



Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date **Wednesday 11 September 2024**
Time **9.30 am**
Venue **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham**

Business

Part A

Items which are open to the Public and Press
Members of the public can ask questions with the Chair's agreement,
and if registered to speak.

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Substitute Members
- 3 Minutes of the Special joint meeting held on 6 June 2024 and the meeting held on 8 July 2024 (Pages 3 - 26)
- 4 Declarations of Interest, if any
- 5 Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties, if any
- 6 Housing Strategy: (Pages 27 - 64)
 - (i) Council House Build Programme - Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth
 - (ii) Houses in Multiple Occupation – Report of the Corporate Director Regeneration, Economy and Growth
 - (iii) Presentation by the Housing Delivery Manager and Planning Policy Manager

- 7 Quarter Four: Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/24 and Quarter One: Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2024/25 - Joint Report of the Corporate Director of Resources and the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth (Pages 65 - 90)
- 8 Quarter Four 2023/24 Performance Management Report - Report of the Chief Executive (Pages 91 - 158)
- 9 Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

Helen Bradley
Director of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
3 September 2024

To: **The Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

Councillor S Zair (Chair)
Councillor A Surtees (Vice-Chair)

Councillors M Abley, A Batey, G Binney, R Crute, M Currah, D Freeman, P Heaviside, G Hutchinson, A Jackson, C Lines, L Maddison, R Manchester, J Miller, B Moist, R Ormerod, K Shaw, M Stead and A Sterling

Co-opted Members:

Mrs R Morris and Mr E Simons

Contact: Jo March

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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

**SPECIAL JOINT ECONOMY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE
COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

At a Special Joint Meeting of the **Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in the **Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham** on **Thursday 6 June 2024** at **9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor S Zair (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors B Coult (Vice-Chair) A Surtees, A Batey, R Crute, M Currah, G Hutchinson, B Kellett (substitute for J Miller), C Lines, R Manchester, R Ormerod, K Shaw, M Stead, D Nicholls, J Purvis, A Simpson and D Sutton-Lloyd

Co-opted Members:

Mrs R Morris

Prior to commencement of the meeting, Members observed a minute silence to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landing.

The Chair formally thanked Councillor Bill Moist, the former Chair of Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny for his commitment to the role.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Abley, E Adam, G Binney, L Brown, J Elmer, D Freeman, C Kay, J Miller and Mr E Simons.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor Kellett was substitute for Councillor J Miller.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

There were no items from Co-opted Members of interested parties.

5 Regional and Local Transport: Policy and Delivery Update

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration Economy and Growth and presentation which provided an update on transport policy and delivery in County Durham and the wider region (for copy of report and presentation slides, see file of minutes).

The Head of Transport and Contract Services and his Team provided a detailed presentation that focused on:-

- DCC Transport, Policy and Devolution;
- NECA Transport, Key Principles and Powers;
- Active Travel Policy and Delivery Plan – Vision and Aims – Projects and Opportunities;
- Bus Provision – Improvement Plan;
- New Transport Infrastructure and Rail Delivery and Opportunities;
- Electric Vehicle Infrastructure;
- Transport Policy and Delivery.

The Head of Transport and Contract Services commenced the presentation, introducing the officers from his service in attendance at the meeting and explained the service management structure. He continued by outlining the scope and scale of the work of the team, namely Transport and Infrastructure Projects, Integrated Passenger Transport and Strategic Traffic Management. He explained that current national transport policy had a focus on plans for decarbonisation and the government's 'Bus Back Better' strategy aims to deliver better bus services for passengers. At a Sub-regional level, a new Strategic Transport Plan had been introduced with Transport for the North which had been out for consultation. Regionally, there had been changes with the formation of the North East Combined Authority (NECA) which would bring forward a revision of the North East Transport Plan and introduce a new Active Travel Strategy to improve connectivity and provide more opportunities and economic benefit across the North East. He continued by commenting that the Mayor was now appointed and that during the pre-election she had highlighted that the refresh of the North East Transport Plan would be one of the first tasks to be undertaken. In addition, the election of the Mayor would lead to better outcomes for all and that she had highlighted the need for bus reform and confirmed that she has access to franchising powers and key route network powers. Locally, work continued with the objectives, policies and principles that sit within the County Durham Plan. He continued by confirming that County Durham has a Local Transport Plan and it was noted that the Local Transport Plan for County Durham had successfully gained funding over the years and delivered a number of schemes. He advised that Nexus was to remain however County Durham and Northumberland have their own transport functions and confirmed that this was a better outcome for County Durham.

He then highlighted the introduction of integrated ticketing, an IT based intelligent ticketing system providing the opportunity to use multiple forms of transport for a single price per day, highlighting that this was much more cost effective and a simpler approach to travelling, linking from Berwick to Barnard Castle.

In response to a query from Mrs R Morris regarding preparation for the NECA Transport Programme and whether DCC had undertaken any work prior to the programme being in place, the Head of Transport and Contract Services confirmed that there are a pipeline of schemes in place that would continue to be delivered and that these were Durham specific schemes. He highlighted that one of the schemes which was a priority of the Mayor and within County Durham was the Bowburn relief road scheme. He commented that Durham schemes and interventions would continue to be delivered through the capital programme and the authority continued to push forward with the levelling up process, with work to stabilise the A690, Bowburn relief road and the expansion of Jade.

The next section of the presentation provided detail on Active Travel. The Strategic Traffic Manager provided details on the Active Travel key agenda delivery plan and policy framework which aimed to provide high quality cycling and walking networks that were safe and usable for everyone, ensuring quality of experience for the user and encouraged and enabled greater participation across all demographic groups.

The Strategic Traffic Manager advised members that there was more to active travel than walking and cycling and that a change of mindset was needed to persuade people not to use their cars and highlighted that it is about giving people options. He advised Members of the various policy commitments to decarbonise transport at a national scale and confirmed that the governments vision was best articulated in their 2020 Cycling and Walking strategy 'Gear Change'. He continued by informing Members that government had also created 'Active Travel England', a new inspectorate for walking and cycling links, whose mission was to ensure that all new developments must include quality active travel links.

He continued by confirming that the Active Travel policy and the importance of walking and cycling is now embedded within the County Durham Plan and its supplementary planning documents. He highlighted that the Council had developed Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPS) for 11 main towns which must be considered as part of the planning application process.

The Strategic Traffic Manager advised that in terms of progress, that Durham County Council had been awarded £10.75m to develop and deliver schemes such as the North Durham Active Travel Corridor (New College to Arnison Centre), Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, Aykley Heads Innovation District, Towns and Villages Walking and Cycling Programme, National Cycling Network Route 1 improvements, 12 new town cycling maps, ad campaigns detailing the different

active travel options available and the delivery of the Borrow and Bike scheme across the County.

With regards to other projects, opportunities and next steps, a further £13.5m had been identified and secured to develop further projects and opportunities including the Towns and Villages schemes. Targets were linked to funding and programmes had to be delivered by the December 2024 and March 2025 target dates. Ongoing elements were noted with regards to the Active Travel Corridors, intervention programmes, funding stream for cycle parking and storage and input into major schemes funding bids and planning and development.

Councillor A Surtees referred to the £3.75m for the Towns and Villages Walking and Cycling Programme and requested that details be provided on what had been delivered, the location of those schemes and clarification as to the determining factors for a scheme to be progressed. The Strategic Traffic Manager explained that he would get back to the member regarding the request for detail of the schemes delivered and the locations however in relation to the second part of the question the deciding factors in determining whether a scheme progressed were, where schemes interlinked with other developments/schemes, where there was movement, work-based travel etc. With regards to the North Durham Active Travel Corridor, they were able to link the Active Travel route to the Arnison Centre from New College Durham where there was a large concentration of students and new housing developments. He continued that in relation to Bishop Auckland this is an area of investment and development and similarly with Newton Aycliffe, there are a number of work places and therefore the movement of people, providing the opportunity for choice and other alternatives to the private motor vehicle.

The Head of Transport and Contract Services added that the Active Travel Fund was a competitive fund at national level and the Northeast as a region were able to bid for funding. Durham was able to tap into the funding source by providing a business case for various schemes that would create the biggest impact, with the best business cases being successful. He confirmed that £7.5m of funding had been awarded for schemes that met government's criteria for the allocation of funding. He explained that schemes that serve smaller communities would not be as successful in the bidding process, resulting in funding being allocated elsewhere in the Northeast.

Councillor D Nicholls referred to areas within his division that were in close proximity but where there were no complete footpath links. In relation to one village in his division to finish off work undertaken to link up the footpaths would cost £175,000 however there was no funding within the Service for this work to be undertaken. He went on to explain how transformational this work would be for both communities allowing access to services such as pharmacies and access transport services to other parts of the region for employment. He added that currently there is ongoing improvement works on the A690 costing £35m and queried whether funding could be transferred from other areas to connect footpaths to communities which would

require small amounts of funding but would be transformative for local communities. The Strategic Traffic Manager acknowledged that it was hugely frustrating and explained how the funding streams worked with the government funding criteria applied when assessing bids and allocations of funding based on how schemes meet that criteria, with the funding body deciding which schemes would be allocated funding with the emphasis in the criteria on links to employment. He confirmed that unfortunately connecting footpaths to communities does not meet the funding stream criteria from Central Government.

Councillor D Nicholls further commented that the above mentioned stretch of road was dangerous with no footpath and highlighted that decisions had been made in advance of Members being elected. He added that strategic processes needed to be looked at to allow Members to become more pro-active and timely in being able to put forward schemes for their communities. The Head of Transport and Contract Services advised that Members requests were all logged, noting that demands were high across the whole County. Programmes were in place and prioritised to help deliver schemes, however finance was a major issue and he confirmed that the case raised by Councillor D Nicholls did not quite meet the criteria. He continued that government's current funding priorities focus on highway maintenance and that whilst this is a priority DCC does not receive the level of funding to meet the deterioration in the highway network. He highlighted that specific schemes that were important to certain areas can be delivered from Member's budgets which could be discussed with colleagues from the Traffic Management Team.

Councillor C Lines shared Councillor D Nicholls' frustration and referred to the NCN improvements and asked if he could have more detail and confirmed that he would speak to the officer outside of the meeting. He added that Active Travel and the resulting schemes are to encourage more people to walk and cycle and it was clear that the scheme needed to enhance footpath and cycle networks. He agreed that Members could use their budgets for small schemes providing a combined funding source to deliver schemes and make a difference locally. He commented that he felt that a key challenge was convincing the public that it was safe to cycle and walk in communities and asked the Active Travel's Teams view on rolling out mandatory lower speed limits across towns and villages within the County. The Strategic Traffic Manager advised that the speed limits within the county are in line with Government Policy with the Speed Management Policy providing guidance relating to putting in place appropriate speed limits. However, the setting of inappropriate speed limits for the environment would not necessarily make it safer for walkers and cyclists. He advised that various studies had been carried out and found that setting lower speed limits does not necessarily make roads safer, the actual speed would only reduce by one mile per hour and that it was about creating the environment so that drivers will reduce their speed, he continued by commenting that there will always be some drivers that would exceed the speed limits. The Head of Transport and Contract Services added that speed should be adjusted for the environment in which a person is driving. He continued that engineering measures to change the environment was something that could be looked at, however such measures

cannot be added to A and B roads. He added that an article had been released which advised that all vehicles sold after 7 July 2024 would have speed limiter technology that would not allow the speed limit to be exceeded, which was a great initiative and a lot of drivers would adhere to it, however, there was still the possibility of it being overridden should the driver chose to do so. He advised that there was an initiative to educate school children regarding the dangers of speeding and he highlighted the importance of getting the message across to children as they will in turn repeat the message to their respective parents.

Councillor Lines suggested that there was potential for legislation and commented that he felt that the balance was currently shifting in favour of cars.

Councillor B Coult commented that she was supportive of Active Travel but queried whether work was undertaken to educate cyclists and gave the example of cyclists riding three abreast on the road. She then referred to the issues with cars parking outside of schools and asked about the level of engagement with schools to encourage more pupils to walk to school and with funding, could this be encouraged more. The Strategic Traffic Manager advised that the Road Safety Team engage with all schools in the county to provide cycle and pedestrian training to educate young people at an early age. He agreed that school parking was an issue for all 280 schools across the County and unfortunately targeted enforcement was limited. Children were asked to pass the message onto parents to park further away from schools and it was hoped that the information would be retained as they get older and become parents themselves. He added that they were constantly looking at new initiatives, the latest targeting years 12 and 13 where the Police and road safety partners engage and educate young drivers. He concluded by reassuring members that the service was doing all it could and that it was a county priority.

Councillor A Batey referred to the role of NECA in relation to cross border issues and raised concerns regarding work being undertaken on the A1M causing diversions through small communities in her division. She asked for clarification as to what strategic level discussions were taking place regarding works being undertaken on major roads that would impact on the road network within County Durham. She commented on the £37.5m funding for town and villages and advised that she was desperately trying to deliver a traffic calming scheme in the Pelton area which would alleviate some of the problems with the volume of traffic caused by the diversions. She acknowledged there were staffing issues within the service team but was concerned about the lack of progress. With regards to dialogue at a regional level, the Head of Transport and Contract Services advised that he chaired the North East Traffic Managers Working Group which shared information and looked at the forward planning of schemes, however, he explained that it was difficult to plan for certain circumstances. Issues on the network would have to be diverted into towns and villages as there were no other options however this would be managed and coordinated with partner agencies to provide diversion information to the public and bus operators.

Responding to a query from the Chair regarding plans for safer cycling routes for rural areas such as Teesdale as we move into the Summer months as these areas become more popular with cyclists. The Strategic Traffic Manager advised that there was no specific funding for this area, however, they had tried to engage with groups in Barnard Castle but the proposed moves were rejected. However, work was currently being undertaken with projects being developed and the point raised by the Chair could be picked up in ongoing pieces of work.

Councillor A Surtees was concerned about the capacity in the team to be able to deliver on the influx of schemes they would be receiving from Members who were approaching the end of their term and requiring local community schemes signed off by December 2024. She advised that she would discuss the issue with the Corporate Director outside the meeting.

The Strategic Traffic Manager advised that the service team were processing and delivering what they could.

Councillor D Nicholls asked whether Members would be notified if the service were unable to deliver schemes put forward making reference to a further 30 MPH scheme identified for his local village. The Strategic Traffic Manager advised that there was a process to go through and the Service would be working through the requests in due course.

Councillor M Stead sought clarification regarding the size of the team as he recollected that the department/team was made larger. The Strategic Traffic Manager advised that there had been vacancies within the team and that they had now been filled however the team had not been made larger.

The Integrated Passenger Transport Manager then provided details on the local bus provision advising that over 90% of local bus services operated without financial support. However, the bus network, patronage and fares income used to support bus service had been negatively impacted by the pandemic. Bus passengers were around 80% of pre pandemic levels, and the bus operators had been struggling to retain local services as well as staff, as bus revenues had been reduced and fuel costs increased.

In April 2022 DfT announced that bus services in the area covered by the JTC would receive a funding allocation of £163m as part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). This would allow NECA and the constituent authorities to invest in the bus network between 2022 and 2025. The BSIP funding was to be made-up of £73m capital and £89m revenue. The new funding would be used to create new services, increase the frequencies, extend operating hours and reduce daily fees. Fares remain at a reasonable price with a daily cap of £4 for County Durham residents, under 21 fares, kids for free and care experience travel pass.

It was reported that there were currently 114 local bus contracts managed by Durham County Council at a gross cost before fares income of £11m and a net cost of £7.8m. In total these carry 3m passengers per year, 17% of all bus passenger journeys per year within County Durham. The contracts provided whole services offering unique links, supplementing the core of commercial services, Park and Ride, demand responsive services, Cathedral Bus tourism services and registered school services.

The Bus Service Improvement Plan funding covers working with operators to enhance services and in demand responsive transport with the aim for them to be financial stable once the funding ends. Funding also covers the customer experience, encouraging more people to use bus services and capital works.

The national bus network (outside London) was deregulated in the 1980s. NECA's commitment was for the regional bus network to be taken back under public control. In October 2014 there was a proposal for a Quality Contract Scheme in the Tyne and Wear area which did not progress and the Bus Back Better policy was published in March 2021 which included a requirement to establish or process franchising or an Enhanced Partnership and publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan. Consideration was given to what NECA may consider in the event of taking control of buses, as there were a number of different ways this could happen, such as how Manchester has approached this by taking the lead in franchising; or Jersey's approach by the operator retaining fares or the approach taken by Nottingham and Lothian where they operate their own buses as a company, which was successful. The Mayor and her Cabinet would look at the options, funding available, priorities regarding coverage, growing passenger numbers or somewhere in the middle. The Integrated Passenger Transport Manager advised there was a lot to be considered and that the size of the region and it's differing geography were important.

Councillor C Lines raised concerns regarding the reduced bus services in his local area which were representative of issues throughout the County. He acknowledged the hard work that the team were doing to find ways to improve service provision in the current challenging situation, both through what Durham County Council do directly, and in lobbying and working with other regional stakeholders and bus companies. He welcomed the introduction of the Link2Work extension to the on-demand offer, however, recognised that it was a very distinct and limited service that did not re-connect the vast majority of residents to communities they used to be able to access easily and often on buses.

Referring to discussions with residents who were unable or no longer wanted to drive, he emphasised how much they relied on the previous bus service to get to places for a variety of reasons as well as reference being made in these discussions to the limited services for younger people attending college or meeting up with friends. During exam season and because of exam timings, parents were providing

transport, resulting in more traffic, more pollution, and more challenges for residents in managing their time.

He added that the direct service from Sedgefield to Darlington had been withdrawn and Arriva were currently consulting on plans to remove the Teesside Park bus stop which would affect a small number of people in the grand scheme of things, but the losses are nevertheless harmful and contrary to any ambition to sustain connectivity to communities. He referred to the impact on mental health that isolation caused and advised that the residents he had spoken to were visibly distressed about the current state of play and very worried about the future status of bus services.

He continued that with regards to confidence in bus services, he added that this was at an all-time low and raised the following points:-

- The timescale for real and substantial action through the Bus Service Improvement Plan was a real concern. By the time improvements were made, there would need to be an enormous amount of work done to regain trust and patronage of bus services which would put a strain on the viability of whatever services existed in the future. During the recent Mayoral election, he wrote to all candidates to ask for their thoughts on the issue and received a response from Kim McGuinness, who outlined her intentions, which she subsequently reiterated after she became Mayor. It was clear that acting on a commitment to bring bus services back into public ownership would not be a quick process, potentially leaving communities disconnected for a long period of time.
- Referring to the Sedgefield area, he asked whether any initiatives could be implemented or led by Durham County Council, to reinstate some connections and suggested that the on-demand Link2 service could be enhanced to help. The maximum journey distance was five miles, which was limited and asked if it could be extended from Fishburn via Sedgefield to Newton Aycliffe. Traditionally, residents in those communities enjoyed a strong connection and travelled for education, work and leisure on a regular basis. There were services to Darlington from Newton Aycliffe, noting that changing buses was not ideal, but would be a much better situation than residents have now.
- The condition of bus stops were far from ideal, and abysmal in some cases. People should not be expected to wait in shelters that did not provide shelter due to damage that had not been addressed. To encourage residents to use current and future bus services bus travel needed to be a more appealing prospect, both in the short term and longer term.

The Integrated Passenger Transport Manager agreed that to bring bus services back into public ownership would be a long process and explained that if the chosen option was later discovered not to be the right path, it would be almost impossible to

step back from that process and commented that bus operators would leave the area, therefore it was necessary for the required due diligence to be carried out.

With regards to connections, she advised that County Durham continued to work on issues, noting that services had not been removed entirely and that certain aspects had been replaced elsewhere. She highlighted the difficulties in putting solutions in place that would not then disrupt other parts of the County and was keen for timetabled routed services to be back in operation. She acknowledged that a definitive response was not given, however she hoped that reassurance was provided.

Referring to bus service appeal and waiting areas, she agreed that enhancements were required and commented that the reliability of bus services were improving, however recognised that further work was required with bus operators to push for further improvements. In relation to the safety and accessibility of bus shelters she commented that BSIP funding could be used however it could not be used for new bus shelters. She advised that if Members were aware of shelters that had safety or accessibility issues, they should contact the team for them to be put forward as part of the bus service improvement plan works. She concluded by requesting that Councillor Lines sends the detail of his concerns regarding bus shelters in his locality through to her.

Councillor D Nicholls commented that bus services were the number one concern of residents that he represented and highlighted that the service timetable was insufficient before the pandemic and that currently reliability was at an all-time low. He noted the poor conditions of some of the buses that were currently in service and found it unacceptable that residents were paying for services that were non-existent. He then asked what could be done about bus services not keeping to timetables or not arriving at all and asked whether contracts could be withdrawn to address the issue of buses not turning up, highlighting that residents are losing employment as a result of not turning up at work on time. He concluded by asking what DCC can do now to improve provision.

The Integrated Passenger Transport Manager explained how the deregulation environment worked noting that any operator that was correctly licenced could operate services when and where they chose to operate. She confirmed that contracts cannot be removed, services were deregulated and therefore this was not an option. The Councils role was to financially support services that were not commercially viable. She added that they worked in partnership with operators and encouraged changes to networks, however they had no control on when and where they operated or the fares they charged. With regards to unreliability, she understood frustrations and the impact on mental health, job security and social care. She asked that details of services that were not operating correctly be provided to the Passenger Transport Team so they could look at patterns and work with bus operators on possible solutions.

Councillor M Stead agreed with Councillor D Nicholls comments regarding the condition of some buses. He commented that minimum wage salaries was a contributing factor towards the shortage of bus drivers and queried whether there was anything that could be done to increase the number of drivers, making the job more attractive. The Integrated Passenger Transport Manager advised that there were resource issues with drivers and engineers and the real issue was retention as there was a high turnover of drivers nationally. She accepted that salaries may be a factor and suggested there may be other contributing factors such as working hours. Durham County Council were very limited in what they could do, however the Team were active in breaking down barriers and encouraged operators to work together with regards to recruitment.

The Transport and Infrastructure Manager then provided an overview of current and future major transport infrastructure projects. In 2023/24, Durham County Council had completed the delivery of the new Durham bus station, junction improvements in Durham City and West Rainton as well as new active mode improvements between Newton Hall and Rivergreen. In addition, the Authority had delivered over £70m worth of transport projects around the County including new active mode routes at Newton Aycliffe and capacity improvements in Bishop Auckland. In 2024/2025, there was the potential for Durham County Council to hold a public consultation on the Toft Hill Bypass, construction of the junction at Jade Enterprise Zone and junction improvements on the A19 corridor at the Seaton Lane was under construction, Stockton and Darlington active mode and locomotion car park was near completion and the surface level car park was under construction at Bishop Auckland Bus Station.

With regards to Transport Infrastructure future funding, the Bus Service Improvement Plan to be contracted by March 2025 included bus lanes, bus priority, pop up park and rides, bus shelter improvements and bus station improvements at Consett, Stanley and Peterlee. The Local Transport fund had been announced in February 2024 and Durham received £72m for Transport projects to be delivered between April 2025 and March 2027. The Safer Roads Fund would deliver road safety improvements on the A690 between Crook and Nevilles Cross with particular emphasis on pedestrian and cyclist safety. The Transforming Cities Fund would deliver active mode improvements around Durham City Centre, linking residential, education, employment and tourism locations with improved active travel infrastructure at South Bailey, Sidegate, Whinney Hill, Stockton Road, Quarryheads Lane, Freemans Place and Framwellgate Waterside.

Members were informed that County Durham were invited to bid for funding to restore railways and draft strategic business cases had been provided for a new unmanned station at Ferryhill, Consett to Newcastle feasibility study and a passenger service on private railways connecting the Bishop Auckland line to Weardale.

Work was continuing to lobby government regarding the reinstatement of the Leamside line which would enable extra passenger and freight services as an alternative to the East Coast Main Line (ECML).

Responding to a query from Councillor A Surtees regarding lobbying for more carriages on the East Coast main line, the Head of Transport and Contract Services advised that work was ongoing, noting the introduction of a further service linked to the Horden scheme and confirmed that Horden Railway had 'smashed' its projected passenger targets. He continued by commenting that it was hoped that Sedgefield could link with Ferryhill using Sedgefield Station. He added that Durham does not have any influence with regards to rail lines, however they continued to lobby and apply pressure on rail operators highlighting fundamental changes to Durham and Northumberland rail networks and successfully pushing back proposals to reduce the frequency of services.

Councillor B Coult commented on the work carried out on the A690 which had made a huge improvement and thanked the Team for their hard work.

The Senior Electric Vehicle Project Officer provided an overview of various projects that had been delivered noting that Durham had been successful in being awarded significant funding to deliver the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure project. The Council had installed over 200 new charging points and that the success of this project had led to further significant funding being awarded. This funding would support the location of new charging points at another 250 sites across the County with a further 16 points to be installed at rural locations. Another funding submission will be made later this year under LEVI for an additional £3m to install 200 charging points on housing association land in the coming years. Members were also informed that once surveys were complete there are plans to install slow and rapid charge points for private and fleet charging at strategic fleet sites.

Responding to queries from Mrs R Morris regarding difficulties supplying certain areas in the County and whether working with external parties effected installation targets, the Senior Electric Vehicle Project Officer advised that installations were currently restricted to DCC owned land and dedicated parking areas and confirmed that the identification of suitable land in rural areas is being looked at. It was noted that they were experiencing issues with the Northern Power Grid supply in rural areas with increased costs to upgrade the network, he added that a number of installations were delayed by 4 – 10 weeks and advised that regular meetings take place with NPG to overcome obstacles with regards to staff retention and substantial price increases. The Head of Transport and Contract Services added that working with utility services was difficult and had caused a lot of problems across all the different projects throughout the service and relationships and working in partnership was an area that required improving.

With regards to a query from Councillor C Lines regarding network maps and the potential use of lampposts as a possible solution for residents who have no other

parking/charging options, the Senior Electric Vehicle Project Officer advised that this was an area of discussion, however this would create problems as the majority of lampposts were house side rather than kerbside and modifications would add to the street furniture and narrow footpaths. It was noted that other options were still being explored. He added that network maps were available and he would circulate this information to Members, that would show both DCC and private network charging points and added that the information was available on the Climate County Durham website.

Councillor B Coult commented that delays with installation were frustrating for residents. She referred to the funding submission that would be made later in the year to install charging points on housing association land and asked whether there was a timetable for delivery. Senior Electric Vehicle Project Officer advised that between now and December 2024, work would be undertaken by Corporate Land and Property and the Legal Team to provide lease agreements and delivery would be expected to commence at the beginning of the 2025 once a charge point operator had been appointed.

The Head of Transport and Contract Services summed up by highlighting that a lot of good work had been carried out during the last 12 months and the project programme for 2025/26 would be just as big providing many challenges and hopefully just as rewarding. The Team would continue to be part of shaping the Combined Authority. He acknowledged that not everything was perfect and there were some areas that needed to be looked at with regards to resources and more focus on engagement. He thanked all the Officers who took part in the presentation and Officers who were involved in the development of the report and presentation considered by members.

Resolved:

That the information contained in the report and presentation be noted.

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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the **Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in the **Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham** on **Monday 8 July 2024** at **9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor S Zair (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors A Surtees, A Batey, R Crute, P Heaviside, G Hutchinson, C Lines, B Moist, R Ormerod, K Shaw, M Stead, A Sterling and L Fenwick (substitute for J Miller)

Co-opted Members:

Mrs R Morris and Mr E Simons

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Binney, M Currah, R Manchester and J Miller.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor L Fenwick was substitute for Councillor J Miller.

3 Minutes

In relation to the minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2024, Councillor B Moist requested that the last paragraph on the Draft County Durham Housing Strategy be revised to read 'the delivery of 500 new build council houses'.

With the above amendment, the minutes of the Special joint meeting held on 12 April and the meeting held on the 22 April 2024 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Councillor A Surtees declared an interest following the presentation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Update as a Trustee of the Welcome Centre in Easington which was mentioned as a recipient of funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

5 Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

There were no items from Co-opted Members or interested parties.

6 Strategic Place Plans

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration Economy and Growth and presentation which provided an update on: the background in relation to Strategic Place Plans (SPPs); what an SPP is; the process in developing a SPP; detail of the SPP pilots focusing on the Spennymoor pilot together with detail of the engagement undertaken with various community groups, the development of the investment plan and detail of the additional data required to develop the SPP; routes for seeking and allocating funding and going forward the delivery of future SPPs highlighting the role of ongoing pilots, the transfer of Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) to economic development and an assessment of their role in developing SPPs in the future, the need for Cabinet to identify resources, the creation of a matrix approach to guide decisions in the future delivery of the programme and current thinking on factors to be considered when prioritising future delivery (for copy of report and presentation slides, see file of minutes).

The Head of Economic Development reminded Members that a previous report to the committee in January, providing an update on masterplan activity in the county, had highlighted to Members that SPPs were to replace Masterplans and that this change in approach was in line with the principles and priorities of the Inclusive Economic Strategy (IES).

He continued that central to this new approach is empowering local communities to shape the future of their Towns and Villages with engagement taking place with local people, businesses, and stake holders to establish a shared vision for each place. He highlighted that the plan will be a live document and will be supported by a combination of a Spatial Plan, Investment Plan and Delivery Plan.

In relation to the process, he commented that it will start with an open brief which involves direct engagement with local people and stakeholders to identify what they want for their area with open discussions highlighting any challenges. The next stage will be shaping/development of the vision with this part of the process led by DCC. A stakeholder group will develop the draft vision through a series of workshops which will be facilitated by DCC. This stage will then be followed by further public consultation focusing on the draft vision with various methods of consultation used including social media, questionnaires, and public engagement events. The fourth stage involves the refining of the vision based on public engagement and the adoption of the vision for that place by Cabinet with the final stage in the process involving the development of the delivery plan based on the adopted vision which is owned by the stakeholder group and adopted by Cabinet.

He continued that three Strategic Place Plans pilots are being undertaken within the county to help refine the approach, understand the resources needed and the timescales involved. The pilots are taking place in Spennymoor, Shildon and Newton Aycliffe and Durham City. It was confirmed that Spennymoor had received government funding of £20m through the Long Term Plans for Town Programme, Shildon and Newton Aycliffe had received National Heritage Lottery Funding and Durham City had been chosen as Cabinet had agreed to create a new version for Durham as detailed in the IES.

The Economic Development Manager then explained in detail the Spennymoor SPP case study. It was highlighted that there are some particular elements within the Spennymoor case study which will not be replicated elsewhere including the establishment of a Town Board to shape the co-design of the Spennymoor vision. The Board will work alongside the community and its stakeholders, supporting the process of ongoing engagement. The remainder of the requirements of the programme are in line with the SPP approach.

The Economic Development Manager then provided Members with detail of how the process for the development of a SPP had been undertaken in relation to the Spennymoor Pilot which included a three-month period of engagement activities undertaken with schools, a Stakeholder Engagement Programme, on street engagement, business drop in sessions and public engagement events. It was highlighted that in relation to the timeline for the case study it would take 7-8 months from the start of the vision through to the delivery of that vision with the plan scheduled to go to government in August. In relation to the development of an Investment Plan for the case study the Economic Development Manager confirmed that a matrix tool has been developed for the Town Board to support decision making on interventions they may wish to include in the town plan. It is designed to be a useful tool to aid discussion and ensure that all aspects of the project are considered. It was highlighted that through the Long Term Plans for Town Programme (LTPT) Government has issued a list of one off investments with some requiring a business case identifying interventions that provide value for money. The Economic Development Manager then highlighted the various additional data required for the development of a SPP which include a Town Centre survey, possibly a series of car park surveys and asset and investment mapping.

In relation to delivering future SPPs it was highlighted that future cabinet reports will be needed to identify resource and the future programme, consideration of a matrix approach to guide decisions on the roll out of the programme with the pilots helping to refine the approach and determine the exact need for resource and timescale for delivery.

The Head of Economic Development concluded by asking Members of the committee for comments on the list of factors for prioritisation when determining the roll out of future SPPs.

Councillor A Sterling referred to the Spennymoor case study and queried the reason why engagement had only involved one primary and one secondary school, and in relation to the business drop-in session, with only 11 engagements undertaken, she asked for clarification as to whether Business Durham had been involved in the process. She continued by asking for confirmation as to the number of days when the on-street engagement session had taken place and that engagement had been undertaken with older residents. She added that she agreed with settlement size being a factor for consideration in prioritisation, however emphasised there was also a need to consider the potential growth of settlements by looking at planning applications.

The Head of Economic Development confirmed that going forward, more on-street engagement would be undertaken. He added that generally it was older residents that engaged in consultation processes and that younger people aged between 30-40 tended to be the hard to reach category. In relation to the suggestion that settlement growth be factored into future prioritisation, he confirmed that a separate criteria could be created. The Economic Development Manager added that there was only one secondary school in Spennymoor and that the primary school was the feeder school for that particular secondary school. In relation to engagement with young people, a fun day was held which was a further engagement opportunity together with a park run. In relation to engagement with businesses, Business Durham fed into the process the points made by larger businesses within the county, however all businesses had been visited and in addition there were opportunities for online engagement. He continued by highlighting that, the Team had also visited community centres to ensure that both young and older resident groups were involved in the engagement process.

Councillor A Sterling commented that the use of social media was a great tool, however she highlighted the danger of potentially getting wish lists. She continued by adding that she would encourage more active on-street engagement as this was a great form of engagement with residents.

The Head of Economic Development confirmed that he agreed with the comments from the member, highlighting the importance of community engagement.

Councillor A Batey thanked Officers for the presentation and commented that it would be interesting to see the priorities of the new Government. She added that the Committee had previously developed a list of priorities in relation to town centres having undertaken a mapping exercise of various towns within the County. She noted that Durham County Council had a large amount of current data and hoped that existing data would also be used in the SPP process. She continued that Chester-le-Street had a considerable outdoor leisure offer, however the Leisure Transformation Programme had not progressed in relation to the proposals for Chester-le-Street. She continued by highlighting the need for local Members to be central in the development of SPPs for their local communities and the need for DCC to provide feedback to all those engaged in the consultation process. The Head of Economic Development agreed that feedback to those who have engaged

in the process was essential and confirmed that Spennymoor had created Working Groups to focus on particular elements of the vision.

Mrs R Morris asked for clarification as to whether the approach only applied to towns in the County and whether it included the wider area. She continued that her local community had a Neighbourhood Forum Plan and asked where such a plan, would fit into the new approach. She queried the data that would be used for the vision document for the area, noting that in County Durham there was a large percentage of the population not located in towns and commented that these areas would have different issues to towns. The Head of Economic Development explained that it was not a one size fits all approach with each area requiring different support/intervention. The approach would look at each place separately and gave the example that if an issue identified during the process was the loss of shops in an area, then potentially what would be needed in the future was more local housing to retain local shops. He added that data and approach were equally important and used the example of parking and the need to understand the issues and perceptions as they were both equally as important.

Councillor B Moist highlighted that the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee had pushed for the move from Masterplans which were spatial plans to SPPs. He noted that SPPs would be developed across the twelve main towns in the County and noted that Spennymoor, Shildon and Newton Aycliffe and Durham City had been chosen as pilot areas. He referred to Durham City being chosen as a pilot area and raised concerns that SPPs could be held up for years with issues in relation to the development in Durham City and the Aykley Heads site. He continued that by Durham City being one of the pilot areas, the process/approach was Durham centric and highlighted that there were other areas in the County which should be included sooner in the rollout plan for SPPs. He expressed concern that there were no timescales for the roll out of future SPPs and highlighted that in his opinion the Durham City SPP would take the majority of the available funding. He commented that Bishop Auckland was an area currently doing well and that SPPs were a positive move, however more work was needed with regards to delivery and roll out to towns in North and West Durham. He referenced detail provided to Members in the presentation on the delivery of future SPPs and the transfer of Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) to the Regeneration, Economy and Growth Service Grouping and commented that AAPs did not have expertise in regeneration and the reach into businesses and local communities, highlighting that Members have these links and local knowledge and therefore should play a key role in the development of SPPs. He concluded by saying that delivery would be slow and that Durham was falling behind, both nationally and regionally.

The Head of Economic Development commented that in relation to two of the pilot areas, funding was available from various Government funding pots, and concerning Durham City private investment and the existence of an engaged business base had contributed to it being identified as a pilot area. He confirmed that work was being undertaken to identify timescales and resources and that AAPs would become more engaged with the local community. He confirmed that in

relation to future SPPs Cabinet and/or Government would need to be approached for future resources.

Councillor B Moist further added that there had been no consultation with Members in relation to Durham City being included as a pilot area and that the decision had just been taken. There was a need for more targeted help around the County and Cabinet needed to be pressed to look at other areas of the County for SPPs roll out.

Councillor C Lines highlighted the need for data within the County Durham Plan and Neighbourhood Plans to be taken into account and used to drive local discussion during the development of future SPPs. He asked whether existing plans would be a fundamental part of future place plans. The Economic Development Manager confirmed that plans/data which already existed would be the starting point for discussions. He added that there was a wide range of teams involved in the process across the Council including the Spatial Policy Team who were familiar with issues at local level. Councillor C Lines added that it would be beneficial to go back to groups previously engaged in Neighbourhood Plan development.

Councillor G Hutchinson commented that he had been involved in the Spennymoor pilot. He referred to representation on the Town Board and commented that he felt that there should be more Member involvement at Board level. He added that many Croxdale residents were unaware of the pilot and development of the SPPs, highlighting that it was vital that local residents be involved in the process. He felt that the level of on-street engagement was relatively low and there was a need to involve residents in the process as early as possible. The Economic Development Manager advised that funding had been provided through the Long Term Plans for Towns (LTPT) fund and highlighted that Government had prescribed the number of Member representatives on the Board and confirmed that the Board had five allocated elective official places.

Councillor A Surtees thanked Officers for the presentation and commented that funding of £20m for the Spennymoor pilot did not extend to neighbouring settlements. She suggested that discussions take place with the current Government to see if this could be changed. She continued that she would want the SPP to look at the whole place and used an example across the east of the county, where the general perception is that Seaham gets all of the funding. She commented that SPPs provided the opportunity to look at areas not just towns and that prioritisation needed to include Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA). She asked whether in relation to the Spennymoor pilot the transport needs of Tudhoe and Page Bank had been considered. In relation to Masterplans she commented that she could not think of a plan that had been taken through and fully delivered and highlighted the importance going forward, that SPPs cover an area, not just a town. She felt the process needed to be inclusive and concluded by highlighting that her local AAP takes an holistic approach and were very much aware of what was happening at the local level.

The Head of Economic Development thanked Members for their comments which had been very helpful and that going forward, the prioritisation criteria would need to look at the biggest impact on surrounding settlements.

Resolved:

That the report and presentation be noted with Members comments on the Strategic Place Plans shared with the Service Grouping.

7. UK Shared Prosperity Fund Update

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration Economy and Growth which provided an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme and the Rural England Prosperity Fund for County Durham, including governance and performance management arrangements and an update on programme implementation and delivery (for copy see file of minutes).

The Funding and Programmes Manager reported that County Durham had been granted a UKSPF allocation of £30,830,618 and an additional £2,803,077 allocation for Multiply, a new adult numeracy programme. The County also had a further capital allocation of £3.5m through the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), a rural top up to UKSPF providing capital grants to address the challenges that businesses and communities in rural areas face. She continued by confirming that against the grant allocation of £34,342,919 UK SPF and £3,512,301 Rural England Prosperity Fund, £34,349,306 has been committed to various projects to date. It was highlighted that a further 7% (£2, 324,775) is due to be approved shortly to projects in development.

The Funding and Programmes Manager then provided an overview of the various projects which have either been delivered or are being delivered across the county through the three core investment priorities of the UKSPF and REPF: Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills.

Members were informed by the Funding and Programmes Manager that in relation to the Multiply Programme, this is delivered by DurhamLearn and 11 Partners with significant outcomes including increased participation, enhanced workplace numeracy skills, progression to further education, increased confidence and better support for children's education.

Concerning the REPF, the Funding and Programmes Manager confirmed that an open call was launched in July 2023 for projects to deliver capital investments to develop, extend, restore or refurbish local tourist assets and infrastructure to improve the visitor experiences. The minimum grant request was £50k, with a maximum of £100k. A total budget of £600k was allocated for this call with 23 Expression of Interest forms received by the deadline and following a period of project development undertaken by the UKSPF Team, 9 full applications totalling £760,703 were received. The prioritisation exercise resulted in seven applications

being approved totalling £608,578 with one project subsequently withdrawing resulting in £532,773 committed.

The Funding and Programmes Manager concluded by commenting that the future of the UKSPF is unclear beyond the end of this current financial year. The lack of confirmation on the continuation of this funding and the amount local areas will receive poses a significant risk to the ability to deliver current UKSPF funded activities like employment support and business growth activities. This impact will be felt as early as Summer 2024 as projects start to curtail activity. It was confirmed that the County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP) is advocating for at least one year bridging allocation to allow UKSPF funded activity to be continued.

Councillor A Surtees declared an interest as a Trustee of the Welcome Centre in Easington which was mentioned in the report as a recipient of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Responding to a query from Mr Simons regarding how the benefits and impact of various projects are communicated to the wider public, the Funding and Programmes Manager advised that they captured outcomes and benefits at project level through performance management and confirmed that in addition the Inclusive Economic Strategy Delivery Plan looks at how actions are delivered with an ongoing evaluation of projects. It was noted that Durham had been chosen as a case study by Government which would provide further information relating to the benefits of various projects and again, this would be reported. With regards to communication, a considerable amount of comms and marketing had been undertaken around specific projects and programmes such as the Business Productivity Growth Programme to ensure that business were aware of the support, events and business networks available. Individual activities were provided with their own press release, however it may not be identified as resulting from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and this was something that needed to be look into.

With regards to comments from Councillor A Surtees regarding whether grant funding would be defrayed in 2025 if not spent, the Funding and Programmes Manager confirmed that funding will be defrayed if there is an underspend however she advised that the individual projects are indicating that current available funding will be spent. In addition, it had been requested that continuation funding be rolled forward and she confirmed that the team were looking at where funds could be reallocated, if they were unable to roll funding forward.

Mrs R Morris commented that she was pleased to see that there is a careers framework to help improve skills within the county however she noted that it was targeted at specific groups and commented that it needs to be wide ranging and not just target those groups that are economically inactive, the framework needs to apply to everyone. She continued by highlighting that it needs to link to schools and in relation to apprenticeships, she commented that currently there is not the take up, as young people were unaware of the opportunities apprenticeships offer. The Economic Development Manager confirmed that there was a focus on primary and

secondary schools to ensure that schools, children and parents were aware of the future opportunities and pathways available. He confirmed that a meeting was to be held shortly to further progress the framework and that it applies to all ages. He highlighted apprenticeships are a central element and would be linked with the ongoing work of the Combined Authority.

Responding to queries from the Chair regarding who would be delivering the town centre vitality events programme and whether they included all County Durham town centres, the Economic Development Manager advised that there were a range of activities undertaken as part of the vitality programme and referred to a recent exercise to procure external providers to deliver twelve events across the County.

Resolved:

That the contents of the report be noted.

8. Refresh of the Work Programme 2024/25 for Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee received a report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services which provided an updated draft work programme for 2024/25 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer highlighted that the work programme had been informed by key documents including: the County Durham Vision; the Council Plan; Cabinet's Notice of Key Decisions; performance and budgetary control data; various partnership plans and strategies and local priorities. She referred to paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report that looked back at the areas of focus for the Committee during 2023/24 and commented that some areas from the previous work programme had been carried forward for inclusion in the draft 2024/25 work programme providing Members with a further opportunity to consider and monitor progress.

It was explained that to deliver the draft work programme, the Committee would need five scheduled meetings which run from July to March 2025, one Special meeting, three Joint Special meetings with the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, one workshop, two site visits and a briefing report. It was noted that the work programme would have to be delivered in a shorter timescale due to the pre-election period commencing in March for the local elections in May 2025.

Going forward, the Overview and Scrutiny Officer emphasised the need for the work programme to be flexible to accommodate any emerging issues, changes in policy and additional items which may arise throughout the year.

Councillor K Shaw referred to the impact of HMO properties across the County, noting the increase in change of use planning applications coming forward in recent years to provide student accommodation at the detriment of much needed family

homes. He was concerned about community cohesion across the County with the growing number of domestic properties being lost in areas that were already under special measures due to deprivation, low property values and anti-social behaviour. He highlighted the increase in applications for social housing with 10,000 applicants currently on waiting lists.

He requested that the Committee undertake a piece of work on HMOs to look at control measures that could be introduced, the numbers within the county and the impact on amenities. He concluded by commenting that HMOs would link in with other housing related topics already identified in the draft work programme for 2024/25.

Councillor R Crute supported Councillor K Shaw's request as HMOs and housing issues in relation to private sector landlords and the impact of Section 21 no fault eviction notices had become a major issue within the County. He added that part of the role of scrutiny was to amplify the voice of the public and there was a need to respond to concerns that had been expressed across the County. He noted the reduced timescale to deliver the work programme as a result of the pre-election period commencing in March and suggested an informal information session could be included within the work programme, inviting all Overview and Scrutiny Members.

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that there were a number of housing related topics already identified within the future work programme such as the Selected Licensing Scheme and the Supported Housing Improvement Programme. He highlighted the need to be mindful not to blur lines of responsibility with regards to Planning Committees and the regulations in place concerning HMOs. He advised that he would discuss with the Service Grouping to ensure that the HMO element would be included in a future housing focused meeting.

Resolved:

- i) That the topic of HMOs be included within the 2024/25 work programme.
- ii) That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2024/25 and the flexibility it offers to respond to emerging issues be agreed.

9 Minutes of the County Durham Economic Partnership Board

The Minutes of the County Durham Economic Partnership Board held on 28 February 2024 were noted for information.

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 September 2024

Housing Strategy – Council House Build Programme



Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

Electoral divisions affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 Following the meeting of County Council on 17 July 2024 and the decision to defer adoption of the County Durham Housing Strategy (CDHS), the purpose of the report is to provide the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Council House Build Programme issue that was raised by Members at the meeting and to set out next steps to adopting the CDHS. There is also an accompanying report to discuss Houses in Multiple Occupation.

Executive summary

- 2 On 10 July 2024 Cabinet agreed to recommend to County Council that they adopt the CDHS. It also agreed to adopt the accompanying 12-Month Delivery Plan subject to the CDHS being adopted by County Council.
- 3 At the meeting of County Council on 17 July 2024 and following extensive discussion the decision of County Council was to defer adoption of the CDHS. The main points of concern related to how the Housing CDHS dealt with:
 - The proliferation of HMOs in the county and the potential use of Article 4 Directions; and
 - The Council House Build Programme and particularly the delivery timeframe and the composition of the proposed 500 units.
- 4 In order for the CDHS to return to Cabinet and County Council for adoption we have prepared this report to discuss the Council House Build Programme. There is also an accompanying report to discuss Houses in Multiple Occupation.

- 5 In October 2020, the council agreed to begin a council house delivery programme of up to 500 homes by 2026. Subsequent reports in February 2021 and December 2021 agreed Phase 1 and Phase 2 sites for the programme.
- 6 On the 12 July 2023, Cabinet approved an updated business case for the council house delivery programme, including a revised financial model. This report revisited and updated the original business case for the council house delivery programme outlined in the October 2020 report.
- 7 There was some concern expressed at County Council that the council had changed its position and was moving away from 500 new build council homes towards including the acquisition of existing properties within the 500 house target. However, it has always been the council's intention to deliver 500 new build properties, and this remains unchanged.
- 8 At the County Council meeting there was also concern from Members that the delivery timeframe for the Programme was unclear. Following the approval of the procurement strategy by Cabinet in July 2023, and the subsequent appointment of the main contractor, it is apparent that the council will not be able to deliver 500 homes by 2026. This reflects the challenges with the start up of the programme, and in particular responding to prevailing macro-economic conditions since 2020. However, the ambition to deliver 500 homes remains and the timescales for delivery are currently being revisited with the main contractor with explicit intention of delivering at pace.
- 9 As a result of the concerns Members had regarding HMOs and the Council House Build Programme, we may propose appropriate amendments to the CDHS. Any feedback from the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee will inform any amendments which will then be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 November 2024 before the CDHS then returns to Cabinet and County Council for adoption.

Recommendation

- 10 It is recommended that the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents of the report and provide any further feedback to inform the CDHS to be approved by Cabinet and County Council.

Background

- 11 On 10 July 2024 Cabinet agreed to recommend to County Council that they adopt the County Durham Housing Strategy (CDHS). It also agreed to adopt the accompanying 12-Month Delivery Plan subject to the CDHS being adopted by County Council.
- 12 At the meeting of County Council on 17 July 2024 and following extensive discussion the decision of County Council was to defer adoption of the CDHS. The main points of concern related to how the Housing CDHS dealt with:
- The proliferation of HMOs in the county and the potential use of Article 4 Directions; and
 - The Council House Build Programme and particularly the delivery timeframe and the composition of the proposed 500 units.
- 13 In order for the CDHS to return to Cabinet and County Council for adoption we have prepared this report to discuss the Council House Build Programme. There is also an accompanying report to discuss Houses in Multiple Occupation.

Council House Build Programme

- 14 In October 2020, the council agreed to begin a council house delivery programme of up to 500 homes by 2026. Subsequent reports in February 2021 and December 2021 agreed Phase 1 and Phase 2 sites for the programme. Since this point, the council has:
- Progressed the Phase 1 sites to RIBA Plan of Work Stage 2;
 - Developed property designs for a range of house types alongside site layouts, which have been informed by pre application planning applications;
 - Undertaken two soft market tests to better understand the delivery environment and market led approaches to development, modern methods of construction and inform the future procurement process to deliver the programme;
 - Acquired six Section 106 units from Chapter Homes at Hartley Gardens, Gilesgate;
 - Obtained Brownfield Land Release Funding to help remediate two sites initially included within phase 1 of the Housing Programme;
 - Engaged Savills Consultancy to undertake a review of the council's financial modelling in the light of changing economic conditions;

- Developed an approach to the procurement and developed an output specification and associated tender documentation;
 - Prepared a suite of procedural documents to support the delivery of housing management service; and
 - Appointed a main contractor, T Manners, to deliver the programme.
- 15 On the 12 July 2023, Cabinet approved an updated business case for the council house delivery programme, including a revised financial model. This report revisited and updated the original business case for the council house delivery programme outlined in the October 2020 report for three main reasons:
- macro-economic changes had seen both inflation and interest rates rise significantly since the first business case was prepared;
 - the opportunity to revisit both the delivery approach and assumptions, to support viability considerations within the programme; and
 - to understand how the programme could support a reduction in the cost of using temporary accommodation.

Sites

- 16 In February 2021 and December 2021 Durham County Council Cabinet agreed sites for Phase 1 and Phase 2 for the programme. All sites within the programme have been identified from land held within the council's ownership. The original intention was to ensure as broad a geographical spread as possible of sites, based on land ownership opportunities, and to identify sites in line with housing needs. Sites were broadly identified in line with the intention to deliver 500 new homes.
- 17 The council has since undertaken further assessment on the suitability of sites for development, including in some cases an initial assessment of viability. In this context the programme has departed from the original list of sites. These sites will be brought forward in line with viability considerations, other development factors (including available funding) and in discussion with the appointed contractor.
- 18 The July 2023 Cabinet report identified that for the initial stage of the programme, three sites would be identified for delivery which would be expected to deliver c.51 dwellings. These are as follows:
- **Greenwood Avenue, Burnhope.** This site will be delivered through a design and build delivery approach. This site will benefit from

remediation via the Brownfield Land Release Fund to support the viability of the scheme.

- **Portland Avenue, Seaham.** This site will be delivered through a design and build delivery approach.
- **Merrington View, Spennymoor.** This site will be delivered through a design and build delivery approach and as a Modern Method of Construction (MMC) scheme.

- 19 The council will continue to progress the other sites identified in the Phase 1 and Phase 2 sites agreed by Cabinet in February 2021 and December 2021, subject to viability considerations. Where sites are not viable for the programme, they will be returned to the council's disposal programme.

The Composition of the 500 House Target

- 20 There was some concern expressed at County Council that the council had changed its position and was moving away from 500 new build council homes towards including the acquisition of existing properties within the 500 house target.
- 21 It is recognised that paragraph 5.8 of the draft CDHS is a little ambiguous and does not specifically refer to 'new build', however, the terminology is consistent with the July 2023 Cabinet report which updated the business case for the council house delivery programme.
- 22 It has always been the council's intention to deliver 500 new build properties, and this remains unchanged. This has been a consistent message through the lifetime of the programme. It is also noted that Cllr Rowlandson confirmed at the County Council meeting that the 500 target related to new build dwellings.

Delivery Timeframe

- 23 In October 2020, the Council agreed to a council house building programme of 500 homes by March 2026. Both the target and timeframe were reflected in the July 2023 Cabinet report.
- 24 The July 2023 Cabinet report provided an update on the work that had been progressing in a challenging economic climate and revised the business case and supporting business plan for the reasons as set out in paragraph 15 of this report.
- 25 At the County Council meeting there was concern from Members that the delivery timeframe for the Programme was unclear. Following the approval of the procurement strategy by Cabinet in July 2023, and the

subsequent appointment of the main contractor, it is apparent that the council will not be able to deliver 500 homes by 2026. This reflects the challenges with the start up of the programme, and in particular responding to prevailing macro-economic conditions since 2020.

- 26 This context was reflected in the draft CDHS which, at paragraph 5.8 notes the intention to roll forward the programme in this context.
- 27 The ambition to deliver 500 homes remains. The council is now working with the appointed main contractor to progress sites with the intention of delivering at pace. In this context, multiple sites are being progressed at any given time in a rolling programme and site densities are being increased across the schemes. The timescales associated with the delivery of 500 units are now being revisited with the main contractor and will be reflected in the final draft of the CDHS.

Housing Strategy and the Council House Build Programme

- 28 In light of the confusion over the composition of the 500 house target and the timescales for delivery of the Council House Build Programme, amendments could be made to the CDHS to provide further clarity.

Next Steps

- 29 Any feedback from the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee will inform any amendments to the CDHS which will then be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 November 2024 before the CDHS then returns to Cabinet and County Council for adoption.

Background papers

- [Housing Strategy Principles and Priorities Paper 2023](#)
- [Draft County Durham Housing Strategy 2024](#)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 requires local housing authorities to consider housing conditions in their area and the needs of the area with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation.

Finance

The draft CDHS identifies a series of actions and outcomes. Each of these will be associated with a project that may require a funding bid once the scope of the project is determined. The CDHS does not guarantee funding for the projects listed.

Consultation and Engagement

The CDHS Principles and Priorities paper was subject to public consultation for eight weeks between 26 June 2023 to 18 August 2023.

Consultation was also undertaken on the draft housing strategy between 30 October 2023 and 18 December 2023.

Consultation was undertaken with residents of County Durham and other stakeholders with a potential interest in the content of the document. Consultation was also undertaken with Overview and Scrutiny on three occasions:

- 10 July 2023: OSC Housing Strategy Workshop
- 18 December 2024: E&E OSC Draft County Durham Housing Strategy
- 22 April 2024: E&E OSC Draft County Durham Housing Strategy

An update on the Council House Build Programme was also presented to OSC in January 2024.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010, public sector equality duty S149-157 of the Act, has been considered as part of a full equalities impact assessment, which was attached to the Cabinet and County Council Report. The CDHS presents no negative impact on the protected groups.

Climate Change

Addressing the cause of climate change is a key thread through the draft CDHS including principle seven and priority three that state that the strategy will support energy efficiency and carbon reduction in existing and new housing.

Human Rights

Protocol 1 Article 1: Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions including their property; the CDHS will provide a framework to deliver housing to meet housing needs.

Article 8: provides a right to respect for private and family life. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home, and his correspondence. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of:

- national security;
- public safety;
- economic wellbeing of the country;
- for the prevention of disorder or crime;
- for the protection of health or morals; or
- for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

The council will ensure the CDHS will be consistent with the council's human rights obligations.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

Resource is required to progress the production, monitoring, review, and implementation of the CDHS.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

Detailed risk assessments will be undertaken at the project level and as part of delivering against the CDHS.

Procurement

None.

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11 September 2024

**Housing Strategy – Houses in Multiple
Occupation**



**Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and
Growth**

Electoral divisions affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 Following the meeting of County Council on 17 July 2024 and the decision to defer adoption of the County Durham Housing Strategy (CDHS), the purpose of the report is to provide the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the HMO issue that was raised by Members at the meeting and to set out next steps to adopting the CDHS. There is also an accompanying report to discuss the Council House Build Programme.

Executive summary

- 2 On 10 July 2024 Cabinet agreed to recommend to County Council that they adopt the CDHS. It also agreed to adopt the accompanying 12-Month Delivery Plan subject to the CDHS being adopted by County Council.
- 3 At the meeting of County Council on 17 July 2024 and following extensive discussion the decision of County Council was to defer adoption of the CDHS. The main points of concern related to how the Housing CDHS dealt with:
 - The proliferation of HMOs in the county and the potential use of Article 4 Directions; and
 - The Council House Build Programme and particularly the delivery timeframe and the composition of the proposed 500 units.
- 4 In order for the CDHS to return to Cabinet and County Council for adoption we have prepared this report to discuss the HMO issue. There is also an accompanying report to discuss the Council House Build Programme.

- 5 A House in Multiple Occupation is defined as a building or flat in which more than one household shares a basic amenity, such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities.
- 6 The data on licensable HMOs containing five separate tenants or more shows that as of May this year there were 915 dwellings in County Durham with an HMO licence. 878 of these are in the wider Durham City area and only 37 were outside of the DH1 postcode area.
- 7 There is national legislation in place to regulate HMOs and the council must operate in line with this legislation. We have limited powers to control the creation of HMOs in the county and no involvement in selecting the tenants who live in them, but we do have the following powers under the following areas:
 - Planning and Article 4 Directions;
 - HMO Licencing; and
 - Selective Licensing.
- 8 Most mentions of HMOs in the draft Housing Strategy are in the context of student accommodation in Durham City. However, as a result of the concerns Members had regarding HMOs and the Council House Build Programme, we may propose appropriate amendments to the CDHS. Any feedback from the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee will inform these amendments which will then be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 November 2024 before the CDHS then returns to Cabinet and County Council for adoption.

Recommendation

- 9 It is recommended that the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents of the report and provide any further feedback to inform the CDHS to be approved by Cabinet and County Council.

Background

- 10 On 10 July 2024 Cabinet agreed to recommend to County Council that they adopt the County Durham Housing Strategy (CDHS). It also agreed to adopt the accompanying 12-Month Delivery Plan subject to the CDHS being adopted by County Council.
- 11 At the meeting of County Council on 17 July 2024 and following extensive discussion the decision of County Council was to defer adoption of the CDHS. The main points of concern related to how the Housing CDHS dealt with:
 - The proliferation of HMOs in the county and the potential use of Article 4 Directions; and
 - The Council House Build Programme and particularly the delivery timeframe and the composition of the proposed 500 units.
- 12 In order for the CDHS to return to Cabinet and County Council for adoption we have prepared this report to discuss the HMO issue. There is also an accompanying report to discuss the Council House Build Programme.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

What is a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)?

- 13 A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is defined as a building or flat in which more than one household shares a basic amenity, such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities.
- 14 In guidance for local authorities published in 2018, the Government stated that HMOs form an important part of the private rented sector, often providing cheaper accommodation for people whose housing options are limited including professionals, students, migrants, and people on low incomes. HMOs are similar to any other housing type in that well-managed HMOs usually go unnoticed within communities. The majority of HMOs in County Durham are well-managed.

County Durham Context

- 15 The data on licensable HMOs containing five separate tenants or more shows that as of May this year there were 915 dwellings in County Durham with an HMO licence. 878 of these are in the wider Durham City area. Only 37 were outside of the DH1 postcode area with one licenced in the Seaham area, two in Bishop Auckland, three in Peterlee area and 12 in Stanley and Annfield Plain.

What powers does the council have to regulate HMOs?

- 16 There is national legislation in place to regulate HMOs and the council must operate in line with this legislation. We have limited powers to control the creation of HMOs in the county and no involvement in selecting the tenants who live in them. A summary of our powers is as follows.

Planning and Article 4 Directions

- 17 Planning permission is required when a landlord/agent is intending to use a house as an HMO for more than six people. If the landlord/agent rents out a house to six tenants or fewer it is considered permitted development and planning permission is not required.
- 18 An exception to the above is when an Article 4 Direction is made under planning legislation. This removes specified permitted development rights, meaning in this case that planning permission would be required when a single family house is to be changed into an HMO with fewer than six tenants. The application would then be considered against Policy 16 in the County Durham Plan.
- 19 Article 4 Directions are intended for in areas where there is a high density of existing HMOs and where there is clear evidence that HMOs are having a negative impact on neighbouring residents and further controls needed. Paragraph 53 of the existing National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Article 4 Directions should be 'limited to situations where an Article 4 direction is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area' and 'be based on robust evidence, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible'.
- 20 The council has introduced three Article 4 Directions for HMOs in Durham City, Framwellgate Moor, Newton Hall and Pity Me, Mount Oswald and Belmont and Carville. These Article 4s were justified on the basis of promoting mixed and balanced communities and preventing the over concentration of HMOs with the potential negative impacts this might have for residents.
- 21 As there are very few existing HMOs outside of Durham City and no reports of any existing issues, or evidence showing a direct link between HMOs and anti-social behaviour or other problems, it would be very difficult to justify an Article 4 Direction in any of these areas.

HMO Licencing

- 22 Landlords or agents managing a property for five or more occupiers must apply for an HMO Licence from the council. Under the Housing Act 2004, the landlord does not need to apply for the licence until the property is occupied by the tenants, meaning local authorities have no control over a property being converted into an HMO and no insight into

who the tenants will be. The council is legally bound to grant a five-year HMO Licence if the applicant meets the nationally set requirements.

- 23 Once an HMO Licence is in place, the council carries out regular inspections to ensure the property has no unacceptable hazards and has access to amenities. The landlord must also comply with licensing conditions relating to the management of the premises, provision of facilities and safety of the occupants, as well as taking reasonable steps to control any anti-social behaviour.

Selective Licensing

- 24 Selective Licensing gives the council powers to regulate landlords and managing agents operating within the private rented sector in areas with low housing demand and/or high levels of anti-social behaviour and/or deprivation. There are currently 103 designated Selected Licencing areas across the county.
- 25 Selective Licence holders must comply with conditions to make sure their properties and tenancies are managed effectively. A property with an HMO Licence is exempt from Selective Licensing. However, a property which does not require an HMO Licence (has fewer than five tenants) would require a Selective Licence if it was located in a Selective Licensing area.
- 26 The aim of Selective Licensing is to ensure the private rented sector offers tenants a choice of safe and well managed accommodation by improving management standards, reducing house hazards and disrepair, and reducing anti-social behaviour. The benefits include:
- Improved health and wellbeing of tenants;
 - Improved management practices. Landlords who fail to get a licence for a property or who are unwilling to manage it effectively can face prosecution or fines. In some cases, the council can take over the management of the property; and
 - Reduced anti-social behaviour. Tenants are made aware of how their behaviour can affect their tenancy and landlords are working alongside the council and other partners to address and reduce anti-social behaviour associated with their properties.
- 27 This is helping to ensure landlords who fail to maintain and manage their properties are held accountable. As well as supporting tenants, this has led to neglectful landlords leaving the market.

- 28 The council continues to carry out proactive and reactive inspections in Selective Licensing areas across County Durham to ensure landlords/agents are complying with all conditions.

Housing Strategy and HMOs

- 29 Most mentions of HMOs in the draft Housing Strategy are in the context of student accommodation in Durham City. However, there is one reference relating to Priority 3: Ensure high quality, energy efficient houses and effective landlord services, which states that we will ‘work to identify new HMOs that require a licence and take robust action against landlords who fail to comply with legislative requirements and HMO management regulations’.
- 30 In light of the perceived increase in the number of HMOs in the county further reference to this issue could potentially be included in the Housing Strategy. The 12-month delivery plan could also include an action seeking to explore the extent of the issue in the county and whether any further controls, for example an Article 4 Direction, would be required.

Next Steps

- 31 Any feedback from the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee will inform amendments to the CDHS which will then be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 November 2024 before the CDHS then returns to Cabinet and County Council for adoption.

Background papers

- [Housing Strategy Principles and Priorities Paper 2023](#)
- [Draft County Durham Housing Strategy 2024](#)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 requires local housing authorities to consider housing conditions in their area and the needs of the area with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation.

Finance

The draft CDHS identifies a series of actions and outcomes. Each of these will be associated with a project that may require a funding bid once the scope of the project is determined. The CDHS does not guarantee funding for the projects listed.

Consultation and Engagement

The CDHS Principles and Priorities paper was subject to public consultation for eight weeks between 26 June 2023 to 18 August 2023.

Consultation was also undertaken on the draft housing strategy between 30 October 2023 and 18 December 2023.

Consultation was undertaken with residents of County Durham and other stakeholders with a potential interest in the content of the document. Consultation was also undertaken with Overview and Scrutiny on three occasions:

- 10 July 2023: OSC Housing Strategy Workshop
- 18 December 2024: E&E OSC Draft County Durham Housing Strategy
- 22 April 2024: E&E OSC Draft County Durham Housing Strategy

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010, public sector equality duty S149-157 of the Act, has been considered as part of a full equalities impact assessment, which was attached to the Cabinet and County Council Report. The CDHS presents no negative impact on the protected groups.

Climate Change

Addressing the cause of climate change is a key thread through the draft CDHS including principle seven and priority three that state that the strategy will support energy efficiency and carbon reduction in existing and new housing.

Human Rights

Protocol 1 Article 1: Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions including their property; the CDHS will provide a framework to deliver housing to meet housing needs.

Article 8: provides a right to respect for private and family life. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home, and his correspondence. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of:

- national security;
- public safety;
- economic wellbeing of the country;
- for the prevention of disorder or crime;
- for the protection of health or morals; or
- for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

The council will ensure the CDHS will be consistent with the council's human rights obligations.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

Resource is required to progress the production, monitoring, review, and implementation of the CDHS.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

Detailed risk assessments will be undertaken at the project level and as part of delivering against the CDHS.

Procurement

None.

Enterprise & Economy Overview & Scrutiny

11 September 2024

Contents



Content

- Introduction
- Council House Build Programme
- Houses in Multiple Occupations
- Next Steps

Introduction



Introduction

- The County Durham Housing Strategy (CDHS) provides a strategic framework to inform the actions and investment of the council and its partners
- It has been prepared following two rounds of consultation with residents and other stakeholders including with Overview and Scrutiny on three occasions:
 - 10 July 2023: OSC Housing Strategy Workshop
 - 18 December 2024: E&E OSC Draft County Durham Housing Strategy
 - 22 April 2024: E&E OSC Draft County Durham Housing Strategy
- On 10 July 2024 Cabinet agreed to recommend to County Council that they adopt the CDHS
- At the meeting of County Council on 17 July 2024 the adoption of the CDHS was deferred. The concerns of members principally related to how the CDHS dealt with:
 - The Council House Build Programme and particularly the delivery timeframe and the composition of the proposed 500 units
 - The proliferation of HMOs in the county and the potential use of Article 4 Directions

Council House Build Programme



Background

- In October 2020, the council agreed to begin a council house delivery programme
- 12 July 2023, Cabinet approved an updated business case for the council house delivery programme, including a revised financial model
- March 2024, appointed a main contractor, T Manners, to deliver the programme
- In February 2021 and December 2021, Cabinet agreed sites for Phase 1 and Phase 2 for the programme
- July 2023 Cabinet report identified first three sites for delivery; Greenwood Avenue, Burnhope; Portland Avenue, Seaham; and Merrington View, Spennymoor

Composition of the 500 Target

- October 2020 Cabinet Report identified a target of up to 500 new homes
- Paragraph 5.8 of the draft CDHS includes reference to the target of 500 however does not specifically refer to ‘new build’
- It has always been the council’s intention to deliver 500 new build properties, and this remains unchanged
- There will likely be acquisitions during the lifetime of the project, but they will be additional and not make up part of the 500

Delivery Timeframe

- October 2020, the Council agreed to a council house building programme of 500 homes by March 2026
- The July 2023 Cabinet report revised the business case and supporting business plan principally due to changes in the macro-economic changes had seen both inflation and interest rates rise significantly
- For these reasons and following appointment of the main contractor, it is apparent that the council are not likely to be able to deliver 500 homes by 2026
- The intention however is still to deliver at pace and timescales are currently being revisited

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

Background

- A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is defined as a building or flat in which more than one household shares a basic amenity, such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities
- HMOs are regarded by the Government and the national housing sector as a legitimate part of the UK's private sector housing supply
- HMOs are similar to any other housing type in that well-managed HMOs usually go unnoticed within communities

Current Distribution of HMOs

- Larger HMOs can be identified by using Council Tax and Licensing data
- There is currently no way to identify smaller HMOs
- The Council Tax data shows that there are currently 961 HMOs in County Durham, all in the DH1 postcode
- The Licensing data shows there are 915 HMOs in County Durham as follows:

Current Distribution of HMOs

DH1 (Durham City, Framwellgate Moor, Pity Me, Belmont, Carville)	878
DH6 (Coxhoe, Bowburn, Shotton Colliery, Wheatley Hill)	2
DH7 (Brandon, Lanchester, Esh Winning, Burnhope, Langley Park, Sacriston, Ushaw Moor, Brancepeth)	7
DH8 (Consett, Blackhill, Bridgehill, Shotley Bridge, Leadgate, Delves Lane)	4
DH9 (Dipton, Stanley, Annfield Plain)	12
DL4 (Shildon)	1
DL5 (Newton Aycliffe, Aycliffe Village, Heighington)	2
DL12 (Barnard Castle, Bowes, Middleton-in-Teesdale)	1
DL14 (Bishop Auckland, West Auckland, Coundon)	2
DL15 (Crook, Willington, Stanley Crook, Hunwick)	1
DL16 (Spennymoor, Kirk-Merrington, Tudhoe Grange, Westerton)	1
SR7 (Seaham, Murton)	1
SR8 (Peterlee, Horden, Easington)	3

Council powers in relation to HMOs

- Landlords or agents managing a property for five or more occupiers must apply for an HMO licence from the council
- Once an HMO Licence is in place, the council carries out regular inspections to ensure the property is safe and has access to amenities
- In County Durham, private landlords must also apply for a Selective Licence if the property falls within one of the 103 designated Selective Licencing areas
- Landlords/agents must apply for planning permission to convert homes into HMOs for more than six people
- If the HMO has six tenants or fewer it is considered permitted development and planning permission is not required

Article 4 Directions

- In some cases, an Article 4 Direction can be made that requires planning permission to be sought for HMOs with less than seven occupants
- This is intended for areas with a high density of HMOs
- The only existing Article 4s are in Durham City and relate to student accommodation
- NPPF states that the use of Article 4 should be limited to situations where ‘an Article 4 Direction is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area, and in all cases, be based on robust evidence, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible’
- Guidance also states that ‘the potential harm that the Article 4 Direction is intended to address will need to be clearly identified, and there will need to be a particularly strong justification for the withdrawal of permitted development rights’
- The Secretary of State has powers to intervene in Article 4 Directions and can require modifications

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

- There is no requirement or mechanism for local authorities to have any input into who a landlord or licence holder has as a tenant. This is the case for all types of tenure
- If a residential property is licensed, either through selective licensing or as an HMO, there are conditions attached to those licences
- We would expect all landlords/licence holders to be responsible and ensure that a tenant's behaviour and conduct does not give cause for concern
- We fully investigate reports of alleged contraventions of conditions or misconduct and will take the appropriate action based on the available evidence

CDHS and HMOs

- Most mentions of HMOs in the CDHS are in the context of student accommodation in Durham City
- Is a reference under Priority 3 which states that we will ‘work to identify new HMOs that require a licence and take robust action against landlords who fail to comply with legislative requirements and HMO management regulations’
- In light of the perceived increase in the number of HMOs in the county further reference to this issue could be included in the CDHS
- The 12-month delivery plan could also include an action seeking to explore the extent of the issue in the county and whether any further controls, for example an Article 4 Direction, would be required

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Any feedback from Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee relating to both the Council House Build Programme and HMOs will inform draft amendments to the CDHS
- These amendments will then be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 November 2024
- Once agreed the amended CDHS will then return to Cabinet and County Council for adoption as soon as possible

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Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 September 2024

**Regeneration, Economy and Growth –
Quarter 4: Revenue and Capital Outturn
2023/24**



Report of Corporate Directors

Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources

Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide details of the final revenue and capital outturn position for the Regeneration, Economy and Growth (REG) service grouping in 2023/24.

Executive Summary

2. This report provides an overview of the final outturn for 2023/24. It provides an analysis of the budgets and final outturn for the service areas falling under the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee and complements the reports considered and agreed by Cabinet on a quarterly basis.
3. In 2023/24 the service reported a cash limit underspend of £0.343 million against a revised budget of £57.322 million after taking account of use of reserves and items outside the cash limit, including redundancy costs which are met from the corporate reserve, capital accounting entries and use of / contributions to earmarked reserves. This compares to a forecast quarter three overspend position of £90,000.
4. Net adjustments on energy reductions of £1.805 million have been excluded from the REG cash limit outturn position. Also excluded is £1.554 million in respect of Leisure Centre income shortfalls post Covid (£0.825 million) and losses due to Leisure Transformation closures that

are being covered corporately (£0.735 million) and £0.245 million linked to pay award vacancies.

5. In arriving at the outturn position, £32.009 million has also been excluded for a range of adjustments associated with year-end accounting entries for capital charges, centralised repairs and maintenance and central administration recharges as well as a small number of other agreed sums outside the cash limit funded from corporate contingencies.
6. The REG Cash Limit balance carried forward at 31 March 2024 is £1.462 million. Other earmarked reserves under the direct control of REG total £28.018 million at 31 March 2024.
7. Capital expenditure incurred in 2023/24 was £125.951 million, representing 94% of the revised REG capital budget of £134.505 million. A request was made to the Member Officer Working Group to carry forward the £8.554 million underspend to the current year to augment the 2024/25 Capital Programme.
8. Details of the reasons for under and overspending against relevant budget heads are disclosed in the report.

Recommendation(s)

9. Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the final outturn position against the 2023/24 revenue and capital budgets.

Background

10. County Council approved the Revenue and Capital budgets for 2023/24 at its meeting on 22 February 2023. These budgets have since been revised to account for grant (additions/reductions), budget transfers, and budget re-profiling between years (in terms of capital) as well as corporately recognised budget pressures). This report covers the financial position for the following budgets of the services within the scope of this committee;

- (a) Revenue Budget - £57.322 (original £56.363 million)
- (b) Capital Programme – £134.505 million (original £131.502 million).

11. The original service revenue budget of £56.363 million has been revised to incorporate various permanent budget adjustments. These are shown in the table below:

Description	Transfer in	Transfer out
Permanent	£m	£m
Q1		
Comms & Marketing - from REG to CEO		(1.935)
Q2		
Design & Conservation – from NCC to REG (P&H)	0.262	
Post Transfer to Care Connect – RES to REG (P&H)	0.030	
Post Transfer from B&FM – REG (CPaL) to RES		(0.028)
Post Transfer from H&S – REG (CPaL) to RES		(0.011)
Post Transfer from T&CS – REG to RES		(0.038)
LTP Income from NCC to REG (T&CS)		(0.017)
EV Charging Infrastructure – from REG (T&CS) to NCC		(0.011)
Transfer of restructure budget – REG (Central) to Corporate		(0.101)
Self-Financing Capital Charges: House Building/CDLA – REG (P&H) to Corporate		(0.048)
Q3		
2023/24 Pay Award	2.857	
Total changes	£3.149	(£2.190)
Net budget change	£0.959	

12. The summary financial statements contained in the report cover the financial year 2023/24 and show:

- (a) The approved annual budget;
- (b) The income and expenditure as recorded in the Council's financial management system;
- (c) The variance between the annual budget and the actual outturn;
- (d) For the revenue budget, adjustments for items outside of the cash limit (outside of the Service's control) to take into account such items as capital charges and use of / or contributions to earmarked reserves.

Revenue Outturn 2023/24

- 13. The service is reporting a cash limit underspend of **£0.343 million** against the revised budget of **£57.322 million** (0.6%).
- 14. The table below compares the forecast outturn with the budget by Head of Service. A further table is shown at **Appendix 2** analysing the position by Subjective Analysis (i.e. type of expense).

Analysis by Head of Service £'000s

	Revised Annual Budget	Outturn	Items Outside Cash Limit	Earmarked Reserves	Net Inflation	Cash Limit Variance
Head of Service	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Economic Development	258	(4,798)	6,001	(914)	0	31
Corporate Property & Land	2,125	542	(995)	1,359	597	(622)
Culture Sport & Tourism	18,258	27,380	(7,191)	(2,373)	922	480
Planning & Housing	8,015	1,132	5,921	610	(44)	(396)
Transport & Contracted Servs	3,126	(2,892)	2,563	3,280	(27)	(202)
REG - Central Costs	25,540	940	24,401	207	357	366
Total	57,322	22,304	30,700	2,169	1,805	(343)

- 13. The cash limit underspend of £0.343 million takes into account adjustments for sums outside the cash limit such as redundancy costs that are met from corporate reserves, year-end capital accounting entries and use of / contributions to earmarked reserves.

Cash Limit Outturn – Explanation of Over and Under Spending

- 14 The outturn position reflects the proactive management of activity by Heads of Service across REG to try and remain within the cash limit. The main reasons accounting for the outturn position are as follows:
 - (a) Culture, Sport and Tourism was overspent by £0.480 million against budget. The main reasons are:
 - (i) An unrealised MTFP saving of £75,000;

- (ii) A capital contribution of £86,000 to the leisure transformation programme;
 - (iii) A £0.167 million overspend at the two completed leisure transformation sites (Abbey and Peterlee); and
 - (iv) Income shortfalls of £0.242 million at Killhope Museum;
 - (v) These overspends were partially offset by short term equipment underspends whilst new gym equipment is awaited at seven leisure centres.
- (b) Transport and Contract Services underspent by £0.202 million against budget. The main reasons are:
- (i) An under-recovery of departure charge income at Durham Bus Station of £0.116 million;
 - (ii) Under-achievement of income for park and ride of £0.241 million;
 - (iii) Increased business rate charges on car parks of £0.135 million;
 - (iv) Under-recovery of bus shelter advertising income of £0.111 million, which was a MTFP saving proposal in a previous MTFP round and an overspend on bus shelter repairs and maintenance of £90,000;
 - (v) These were partially offset by an underspend of £0.175 million against Durham bus station during its closure in year, £0.319 million overachievement of parking income, an underspend of £0.426 million on bus and rail contracts and £88,000 of underspends mainly relating to road safety employee costs and school crossing patrols. The 2024/25 budget includes an adjustment to rebase the park and ride income, which will then be unwound over the following four years.
- (c) Planning and Housing was underspent by £0.396 million against budget. This was largely due to staffing underspends of £0.782 million across the service, partially offset by an underachievement of income of £0.331 million relating planning fee income.
- (d) Economic Development was overspent by £31,000 against budget, which was mainly a result of underachieved training income in Employment & Skills.

- (e) Corporate Property and Land was underspent by £0.622 million against budget.
- (i) Within Buildings & Facilities Management, there was an overspend of £0.159 million, mainly relating to the catering service, which includes a shortfall in income as a result of Page 496 hybrid working and reduced footfall in staff facilities such as County Hall and Green Lane;
 - (ii) Strategy and Property Management was underspent by £0.626 million due primarily to additional budget growth of £0.600 million included in the base budget from 2022/23 for a staffing restructure that had not been implemented and is not now expected to be in place until 2024/25; and
 - (iii) There were also minor underspends elsewhere within the service, including additional unbudgeted income in Business Development of £67,000 along with underspends on supplies and services of £92,000.

- 15 The outturn position has been adjusted by £32.009 million relating to a range of adjustments associated with year-end accounting entries for capital charges, centralised repairs and maintenance and central administration recharges as well as a small number of other agreed sums outside the cash limit funded from corporate contingencies, £2.169 million relating to contributions to and from reserves, £1.804 million net inflation adjustment for energy reductions, £1.554 million in respect of Leisure Centre income shortfalls post COVID (£0.825 million) and losses due to Leisure Transformation closures that are being covered corporately (£0.735 million) and £0.245 million linked to pay award vacancies.
- 16 The Cash Limit Reserve carried forward for Regeneration, Economy and Growth is £1.462 million after taking the outturn position into account.
- 17 In summary, the service grouping reported an underspend of £0.343 million in 2023/24.

Capital Programme

18. The capital programme makes a significant contribution to the regeneration ambitions of County Durham. The programme is relatively large and diverse and is managed by project delivery officers throughout the service.
19. The Regeneration, Economy and Growth Services capital programme was revised for budget re-phased from 2022/23. This increased the

2023/24 original budget to a level of £131.502 million. Since then, reports to the MOWG have detailed further revisions, for grant additions/reductions, budget transfers and budget re-profiling into later years. The final capital budget was **£134.505 million**.

20. Summary financial performance for 2023/24 is shown below.

Service	Revised Annual Budget 2023/24 £000	Actual Spend to 31 March £000	Remaining Budget 2023/24 £000
Economic Development	30,756	31,188	(432)
Planning & Housing	17,289	16,690	599
Corporate Property & Land	21,275	21,129	146
Transport & Contracted Services	40,390	33,166	7,223
Culture Sport & Tourism	24,705	23,778	928
Strategy, Prog & Performance	90	0	90
Total	134,505	125,951	8,554

21. Actual spend for 2023/24 amounts to **£125.951 million**. **Appendix 3** provides a more detailed breakdown of spend.

22. The key areas of spend during the year are on NETPark Phase 3 (£18.285 million), Aykley Heads Rivergreen (£11.540 million), Disabled Facilities Grant (£9.368 million) and Durham Bus Station and North Road Development (£8.004 million).

Background papers

- a) [County Council Report \(22 February 2023\) – Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2026/27 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2023/24.](#)
- b) [Cabinet Report \(13 September 2023\) – Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23 – Period to 30 June 2023.](#)
- c) [Cabinet Report \(15 November 2023\) – Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23 – Period to 30 September 2023.](#)
- d) [Cabinet Report \(13 March 2024\) – Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23 – Period to 31 December 2023.](#)
- e) [Cabinet Report \(10 July 2024\) – 2023/24 Final Outturn for the General Fund and Collection Fund.](#)

Contact:

Ed Thompson – Finance Manager Tel: 03000 263 481

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The consideration of regular budgetary control reports is a key component of the Council's Corporate and Financial Governance arrangements. This report shows the spend against budgets agreed by the Council in February 2023 in relation to the 2023/24 financial year.

Finance

Financial implications are detailed throughout the report which provides an analysis of the revenue and capital outturn position alongside details of balance sheet items such as earmarked reserves held by the service grouping to support its priorities.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable.

Climate Change

Not applicable.

Human Rights

Not applicable.

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable.

Staffing

Not applicable.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

The consideration of regular budgetary control reports is a key component of the Council's Corporate and Financial Governance arrangements.

Procurement

The outcome of procurement activity is factored into the financial projections included in the report.

Appendix 2: Regeneration, Economy and Growth Outturn 2023/24 – Subjective Analysis

REG Subjective analysis	Revised Annual Budget	Outturn	Items Outside Cash Limit	Earmarked Reserves	Net Inflation Adjustment	Cash Limit Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Employees	78,476	74,590	663	0	0	(3,223)
Premises	23,367	25,515	1,051	4	1,805	5,008
Transport	1,635	1,935	0	0	0	300
Supplies & Services	19,023	31,758	0	0	0	12,735
Third Party Payments	45,597	45,673	0	0	0	76
Transfer Payments	0	1	0	0	0	1
Capital	13,592	26,855	(13,263)	0	0	0
Central Support	11,996	12,182	1,012	2,165	0	3,363
DRF	0	6,164	0	0	0	6,164
Grant	(9,436)	(15,024)	0	0	0	(5,588)
Contributions Summary	(19,943)	(20,853)	0	0	0	(910)
Sales Summary	(2,519)	(2,145)	0	0	0	374
Charges	(30,073)	(35,449)	(1,555)	0	0	(6,931)
Rents	(10,543)	(18,291)	0	0	0	(7,748)
Recharges	(62,981)	(62,521)	(847)	0	0	(387)
Other Income Summary	(869)	(4,447)	0	0	0	(3,578)
Capital Accounting Income	0	(43,639)	43,639	0	0	0
Total	57,322	22,304	(30,700)	(2,169)	1,805	(343)

Appendix 3: Regeneration, Economy and Growth Capital Programme 2023/24

General Fund	Revised Annual Budget £000	Actual Spend to 31 March £000	Remaining Budget £000
Economic Development			
Industrial Estate (Business Durham)	18,022	19,189	(1,167)
Minor Schemes	150	113	37
North Dock Seaham	25	33	(8)
Beamish Capital Project	1,879	5,533	(3,654)
Town & Village Centre	4,025	2,783	1,242
Forrest Park Dev	0	100	(100)
<u>Town Centres:</u>			
Barnard Castle	76	70	6
Bishop Auckland	3,985	1,848	2,137
Consett	516	519	(3)
Peterlee	284	40	244
Seaham	936	502	434
Spennymoor	327	311	16
Other	532	147	385
	30,756	31,188	(432)
Planning & Housing			
Housing Renewal	9,149	6,686	2,463
Housing Development	195	49	146
DFG/FAP	7,176	9,503	(2,327)
Minor P&H	769	452	317
	17,289	16,690	599
Corporate Property and Land			
Office Accommodation	17,014	17,324	(310)
Structural Capitalised Maint	3,858	3,644	214
Milburngate	403	160	243
Aykley Heads	0	1	(1)
	21,275	21,129	146
Transport & Contracted Services			
Local Transport Plan	1,790	1,982	(192)
Transport Major Schemes	37,852	30,559	7,292
T&CE	748	625	123
	40,390	33,166	7,223
Culture, Sport and Tourism			
<u>Culture and Museums:</u>			
The Story	4,471	4,258	213

	Revised Annual Budget £000	Actual Spend to 31 March £000	Remaining Budget £000
General Fund			
Shildon Coal Drops	513	367	146
Redhills Refurbishment	815	710	105
Locomotion New Building	2,975	2,975	0
Weardale Railway	977	656	321
Killhope Museum	602	550	52
DLIMAG	1,434	849	585
Other	18	49	(31)
<u>Leisure Centres:</u>			
Teesdale LC	361	198	163
Spennymoor LC	2,015	2,050	(35)
Woodhouse Close LC	950	662	288
Peterlee LC	4,645	4,543	102
Abbey LC	2,330	2,237	93
Louisa LC	2,164	3,308	(1,144)
Other	372	325	47
Outdoor S&L Facilities	63	40	23
	24,705	23,778	928
Strategic Programmes			
Minor SPP	90	0	90
	90	0	90
REG Total	134,505	125,951	8,554

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Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 September 2024



Regeneration, Economy and Growth – Quarter 1: Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2024/25

Report of Corporate Directors

Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources

Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide details of the forecast outturn position for quarter 1 revenue and capital for Regeneration, Economy and Growth (REG) as at 30 June 2024.

Executive summary

- 2 This report provides an overview of the forecast of outturn, based on the position at quarter 1, 2024/25. It provides an analysis of the budgets and forecast outturn for the service areas falling under the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee and complements the reports considered and agreed by Cabinet on a quarterly basis.
- 3 The position is that there is a forecast overspend of £0.966 million, against a revised budget of £59.026 million after taking account of the forecast use of reserves and items outside the cash limit, including redundancy costs which are met from the corporate reserve, capital accounting entries and use of / contributions to earmarked reserves.
- 4 Net adjustments on energy reductions of £1.061 million have been excluded from the REG cash limit forecast outturn position. Also excluded is £0.500 million in respect of Leisure Centre income shortfalls due to Leisure Transformation closures that are being covered corporately, £0.257 million underspend in relation to the delayed Sniperley Park & Ride route extension, £0.272 million underspend on

the Aykley Heads Cultural Venue revenue budget due to the delayed opening date and £0.364 million of costs which have been covered from central contingencies (Facilities Management dual running net costs (£43,000), under-achieved Catering income in relation to civic sites of £0.154 million, Health & Safety radon works of £43,000 and legal / professional fees for the Milburngate development of £0.210 million).

- 5 The revised service capital budget is £170.367 million with expenditure of £35.270 million as at 30 June 2024.
- 6 Details of the reasons for under and overspending against relevant budget heads are disclosed in the report.

Recommendation(s)

- 7 Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the contents of this report.

Background

8 County Council approved the Revenue and Capital budgets for 2024/25 at its meeting on 28 February 2024. These budgets have since been revised to account for grant additions/reductions, budget transfers, and budget re-profiling between years (in terms of capital) as well as corporately recognised budget pressures. This report covers the financial position for the following budgets of the services within the scope of this committee;

- (a) Revenue Budget - £59.026 million (original £54.929 million)
- (b) Capital Programme – £170.367 million (original £167.396 million)

9 The original service revenue budget has been revised in year to incorporate various permanent budget adjustments. These are shown in the table below:

Description	Change (£m)
AAP's – from NCC to REG (Ec Dev)	3.875
Humanitarian Support – from NCC to REG (P&H)	0.009
Post Budget (Arborist) – from REG (CPaL) to NCC	(0.049)
Post Budgets (Parking Admin) – from RES to REG (T&CS)	0.262
Total Change	4.097

- 10 The summary financial statements contained in the report cover the financial year 2024/25 and show: -
- (a) The approved annual budget;
 - (b) The forecast income and expenditure as recorded in the Council's financial management system;
 - (c) The variance between the annual budget and the forecast outturn;
 - (d) For the revenue budget, adjustments for items outside of the cash limit (outside of the Service's control) to take into account such items as capital charges and use of / or contributions to earmarked reserves.

Forecast Revenue Outturn 2024/25

11 The service is reporting a cash limit overspend of **£0.966 million** against a revised budget of **£59.026 million** (1.6%).

- 12 The table below compares the forecast outturn with the budget by Head of Service. A further table is shown at **Appendix 2** analysing the position by Subjective Analysis (i.e. type of expense).

Service Budget - Analysis by Head of Service £'000

Head of Service	Revised Annual Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	Items Outside Cash Limit	Earmarked Reserves	Net Inflation Adjustment	Cash Limit Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Economic Development	3,942	5,685	1,743	0	(1,714)	0	29
Corporate Property & Land	1,041	2,650	1,609	(364)	(1,567)	0	(323)
Culture Sport & Tourism	16,803	20,030	3,227	(228)	(1,614)	0	1,385
Planning & Housing	6,523	7,165	642	0	(562)	0	80
Transport & Contracted Servs	2,662	599	(2,063)	257	1,762	0	(44)
REG - Central Costs	28,055	26,832	(1,223)	0	0	1,061	(161)
Total	59,026	62,961	3,935	(335)	(3,694)	1,061	966

- 13 The cash limit overspend of £0.966 million takes into account adjustments for sums outside the cash limit such as redundancy costs that are met from corporate reserves and use of / contributions to earmarked reserves.

Cash Limit Outturn – Explanation of Over and Under Spending

- 14 The main reasons accounting for the outturn position are as follows:
- (a) Culture, Sport and Tourism is forecast to overspend by £1.385 million against budget. The main reasons are:
 - (i) Unrealised MTFP savings of £0.410 million relating to Culture for Clayport Library restructure and remodel (£0.200 million), Sevenhills recharge to CYPS (£75,000), Library Transformation co-location opportunities (£0.105 million) and dynamic ticketing on theatres (£30,000).

- (ii) A £0.137 million overspend relating to library facility employee costs, contract cleaning and unachieved income for fines and fees.
 - (iii) A £0.436 million anticipated overspend at the two completed leisure transformation sites (Abbey and Peterlee) and the three sites expected to complete in year (Spennymoor, Louisa and Teesdale) due to cost and income pressures not being in line with the levels anticipated / forecast as part of the Leisure Transformation programme.
 - (iv) A £0.279 million overspend within Leisure & Wellbeing as a result of unachieved staff turnover savings and increased business rate costs.
 - (v) An overspend of £0.101 million relating to a previous service restructure relating to staff working in Theatres and Durham Town Hall.
- (b) Transport and Contract Services is forecast to broadly breakeven against budget, with the following offsetting variances identified:
- (i) Under-recovery of bus shelter advertising income of £0.153 million, which was a MTFP13 saving, and an overspend on bus shelter repairs and maintenance of £81,000.
 - (ii) An overspend of £0.110 million on Bus Stations due to business rates and cleaning costs at Durham Bus Station (£96,000) and additional security costs at Peterlee and Consett Bus Stations (£45,000), offset slightly by an underspend on Bishop Auckland Bus Station following its closure in year (£30,000).
 - (iii) Increased business rate charges and contract costs on car parks of £0.477 million, offset by £0.460 million overachievement of parking income, £0.195 million underspends in Road Safety mainly relating to employee and School Crossing Patrol vacancies and £0.186 million underspend on bus & rail contracts.
- (c) Planning and Housing is forecast to overspend by £80,000 against budget. The main reasons are:
- (i) Planning - anticipated overspend of £0.208 million, largely due to under-achieved of planning fee income targets, which were a MTFP13/14 saving;

- (ii) Strategy & Delivery – anticipated underspend of £20,000 on staffing;
 - (iii) Building Safety & Standards - anticipated underspend of £49,000 on staffing and additional Building Control income;
 - (iv) Housing Access and Independent Living – anticipated underspend of £39,000, comprised of an overspend of £75,000 on Temporary Accommodation, offset by underspends on staffing, as well as additional income in Care Connect/CCTV of £114,000.
- (d) Economic Development is forecast to overspend by £29,000 against budget, which is predominantly attributed to overspends against employee's for unachieved staff turnover savings in the Area Action Partnerships team.
- (e) Corporate Property and Land is forecast to underspend by £0.323 million against budget. The main reasons are:
- (i) Building & Facilities Management – anticipated overspend of £0.155 million due to under-achieved income in public-facing catering venues (£43,000), an unrealised MTFP saving (also Catering, of £71,000) and increased contract cleaning costs in Facilities Management (£43,000);
 - (ii) Business Development – anticipated underspend of £83,000 on staffing and supplies & services;
 - (iii) Head of Service – anticipated underspend of £0.102 million on supplies & services;
 - (iv) Strategy & Property Management – anticipated underspend of £0.323 million in relation to ongoing restructure, partially offset by additional costs in relation to Freemans Reach energy centre and unbudgeted business rates (Priory House);
 - (v) Strategic Programmes – anticipated overspend of £91,000 due to unachieved capital recharge income of £0.170 million, partially offset by underspends on staffing and supplies & services.
- (f) REG Central is forecast to underspend by £0.161 million against budget, which is predominantly a result of unallocated price inflation which is being held as a contingency sum in the service.

- 15 In summary, the service grouping is not managing to maintain spending within its cash limit and as a result needs to draw £0.966 million from the Regeneration Cash Limit Reserve.

Capital Programme

- 16 The capital programme makes a significant contribution to the regeneration ambitions of County Durham. The programme is relatively large and diverse and is managed by project delivery officers throughout the service.
- 17 The Regeneration, Economy and Growth Services capital programme was revised at year-end for budget re-profiled from 2023/24. Since then, reports to the MOWG have detailed further revisions, for grant additions/reductions, budget transfers and budget re-profiling into later years. The revised budget now stands at £170.367 million.
- 18 Summary financial performance for 2024/25 is shown below.

Service	Revised Annual Budget 2024/25 £000	Actual Spend to 30 June £000	Remaining Budget 2024/25 £000
Economic Development	64,006	20,426	43,580
Corporate Property & Land	11,955	1,941	10,014
Culture Sport & Tourism	26,825	3,218	23,607
Planning & Housing	17,458	3,516	13,942
Transport & Contracted Services	50,123	6,169	43,954
Total	170,367	35,270	135,097

- 19 Officers continue to carefully monitor capital expenditure on a monthly basis. Actual spend for the first 3 months amounts to £35.270 million. **Appendix 3** provides a more detailed breakdown of spend across the major projects contained within the capital programme.

Background papers

- County Council Report (28 February 2024) - [Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2027/28 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2024/25 - Report of Cabinet](#)

Contact: Ed Thompson

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The consideration of regular budgetary control reports is a key component of the Council's Corporate and Financial Governance arrangements. This report shows the forecast spend against budgets agreed by the Council in February 2024 in relation to the 2024/25 financial year.

Finance

Financial implications are detailed throughout the report which provides an analysis of the revenue and capital outturn position alongside details of balance sheet items such as earmarked reserves held by the service grouping to support its priorities.

Consultation

None.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None.

Climate Change

None.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

The consideration of regular budgetary control reports is a key component of the Councils Corporate and Financial Governance arrangements.

Procurement

The outcome of procurement activity is factored into the financial projections included in the report

Appendix 2: Regeneration, Economy & Growth Forecast Outturn at Q1 – Subjective Analysis

REG Subjective analysis	Revised Annual Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance (excl OCL & Reserve Adjustments)	Items Outside Cash Limit	Earmarked Reserves	Net Inflation Adjustment	Cash Limit Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Employees	83,057	81,039	(2,018)	272	0	0	(1,746)
Premises	21,682	22,918	1,236	0	0	1,061	2,297
Transport	1,574	1,692	118	0	0	0	118
Supplies & Services	20,802	34,573	13,771	0	0	0	13,771
Third Party Payments	46,075	44,952	(1,123)	257	0	0	(866)
Transfer Payments	980	2,493	1,513	0	0	0	1,513
Capital	14,131	14,131	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	13,206	13,905	699	(364)	(3,694)	0	(3,359)
DRF	0	1,104	1,104	0	0	0	1,104

REG Subjective analysis	Revised Annual Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance (excl OCL & Reserve Adjustments)	Items Outside Cash Limit	Earmarked Reserves	Net Inflation Adjustment	Cash Limit Variance
Grant	(10,523)	(27,172)	(16,649)	0	0	0	(16,649)
Contributions Summary	(20,316)	(23,109)	(2,793)	0	0	0	(2,793)
Sales Summary	(2,939)	(2,433)	505	0	0	0	505
Charges	(29,277)	(35,924)	(6,647)	(500)	0	0	(7,148)
Rents	(11,073)	(14,151)	(3,078)	0	0	0	(3,078)
Recharges	(67,293)	(49,976)	17,317	0	0	0	17,317
Other Income Summary	(1,061)	(1,081)	(20)	0	0	0	(20)
Total	59,026	62,961	3,935	(335)	(3,694)	1,061	966

Appendix 3: Regeneration, Economy and Growth Capital 2024/25

General Fund	Revised Annual Budget £000	Actual Spend to 30 June £000	Remaining Budget £000
Economic Development			
Industrial Estates (Business Durham)	40,410	17,282	23,128
Community Infrastructure	3,850	13	3,837
Minor Schemes	37	37	0
North Dock Seaham	21	0	21
Beamish Capital Project	3,318	1,983	1,334
Town & Village Centre	2,327	235	2,092
<u>Town Centres:</u>			
Barnard Castle	6	4	2
Bishop Auckland	8,105	714	7,391
Crook	40	0	40
Durham	203	0	203
Peterlee	80	0	80
Seaham	3,477	89	3,388
Spennymoor	1,167	66	1,101
Other	965	3	962
	64,006	20,426	43,579
Planning & Housing			
Housing Renewal	10,933	1,010	9,923
Housing Development	1,197	239	958
Disabled Facility Grants/Financial Assist	4,443	1,580	2,863
Minor P&H	885	687	198
	17,458	3,516	13,942
Corporate Property and Land			
Office Accommodation	2,724	821	1,903
Structural Capitalised Maint	5,221	1,112	4,109
Aykley Heads	4,009	8	4,001
	11,954	1,941	10,013
Transport & Contracted Services			
Local Transport Plan	1,362	104	1,258
Transport Major Schemes	48,195	5,919	42,276
Traffic & Community Engagement	566	146	420
	50,123	6,169	43,954
Culture, Sport and Tourism			

	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Spend to 30 June	Remaining Budget
Libraries	10	0	10
<u>Culture and Museums:</u>			
The Story	1,885	45	1,840
Station Coal Drops	140	3	137
Redhills Refurbishment	428	105	323
Locomotion New Building	6	0	6
Weardale Railway	1,472	0	1,472
Killhope Museum	835	5	830
DLIMAG	8,409	844	7,565
Other	82	0	82
<u>Leisure Centres:</u>			
Teesdale LC	1,416	568	848
Spennymoor LC	1,967	394	1,573
Woodhouse Close LC	7,702	234	7,468
Peterlee LC	265	74	191
Abbey LC	45	2	43
Louisa LC	2,004	937	1,067
Other	107	2	105
Outdoor S&L Facilities	51	5	46
	26,825	3,218	23,607
Strategic Programmes			
Minor SPP	1	0	1
	1	0	1
REG Total	170,367	35,270	135,097

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Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 September 2024

Quarter Four, 2023/24
Performance Management Report



Report of John Hewitt, Chief Executive

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To share information about our performance with members, senior managers, employees and the public.
- 2 The report tracks our progress towards achieving the strategic ambitions and objectives set out in our 2023-27 council plan. It contains the most recent performance data available on 31 March. Contextual information relates to activity and events taking place in the fourth quarter of the 2023/24 financial year (January to March). It provides insights into what is going well and the issues we are addressing.

Executive Summary

- 3 We are a key player within the County Durham Together Partnership and are working with our partners to deliver the [County Durham Vision 2035](#). This vision sets out what we want the county to look like over the next decade and beyond. The overall vision is for:

a place where there are more and better jobs, people live long, and independent lives and our communities are well connected and supportive.
- 4 Our [Council Plan](#) sets out how we will contribute to achieving this vision, while continuing to effectively deliver our day-to-day services.
- 5 We refresh our Council Plan every year. Council has now approved the plan for the forthcoming four years ([Council Plan 2024-28](#)). We will commence reporting performance against our ambitions, objectives and priorities for this plan from 1 April.
- 6 We continue to be a 'well-functioning council' in relation to performance. We operate to the characteristics set out in guidance from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)¹. And we are continuing to

¹ [Best Value standards and intervention](#)

develop the following through our performance management processes and the wider Corporate Business Intelligence Review:

- (a) A council-wide approach to continuous improvement, with frequent monitoring, performance reporting and updating of the corporate and improvement plans;
- (b) A Council Plan that is evidence based, current, realistic and enables the whole organisation's performance to be measured and held to account;
- (c) Clear and effective mechanisms for scrutinising performance across all service areas. We regularly report our performance to the public to ensure citizens are aware of the quality of services being delivered.

7 The government has established an Office for Local Government (Oflog). Oflog aims to increase understanding about the performance of local authorities, warn when authorities are at risk of serious failure, and support local government to improve itself.

8 Oflog is bringing together existing data in an informative way through the [Local Authority Data Explorer](#). Their suite of metrics is being continually expanded and will eventually cover all local government responsibilities. The next tranche of data will be added later in the year. We will also add the new metrics to our performance framework and include in our reporting process.

Context

9 We are a large organisation providing a broad range of services. Our operating environment can at times be challenging, influenced by various interconnected factors including inflationary and demand pressures, demographic shifts and the changing needs of our residents, economic uncertainties, and the ongoing impacts of global events.

- (a) We are showing strong economic performance in the county with a range of measures such as the employment rate and unemployment being favourable compared to previous years. Cultural events and venues are well attended with local businesses enjoying their economic impact. A current challenge for the council is transitioning from European funding to national schemes such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for employment initiatives;
- (b) Bus patronage for our park and ride scheme is increasing and public bus services have been impacted by industrial action. Work is going on at national, regional and local levels to improve bus services;
- (c) Homelessness outcomes are generally improving, although we continue to see an increase in people presenting as already homeless. Overall, our leisure centres are performing well and our leisure transformation programme is having a positive impact, although visits remain below target and are still recovering following the pandemic;

- (d) The number of eligible private sector rented properties which are fully licensed or where legal proceedings have been instigated under the selective licensing scheme is now at 48%. Timeliness of repairing all categories of highway defects are better than or near target.

Recommendation

- 10 Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
 - (a) note the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter four performance (January to March), and the actions being taken to address areas of challenge.

Background papers

- County Durham Vision (County Council, 23 October 2019)
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s115064/Draft%20Durham%20Vision%20v10.0.pdf>

Other useful documents

- Council Plan 2023 to 2027 (current plan)
<https://www.durham.gov.uk/media/34954/Durham-County-Council-Plan-2023-2027/pdf/CouncilPlan2023-2027.pdf?m=638221688616370000>
- Quarter Three, 2023/24 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s186162/Q3%202023-24%20Corporate%20Performance%20Report.pdf>
- Quarter Two, 2023/24 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s183015/Q2%202023-24%20Corporate%20Performance%20Report.pdf>
- Quarter One, 2023/24 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s178933/Q1%202023-24%20Corporate%20Performance%20Report%20-%20Cabinet%2013.09.23.pdf>
- Quarter Four, 2022/23 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s174900/Item%204%20Q4%202022-23%202%201.pdf>
- Quarter Three, 2022/23 Performance Management Report
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s166398/Corporate%20Performance%20Report%20Q2%202022-23%20v2.1.pdf>

Author

Steve Evans

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable.

Finance

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality measures are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Climate Change

We have declared a climate change emergency and consider the implications of climate change in our reports and decision-making.

Human Rights

Not applicable.

Crime and Disorder

A number of performance indicators and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with the Safe Durham Partnership and its sub-groups.

Staffing

Performance against a number of relevant corporate health indicators has been included to monitor staffing issues.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly performance management report.

Procurement

Not applicable.



Corporate Performance Report

Quarter Four, 2023/24



Contents (blue text links to sections of the report)

	➤ Executive Summary
Our Economy	➤ Our Economy Performance Report
	Performance Dashboards
	➤ Economic growth: planning applications
	➤ Economic growth: planning application appeals
	➤ Economic growth: business investments and portfolio
	➤ Business support and job creation
	➤ Employability and skills
	➤ Cultural offer: cultural events, venues and libraries
	➤ Cultural offer: cinemas and theatres
	➤ Visitor economy: public transport accessibility to visitor attractions
Our Environment	➤ Our Environment Performance Report
	➤ Sustainable transport
Our People	➤ Our People Performance Report
	➤ Housing vulnerable people: homelessness
	➤ Housing vulnerable people: Disabled facilities grant and local lettings agency accommodation
	➤ Physical activity
Our Communities	➤ Our Communities Performance Report
	Performance Dashboards
	➤ Housing delivery
	➤ Housing standards
	➤ Transport connectivity: public transport patronage, punctuality and satisfaction
	➤ Transport connectivity: accessibility by public transport
➤ Highway maintenance	
Our Council	➤ Our Council Performance Report
	➤ Managing money better
	➤ Data Tables
	➤ Glossary

Executive Summary

- 1 This report shows how we are performing against the priorities set out in our Council Plan 2023-27.
- 2 We are reporting performance on an exception basis with key messages structured around the five thematic areas of, our economy, our environment, our people, our communities, and our council.
- 3 We are reporting the most recent performance available as at 31 March. Contextual information relates to activity and events taking place in the fourth quarter of the 2023/24 financial year (January to March).

Our economy

- 4 The aim of this priority is to create an inclusive economy with more and better jobs, major employment sites which cement our position as a premier place in the region to do business, a good tourism base and cultural offer, and employability support programmes which help people back into jobs or to start their own business. Our children and young people will receive the education and training required to access opportunities.

Going Well

- 5 Employment levels are within the highest levels for 20 years and unemployment remains low.
- 6 There is a growing demand for jobs and the balance within the labour market is starting to shift with more people achieving higher levels of education and training. Average wages for residents within the county are growing.
- 7 Levels of education and training align well with the general demand from local employers, and more than half of the workforce is at a standard to undertake higher education to advance their careers.
- 8 Processing times of planning applications are now on target and in a positive position in relation to all benchmarking groups, the result of the use of Extension of Time Agreements and more robust staffing establishment.
- 9 The proportion of planning applications overturned on appeal remain well within the government's criteria.
- 10 The number of inward investments attracted to the county is significantly higher than the annual target.
- 11 We have recorded increased attendances at all our cultural venues, strengthening our position as the culture county and contributing significantly to the local economy. The number of library borrowers continues to grow and performed better than target.

Issues we are addressing

- 12 The occupancy rate for business floorspace owned by the council is worse than target. However, this is due to new units being established earlier in the year, now these are becoming occupied, overall occupancy is expected to increase in the coming quarters.

- 13 The transition from European Regional Development Fund to UK Shared Prosperity Fund Productivity and Growth Programme has resulted in fewer businesses being engaged as funded schemes come to an end.
- 14 The transition from European Regional Development Fund programmes to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programmes has impacted on business support programmes' outcomes and employability programmes. As these become established and the programmes gain momentum numbers are expected to increase.
- 15 Scheduled maintenance and operational issues have impacted on cinema occupancy and ticket sales. The operational issues have been resolved and the scheduled maintenance is due to be complete in September.

Our environment

- 16 The aim of this priority is to protect our natural environment, including biodiversity and healthy ecosystems. In 2019, the council declared a climate emergency with a commitment to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 and contribute towards a carbon neutral county by 2045. In April 2022, the council declared an ecological emergency and committed to address ecological decline wherever possible. Our county is of significant landscape value and supports unique combinations of plant and animal species.

Going Well

- 17 Park and Ride patronage is better than last year driven by the cessation of free after 2.00pm off-street parking in January 2024.

Our people

- 18 This priority aims to help our residents live long and independent lives and remain in good health for as long as possible. We will protect and improve health by tackling the leading causes of illness and early death, inequalities and the challenges around mental health. We will ensure a sustainable high-quality care market and invest in a multi-million pound programme to transform our leisure centre venues.

Issues we are addressing

- 19 Although performance against homelessness outcomes are generally improving, overall, we remain worse than latest benchmarking averages for both the region and nationally (July to September 2023). Since COVID we have faced challenges with the recruitment and retention of staff. The loss of more experienced staff resulted in a whole new front-line service, impacting upon the outcomes of homeless cases. Positive outcomes were also impacted by more people presenting as already homeless during this period, as well as reduced access to social housing and private rented sector accommodation.

Our communities

- 20 The aim of this priority is to ensure our communities are well connected and supportive of each other, with vibrant and accessible towns and villages which are well-used, clean, attractive and safe. We will support our most vulnerable residents, particularly those isolated or financially vulnerable. We will maintain a strong focus on tackling poverty throughout the cost-of-living crisis.

Going Well

- 21 The net delivery of homes exceeded target this year. This trend is set to continue with the delivery of several large existing sites and a number of new sites that have recently started.
- 22 During 2023/24, 210 empty homes brought back into use, 10 better than the target of 200.
- 23 Response times to rectify highway defects are better than or near target for all three defect categories.
- 24 Highways conditions have shown an improvement due to targeted investment and are better than all benchmarking comparators.

Issues we are addressing

- 25 Forty eight percent of private rented sector properties covered by the selective licensing scheme are either fully licenced, in the process of being licenced, or have had legal proceedings instigated. Our enforcement team continue to target all properties not yet licensed.
- 26 Bus patronage and punctuality were heavily impacted by seven weeks of Go North East industrial action during October and November 2023. Overall satisfaction with bus journey shows County Durham is worse than benchmarking comparators. We continue to work in partnership with other local authorities in the region to implement the North East Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Risk Management

- 27 The government's statutory guidance for best value authorities sets out the characteristics of a well-functioning authority. This details the arrangements that councils should have in place for robust governance and scrutiny including how risk awareness and management should inform decision making. The latest [Strategic Risk Management Progress Report](#) provides an insight into the work carried out by the Corporate Risk Management Group between October and December 2023.

Our Economy

Priority Aims:

County Durham has a thriving and inclusive economy with more and better jobs and fewer people suffering from the hardships of poverty and deprivation. We are continuing to,

- deliver a range of employment sites across the county
- deliver a strong, competitive economy where County Durham is a premier place in the North East to live and do business
- ensure a broader experience for residents and visitors to the county
- ensure young people will have access to good quality education, training and employment
- help all people into rewarding work
- ensure fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation within the county
- improve employment opportunities for disabled people

National, Regional and Local Picture

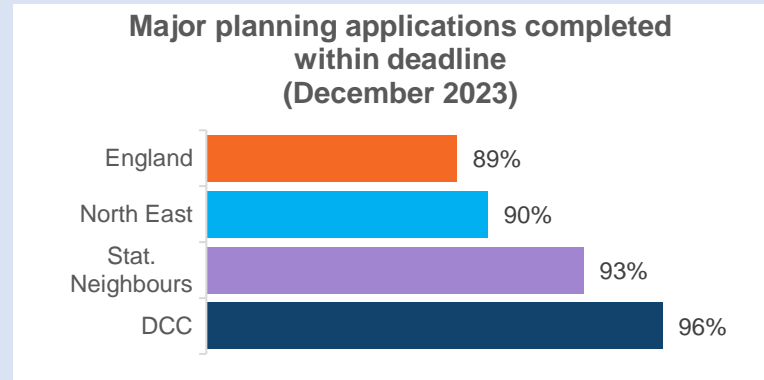
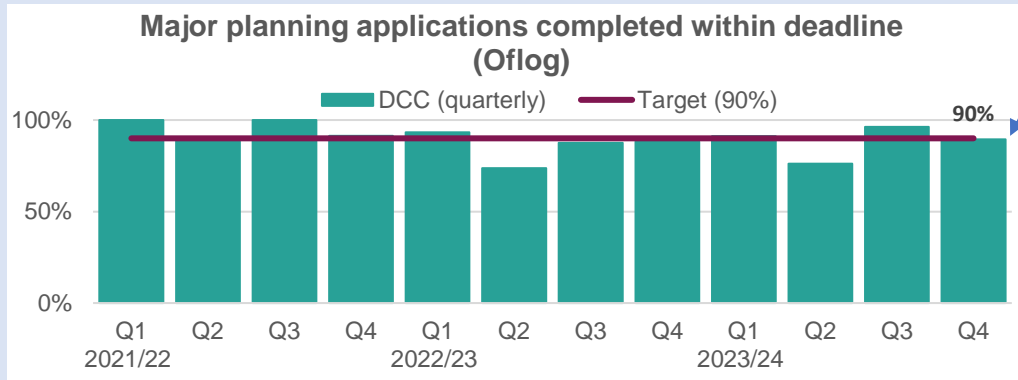
- 28 There is strong economic performance across a range of performance measures. Although, there is variation within the county and across the region compared to national levels.
- 29 There has been strong demand for development land as well as industrial and office premises of all sizes. Jobs have increased 3.7% in the county since 2010. Employment is significantly higher (74.5%) than 20 years ago and unemployment is low (2.2%), which reflects national trends (76% and 3.8% respectively).
- 30 Our manufacturing sector, which has remained strong during the last few challenging years, is innovating, driving green growth and supporting a range of other sectors such as logistics and business services. Businesses have invested to reduce energy usage, costs and carbon emissions. However, the last few years have been particularly challenging for the retail, hospitality and public sector.
- 31 There is a growing demand for workers in the county and the balance of jobs is starting to shift. More people are achieving higher levels of education and training and moving into better paid jobs. We continue to lose many people to urban areas which offer higher wages and a greater choice of private sector jobs.
- 32 Average wages in the county are growing (£29,537 in 2023). However, they remain low compared to the national level (£35,106). The cost-of-living is a long-term problem, especially for the large numbers of people with health conditions, disabilities, and caring responsibilities.

Economic Growth Dashboard: Planning Applications - Oflog measures

(discrete quarterly data / benchmarking data 31 December 2023)

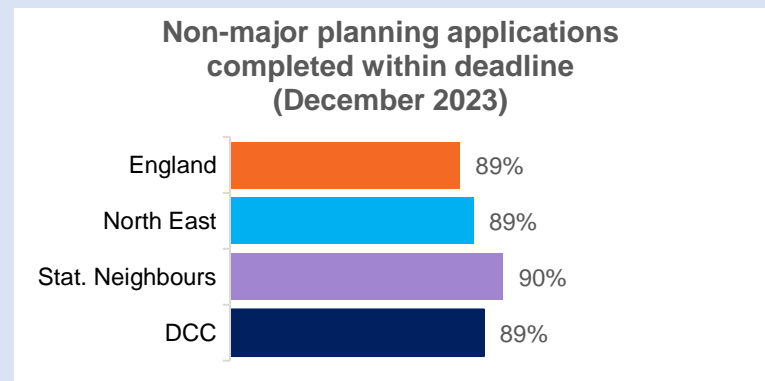
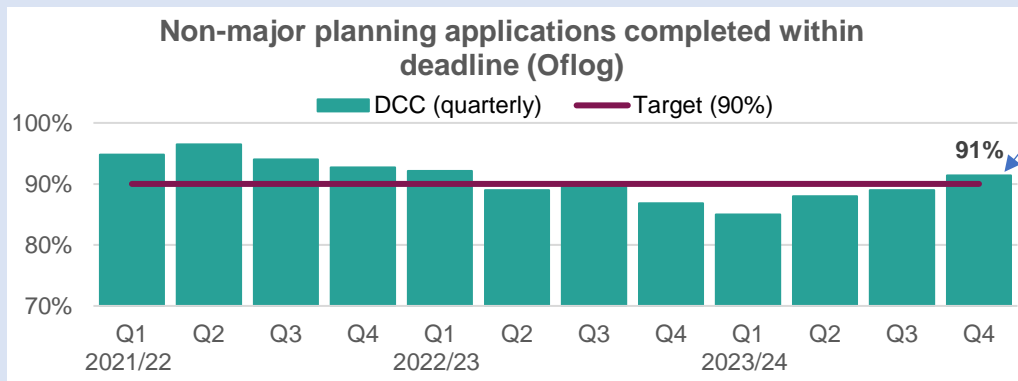
Major Planning Applications

17 out of 19 applications determined to deadline.



Non-major Planning Applications

391 out of 428 applications determined to deadline.



Economic Growth Dashboard: Planning Application Appeals – Oflog Measures

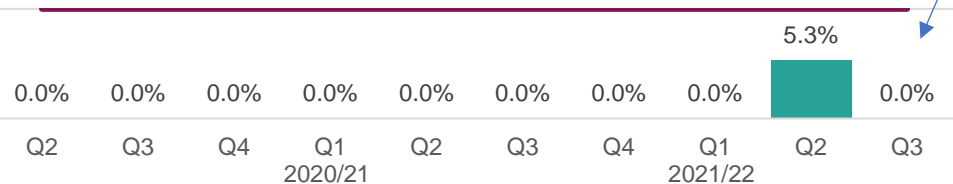
(discrete quarterly data / benchmarking data 31 December 2022)

Major planning applications overturned on appeal

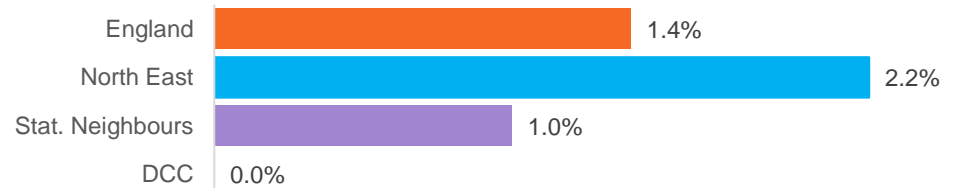
None out of 32 decisions overturned.

Major planning applications overturned on appeal (December 2022 - 15 month lag) (Oflog)

DCC (quarterly)



Major planning applications overturned on appeal (December 2022) - 15 month lag *

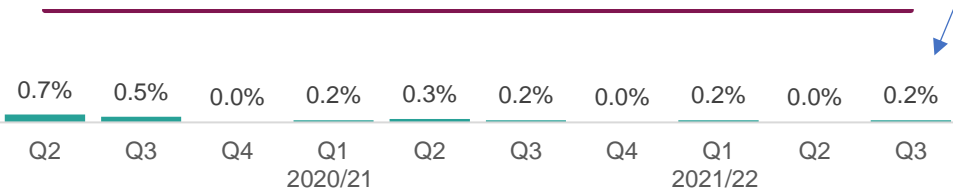


Non-major planning applications overturned on appeal

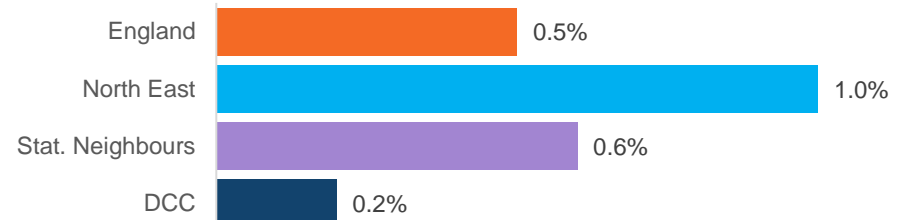
1 of the 441 decisions overturned.

Non-major planning applications overturned on appeal (December 2022 - 15 month lag *) (Oflog)

DCC (quarterly) Target (less than 10%)



Non-major planning applications overturned on appeal (December 2022 - 15 month lag *)



*Significant data lag on planning applications overturned on appeal. Applicants are allowed nine months following a decision to submit an appeal, and the Planning Inspectorate has six months to make a decision.

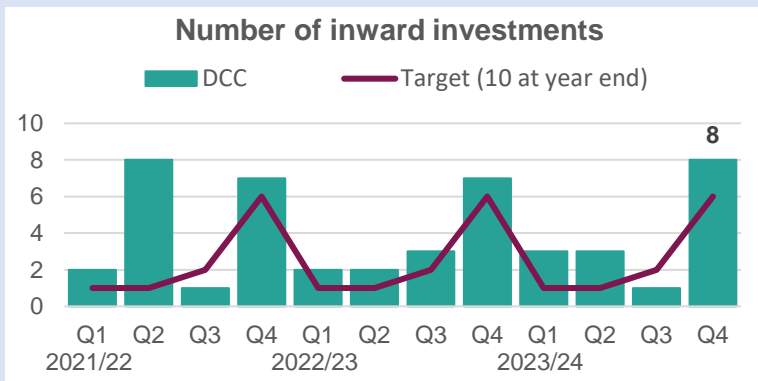
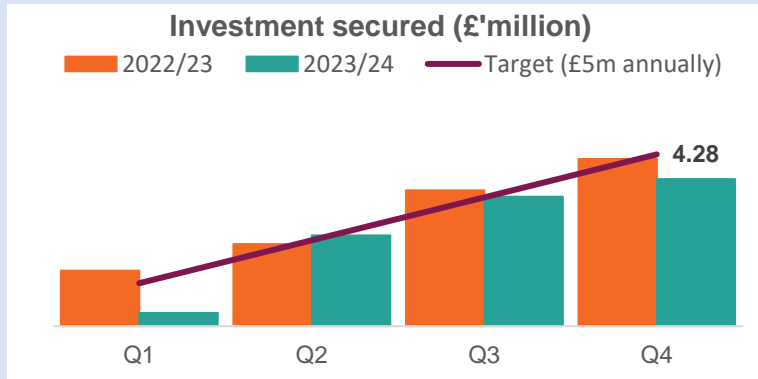
Planning Applications (Oflog measures)

- 33 Use of Extension of Time Agreements, where it is not possible to complete a consideration within the deadline, continues to improve performance. A new team structure has also been implemented to provide a more robust staffing establishment.
- 34 During quarter four (January to March), 90% of major planning applications were determined within 13 weeks (17 of 19 applications). Performance is on par with target (90%) and better than quarter three (88%). Latest benchmarking data (December 2023), shows our performance for that period (96%) to be better than national average (88%), North East average (84%) and our statistical neighbours (90%).
- 35 Between January and March 2024, 91% of non-major applications were determined within deadline (391 of 428), which is better than target (90%). Latest benchmarking data (December 2023) shows our performance for that period (89%) to be on par with both the national average (89%) and North East average (89%) but slightly worse than our statistical neighbours (90%).
- 36 Latest benchmarking data (December 2022) shows our performance for both major and non-major applications overturned on appeal is better than the government's designation criteria (less than 10%) and all benchmarking groups. None of the 32 decisions for major applications were overturned at appeal and only one non-major application out of 441 (0.2%) was overturned at appeal.

Economic Growth Dashboard: business investments and portfolio

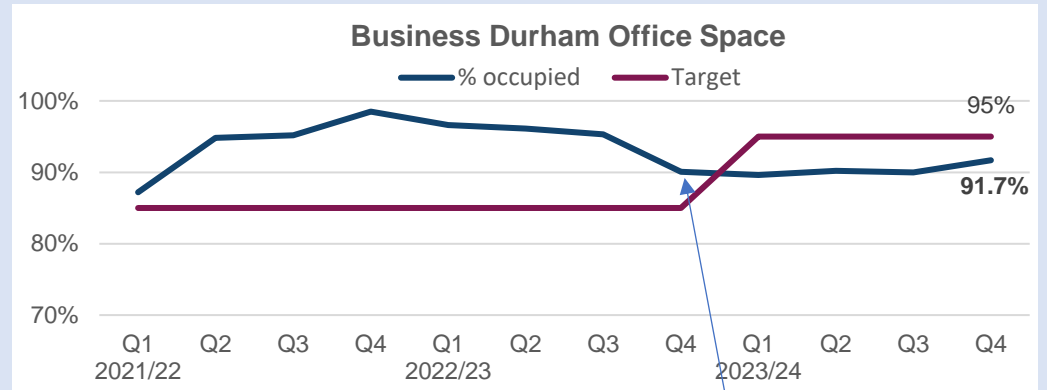
(year to date ending 31 March 2024 / discrete quarterly data)

Investment in County Durham



16 inward investment supported in 2023/24, better than target

Business Portfolio



Additional floorspace added to the portfolio last year reduced the occupancy rate.

Investments

- 37 We secured £506,431 of investment for companies during quarter four, bringing the 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024) figure to £4.28 million – below the annual target of £5 million.
- 38 Investment included Finance Durham Fund, Space Investments, along with grants paid out through the County Durham Growth Fund.
- 39 In 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024) we supported a total of 16 inward investments, better than the annual target (10).
- 40 The eight inward investments supported during quarter four were Equans, PervasID, Bidfood, Octopus Energy, Kingfield Developments, Caddick Construction, NECIT Services Ltd and Brisca Healthcare.

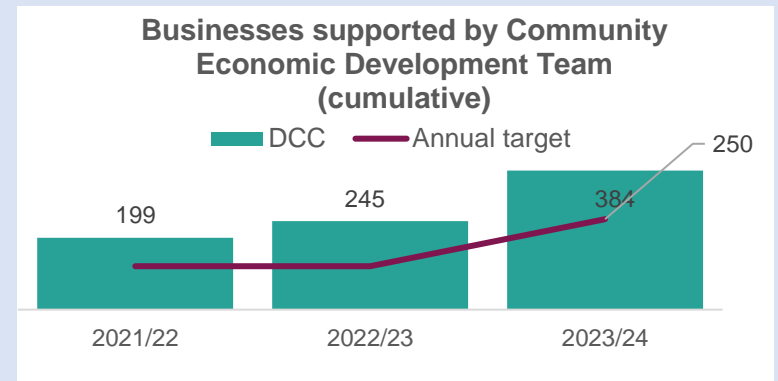
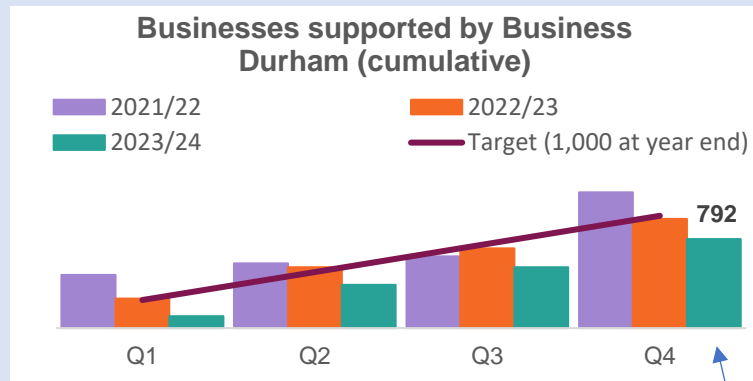
Business Durham floor space

- 41 Floorspace of Business Durham's office and industrial portfolio increased earlier this year, with new units at Station Place and two new offices at the Durham Dales Centre.
- 42 The occupancy rate (91.7%), which includes the additional floorspace, is worse than the target (95%). However, excluding Station Place occupancy is 94.92%. After a slower than anticipated start, occupancy at Station Place is now at 28%. Two further units are reserved which should take occupancy up to 47% in quarter one (April to June 2024). Of the two new offices at the Durham Dales Centre, one is occupied and the other reserved.

Business Support and Job Creation Dashboard

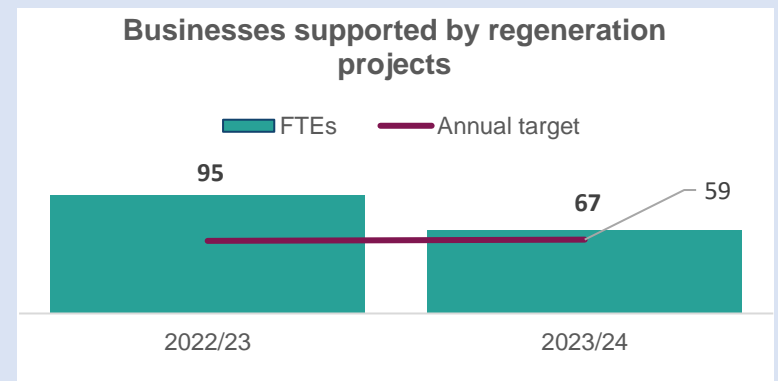
(year to date ending 31 March 2024 / discrete annual data)

Business support

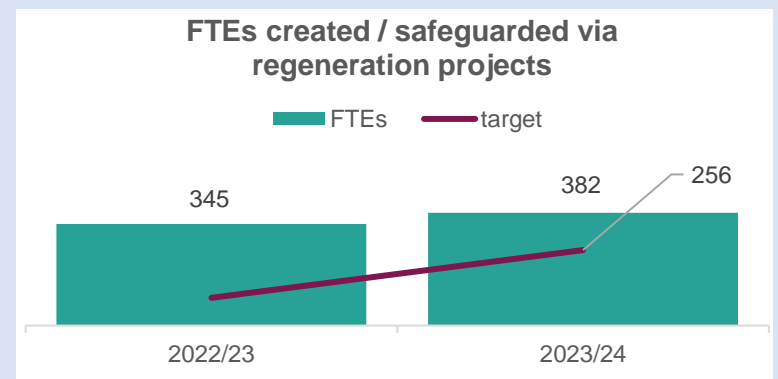
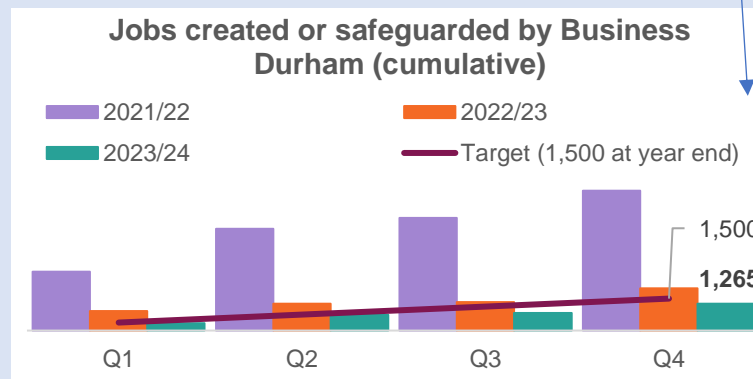


In Q1 - Q3 2023/24 fewer businesses were supported, and jobs created/safeguarded as most ERDF funded schemes ended and there was a transition period to the new UKSPF Productivity and Growth Programme.

Delivery is back on track. Q4 delivery is in line with (business support) or better than (jobs/safeguarded) quarterly target



Jobs created/safeguarded



Businesses supported and jobs created/safeguarded

- 43 In quarter one (April to June 2023) European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding came to an end. This was replaced by the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Productivity and Growth Programme. This transition impacted on delivery in early in the year and subsequently the outturn for 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024).
- 44 Between April 2023 and March 2024, we recorded 792 engagements, worse than the annual target (1,000). In the same period, 1,265 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs were created or safeguarded (1,124 created and 141 safeguarded), also worse than the annual target (1,500).
- 45 However, as the new programme has become established, delivery is now back on track. During quarter four (January to March 2024), 249 businesses were engaged, in line with the profiled target of 250. 445 full time equivalent jobs were created or safeguarded as a result, better than the period target of 375.
- 46 In 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024), we also engaged with 384 new retail businesses, 134 better than target (250); and through our regeneration initiatives² supported 67 businesses, creating or safeguarding 382 FTE jobs. Again, both better than target (+18, +126 respectively).

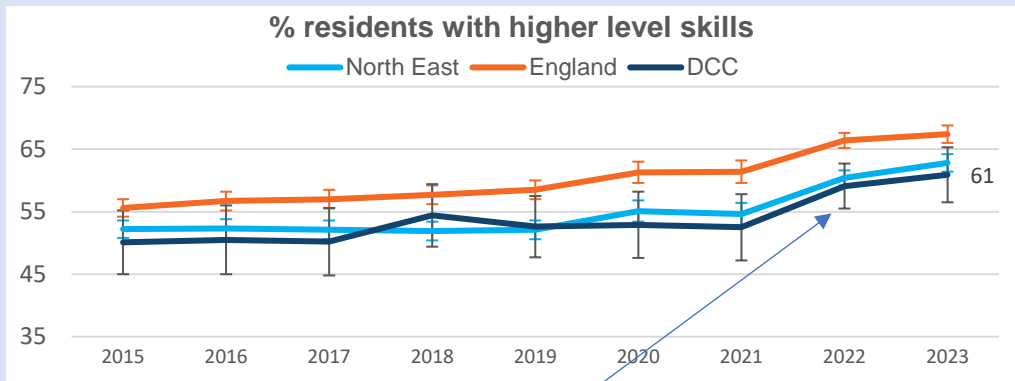
² includes Targeted Businesses Improvement Scheme, Towns & Villages Programme, Seaham Townscape Heritage Programme, Property Re-use Scheme Conservation Area Grant Scheme and Meanwhile Use fund (grants to businesses supporting temporary uses and start up).

Employability and Skills Dashboard

(January – December 2023 / January – March 2024)

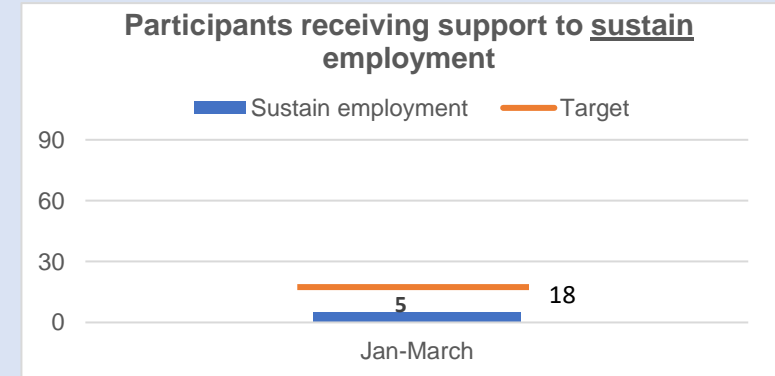
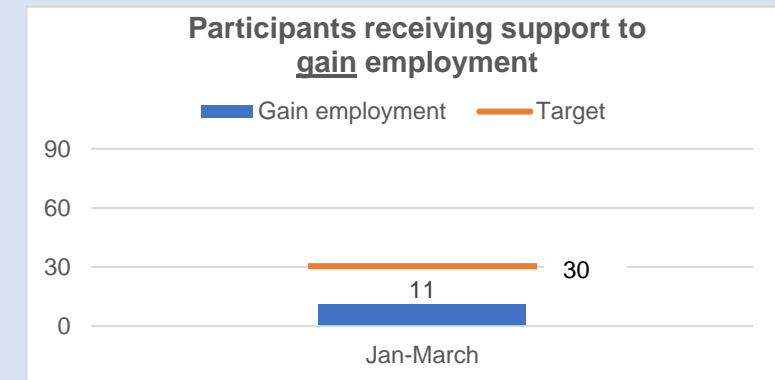
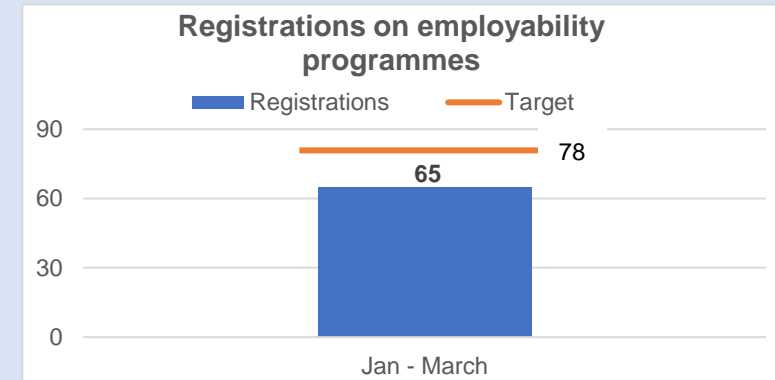
New UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) employability programme outcomes are not comparable with the previous European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) ones.

Higher Level Skills (RQF Level 3+) (Oflog measure)



Change of methodology in 2022 to RQF level 3+ from NVQ level 3+

Employability programmes



Higher level skills (Oflog measure)

- 47 Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) estimates replaced National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) estimates in 2022. Estimates prior to this remain on an NVQ basis. There is no clarity at this point from the Office of National Statistics as to whether the new methodology is comparable.
- 48 In 2023, 61% of 16-64 year olds held qualifications of RQF level 3 or above. This level of education and training aligns well with the general demand from local employers. It also means that more than half of the workforce is at a standard to undertake higher education to advance their careers.
- 49 There is known leakage of those with higher level skills to other places for higher education and professional training as well as semi-professional and professional jobs.
- 50 The Inclusive Economic Strategy aims to tackle the underlying issues from both supply and demand perspectives. Inspiring local people to continue learning and training after they leave school, and supporting business innovations that will provide more high-skilled job opportunities.

Employability programmes

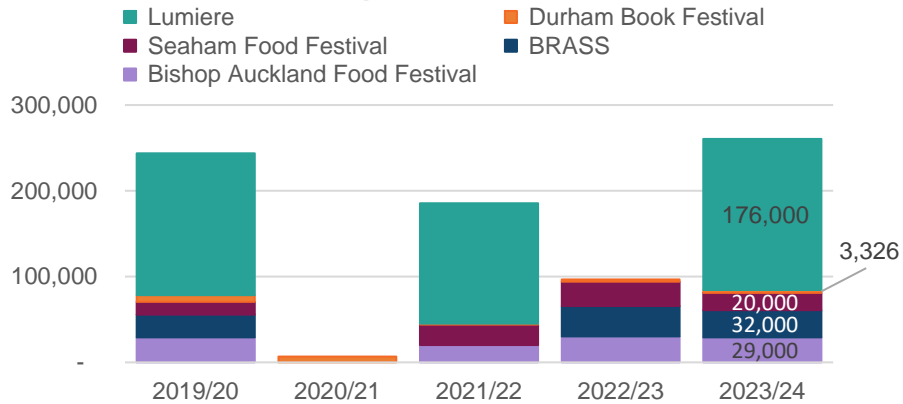
- 51 Our employability programme is now funded by UKSPF and will run from January 2024 to March 2025. The main focus of the new programme is to support economically inactive clients to gain employment, and support employed participants in unstable positions to sustain their employment. Previous ERDF programme outcomes are not comparable.
- 52 During the first quarter of the new programme (January to March 2024), there were 65 referrals to the programme. 11 individuals gained employment and five were supported to sustain unstable employment. Although outcomes are worse than profiled targets, there are a further 13 registrations in the pipeline and another 28 clients pending registrations which will increase numbers going forward.
- 53 The programme is still in its infancy. The people we support have multiple barriers to employment that require intensive support before they are ready to look for and gain employment. A staffing structure and referral mechanisms with Job Centre Plus (JCP) to refer economically inactive clients are in place. We continue to raise awareness of the programme through JCP, community engagement and marketing campaigns. It is expected that numbers will increase in line with projections once the programme gains momentum.

Cultural Offer Dashboard: cultural events, venues and libraries

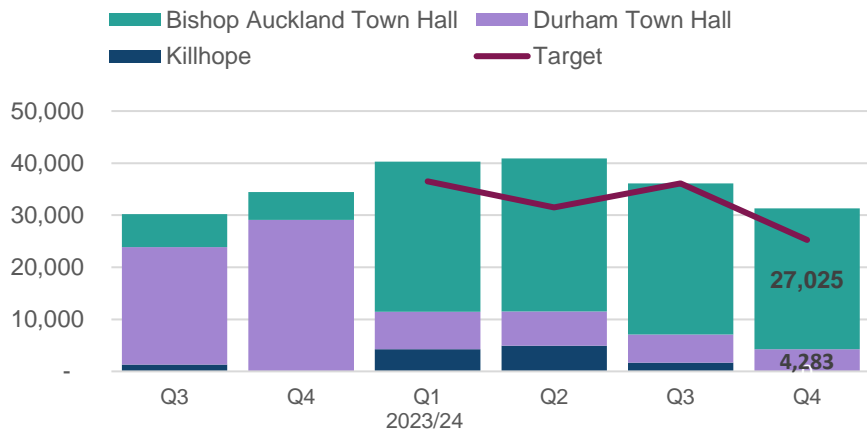
(year to date ending 31 March 2024 / discrete quarterly data)

Cultural events and venues

Attendance at cultural events delivered by Culture, Sport & Tourism

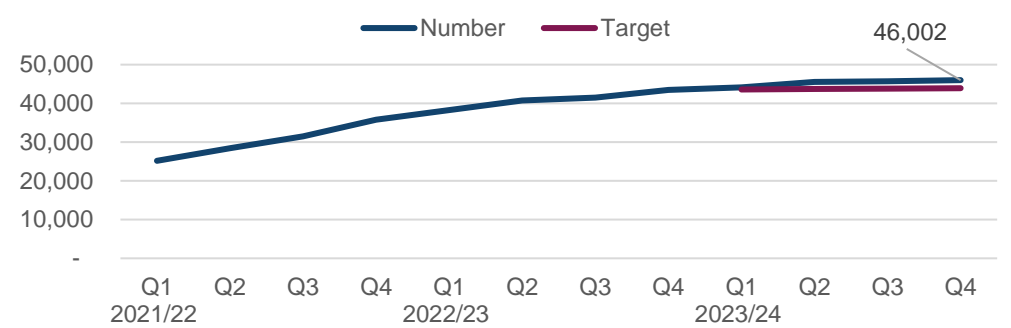


Visits to council owned cultural venues

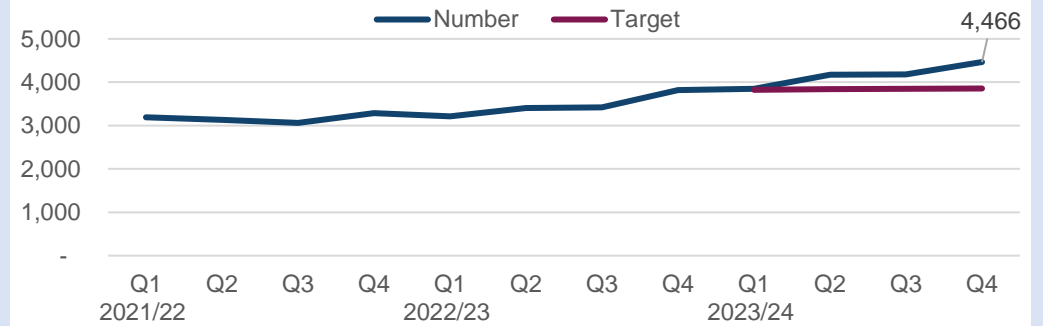


Libraries

Active borrowers (libraries)



Digital borrowers (libraries)



Reporting dates of official figures:

Quarter two	Quarter three
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bishop Auckland Food Festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BRASS Festival Seaham Food Festival Durham Book Festival Lumiere (biennial)

Note - Durham Town Hall was under-reported in 2022/23, issues now rectified.

Cultural events

54 Our continued investment in our cultural events programme strengthens County Durham’s position as the ‘culture county’ and demonstrates the council’s ongoing commitment to culture-led regeneration.

- 3,326 people attended the two-day Durham Book Festival in October 2023, 483 more than 2022. Despite increased attendance, lower average visitor spend and a lower value of contracts placed in County Durham contributed to the festival’s direct economic impact being worse than last year.

Direct economic impact when held in 2022	Direct economic impact when held in 2023	Council investment
£65,077	£46,634	£65,000

- 97% of visitors rated the whole experience positively, and 95% of visitors felt the festival was a worthwhile event for the council to support. Visitors thought the atmosphere at venues and value for money of tickets was a standout strength. The quality of the programme, particularly the variety of authors, was also commended. Authors themselves found the event to be inclusive and welcoming and would welcome future involvement in the festival.
- A full evaluation for Lumiere will be provided at quarter one 2024/25 (April 2024 to March 2025).

55 Preparations are well underway to deliver the cultural events programme for 2024/25 (April 2024 to March 2025). Events include food festivals at Bishop Auckland and Seaham, Durham BRASS Festival and Durham Book Festival.

Cultural Offer Investment

56 We continue to increase the cultural offer within the county. The Story, a new history centre and registration service for County Durham is scheduled to open at Mount Oswald in June. Plans are also well under way to establish a County Durham Culture Trust; a charitable incorporated organisation with our partners to promote the arts, culture and heritage in County Durham.

57 County Durham’s culture and regeneration programme received £1.25 million from the Arts Council (through the National Lottery) to support the three-year programme ‘Into the Light’. We submitted the bid on behalf of the Culture Durham Partnership (of which we are a partner) and Durham University. The funding builds on the £2.6 million already in place. The programme will invest in our county through cultural projects which:

- increase understanding of employment opportunities in the sector amongst children and young people,
- develop skills at all levels,
- create cultural opportunities for artists and communities. and
- develop pride of place.

58 We are also lead authority for the Culture Creative Tourism and Sport portfolio for North East Devolution. Working with local authorities, North of Tyne Combined Authority and partners across the region to make sure ambitious and relevant cultural plans are developed for the North East Mayoral Combined Authority

Visits to council owned cultural venues (BATH, Durham Town Hall, Killhope)

- 59 Visits to our cultural venues increased (+16.6%, 21,160) this year (April 2023 to March 2024) compared to the same period last year (127,475). In the 12 months to March 2024, there were 148,635 visits across our three venues, 18,635 better than target (130,000).
- 60 Despite operational issues at venues throughout the year, for example a broken projector at Bishop Auckland Town Hall (BATH), all venues performed above individual targets. A new café menu at BATH, popular exhibitions and Gallery Days, including International Women’s Day, contributed to high visitor numbers. BATH are also marketing a new wedding package that includes civil ceremonies, which will hopefully generate more wedding bookings.
- 61 Killhope is currently closed for the winter and will remain closed for the 2024 season to carry out essential works. These works, which include repairs to the underground mine, washing floor, mine shop, buddle house, and jigger house will preserve the site and secure its future as a heritage and visitor attraction. Future programming of the site will be revised and refined ready for reopening in April 2025.

Libraries

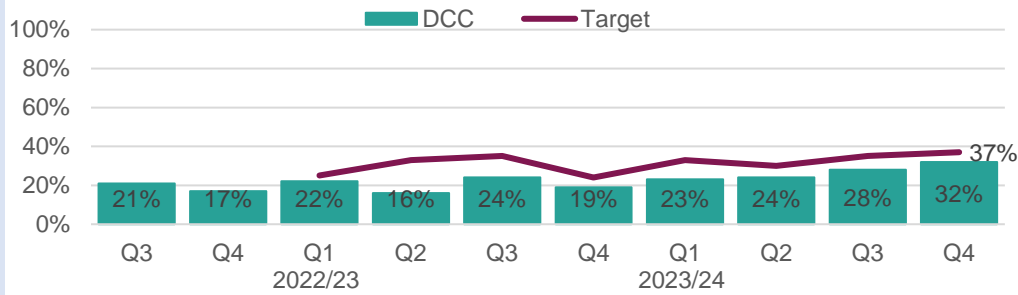
- 62 Both active borrowers and digital borrowers performed better than target again this quarter, with 46,002 (+4.8%, 2,092) and 4,466 (+15.8%, 610) borrowers, respectively.
- 63 The strong growth in digital borrower numbers is mainly due to an increased digital offer. The addition of newspapers to the BorrowBox App which has driven the downloading over 25,000 issues since September 2023.
- 64 Active borrower numbers continue to follow an upward trend quarter on quarter.
- 65 To continue this growth, we have significantly increased engagement with borrowers over the last six months with further initiatives planned for 2024/25 (April 2024 to March 2025). This has included:
- Appointed two part-time library engagement support officers through the ‘Know Your Neighbourhood’ programme (funded to May 2025) to support reading and access to books for those with high health inequalities and chronic loneliness in the north Durham area.
 - Through our Durham Reads project, we held two author events this year, with a further four events scheduled between April 2024 and March 2025, including New Writing North’s Northern Bookshelf Live programme.
 - Monthly reading groups across our libraries, both in person and digital, and encourage extra membership of our VIP (visually impaired) reading group.
 - Continued support of grassroots literature festivals including Durham Book Festival and engagement with local schools through Literacy Trust’s World of Stories initiative to promote The Reading Agency’s Summer Reading Challenge 2024.

Cultural Offer Dashboard: cinemas and theatres

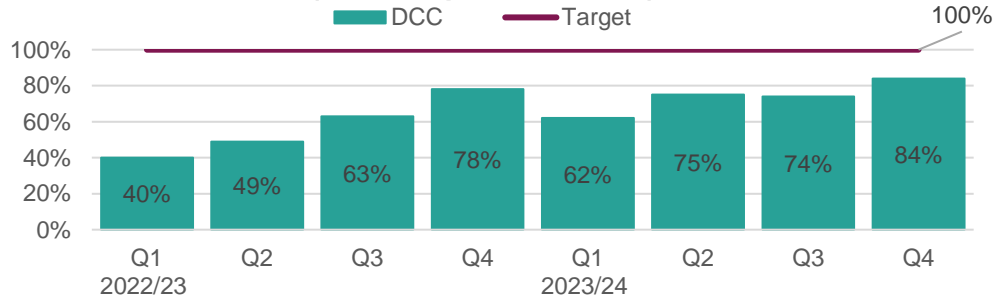
(discrete quarterly data)

Cinemas

Average occupancy of cinema screenings (Gala, Empire and BATH)

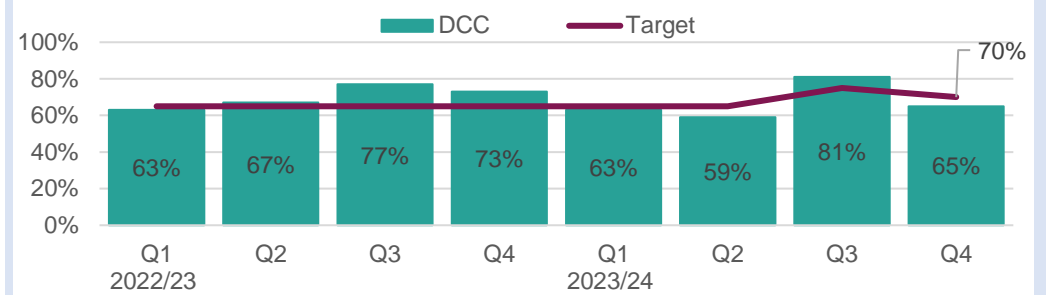


Average yield of cinema screenings (Gala, Empire and BATH)

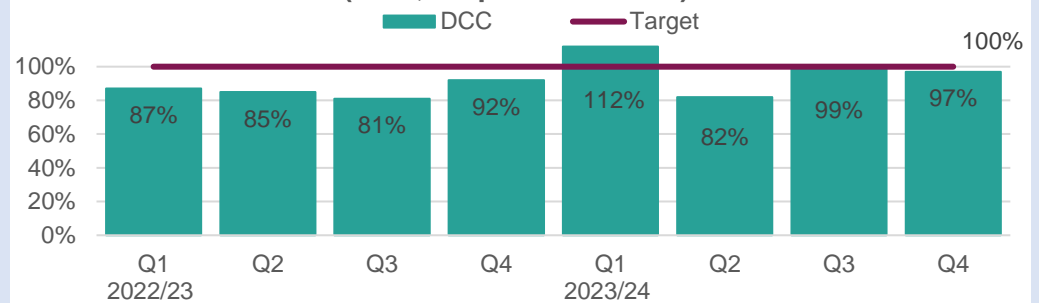


Theatres

Average occupancy of theatre performance (Gala, Empire and BATH)



Average yield of theatre performances (Gala, Empire and BATH)



* yield = proportion of potential income achieved

Cinemas: Gala, Bishop Auckland Town Hall and Empire

- 66 During quarter four (January to March 2024), the average occupancy rate across all cinema screenings was 32%. Worse than target (37%), but better than the same period last year (19%, January to March 2023).
- 67 Similarly, income from projected ticket sales was also worse than target (100%), with sales achieving 84%. However, we are seeing an improvement in sales compared to the same period last year (78%, January to March 2023), specifically at Gala.
- 68 Both occupancy levels and projected tickets sales have been impacted by:
- fewer screenings at Empire due to closure for roof maintenance;
 - ongoing projector issues at Bishop Auckland Town Hall (BATH); and
 - the Gala lift being out of service for six weeks.
- 69 The projector and lift have now been fixed and the Empire is scheduled to reopen in September.

Theatres: Gala, Bishop Auckland Town Hall and Empire

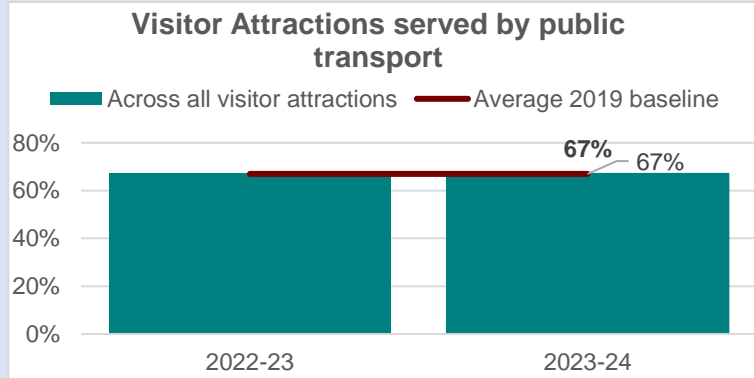
- 70 Average occupancy rate across all theatre performances for quarter four (January to March 2024) was 65%, worse than target (70%). It is also worse than the same period last year (73%, January to March 2023).
- 71 Half of theatre performances at Gala were hires this quarter, with the hirer responsible for marketing. Hires are not as well attended as programmed shows; however, hires generate a guaranteed fee regardless of sales.
- 72 Occupancy levels at Empire were lower than expected, with only one professional show delivered as the venue had to close for essential roof repairs.
- 73 Performances at BATH had an average occupancy of 69%, an improvement from quarter three (53%, October to December 2023).
- 74 Average theatre tickets sales performed well this quarter with 97% tickets sold across all theatre performances. Although worse than target (100%) an improvement on the same period last year. Guaranteed income from hires and ongoing audience development work at BATH, including activity from the new Learning Engagement team has contributed to improved sales.

Visitor Economy Dashboard: public transport accessibility to visitor attractions

(year to date ending 31 March 2024)

Accessibility to visitor attractions

Visitor attractions that have an hourly bus service on Mon-Sat and a Sunday service of at least 5 buses/day, within a walk of no more than 0.5 miles.



Visitor Attraction	Accessible by public transport
Auckland Castle	Yes
Beamish Museum	Yes
Botanic Gardens	Yes
Diggerland	No
Killhope	No
Oriental Museum	Yes
Palace Green Library	Yes
Raby Castle	No
Bowes Museum	Yes
Locomotion	Yes
Hardwick Park	No
Chester-le-Street Cricket Ground	Yes
The Story	Yes
Seaham Sea Front	Yes
Ushaw Historic House and Gardens	No

Accessibility by public transport to visitor attractions

- 75 In 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024), 10 out of the 15 visitor attractions (67%) were accessible by public transport³. This remains unchanged from the 2019 baseline and 2022/23 (April 2022 to March 2023).
- 76 Of the five attractions which are not accessible by public transport:
- Killhope has no bus services.
 - Diggerland, Raby Castle and Ushaw Historic House and Gardens do not have a Sunday service.
 - Hardwick Park is more than half a mile walking distance from the nearest bus service.
- 77 We continue to work in partnership at a regional level with bus operators and other local authorities to implement the North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to transform bus services and improve the bus network.

³ Monday-Saturday and a Sunday service of at least 5 buses per day, within a walk of no more than 0.5 miles

Our Environment

Priority Aims:

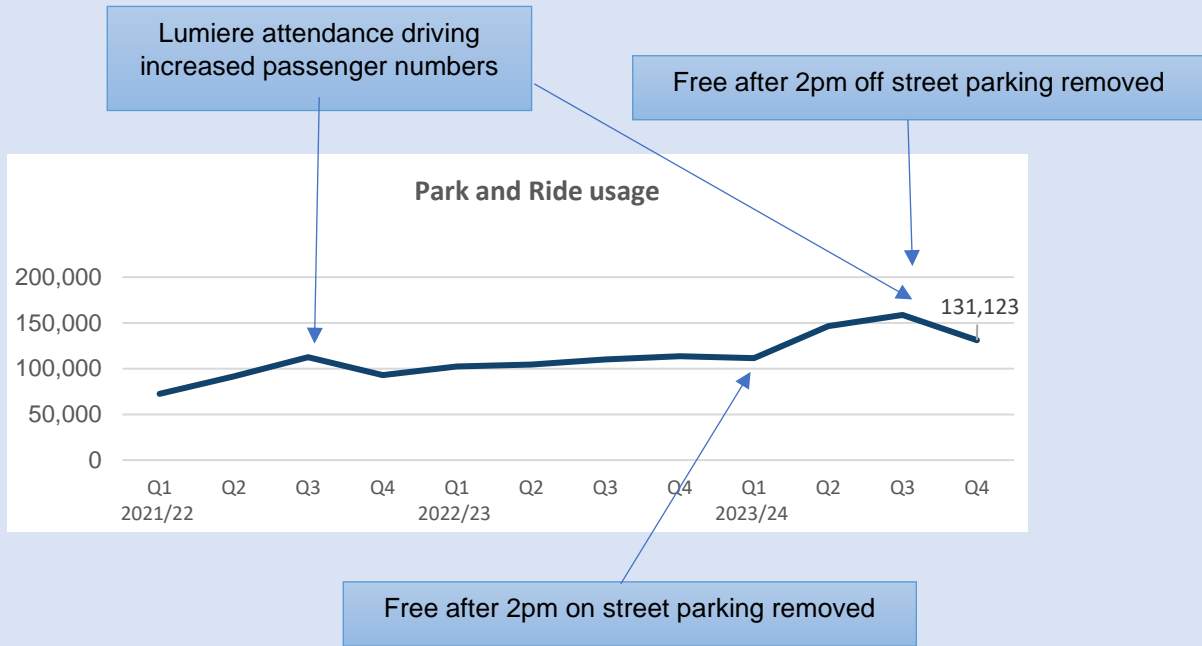
County Durham has taken action to tackle the climate emergency, reduce the impact of pollution and waste on our county and protect, restore and sustain our natural environment. We are continuing to,

- create a physical environment which will contribute to good health
- work with others to achieve a carbon neutral county by 2045
- reduce the impact of waste and pollution on our environment
- protect, restore and sustain our natural environment for the benefit of future generations

Sustainable Transport

(discrete quarterly data)

Park and Ride Usage



Park and Ride Usage

- 78 Quarter four performance is better than the same period last year (113,434 passengers). Mainly driven by the free after 2.00 pm for off street parking ceasing in January 2024.
- 79 Park and ride provision on Sundays at Belmont and Sniperley commenced April 2024. Following a successful application to the government's Transforming Cities Fund the expansion of Sniperley Park and Ride facility has begun. This will increase capacity to nearly 600 spaces (an additional 262 spaces).

Our People

Priority Aims:

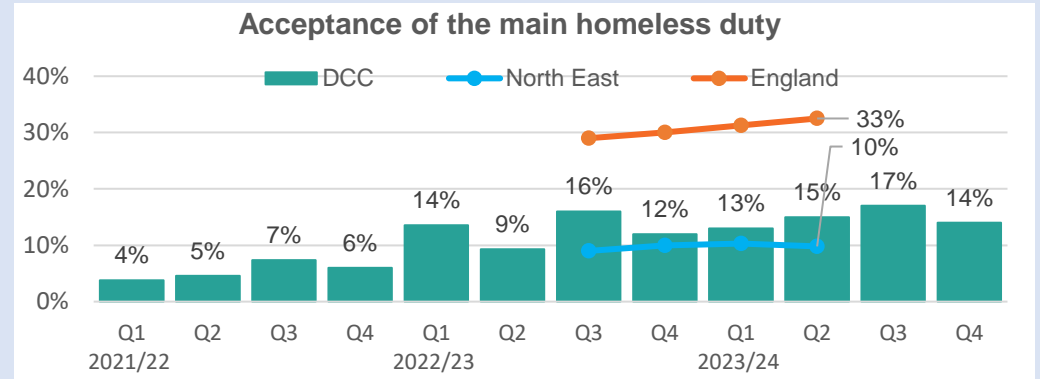
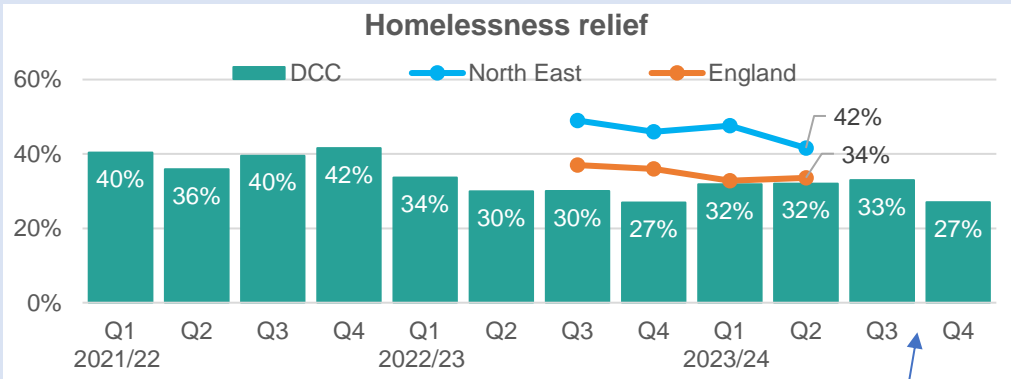
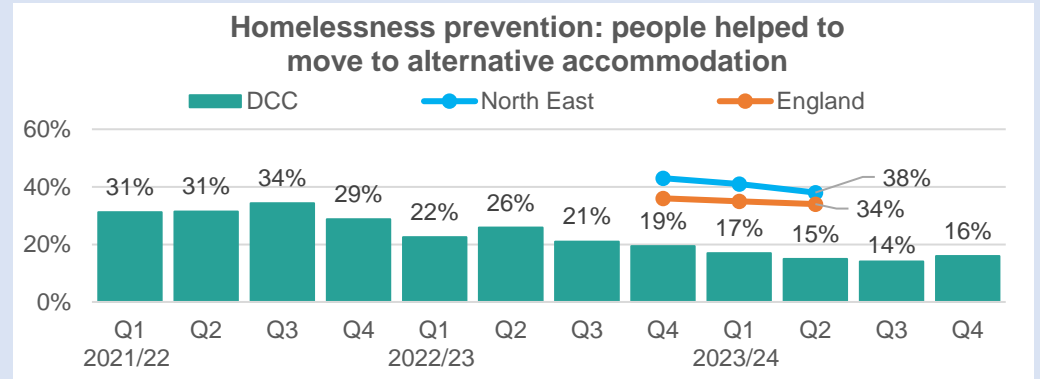
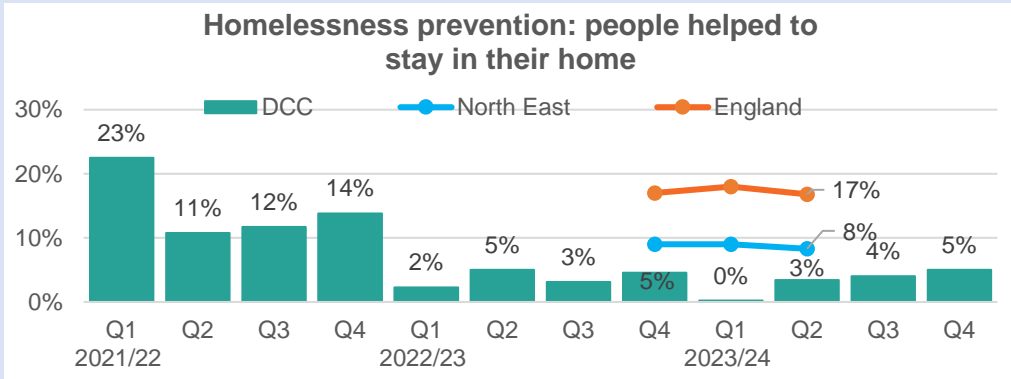
County Durham is a place where people will enjoy fulfilling, long and independent lives. We aim to,

- ensure children and young people will enjoy the best start in life, good health and emotional wellbeing
- ensure children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities will achieve the best possible outcomes
- ensure all children and young people will have a safe childhood
- promote positive behaviours
- better integrate health and social care services
- tackle the stigma and discrimination of poor mental health and build resilient communities
- people will be supported to live independently for as long as possible by delivering more home to meet the needs of older and disabled people
- support people whose circumstances make them vulnerable and protect adults with care and support needs from harm
- protect and improve the health of the local population, tackling leading causes of illness and death

Housing Vulnerable People Dashboard - Homelessness

(discrete quarterly data)

Homelessness

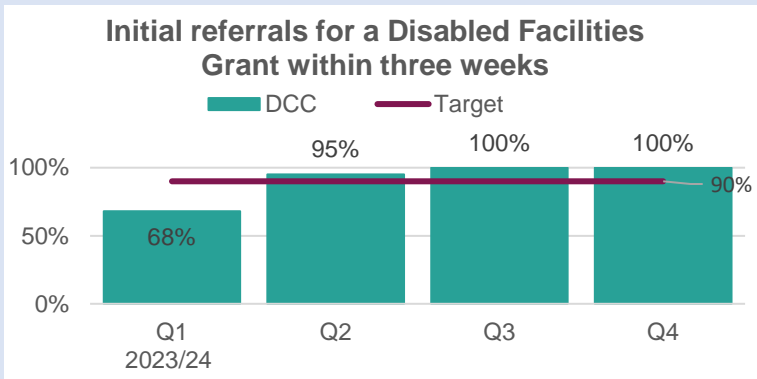


Equates to a difference of two households.

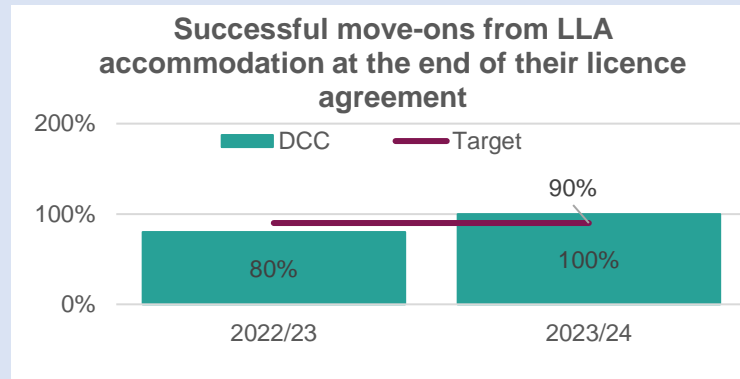
Housing Vulnerable People Dashboard – Disabled Facilities Grants and Local Lettings Agency Accommodation

(discrete quarterly data / as at 31 March 2024 / year to date ending 31 March 2024)

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)



Successful move-ons from LLA accommodation



Equates to 63 clients moved on successfully.

Homelessness

- 80 Within the quarter (January to March 2024) 5% (17) of households were prevented from homelessness and helped to remain in their current home. An improvement compared to last quarter (4%, October to December 2023).
- 81 This improvement is following the appointment of two full-time visiting officers to assist households to remain in their existing accommodation.
- 82 Similarly, in the same period, 16% (52) households were prevented from homelessness and helped to move to alternative accommodation. An improvement compared to last quarter (14%, October to December 2023).
- 83 Most of these households (42%, 22) moved into the private rented sector with the remaining moving into social housing (20%, 15), social rented supported housing (15%, 8) or to live with family and friends/other (14%, 7).
- 84 Twenty-seven percent (230, January to March 2024) of households had their homelessness relieved (where homelessness was not prevented within 56 days or the household was already homeless). Worse than quarter three (33%, 228, October to December 2023). However, this only equates to a difference of two households.
- 85 Procedural changes have previously been made to reduce cases where contact has been lost. However due to an increase in presentations to the service and therefore a higher officer caseload, cases where contact was lost increased. This has resulted in the number of households being relieved of homelessness decreasing.
- 86 Latest benchmarking data (July to September 2023) show that during this period we performed worse than the national and regional averages for these homelessness outcomes.

Homelessness outcome	DCC	Regional	National
Prevention: stay in their home	3%	8%	17%
Prevention: move to alternative accommodation	15%	38%	34%
Relief	32%	42%	34%

- 87 Since COVID we have faced challenges with the recruitment and retention of staff. The loss of more experienced staff resulted in a whole new front-line service, impacting upon the outcomes of homeless cases.
- 88 Positive outcomes were also impacted by more people presenting as already homeless during this period, as well as reduced access to social housing and private rented sector accommodation.
- 89 Durham Key Options (DKO) is undergoing a review to increase allocations for our vulnerable clients. Banding of this client group on DKO is also to be reviewed due to higher numbers of homeless presentations since bandings were agreed. Accommodation secured within the PRS has been lower in County Durham compared to the national average and the service has introduced private landlord insurance aimed at increasing our access to private rented accommodation.
- 90 In quarter four (January to March 2024), the proportion of cases where there has been an acceptance of the main homeless duty (where relief duty has ended, and the client is not intentionally homeless and in priority need) (14%, 115) is better than quarter three (17%, 110).

- 91 There has been increase in the overall number of households requiring a homelessness assessment resulting in the proportion of acceptances of the main homelessness duty improving. The actual number of acceptances of the main homelessness duty only reduced by five households.
- 92 Latest benchmarking data (15%, July to September 2023) show we performed better than the national average (33%), but worse than the regional average (10%).
- 93 Our emerging Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, outlines a commitment to reduce homelessness and an ambition to ending rough sleeping for good. We continue to deliver and develop initiative to achieve this:
- In 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024), we successful rehoused 100% (63) clients from council managed accommodation. Better (10 percentage points) than target. Out of the 63 successful move-ons, 35 (56%) of cases were previously rough sleepers.
 - An increase in successful Durham Key Options appeals has allowed clients in council managed accommodation to access social housing securing long-term accommodation.
 - We are currently identifying accommodation options and will commence the support contract procurement process summer 2024 for the Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP). To increase supply of high-quality accommodation (32 units) and support to people either rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping.
 - In 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024), we secured 26 temporary accommodation units of mixed type and size. In total 40 properties will be delivered by the scheme funded through self-financing and Homes England.
- 94 We supported 54 ex-offenders to secure accommodation as part of our Accommodation for ex-Offenders (AfEO) initiative during 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024). 46 continue to remain in their tenancy and 22 sustained it for more than six months.

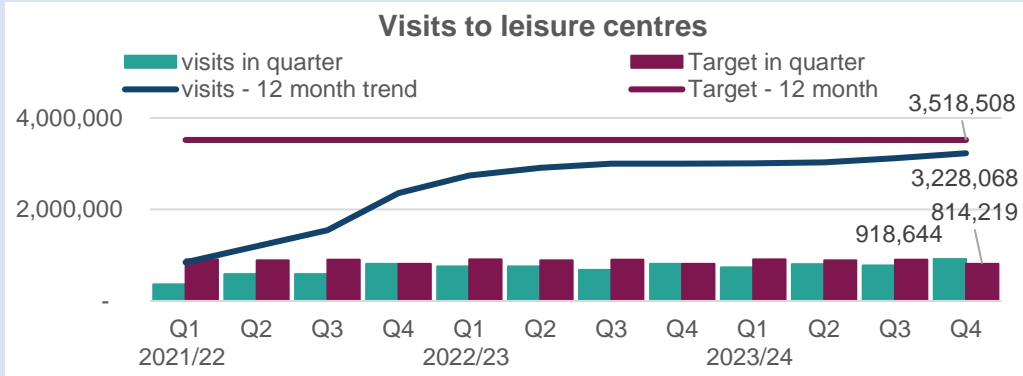
Disabled Facilities Grants

- 95 During quarter four, 100% of clients were contacted within three weeks of receiving a referral for a Disabled Facilities Grant. Ten percentage points above target, and on par with quarter three (100%, October to December 2023).
- 96 Performance has improved from the 68% at quarter one (April to June 2023) due to dedicated officers being allocated responsibility to deal with first contact.

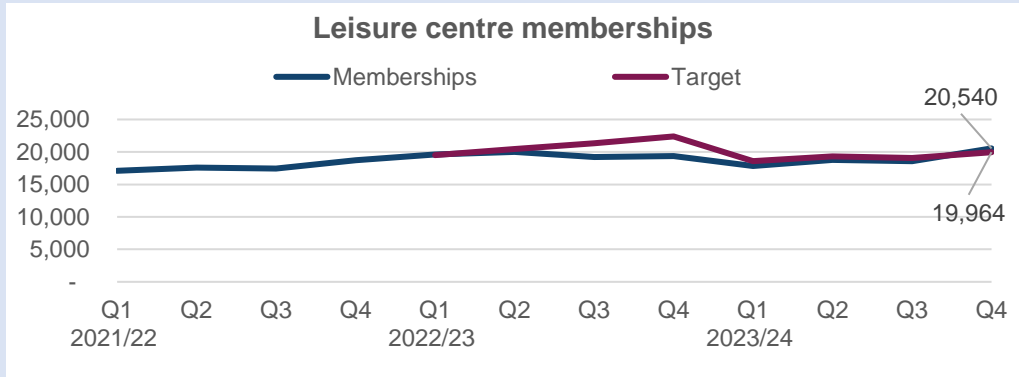
Physical Activity Dashboard

(discrete quarterly / as at 31 March 2024 / year to date ending 31 March 2024)

Leisure centre visits



Leisure memberships



Leisure Centre Visits

- 97 Our substantial leisure transformation programme continues to deliver upgraded and new facilities. Abbey leisure centre, the first site to undergo transformation works, fully opened to the public in July 2023. Since reopening there have been nearly 94,000 visits (August 2023 to March 2024) a 192% increase on the same period pre-transformation (32,035, August 2021 to March 2022).
- 98 Visits across all leisure centres this year (3,228,068, April 2023 and March 2024) have improved on last year (April 2022 and March 2023) by 7.6% (+228,547).
- 99 However, site closures, disruption to services and our ongoing recovery following the pandemic have resulted in this being 14.8% (-518,985) worse than target (3,518,508). Targets were based on a fully operational service. This will be reviewed for 2024/25 (April 2024 to March 2025) to reflect ongoing disruption at some sites and positive impacts following our improvement works.
- 100 Visits were also affected by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis that has been a real challenge for our communities.
- 101 Moving forward, our transformation programme is expected to have a positive impact across our leisure centres. It is anticipated that the upward trend seen at quarter four (January to March 2024) and at Abbey leisure centre will continue for other transformed sites.

Leisure Centre Memberships

- 102 Our leisure membership sales continue to increase, despite disruption to services and transformation programme site closures. The highest growth period was January 2024. At the end of March 2024, we had 20,540 members. 756 better than target (19,964), and 1,989 better than quarter three (18,551, December 2023).
- 103 In September 2023 we launched a digital enquiry system for all leisure centres. This has received over 11,000 enquiries since it launched and the impact of this has been reflected in quarter four sales.
- 104 We also launched a brand-new website for thrive and improved our digital advertising with the support of our digital marketing partner. They have provided us with dedicated capacity to market our products, and most importantly industry expertise. Following their advice, we have changed our discount / promotion led approach and implemented a 'campaign' led approach. This has reduced our advertising spend per membership to 72p, the lowest rate that TA6 has produced with any leisure operator.
- 105 To continue improving, keep our members longer and reduce cancellation:
- We will also build on our new 'onboarding' retention system that launched in September 2024.
 - We are developing a new customer app that will provide customers with a one stop shop for Thrive. Customers will be able to book activities, purchase memberships or invite a friend to join Thrive.

Our Communities

Priority Aims:

Durham is a great county in which to live, with flourishing communities which are connected and supportive of each other. We aim to,

- ensure standards will be maintained or improved across County Durham's housing stock
- have towns and villages which are vibrant, well-used, clean, attractive and safe
- ensure people will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities
- ensure communities will be able to come together and support each other
- deliver new high-quality housing which is accessible and meets the needs of our residents
- ensure our rural communities will be sustainable whilst maintaining those characteristics which make them distinctive
- narrow the inequality gap between our communities
- build inclusive communities

National, Regional and Local Picture

- 106 Of the approximate 250,000 dwellings⁴ across the county, 63% are owner-occupied, 20% are social rented and 17% private rented.
- 107 Median house prices across the county (£125,000 between April 2022 and March 2023) are consistently lower than those across the North East (£152,000) and the England (£290,000)⁵. Although median house prices across the county have increased by 166% since 2000, from £47,000 to £125,000, there is significant variation.
- 108 County Durham is a large and diverse county with some of the lowest population densities in the country: of 300 recognised settlements, only 23 have a population of 5,000 or more.

Land Type ⁶	% of the county	% of the population	People per hectare ⁷
Rural	57%	7%	0.3
Rural town and Fringe	32%	37%	2.7
Urban	11%	56%	12.1

- 109 Accessing opportunities across the county continues to be priority. The county has good North-South connectivity both by road and rail, and the improved A66 connects east to west. However, some areas have limited public transport or major roads, especially in more rural areas. Our large, rural geography means residents are often reliant on cars for commuting. 80% of those surveyed for the [Inclusive Economic Strategy](#) said they travel to work by car, compared to 5% who use public transport.

⁴ [Durham Insight - Housing](#)

⁵ [Median House Prices](#)

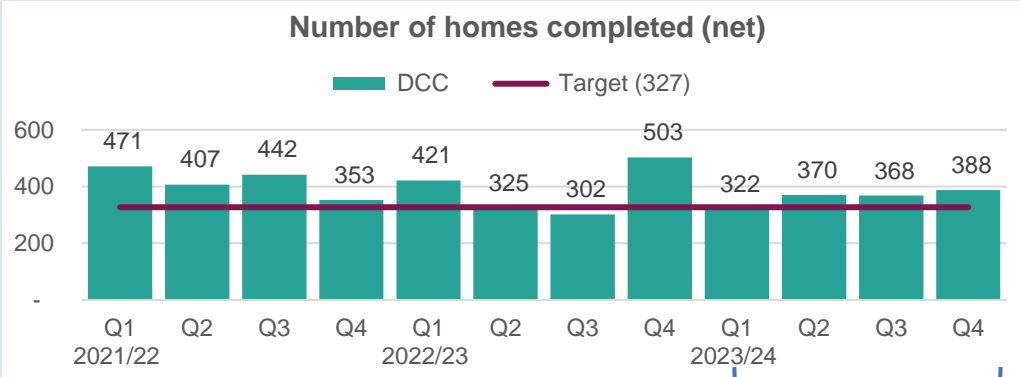
⁶ [Rural Urban Classification for LSOAs 2011](#)

⁷ [Durham Insight - Rural](#)

Housing Delivery Dashboard

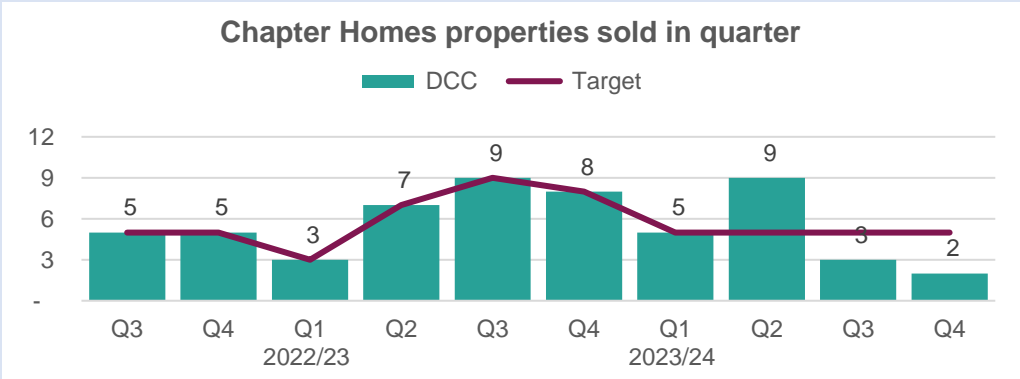
(discrete quarterly data)

Net Homes Completed



1,448 completions in 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024)
140 better than target (1,308)

Chapter Homes



19 properties sold in 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024)
One less than annual target (20)

Net homes completed

- 110 The County Durham Plan support the delivery of housing to meet identified need and ensure the right type of housing.
- 111 During quarter four (January 2023 to March 2024), 388 homes were completed, 61 better than the profiled target (327). Bringing the total for this year (April 2023 to March 2024) to 1,448, exceeding the annual target (1,308) by 140.
- 112 This trend is set to continue with several large sites across the county continuing to be built out. A number of new sites have also recently started and are seeing the first completed units on site.

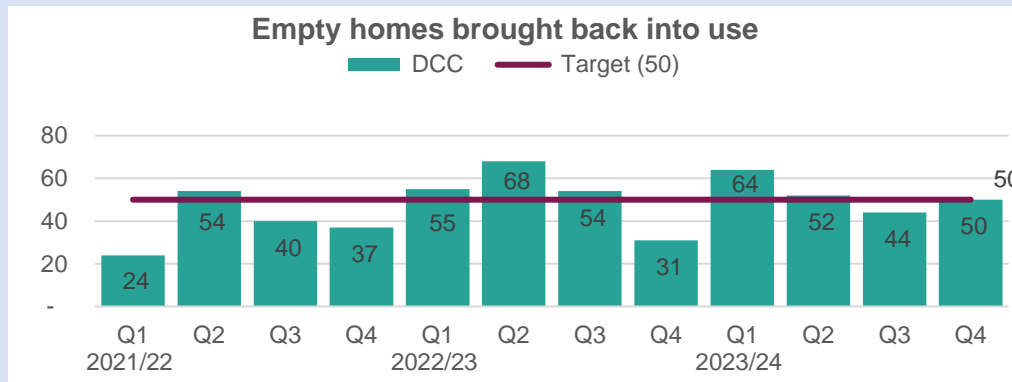
Chapter Homes

- 113 Nineteen properties were sold during this financial year (April 2023 to March 2024), marginally behind the annual target (20). Six extra homes were projected to be sold to the council bringing the annual outturn above target. These are now expected to complete in quarter one (April to June 2024) to allow for the required internal approvals and applications for external funding.

Housing Standards Dashboard

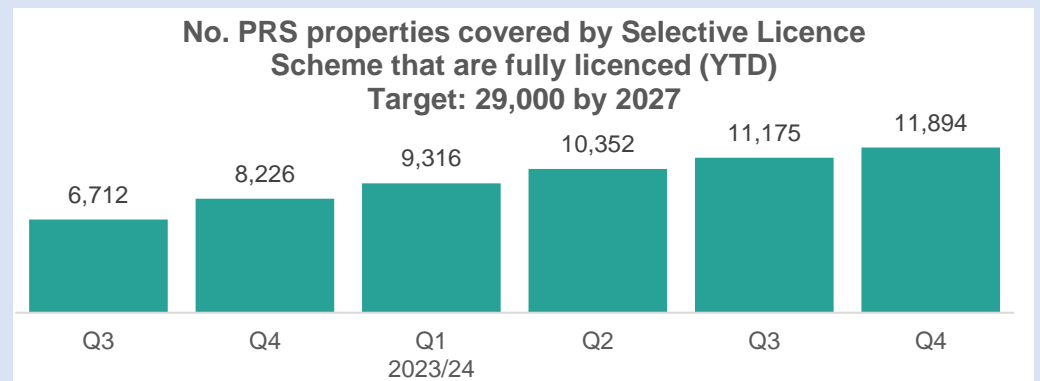
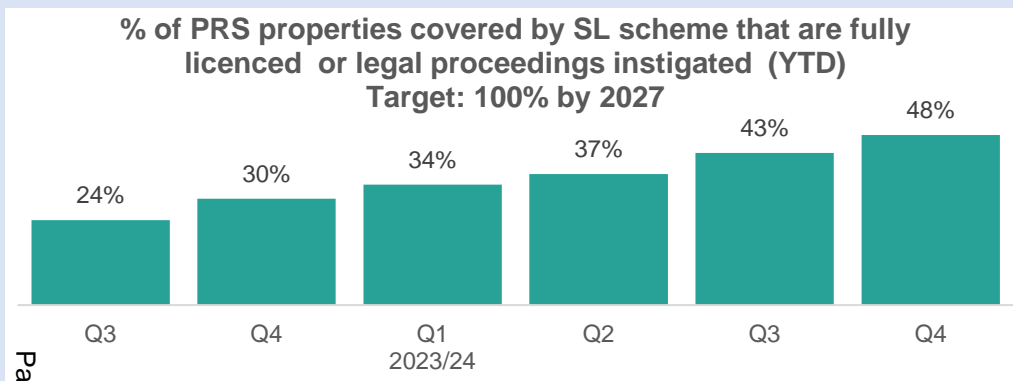
(discrete quarterly data / as at 31 March 2024)

Empty Homes



210 empty homes brought back into use in 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024)
10 better than target (200)

Selective Licensing (Private Rented Sector properties - PRS)



Empty Homes

- 114 During this financial year (April 2023 to March 2024), 210 empty homes were brought back into use, 10 better than target (200), and a slight improvement on last year (208).
- 115 Various methods were used to bring empty homes back into use:
- 85% (178) via advice, support, assistance and negotiations;
 - 10% (20) via Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme;
 - 4% (eight) via empty homes interest free loans; and
 - 2% (three) via intervention relating to council managed stock and one enforced sale of a property.

Selective Licensing

- 116 As at 31 March 2024, of the estimated 29,000 private sector properties covered by the scheme, 11,894 (41%) are now fully licenced. A further 1,302 (4%) applications were being processed and four live temporary exemptions and 347 family exemptions are in place.
- 117 A further 424 properties are under investigation for not having a licence. Four prosecution files relating to 11 properties, are being progressed, with one successful prosecution and one going to retrial. As at 31 March, eight civil penalties had been issued and 64 notices of intent to issue a civil penalty served.
- 118 14,071 (48%) of private rented sector properties covered by the scheme are either fully licenced, in the process of being licenced, or have legal proceedings instigated.
- 119 We continue to target private rented sector modelled properties that have not yet been licenced. Staff are in place to focus on identifying landlords of unlicensed properties using numerous data sources and carry out enforcement proceedings. We are also focusing efforts in Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) where licence numbers are lower. A new financial penalty policy is now in place to assist with enforcement action (as an alternative to prosecution) and encourage unlicensed landlords to apply.

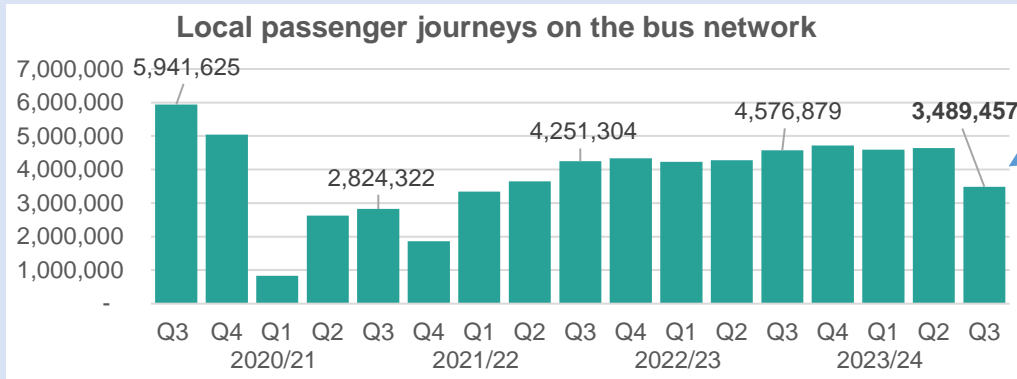
ASB in Selective Licensing Areas

- 120 We continue to experience issues with one element of our ASB recording system so are unable to provide an update in relation to this indicator. We are working to resolve the issue. If a resolution cannot be found the baseline will need to be reset based on the remaining elements of the available ASB data.

Transport Connectivity Dashboard: public transport patronage, punctuality and satisfaction

(discrete quarterly data / year to date ending 31 December 2023)

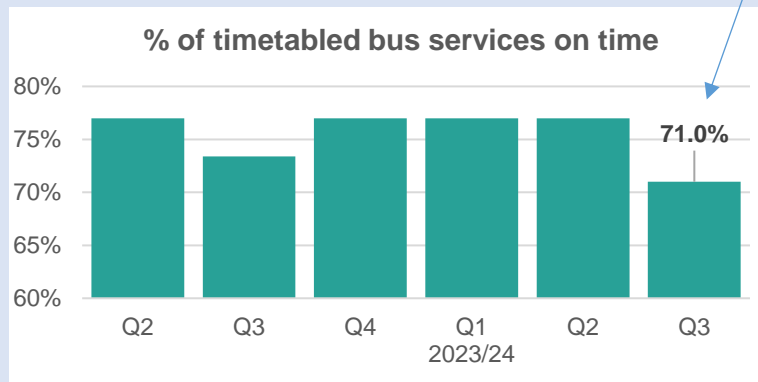
Public Transport Patronage



Passenger numbers were heavily impacted because of Go North East industrial action.

Punctuality

Punctuality was heavily impacted as a result of Go North East industrial action.



Satisfaction: 'Your Bus Journey 2023' – Transport Focus Survey

Transport Focus nearest neighbours benchmarking rural group: County Durham, Cornwall, East Riding of Yorkshire, Norfolk, Northumberland, Oxfordshire and Suffolk.

Your Bus Journey 2023	Durham	Rural	All England
Overall Satisfaction	75%	80%	80%

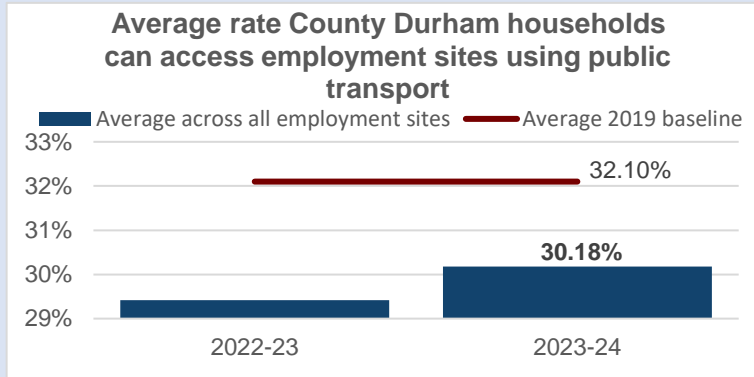
Not comparable with previous Transport Focus Survey

Transport Connectivity Dashboard: Accessibility by public transport

(discrete annual data)

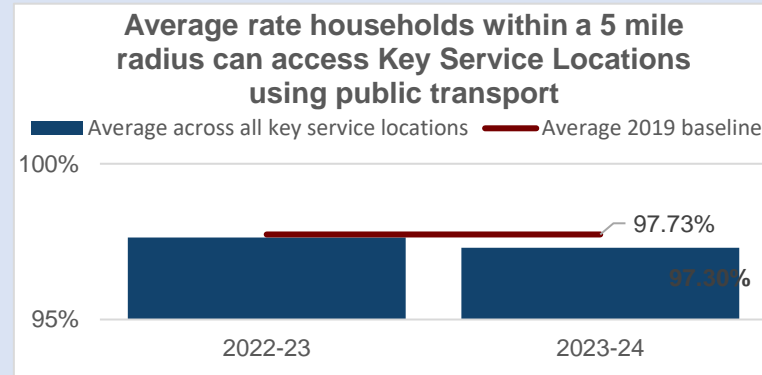
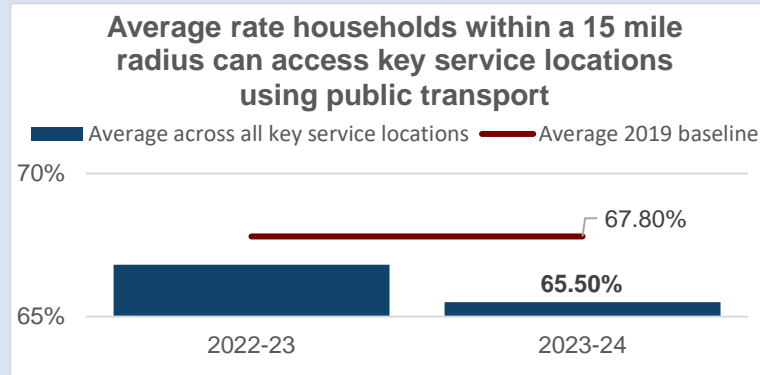
Accessibility to Employment Sites

Employment site that can be accessed before 8.30 and within 1 hr by bus



Accessibility to Key Service Locations

Key service locations that can be accessed between 10 – 12 on a Tuesday within 1 hour.



Public transport patronage and punctuality

- 121 Bus patronage continues to be worse than pre-Covid levels and is not likely to return to those levels in the medium term.
- 122 Passenger numbers (3,489,457, October - December 2023) were heavily impacted by seven weeks of Go North East industrial action during October and November 2023. Consequently, overall passenger numbers were at around 75% of the previous year (4,576,879, October - December 2022).
- 123 In the same period, journeys on smaller operators saw an increase of 57% on services which run alongside Go North East routes.
- 124 Punctuality deteriorated (71.0%, October - December 2023) compared to the same period of the previous year (73.4%, October - December 2022) because of the Go North East industrial action.
- 125 Buses operated by other companies saw increased passenger numbers slowing down boarding times, alongside increased car usage, impacting on their ability to operate to scheduled timetables.
- 126 We continue to implement the North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in partnership with bus operators and other councils to encourage patronage growth and improve punctuality.

Bus journey satisfaction

- 127 Overall satisfaction with bus journey shows County Durham (75%) is worse than the rural statistical neighbours (80%) and national (80%) averages.
- 128 Satisfaction with value for money is the only element where County Durham at 74% is better than the rural statistical neighbours (69%) or national (67%) averages.

Your Bus Journey 2023 - satisfaction with....	Durham	Rural	All England
value for money	74%	69%	67%
bus stop where you caught the bus	69%	75%	76%
length of time you had to wait for bus	60%	69%	68%
punctuality of bus at stop (arriving on time)	64%	72%	70%
bus driver	84%	87%	85%
length of time journey on bus took	80%	80%	81%

- 129 Satisfaction by operator in County Durham indicates:

Your Bus Journey 2023 satisfaction by operator	Go North East	Arriva
Overall Satisfaction	82%	70%
Satisfaction with value for money	69%	73%
Satisfaction with bus driver overall	86%	84%

- 130 We continue to work in partnership at a regional level, with bus operators and other local authorities, to implement the North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to transform bus services and improve the bus network.
- 131 Further analysis and research will be undertaken to understand the initiatives that contributed to higher performance. For example, the £2 fare and other ticketing initiatives.

- 132 The 2024 results will track changes in passenger satisfaction, identify any trends and link these to BSIP funding and interventions.
- 133 The Transport Focus ‘Your Bus Journey’ passenger satisfaction survey was launched in January 2023 and ran until December 2023. It is not comparable with from the previous Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey which ran until 2019.
- 134 Challenges in delivering bus services and progress against implementing the National Bus Strategy differ across transport authorities. To benchmarking results Transport Focus has split areas into four types: urban metropolitan, urban other, semi-rural and rural. County Durham has been placed in the rural group alongside Cornwall, East Riding of Yorkshire, Norfolk, Northumberland, Oxfordshire and Suffolk.

Accessibility to employment sites and key service locations

135 The average rate for accessibility to employment sites across County Durham for households using public transport in 2023/24 (30.18%, April 2023 to March 2024) is worse than the average 2019 baseline (32.10%) but better than 2022/23 (29.43%, April 2022 to March 2023).

136 Of the eighteen employments sites:

- Six exceeded their 2019 baseline in 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024).

Employment Sites	2019 baseline	2022/23	2023/24
Peterlee Industrial Estate	24.99%	25.56%	25.94%
Merchant Park	11.97%	13.55%	17.25%
Number One Industrial Estate	26.22%	27.70%	30.30%
Spectrum Business Park	20.58%	23.62%	25.49%
Forrest Park	13.58%	12.55%	15.11%
Belmont Business Park	41.13%	40.55%	43.07%

- Accessibility at one employment site; Jade Business Park, remains unchanged from its 2019 baseline (0.05%) and 2022/23 (0.05%, April 2022 to March 2023).
- The remaining eleven sites are worse than their 2019 baselines.

Employment Sites	2019 baseline	2022/23	2023/24
Aykley Heads	62.54%	57.17%	56.48%
NetPark Business Park	34.96%	25.36%	23.01%
Integra 61	35.79%	24.89%	25.74%
Aycliffe Business Park	22.45%	20.64%	19.13%
Bracken Hill Business Park	24.12%	22.91%	22.74%
Dragonville	54.84%	50.28%	50.96%
Drum Industrial Estate	23.17%	22.30%	22.55%
Durham Science Site	57.69%	49.77%	52.58%
Durham Way (NA Trading Estate)	22.45%	20.64%	19.13%
Abbey Road	50.40%	45.48%	46.47%
Abbey Woods	50.74%	46.46%	47.21%

137 The average rate for accessibility to the two key service locations of Bishop Auckland and Durham City by public transport for households within a 15-mile radius in 2023/24

(65.50%, April 2023 to March 2024) is worse than the average 2019 baseline (67.80%) and 2022/23 (66.81%, April 2022 to March 2023).

Key Service Locations within a 15-mile radius	2019 baseline	2022/23	2023/24
Bishop Auckland	55.14%	53.46%	53.76%
Durham City	80.46%	80.16%	77.24%

138 The average rate for accessibility to the other key service locations across County Durham by public transport for households within a 5-mile radius in 2023/24 (97.30%) is slightly worse than the average 2019 baseline (97.73%) and 2022/23 (97.63%, April 2022 to March 2023).

139 Of these 14 key service locations:

- Four have exceeded their 2019 baseline in 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024).

Key Service Locations within a 5-mile radius	2019 baseline	2022/23	2023/24
Barnard Castle	89.48%	94.57%	90.19%
Dalton Park	99.67%	99.79%	99.83%
Arnison	99.25%	99.54%	99.53%
Tindale Shopping Centre	92.77%	92.75%	93.06%

- The remaining ten sites are worse than their 2019 baselines.

Key Service Locations within a 5-mile radius	2019 baseline	2022/23	2023/24
Chester-le-Street	99.46%	99.42%	99.39%
Consett	98.39%	98.77%	98.38%
Crook	94.49%	93.10%	93.51%
Newton Aycliffe	99.24%	98.62%	98.98%
Peterlee	99.69%	99.68%	99.67%
Seaham	98.66%	97.92%	98.62%
Spennymoor	99.31%	98.43%	98.39%
Stanley	99.54%	99.46%	99.45%
Ferryhill	98.97%	99.46%	99.45%
Sildon	99.06%	99.09%	97.24%

140 For both accessibility by public transport to employment sites and key service locations, in most cases, changes from the baseline are reflective of marginal changes in timetables causing changes in travel time or different connecting opportunities.

141 Service changes since 2019 have resulted in about 10% fewer buses running on the overall network. Mainly due to reduced frequencies on higher frequency corridors rather than whole service withdrawal. In a few cases a change of bus may now be required to make a journey, with an impact on travel time.

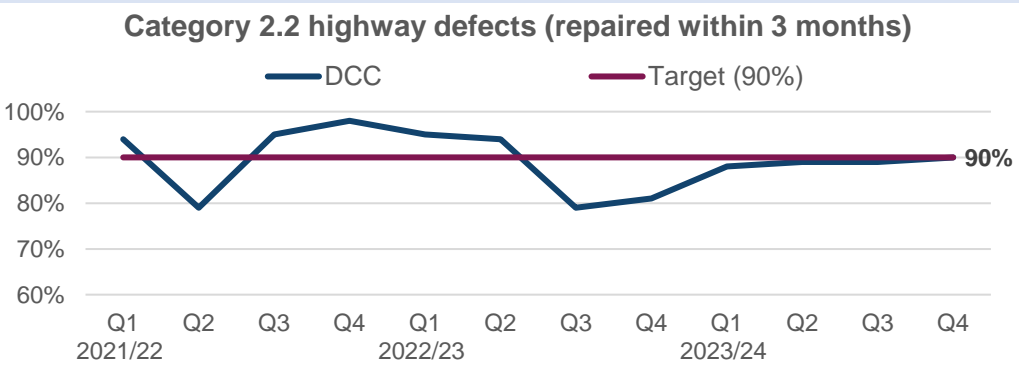
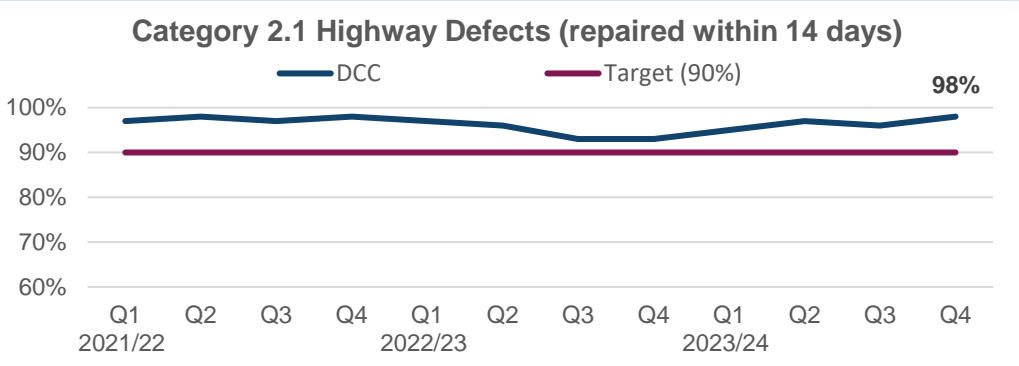
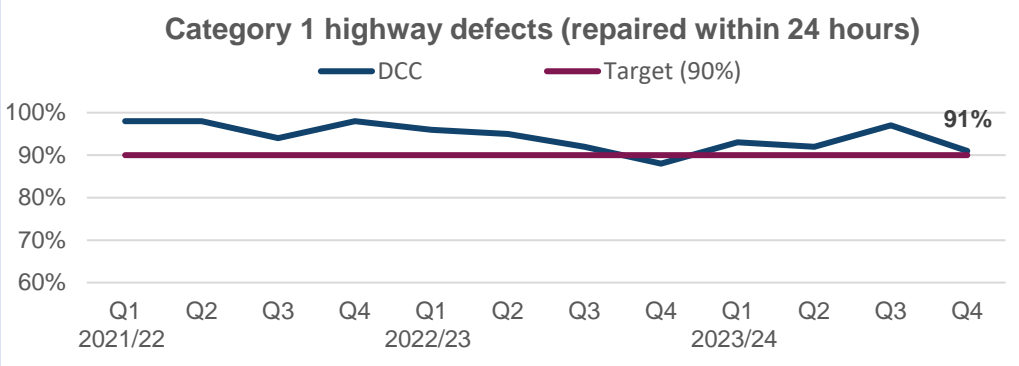
142 We continue to work in partnership at a regional level, with bus operators and other local authorities, to implement the North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to transform bus services and improve the bus network.

Highway Maintenance Dashboard

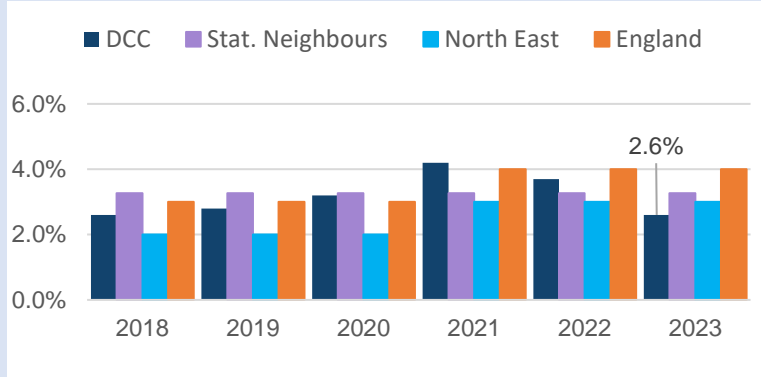
(discrete quarterly data / discrete annual data)

Highway Maintenance

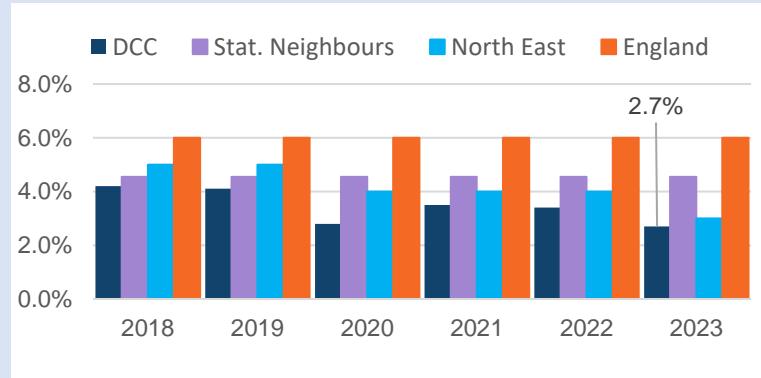
Defects are categorised on a risk basis, resources targeted at those likely to pose the greatest risk of harm. Category 2.2 highway defects pose the lowest risk based on footfall and location.



Percentage of A Roads where maintenance should be considered (Oflog)



Percentage of B & C Roads where maintenance should be considered (Oflog)



Highways Maintenance

- 143 Highway defects are categorised on a risk basis and where there is a high number of defects across all categories. Resources are targeted at those likely to pose the greatest risk of harm. Category 2.2 defects pose the lowest level of risk to the public based on footfall and location.
- 144 Maintenance of Category 1 highway defects (91%, January to March 2024) remains better than target (90%). Although weather impacted performance this quarter due to defects being covered in snow. Category 2.1 highway defects (within 14 days) (98%) continue to be better than target (90%) and the previous 12 months (3%, January to March 2023).
- 145 Following a downward trend last year, Category 2.2 highway defects continued to improve in quarter four (90%, January to March 2024) and is on target (90%). Heavy rain in March preventing the repair of some defects within timescale affected performance.

A and B and C Road Condition (Oflog measures)

- 146 In 2023 the percentage of A roads where maintenance should be considered was 2.6%. Better than our statistical neighbours (3.27%), the North East (3.0%), England (4.0%) and the 2022 period (3.7%).
- 147 Similarly, the percentage of B and C roads where maintenance should be considered was 2.65%. Better than our statistical neighbours (4.55%), the North East (3.0%), England (6.0%) and the 2022 period (3.4%).
- 148 Highways conditions have shown an improvement due to targeted investment.
- 149 The Highways Asset Maintenance Plan is complete. However, we are currently awaiting guidance from local authorities in the region to complete the maintenance backlog to ensure continuity of reporting.
- 150 The most up to date condition data and treatment costs have been used to enable an accurate highways maintenance backlog to be calculated. Early indications are that the backlog will have increased significantly driven by inflation which is outside of our control.

Our Council

Priority Aims:

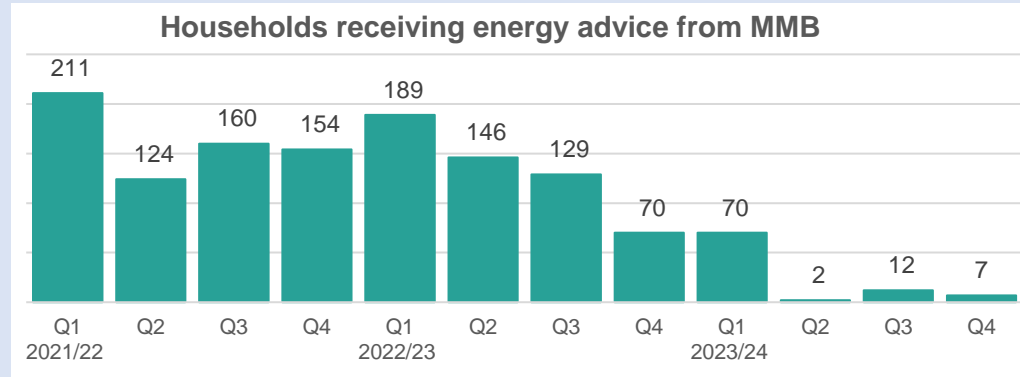
Durham County Council has a reputation for listening to its residents, being well-managed and getting things done. We are continuing to,

- manage our resources effectively
- create a workforce for the future
- design our services with service users
- use data and technology more effectively
- build an inclusive and welcoming employee culture

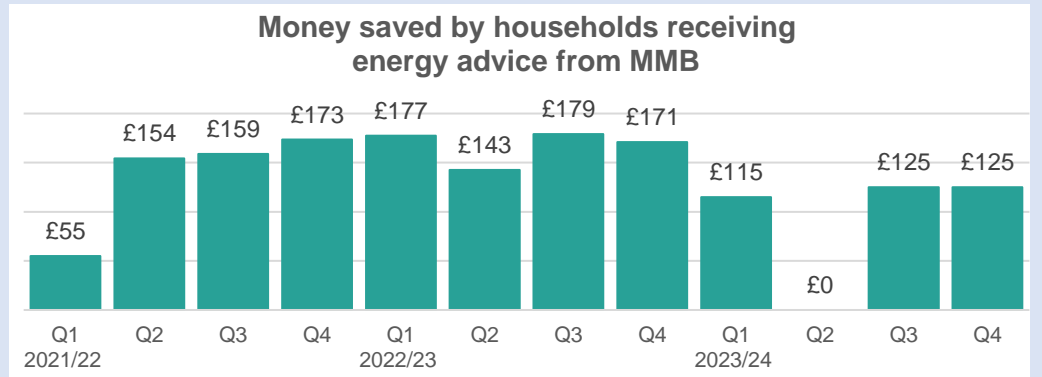
Managing Money Better

(quarterly data at 31 March 2024)

Managing Money Better (MMB)



Money saved by households receiving energy advice from MMB



Managing Money Better (MMB)

- 151 During quarter four (January to March 2024), seven households received energy advice from MMB, worse than quarter three (-5), and last year (-63). Out of the 30 referrals received in the quarter, six were identified as social housing and referred to their registered provider for assistance. The remaining 17 referrals either did not engage with our contact attempts or when contacted did not require further assistance.
- 152 Energy advice saved households an estimated £125, on par with quarter three, but a deterioration on the same period last year (-£171). General advice only was provided to households as there were no tariff switching opportunities available and no referrals for fuel debt advice.
- 153 Referrals into the service are still low. We continue to publicise the service, with new approaches scheduled for the new financial year (April 2024 to March 2025) including:
- Warm Homes drop-in sessions;
 - regular social media posts on energy tips;
 - attendance at events including AAP board meetings; and
 - Working with organisations such as Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services (UTASS) to access hard to reach residents.

Data Tables

D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
				Household waste re-used, recycled or composted	Oct 22 – Sep 23	36.5%	Tracker	37.7%	April 21 – March 22	38.1%	42.5%	33.5%	Yes	Yes

D = Direction of Travel	T = compared to target	C = compared to England average	G = Gap between our performance and England average
meeting or exceeding the previous year	Meeting or better than target	meeting or better than the England average	The gap is improving
worse than the previous year but is within 2%	worse than but within 2% of target	worse than the England average but within 2%	The gap remains the same
more than 2% worse than the previous year	more than 2% behind target	worse than the England average	The gap is deteriorating

This is the overall performance assessment. Its calculation is dependent upon whether the indicator has an agreed target.

Key Target Indicator	Key Tracker Indicator
targets are set as improvements, can be measured regularly and can be actively influenced by the council and its partners. When setting a target, the D, C and G have already been taken into account.	no targets are set as they are long-term and / or can only be partially influenced by the council and its partners. Therefore, D, T, C and G are used to assess overall performance
better than target	Direction of Travel (D) is meeting or exceeding the previous year AND the gap with England (G) is improving
worse than but within 2% of target	Direction of Travel (D) is worse than the previous year OR the gap with England (G) is deteriorating
more than 2% behind target	Direction of Travel (D) is worse than the previous year AND the gap with England (G) is deteriorating

More detail is available from the Strategy Team at performance@durham.gov.uk

Our Economy: summary data tables

Economic Growth KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	Jan-Mar 2024	90%	90%	88%	Oct-Dec 23	96%	89%	90%	Yes	Yes
					Non-major planning applications determined in deadline	Jan-Mar 2024	91%	90%	87%	Oct-Dec 23	89%	89%	89%	Yes	Yes
					Major planning applications overturned on appeal	Oct-Dec 2022	0%	10%	0%	Oct-Dec 22	0%	1.4%	2.2%	Yes	Yes
					Non-major planning applications overturned on appeal	Oct-Dec 2022	0.2%	10%	0%	Oct-Dec 22	0.2%	0.5%	1%	Yes	Yes
					Inward investments secured	Jan-Mar 2024	8	6	7					Yes	No
					Investment secured for companies	Jan-Mar 2024	£506,431	£1.25 million	£915,409					Yes	No
					Occupancy of Business Durham floor space	Jan-Mar 2024	91.7%	95%	90.1%					Yes	No
					Private sector employments per 10,000 population	2022	2,827	Tracker	2,795	2022	2,827	4,133	3,212	No	No
					Private sector businesses per 10,000 population	2023	272	Tracker	274	2023	272	417	269	No	No
					GVA per filled job	2021	£47,046	Tracker	£45,361	2021	£47,046	£61,310	£48,828	No	No
					Employment land approved and delivered	2022/23	13.32Ha	28.46Ha	5.51Ha					No	No

Business Support KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Businesses engaged by Business Durham	Jan-Mar 2024	249	250	261					Yes	No
					Businesses supported by regeneration projects	2022/23	67	59	95					Yes	No

				New businesses supported by CED Team	2022/23	385	250	245					Yes	No
				Organisations involved in the Better Health at Work Award	Mar 2024	121	Tracker	75					Yes	No

Employability and Skills KPIs

D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
				Jobs created or safeguarded due to Business Durham activity	Jan-Mar 2024	445	375	647					Yes	No
				Jobs created or safeguarded through regeneration schemes	2022/23	382	256	345					Yes	No
				Registrations to employability programmes	Jan-Mar 2024	65	78	N/A					Yes	No
				Number of participants receiving support to gain employment	Jan-Mar 2024	11	30	N.A					Yes	No
				Number of participants receiving support to sustain employment	Jan-Mar 2024	6	18	N.A					Yes	No
				Employment rate for 16-64 year olds <i>Confidence intervals +/-3.9pp</i>	Jan 2023-Dec 2023	74.5%	Tracker	72.2%	Jan 23-Dec 23	74.5%	76%	72.8%	Yes	No
				Disability employment rate <i>Confidence intervals +/-8.3pp</i>	Jan 2023-Dec 2023	48.8%	Tracker	41.9%	Jan 23-Dec 23	48.8%	57.3%	49.1%	Yes	No
				Residents with higher level skills <i>Confidence intervals +/-4.4pp</i>	2023	60.9%	Tracker	59.1%	2023	60.9%	67.4%	62.8%	Yes	Yes
				16-17-year-olds in an apprenticeship	Apr-Jun 2023	7.3%	Tracker	8.5%	Apr-Jun 23	7.3%	4.8%	7%	No	No

Cultural Offer KPIs

D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
				People attending cultural events ran and commissioned by CS&T	Apr-Dec 2023	260,326	Tracker	185,312 (2021 Lumiere year)					No	No
				People attending council owned cultural venues (Killhope & town halls)	Jan-Mar 2024	31,288	25,250	27,191					Yes	No

Page 146				Average % occupancy of cinema screenings (Gala, Empire & BATH)	Jan-Mar 2024	32%	37%	19%					Yes	No
				Average % yield of cinema screenings (BATH, Gala and Empire)	Jan-Mar 2024	84%	100%	78%					Yes	No
				Average % yield of theatre performances (BATH, Gala and Empire)	Jan-Mar 2024	97%	100%	92%					Yes	No
				Average % occupancy of theatre performances (Gala, Empire & BATH)	Jan-Mar 2024	65%	70%	73%					Yes	No
				Council owned/managed heritage assets classed as 'at risk'	2023	3	Tracker	3					No	No
				Heritage assets 'at risk' categorised as 'Priority A' and/or in 'very bad condition'	2023	7	Tracker	6					No	No
				Active borrowers (libraries)	Jan-Mar 2024	46,002	43,910	43,475					Yes	No
				Digital borrowers (libraries)	Jan-Mar 2024	4,468	3,856	3,818					Yes	No

Visitor Economy KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Visitors to the county	2022	17.91m	17.085m	15.77m					No	No
					Money generated by the visitor economy	2022	£1.04b	£760.5m	£826.68m					No	No
					Jobs supported by the visitor economy	2022	11,724	10,191	10,063					No	No
					Visitor attractions served by public transport	2023	67%	Tracker	67%					Yes	No
					Tourism businesses actively engaged with Visit County Durham	2023	55%	Tracker	27.8%					No	No

Our Environment: summary data tables

Sustainable Transport KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Park and Ride passenger journeys	Jan-Mar 2024	131,123	Tracker	113,434					Yes	No

Our People: summary data tables

Housing Vulnerable People KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Potential clients contacted within 3 weeks of initial referral for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	Jan-Mar 2024	100%	90%	new					Yes	No
					Households prevented from homelessness and helped to stay in their home	Jan-Mar 2024	5%	Tracker	5%	Jul-Sep 23	3.4%	16.8%	8.3%	Yes	No
					Households prevented from homelessness and helped to move to alternative accommodation	Jan-Mar 2024	16%	Tracker	19%	Jul-Sep 23	14.8%	34.2%	38.2%	Yes	No
					Households where homelessness has been relieved, and the client moved into alternative accommodation	Jan-Mar 2024	27%	Tracker	27%	Jul-Sep 23	31.5%	33.6%	41.6%	Yes	No
					Households where there has been an acceptance of the main homeless duty	Jan-Mar 2024	14%	Tracker	12%	Jul-Sep 23	15.4%	32.5	9.8%	Yes	No
Page 147					Successful move-ons from Local Lettings Agency accommodation at the end of their licence agreement	2022/23	100%	90%	new					Yes	No

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
Page 148					Approvals on new housing sites of 10 units or more, a minimum of 66% of the total number of dwellings meet accessible and adaptable standards (building Regulations requirements M4(2)).	2022/23	71%	66%	50%					No	No
					Approvals on new housing sites of 10 units or more, a minimum of 10% of the total number of dwellings meet a design and type for older persons	2022/23	16%	10%	27%					No	No

Physical Activity KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Visits to Leisure Centres	Jan-Mar 2024	819,644	814,219	812,455					Yes	No
					Leisure memberships	Jan-Mar 2024	20,540	19,964	19,377					Yes	No

Our Communities: summary data tables

Housing Delivery KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Net affordable homes	2022/23	282	836	536					No	No
					Net delivery of new housing	2022/23	1,488	1,308	1,551					Yes	No
					Chapter Homes properties sold	2022/23	19	20	27					Yes	No

Housing Standards KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Empty homes brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention	2022/23	210	200	208					Yes	No
					Properties covered by Selective Licence Scheme that are licensed, or legal proceedings instigated	Jan-Mar 2024	48%	100% (by 2025)	30%					Yes	No
					ASB incidents per 10,000 population within the Selective Licensing Scheme	Jul 2022-Jun 2023	212.97	224.28	287.7					No	No

Transport Connectivity KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Satisfaction with ease of access (<i>confidence intervals +/-4pp</i>)	2023	73%	Tracker	73%	2023	73%	71%		No	No
					Overall satisfaction with bus journey	2023	75%	Tracker	New	2023	75%	80%		Yes	No
					Households who can access key service locations using public transport within a 15-mile radius	2023	97.30%	97.73%	97.63%					Yes	No
					Households who can access key service locations using public transport within a 5-mile radius	2023	65.50%	67.80%	66.81%					Yes	No
					Residents who can access employment sites by public transport	2023	30.18%	32.10%	29.42%					Yes	No
					Timetabled bus services no more than 5 min late or 1 min early	Oct-Dec 2023	71.0%	Tracker	73.4%					Yes	No
					Local passenger journeys on public transport	Oct-Dec 2023	3,489,457	Tracker	4,577,008					Yes	No

Highways and Footways Maintenance KPIs

Page 150	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					A roads where maintenance is recommended	2023	2.6%	Tracker	3.7%	2023	2.6%	4.0%	3.0%	Yes	Yes
					B & C roads where maintenance is recommended	2023	2.65%	Tracker	3.4%	2023	2.65%	6.0%	3.0%	Yes	Yes
					Unclassified roads where maintenance is recommended	2023	23%	Tracker	25%	2023	23%	17%	22%	Yes	No
					'Footways' structurally unsound	2022	30.9%	Tracker	31.3%					No	No
					Bridge condition: principal roads	2020	82.0%	Tracker	81.1%					No	No
					Bridge condition: non-principal roads	2020	81.0%	Tracker	80.1%					No	No
					Category 1 highway defects repaired within 24 hours	Jan-Mar 2024	91%	90%	88%					Yes	No
					Category 2.1 highway defects repaired within 14 days	Jan-Mar 2024	98%	90%	93%					Yes	No
					Category 2.2 highway defects repaired within 3 months	Jan-Mar 2024	90%	90%	81%					Yes	No
					Highways Maintenance Backlog	awaiting data		Tracker						No	No
					Satisfaction with highways maintenance. (<i>confidence intervals +/-4pp</i>)	2023	46%	Tracker	47%	2023	46%	43%		No	No
					Footway maintained and repaired over and above the core programme		new	Tracker	new					No	No

Our Council: summary data tables

Managing Money Better (MMB) KPIs

	D	T	C	G	Performance Indicator	Period	Performance	Target	12 months earlier	Benchmark period	DCC	National average	NE average	updated	Oflog
					Households receiving energy advice from MMB Initiative	Jan-Mar 2024	7	Tracker	70					Yes	No
					£s saved per household as a result of energy efficiency advice provided by MMB initiative	Jan-Mar 2024	£125	Tracker	£171					Yes	No

Glossary

Term	Definition
ACD	<p>Automatic Call Distribution</p> <p>Telephone calls are received either through our Automatic Call Distribution system, which routes calls to groups of agents based on a first-in-first-answered criteria, or directly to a telephone extension (non-ACD). Only calls received via our ACD system are included in our telephone statistics.</p>
AQMA	<p>Air Quality Management Area</p> <p>A geographical area where air pollution levels are, or are likely to, exceed national air quality objectives at relevant locations (where the public may be exposed to harmful air pollution over a period of time e.g., residential homes, schools etc.).</p>
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
ASCOF	<p>Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework</p> <p>measures how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to people (link)</p>
BATH	<p>Bishop Auckland Town Hall</p> <p>A multi-purpose cultural venue situated in Bishop Auckland market place. It offers regular art exhibitions, live music, cinema screenings and theatre performances, as well as a library service.</p>
BCF	<p>Better Care Fund</p> <p>A national programme that supports local systems to successfully deliver the integration of health and social care.</p>
B2B	<p>Business to Business</p> <p>B2B refers to selling products and services directly between two businesses as opposed to between businesses and customers.</p>
CAP	<p>Customer Access Point</p> <p>A location where residents can get face-to-face help and information about council services. There are eight CAPs across County Durham.</p>
CAT	<p>Community Action Team</p> <p>A project team which includes members of our community protection service, planning, neighbourhood wardens and housing teams, who work alongside police and community support officers and fire and rescue teams and residents to tackle housing and environmental issues in a specific area by identifying local priorities and making best use of resources.</p>
CDP	<p>County Durham Plan</p> <p>Sets out the council's vision for housing, jobs and the environment until 2035, as well as the transport, schools and healthcare to support it (link)</p>
CED	Community Economic Development

Term	Definition
CERP	<p>Climate Emergency Response Plan</p> <p>A community-wide call to action to help align all sectors on the actions required to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve our resilience to the impacts of climate change.</p>
Changing Places toilet	<p>Toilets meet the needs of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, as well as people with other physical disabilities such as spinal injuries, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis. These toilets provide the right equipment including a height adjustable adult-sized changing table, a tracking hoist system, adequate space for a disabled person and carer, a peninsular WC with room either side and a safe and clean environment including tear off paper to cover the bench, a large waste bin and a non-slip floor.</p>
CLD	<p>Client Level Dataset</p> <p>A national mandatory person-level data collection (to be introduced) that will replace the existing annual Short and Long Term (SALT) Support data collected by councils. CLD will be added to the single data list and will become mandatory for all local authorities.</p>
CNIS	<p>Child Not In School</p>
CPN	<p>Community Protection Notice</p> <p>Can be issued to anyone over the age of 16 to deal with a wide range of ongoing anti-social behaviour issues or nuisances which have a detrimental effect on the local community. There are three stages: the first stage is a written warning (CPW), the second a notice (CPN) the third is an FPN or further prosecution for failure to comply with the previous stages</p>
CRM	<p>Customer Relationship Management system</p>
CS&T	<p>Culture, Sport and Tourism</p>
CTR	<p>Council Tax Reduction</p> <p>Reduces council tax bills for those on low incomes</p>
DCC	<p>Durham County Council</p>
DEFRA	<p>Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</p> <p>A ministerial department, supported by 34 agencies and public bodies responsible for improving and protecting the environment. It aims to grow a green economy and sustain thriving rural communities. It also supports our world-leading food, farming and fishing industries (link)</p>
DHP	<p>Discretionary Housing Payments</p> <p>Short term payments which can be made to tenants in receipt of the housing benefit element of Universal Credit, to help sort out housing and money problems in the longer term.</p>
DHSC	<p>Department of Health and Social Care</p> <p>The DHSC supports the government in leading the nation's health and care system.</p>

Term	Definition
DLE	Daily Living Expenses Available for those whose circumstances have changed unexpectedly. Payments can be made for up to seven days to help with food, travel and some clothing (restrictions apply).
DoLS	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards A set of checks that are part of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, which applies in England and Wales. The DoLS procedure protects a person receiving care whose liberty has been limited by checking that this is appropriate and is in their best interests.
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme A confidential employee benefit designed to help staff deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting their home or work life, health, and general wellbeing.
EET	Employment, Education or Training Most often used in relation to young people aged 16 to 24, it measures the number employed, in education or in training.
EHCP	Education, Health Care Plan A legal document which describes a child or young person's (aged up to 25) special educational needs, the support they need, and the outcomes they would like to achieve.
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund Funding that helps to create economic development and growth; it gives support to businesses, encourages new ideas and supports regeneration. Although the United Kingdom has now left the European Union, under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement, EU programmes will continue to operate in the UK until their closure in 2023-24.
EHE	Elective Home Education A term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they desire, instead of sending them to school full-time.
ETA	Extension of Time Agreement An agreement between the council and the customer submitting a planning application to extend the usual deadline beyond 13 weeks due to the complex nature of the application.
FPN	Fixed Penalty Notice Is a conditional offer to an alleged offender for them to have the matter dealt with in a set way without resorting to going to court.
FTE	Full Time Equivalent Total number of full-time employees working across the organisation. It is a way of adding up the hours of full-time, part-time and various other types of employees and converting into measurable 'full-time' units.
GVA	Gross Value Added <i>The measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.</i>

Term	Definition
HSF	Household Support Fund Payments support low income households struggling with energy and food costs, or who need essential household items.
ICO	Information Commissioner's Office The UK's independent body's role is to uphold information rights in the public interest (link)
IES	Inclusive Economic Strategy Sets a clear, long-term vision for the area's economy up to 2035, with an overarching aim to create more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy (link)
JLHWS	Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy The Strategy (2023-28) supports the vision that County Durham is a healthy place where people live well for longer (link)
KS2	Key Stage 2 The national curriculum is organised into blocks of years called 'key stages.' At the end of each key stage, the teacher will formally assess each child's performance. KS2 refers to children in year 3, 4, 5 and 6 when pupils are aged between 7 and 11.
KS3	Key Stage 3 The national curriculum is organised into blocks of years called 'key stages.' At the end of each key stage, the teacher will formally assess each child's performance. KS3 refers to children in year 7, 8 and 9 when pupils are aged between 11 and 14.
LGA	Local Government Association The national membership body for councils which works on behalf of its member councils to support, promote and improve local government (link).
LINKCD	A programme that brings together a number of delivery partners to support people with multiple barriers to address these underlying issues and to move them closer to or into the labour market or re-engage with education or training.
LNRS	Local Nature Recovery Strategies Propose how and where to recover nature and improve the wider environment across England.
MMB	Managing Money Better A service offered by the council which involves visiting residents' homes to carry out a free home energy assessment. In addition to providing advice on energy bills, the service can provide financial advice through referrals to benefits advice or help with a benefits appeal and other services for advice on benefit entitlements.
MTFP	Medium Term Financial Plan A document that sets out the council's financial strategy over a four year period
MW	MegaWatt is one million watts of electricity

Term	Definition
NESWA	North East Social Work Alliance A social work teaching partnership made up of 12 North East councils and six Higher Education Institutes. The Alliance is one of several teaching partnerships across the country which were created to improve the quality of practice, learning and continuous professional development amongst trainee and practicing social workers.
NQSW	Newly Qualified Social Workers a social worker who is registered with Social Work England and is in their first year of post qualifying practice.
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification The NVQ is a work-based qualification that recognises the skills and knowledge a person needs to do a job.
Oflog	Office For Local Government The vision for Oflog is for it to provide authoritative and accessible data and analysis about the performance of local government and support its improvement. Oflog is part of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities .
PDR	Performance and Development Review Is an annual process which provides all staff with the valuable opportunity to reflect on their performance, potential and development needs.
PRS	Private Rented Sector This classification of housing relates to property owned by a landlord and leased to a tenant. The landlord could be an individual, a property company or an institutional investor. The tenants would either deal directly with an individual landlord, or alternatively with a management company or estate agency caring for the property on behalf of the landlord.
PSPO	Public Space Protection Order Are intended to deal with a nuisance or problem in a particular area that is detrimental to the local community.
QoL	Quality of Life
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations A RIDDOR report is required for work-related accidents which result in a reportable injury. The definition of a reportable injury can be found here
RQF	Regulated Qualifications Framework The RQF helps people understand all the qualifications regulated by the government and how they relate to each other. It covers general and vocational in England, and vocational in Northern Ireland. Link
SALT	Short and Long Term Relates to the annual Short and Long Term (SALT) Support data collected by councils. It is to be replaced by a national mandatory person-level data collection (Client Level Data).

Term	Definition
SEN	<p>Special Educational Needs</p> <p>The term is used to describe learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for children to learn than most children of the same age. Children with SEN are likely to need extra or different help from that given to other children their age.</p>
SEND	<p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities</p> <p>SEND can affect a child or young person's ability to learn and can affect their;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ behaviour or ability to socialise (e.g., they struggle to make friends) ▪ reading and writing (e.g., because they have dyslexia), ▪ ability to understand things, ▪ concentration levels (e.g., because they have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) ▪ physical ability
SG	<p>Settlement Grants</p> <p>Help people stay in their home or move back into housing after living in supported or unsettled accommodation (such as leaving care or being homeless). They provide help towards furniture, white goods, flooring, curtains, bedding, kitchen equipment, removal costs etc.</p>
SME	<p>Small to Medium Sized Enterprise</p> <p>A company with no more than 500 employees.</p>
Statistical nearest neighbours	<p>A group of councils that are similar across a wide range of socio-economic.</p> <p>Durham County Council uses the CIPFA nearest neighbours model which compares us to Northumberland, North Tyneside, Barnsley, Rotherham, Wakefield, Doncaster, Redcar and Cleveland, Wigan, St Helens, Cornwall, Sefton, Sunderland, Wirral, Plymouth and Calderdale</p>
UASC	<p>Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children</p> <p>Children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK but who have been separated from their parents or carers. While their claim is processed, they are cared for by a council.</p>
UKSPF	<p>UK Shared Prosperity Fund</p> <p>Part of the government's Levelling Up agenda that provides funding for local investment to March 2025. All areas of the UK receive an allocation from the Fund to enable local decision making and better target the priorities of places within the UK that will lead to tangible improvements to the places where people work and live.</p>
WEEE	<p>Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment</p> <p>Any electrical or electronic waste, whether whole or broken, that is destined for disposal. The definition includes household appliances such as washing machines and cookers, IT and telecommunications equipment, electrical and electronic tools, toys and leisure equipment and certain medical devices.</p>
Yield	<p>Proportion of potential income achieved</p>

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