



Hartlepool New Deal for Communities

SUCCESSION STRATEGY

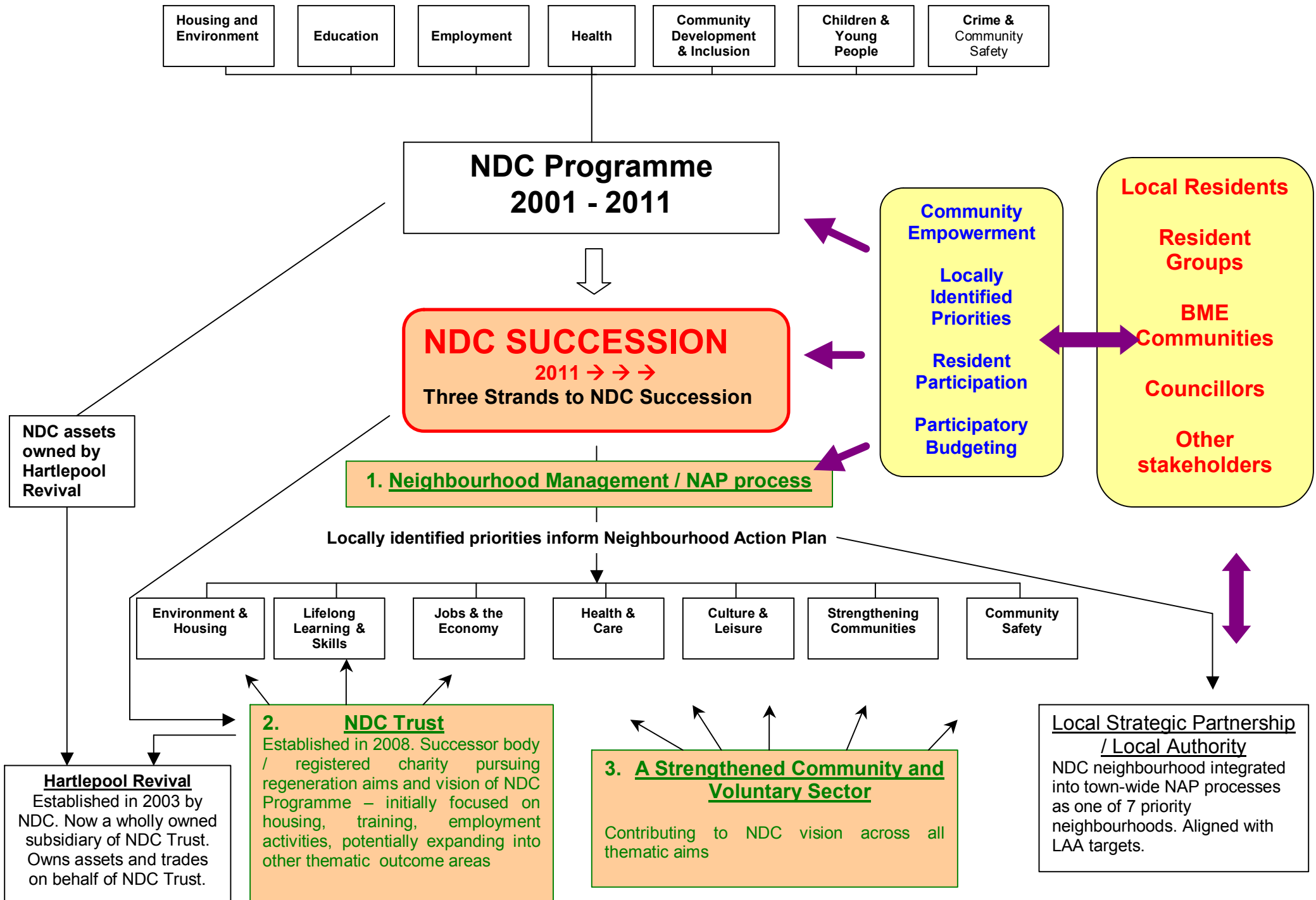


HARTLEPOOL
NDC TRUST

HARTLEPOOL NDC SUCCESSION STRATEGY

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Hartlepool NDC Succession Strategy 'Vision'

The diagram on the previous page represents graphically the delivery vehicles that will deliver the NDC Succession Strategy Vision.

The Hartlepool NDC Delivery Plan, approved in 2001, establishes a clear vision that the neighbourhood ... "will re-emerge as a vibrant, lively and economically viable place with a safe, healthy and clean environment where people want to stay" ... where "key services will be easily accessible and effectively co-ordinated" ... and where ... "residents and other stakeholders will be able to maximise opportunities to participate in the regeneration of their area."

The Hartlepool NDC Partnership has made huge strides towards achieving this vision in the nine years since it was established. The aim of this succession strategy is to ensure that this vision is kept clearly in focus and becomes fully realised after the NDC programme ends in March 2011.

The Strategy identifies and describes two main custodians of the vision. Primarily, the vision will be enshrined in the Neighbourhood Action Plan, delivered through Neighbourhood Management structures, and incorporating the commitment of the Local Strategic Partnership and the Local Authority. Additionally, the vision has also been adopted by the NDC Trust, a successor body which will use a small asset base and develop social enterprises to add further value to the ongoing regeneration of the area.

1. Why do we need a Succession Strategy?

People involved in Hartlepool NDC have always been aware that the 10 year NDC programme should not be seen as an end in itself.

The Delivery Plan, written in March 2001, describes how... "We look upon the NDC programme as an exceptional opportunity to begin a process of community led regeneration which will endure beyond the ten years of this delivery plan."

The plan clearly set out the intentions to... "Look carefully at the option of establishing a community led Trust that could manage facilities, deliver services and pursue funding opportunities... after the end of the NDC programme" and to "engage in developing the process of Neighbourhood Management as early as possible."

The plan goes on to set out how our proposals for capacity building will ensure that the experience and skills we are developing will inform the process of Neighbourhood Management and lay a firm foundation... to take forward the regeneration of the area through the New Deal for Communities programme and beyond!

The awareness was always there that the NDC programme, given its scale and emphasis on resident led regeneration, represented a real opportunity to develop new ways of working that would sustain and continue regeneration post 2011.

As soon as the Partnership's Community Housing Plan was nearing completion in 2003 work was well underway to establish a new resident led company, Hartlepool Revival Ltd, to deliver the Housing Plan and act as a successor body which could hold assets and develop services on behalf of the local community.

Hartlepool Revival has subsequently amended its constitution to become a wholly owned trading subsidiary of the Hartlepool NDC Trust as set out in the business plan (Appendix 4) and Memorandum and Articles (Appendices 5&6).

Of course, apart from building on the success, impetus and capacity created by the 10 year NDC Regeneration Programme, the other obvious reason for a succession strategy is that

there remain significant needs in the community. Progress has been made in reducing disadvantage and improving conditions and services across theme areas, but challenges remain in all. These are perhaps most acute in relation to health, worklessness and the need to continue delivery of the Community Housing Plan.

This succession strategy sets out how these challenges will be approached. Three discrete but complementary strands will continue to address identified needs through a now well-embedded town-wide Neighbourhood Management strategy and Neighbourhood Action Planning (NAP) process (see appendix 1); through the NDC Trust; and through the increased capacity of key voluntary and community sector organisations.

2. Hartlepool NDC Area

The Hartlepool NDC area is characterised by the grid pattern of small Victorian terraced housing that were developed as the 'New Town' of West Hartlepool expanded westwards from the docks and old town centre at the end of the 19th century.

There was a great deal of consensus in Hartlepool nine years ago that Central Hartlepool should be the focus for NDC regeneration. At that time the boundary of the area had to be constrained to ensure that total household numbers were in line with existing NDC programme guidance. The NDC succession area encompasses a slightly wider definition as outlined in Appendix 10.

The area is made up of a number of neighbourhoods around the commercial areas which, whilst historically having a strong sense of identity and community, had been in a process of serious decline since the 1980's. A combination of severe job losses in steel and heavy industries and a growth of new low budget housing for sale on the outskirts of town, alongside a changing demography and different aspirations, had led to the area not being seen as a 'first step' on the housing ladder, but rather, for some, an area of last resort to rent.

This shift from the predominance of owner occupation to the private rented sector, along with the appearance of large, often irresponsible, occasionally criminal, property management/buy to let companies, during the 1990's, had contributed to increased levels of empty properties, anti social behaviour and crime, identified as a 'spiral of decline' in studies ^[1,2] commissioned just prior to the start of the NDC Programme.

As the NDC Programme began, the potential for the acceleration of this decline was becoming more evident. The housing studies had predicted that if current trends continued then there would be over 800 empty properties by 2010. House prices were falling dramatically, with some changing hands for 4 figure sums, and some streets were becoming untenable, with some residents who couldn't sell, fleeing the area.

In this context it was no surprise that residents identified the need to arrest this decline as their top priority.

The need for significant intervention in the private housing market in the area informed the strategies of the Partnership in engaging with local residents. The Delivery Plan sets out how an early Partnership Steering Group meeting agreed that "NDC will ensure that the consensus view of residents is paramount to the Housing Strategy for the area."

Whilst the NDC Programme clearly had to set out strategies to "close the gap" in relation to education, employment, crime and health, the emphasis has always fundamentally been on aiming to create a place where people want to live.

Given the nature of the town centre location and the high number and poor quality of private rented houses, the area would be expected to have a higher than average turnover of residents. The aim of the NDC housing strategy has been to stabilise this turnover by increasing the range of housing offered, enhancing the local environment, reducing crime and improving management of the area and private housing, while improving the quality of retained housing.

The National NDC Evaluation Team (led by Sheffield Hallam University) identified the difficulty in capturing regeneration outcomes in areas of high “population churn”. (A 2007 report showed that Hartlepool NDC had the seventh highest level of ‘churn’ amongst the 39 NDC’s across England.) Despite that difficulty it has been possible to build a strong body of evidence which is summarised in the next section.

3. NDC Programme Progress to June 2009

The NDC programme has been delivered in line with targets agreed with Government Office and DCLG over the past eight years. The current action plan illustrates that of the £53.7m budget; that £49.8m is now spent; £3.782m is approved and funding ongoing projects; £68k is identified for projects still to gain detailed approval and £50k is retained in the programme’s ‘flexible pot’ for contingencies arising from implementation of the succession strategy.

[1] Housing Market Dynamics Study Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners / NEMS Market Research. April 2000

[2] West Central Hartlepool New Deal for Communities Housing Study Final Report. Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners. Dec 2000

Section 4 of this report will identify how the progress identified below will be sustained and built upon, primarily through the Neighbourhood Management / Neighbourhood Action Planning process (see appendices 2 & 3) along with the other two components of NDC succession. The remainder of this section will first set out a brief summary of the main outcomes of the programme on a theme by theme basis.

3.1 Education Theme

Two new £1m “Learning Centres” have been built onto the two Primary Schools in the area, enabling the development and sustainability of a wide range of extended and community services and activities. Significant resources have been allocated to individual schools to improve attainment of NDC pupils, resulting in the deployment of additional teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors. Specific projects have addressed school inclusion, primary to secondary school transition, and raising aspirations at Key Stage 4. A Bursary Scheme to help those aged 16+ into training has also been delivered, providing 796 grants to NDC residents for educational and training activities.

NDC investment in the training of NDC residents is reflected in the latest MORI Household survey data, which shows that the proportion of those in the NDC area that have taken part in training or education in the last year (excluding current students) has climbed by 10 percentage points, from 20% in 2002 to 30% in 2008.

In terms of school performance, in 2008 Hartlepool Borough Council supplied two longitudinal reports based on the ‘Contextual Value Added’ (CVA) scores of NDC and non-NDC pupils from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, and from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4. At both stages, NDC pupils are making faster progress than non-NDC pupils in the Borough, and they have also progressed at a greater rate than the national average.

In the earlier age group, NDC pupils that moved from Key Stage 1 in 2004 to Key Stage 2 in 2008 recorded a CVA score of 100.6 compared to non-NDC pupils at 100.4 (national base: 100). In the older age-group, NDC pupils that moved from Key Stage 2 in 2003 to Key Stage 4 in 2008 recorded a CVA score of 1023.1 compared to non-NDC pupils at 1014.8 (national base: 1000)

The most recent evaluation of NDC pupils performance at KS4, (completed in September 2009) has demonstrated that the key measure of attainment, average point score, has seen a significant narrowing of the gap between NDC pupils and pupils across the town as a whole. A 16 percentage point difference in 2005/6, narrowed to a 13 point difference in 06/07 and a 7 point difference in 07/08. If this positive trend continues the NDC target of attaining a difference of only 3 percentage points by 2011 is likely to be met.

These (and other) criteria of performance assessment are now integrated into the 'Lifelong Learning and Skills' section of the NDC area Neighbourhood Action Plan (Appendix 1), and they will continue to be monitored and responded to through that medium.

3.2 Employment Theme

Strategies have been delivered to support and develop the industrial estates and commercial street areas. Essentially the strategies have involved building business involvement (e.g. in the process of establishing one of the first Business Improvement Districts on an industrial estate in the country); environmental and general security improvements; and grant support for business security and development.

Specific support has been given to NDC residents to start their own businesses. Job Brokerage services and childcare support have been provided. A construction training project for young people has been developed, linked to the NDC Housing Strategy, and is now to be launched as a Social Enterprise.

In total £2,273,802 of NDC funded grant support has been taken up by 462 businesses. This has resulted in the creation of an estimated 131 direct additional jobs and the enhancement of premises and areas so as to safeguard existing jobs and encourage future job creation. This NDC funding has directly levered in £9,778,354 of private sector funding, £218,928 of European Funding and £174,000 of HBC funding.

Furthermore the Longhill & Sandgate BID scheme used £149,800 of NDC funding that was complemented by £31,200 of HBC funding and an £85,365 contribution from Tesco to install and commission a 14 camera CCTV system for the estates. The ongoing revenue costs for this system over the next five years will lever in approximately £200,000 from contributions by private sector businesses.

708 NDC Residents have been helped into work and 73 NDC residents have been supported to establish new businesses. Of these, 42 continue to trade.

Recently the NDC has also responded to the national financial position by approving a scheme of 'Back to Work' grants to reduce barriers to employment by bridging the gap between benefit dependency and the receipt of first wages or in-work incentives (i.e. tax credits).

Contrasting somewhat with these successes, the latest MORI survey data shows that the proportion of those NDC residents reporting themselves as 'In Paid Work' is at the same level in 2008 as it was in 2002 (43%). However, the comparable figure for Hartlepool has fallen across the same period by 2 percentage points from 52% to 50%. Although this is not a statistically significant shift, it hints that NDC residents have fared slightly better over this time frame, with the resulting gap having narrowed from 18% down to 14%.

The NDC Neighbourhood Action Plan identifies priority areas for action, aligned with LAA indicators, relating to jobs and the local economy, which will build on the advancements made to date, and which will maintain an ongoing focus on these areas well beyond the

lifetime of the NDC Programme. The activities of the NDC Trust will also contribute by furthering employment and training aims.

3.3 Health Theme

The NDC Health Theme Strategy has been largely based on evidence that NDC residents do not access services at a level that would be expected in relation to known health needs in the area.

The cornerstone of NDC's Health Theme programme was originally designed to be the provision of a community-based Healthy Living Centre in the heart of the area, to be built with a £2.5m NDC contribution. However, as project development work was initiated, the opportunity for the new Primary Care Trust to gain alternative (LIFT) funding for such a project became apparent. A new Flagship £19m Health Centre is now under construction and will open in the near future in the very centre of the NDC area.

The LIFT funding has enabled the NDC to use its budget to fund a range of projects that support people, including children and young people, suffering from stress, emotional and mental health problems; that improve access to health and related services; that increase opportunities to participate in sporting activities, and to support people to live independently in their own homes. The Surestart project has also been extended to cover the whole NDC area.

Through Hartlepool MIND's 'Complementary Therapies', 'Mental Health Support Network', and 'Children and Young Person Emotional Well Being' programmes, 1108 NDC Residents have received support with stress and mental health related problems. 515 NDC residents have been helped to access services through the 'People's Access to Health' project. NDC monitoring data also shows that 1,601 one to one support/therapy sessions have taken place, and over 4,800 NDC resident attendances have been recorded at health awareness training events.

Despite the success of these projects where local evaluation clearly demonstrates the positive impact on beneficiaries, improvements in overall health outcomes have been difficult to identify. For example, although 1,280 NDC residents have attended smoking cessation events, MORI household survey data shows that the proportion of NDC residents reporting that they smoke has increased by 3 percentage points between 2000 and 2008, from 43% to 46%. A further indicator shows that the proportion of residents that report experiencing anxiety, nerves, depression or stress has remained fairly constant (24% in 2000 changing to 26% in 2008).

As with other NDC theme areas, the NDC NAP will ensure that health outcomes are monitored regularly and driven forward as local priorities by ensuring that health services continue to be designed and delivered in accordance with locally identified needs.

3.4 Community Safety Theme

Alongside housing, the top priority for residents was to improve community safety in the area. The NDC strategy concentrated on delivering projects focussed on the three elements of the 'crime triangle', namely, 'Location' (e.g. target hardening, CCTV, Wardens etc), 'Victim' (victim support, home security) and 'Offender' (mentoring, drugs outreach, targeted operations, anti social behaviour officers etc).

Services covering all sectors and all areas of the strategy have been co-ordinated in a central, accessible location, providing a focal point for community safety and neighbourhood management and a base for the introduction of neighbourhood policing in the area. The NDC funded 'Community Safety Premises' has developed into the town's 'central area base' from which these activities are, and will continue to be, delivered into the future. Community

empowerment - through the identification of local issues and resident's concerns - is central to the effectiveness of the approach through the working of the NAP and NDC Neighbourhood Panel. Evidence of the success of this mode of service delivery in addressing crime and community safety issues is clear...

Since 2001, overall crime has fallen in the NDC area from 239 crimes per '000 population down to 168. As a result, the gap in the number of crimes between the NDC area and Hartlepool as a whole has successfully been narrowed, from 70% down to 49%. House burglary also shows significant reductions. There were 81 burglaries per '000 households in the NDC area in 2001 but this had fallen to 29 by 2008, with this fall also contributing to a noteworthy decrease town-wide (from 42 burglaries per '000 households down to just 13).

The number of incidents of anti social behaviour has also declined. The gap between the NDC area and Hartlepool in the number of reported anti social incidents has narrowed by 27 percentage points, from 76% in 2001 down to 49% in 2008. Data supplied by the fire service also shows a 59.6% reduction in fires in the NDC area between 2004/5 and 2008/9. Collectively, these reductions in crime and disorder have led to increased feelings of safety among residents. MORI household survey data shows that those reporting feeling very or fairly safe alone at night has increased from 39% in 2002 to 45% in 2008.

3.5 Housing and Environment Theme

The Housing and Environment Strategy has been about making the area safe, healthy, clean and attractive. It sought to encourage people to stay in the area, essentially by addressing four key things; firstly, by stabilising values and turnover; secondly, by increasing levels of satisfaction (with the area generally and with public spaces); thirdly, by improving housing quality; and fourthly, by reducing problems with private rented sector properties. It was known that a significant intervention was needed to halt the spiral of decline. As a priority, the strategy needed to determine, early, whether and to what extent housing clearance was appropriate and it had to do this by involving the community, providing appropriate support and incentives to residents.

One of the most extensive resident participation exercises ever conducted in the region took place over an 18-month period. Over 80 street workshops were held involving over 2000 residents, as well as a range of other events. 1500 households participated in 60 street ballots resulting in the Community Housing Plan, launched in 2003. This Plan was radical and had the clear support of the majority of residents. It has been amended since, for various reasons, but community consent remains and it is the bedrock of the housing strategy. Under this plan, 422 older houses have been demolished and 176 houses are built or in the process of being built (80 completed to summer 2009). Two further key sites are in the process of being acquired for development. In Belle Vue, 80% of houses have been acquired and a preferred developer appointed to build in the order of 100 new homes for sale and rent. Demolition has begun. In the wider Rodney Street area, 35% of homes have been acquired and partial demolition of the area has already taken place.

Almost all of the other residents preferences expressed in the Plan, (eg for greater security, traffic calming, grant opportunities) have been addressed. The Community Housing Plan, despite pulling no punches about the shortage of the funding necessary for implementation, has been a successful, working document for six and half years. It was always designed to complement and be part of the local authority's housing renewal and environment plans, and it has been integrated into these strategies thus ensuring a continued focus on the NDC area.

Alongside the visible and tangible regeneration of the area through improved housing stock, the impact of the Community Housing Plan and NDC Housing and Environment strategy is also demonstrated by MORI household survey data. The Neighbourhood Management

project established the 'Safer Cleaner Greener' initiative to address day-to-day neighbourhood environmental issues and these initiatives coupled with actions under the Community Housing Plan have turned the area around.

Since 2001 the number of residents satisfied with the area as a place to live has increased from 51% to 71%. Furthermore, a range of neighbourhood and environmental issues that were identified by residents at the start of the NDC programme as either a problem or a serious problem in the area have been addressed such that fewer residents are now concerned about them. Perceptual indicators from the MORI household survey show that the number of residents citing household burglary as a problem has reduced by 40 percentage points from 63% to 23%; those perceiving vandalism, graffiti and property damage to be a problem or a serious problem has fallen by 22 percentage points to 45%; perceptions of drug dealing and use as a problem has fallen by 19 percentage points to 52%; car crime is down by 25 percentage points to 31%; disturbances from crowds or gangs has fallen by 15% to 46%; concerns about run down or boarded up properties is down by 20 percentage points to 35%; and the proportion of residents who think property being set on fire is a problem has dropped by 18 percentage points from 29% to 11%.

A recent NDC project to be approved is a grants/loans scheme to provide 'facelifts' and 'general improvements' to owner-occupied houses in the area. This contributes to the strategic objective of improving housing quality while also providing incentives for owner-occupiers to stay.

The NDC work in running voluntary landlord registration schemes has led to a successful application by the local authority to establish a landlord-licensing scheme in the most challenging parts of the area, which will go on to reduce private rented sector problems.

Significant and visible improvements in the NDC area have already been achieved. Further, the local authority's housing and environment strategies will continue to deliver the CHP, while improved community empowerment mechanisms will enable residents to effectively identify local and environmental problems and concerns in the future.

3.6 Community Development and Inclusion

Building a stronger community was essential not only in terms of effective delivery of the NDC programme, but also in terms of laying the foundations for succession and sustainability. At the start of the programme there was only one local residents group active in the area and little history of community development activity.

The NDC strategy has focussed on providing better community facilities, capacity building and financial inclusion.

An early Flagship Project was achieved with the £1.6m extension of the Belle Vue Centre, run by local residents. Local resource centres were established and community buildings have been improved. There are now 11 active resident associations in the area and the Moneywise Credit Union, based in the NDC area, has expanded its membership from 120 NDC residents in 2001 to 4100 adult and 1680 junior members currently.

Impressive increases in people feeling they could influence services in the area were achieved at the time of the Community Housing Planning process, rising from 22% in 2001 to 30% in 2004. In addition, a sustained increase has occurred in the number of residents being involved in voluntary work, from 11% in 2001 to 15% in 2008. The proportion of residents that think the NDC has improved the area a great deal or fair amount has risen from 25% at the start of the programme to 52% in 2008, and those who report feeling a part of the local community a great deal or a fair amount has risen by 9 percentage points from 35% in 2001 to 44% in 2008.

The 'Culture and Leisure' and 'Strengthening Communities' sections of the NDC Neighbourhood Action Plan ensure a continued focus on these issues in the NDC area through the LSPs' NAP process and through the NDC Neighbourhood Panel.

3.7 Children and Young People

Clearly, children and young people benefit from activity across all the preceding areas. However Hartlepool NDC took a decision to establish a dedicated theme in order to focus attention on their needs and enable effective involvement of young people.

The NDC strategy has involved developing new activities, establishing a state of the art youth project/café/internet facility, enabling youth participation and developing new play facilities. New play areas have been developed at Burn Valley Gardens and Lynnfield School. The latter involves an innovative partnership with Lynnfield School. Safe play spaces have been created by alley gating and by the creation of a park in Thornton Street. A youth forum has been established and the Café 177 project is seen as a 'centre for youth democracy' in the town.

Findings from MORI household survey data show that since the baseline survey conducted in advance of the NDC programme in 2000, significant increases in satisfaction have been reported over a range of indicators. The proportion of residents that are very and fairly satisfied with children's play areas has increased from 10% to 47%, satisfaction with youth and community centres has also improved, from 16% to 76%. Similarly, satisfaction with sports clubs and facilities has risen from 39% to 74%, and satisfaction with public parks and open spaces has increased from 53% to 62%.

A consequence of the improved opportunities now available to children and young people in the area is that the proportion of residents reporting teenagers hanging round the streets to be a problem has fallen from 74% in 2002 to 59% in 2008; a fall of 15 percentage points. As with other theme areas, ongoing attention will be given to issues affecting children and young people through the NAP process, as well as through the young people's consultation and participation mechanisms that have been established.

4. Hartlepool NDC Succession Strategy

As set out in the introduction to this report, the anticipated need for a succession strategy was first outlined in March 2001. The strategy was further discussed in detail by the Partnership in 2003 when deliberations on the delivery vehicle for implementation of the Community Housing Plan were taking place. When Hartlepool Revival was launched in May 2003 its long-term aim was defined as forming part of the NDC succession strategy.

Deliberations on Neighbourhood Management started in earnest in 2002, and a feasibility study was completed in 2003. The current Neighbourhood Management project was subsequently approved in April 2005.

The detailed NDC Succession Strategy was approved by the Partnership in December 2006 and set out three interconnected main elements. These would work together to focus on regeneration issues, to empower residents, and to sustain the improved partnership working that has been developed. The 3 elements are:

- **Neighbourhood Management and Community Empowerment**

Neighbourhood management is the key vehicle for ensuring residents are effectively engaged in prioritising local issues and that services are delivered in a co-ordinated way that is responsive to local needs. This includes the provision of ongoing support to local community groups and leaders (see Appendix 3.)

- **NDC Successor Body**

The successor body, the Hartlepool NDC Trust and its trading subsidiary companies (currently Hartlepool Revival) will own and manage assets on behalf of the local community; attract further resources for regeneration and develop projects and social enterprises to further the regeneration of the area. Whilst the Trust is modest in scale compared to the original £53.7 million NDC Programme, and with only a relatively small asset base at the outset, it will work to complement the Neighbourhood Management process by continuing to contribute to the original objectives of the NDC Programme.

- **Building the capacity of key voluntary and community sector organisations**

These organisations will be important in terms of delivering additional services across all strategy theme areas and beyond the life of the NDC Programme.

A brief description of progress in these three areas is set out below:

4.1 Neighbourhood Management & Community Empowerment

The NDC Neighbourhood Management project was established in 2005. It was designed within the grain of the LSP Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and the Local Authority Town Care Management Structure, and it has become embedded in LSP processes such that it forms the central plank of NDC succession in terms of empowering local residents and shaping local services to address the regeneration challenges that remain in the area (see Appendix 3.)

The project is focused on the Community Safety Office (premises at the heart of the NDC area which are owned by the NDC Successor Body). The office provides a base for a wide range of services coordinated by the Neighbourhood Manager and the local Police Sergeant. Currently services located at the office include: Neighbourhood Policing Team (including PCSO's), Neighbourhood Manager, Community Development Workers, Anti Social Behaviour Officers, Crime Prevention Adviser and Victim Support Worker.

The strategy for the team is set by a Neighbourhood Action Plan, developed by residents and other stakeholders and monitored by a Neighbourhood Panel comprising local resident representatives and Ward Councillors. The Panel, in addition to influencing mainstream services, has a dedicated budget under its control.

The terms of reference for the neighbourhood panel (Appendix 2) sets out how local residents will be involved and empowered. In addition to including any residents already elected to the NDC partnership and the Council's Consultative Forum, the main formal route for resident engagement is through nomination as a representative of a constituted residents association.

There are currently 11 formally constituted residents associations in the NDC area (14 in the wider succession area) and these groups receive support from the Borough Council (Neighbourhood Development officers), Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency, and the NDC capacity building project.

Formally 'writing in' residents associations into the terms of reference has helped to strengthen and legitimise their role at the neighbourhood level and strengthen the quality of partnerships, especially with local ward councillors and service providers.

Day to day operations are directed via the Neighbourhood Manager through Joint Action Groups and weekly priority meetings.

The project's success and impact has been clearly demonstrated through local evaluation and has been recognised recently when it was chosen as one of 12 national 'exemplar' sites of best practice by the Police Improvement Board.

The project has informed the further development of Neighbourhood Management by the Council across the town as described in the draft Neighbourhood Management Strategy currently under consideration by the Council. Hartlepool Council has already mainstreamed the Neighbourhood Manager post, and along with the Police contribute to annual running costs for the project. There is a full commitment by the Council to mainstream the project post 2011.

4.2 Successor Body

As previously described, Hartlepool Revival Ltd. was established in 2003, and since then it has purchased and managed assets on behalf of the NDC Partnership. In December 2006 the NDC Partnership agreed to explore the feasibility of establishing a charitable trust, which would take on ownership of Hartlepool Revival Ltd to act as its trading subsidiary, and which would 'lock in' assets to the local community.

Following that feasibility work, the Trust (Hartlepool NDC Trust) was successfully launched at a meeting involving over 60 local stakeholders in February 2008. Later that year the Trust was formally registered with Companies House and the Charities Commission.

The Trust secured the services of a leading commercial law firm Muckle LLP to advise on company structure and to assist in the registration of the Trust as both a company and a charity. Our lawyer has ensured that the Trust Memorandum of Association contains the necessary "asset lock", which ensures that the assets of the Trust can only be used to further its charitable objects. Hartlepool Revival is now wholly owned solely by the Trust – who are its only member and appoint all its directors. The asset-lock that secures the assets of the Trust for the future benefit of the NDC area therefore also applies to Hartlepool Revival. This company structure enables the Trust to pursue its charitable (regeneration) objectives with Hartlepool Revival acting as its trading subsidiary, pursuing activities that support these regeneration aims.

As the directors of the trading company (Revival) are under a duty to act in the best interest of the company and in accordance with its objects, they would not be able to act in a way which is detrimental to the charity. Our lawyer has provided specific advice that with this company structure all concerns about asset transfer are satisfied.

The asset base of the Trust is relatively limited and will generate only a moderate level of income. This is largely due to the nature of housing issues in Hartlepool, where capital investment has needed to be focussed on buying housing for demolition, and then recycling land receipts to bridge the significant funding gap in the Community Housing Plan. There have not, therefore, been the same opportunities as available to some other NDC's, to invest in land and property on a larger scale to generate significant projected income for their successor bodies.

However the Trustees of the successor body, made up predominantly of local residents and other stakeholders who have been involved in the delivery of the NDC programme, have established a clear vision of how from this relatively modest base, a sustainable and relevant development trust can be established and developed.

Progress has already been made in securing resources from the NDC programme in order to support the employment of a dedicated NDC trust development worker until March 2011 and to assist with establishing an office base for the Trust.

The NDC trust has also worked with the DTA and local support networks to assist with its establishment. It has been developed to be a democratic and accountable organisation that will remain rooted in the community it serves. The Trust's main functions are:

- To continue to support regeneration initiatives in the area, with particular focus on the objectives of the Community Housing Plan
- To develop sustainable community enterprise activity supporting the aims of the NDC programme
- To provide funds and support for community empowerment in the NDC area
- To provide a 'voice' for the area

The Trustees have developed a robust business plan within this context and that plan is appended to this report. (Appendix 4.)

4.3 Key Voluntary Organisations

The importance and potential of the community and voluntary sector to deliver sustainable change in the area has always been prominent in Hartlepool NDC's strategy development. Significant elements of the programme have been directly delivered by voluntary sector organisations. There are, however, a number of organisations which are particularly important in terms of NDC succession, in their capacity to deliver programmes beyond 2011. This section briefly sets out the role of 5 key organisations.

The NDC strategy has been to assist these five projects through capital investments (including recently approved 'sustainability' grants) and strategic support to be in as strong position as possible in relation to sustainability as the NDC programme draws to a close.

The Belle Vue Centre

The Belle Vue Centre had been developed in 1985 as a small sports hall project, by local residents aligned to a Workingmen's Club in one of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Hartlepool. The project was initially developed as a community response to chronic youth unemployment and lack of local facilities.

By 2001 the Centre had become well established, expanded its range of activities, and convinced the NDC Partnership that it had the capacity to radically expand its activities, delivering a wider range of services, whilst retaining its community led ethos. At that time the Centre employed four staff.

Currently the Belle Vue Centre comprises one of the best equipped facilities in the sub-region with sports, training, conference, catering and youth facilities, and employs over 90 paid staff (32 full time and 60 part-time) and 50 volunteers. It delivers services across all strategic theme areas with a focus on health, sport, family support, children and young people and training.

Whilst the wide range of projects is dependant on an even wider range of funders and commissioners, the Centre does not now rely on core revenue support from NDC and has a sustainable business plan. Last year the Centre attracted over 100,000 visits and has gained national recognition for its ability to reach disadvantaged groups.

Hartlepool Youth Ltd (Café 177)

Hartlepool Youth Ltd was established primarily to develop and deliver the Café 177 Youth Project for 12-19 year olds. Starting in 2004, the project now delivers services from a superb facility at a town centre location in the heart of the NDC area. The project has become established as a centre for youth participation and democracy in Hartlepool, as well as for providing a wide range of diversionary and leisure activities and support services for young

people. In early Autumn 2009 the project developed a new partnership-management arrangement involving local and national charitable organisations, Hartlepool Families First and Barnardos - with the latter formally appointed as the lead organisation. It also approved a new outline vision for the future, and a new business plan is currently in development. A building refurbishment is underway prior to a project re-launch, which is also set to include the proposed development of a new youth enterprise scheme that will operate out of the venue. These developments have already secured the future of the project beyond NDC funding, and they provide the foundations on which to build a sustainable project future.

The Salaam Centre

The Salaam Centre is a resource centre, which provides advice, training, and capacity building activities targeted at the BME communities. Hartlepool's BME population is relatively small, but is growing in number and diversity. The majority of Hartlepool's BME population live in the NDC area.

The project was established in 2001 and is managed by a community interest company made up of local residents, mainly from BME communities. The project is due to relocate to larger refurbished premises in April 2010, enabling a greater range of services to be developed. A recent evaluation has assisted in outlining a way forward for the project to ensure it is best placed to respond to the changing needs of local communities, and to work with potential partner agencies (including by providing commissioned services). As such, it will continue to promote equality and diversity issues, and contribute to increased social cohesion in the area.

Hartlepool MIND

Initial surveys indicated very high levels of people suffering stress, anxiety and mental health problems in the NDC area. An early partnership was established with Hartlepool MIND (who at that time were a very small organisation employing two people), and a range of projects were developed and delivered.

Hartlepool MIND has provided new ways of working with local residents that have achieved significant (and in some cases dramatic) positive results. This work has been recognised at a regional and national level and has attracted funding (through the PCT and Local Authority) to expand its work. The organisation now employs 85 staff and in the last year it worked with a caseload of around 1300 local people.

NDC funding and support enabled this growth to the current position where the future of the services is secure through being commissioned by the PCT/Council. This significantly strengthened organisation is therefore now much better positioned to continue to address the health inequalities of the area which have proved to be extremely difficult to impact upon thus far.

Hartlepool People Ltd. (The Peoples Centre)

The Peoples Centre has operated since 1983 from a former Police Station (a relatively dilapidated building), delivering a range of services focussing on some of the most marginalised groups, in Hartlepool (including support for drug and alcohol addiction, and victims of domestic abuse). NDC initially provided revenue and capital support to assist with staffing and minor refurbishment.

More significantly, NDC has assisted the project to access a £1m grant from the Government's Asset Transfer Fund to fully refurbish the building. Crucial to this was the support of a loan from Hartlepool Revival, which enabled Hartlepool People to purchase the building and release that grant, thus ensuring future sustainability. This security will enable the project to continue to offer a wide range of support services to clients that otherwise often fall through the gaps of existing service provision.

5. Government Criteria

The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has set out eight criteria against which they will assess NDC succession strategies before giving their approval. This section comments on the Hartlepool NDC succession strategy in relation to each of these criteria.

Criterion 1: Outcomes to be delivered should be appropriate for the NDC area.

The Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP), described earlier, establishes the priority outcomes to be delivered in the area, and their relationship to priorities set out in the Local Area Agreement and Community Strategy. The NAP is monitored by the Neighbourhood Panel, which is comprised of local residents (from a variety of sources, including residents associations) and ward councillors.

The NAP sets out the current social and economic conditions in the NDC area and identifies clear priorities and actions relating to these conditions across all of the thematic areas of the NDC Programme.

NAP delivery is coordinated and led by the Neighbourhood Manager. The NAP is agreed by local residents (at a community conference) and by other stakeholders. The NAP is then endorsed by the LSP. The written NDC NAP was formally endorsed by the LSP in March 2007. This NAP is included as an Appendix. The new NAP, involving a broad consultation process with local residents and stakeholders, has been commenced and, with a scheduled completion in March 2010, is to be a 5 year document with an annual refresh.

The key organisations responsible for taking forward regeneration in the area all feature strong local representation and networking, helping to ensure that they focus on appropriate outcomes. The NDC Trust and Hartlepool Revival Boards are comprised of a majority of local residents. All of these residents have extensive knowledge of the needs of the area and experience of delivering regeneration outcomes through involvement in the NDC partnership. Other Trustees comprise local business people and those with extensive experience of the community sector and economic development, with links across a range of local organisations and partnerships.

All the five key voluntary organisations outlined in section 4.3 are based in the NDC area and are governed by Boards of Trustees which include NDC residents.

Appendix 8, on project sustainability, identifies how NDC funded projects will continue, or how benefit will be sustained. The report demonstrates that there are robust proposals to continue at least 55 NDC funded projects beyond 2011.

Criterion 2: The community should continue to be empowered and leaders supported.

The succession strategy for Hartlepool NDC has been developed by local resident leaders working alongside other stakeholders. The main vehicle for involving and empowering the local community is through the Neighbourhood Management process, and specifically through the Neighbourhood Panel.

The Neighbourhood Panel provides a direct link between Resident Groups at a Neighbourhood level and the town's strategic decision making processes.

The Neighbourhood Panel terms of reference outline how a majority of voting members will be local residents. The Hartlepool NDC Trust has a board of directors currently comprising ten local residents and one local business person. The board are currently undergoing an exercise to determine skills requirements before embarking on widening membership. This process will be led by local resident Board members.

Local resource and Community Centres are central to ensuring that voices of the “harder to reach” groups will continue to be heard. Most specifically the Salaam Centre will enable effective BME engagement and Café 177 is now established as a “Centre for democracy and participation” for young people in the town. A dedicated NDC youth forum will continue to be supported by the Neighbourhood Management Team and will link directly with the Neighbourhood Panel and Action Planning Process.

Hartlepool Council has mainstreamed a post to provide community development support under the Neighbourhood Manager. Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) continue to support community empowerment and leadership.

In the medium term the NDC Trust are to establish a community investment/grant fund to enable community empowerment.

Criterion 3: Responsibilities for project continuation / mainstreaming should be agreed with the Local Authority and other partners.

The attached Project Sustainability Matrix (Appendix 8) outlines sustainability arrangements for all projects and activities funded throughout the NDC Programme. The Matrix has been shared with and agreed by all identified delivery partners.

Projects coloured in green are those where arrangements are clearly agreed with responsible bodies.

Those highlighted in yellow are projects which were generally not designed to continue beyond the life of the NDC Programme, but where project benefits are sustained.

Those highlighted in orange are projects where work on sustainability is ongoing with responsible bodies and relevant stakeholders.

Hartlepool NDC has established an extremely effective internal evaluation team; supported by an independent evaluation panel. Over the past five years the team has produced 102 detailed project and theme evaluations. Each evaluation explores in detail specific issues around project or activity sustainability and makes appropriate recommendations to project sponsors and mainstream service providers.

This process of clearly establishing local outcomes has been instrumental in securing commitment to continuation of activities across all theme areas as outlined in the project sustainability plan. Appendix 13 shows key partners endorsement of the NDC succession strategy.

Criterion 4: NDC assets should be safeguarded into the long term.

The NDC Successor Body, the NDC Trust, was registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee in June 2008 and as a Charity in July 2008. The Memorandum and Articles of Association are compliant with DCLG succession guidance and contain clauses to ensure that assets and benefits are locked into the area.

The area of benefit for the NDC Trust outlined in the memorandum and articles is defined as ‘Central Hartlepool’. This area includes all of the NDC area, but is not coterminous with existing NDC boundaries.

The Hartlepool NDC boundary has never really made a great deal of sense at a local level. The main driver in deciding the boundary in 2001 was the need to cover as much of the area of older housing around the town centre as possible, whilst keeping the total number within Government guidance levels. The resulting area cuts across several ‘real’ neighbourhoods,

and includes parts of four wards. The key issues affecting the NDC area equally affect some of those surrounding neighbourhoods, especially those characterised by similar terraced house types.

In terms of maximising the potential to work with partners, and within the grain of how the Hartlepool Partnership (LSP) and Local Authority design and deliver services, it makes sense to relax the NDC boundary post 2011 to include other neighbourhoods.

Their inclusion, encompassed in the description of 'Central Hartlepool' in the NDC Trust Memorandum and Articles, is supported by the NDC Partnership and key partners.

The existing NDC area will make up around 86% of the expanded Central Hartlepool area, and therefore is consistent with most recent Government guidance which states that... "We expect the area covered by the succession strategy will predominantly be the NDC area." (Programme note 44).

The plans attached at Appendix 10 illustrate the additional areas described above. They predominantly comprise older terraced housing directly adjacent to the current NDC boundary and are within the ward boundaries which currently make up the NDC area.

If this wider 'Central Hartlepool' area was not adopted as the succession area there is a risk that key partners would find it more difficult to engage with and respond to the key successor bodies i.e. Neighbourhood Panel and NDC Trust.

Criterion 5: Governance arrangements support the objectives and the succession plans.

(a) The Neighbourhood Panel terms of reference are appended to this report at Appendix 2. They demonstrate the relationship between the local authority and local resident members. The NAP demonstrates the commitment of partner agencies to the process; to ensuring ongoing and effective resident representation in shaping and commenting upon the services they receive.

(b) The Hartlepool NDC Trust has been developed with the support of the local authority. Hartlepool Revival Ltd (the Trust's trading subsidiary) has a place on its Board prescribed for the local authority. This has been occupied for 5 years by the town's directly elected Mayor, Stuart Drummond, who has recently been elected for a third term.

The Trust Board conducted an internal skills audit in July 2009 and has reviewed skills required for effective progression of the Business Plan. A Development Programme has been designed in response to the audit and four places on the Board have been reserved to recruit to meet skills gaps. The Trust Business Plan (Appendix 4) describes this in further detail.

Criterion 6: The risks to the succession strategy should be properly identified and managed.

Two risk registers are appended to this report. The succession strategy risk register (Appendix 7) describes the general, political, economic and commercial risks to successful progression and delivery of the overall strategy and its main elements. The NDC Trust Business Plan (Appendix 4) contains a Risk Register pertaining to the successor body and its trading subsidiary.

Criterion 7: The strategy must be agreed by the local authority and supported by local partners.

Hartlepool NDC has been proud of its good working relationship with the Local Authority and other partners. The Local Authority, through elected members and a senior officer, has been directly involved in every monthly meeting of the Partnership Steering Group since 2000.

The NDC Trust's trading subsidiary, Hartlepool Revival, has a place on its board reserved for a representative of the Local Authority, with paragraph b) of Criterion 5, above, providing more detail.

Regular NDC reports are presented to the Hartlepool Partnership (LSP) and the NDC Director has been a member of the LSP since 2001. Other NDC Steering Group Members (residents and officers) sit on the LSP in different capacities. The succession strategy has been presented for approval to the Cabinet of Hartlepool Borough Council. A full presentation of the strategy has also been made to the Hartlepool Partnership.

The endorsement of the local authority and key partners is formally demonstrated in Appendix 13.

Criterion 8: The successor vehicle must be financially independent into the long term.

The attached business plan for the Hartlepool NDC Trust (Appendix 4) sets out how it will be viable over the next 10 year period.

State Aid and other issues: The NDC Partnership have considered the implications of State Aid and are not aware of any issues. All grant applications are subject to consideration in respect of EU State Aid rules by HBC officers.

No pension liabilities will remain from the NDC Programme

6. Conclusion

Hartlepool NDC has made a significant contribution to the regeneration of the town over the past 9 years. Many more people are satisfied with the area as a place to live and the way services are provided. The physical improvements and new facilities are clearly visible and have made a real impact. The capacity and potential of local residents and the community sector have been clearly developed and highlighted. High quality partnerships and trusting relationships have been established between residents and a wide range of stakeholders.

Big challenges still remain. These are clearly highlighted in the Neighbourhood Action Plan for the area. This succession strategy sets out how the Hartlepool NDC area is in a strong position to sustain the improvements made since 2001, to build on the success outlined above and to meet the challenges involved in creating a sustainable community where people want to live long into the future.