



HARTLEPOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD

Tuesday 2 September 2025 at 4pm

Meeting held at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre

<u>ATTENDEES</u>	
<b>Members</b>	
Mark Robinson	Independent Chair
Councillor Brenda Harrison	Leader of Hartlepool Borough Council
Sarah Bedford	Independent Member
Brenda McLeish	Independent Member
Lisa Molloy	Independent Member
Shane Moore	Independent Member
Alison Gwynn	Independent Member
Pamela Hargreaves	Independent Member
Martin Raby	Independent Member
<b>Associate Member</b>	
Tom Bryant	Chief Executive Officer, TVCA
<b>Officers and other representatives</b>	
Jo Moore	Interim Group Director of Finance and Resources, TVCA
Beverley Bearne	Chief Operating Officer, HDC
Jodie Townsend	Interim Group Chief Legal Officer & Monitoring Officer, TVCA
Shaun Natrass	Group Legal Manager, TVCA
Justine Matchett	Lichfields
Neil Westwick	Lichfields
Kate Smith	Governance Officer, TVCA
<b>Apologies</b>	
Simon Corbett	Independent Member
Matt Storey	Police and Crime Commissioner, Cleveland Police
Denise McGuckin	Managing Director, Hartlepool Borough Council
Victoria Fuller	Chief Constable, Cleveland Police
Victoria Smith	Group Financial Controller, TVCA
Julie Hurley	Interim Director of Infrastructure & Head of Planning, TVCA

<p>HDC 05/25</p>	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were noted in the Attendees list.</p>
<p>HDC 06/25</p>	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>Alison Gwynn declared a non-pecuniary interest as CEO of North East Screen. Martin Raby declared a non-pecuniary interest as Director of the Northern School of Art.</p>
<p>HDC 07/25</p>	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p>Members were invited to raise any concerns or amendments regarding the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2025. No comments were received.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board <b>APPROVED</b> the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2025 as a correct record.</p>
<p>HDC 08/25</p>	<p><b>CHAIR AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER'S UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Board received a presentation and verbal update from the Chair and the Chief Operating Officer of Hartlepool Development Corporation.</p> <p>It was outlined that there is the need to raise the profile of the Development Corporation.</p> <p>The following updates were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production Village application – This will be presented to the Planning Board on 16 September 2025.</li> <li>• Middleton Grange Shopping Centre (MGSC): A Focus Day will be held on Monday 15 September with the aim to provide clarity to the Board and Hartlepool Borough Council. This will be to ensure that operationally MGSC is as efficient as it can be, and reporting is accurate. This will be brought back to the Board comprehensively in December.</li> <li>• Anti-Social Behaviour – there is funding available to the Development Corporation to work with all stakeholders in the town centre. The Chair outlined that a proposal was put to the Retail Trust last week in relation to an ASB Training Regime pilot for a 'whole town' approach to work with victims of ASB, especially shop workers and this will be brought before the Board in the future.</li> <li>• HMOs and planning – article 4 applied within DC. Deliver what is best.</li> </ul>

The Chair noted comments from a member that, as a Board there is the need to improve communication, particularly with HMOs. It was stated that the Board should not be afraid to make comment on these, which feeds into the national narrative.

- Board Members were advised by the Chair that there is work ongoing with the Chief Executive Officer on a 5-year Strategic Plan, which will be relevant to the people of Hartlepool, and make meaningful change to people's lives. These changes will involve new asks for resources/capital to deliver.

Comments and questions were invited from the Board, and these are summarized below:

- A member noted that it is important to get the best value out of the consultants to deliver change at MGSC.
- A Member requested clarification on how the difference between student accommodation and HMO is determined in planning applications. They were advised by the representatives from Lichfields that conversations are held with the applicant to establish if the application is for just for students or for open consent. In cases where it is solely for student use the description is amended, and separate consent would be needed if use was for anything but students. It was explained that, in the case of Church Street, the intention is for students, however as the building is listed, there is considerable lead-in time between getting consent and having premises ready. The developer is not prepared to take the risk that the demand for students will still be there and therefore, open consent was being sought. Another Member confirmed that, at the current time there is only need for 100 bed space, as there is adequate provision from the private sector.
- Members discussed the need to keep developing the policy, and for every application to receive due scrutiny, upholding the highest standards. It was highlighted that many HMO applications have already been approved, and it was asked whether there is provision for call-in where issues arise. Members were advised that there is no call-in provision, however decisions are made in accordance with the Development Plan, with the primary document of reference being the Local Plan. The Local Plan does not contain any policies which give the opportunity to refuse HMOs in certain locations.
- Additionally, Members were advised that representatives from Lichfields have met with officers from HBC with the intention to produce a policy document. HDC cannot produce policy documents however the Council can produce a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which could then form part of the Development Plan. Linked to this, all HMO applications, whether student or HMO, should be reported to the Board for determination.
- It was explained to Members that this document is being produced, and HBC are very supportive of this. The SPD should give weight and substance to the Development Corporation.

	<p>It was noted that HBC require 8 weeks, however the intention is to have the document out for consultation within a month. This should include space standards, sandwich policy (concentration of HMOs in a particular street), and other amenity issues as well. It is understood this will be circulated at the next Council meeting.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board <b>NOTED</b> the update.</p>
<p>HDC 09/25</p>	<p><b>ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT</b></p> <p>The Board received a report from the Interim Group Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer presenting the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2024/2025.</p> <p>Comments and questions were invited from the Board, and these are summarized below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member noted that it would be helpful for the Board to have sight of, and discussions regarding the Risk Register, particularly the ‘risk appetite’ at an appropriate point. This was noted by the Chief Operating Officer and by the Chair, and assurances were made that this would be brought back to the Board and updated.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board <b>NOTED</b> the content of the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2024-25 and <b>NOTED</b> that it was published as a draft with the draft Financial Statements for Hartlepool Development Corporation.</p>
<p>HDC 10/25</p>	<p><b>PLANNING UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Board received a Planning Update from the Head of Planning on planning applications within the Hartlepool Mayoral Development Corporation boundary for Hartlepool Development Corporation.</p> <p>The following update was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hellens application at Queens Meadows – this was due to come to the last Board which was cancelled. Further information has recently been received to considerably increase floor space within hybrid part of the application and include data centre in potential uses. The revised proposal will have to be sent for re-consultation and is currently on hold for additional work. A further update will be provided in due course.</li> </ul> <p>Comments and questions were invited from the Board, and these are summarized below:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Leader of HBC advised the Board that, following conversations with Hellens, the financial offer for the S106 to the Council is not deemed to be fair, and will need to be re-addressed. This was noted by representatives from Lichfield, who confirmed this can be picked up as part of onward discussions and will go back for re-consultation.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board <b>NOTED</b> the update</p>
<p>HDC 11/25</p>	<p><b>Q1 FORECAST OF REVENUE 2025/26 &amp; 2025/2029 CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>The Board received a report from the Interim Group Director of Finance and Resources providing details of the 2025/26 revenue and capital forecast outturn position for Hartlepool Development Corporation, highlighting any significant variances against the approved budget for the year, based on the position as at the end of June 2025.</p> <p><b>The appendix to this report is not for publication under the terms of paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)); of schedule 12a Local Government Act 1972.</b></p> <p><i>Members were informed that the confidential appendix held commercial information which could not be public, and if members wished to discuss, then the session would have to be closed.</i></p> <p>The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members were provided with an overview of the report, and it was explained that the format of the report has been revised, to provide more information than previously shown.</li> <li>Overspend of £135k in terms of revenue and this is with the additional operating costs for the shopping centre.</li> <li>Initial £10m grant from TVCA - £2m revenue / £7.9m capital. Underspend of £216k. Budget for feasibility study. Allocate to MGSC capital budget. Residual will be reallocated to revenue. Gone back to auditors - £10m grant not been paid over in full – paid as needed. Estimates at the time – next tranche would like to reallocate to overspend. Funded through mixture of cost savings.</li> </ul> <p>Comments and questions were invited from the Board, and these are summarized below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Member raised concerns that the report is flagged as a medium risk issue, considering the rise from £1.287m to £1.986m after the budget was set. It was suggested this should have been addressed in the discussion. Members were advised that external work has been commissioned to firm up the budget, and the Chief Operating Officer stated that a number of</li> </ul>

	<p>retailers have recently exited the shopping centre. There have also been immediate repair issues which were not previously anticipated. It was stated that as part of the risk review this will be adequately referenced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Member suggested that the picture going forward is not particularly comfortable as the shopping centre losses increase and questions were raised over the ability to generate funds. It was highlighted that MGSC is a significant risk factor now, and it is important to engage with the Board to address risk issues going forward.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair noted the concerns raised and confirmed that there is now real data to work with to consider the longer-term funding for the Development Corporation. This is critical to the ongoing function of this Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chief Executive for the TVCA also acknowledged the comments and stated that it is not possible to turn back the clock. Members were reassured of the commitment to the Board going forward, and that the Risk Register is a live document. It was also outlined that the £10m has enabled the current position, and further work is being done as to what is next. There is the need to explore the whole suite of funding opportunities and give the Board proper foresight.</li> <li>• Members welcomed the thorough reset.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. <b>NOTED</b> the Q1 forecast revenue outturn of £0.135m overspend for 2025/26.</li> <li>II. <b>NOTED</b> the Q1 Capital Outturn Forecast for 2025/26 as at the end of quarter 1 and the forecast overspend of £0.1m for 2025/26.</li> <li>III. <b>APPROVED</b> the reallocation of £0.1m from the initial Project Development budget to offset the forecast overspend on the MGSC capital budget.</li> <li>IV. Formally <b>REQUESTS</b> of TVCA a reallocation of £0.116m initial Project Development budget to be used for revenue funding to partially offset the forecast overspend.</li> <li>V. <b>NOTED</b> that the revenue allocation of £2.056m from the £10m (£2.056m Revenue and £7.944m Capital) grant from TVCA is forecast to be fully utilised in 2025/26.</li> <li>VI. <b>NOTED</b> the revised capital programme for the period April 2025 to March 2029 incorporating the changes above if approved as set out in Table 10.</li> <li>VII. <b>NOTED</b> the impact to the Medium-Term Financial Plan for the period to March 2029 of the changes above as set out in Table 4.</li> <li>VIII. <b>APPROVED</b> the increase of £0.0116m to the MGSC revenue budget for the period to 31 March 2026.</li> <li>IX. <b>NOTED</b> the financial risks as set out from paragraph 39.</li> <li>X. <b>NOTED</b> the future years’ revenue implications of the revised capital Investment programme as set out in paragraph 26.</li> </ol>
HDC 11/25	URGENT AND DELEGATED DECISIONS

The Board received an update for the Hartlepool Development Corporation Board of Delegation and Urgent Decisions taken since the last Development Corporation Board meeting.

**The appendices to this report are not for publication under the terms of paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)); of schedule 12a Local Government Act 1972.**

*Members were informed that the confidential appendices held commercial information which could not be public, and if members wished to discuss, then the session would have to be closed.*

Comments and questions were invited from the Board, and these are summarized below:

- A Member raised concerns over one of the Urgent Decisions (Item 13) which was in relation to a fixed term Marketing contract. Clarification was requested as to why this should be marked as an urgent decision when it was a fixed term contract, and therefore clear as to when it would be coming to an end. It was suggested that it was necessary for the contract to be re-procured, and therefore the decision was taken to continue the contract while this took place. The decision sat between Board meetings. The Chair confirmed that he would investigate this for further clarity.
- The Chief Executive advised Members that an improved Forward Plan would help to minimise the number of Urgent Decisions, and ensure more decisions come to the Board.
- The question was also raised whether Members were happy with the management agent currently in place for MGSC, given the number of unexpected 'surprises'. The Chair offered assurances that a full procurement exercise is being carried out.

**RESOLVED** – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board:

- NOTED** the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 3 and confidential Appendix 1.
- NOTED** the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 4 and confidential Appendix 2.
- NOTED** the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 5 and confidential Appendix 3.
- NOTED** the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 6 and confidential Appendix 4.
- NOTED** the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 7 and confidential Appendix 5.
- NOTED** the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 8 and confidential Appendix 6.

	<p>vii. <u>NOTED</u> the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 9 and confidential Appendix 7.</p> <p>viii. <u>NOTED</u> the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 10 and confidential Appendix 8.</p> <p>ix. <u>NOTED</u> the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 11 and confidential Appendix 9.</p> <p>x. <u>NOTED</u> the Urgent Decision detailed in paragraph 12 and confidential Appendix 10.</p> <p>xi. <u>NOTED</u> the Urgent Decision detailed in paragraph 13 and confidential Appendix 11.</p> <p>xii. <u>NOTED</u> the Urgent Decision detailed in paragraph 14 and confidential Appendix 12.</p> <p>xiii. <u>NOTED</u> the Urgent Decision detailed in paragraph 15 and confidential Appendix 13.</p> <p>xiv. <u>NOTED</u> the Urgent Decision detailed in paragraph 16 and confidential Appendix 14.</p> <p>xv. <u>NOTED</u> the Urgent Decision detailed in paragraph 17 and confidential Appendix 15.</p> <p>xvi. <u>NOTED</u> the Urgent Decision detailed in paragraph 18 and confidential Appendix 16.</p>
HDC 08/25	<p><b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tuesday 2 December 2025</li></ul> <p>(The meeting concluded at 16:46)</p>