapy services into adult learning disability (TEWV) services. There is a particular focus on the age that the transition will start.

Darlington Transition Programme is a comprehensive programme from early years to post-16 for all pupils and promoting enhanced support for children with SEN at all levels. Pupil voice has been used to inform the development of this comprehensive programme.

NEET (16-17 year olds)

The latest published national data (16-17 years olds at the end of 2022 (average of December, January and February) showed that 3.8% of young people in Darlington were NEET or Not Known. This was better than the North-East and National averages of 5.2%. This can be further broken down as follows:

	Darlington	North East	England
No SEND	3.6%	4.5%	4.6%
SEND EHCP	6.3%	12.8%	10.1%
SEN Support	4.5%	9.8%	9.3%

Some local initiatives include: -

Project Search Supported internship initiative with Amazon UK and Darlington College. An initial intake of supported interns is now in planning for September 2024

NHS Choices College has been active in Darlington and offer a Supported Internship programme for up to 12 Young people each year.

Adults Skills Centre Following a successful bid for Town Fund grant Darlington Borough Council has purchased the historic Northern Echo building which will be the home to a new dedicated Adults Skills Centre. Darlington College and the council's Learning and Skills Service will be co-located on site. It is planned that the centre offer a range of provision including Core skills -such as digital skills, English and maths and employability provision and support. A procurement exercise has been completed and agreed by cabinet in January 2024 to identify an experienced and imaginative development partner to design, redevelop, repurpose, and once complete to operate, manage, and maintain the entire building. The preferred tenderer has submitted a bid which includes a full refurbishment of the building in addition to a full fit out of the Adult Skills Hub on the ground floor. It is anticipated that the overall redevelopment will take circa 18 months

YEI - The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) is aimed at supporting young people aged 16-29 into employment education and training. It offers personalised support to remove barriers to employment and help get young people work ready. Since its start in 2016 it has successfully move

97% of participants into education, employment or training, and of those 63% of those young people have been in that positive destination after six months.

Study Programme - Learning & Skills offer a pre-employment study programme for those young people who are unsure of their career aspirations. The programme is designed to improve learner's preparation for adulthood, enhance their skills and improve confidence in social, academic and working lives ready for work or further educational opportunities. At the end of the programme Learners will have gained an academic qualification relevant to their level of study in their chosen vocational area, maths and English, gained work experience in an area of their choice and developed social skills as part of their Study Programme.

BELPS - The Learning & Skills Employment Academy offers bespoke employer led programmes (BELPs) that are intensive one-week upskilling courses for job seekers, delivered by Learning & Skills Darlington, in partnership with employers across the borough. They act as a fast track route into employment.

Each separate course broadly follow the same schedule.

One week course spread over four or five days

Relevant skills studied for the role (i.e. warehousing skills needed for Aldi)

All courses include interview skills and a workshop with the employer

All courses permit a site visit/tour of the employers facilities

Finally, all courses grant a guaranteed, fast track interview upon completion of the course

Youth Employment UK has worked in Darlington over the past few years bringing together Employers schools and colleges. Information can be found on the following link

<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/careers-advice-help/youth-friendly-places-in-the-uk/darlington/>

Strengths and Developments

Strengths	Areas for Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing well at providing EHC Plans within 20-week period • All annual reviews of EHC within statutory timescales • Very high parental satisfaction rates for new EHC plan assessments • Neuro pathway and introduction of Trauma routes • EBSA guidance in place across all schools in Darlington • A well-established which is both strong and robust Parent Carers forum • A range of developments locally for those 19+ • Development of a transitions group working with those with most complex needs • Well attended multi-agency provision panel • Training and development programme for social care colleagues around statutory advice. • Clear and well developed graduated response and ranges. • Deep dive conducted in Dec 23, indicated that PFA was lacking in the majority of statutory advice, indicating a clear training need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key stage 4 outcomes need to improve • Improve the ways to hear the voice of children and young people strategically • Improved Attendance, including suspension and exclusion including development of a multi-agency response and an accessible version of EBSA Guidance – for families and CYP • Clearer access and better advice from Social Care and Health professionals • Local Offer to be improved • Better more clearly understood pathway to adulthood and offers for those 19+ • Improved offer across Darlington local community offering activities outside school and college • Development of an under 5's (Pre-school) Pathway for Neurodiversity • Rockpool Adverse Childhood Experiences Programme Phase 2 2024-25 • Development of outcome based commissioning models

Alternative Provision

Darlington has effective measures in place to monitor the quality of school commissioned alternative provision.

Darlington's **Framework Agreement for Alternative Education Provision** has to date been primarily part of the delivery of education to Key Stage 4 young people. From September 2024 the Alternative Education Provision Framework (the Framework) also includes providers meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

The Framework aims to improve outcomes by

- Clear and consistent terms and conditions for all providers, in line with statutory requirements, guidance on alternative provision and local agreed practice.
- Improved arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of young people.
- Clarity on the responsibilities of all parties (schools, Local Authority, and providers)
- Improved quality assurance and monitoring arrangements.
- Clear and consistent costs against outcomes, supporting the duty to deliver value for money.
- Improved engagement with the market of alternative education providers, supporting innovation, sustainability of providers and improved provision to meet needs.
- Improved operational and strategic partnerships with and between providers to improve outcomes for young people.

The council works with academy trusts to undertake regular health & safety checks, safeguarding checks and quality assurance monitoring of providers.

Oversight of the key performance indicators is through Darlington's Education Strategy Group (ESG) which provides overall strategic direction to educational partnership activity across Darlington. The ESG works with the Primary Headteachers Forum, the 11-19 Partnership, Vulnerable Pupil Panel (VPP) and other partnership groups. It provides overall strategic direction for identified partnership work programmes and funded projects. The VPP is a partnership of Darlington settings that examines service delivery and options for provisions and promotes multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working where appropriate.

Schools which have any pupil off site complete an Alternative Education and reduced timetable return reportable to the VPP, which allows the local authority to identify placements and arrange quality assurance monitoring visits.

Settings provide information as a minimum on the following:

- Pupils attending AP or receiving AP outreach services
- Pupils who have stopped receiving AP in the previous 6 months

- Pupils who are on the roll of an AP but are not attending It can also include where pupils are in unregistered provision, out-of-area and in dual-registered placements and on part time timetables.

The report allows schools to report destination following AP placement, progress regardless of attainment, and attitude to learning.

Overall impact is measured in a variety of ways, including the use of the quality assurance monitoring visits which consist of learning walk reports. Impact can also be ascertained by using pupil voice and annual report summaries from providers.

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/education-and-learning/alternative-provision/darlington-alternative-education-framework/>

Future plans include undertaking focus groups and arranging parental feedback.

Local area oversight of the quality assurance protocol

The Darlington Education Strategy Group (ESG) established a working group in 2023 to review and report to the ESG on the use and impact of school commissioned AP in Darlington, refresh the 11-19 AP Framework quality assurance protocol and make recommendations to strengthen local area strategic planning and oversight of AP as required. The working group has representation from the most commissioned APs, primary, secondary and Post 16 representation and local authority leaders which supports their strategy for AP commissioning and oversight (Strategic Commissioning Manager – SEND). The group meet half termly and have established a termly AP network inviting all schools and APs working in Darlington to training and sharing of best practice.

In Spring term 2024 quality monitoring visits were undertaken on 11 of the providers on the framework (not all providers are currently being commissioned). The visits focus on assessment of need; quality of education; behaviour and attendance; safeguarding and transition.

A sample of student voice is gathered as part of the monitoring visit. Student voice questionnaires are returned alongside a visit report. The students are asked questions relating to their learning experience, relationships with teacher(s) and student(s), support for transition and their social, emotional, mental and physical health. Pupils are asked to comment specifically on safeguarding and transition.

Average scores (out of 4.0) are provided for each provider. Of 5 providers, scores ranged between 3.3 and 4.0.

Rise Carr College is the local authority maintained alternative provision provider. The college provides alternative education for pupils aged 11-16. The council is working with Rise Carr College to ensure there is sufficient capacity in the local area to meet need in a context of rising suspension rates.

Strengths and Developments

Strengths	Areas for Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A baseline for tracking AP data in place • The AP framework is a straightforward, effective QA system which applies to all providers across Darlington. • Quality assurance protocol is a positive way to support schools in their commissioning responsibilities. • The quality visit considers what the school has commissioned, and report on the impact. • Good engagement with providers • Schools and providers have received training on the framework, protocols, checklists and forms used in the monitoring QA process. • A peer network has been set up to share good practice, identification of key issues in commissioning. • Development of an audit tool and best practice AP policy for schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data may include tracking of attendance, suspensions, exclusion, outcomes including destination and impact. • A recent survey of secondary settings identified that there is insufficient focus on core curriculum in AP. • The costs of provision and other costs such as transport are identified barriers to schools. • Practical 'hands on' vocational qualifications that help students to build foundations and continue their education are sought. • Providers and schools agreed to provide AP parental/carer views. • Development of case studies will give a better picture of reasons of why AP is used and outcomes. • Training to include how to write, record and report effective outcomes. • Transition working group to look at a common standard for Year 6 into Year 7 transition and how the effectiveness can be measured. • Day 6 provision for primary exclusions • 3 Tier approach to AP is underdeveloped

Parent Carers Forum

Darlington Parent Carer Forum Key Position Statement.

Strategic work

Darlington PCF work with the local authority, education settings, health and other providers to ensure the services that they plan and deliver meet the needs of children and families living in our area. Steering group members represent parents' experiences to local decision makers at strategic boards and during the planning and developing of services and make recommendations for service improvements. Our strategic priorities are influenced by the feedback we receive from families.

Peer support in schools.

Darlington PCF delivers monthly peer support sessions in 9 primary schools, 4 secondary schools and 2 nurseries. We also offer fortnightly virtual peer support, regular male carers support and community-based peer support at Pear Tree Café in Hurworth. The aim of this offer is to prioritise listening, provide a safe space to share experiences, plan and provide training opportunities based on identified needs, share information, facilitate professional representation, support solution focussed communication between schools, parents and professionals, and offer practical advice, support and signposting.

Dolphin Centre community drop-in.

These monthly sessions are open to all parent carers and are attended by peer supporters. These are longer sessions and have an additional strategic focus. These sessions now include regular professional attendance with the aim of sharing information about what services provide and how families can access them.

Legal training for parent carers.

Darlington PCF have offered a suite of annual SEND legal training, this is highly valued by families. Funding dependent, we intend to continue with this and hope to be able to expand this offer to include professionals.

Social media engagement.

Darlington PCF provide a Facebook page for general information and event advertising. In addition to this we also operate a closed Facebook group, this provides a safe space for parent carers to

share experiences, seek advice and support and provide feedback. Parents are able to post to the page anonymously, all posts must be approved, and comments are checked regularly, this ensures compliance with safeguarding processes and procedures.

Events

Darlington PCF strive to reduce isolation and increase family well-being, to support us in doing this we offer a range of inclusive family events. The delivery of these is dependent on funding and volunteer availability, however, steering group members regularly fundraise, and the entirety of this fundraising is used for these events. Recently, to mark Carers Week, Darlington PCF have been able to host a number of events with a focus on parent carer wellbeing. We hope to be able to host more of these events in the future.

Celebrations

In Darlington we continue to prioritise expanding the reach of the PCF. To aid us in doing this we have recruited a new, and vibrant steering group, this includes 2 new co-chairs. Additionally, we have also welcomed a new strategic coordinator.

We continue to use the learning from the Mental Health Support Team roll out to support our peer support offer in over half of Darlington's schools. This plays a vital role in informing our strategic work and has also contributed to our annual SEND and EBSA surveys, which are being used to drive forward local work with strategic partners.

Darlington PCF are committed to working in coproduction with local service leaders to ensure that the services that they plan and deliver continue to meet the evolving and diverse needs of the families living within Darlington.

Steering group members continue to prioritise engagement with families and are excited to plan and deliver future events for children, young people and parent carers with the aim of improving family wellbeing, and providing opportunities for all families to have their voices heard.

We are looking forward to an exciting year ahead and feel that Darlington PCF is in a strong position to embrace any challenges this may bring.

Development Opportunities

- Evaluation of our peer support offer confirms the increasing need for support of this nature. More and more parent carers are dependent on the PCF for increasingly complex advice and support. Whilst we always strive to increase our reach and accessibility without an increase in capacity, our ability to do so is compromised. The peer support offer is currently run voluntarily which presents a significant risk.
- There are an increasing number of children out of education or being home educated. Additionally, we are conscious of other hard to reach families and we are keen to explore opportunities to engage with them in a way that they find accessible.
- Access to tailored training for peer supporters and steering group members.
- An open SEND legal training offer for both parents and professional to ensure transparency around messaging.

A significant concern of ours is when we are presented with a plan or development at information stage. We are committed to working in true coproduction, where all parties are present from the beginning. We would like to see the development of a coproduction charter and stamp to increase confidence and encourage partnership working.



Top 10 Actions for 2024 - 25

1. New SEND Strategy
2. New Local Offer
3. School Inclusion Strategy
4. EBSA and Attendance
5. Pathway to Adulthood
6. New Resource Base offer
7. SEND local area Data Dashboard
8. Open Portals to EHC plan recording system
9. More community opportunities beyond school
10. The Voice of Children and Young People

Conclusion

The Local Area continues to work effectively to ensure that you people with SEND have their needs identified and met and achieve better outcomes. Ther is evidence across a number of indicators commitment to continuous improvement is having a positive impact.

- Most young people supported by EHCP are educated and having their needs met within Darlington. The high percentage of pupils educated in a mainstream school demonstrated the Local area's commitment to inclusion
- The timeliness of ECHP assessment ensures that children and young people's needs are assessed at any early point
- Both state maintained special schools in Darlington are rated "Good" by Ofsted. Leaders work closely with the local area partnership and have high aspirations for outcomes for learners
- All resourced base provision in Darlington is hosted by school which are judged "Good" or above by Ofsted.
- Attendance levels at school for ECHP cohort are consistently higher than regional and national average
- Parent Carer Forum survey feedback indicates parent/carer feel well supported by children's social care services with respondents rating the support they receive at 4.23 out of 5
- There are improving outcomes in recent years at KS4 for both the Send Support and EHCP cohorts

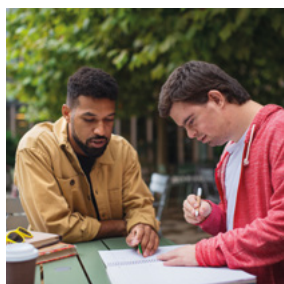
Significant challenges remain in the local area. Increasing levels of demand impact partners ability to improve outcomes in some areas.

- Suspension and exclusion rates in Darlington have remained high
- There has been a significant increase in demand for services since the Covid pandemic and this has been particularly in the early years
- Further work is required to develop a fully tiered approach to alternative provision
- The local area needs to continue to imbed a fully understood ordinarily available offer in mainstream setting to continue to improve parental confidence in mainstream school's ability to consistently support pupils with additional needs

Appendices

Documents attached

1. SEND performance Scorecard May 2024
2. Darlington WSOA Review - Feb 24



Darlington Local Area Partnership
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

SEND Strategy

2025-2029



Consultation
Document

This refreshed Darlington local Area SEND Strategy sets the Local Area’s priorities for the next 4 years.

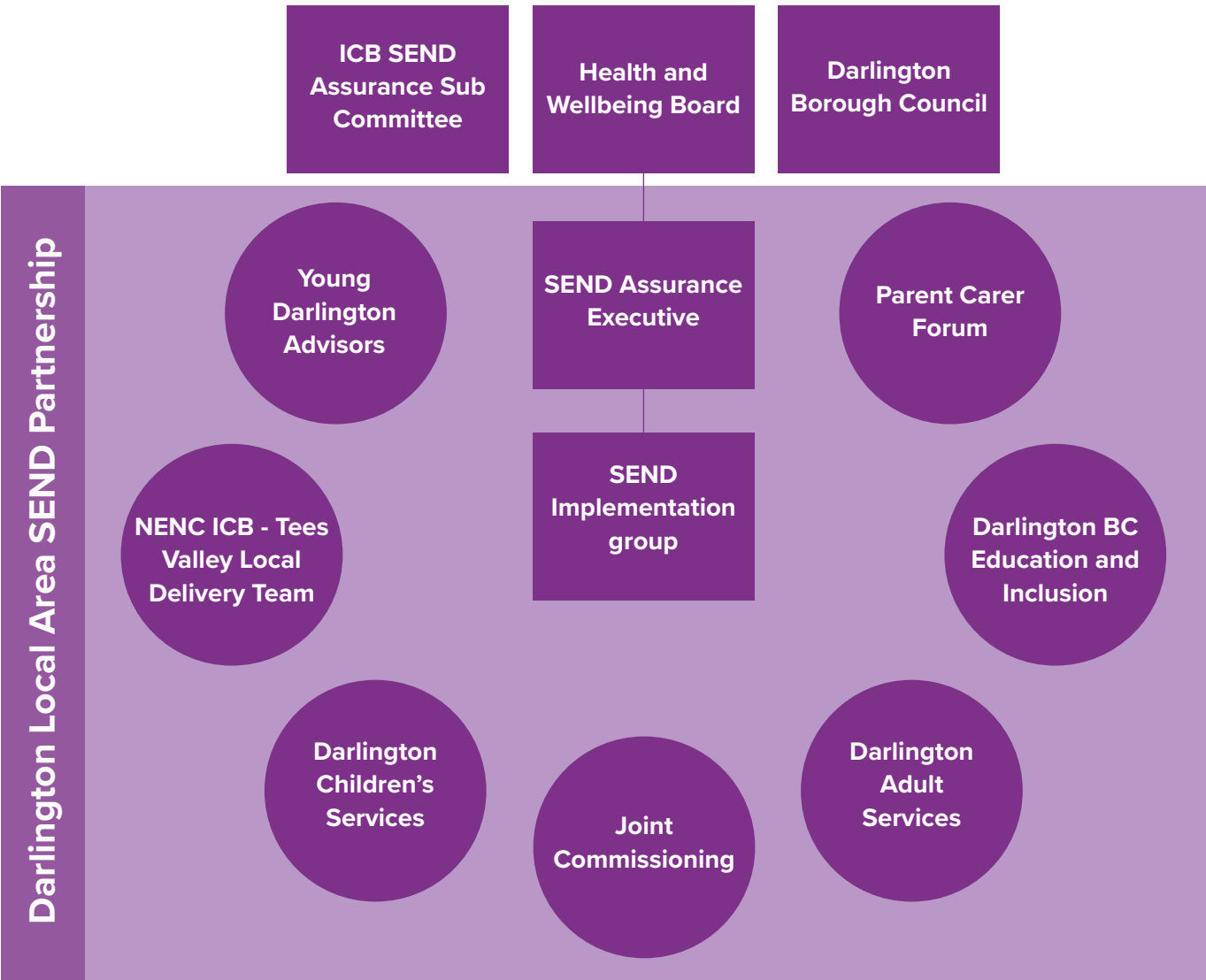
In Darlington we are committed to working in partnership across our local area to coordinate support, care and learning for SEND children, young people, and their families, so they are able to fulfil their ambitions and to thrive.

The Strategy builds on existing good practice and addressing those areas where services need to be strengthened. This includes:

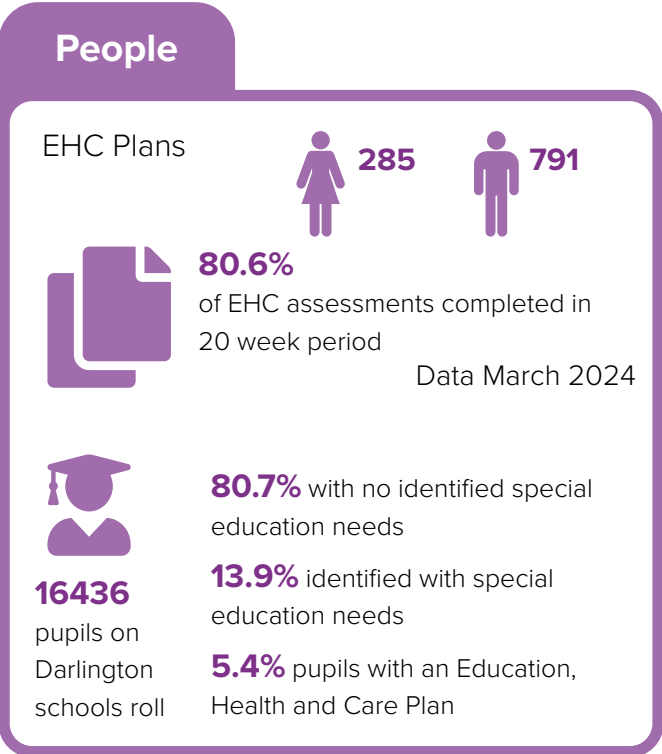
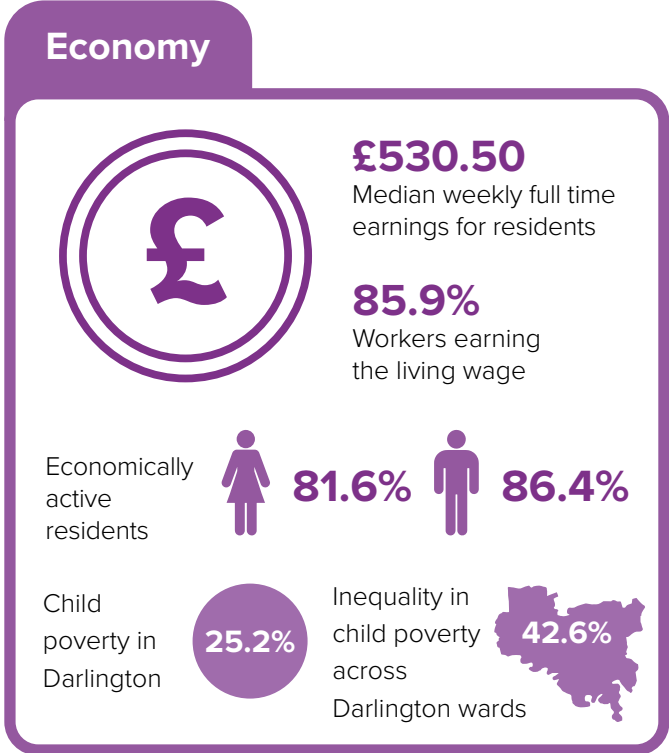
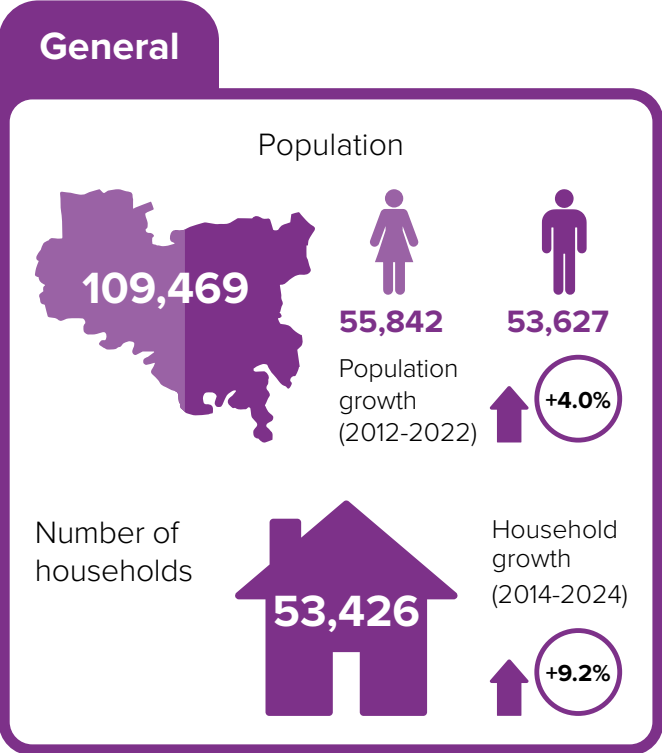
- improved access to and experience of therapeutic, mental health, and physical health services;
- supporting more children and young people to attend an inclusive setting or school in Darlington where needs are met earlier; and
- broadening access to a wide range of short breaks and local community activities.

We are proud of the quality of the schools and early years provision in Darlington: we know our schools and settings work hard to deliver good outcomes for children and young people. We know however, that we need to work hard to improve some areas of our services and that we need to improve our communication with children, young people, parents and carers to improve our understanding of their experiences and to involve them more closely in the design and delivery of the services which support them.

Local governance



Darlington context



National and local drivers

This strategy is informed by related key national documents such as the Children and Families Act (2014), SEND Code of Practice (2015), National Autism Strategy (2021), the National Disability Strategy (2021) and the NHS Long Term Plan.

It is consistent with the values and ambitions outlined in the Darlington Council Plan 2024-2027.

Co-producing the strategy

Darlington's Local Area SEND partnership has developed this strategy for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) through co-production. It has been co-created by children and young people; parents and carers; and those who work with them across the partnership. The following set of priorities has been shaped into a clear set of actions the shared thoughts, words and phrases of children, young people, parents and carers (via the Darlington Parent Carer Forum), and strategic partners.

The priorities directly respond to the ambitions for children and young people in Darlington identified through a series of events and consultations undertaken in the last year, involving children and young people, their parents and carers, and those who support young people. Five key areas, building on the preparation for adulthood outcomes were used as headings in the consultation and form the framework for this strategy. It was agreed that this approach will encourage a more effective pathway into adulthood and enable children and young people to build on life skills and support their aspirations.

The voice of children and young people has been clear. This is their borough. They want their voices to be heard in shaping the future of Darlington.



Strategy framework

The strategy framework sets the Local Area's priorities for the next 4 years.

It is set out across the five key areas

Five key areas

1. Being as healthy as possible

2. Having good education, training and opportunities

3. Family, friends and relationships.

4. Into adulthood towards independence

5. Darlington - our town, community and environment

Each Key area is presented across the following four headings:

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parents and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The Difference this will make
This is a summary of what Children and Young people said was most important to them when thinking about each key area.	This is a summary of what Parents and carers said was most important to them when thinking about each key area.	This is an expression of the commitments that the Local Area Partnership has made to children and young people with SEND in Darlington.	This sets out the difference the strategy looks to deliver for children and young people, parents and carers.



Being as healthy as possible

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>Having good mental health is important: Being able to talk to people who listen, understand and support you helps.</p> <p>To be healthy It's important to have a balanced diet, healthy eating habits and to drink lots of water - not focusing purely on fruit and vegetables but having a mix of everything, as well as a good nights sleep.</p> <p>Exercise in whatever way suits you best is good for your mental and physical health e.g. the gym, walking, sporting clubs, dancing, swimming.</p> <p>Not focusing on unrealistic health expectations from media.</p>	<p>Maintaining positive mental health and physical health is important.</p> <p>Effective and timely access to mental & physical health support.</p> <p>Having suitable education provision is important in ensuring good physical and mental health.</p> <p>It can be difficult to maintain a healthy diet, particularly where sensory needs impact this.</p> <p>Communication between health and education services needs to be improved.</p> <p>More inclusive opportunities for exercise and social inclusion are needed.</p> <p>Independence in respect of healthy lifestyle choices.</p>	<p>We will improve inclusive opportunities to be active in Darlington.</p> <p>We will support community organisations and community facilities to be more inclusive of children and young people.</p> <p>We will effectively manage waiting lists for health appointments especially access to mental health services.</p> <p>We will ensure the new public health strategy is fully inclusive of children and young people with SEND.</p>	<p>I will know when, where and how to access support if I am physically or emotionally unwell.</p> <p>I will be able to access support and advice in a timely way.</p> <p>I will be able to make a healthy meal or snack.</p> <p>I will be able to choose from and access a range of activities either independently or with support to help keep me as active as possible.</p> <p>People supporting me will talk to each other and work with me and my family/carers to plan my support together.</p>

Having good education, training and opportunities

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>'Need to be learning about real life issues, so we can know how to handle them when it happens.'</p> <p>Prefer practical/'fun' learning.</p> <p>More extra-curricular learning e.g. clubs, groups, after school activities.</p> <p>More support to help me plan my future: qualifications, further and higher education, advice and guidance on accessing different jobs (childcare, police, army, beauty therapist YouTuber, robotics etc).</p> <p>More volunteer/work experience opportunities needed from a younger age.</p> <p>No Bullying, including online.</p>	<p>Suitable education in a suitable school environment.</p> <p>To feel included, respected, valued and safe while at school.</p> <p>Availability and accessibility of information in relation to SEND support, improved and consistent SEND offer in schools and training / upskilling of school staff in respect of SEND.</p> <p>Skills for independence to be included consistently in education.</p> <p>Ensuring early identification of needs that are met flexibly, effectively and consistently through thorough and coordinated planning to prevent emerging needs escalating including for emotional, social & mental health needs.</p> <p>Choice and flexibility regarding appropriate, supported and fulfilling education and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>We will launch an Inclusion Charter across all Darlington education settings.</p> <p>We will work with education settings to address barriers to attendance for children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>We will work with education settings to include developing skills for independence as part of their offer.</p> <p>We will develop and implement a multi-agency strategy for Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) to support children and young people, families and educational settings.</p> <p>We will make sure that Preparation for Adulthood is central to all Education, Health and Care Plans and individual SEN plans.</p>	<p>I will feel safe, happy and valued in my nursery, school or college.</p> <p>I will go to my local nursery, school or college and my teachers will know how to support me to achieve my goals.</p> <p>I will enjoy my early years, school or college setting and will have good attendance.</p> <p>I will be able to achieve good qualifications to help me get a good job or higher education.</p> <p>I will know where and how to access information on jobs, courses and volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>I will be confident that I have the skills I need to move on to the next phase in my journey to adulthood.</p>

Family, friends and relationships

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>Love, care and support.</p> <p>Recognising that families are all different. Being loved and cared for as well as stability, security, trust and safety are important.</p> <p>Stability, security, trust, safety, communication, listening.</p> <p>Making friends is important.</p> <p>Healthy relationships are important e.g. friendships, family, school.</p> <p>Being provided for e.g. food, Wi-Fi, pocket money, shelter.</p> <p>Independence support.</p>	<p>Positive relationships with friends and family.</p> <p>To develop reciprocal relationships/ lasting friendships.</p> <p>Support to develop confidence and self-acceptance.</p> <p>Child/young person's voice is listened to.</p>	<p>We will support schools, education providers and health services to offer education on healthy relationships.</p> <p>We will work as a partnership to support individuals and families to greater empowerment.</p> <p>We will make sure that there is a range of high quality local short break opportunities available for eligible children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>We will hold regular events for Parents and Carers to discuss current SEND issues with local area Leaders. We will find a way to expand this to a children and young person's opportunity.</p> <p>We will listen to, and support, children and young people with SEND to raise their aspirations and achieve their ambitions.</p>	<p>I will know what a healthy relationship is and know how to manage my relationships with different groups of people.</p> <p>I will be able to access places and activities in the community where I can make and maintain friendships.</p> <p>We will be involved in more local decision making.</p> <p>My family/carers will be supported to support me achieve my dreams.</p> <p>We will be more aware of what is, and what isn't, happening in Darlington.</p> <p>I will have a better choice of short breaks available locally.</p>

Into adulthood towards independence

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>More support with independence from an earlier age.</p> <p>Help with transitions.</p> <p>More support with taxes, budgeting and finances.</p> <p>More work opportunities for under 18's.</p> <p>Life skills - knowing how to move into adulthood.</p> <p>Being able to do things on your own (not relying on anyone), walking to school yourself, cooking own meals, doing laundry yourself.</p>	<p>Improved preparing for adulthood support from an earlier age learning skills for managing finances, transport/travel training opportunities, support to develop confidence and self-acceptance.</p> <p>Choice and flexibility regarding appropriate, supported and fulfilling education and employment opportunities.</p> <p>Increase/improvements in the local post 16 offer.</p> <p>To be as independent as possible.</p> <p>That young people are appropriately supported to become active and contributing members of society.</p> <p>That young people's voices continue to be heard and listened to.</p> <p>Supported opportunities in respect of independent living skills including safe and appropriately supported housing options.</p>	<p>We will make sure that there are clear pathways into adulthood that have been co-produced.</p> <p>We will make sure good quality information and guidance is available for individuals, and their families, as they move from childhood to adulthood. This will include advice on:- finance; benefits; adult services in the NHS and Darlington BC; getting a job; getting a place to live; and adult rights and independence.</p> <p>We will make sure there are clear pathways into employment and opportunities for all.</p> <p>We will make sure that local housing and independent living opportunities are available for those who meet the relevant eligibility criteria.</p> <p>We will work with local +16 education setting to provide better life skills training.</p>	<p>I will know how to manage money and take care of myself.</p> <p>I feel confident to travel safely wherever I want to go.</p> <p>My views are listened too, I will be able to make decisions about the support I need.</p> <p>I will be able to choose where I live, who I live with and will feel supported to live as independently as possible.</p> <p>I will have better support towards work and if I have a job.</p>

Darlington - our town, community and environment

What Children and Young People said is important to them	What Parent and Carers said is important to them	What we will do	The difference this will make
<p>Having a variety of activities that they enjoy. The Dolphin Centre, parks and sports are popular and they enjoy activities such as bowling, shopping, gaming and funfairs as well as groups like Scouts, Brownies & Rainbows.</p> <p>They would like to see less crime and a calmer, cleaner environment with more nature spaces, more play areas with green spaces and more events for teenagers.</p> <p>More youth centres and a wider variety of shops/centres e.g. comic shops, gaming centres, youth centres</p> <p>Safer & better public transport with buses that run after 6pm</p> <p>Less potholes</p>	<p>Increased social & leisure opportunities for those with similar interests including for those with the highest need</p> <p>Safe and inclusive meeting spaces/ places to check in within the community.</p> <p>Increased understanding and acceptance from the whole community with inclusive community opportunities for all ages.</p> <p>To feel valued and to have a sense of belonging and involvement in the community.</p>	<p>We will create and develop a new Local Offer for Darlington. Making sure it is the main information and communication point for SEND locally</p> <p>We will work with local clubs and organisations to support children and young people with SEND to be included in activities and opportunities available across Darlington.</p> <p>We will make sure that community safety works on inclusion of children and young people with SEND, including looking a safe spaces in the local community.</p> <p>We will make sure children and young people with SEND are involved in service development and commissioning activity</p> <p>We will work with local transport providers to make sure public transport is more inclusive and welcoming</p>	<p>I will be able to choose from a variety of activities in Darlington that interest me</p> <p>I know that staff in youth clubs, leisure centres and shops will understand me and know how to communicate with me</p> <p>I can make friends at Inclusive Youth events across Darlington</p> <p>I will feel safer when I am out and about in Darlington</p> <p>I will be asked for my views and be able to change and shape services and facilities in Darlington for me</p> <p>I will be able and supported to use public transport in Darlington</p>



How will we know we have made a difference?

This Strategy will be underpinned by a detailed delivery plan created from the commitments we have made in this strategy.

We will measure impact through performance data gathered across schools, the local authority and the NHS. We will measure this against national and/or local data wherever possible.

The voices of children, young people and parents and carers will be captured through feedback received as part of the quality assurance and review process of both EHC plans and SEN support planning in Schools.

An annual survey and/or engagement sessions in schools and settings will provide the opportunity to gather evidence of impact on the experiences of children and young people.

We will work closely with Darlington Parent Carer Forum, and others, to ensure the voice of parents and carers is heard and understood.

The strategy and plan will be delivered through the SEND Implementation Group and monitored by the SEND Assurance Executive with updates submitted regularly to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

An annual report to the Health & Wellbeing Board will outline our collective achievements as well as any challenges encountered and joint solutions developed which will be publicly available.

Darlington Local Area Partnership

Through these commitments the Local Area SEND partnership looks to offer opportunities for children and young people with SEND to thrive and become active and valued members of the Darlington community.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
6 JANUARY 2025**

DEDICATED SCHOOL GRANT AND THE SAFETY VALVE

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide scrutiny committee with an update on progress made on the Council's Safety Valve agreement to address historic deficit in the High Needs Block which supports education provision for young people with Special Educational Needs.

Summary

2. The council has entered into the "Safety Valve" agreement with the Department for Education (DfE), enabling funding over a 5 year period to address the accumulated deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block (HNB).

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that Scrutiny notes the terms of the agreement and progress made to date.

Tony Murphy
Assistant Director of Education and Inclusion

Background Papers

Darlington Safety Valve Agreement

Tony Murphy : Extension 5637

S17 Crime and Disorder	N/A
Health and Wellbeing	Supports improved outcomes for children and young people
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	No implications arising from this report
Diversity	No implications arising from this report
Wards Affected	All wards are affected
Groups Affected	Young people 0-25 with Special Educational Needs
Budget and Policy Framework	Dedicated School Block
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
Council Plan	Supports SEND priorities in the Council Plan
Efficiency	Supports efficient use of resources and service improvement
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	Impacts on Looked After Children or Care Leavers with Special Education Needs

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

4. The Department for Education (DfE) as part of its wider SEND reforms, has initiated the 'safety valve' intervention programme. The DfE recognises that over recent years, pressures on high needs budgets have contributed to many local authorities accruing deficits on their Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The DfE states that the right response to tackling this is a multi-faceted approach, which looks to the heart of the issues, taking in the significant increases in high needs funding that have been provided nationally; reform from the cross government SEND review; and targeted intervention for the local authorities who have struggled the most.
5. The safety valve intervention programme began in 2020/21 and has continued with further authorities added to the programme in 2021/22 and 2022/23, targeting the local authorities with the highest DSG deficits. The programme requires local authorities to develop substantial plans for reform to their high needs systems, with support and challenge from the department's expert team, to rapidly place them on a sustainable footing. If a local authority can demonstrate sufficiently that their DSG management plan creates lasting sustainability, including reaching an in-year balance as quickly as possible, then the department will enter into an agreement with the authority (subject to Ministerial approval). Darlington entered into an agreement in March 2023.
6. Through the agreement, the local authority is held to account for the delivery of their reforms and savings targets via regular reporting to the DfE. Contingent on delivery of the reforms set out in the agreement, the DfE will help the local authority with additional funding over time to contribute to eliminating the historic deficit.

Reporting Requirements

7. When Darlington were accepted onto the programme this came with the requirement to formally report progress back to the department three times per financial year. These reporting requirements are a condition of receiving the grant.

Darlington Position

8. In Darlington the majority of our DSG deficit is made up of High Needs deficit. The other blocks which are in surplus therefore reduce the overall net High Needs Block deficit position.
9. To date the council has successfully implemented the Safety Valve plan and the High Needs Block achieved an in year balance in the 2022/23 and 2023/24. The year end position in 2023/24 on the High Needs Block was an underspend of £865,357 which decreased the deficit prior to Safety Valve payments to £5,557,792, this is being addressed through the Safety Valve programme. To date we have received payments totalling £3,580,667 from the ESFA towards the high needs deficit.
10. We cannot be complacent, however, in terms of our plan. We are still seeing rising demand and increasing tribunal requests which are impacting on our high needs plans. We therefore still have a significant challenge in the year ahead to provide a balanced budget which we outlined in our agreed plan.
11. The progress made however reflects the effective work of our SEND services and Finance to manage demand and develop accurate growth projections. We have moved from a high needs overspend of circa £1.6m in 2019/20 to an underspend, though the DSG funding has increased significantly in this period.

Darlington Conditions of Agreement

12. The Assistant Director Education and Inclusion, the Assistant Director Resources, the Head of SEND and the Finance manager meet on a monthly basis to manage our safety valve progress. The Head of SEND and Finance Manager also meet frequently to look at day to day budget management. The council's Chief Officer Board are updated regularly on progress.
13. Schools Forum are also updated as to progress against agreement in the regular cycle of meetings.

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**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
6 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.

Tony Murphy: 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.

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
6 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:-
 - a) 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.
 - b) 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 of the Scrutiny Committee supports the ‘Children and Young People’ priority, supporting the best start in life, realising potential and raising aspirations.
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

5. 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.
6. The Council Plan was adopted on 18th 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.
7. The Council Plan identifies six priorities, including 'Children and Young People', which aims to support the best start in life, realising potential and raising aspirations. Eight key deliverables are identified as part of this priority.

Forward Plan and Additional Items

8. 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.
9. A copy of the index of the Forward Plan has been attached at **Appendix 3** for information.

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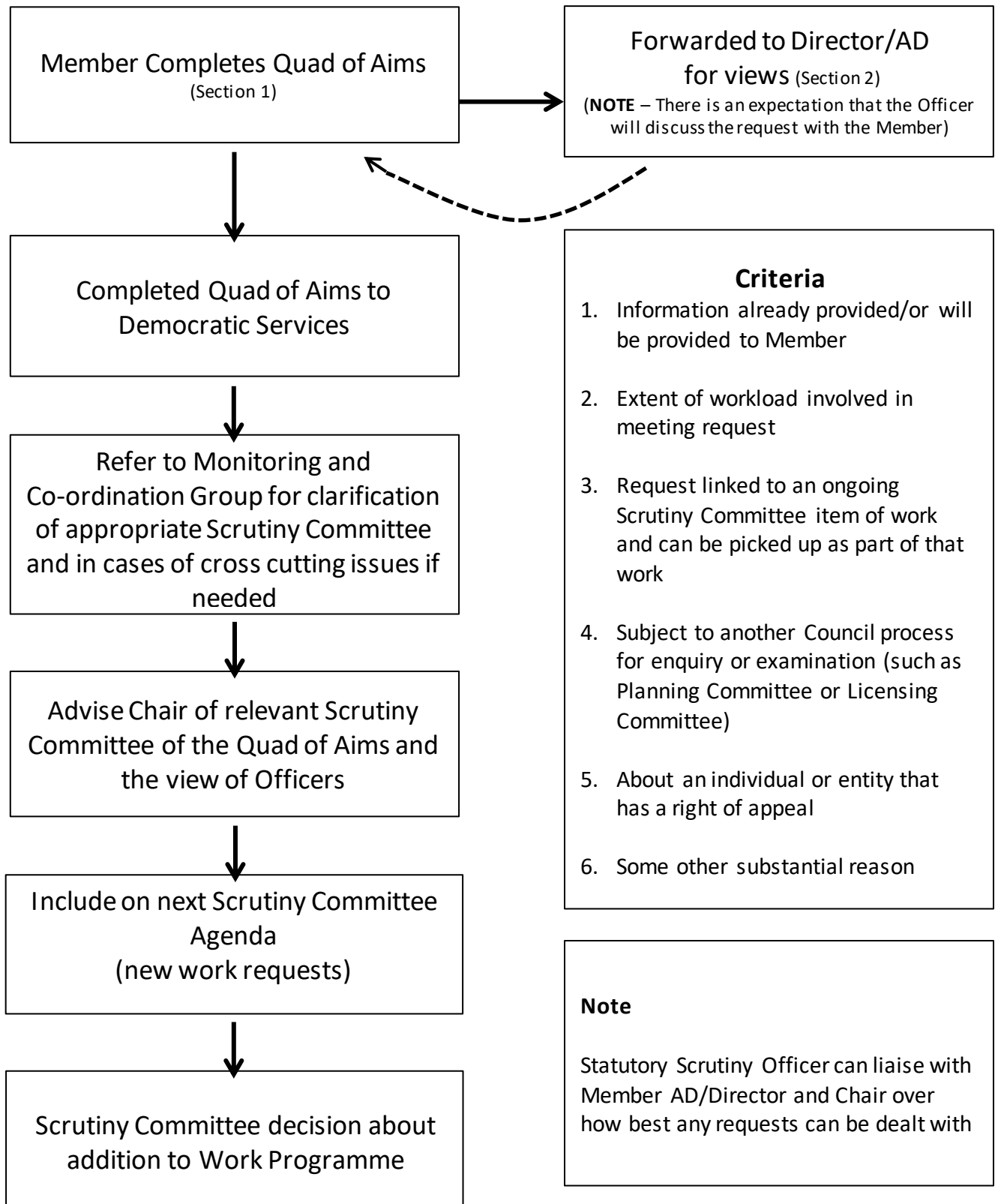
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role / Notes
Medium Term Financial plan	06/01/2025	Brett Nielsen		
SEND Policy Review	06/01/2025	Tony Murphy		
Transport Review	06/01/2025			
Transitional Service Update	06/01/2025	Tony Murphy		
Local Designated Officer Annual Report	03/03/2025	Martin Graham		To examine the Annual Report and assure Members that allegations made against staff who work with children are reported and how they are actioned
Performance Indicators Quarter 2 2024/25	03/03/2025	Sharon Raine	Agreed set of indicators	To receive quarterly monitoring reports and undertake any further detailed work into particular outcomes if necessary
Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report	03/03/2025	Ann Baxter, Independent Chair		Annual monitoring
Autism Review	03/03/2025			

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role / Notes
Calm in Communities	07/04/2025			
Children and Young People - Website Content	07/04/2025			
Home Education	07/04/2025	Dianne Gage, Inclusion Lead		
Children and Young People Public Health Overview	TBD	Ken Ross	PBH 009 PBH 013c PBH 016 PBH 018 PBH 020 PBH 021 PBH 054	Annual Monitoring

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



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

SECTION 1 TO BE COMPLETED BY MEMBERS

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

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

Signed Councillor

Date

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

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

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
FORWARD PLAN**



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

**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

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
FORWARD PLAN**

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