

EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the Executive was held on Monday 28 October 2024.

PRESENT: Mayor C Cooke (Chair) and Councillors P Gavigan, J Thompson, Z Uddin and N Walker

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: D. Hodgson (Local Democracy Reporting Service)

OFFICERS: M Adams, S Bonner, R Brown, B Carr, C Cunningham, G Field, A. Glover, C Heaphy, R Horniman, J Savage, E Scollay and J Tynan

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors T Furness and P Storey

24/35 **WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the fire evacuation procedure.

24/36 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Nature of Interest
Mayor Chris Cooke	Non-Pecuniary	Agenda Item No. 5 – Member of the Health and Wellbeing Board

24/37 **MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 2 OCTOBER 2024**

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 2 October 2024 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

24/38 **HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY**

The Mayor and Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration submitted a report for Executive's consideration.

The Mayor clarified that Executive were being asked to note the report and attached strategy.

The purpose of the report was to ask Executive to note the Health and Wellbeing Strategy which was approved at Health and Wellbeing Board on 12th September 2024. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy was owned by the multi-agency LiveWell South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board and was a statutory requirement. The Strategy was built around nine ambitious missions, each of which is supported by relevant goals that further articulate and explain the mission. The strategy supported the Council Plan 2024-2027.

The Council Plan (2024-27), which was agreed by Council in March 2024, aimed to create a healthier, safer and more ambitious town. The Plan was built on four key pillars:

- A successful and ambitious town
- A healthy place
- Safe and resilient communities
- Delivering best value

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy was built around nine ambitious missions, each of which was supported by relevant goals that further articulated and explained the mission. The individual missions were detailed in the report.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer clarified a minor amendment to the report was required at paragraph 2.1. The proposed amendment changed paragraph 2.1 to read "that the Executive notes the Health and Wellbeing Strategy that was approved by the Health and Wellbeing

Board on the 12 September 2024” rather than “that the Executive approves the adoption of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy in support of the delivery of the Council Plan (2024 – 2027)”.

ORDERED that the proposed amendment to paragraph 2.1 be approved.

AGREED that Executive noted the Health and Wellbeing Strategy that was approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 12 September 2024.

OPTIONS

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy was owned by the multi-agency LiveWell South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board and was a statutory requirement for both the Council and the Integrated Care Board (NHS). The framework and mission-led approach was agreed through LiveWell South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2022 which in turn informed the development of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The recommendations in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy are drawn from the JSNA.

The development of the JSNA involved more than 500 people (through workshops, meetings, attendance at key partnership boards and via email) which included more than 100 organisations and teams.

REASONS

LiveWell South Tees was a formal statutory committee of the Council, and provided a forum where political, clinical, professional and community leaders from across the health and care system came together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities as described in the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy tackled complicated problems which could not be solved by any single agency, as described in the missions, and committed a wide range of partners to working together to explore local issues and challenges, agree priorities to respond collaboratively, using collective resources.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) had been developed across a broad range of partners and provides the intelligence behind the missions.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy contributed to all elements of the Council Plan (2024 – 2027) and was a vehicle for engaging partners to contribute to the delivery of that Plan.

24/39

HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND 2024/2025

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance submitted a report for Executive's consideration.

The report sought approval of the Household Support Fund Scheme (HSF) for the second half of 2024/25 and sought delegated authority be provided to the Director of Finance to make any modifications or minor revisions to the scheme and make decisions in respect of any remaining funds to ensure they are distributed in line with the guidance and within the defined timescales. Any revisions or modifications would be made in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Governance.

On 2 September 2024, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced that the HSF would be extended for a further 6 months, from 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025. A hyperlink was provided as part of the report that provided further information on this.

Each local authority was required to prepare a local scheme to determine how the funding provided would be allocated. The grant amount allocated to Middlesbrough was £1,653,614.95.

Government guidance required local authorities to clearly advertise the scheme to residents,

including publication on the Council's website. The value of individual awards was to be determined by local authorities in accordance with the parameters set out in the guidance.

The proposed scheme was based on the Council's previous successful HSF schemes and further extended to include an additional amount for pensioners who would not be eligible for the state Winter Fuel Payment under recently changed criteria.

The scheme was designed to support vulnerable residents and low-income households that included children, pensioners, people with disabilities and other households who may be experiencing financial difficulties brought about by the economic challenges. The proposed scheme was set out in Table 1.

The Executive Member advised Executive that an amendment was required at the fourth point in table 1. The criteria in that part of the table included the addition criteria of having less than £6,000 savings, earning less than £30,000 if single or £50,000 if a couple and not in receipt of any benefits. Executive was also advised a full list of criteria would be added to the Council website.

Executive welcomed the report and was advised that communications would be sent to the public in different formats to publicise the Household Support Fund. The Executive Member for Finance and Governance also encouraged all Councillors to promote the Household Support Fund in their wards.

ORDERED that Executive:

- 1. Approves the HSF delivery plan for 2024/25, which would be delivered between 1 October 2024 and 31 March 2025 and was set out in Table 1 of the report to target the main groups below where each has a Council Tax or rental liability for their home:**
 - **Families with children in receipt of benefits.**
 - **Pensioners in receipt of Council Tax Reduction but not eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment.**
Pensioners who are not in receipt of Council Tax Reduction subject to the qualifying criteria (listed in table 1, para 4.7).
 - **Singles/Couples which includes those of pensionable age in receipt of benefits.**
 - **Application-based awards for residents not in receipt of CTR or other benefits**
- 2. Approves that any remaining funds following implementation of the delivery plan were allocated to Council Tax accounts, with a then current award of CTR and where an outstanding balance remained following the issue of a summons in the 2024/25 financial year. The Council also reserved the right to widen the group to include those accounts not in receipt of CTR. Priority would be given to taxpayers who did not receive HSF from the allocation that remained in September 2024, with the intention that the balances for those in each group would be reduced by the same extent across both schemes so far as is possible.**
- 3. Approves that delegated authority is provided to the Director of Finance to make any modifications or minor revisions to the scheme and make decisions in respect of any remaining funds to ensure they were distributed in line with the guidance and within the defined timescales. Any revisions or modifications would be made in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Governance.**

OPTIONS

Do nothing. Without a suitable scheme with sufficient defined criteria approved by the Council's Executive and presented to the DWP, the funds would not be able to be utilised by the Council to benefit vulnerable residents and low-income households and would need to be repaid to the DWP.

Funding could be distributed differently amongst the groups identified or across

different groups. The plan presented had taken account of the government guidance and experience gained through prior schemes to ensure maximum reach to those in need of support.

REASONS

The Urgent decision was required as Central Government advised of a further round of the HSF. This funding had been due to end on 30 September 2024, the guidance on this was not provided until 24 September 2024, and the HSF delivery plan must be submitted to the DWP by the 1 November 2024, hence the short timescale for implementation.

As the forward work programme requirements in Part 6.32 of the constitution cannot be met, the decision could still be taken in accordance with the General Exception in part 6.35 of the constitution as it is impracticable to defer the decision until it has been included in the next forward work programme and the formalities in part 6.35 have been complied with.

Central Government has provided funding to Local Authorities through the HSF to provide crisis support to vulnerable households in most need with the cost of essentials.

The Council needs to confirm an approach and submit an approved delivery plan to the DWP by 1 November 2024 for awards to be made between 1 October 2024 and 31 March 2025.

The policy is a key decision that impacts on two or more wards and will incur expenditure above £250,000.

The minor amendments that may be required will result in no changes to the threshold to services and support provided.

That delegated authority is provided to the Director of Finance to make any modifications or minor revisions to the scheme and make decisions in respect of any remaining funds to ensure they are distributed in line with the guidance and within the defined timescales.

Any revisions or modifications will be made in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Governance.

24/40

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.

None.

The decision relating to agenda item 5 (Health and Wellbeing Strategy) will come into force after five working days following the day the decision was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures.

The decision relating to agenda item 6 (Household Support Fund) will come into force immediately as they were considered under urgency provisions.