

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 July 2021

Quarter Four, 2020/21 Performance Management Report



Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources (Interim)

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework.

The impact of COVID-19

- 2 2020/21 has been dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the world more than 115 million people have been infected and more than 2.5 million have died.
- 3 Following confirmation of its first cases in January 2020, the UK government subsequently put in place [restrictions](#) to contain the virus, minimise deaths and prevent health and social care systems being overwhelmed. Those restrictions, in varying forms, have impacted our everyday lives, our health and the economy ever since.
- 4 At the beginning of quarter four, in response to a huge increase in COVID-19 cases and the discovery of a faster spreading variant, restrictions were tightened with a third national lockdown. At the same time, the national vaccination programme¹ continued to be rolled out.
- 5 The subsequent fall in infection rates allowed the government to implement plans for a [gradual and phased route out of lockdown](#). The first step, centred around children and students returning to face-to-face teaching, was enacted in March 2021.
- 6 In line with these developments, alongside our continuing public health role and work with other agencies on the Local Resilience Forum (covering both County Durham and Darlington) to protect our

¹ started on 8 December 2020

communities and support those affected by the pandemic, we are also developing plans for future recovery.

- 7 The COVID-19 surveillance dashboard can be accessed [here](#).

Performance Reporting

- 8 This performance report is structured around the three externally focused results-based ambitions of the [County Durham Vision 2035](#) alongside a fourth 'excellent council' theme contained within our [Council Plan](#)². It also includes an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on council services, our staff, and residents.

More and Better Jobs

- 9 The impact of COVID-19 continues to be felt in the UK economy – with GDP contracting by 9.8% in 2020, the largest annual fall on record³. Latest figures suggest a broadly stable jobs market with early signs of recovery. However, there are 772,000 fewer payrolled employees than pre-COVID, with the hospitality sector, those aged under 25, and those living in London⁴ impacted the most.
- 10 Across County Durham our employment rate remains static, but as the government is continuing to support one in eight eligible jobs (furlough) and six in ten self-employed people (income support scheme), we are expecting it to deteriorate in the future as these schemes come to an end. That said, the increase in universal credit has levelled off which suggests local and national support measures are helping to create some economic resilience.
- 11 We remain concerned about the longer-term impacts of the pandemic. The economic situation is contributing to financial pressures across the county, with increased levels of children eligible for free school meals and many households at risk of falling into poverty.
- 12 To mitigate against these economic challenges, we are continuing to provide financial support to residents and businesses, are moving forward with significant investment projects which will create new infrastructure and transform our towns and villages, and are helping people back into work particularly through self-employment or by moving into job sectors experiencing increasing demand, e.g. food retail, delivery.

Connected Communities – Sustainable Communities focus

² approved by full council October 2020

³ Office of National Statistics: [GDP quarterly national accounts, UK: October to December 2020](#)

⁴ Office of National Statistics: [Labour Market Overview, UK: May 2021](#)

- 13 Across this section, we are concerned about the lifting of the eviction ban as lockdown eases. More households are already living in temporary accommodation, and for longer, due to a shortage of suitable properties, a consequence of action taken to house rough sleepers during the pandemic. We are sourcing additional properties to help alleviate the problem.

Risk Management

- 14 Effective risk management is a vital component of the council's agenda. The council's risk management process sits alongside our change programme and is incorporated into all significant change and improvement projects. The latest report can be found [here](#).

Recommendation

- 15 That Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter four performance, the impact of COVID-19 on performance, and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance including the significant economic and well-being challenges because of the pandemic.

Author

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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 Durham Constabulary.

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.



Durham County Council Performance Management Report

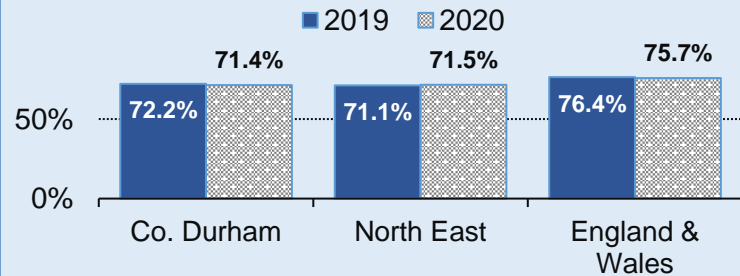
Quarter Four, 2020/21



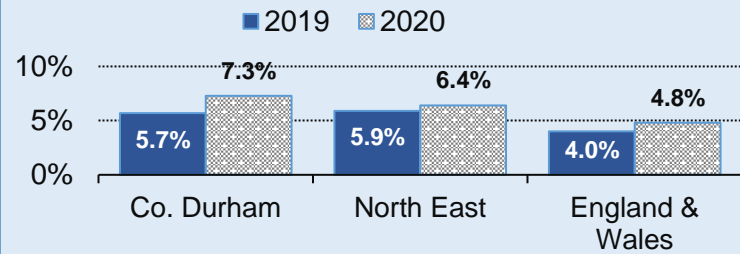
MORE AND BETTER JOBS: Do residents have good job prospects?

Summary⁵

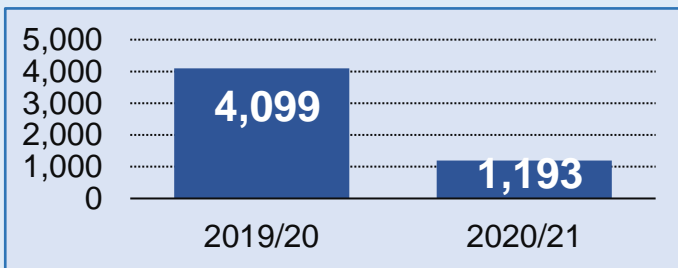
Employment Rate¹ (Jan to Dec)



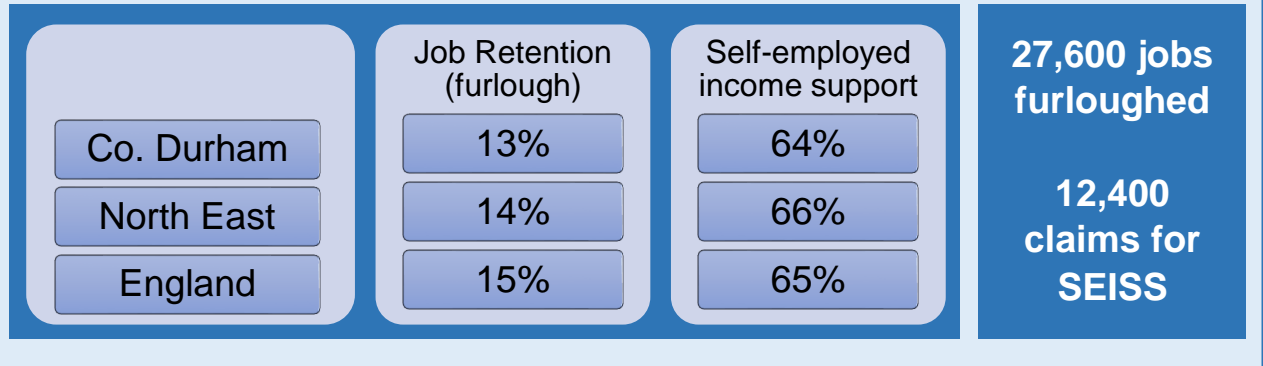
Unemployment Rate¹ (Jan to Dec)



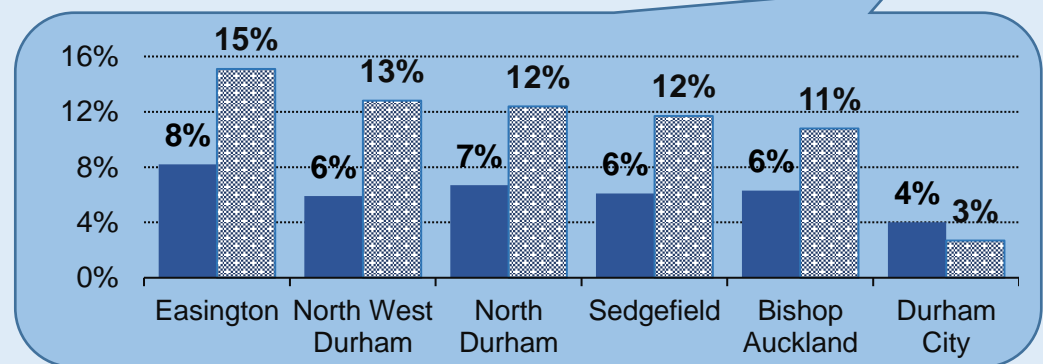
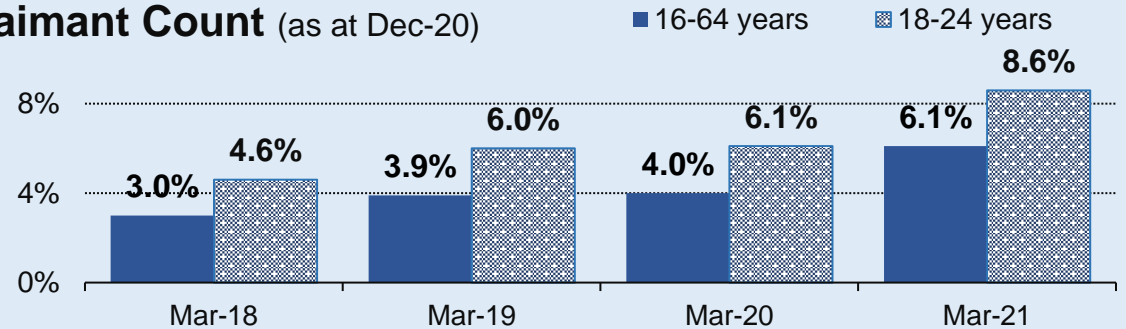
Jobs created/safeguarded by Business Durham



Support Schemes (as at 31 Mar)



Claimant Count (as at Dec-20)



⁵ Employment / Unemployment Rates: Annual Population Survey Jan-20 to Dec-20

More and Better Jobs

1 The ambition of More and Better Jobs is linked to the following key questions:

- (a) Do residents have good job prospects?
- (b) Is County Durham a good place to do business?
- (c) How well do tourism and cultural events contribute to our local economy?

Do residents have good job prospects?

- 2 Although our employment rate has dropped slightly, it has yet to see any significant impact of the pandemic. However, we expect this to change once the government removes the available support packages (furlough and self-employment income schemes).
- 3 The unemployment rate has been increasing since June 2020, and at a greater rate than nationally. However, the rate is an estimate from a sample survey, and as it is within the estimated confidence intervals, it is possible that the latest increase is due to random sample variation.
- 4 Following a significant rise in people claiming employment benefits between March 2020 and May 2020, the claimant count has continued to remain relatively static throughout 2020/21 and now stands at 6.1%. This trend is reflected both regionally and nationally.
- 5 The pandemic impacted our ability to deliver employability programmes during 2020/21. Although, we moved programmes online when face-to-face contact ceased, some people were reluctant to engage, especially as Jobcentre Plus no longer mandated participants to complete job search activity and there were fewer job opportunities. However, there have been successes with participants becoming self-employed or moving into job sectors experiencing increased demand, e.g. food retail, delivery drivers.
- 6 During quarter four, we provided [Durham Advance](#) with £1 million additional funding. The project supports people out of work who are aged 25 or over with health conditions, or over 50 years. It is hoped an additional 1,000 people can be assisted.

MORE AND BETTER JOBS:

Is County Durham a good place to do business?

Summary⁶

Business Durham Activity	Jan-Mar 2021	Compared to last year	
inward investments secured	3	-1	↓
businesses engaged	867	663	↑
floor space occupied	83%	-3.4pp	
GVA from jobs created or safeguarded (million)	£45.9	+£16.5	↑

additional information on businesses is available via [Durham Insight](#)

How well do tourism and cultural events contribute to our local economy?

Summary⁷

COVID-19 Impact Survey⁴ - current status of businesses

90%
closed

2%
fully open

8% open with
reduced hours

75%
income reduced by
more than 50%

4%
income increased

COVID-19 Impact Survey⁴ - main concerns

53%
further restrictions

15%
business survival

12%
lack of demand

⁶ data relates to the 12 months ending 31 March 2021, compared to the previous year where applicable

⁷ by Visit County Durham, 11 January to 8 February – 53 responses

Is County Durham a good place to do business?

- 7 In January 2021, we invested £5 million into the Durham Business Recovery Grant Scheme⁸. To date, 82 of the 467 applications received have been approved, totalling more than £1.1 million and with the potential to safeguard 736 jobs. Businesses whose applications were not accepted, either because they did not meet key eligibility criteria or their recovery plans required further development, have been signposted to other support programmes.
- 8 Work has started on the Aykley Heads Business Park. The site's first two phases, providing almost 40,000m² of floorspace across six plots of office buildings and parking spaces, have the potential to create 4,000 jobs. It is estimated a further 1,800 jobs will be supported throughout the construction.
- 9 Hitachi Rail has announced further investment in its factory at Newton Aycliffe leading to the creation of additional jobs which will benefit the wider business community. New welding and painting facilities at the site will allow the company to manufacture high-tech aluminium carriage shells on site rather than importing them from overseas.
- 10 Despite the impact of COVID-19 on enquiry levels, there were three inward investments completed this quarter - Monarch International, Quorum Fleet Solutions and Power Roll. This brings the total inward investments for the year to eight.
- 11 Throughout 2020/21, 552 businesses were intensively assisted by Business Durham, 37% more than previous year (403), reflecting the increasing number of businesses requiring support due to the pandemic. This includes support through various programmes and the Recovery Grant scheme.
- 12 The Durham Ambitious Business Start-ups (DABS) programme has assisted 57 pre-start entrepreneurs and 37 newly registered businesses over the year. A second virtual Festival of Enterprise is to be held on 21 October 2021, this follows a successful first virtual event held in October 2020.
- 13 Quarter four saw a further increase in occupancy across the council's business premises portfolio, which is managed by Business Durham, with the biggest increase showing at NETPark Explorer with all four remaining units reserved.
- 14 We approved the Towns and Villages Investment Plan in February 2021. The largest investment from the £25 million fund is £4.5 million toward a major regeneration scheme in Horden which will acquire and subsequently demolish

⁸ Offers businesses up to £40,000 and pays 75% of recovery costs ([link](#))

buildings and houses to allow rebuilding to begin in line with the Horden Masterplan.

How well do tourism and cultural events contribute to our local economy?

- 15 The tourism sector continues to be impacted by the pandemic, missing out on the recent Easter season which is one of the most profitable times of the year, along with Christmas. A recent survey⁹ highlighted most businesses were closed during quarter four due to the national lockdown and some were not taking bookings due to uncertainty around re-opening dates.
- 16 The survey also found tourism businesses are putting plans in place to aid recovery with 13% stating that they would be changing their opening pattern and 9% considering discounted tickets or promotions. Thirty one percent indicated that they had already taken steps such as adapting their offer, increasing their range or investigating other revenue streams.
- 17 Although many attractions and venues have been closed due to lockdown restrictions, outdoor spaces such as parks and gardens have been open for exercise. Throughout the year we have seen a significant increase in the number of visitors at Hardwick Park and a good level of take up of our online sessions and Love Exploring app which offers activities such as trails and games.
- 18 A refreshed café, library and exhibition offer has been completed at Bishop Auckland Town Hall, was launched when cultural venues re-open in May. Durham Town Hall will remain closed until the summer to allow conservation and restoration work on the building to be completed.
- 19 Killhope Lead Mining Museum re-opened on 17 May with a new cultural programme and improved café.
- 20 In preparation for Lumiere 2021, the creative commissioning scheme BRILLIANT was launched in January. The scheme will commission six new pieces of work to feature at the event.
- 21 We plan to reinstate both the Seaham and Bishop Auckland Food Festivals, in August and October respectively.
- 22 Work on the Durham History Centre commenced in spring, will be complete by autumn 2022 and open to the public in 2023. It is anticipated that the centre will attract in the region of 70,000 visitors each year with its modern search rooms,

⁹ Visit County Durham COVID-19 Impact Survey

innovative digital facilities, dedicated spaces for learning, exhibiting and interpreting, and café.

- 23 During quarter four, Durham County Record Office's online programme of talks, family history courses, school workshops and exhibitions was extended to include children's holiday archive craft activities and a special online talk about the role played by the Durham Light Infantry in the liberation of Belsen Concentration Camp (part of our holocaust memorial programme).

Connected Communities - Sustainability

- 24 The ambition of Connected Communities – Sustainability is linked to the following key questions:
- (a) Do residents have access to decent and affordable housing?
 - (b) Is it easy to travel around the county?

Do residents have access to decent and affordable housing?

- 25 Although COVID-19 restrictions initially reduced the number of net homes completed, build rates have now returned to pre-COVID levels.
- 26 During quarter four, we approved phase one of a new programme to build 500 council houses over five years. This initial phase will deliver 155 homes, mainly family accommodation and bungalows for older people at seven locations across the county, with the first homes being ready around May 2023.
- 27 More households accessed Housing Solutions during quarter four, following a drop at quarter three. Contact, predominately relating to housing advice and private landlord tenancies, was in part driven by the lifting of the eviction ban in January. As landlords are required to give a six-month eviction notice, clients are not classed as 'threatened with homelessness'. However, we are working with clients to provide advice and early intervention through the [Stop B4U Serve scheme](#).
- 28 A combination of the eviction ban and action taken to house all rough sleepers and those at significant risk of rough sleeping has reduced the number of available properties. This in turn has increased both the number of households in temporary accommodation and the length of their stay compared to last year.
- 29 We continue to prioritise individuals/households for any available properties, review every placement to ensure all options are explored and work closely with landlords to facilitate moves to long-term accommodation. We are also continuing to source additional accommodation, for example, a two-year 9-bed complex needs scheme welcomed its first residents in February, and five one-bed flats at

Wheatley Hill, reserved for homeless clients for the next 30 years, will be complete by 30 June 2021.

- 30 The number of empty properties brought back into use has fallen short of the annual target. This is because COVID-19 restrictions prevented non-essential work being carried out, caused a lag on supplies/ability to secure contractors, and reduced public confidence to meet with staff and/or invest in properties.
- 31 Uptake of fuel poverty grants has increased. During quarter four, additional publicity targeted households experiencing reduced incomes due to COVID. Four hundred and seventy six fuel poor households received grants worth almost £690,000 for energy efficiency measures.

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES (SUSTAINABILITY): Do residents have access to decent and affordable housing?

Summary^{10,11}

Housing advice and support

properties improved, adapted or brought back into use

747

up 34%

households accessing Housing Solutions

3,366

static

households helped to move to alternative accommodation

219

down 10%

263

households helped to stay in their homes



35% on last year

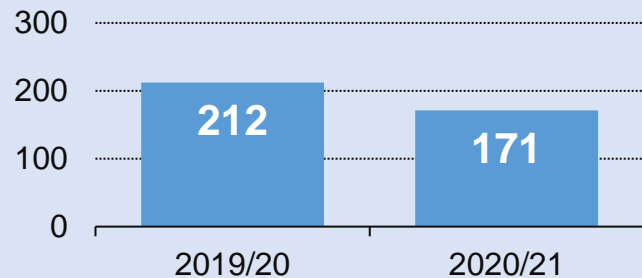
85

'new' households placed in temporary accommodation



18% on last year

properties brought back into use as a result of LA intervention



Impacted by COVID:

- essential visits only
- Staffing levels

average time household spends in temporary accommodation (days)



¹⁰ For additional housing information, visit the [Durham Insight, Housing factsheet](#)

¹¹ data relates to January 2021 to March 2021, compared to the same period the previous year where applicable

Is it easy to travel around the county?

- 32 Construction of Durham City's new bus station commenced during quarter four. The £10.3 million project will increase the overall space for passengers in a light and airy setting and improve visibility and safety for buses leaving the station. There will also be increased facilities including parent and child toilets and a changing places toilet, as well as improved seating and space in the passenger waiting area.
- 33 Free parking after 2pm has been introduced in all council car parks to help support the economic recovery from COVID-19. The scheme will be reviewed every three months.
- 34 We have agreed to extend our cycle parking scheme 'ParkThatBike' for a further three years. To date the scheme has provided more than 500 cycle stands at locations such as shops, offices, cafes, pubs, churches and dentist and GP surgeries.

Key Performance Indicators – Data Tables

There are two types of performance indicators throughout this document:

- (a) Key target indicators – targets are set as improvements can be measured regularly and can be actively influenced by the council and its partners; and
- (b) Key tracker indicators – performance is tracked but no targets are set as they are long-term and/or can only be partially influenced by the council and its partners.

A guide is available which provides full details of indicator definitions and data sources for the 2020/21 corporate indicator set. This is available to view either internally from the intranet or can be requested from the Strategy Team at performance@durham.gov.uk

KEY TO SYMBOLS

	Direction of travel	Benchmarking	Performance against target
GREEN	Same or better than comparable period	Same or better than comparable group	Meeting or exceeding target
AMBER	Worse than comparable period (within 2% tolerance)	Worse than comparable group (within 2% tolerance)	Performance within 2% of target
RED	Worse than comparable period (greater than 2%)	Worse than comparable group (greater than 2%)	Performance >2% behind target

National Benchmarking

We compare our performance to all English authorities. The number of authorities varies according to the performance indicator and functions of councils, for example educational attainment is compared to county and unitary councils however waste disposal is compared to district and unitary councils.

North East Benchmarking

The North East figure is the average performance from the authorities within the North East region, i.e. County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-On-Tees, South Tyneside, Sunderland.

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

MORE AND BETTER JOBS

Do residents have good job prospects?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
1	% of working age population in employment	71.4	2020	73 (red)	72.2 (amber)	75.7 (red)	71.5 (amber)			Yes
2	Per capita household disposable income (£)	16,542	2018	Tracker	15,875 (green)	21,609 (red)	16,995 (red)			No
3	Gross jobs created / safeguarded as a result of Business Durham activity	361	Oct-Dec 2020	Tracker	257 (green)					No
4	% of 16 to 17 year olds in an apprenticeship	5.1	as at Mar 2021	Tracker	6.8 (red)	3.8 (green)	5.3 (amber)	5.3 (amber)		Yes

Is County Durham a good place to do business?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
5	Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita in County Durham (£)	16,763	2018	Tracker	16,388 (green)	29,356 (red)	20,554 (red)			No
6	No. of registered businesses in County Durham	14,105	Mar 2020	Tracker	13,795 (green)					No
7	Value (£ million) of new contracts secured	8,173,215	2020/21	8 (green)	907,439 (green)					Yes
8	Value (£ million) of GVA growth from jobs created	45.9	Jan-Mar 2021	18 (green)	29.4 (green)					Yes
9	No. of Inward Investments secured	3	Jan-Mar 2021	2 (green)	4 (red)					Yes
10	% of Business Durham business floor space that is occupied	83.0	Jan-Mar 2021	Tracker	86.4 (red)					Yes

How well do tourism and cultural events contribute to our local economy?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
11	No. visitors to County Durham (million)	20.13	2019	Tracker	19.71 (green)					No
12	No. jobs supported by the visitor economy	12,133	2019	Tracker	11,998 (green)					No
13	Amount (£ million) generated by the visitor economy	955	2019	Tracker	914 (green)					No

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES – SUSTAINABILITY

Do residents have access to decent and affordable housing?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
103	Number of properties improved, adapted or brought back into use	747	Jan-Mar 2021	Tracker	558 (green)					Yes
104	Number of empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention	37	Jan-Mar 2021	50 (red)	48 (red)					Yes
105	Number of net homes completed	427	Jan-Mar 2021	Tracker	431 (amber)					Yes
106	Number of affordable homes delivered	628	2019/20	300 (green)	532 (green)					No
107	Number of households accessing the Housing Solutions Service	3,366	Jan-Mar 2021	Tracker	3,361 (green)					Yes
108	Number of households helped to stay in their home	263	Jan-Mar 2021	Tracker	403 (red)					Yes
109	Number of households helped to move to alternative accommodation	219	Jan-Mar 2021	Tracker	243 (red)					Yes

Is it easy to travel around the county?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
110	% of A roads where maintenance is recommended	3.0	2019	Tracker	2.6 (red)	3.38 (green)	1.92 (green)		2019	No
111	% of B roads where maintenance is recommended	3.3	2019	Tracker	4.7 (green)	4.57 (green)	2.83 (green)		2019	No
112	% of C roads where maintenance is recommended	4.3	2019	Tracker	3.7 (red)	4.57 (green)	2.83 (green)		2019	No
113	% of unclassified roads where maintenance is recommended	21.3	2019	Tracker	21.0 (amber)	15.08 (red)	16.25 (red)		2019	No
114	Highways maintenance backlog (£millions)	172.6	2019	Tracker	179.7 (green)					No
115	Bridge Stock Condition – Principal Roads*	80.7**	2019	Tracker	80.7 (green)					No
116	Bridge Stock Condition – Non-Principal Roads*	79.9**	2019	Tracker	79.9 (green)					No

* Bridge stock condition (>=90 very good condition / >=80 good condition / >=65 fair condition / >=40 poor condition / <40 very poor condition)

** last year's data has been used due to issues with obtaining current values

Other additional relevant indicators

Do our young people have access to good quality education and training?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
15	Average point score per A level entry of state-funded school students	39.9	2019/20 (academic year)	Tracker	Not comparable	39.5 (green)	38.3 (green)			No
17	% of 16-17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training	5.6	Jan-Mar 2021	Tracker	4.1 (red)	2.9 (red)	4.8 (red)			Yes

Are we being a good corporate parent to Children Looked After (CLA)?

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	12 months earlier	National figure	North East figure	Nearest statistical neighbour	Period covered if different	updated this quarter
73	% of care leavers aged 17-18 in education, employment or training	68	Mar 2021 [prov]	Tracker	60 (green)	64 (green)	63 (green)	65 (green)	2019/20	Yes
74	% of care leavers aged 19-21 in education, employment or training	63	Mar 2021 [prov]	Tracker	68 (red)	53 (green)	52 (green)	53 (green)	2019/20	Yes