Hartlepool Development Corporation

HARTLEPOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD

Tuesday 28 April 2026 at 3pm

Meeting held at Hartlepool Civic Centre

ATTENDEES	
Members	
Pamela Hargreaves	Independent Chair
Brenda Harrison	Independent Member
Martin Raby	Independent Member
Alison Gwynn	Independent Member
Associate Member	
Matt Wilton	Chief Executive, Hartlepool Borough Council
Tom Bryant	Chief Executive Officer, TVCA
Officers and other representatives	
Jonathan Spruce	Director of Infrastructure, TVCA
Jeanette McGarry (Via Teams)	Interim Monitoring Officer, TVCA
Jo Moore (Via Teams)	Interim Director of Finance and Resources, TVCA
Laura Metcalfe	Development Corporation Manager, TVCA
Louise Holroyd	Locum Solicitor, TVCA
Justine Matchett	Planning Consultant, Lichfields
Kate Smith	Governance Officer, TVCA
Apologies	
Matt Storey	Police and Crime Commissioner, Cleveland Police
Lisa Molloy	Independent Member
Shane Moore	Independent Member

HDC 10/26 Agenda item 1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted in the Attendees list.
HDC 11/26 Agenda item 2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest.
HDC 12/26 Agenda item 3	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING Members were invited to raise any concerns or amendments regarding the minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 March 2026. No comments were received. RESOLVED – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board APPROVED the minutes of the meetings held on 30 March 2026 as a correct record.
HDC 13/26 Agenda item 4	GOVERNANCE AND APPOINTMENTS Members received a report from the Interim Monitoring Officer detailing the appointment of Jonathan Spruce as Head of Planning and were asked to note previous resignations from the Board. Comments and questions were invited, but none were received. RESOLVED – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board i. CONFIRMED the appointment of Jonathan Spruce as the Head of Planning for Hartlepool Development Corporation Board. ii. NOTED the resignation of Simon Corbett as an independent member of Hartlepool Development Corporation. iii. NOTED the resignation of Sarah Bedford as an independent member of Hartlepool Development Corporation. iv. NOTED the resignation of Brenda McLeish as an independent member of Hartlepool Development Corporation.
HDC 14/26 Agenda item 5	PLANNING UPDATE The Board received a report from the Head of Planning providing an update on the position of planning service delivery and the status of planning applications relevant to the Hartlepool Development Corporation.

	Planning Consultant, Justine Matchett, advised that since the last Board meeting permission has been granted to Hellens Group for the Queens Meadow Business Park Development. This did not trigger requirement for consideration by the Board. The Board were told that there are continued discussions around the main residential application, including concerns about noise from TATA Steel. A new architect is being appointed, and it is likely to be a couple of months before this is brought for consideration. The Chair noted that this is a positive step forward on behalf of Hartlepool. Comments and questions were invited from the Board, and none were received. RESOLVED – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board: I. NOTED the updated position of planning service delivery and the status of planning applications submitted for consideration.
HDC 15/26 Agenda item 6	URGENT AND DELEGATED DECISIONS The Board received a report from the Interim Monitoring Officer providing an update on urgent and delegated decisions made since the last Board meeting. **Appendices 1-7 of 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.** *The Chair advised the Board and members of the public that appendices 1-7 to this report hold commercial information which could not be public, so if members wished to discuss this, then the session would have to be closed for those specific conversations. Members of the Board indicated that their comments did not pertain to any confidential items.* The Chair invited comments and questions from members, and these are summarized below: • A member highlighted that Decisions 7 and 8 were marked as 'urgent', however there was considerable delay between the signatures. It was noted that at a previous meeting comments were raised that decisions need to be swifter and better planned. The Interim Monitoring Officer, Jeanette McGarry confirmed that in both cases the decisions do qualify as urgent decisions and Chief Executive, Tom Bryant acknowledged the concerns raised. The Board were told that the Scheme of Delegation is being

	reviewed as part of the wider review and Members were assured that lessons have been learned, and there is commitment to make sure decisions are taken in the appropriate time frame. RESOLVED – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board: I. NOTED the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 3 and confidential Appendix 1. II. NOTED the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 4 and confidential Appendix 2. III. NOTED the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 5 and confidential Appendix 3. IV. NOTED the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 6 and confidential Appendix 4. V. NOTED the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 7 and confidential Appendix 5. VI. NOTED the Delegated Decision detailed in paragraph 8 and confidential Appendix 6. VII. NOTED the Urgent Decision detailed in paragraph 9 and confidential Appendix 7. VIII. NOTED the Urgent Decision detailed in paragraph 10 and confidential Appendix 8.
HDC 16/26 Agenda item 7	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES The Board received a verbal update from the Director of Infrastructure, Jonathan Spruce regarding the strategic priorities of the Hartlepool Development Corporation. Key points are summarised below: • On 20 March, the Mayor announced a review of the Development Corporations, and as a part of this the priorities of HDC are being looked at. There will be an options assessment to decide whether the Development Corporation is the appropriate vehicle. The Board were advised that officers are working with colleagues at Hartlepool Borough Council and TVCA to understand what strategic priorities will go forward to the options assessment, to be brought back to the Board in due course. • The Chair added that this is all part of the wider Governance and Strategic Assurance Framework Review at TVCA, and June's meeting will be critical. Comments and questions were invited from the Board, and these are noted below: • A member asked for further information regarding the timeframe. Jonathan Spruce outlined that it is estimated the review is expected to take 3-4 months and will then need to go back to Cabinet with recommendations. It is expected that this will be an autumn Cabinet meeting.

	RESOLVED – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board: i. NOTED the update.
HDC 17/26 Agenda item 8	MIDDLETON GRANGE SHOPPING CENTRE UPDATE The Board received a report from the Director of Infrastructure, Jonathan Spruce providing an update on the operations of Middleton Grange Shopping Centre (MGSC). **The appendices of 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.** *The Chair advised the Board and members of the public that the appendices to this report hold commercial information which could not be public, so if members wished to discuss them, then the session would have to be closed for those specific conversations. Members of the Board indicated that their comments did not pertain to any confidential items.* Jonathan Spruce drew Members attention to the following: • Paragraph 8: Capital Expenditure on RAAC – this is underway and should be complete in the next 2 weeks. • Paragraph 18-20: Footfall/performance for the calendar year 2025 – slightly down on the UK average, which is disappointing but broadly similar across the area and country. This will continue to be monitored and will form part of the plan on how to turn the shopping centre around. • Paragraph 22-23: A viable business plan for MGSC is being compiled and will be brought to the Board in June/July. • Paragraph 28: Black Cat Building Consultancy Ltd have been appointed as asset managers for MGSC, and it was highlighted that they have been extremely proactive in identifying opportunities for the future. • Paragraph 30: Looking to reduce the operating deficit forecast as much as possible and need to look at the role of MGSC. The Chair outlined that the Board need to consider the longer-term vision and role of MGSC, and that it is a borough-wide issue. The need for smart decisions to make maximum benefit and usage of MGSC. The Chair also highlighted that the appointment of Black Cat has been extremely positive and there has been a noticeable ramping up of activity. It was noted that they have a good understanding of how much the Borough wants and needs the shopping centre. It

	was suggested that they will attend the next Board meeting so Members can hear directly from them and get a sense of their thinking. Questions and comments were invited, and are summarized below: • A Member highlighted that there seems to be a disconnect with engagement and footfall on social media for the shopping centre, and social media figures are modest. It was suggested that contacts could be shared between Members and the digital marketing team to help boost engagement and footfall. The Chair agreed and highlighted that the current contract should be reviewed. RESOLVED: The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board <u>NOTED</u> the update.
HDC 18/26 Agenda item 9	RISK REGISTER The Board received a report from the Head of Performance, Risk and Assurance providing an overview of the principal strategic risks facing Hartlepool Development Corporation, including current exposure and key management actions. Members of the Board and officers had a discussion regarding the Risk Register, and key points are summarized below: • Jonathan Spruce highlighted that 3 of the top 4 risks are financial sustainability, MGSC and the strategic direction. The A&G Committee constitution is also under governance review. It is important that, in parallel with TVCA, the voice of business is included in the plans of the Development Corporation. • The Chair outlined that there are a lot of businesses in the Borough, and currently there is minimum interaction with the DC. It was suggested that Members could explore the idea of a 'business advisory' forum/group for additional input, and Members welcomed the idea. The Chair agreed to bring further thoughts back to the Board for consideration. • A Member raised that input from businesses throughout the area would be positive and help make visible progress for the town. Highlighted the importance of being seen to be getting on with making a difference. • A Member expressed disappointment that the financial proposal may inhibit progress and commented that whilst there was not an issue with the risk ranking, clarity on how this has been generated would be helpful. This request was noted, and assurances were offered that this will be included going forward. • Members also highlighted it would be helpful to understand the current business in Hartlepool, such as demographics of businesses and what they are looking attract, as well as how these match with opportunities going

	forward. It was suggested that this information would help to understand high growth potential. Tom Bryant advised this information is being compiled at Tees Valley level in work being done around the Local Growth Plan and agreed to discuss with Matt Wilton to present to the DC at a granular level. Jonathan Spruce explained work is being done on web portals which will also help to present at a local level. The Board were advised that the information is available, but discussions are needed over how to present it and tell a story. • Members reported that the risk appetite was previously flagged in the annual report last year, and there has not been a request to determine this. It was felt this may be relevant to consider and would have been helpful originally. In response, Jonathan Spruce welcomed the feedback and expressed the importance that the information shared is useful and officers understand how members feel about it. • Tom Bryant stated that the data can present the current situation, as well as growth opportunities and potential which is important. • The Chair outlined that Hartlepool is going to be a part of the regional growth strategy, and it is important to establish how the DC is going to contribute to this. Members agreed that it would be helpful to understand what the offer is from other areas in the Tees Valley, and what makes Hartlepool unique. The Chair assured the Board that these conversations have been happening between Chief Executives and Cabinet, and it is important that the Tees Valley acts as a whole, and not in competition. A lot of progress has been made in making all 5 boroughs act collectively. RESOLVED – The Hartlepool Development Corporation Board: i. NOTED the current risk position. ii. COMMENTED on the risks and planned mitigations iii. ENDORSED the direction of travel for key mitigation plans and governance improvements
HDC 19/26	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS FOR 2026 • Tuesday 9 June 2026 • Tuesday 14 July 2026 (AGM) • Tuesday 8 September 2026 • Tuesday 13 October 2026 • Tuesday 10 November 2026 • Tuesday 8 December 2026 All meetings to commence at 4pm. Members noted the dates of future meetings.

	The Chair concluded that there is an overriding message of progress and highlighted the need for the Board to serve the Borough. She thanked everyone for their attendance and participation in the meeting. Meeting closed at 15:35.