

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Director of Public Health South Tees, Mark Adams
Relevant Executive Member:	Mayor of Middlesbrough and lead for Changing Futures – Chris Cooke
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	6 May 2026
Title:	Changing Futures Phase 2 Funding
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	A healthy place
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will have a significant impact in two or more wards
Subject to call in?	Yes
Why:	Non-urgent decision

Proposed decision(s)	
That Executive:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. APPROVE the acceptance of external grant funding of £3,114,939 that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme in Middlesbrough for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029. b. APPROVE the principles and terms of the Memorandum of Understanding. c. DELEGATE to the Director of Public Health the authority to approve expenditure in accordance with the Changing Futures Delivery Plan, as directed by the Changing Futures Board, for the funding period April 2026 - March 2029. 	

Executive summary

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to accept external grant funding that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029.

Why This Decision Is Needed

Changing Futures is a programme that has been running across South Tees since 2021 following a successful bid to the National Lottery and MHCLG programme. South Tees is one of 15 local partnerships that have built strong evidence on how areas can provide a more effective response through flexible, coordinated support that works with the whole person and drives lasting changes in how services work together on multiple disadvantage.

The Programme directly supports people experiencing multiple disadvantage (combinations of homelessness and rough sleeping, substance misuse, mental ill health, domestic abuse and contact with the criminal justice system) and aims to develop strong partnerships and understanding of system change required to better support people to lead more fulfilling lives.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has announced phase two of the Changing Futures programme, with 18 areas of the country sharing over £50m to help the most deprived upper-tier local authority areas in England. This represents a new phase of the cross government public service reform programme, led by MHCLG, that improves outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

Middlesbrough has been selected as a Changing Futures phase 2 area and will receive £1.038M each year over the next three years (2026/27 to 2028/29).

Recommended Option and Rationale

That Executive:

- a. APPROVE the acceptance of external grant funding of £3,114,939 that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme in Middlesbrough for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029.
- b. APPROVE the principles and terms of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- c. DELEGATE to the Director of Public Health the authority to approve expenditure in accordance with the Changing Futures Delivery Plan, as directed by the Changing Futures Board, for the funding period April 2026 - March 2029.

Impacts and Benefits

Accepting the funding to extend the Changing Futures programme in Middlesbrough will have a positive impact on local people who experience multiple disadvantage and continue to provide additional capacity to support them directly. The funding presents a compelling opportunity to continue delivering and expand a programme that is already delivering positive outcomes.

1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to accept external grant funding that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	Supporting people out of chaotic and difficult lives to support them to contribute to their communities through volunteering, training or finding a good job.
A healthy place	This programme will improve the life chances of our most vulnerable residents and reduce health inequalities.
Safe and resilient communities	Finding new ways to support people experiencing multiple disadvantage should reduce anti-social behaviour and crime – both that committed by people experiencing multiple disadvantage and committed against them.
Delivering best value	The programme connects us into learning from similar places that will help the Council and partners to improve effectiveness by improving outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Executive:

- a. APPROVE the acceptance of external grant funding of £3,114,939 that will enable the extension of the Changing Futures programme in Middlesbrough for a further 3 years from April 2026 to March 2029.
- b. APPROVE the principles and terms of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- c. DELEGATE to the Director of Public Health the authority to approve expenditure in accordance with the Changing Futures Delivery Plan, as directed by the Changing Futures Board, for the funding period April 2026 - March 2029.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- 3.1 Accepting this funding will not only help those with multiple disadvantages, continued involvement in the Changing Futures Programme will give Middlesbrough a further opportunity for ongoing learning through the programme to improve our approaches across the partnership, build the reputation of the Council with key Government departments and could increase the likelihood of further funding and support.
- 3.2 A core principle of the programme is to work in partnership across local services and the voluntary and community sector, building strong cross-sector partnerships at a

strategic and operational level. As such the Council should consider itself as the host and partner in the programme, rather than key decision-maker. Delegating the allocation of monies and management of procurement processes to the Director of Public Health on behalf of the Middlesbrough Changing Futures Board supports the development of a true partnership approach – an essential element of this programme.

4. Background and relevant information

- 4.1 Changing Futures is a programme that has been running across South Tees since 2021 following a successful bid to the National Lottery and MHCLG programme. South Tees is one of 15 local partnerships that have built strong evidence on how areas can provide a more effective response through flexible, coordinated support that works with the whole person and drives lasting changes in how services work together on multiple disadvantage.
- 4.2 The Programme directly supports people experiencing multiple disadvantage (combinations of homelessness and rough sleeping, substance misuse, mental ill health, domestic abuse and contact with the criminal justice system) and aims to develop strong partnerships and understanding of system change required to better support people to lead more fulfilling lives.
- 4.3 A core principle of the programme is to work in partnership across local services and the voluntary and community sector, building strong cross-sector partnerships at a strategic and operational level. As such the Council should consider itself as the host and partner in the programme, rather than key decision-maker.
- 4.4 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has announced phase two of the Changing Futures programme, with 18 areas of the country sharing over £50m to help the most deprived upper-tier local authority areas in England. This represents a new phase of the cross government public service reform programme, led by MHCLG, that improves outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.
- 4.5 Middlesbrough has been selected as a Changing Futures phase 2 area and will receive a total of £3,114,939 - £1.038M each year over the next three years (2026/27 to 2028/29).
- 4.6 The targeted areas have been identified as high need, based on the ranking of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Middlesbrough has been chosen as a target area as they are second in the IMD ranking, however Redcar and Cleveland hasn't been chosen as the IMD ranking of 29th is outside the chosen areas. South Tees wasn't considered as a composite as MHCLG only looked at Council footprints.
- 4.7 This approach is part of the Government moving away from bidding processes to an allocation process. Government consultation identified that there was widespread frustration with the intensity and resources required for the bidding processes.
- 4.8 National Learning from Phase 1 Programmes

4.8.1 There is a significant emphasis placed on learning in both the current South Tees programme and the phase 2 programme. The learning will inform national policy across Government, with the Cabinet Office, MHCLG, DHSC, DWP, MoJ and the Home Office all sponsoring the programme.

4.8.2 The features of a more effective response identified from phase 1, and anticipated to be developed further throughout this programme include:

- Trusted caseworker building relationships, providing practical and emotional support and leading coordination of support across the system, with low caseloads allowing bespoke and intensive support
- Wrap-around of specialist support such as housing, health, and employment advice as needed, e.g. through multi-disciplinary teams.
- Strong strategic partnership backing and collective, person-centred problem-solving between public services.

4.9 Programme Core Principles

4.9.1 There is a strong desire to avoid direction from the centre and allow areas to explore local issues and solutions in a local context. However, there are a set of core principles we will need to work to:

- **Work in partnership** across local services and the voluntary and community sector, building strong cross-sector partnerships at a strategic and operational level
- **Coordinate support**, and better integrate local services that support adults experiencing multiple disadvantage to enable a ‘whole person’ approach
- **Create flexibility** in how local services respond to adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, taking a system-wide view with shared accountability and ownership leading to better service provision and a ‘no wrong door’ approach to support
- **Involve people with lived experience** of multiple disadvantage in the design, delivery and evaluation of improved services and in governance and decision making
- **Take a trauma-informed, relational approach** across the local system, services and in the governance of the programme
- **Commit to drive lasting systems-change**, with long-term sustainable changes and a commitment to sustain the benefits of the programme beyond the lifetime of the funding.

4.10 Local Commitments

4.10.1 The programme is described as a “joint central/local endeavour” to achieve positive sustained change for people and services. As part of that approach a set of local commitments are described:

- Target and improve support for a local cohort of adults experiencing multiple disadvantage, who are placing a high level of demand on local services (c.300-350 adults over 3 years).
- Drive wider system change, as defined through a co-designed system maturity framework.
- Build lived experience into the local system stewardship and development.

- Evidence the impact of work on the cohort and local systems by working with the Changing Futures national evaluation.
- Develop and share learning relevant to other areas and government departments, attending events and hosting visits.
- Produce and implement a partnership delivery plan.

4.11 These features are consistent with the approach in phase 1.

5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

5.1 Not relevant.

6. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

6.1 To do nothing and not accept the funding would deny Middlesbrough the opportunity for investment into continuity of existing Changing Futures projects and improvement into services for some of our most complex and vulnerable residents.

7. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial	<p>There are no formal match funding requirements from the Council or other partners, although there is an expectation that areas align and embed this funding with wider investments and initiatives locally.</p> <p>The learning from this programme should influence the MTFP over the years of the funding and beyond to ensure that what works for people suffering multiple disadvantage becomes part of mainstream delivery.</p>
Social Value	<p>In terms of social value the focus of this work will be to work with local organisations to improve the system of support, which will include commissioning services that directly support people suffering multiple disadvantage.</p>
Procurement	<p>Any services or support commissioned through this programme will follow Middlesbrough Council procurement policies and best practice.</p>
Legal	<p>There are no identified legal implications in relation to accepting the funding and to develop the delivery of the programme up until March 2029.</p> <p>Any contract extensions required through the extension of this funding from the previous South Tees Changing Futures programme will be consistent with Middlesbrough Council commissioning and procurement policies.</p>
Risk	<p>No significant risks that would negatively impact on the strategic risk register have been identified.</p>

Topic	Impact
	Please see attached Risk Assessment at appendix 5
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	<p>Equality impact assessments were carried out for original Changing Futures proposal and found no negative impacts on any protected groups, nor was it likely to have any negative impact as a whole.</p> <p>An updated Impact Assessment can be found at appendix 4.</p>
Reducing Poverty	<p>People suffering multiple disadvantage suffer from the most extreme impact of poverty. This programme will support some of the most vulnerable people in Middlesbrough to reduce that impact and move towards more fulfilling lives.</p> <p>The system change element of the programme will include an action learning approach to understand how we can move beyond working with people to challenge the underlying systems and processes that either don't help to resolve or make those problems worse.</p>
Climate Change / Environmental	No adverse impact
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	No adverse impact
Data Protection	<p>There have been early discussions with the Probation Service on data linkage to better understand the intersection of issues with this population and there may be further aims to use data differently to better understand how people suffering multiple disadvantage use services and how Changing Futures interventions shift that pattern to something more productive for the person.</p> <p>Any arrangements on data sharing will be in line with GDPR regulations and in liaison with the Data Protection team.</p>

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Establish Middlesbrough Changing Futures Programme Board	Mark Adams	May 2026
Identify lead roles (as detailed in the Prospectus)	Mark Adams	May 2026
Develop a Changing Futures Delivery plan	Mark Adams	June 2026

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Update report to Executive within 6 months of approval	Mark Adams	November 2026

Appendices

1	Executive Committee (April 2021): South Tees Changing Futures Programme
2	Changing Futures Programme: Prospectus for Phase 2 – 2026-2029
3	Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and Middlesbrough Council
4	Impact Assessment level 1
5	Risk Assessment

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