

**Company registration number 08604037 (England and Wales)**

**HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST  
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

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# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

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### Members

H Gordon  
G Jones  
A Malcolm  
E Latimer  
S Burton

### Trustees

H V Gordon (Chair)  
G Jones  
P Holbrook  
P R Hewitson  
G Fletcher  
L J Greig (Accounting Officer)  
B Duncan  
S Lamplough  
A Godfrey (Appointed 7 July 2023)

### Senior management team

- CEO
- Deputy CEO
- Assistant Head Teacher
- Head of Corporate Services

L Greig  
A Johnson  
W Wharton  
L Robson

### Company secretary

L Robson

### Company registration number

08604037 (England and Wales)

### Registered office

Catcote Road  
Hartlepool  
TS25 4EZ  
United Kingdom

### Independent auditor

Azets Audit Services  
Wynyard Park House  
Wynyard Avenue  
Wynyard  
TS22 5TB  
United Kingdom

### Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc  
132 York Road  
Hartlepool  
TS26 9DD  
United Kingdom

### Solicitors

Womble Bond Dickinson  
Camden House  
Princes Wharf  
Teesdale  
Stockton-On-Tees  
TS17 6QY  
United Kingdom

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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The trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a directors' report under company law.

The academy trust operates one special academy (Catcote Academy) for pupils aged 11 to 19 serving a catchment area of Hartlepool and surrounding areas. There were 202 students on roll as of Aug-23. The Trust also operates a facility for older students (Catcote Futures) which provides learning opportunities for adults with disabilities. In addition to those on roll at the Academy, Catcote Futures accommodated 100 students. Catcote Futures is an exempt charity and wholly owned subsidiary of Hartlepool Aspire Trust.

## Structure, governance and management

### Constitution

The academy trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the academy trust. The trustees of Hartlepool Aspire Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company operates as Catcote Academy.

Details of the trustees who served during the year, and to the date these accounts are approved are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1.

### Members' liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charitable company in the event of it being wound up while they are a member, or within one year after they cease to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10, for the debts and liabilities contracted before they ceased to be a member.

### Trustees' indemnities

Subject to the provision of the Companies Act 2006 every Director or other officer or auditor of the Trust is indemnified out of the assets of the Trust against any liability incurred by him/her in that capacity.

### Method of recruitment and appointment or election of trustees

Trustees are appointed or elected in accordance with the Articles of Association. Appointment of additional Trustees, or replacement of Trustees who resign their post, is by such process as the Members determine. The Trustees also have the right to co-opt additional Trustees in accordance with the Articles of Association.

### Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees

The Trust contracts Stockton Borough Council to carry out Governance Officer duties. This includes a comprehensive training package. In addition, Trustees receive an induction pack including a guide to the responsibilities of a multi-academy trustee. Online training and regular face to face training is also available.

### Organisational structure

The Members are responsible for ensuring that the ethos of the organisation is preserved and holding the Trustees to account for the performance of the organisations within the Trust.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the management of the Trust by establishing a policy framework for the management teams to follow, monitor implementation of the policies and take corrective action if the policies are not being implemented to an appropriate standard.

The Board has established three committees to which oversight of finance, health and safety, the quality of education and staffing matters are delegated, this being the Finance and Audit Committee the Standards Committee and the Staffing Committee. The committees also have oversight of Catcote Futures affairs and committee membership is made up of Trustees from the Trust and Catcote Futures. The committees report to the Board on these issues termly.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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The Board, described above, provide strategic direction (in the form of policies) and oversight to the organisations within the Trust. Responsibilities are delegated to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as assigned under the job description and also include:

- implementing the agreed policies and procedures laid down by the Trust this includes the implementation of all statutory regulations, provisions within the Education Acts and compliance with the Master Funding Agreement
- advising the Trust on strategic direction, forward planning and quality assurance
- the leadership and management of the Academy Trust, and line management of all members of the Management Teams
- as Accounting Officer for the Trust, overall accountability and management of the Trust budget
- advising the Trust on the appointment of all Leadership posts across the Trust
- delegation of responsibility up to and including dismissal for all staff employed by the Trust
- the admission of students
- managing the delegated budget and resources
- the maintenance of good order and discipline by the students

The Academy and Catcote Futures have their own management teams which are responsible for implementation of the policies set out by the Board, monitoring their effectiveness and reporting back to the Board on the benefits realised or issues encountered. The CEO has overall responsibility for the Academy within the policy framework aided by a senior leadership team consisting of a Deputy Head Teacher, Assistant Head Teachers, Head of College and Head of Corporate Services during 2022/23. The Head of Corporate Services is responsible for the implementation of the Finance, Health and Safety and Human Resource policies on behalf of the CEO and is the Principal Finance Officer for the Trust.

#### **Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel**

The Trust assigns a seven point pay scale i.e. an Individual School Range (ISR) for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). This is based on the school group size and any permanent additional relevant factors as determined within the framework of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document. These additional factors will relate to the Trust context and challenge, and the wider accountability of the CEO. The Trust will ensure that, other than in exceptional circumstances, there is no overlap of salary ranges between the CEO and other leadership posts.

Progression on the ISR for the CEO will be subject to a review of the CEO's performance set against the annual appraisal review. A committee consisting of an external consultant, the Chair of Trustees and a member of the Staffing Committee carry out the appraisal review of the CEO and recommend any increments to the Trustees for approval.

The Trust determines a 5 point pay range for all other leadership posts from within the indicative pay points for the leadership scale contained in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. The relevant leadership range will be established and the range for individual posts will be determined according to the duties and responsibilities of the post. Progression on the pay range for a member of staff paid on the leadership scale will be subject to a review of their performance set against the annual appraisal review. The CEO will appraise leadership posts and recommend any increments to the Staffing Committee for approval.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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### Trade union facility time

#### Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	2
Full-time equivalent employee number	115.11

#### Percentage of time spent on facility time

Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	2
1%-50%	-
51%-99%	-
100%	-

#### Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	43
Total pay bill	4,103,000
Percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time	0.1%

#### Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours	100%
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### Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

The Academy does not work in a federation with any other organisation but is developing relationships with other schools and colleges and other businesses where these partnerships assist in the achievement of Academy objectives. Catcote Futures is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hartlepool Aspire Trust. Catcote Academy provides management and administrative resource to support Catcote Futures, and also use of some specialist facilities. Catcote Academy charges Catcote Futures a management and resource charge calculated on a cost basis for this service, whilst Catcote Futures also charges the Academy for any use of their resources, at cost.

### Objectives and activities

#### Objects and aims

Hartlepool Aspire Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust established in 2013. The Trust is an educational establishment which comprises a single Academy, Catcote Academy, which provides education for students with wide range of special needs plus a wholly owned subsidiary, Catcote Futures, providing learning opportunities for learners with a range of special needs. The management system for the Hartlepool Aspire Trust is based around a high level vision and mission for the organisation along with strategic objectives that set out requirements that must be met in order to achieve the vision. Policies and procedures, and its management structure, also ensure that the Trust is managed in line with the strategic objectives and statutory requirements.

The vision of the Hartlepool Aspire Trust is "to be an innovative centre of excellence, providing outstanding, personalised education for all students". The Trust aims to provide the best quality education services for all learners, irrespective of age or disability.

This vision is supported by a more detailed mission statement in order to help members of the organisation relate to their contribution to achieving the overall vision of the organisation and hence provide a public benefit. The mission of the Trust is to "provide an environment where students are offered every opportunity to maximise their potential, grow in confidence, and above all, be happy and safe – 'working together, achieving success'.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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In setting objectives, the Trustees have given careful consideration to providing public benefit and strategic objectives are thus in place to support the achievement of the vision:

#### Effective Governance and Oversight

Ensure that we can demonstrate to our stakeholders that Hartlepool Aspire Trust provides the best quality services to learners and provides value for money to tax payers.

#### Engaged and well qualified workforce

Ensure that personnel working with our learners are suitably qualified and appropriate for working with vulnerable people. We will encourage continuous development of staff and will engage staff in the development of the organisation.

#### Excellence in Education Services for all our Learners

Provide a stimulating and exciting learning environment for all, promote lifelong learning, recognise value and reward the achievement of each individual, develop responsibility, tolerance and consideration for others, strengthen the bond between school, home, education partners and the community.

#### Maximise the personal development, behaviour and welfare of students and ensure the safety of all students, staff and visitors

Create an environment in which barriers to learning are minimised and ensure that our staff, students and visitors experience risk free surroundings.

#### Financial Stability

The financial position of the Trust must be managed carefully to ensure that the services provided by the Trust are sustainable.

#### High Quality Educational Facilities

The learning environment provided for students is important to help them maximise their potential. The educational facilities and accommodation will be managed carefully to provide a safe, stimulating learning environment, and minimise the risk of disruption to educational services as a result of failure of equipment or facilities.

#### **Objectives, strategies and activities**

The Academy operates a pathway structure for its students and objectives are set for each pathway as well as the Trust. The pathways are determined by expected destination and aspirations:

Red Pathway (moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and additional needs) - independent living and employment

Blue Pathway (severe learning difficulties (SLD) and additional needs) - semi-independent living and supported employment

Yellow Pathway (profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), complex learning difficulties and disabilities (CLDD)) - supported living and meaningful adult activities

To meet the Trust's strategic aims, the following objectives were employed for the academic year:

#### Effective governance and oversight:

Assess the Trusts strategic position with regards to being a 'strong trust' in order that, not only is the Trust operating at a high standard, but that it is also in a position to grow when deemed appropriate.

#### Engaged and well qualified workforce:

Review and develop monitoring mechanisms to ensure a range of assessment indicators to effectively quality assure teaching and learning. To include the development of middle leadership to contribute to this assessment.

Continue to invest in the continuous professional development of all staff.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### Excellence in education services for all learners:

Ensure a creative, coherent and sequential curriculum is in place to meet learners' aspirations. This will include reviewing and improving medium term planning in several areas and evaluating the newly implemented maths programme. Furthermore there will be a development of a backwards planned independent living skills programme of study. In the yellow and blue the phase 1 curriculum, for younger learners, will be implemented to ensure an ambitious and sequential curriculum appropriate to student's needs. Alongside this the phase 2 curriculum, for older learners, will be developed to promote functional skills including preparation for adulthood and WRL (work related learning).

Continue to drive forward the effective use of the 'pillars of feedback' initiative and ensure it is embedded across all subject areas resulting in an effective assessment system to monitor progress.

A 'love of reading' scheme implemented involving resources and planned interventions supported by a reading coordinator to improve functional literacy for all learners.

Increase the availability and use of visual communication systems throughout the Trust to reduce barriers to learning.

### Maximise personal development, behaviour and welfare of students and ensure the safety of all students, staff and visitors:

Develop a provision mapping tool to detail a student's additional needs and the provisions in place to support these. This will aid curriculum planning, staff training and interventions.

Strengthen systems to support a graduated response to complex behaviour in order to improve 'readiness to learn'.

Embed effective praise culture which embeds the value of students being proud of themselves, each other and the Trust.

Review the careers and enterprise activities in the yellow pathway in order to create a careers programme to provide suitable work related and careers opportunities.

### Financial Stability:

Secure high needs funding which reflects inflationary pressures.

### High Quality Educational Facilities:

Expand specialist teaching areas to meet the growth in the population of PMLD students and increasing needs of ASC sixth form students.

### **Public benefit**

The Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit as set out by the Charity Commission whilst exercising their powers and duties. The activities of the Trust are driven by the vision to be an outstanding provider of education and for students to be offered every opportunity to maximise their potential and grow in confidence. All objectives aim to support this vision and therefore providing public benefit is embedded in the goals of the Trust.

The Trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when objectives have been set and activities planned.



# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### Strategic report

#### Achievements and performance

The Trust has grown steadily and the Academy now has 3 sites and 2 off-site training provisions. In addition the subsidiary post 19 college has 2 sites and an off-site training provision. Much work has taken place this year to establish a corporate identity for the Trust and the College including embedding values. In addition the Trust has embarked on a project to assess its standing as a 'strong' trust and to devise an action plan to ensure it meets all the principles of a strong trust.

Development of middle leaders to assist in quality assurance of teaching and learning through modelling has begun with curriculum leads. In addition, an in depth 'area 360' observation has supported the monitoring of the intent, implementation and impact of the curriculum. This has supplemented existing monitoring mechanisms to enable triangulation of data to support action plans for improvements.

A comprehensive review, carried out by Challenge Partners during the year, resulted in the Academy receiving 'leading school' grading; the highest accolade. The review challenges performance of all Ofsted criteria, with the exception of attendance and safeguarding.

A new improved maths programme is now fully implemented across all key stages, with effective assessment and planning strategies in place. Also, a revised independent living skills curriculum plan will be introduced next year. Medium term planning in English, PSHE and Science has been reviewed and enhanced for KS3 to KS5. In yellow and blue pathways, following analysis of individual subject strands, there has been further development in the strategies around creativity, communication and reading and the 'my health' curriculum. This will enable the introduction of more creative activities in coming year.

'Pillars of feedback' is now embedded, with staff training and development being key to its success. Its impact will continue to be monitored over the coming year. A new reading programme for red pathway learners has been successfully implemented to create a 'love of reading' culture with all classes fully engaged in the initiative leading to literacy skills being enhanced. For yellow and blue pathways this has involved the introduction of a new phonics programme, as well as activities dedicated to improved reading and storytelling.

There has been a focus on increasing visual communication aids in different areas around the Trust. This has supported emotional education and improved access to learning and reading. In addition, a plan has been devised to develop 'student voice' with staff training underway and activities piloted to improve students' knowledge of the impact they can have.

Alongside the development of a new provision mapping tool, a SIT (student intervention team) team has also begun regular student support clinics. The multi-disciplined team ensure students who require additional support to be 'ready to learn' have the appropriate interventions and monitor and support with any intervention plans. The Trust have invested in events and initiatives to ensure students take pride in themselves and their diverse school and college communities. Pride events and 'catcote stars' celebrations have helped embed the Trusts values and create a culture of praise.

Work related learning and careers opportunities have been reviewed for the yellow pathway with a strategic plan being devised alongside a visual road map for students. Following this work, the plan will be implemented next year.

The Academy has worked with the Local Authority to review an outdated system for allocation of high needs funding. A full costing and resource allocation exercise took place to inform the review which resulted in revised funding levels that are reflective of the current costs faced by the Academy.

A new expanded area was created for the PMLD cohort, not only providing additional space, but also the resources and modifications required to enable a highly differentiated curriculum and the ability to effectively meet complex additional needs. An additional site providing bespoke provision for ASC sixth form student was acquired. This will enable students to focus on social communication, emotional regulation and preparation for adulthood in a tailored environment.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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#### Key performance indicators

##### Finance:

Performance against a financial budget for the period September 2022 to August 2023 has been monitored and performance reported to Trustees and Finance & Audit Committee throughout the year.

During the academic year 2022/23 income was 7% higher than expected, largely due to government grants which are expected to diminish moving forward. Staff costs were elevated following support staff pay increases for April 22 and April 23. Following the pandemic there has been an increase in staff turnover and a much reduced response to vacancies. Whilst this has not been ideal, delays in filling vacancies had marginally negated the increase in staff costs. Operating costs also ran higher than anticipated, with inflationary pressures effecting utility and food costs in particular. The resulting deficit was expected as significant projects and improvements took place during the year. This followed delayed plans during covid and prior to this, cautious spending due to deficit budget forecasts. It will take some time to complete all planned and delayed refurbishments and improvements and therefore reserves remain temporarily high.

##### Teaching and Learning:

All teaching and learning observed via the monitoring mechanisms was good with an increasing amount of outstanding practice. Student engagement across the academy was clearly evident throughout learning walks, Area 360 and the Challenge Partners review. The impact of CPD was also evident via student conversations, students work and student progress/outcomes. Staff and student relationships are exceptionally strong due to the staff following, and contributing, to whole school procedures, and personalising the learning for each student to overcome the plethora of barriers to learning.

##### Progress of students:

The majority of students reached their target grade.

##### Red pathway

- 91% of all students from KS3 – KS5 achieved their target grades in English
- 93% of all students from KS3 – KS5 achieved their target grades in maths
- 92% of all students from KS3 – KS4 achieved their target grade in science
- 93% of all students from KS3 – KS4 achieved their target grade in ICT

##### Yellow and blue pathways

- 91% of KS3 students achieved or exceeded their target grades across all strands
- 79% of all KS4 students achieved or exceeded their target grades across all strands
- 72% of all KS5 students achieved or exceeded their target grades across all strands

##### Key Stage 4 and 5

Overall the attainment across all pathways was excellent; 100% of all KS5 and KS4 students entered achieved their accreditation across all pathways. Due to all students achieving accreditation there are no gaps between student groupings. A high level of intervention was implemented to provide additional support and scaffolding to facilitate student progress.

##### Attendance:

The overall attendance figure for 2022-2023 is 91% which is 3.8% higher than national average for SEND provisions. It is also 7.9% higher than the national average for students attending a mainstream provision with an EHCP and 7.3% higher than the regional figure for students with an EHCP.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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#### Student Transition:

Destination data of Y11 students

Further Education:	
Catcote 6th Form	85%
Other FE	15%

Destination data for KS5

Further Education:	
Catcote Futures	24%
Steps Program	35%
Supported Internship	6%
Other FE	29%
Employment	6%
NEET	0%

#### Safety Performance:

The number of reported accidents/incidents involving staff and students for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 was 68 (29 Staff, 39 students). This is an increase of 6 incidents compared to the previous year. The majority of incidents continue to be related to minor injuries to staff managing challenging behaviour of a small number of students and minor slips, trips and falls. The number of incidents is monitored by the Finance & Audit Committee as are actions to address them. There were no RIDDOR reportable incidents during this time period and all statutory health & safety checks were performed with no significant risks being identified.

#### Premises:

There were no unplanned closures of the school / college. All regular maintenance and inspections took place during the planned period.

#### **Going concern**

After making appropriate enquiries, the board of trustees has a reasonable expectation that the academy trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

#### **Financial review**

The Trust's principal sources of funding are those received direct from the ESFA (including the high needs allocation, grants and pupil premium) and the high needs top up funding received via the Local Authority. Voluntary donations and grant income also contribute to reserves. The vast majority of the funding received facilitates the employment of staff and maintenance of the premises to enable the provision of educational services to learners with special needs.

Spending continued to be affected in year due to the significant increase in support staff salaries rates over the past 2 years and other effects of inflation, primarily being food costs and utilities. The Trust continues to receive grant funding from the Government to alleviate some of the inflationary pressures. Increased staff turnover and difficulties in recruiting have been a national picture for some industries following the pandemic. This continues to effect the Trust, and whilst salary costs are reduced when there are vacant positions, an increasing amount of money and resources is required for recruitment. The aftermath of the pandemic also continues to affect the Trust with regards to carrying out planned improvements to meet the needs of the student population. With much resource being utilised in managing the Government requirements and staff absence in this period, ongoing refurbishment and improvement plans were put on hold. The Trust has gone some way to meeting these plans over the last year, however the Trust will continue to 'catch up' over the next academic year. The substantial work carried out resulted in an expected deficit in-year as brought forward reserves were spent improving the facilities. Nevertheless reserves remain high whilst delayed improvement plans continue to be carried out. The in year surplus for 2022/23 was £48k. The resulting reserves balance is £727k (exc. fixed asset and pension reserve).

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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There are some uncertainties regarding income in the coming years. Pay settlements for both teaching staff and support staff have been relatively high during the last 2 years, and an increase in teachers' pension contribution has been announced. Whilst Trustees support staff being fairly paid, the Government have increased income for special schools to meet these increased costs by way of grant income as opposed to incorporating this into place funding. Therefore the Trust currently has a significant amount of income that is not permanent including grants that originated as a result of the Covid pandemic, and those to support previous teachers' pay and pension increases. Grant funding, as opposed to permanent funding, is also being used to partly fund the most recent teachers' pay award. Furthermore a considerable proportion of the Trusts income is by way of high needs top up paid via the Local Authority's high needs block. The amount paid to the Trust is therefore subject to change depending on the amount received from Government by the Local Authority and the other demands on this block of funding. Hence, whilst the 3 year budget continues to reflect an acceptable financial position, with growing student numbers, this uncertainty in special needs funding should be noted.

#### **Reserves policy**

Our reserves policy recognises the Trusts inability to borrow funds and the risk this represents to financial planning. Effective management of reserves is key to mitigating this risk in order to provide alternative funding streams if required in the event of a delay in the receipt of funding or an unforeseen increase in expenditure. The level of required reserves is therefore set at the equivalent of 1 months expenditure.

The value of free i.e. unrestricted reserves at the end of the academic year 2022/23 is £234k and restricted reserves are £493k. A fixed asset reserve of £5,848k can only be realised by disposing of capital assets. This reserve does not reflect market value upon sale of these items and the amount realised may therefore differ.

Whilst the Trust has begun to carry out some of the essential developments, improvements and refurbishment put on hold during the Covid pandemic, much remains to be done. The deficit position in year represents, in part, the work undertaken so far. The 3 year budget includes further projects that will utilise brought forward reserves for the benefit of its students, with reserves forecast to be marginally above minimum reserves at the end of the 3 year period.

To this end, the Trust continues to manage its use of reserves to benefit current students whilst also considering its financial sustainability.

#### **Investment policy**

The Trust's Treasury Management Policy sets out how the Trust's cash flows, banking and investment transactions are to be managed. Its objectives are to maintain sufficient cash balances to meet daily commitments and invest surplus cash to earn an acceptable rate without undue risk. Cash balances are currently held in a notice account held by the banks Treasury team.

#### **Principal risks and uncertainties**

A risk register for the Trust describes the major risks to which the Academy is exposed, identifies the probability of their occurrence and the impact should the events actually occur. Actions are identified to reduce the probability and/or impact of each event and allocated to mitigation owners to ensure implementation.

Insufficient capacity remains a possibility. Whilst the premises have been extended and modified to accommodate student numbers and complex needs, numbers continue to rise. Suitable additional provision was identified for sixth form ACS students and occupation of the new premises will commence in 23/24. Forecasting tools enable the Academy to remain vigilant in respect to future capacity issues and the new building at the main academy site has the potential for an increase in size of the second floor when necessary.

The difficulties in recruiting following the Covid pandemic have increased, which along with staff absence, has amplified the risk of not providing an effective education provision due to staffing levels. Therefore additional cover assistants have been employed along with an increase in casual curriculum support staff in order to temporarily cover absence. In addition the recruitment process will be reviewed in order to maximise perspective candidates in the current labour market.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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A costing exercise took place for the Local Authority in order that outdated high needs top up rates could be reviewed and be reflective of current costs. Whilst new rates are representative of funds needed to educate students with high needs, when the Local Authority experience pressure on the high needs block funding there is a risk of funding being changed. This represents a sizeable proportion of the Academy's funding.

#### **Fundraising**

Fundraising carried out by the Trust must be approved by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) following an application setting out the means and purpose of the fundraising and any literature/promotion that will be issued to the public. The SLT may approve fundraising that is for the purpose of achieving the charitable aims of the Trust and is in line with any relevant legislation and standards. It must also ensure that all literature issued, and the means of fundraising, is sensitive to the Trust's ethos and is compliant with relevant laws such as GDPR and child protection etc. Fundraising activities are reported to the Trust's Finance & Audit Committee on a termly basis and any complaints are also reported to them.

Funding this academic year has been limited to small-scale events and no complaints have been received.

#### **Plans for future periods**

An assessment of the Trust's achievements with regards to the principles of being a strong trust will commence. This will not only ensure that the Trust is operating at a high standard but also that it is capable of sustained and effective growth if required.

The trust's largest body of staff is curriculum support staff. The structure of these staff, across the Trust, will be reviewed including line management, training and appraisal systems to ensure staff are engaged and qualified and staff structures are effective. The induction programme will be improved with an enhanced programme of SEND specific training and high quality induction pack to support effective orientation and teaching and learning.

Work will continue on ensuring a robust quality assurance framework through the 'area 360' reviews and continuing to develop middle leaders to effectively contribute to the QA process. Following on from the work last year, new English, science, ICT, PSHE (personal, social, health and economic) and independent living skills curriculums will be embedded for red pathway students. This will ensure a creative, coherent and sequential curriculum is delivered with confidence. Further developments in the yellow and blue pathways curriculums will involve the implementation of the phase 2 curriculum, for older learners, which will include learning experiences and opportunities related to preparation for adulthood, specifically WRL (work related learning) and living skills through the 'my catcote crew' initiative.

A total communication approach, adopted across the Trust, will involve staff training, effective use in teaching and CASS plans (consistent approach to supporting students), and improved use of communication aids and technology. Furthermore, integrated character and cultural education opportunities will be developed.

An audit will be conducted to assess the efficiency of Trust buildings with regards to utility and carbon usage. In addition, improved key financial metrics and benchmarking will be implemented. The Trust will continue to seek alternative forms of funding, in particular from grants, for relevant projects and will aim to introduce a more structured approach to this process.

#### **Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others**

There are no funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### Auditor

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on .....12/12/23..... and signed on its behalf by:



H V Gordon

**Chair**

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### Scope of responsibility

As Trustees, we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Hartlepool Aspire Trust Limited has an effective and appropriate system of control, financial and otherwise. However such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve business objectives, and can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss.

As Trustees, we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in the DfE's Governance Handbook and competency framework for governance.

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the CEO, as Accounting Officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Hartlepool Aspire Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

### Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met three times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Board of Trustees was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
H V Gordon (Chair)	1	3
G Jones	3	3
P Holbrook	3	3
P R Hewitson	3	3
G Fletcher	3	3
L J Greig (Accounting Officer)	3	3
B Duncan	2	3
S Lamplough	2	3
A Godfrey (Appointed 7 July 2023)		

A skills audit is undertaken each year and this has not identified any issues during 2022/23 period.

Trustees commissioned an external review of governance which took place during the year. This was carried out by the National Governance Association (NGA). The review included an assessment of the core governance functions and the NGA's eight elements of effective governance and concluded that the governance of the trust, and its subsidiary, is effective. Furthermore that members and trustees are committed to ensuring they fully discharge their responsibilities in relation to the three-core functions of governance (vision and strategy, holding to account, the right people) and that there is a strong and positive governance culture which ensures that robust scrutiny and facilitative support are balanced. The findings identify aspects which can further develop the robustness of the governance arrangements and theses generally relate to systemising and streamlining processes. The findings from the review will be reviewed by trustees early in 23/24 and an action plan produced.

Recruitment of a replacement parent Trustee took place and will be effective for 23/24.

It is essential the Trust effectively manage any conflicts of interest, within the Trust and in the management of its subsidiary. A complete and up-to-date register of interests is maintained by the Trust for all Trustees and key personnel. All relevant staff are aware of the requirements in managing any identified conflicts including related party purchases and the effects on the scheme of delegation. In particular, the Trust has some declared family relationships that require additional controls and procedures to be in place. The Trust is transparent regarding these relationships with all relevant stakeholders, and the Board of Trustees are implicit in the oversight of this conflict of interest.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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A comprehensive induction pack is provided to new trustees. The Trust subscribes to an online support for Trustees as well as an E-learning platform. The governance support package gives opportunity for regular instructor led training and updates.

Three committees, Finance & Audit, Staffing and Standards Committee, are provided with comprehensive information regarding the activities of the Trust and how it meets its goals and statutory obligations. Each committee meets 3 times per year and challenge decision making across these three areas. The committees also ensure that there is a trustee from Catcote Futures on each of the committees, to ensure that there is openness and transparency as well as full participation. The structure works well and key trustees feed back into Board meetings on decision making and monitoring and provide recommendations to the Board of Trustees. Some Trustees have individual responsibility for areas, such as Safeguarding, and regular monitoring is undertaken and fed back to the Board. The Board reviews this structure each year and appoints a Chair and Vice Chair of the Board and subsequent committees.

The Finance and Audit Committee is a sub-committee of the HAT Board of Trustees. Its purpose is to ensure sound financial management of the Trust's resources including proper planning, monitoring and probity. Also, to advise on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's systems of internal control and its arrangements for risk management, control and governance processes and securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money).

During the year the committee met formally three times with financial updates and other relevant information issued regularly to its members. This committee has reviewed/approved independent compliance audit reports and subsequent recommendations, received and discussed budget monitoring reports, monitored the progress of the implementation of the risk register, been advised of revised financial procedures and non-routine expenditure, approved expenditure in line with the Finance Policy and received regular health, safety and building reports.

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
G Jones	3	3
P R Hewitson	3	3
G Fletcher	3	3
B Duncan	3	3

#### Review of value for money

As accounting officer, the CEO has responsibility for ensuring the Academy Trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The accounting officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes, as well as estate safety and management, achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The accounting officer considers how the Trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year, and reports to the Board of Trustees where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where appropriate.

The accounting officer for the Academy Trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by investing in refurbishment plans which were placed on hold during the Covid pandemic. Many areas across the Trust have benefited from the refurbishment including lighting, flooring, decoration and storage. This has provided a much needed improvement in the learning environments of students. This refurbishment will continue in 23/24. The Trust's values have been incorporated into the refurbishment and displayed in order to ensure these are embedded into a student's daily experiences. Investment in the new red pathway building, and modified PMLD classrooms also continued, ensuring that all necessary resources were in place and that environments are engaging. Funds were also committed to developing a separate ASC sixth form facility which will provide a suitable environment for this cohort from 23/24.

Electronic gates have been installed at the Academy site along with upgraded fobbed internal door system to support safeguarding of students, and a new fire system has been installed which provides improved detection. There has also been an investment in changing facilities.



# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### **The purpose of the system of internal control**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Academy Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Hartlepool Aspire Trust throughout the period 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023.

### **Capacity to handle risk**

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks that has been in place throughout the period 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

### **The risk and control framework**

The Academy Trust's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees
- regular reviews by the Finance and Audit Committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines
- identification and management of risks

The Board of Trustees has decided to buy-in an internal audit service from Clive Owen LLP. The FRC Ethical Standard for auditors states that a firm providing external audit to an entity shall not also provide audit services to it. To this end, the provision of internal audit function and external audit was provided by separate companies.

The external auditor's role includes giving advice on financial and other matters and performing a range of checks on the Academy Trust's financial and other systems. In particular, the checks carried out in the current period include regularity, payroll, purchases, income, accounting systems, income, information technology, fixed assets, VAT.

On a termly basis, the auditor reports to the Board of Trustees, through the Finance and Audit Committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees' financial responsibilities and annually prepares an annual summary report to the committee outlining areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress. No high risk areas were identified during the year and remedial action has taken place for all low risk areas identified.

### **Review of effectiveness**

As Accounting Officer the CEO has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question the review has been informed by:

- the work of the internal auditor
- the work of the external auditor
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process
- the work of the executive managers within the Academy Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework
- correspondence from ESFA e.g. financial notice to improve/notice to improve (FNtI/NtI) and 'minded to' letters

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Finance & Audit Committee and a plan to ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 12/12/23 and signed on its behalf by:



H V Gordon  
**Chair**



L J Greig  
**Accounting Officer**

# **HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST**

## **STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE**

***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023***

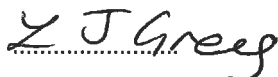
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As accounting officer of Hartlepool Aspire Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust board of trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement in place between the academy trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2022, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the academy trust's board of trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the academy trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the academy trust's funding agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook 2022.

I confirm that no instances of material irregularity, impropriety or funding non-compliance have been discovered to date. If any instances are identified after the date of this statement, these will be notified to the board of trustees and ESFA.

L J Greig  
**Accounting Officer**



# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

The trustees (who are also the directors of Hartlepool Aspire Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the accounts in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year. Under company law, the trustees must not approve the accounts unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

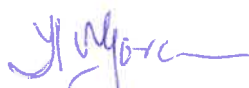
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that in its conduct and operation the charitable company applies financial and other controls, which conform with the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management. They are also responsible for ensuring that grants received from ESFA/DfE have been applied for the purposes intended.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of accounts may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 12/12/23 and signed on its behalf by:



H V Gordon  
Chair

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### Opinion

We have audited the accounts of Hartlepool Aspire Trust for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the accounts, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the accounts:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023.

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts' section of our report. We are independent of the academy trust in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Emphasis of matter - LGPS

We draw your attention to note 2 to the financial statements which describes how the LGPS balance has been accounted for. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the academy trust's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the accounts themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report including the incorporated strategic report for the financial year for which the accounts are prepared is consistent with the accounts; and
- the trustees' report including the incorporated strategic report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the academy trust and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report, including the incorporated strategic report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the accounts, the trustees are responsible for assessing the academy trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### **Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud**

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above and on the Financial Reporting Council's website, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

We obtain and update our understanding of the entity, its activities, its control environment, and likely future developments, including in relation to the legal and regulatory framework applicable and how the entity is complying with that framework. Based on this understanding, we identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This includes consideration of the risk of acts by the entity that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, we designed procedures which included:

- Enquiry of senior leadership, Governors/Trustees and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims as well as actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations including compliance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency;
- Performing audit work over the recognition of grant income and the allocation of expenditure to funds;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for indicators of potential bias.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Angela Ingham FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
for and on behalf of Azets Audit Services**

**Statutory Auditor**

13/12/2023

Wynyard Park House  
Wynyard Avenue  
Wynyard  
United Kingdom  
TS22 5TB



# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 22 August 2023 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Hartlepool Aspire Trust during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

This report is made solely to Hartlepool Aspire Trust and ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Hartlepool Aspire Trust and ESFA those matters we are required to state in a report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than Hartlepool Aspire Trust and ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

### **Respective responsibilities of Hartlepool Aspire Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant**

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Hartlepool Aspire Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 1 August 2013 and the Academies Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2022, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance, and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

### **Approach**

We conducted our engagement in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountant of Academy Trusts issued by ESFA. We performed a limited assurance engagement as defined in our engagement letter.

The objective of a limited assurance engagement is to perform such procedures as to obtain information and explanations in order to provide us with sufficient appropriate evidence to express a negative conclusion on regularity.

A limited assurance engagement is more limited in scope than a reasonable assurance engagement and consequently does not enable us to obtain assurance that we would become aware of all significant matters that might be identified in a reasonable assurance engagement. Accordingly, we do not express a positive opinion.

Our engagement includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the regularity and propriety of the academy trust's income and expenditure.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- completion of self assessment questionnaire by Accounting Officer
- discussions with the Accounting Officer and finance team
- review of Internal Assurance report
- review of trustee and committee meeting minutes
- review of finance and other relevant policies
- review of purchases, expenses and expense claims on a sample basis including the application of controls and tendering processes where applicable
- review of gifts and hospitality transactions including the application of controls
- review of credit and debit card transactions including the application of controls
- review of payroll transactions on a sample bases including the application of controls
- review of potential special payments to staff
- review of leases and consideration of areas where borrowing may have been incurred
- consideration of transactions with related and connected parties
- review of register of business interests for completeness and compliance with regulations
- enquiries into transactions that may require disclosure under ESFA delegated authority rules
- consideration of value for money and appropriateness of transactions

### Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



**Reporting Accountant**  
Azets Audit Services

Dated: 13/12/2023

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds: General £	Fixed asset £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>						
Donations and capital grants	3	9,744	1,200	364,397	375,341	2,920,135
Charitable activities:						
- Funding for educational operations	4	32,152	4,871,157	-	4,903,309	4,473,709
Other trading activities	5	183,804	-	-	183,804	162,519
Investments	6	2,463	-	-	2,463	156
<b>Total</b>		<b>228,163</b>	<b>4,872,357</b>	<b>364,397</b>	<b>5,464,917</b>	<b>7,556,519</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>						
Raising funds	7	178,486	-	-	178,486	166,007
Charitable activities:						
- Educational operations	8	23,247	4,952,363	262,846	5,238,456	5,319,801
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>201,733</b>	<b>4,952,363</b>	<b>262,846</b>	<b>5,416,942</b>	<b>5,485,808</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>26,430</b>	<b>(80,006)</b>	<b>101,551</b>	<b>47,975</b>	<b>2,070,711</b>
Transfers between funds	17	-	(277,248)	277,248	-	-
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses)</b>						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	19	-	1,776,000	-	1,776,000	5,091,000
Pension asset not recognised	12	-	(1,063,000)	-	(1,063,000)	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>26,430</b>	<b>355,746</b>	<b>378,799</b>	<b>760,975</b>	<b>7,161,711</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward		207,673	137,238	5,469,076	5,813,987	(1,347,724)
Total funds carried forward		234,103	492,984	5,847,875	6,574,962	5,813,987

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Comparative year information Year ended 31 August 2022		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds:		Total 2022
	Notes	£	General £	Fixed asset £	£
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>					
Donations and capital grants	3	4,523	20,500	2,895,112	2,920,135
Charitable activities:					
- Funding for educational operations	4	34,825	4,438,884	-	4,473,709
Other trading activities	5	162,519	-	-	162,519
Investments	6	156	-	-	156
<b>Total</b>		<b>202,023</b>	<b>4,459,384</b>	<b>2,895,112</b>	<b>7,556,519</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	7	166,007	-	-	166,007
Charitable activities:					
- Educational operations	8	35,064	5,079,601	205,136	5,319,801
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>201,071</b>	<b>5,079,601</b>	<b>205,136</b>	<b>5,485,808</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>952</b>	<b>(620,217)</b>	<b>2,689,976</b>	<b>2,070,711</b>
Transfers between funds	17	-	(257,896)	257,896	-
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses)</b>					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	19	-	5,091,000	-	5,091,000
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>952</b>	<b>4,212,887</b>	<b>2,947,872</b>	<b>7,161,711</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		206,721	(4,075,649)	2,521,204	(1,347,724)
Total funds carried forward		207,673	137,238	5,469,076	5,813,987

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	12		5,847,875		5,469,076
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stock	14	4,054		4,634	
Debtors	15	588,204		720,390	
Cash at bank and in hand		975,802		564,241	
		1,568,060		1,289,265	
<b>Current liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(840,973)		(416,354)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			727,087		872,911
<b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>			6,574,962		6,341,987
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	19		-		(528,000)
<b>Total net assets</b>			6,574,962		5,813,987
<b>Funds of the academy trust:</b>					
<b>Restricted funds</b>	17				
- Fixed asset funds			5,847,875		5,469,076
- Restricted income funds			492,984		665,238
- Pension reserve			-		(528,000)
<b>Total restricted funds</b>			6,340,859		5,606,314
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>	17		234,103		207,673
<b>Total funds</b>			6,574,962		5,813,987

The accounts on pages 25 to 49 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 12/12/23 and are signed on their behalf by:



H V Gordon

Chair

Company registration number 08604037 (England and Wales)

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>					
Net cash provided by operating activities	20		686,346		347,698
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		2,463		156	
Capital grants from DfE Group		364,397		13,467	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(641,645)		(271,363)	
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>			(274,785)		(257,740)
<b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>			411,561		89,958
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year			564,241		474,283
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year</b>			975,802		564,241

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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#### 1 Accounting policies

A summary of the principal accounting policies adopted (which have been applied consistently, except where noted), judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty, is set out below.

##### 1.1 Basis of preparation

The accounts of the academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

##### 1.2 Going concern

The trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate, ie whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charitable company to continue as a going concern. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the accounts and have concluded that the academy trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the academy trust's ability to continue as a going concern. Thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the accounts.

##### 1.3 Income

All incoming resources are recognised when the academy trust has entitlement to the funds, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably.

###### Grants

Grants are included in the statement of financial activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of meeting any performance-related conditions there is not unconditional entitlement to the income and its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income until the performance-related conditions are met. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

General Annual Grant is recognised in full in the statement of financial activities in the period for which it is receivable, and any abatement in respect of the period is deducted from income and recognised as a liability.

Capital grants are recognised in full when there is an unconditional entitlement to the grant. Unspent amounts of capital grants are reflected in the balance sheet in the restricted fixed asset fund. Capital grants are recognised when there is entitlement and are not deferred over the life of the asset on which they are expended.

###### Sponsorship income

Sponsorship income provided to the academy trust which amounts to a donation is recognised in the statement of financial activities in the period in which it is receivable (where there are no performance-related conditions), where the receipt is probable and it can be measured reliably.

###### Donations

Donations are recognised on a receivable basis (where there are no performance-related conditions) where the receipt is probable and the amount can be reliably measured.

###### Other income

Other income, including the hire of facilities, is recognised in the period it is receivable and to the extent the academy trust has provided the goods or services.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

#### Donated goods, facilities and services

Goods donated for resale are included at fair value, being the expected proceeds from sale less the expected costs of sale. If it is practical to assess the fair value at receipt, it is recognised in stock and 'Income from other trading activities'. Upon sale, the value of the stock is charged against 'Income from other trading activities' and the proceeds are recognised as 'Income from other trading activities'. Where it is impractical to fair value the items due to the volume of low value items they are not recognised in the accounts until they are sold. This income is recognised within 'Income from other trading activities'.

#### Donated fixed assets

Donated fixed assets are measured at fair value unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor is used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the academy trust's accounting policies.

### 1.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

#### Expenditure on raising funds

This includes all expenditure incurred by the academy trust to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

#### Charitable activities

These are costs incurred on the academy trust's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the academy trust apportioned to charitable activities.

### 1.5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with the aid of specific grants, either from the government or from the private sector, they are included in the balance sheet at cost and depreciated over their expected useful economic life. Where there are specific conditions attached to the funding that require the continued use of the asset, the related grants are credited to a restricted fixed asset fund in the statement of financial activities and carried forward in the balance sheet. Depreciation on the relevant assets is charged directly to the restricted fixed asset fund in the statement of financial activities. Where tangible fixed assets have been acquired with unrestricted funds, depreciation on such assets is charged to the unrestricted fund.



# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

#### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset on a straight-line basis over its expected useful life, as follows:

Leasehold buildings	50 years
Leasehold land	125 years
Leasehold improvements	50 years
Computer equipment	3 years
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7 years
Motor vehicles	5 years

The trust's land and buildings are occupied on a 125 year lease from the local authority. In the view of the trustees, the risks and rewards of occupying the site have been substantially transferred to the trust and therefore the land and buildings have been recognised as a donation on conversion and capitalised within the restricted fixed assets fund. The basis of valuation has been disclosed within the fixed assets note.

A review for impairment of a fixed asset is carried out if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value of any fixed asset may not be recoverable. Shortfalls between the carrying value of fixed assets and their recoverable amounts are recognised as impairments. Impairment losses are recognised in the statement of financial activities.

#### 1.6 Liabilities

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the academy trust anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

#### 1.7 Leased assets

Rentals under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

#### 1.8 Financial instruments

The academy trust only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the academy trust and their measurement basis are as follows.

##### Financial assets

Trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

Cash at bank is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value.

##### Financial liabilities

Trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition.

Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

#### 1.9 Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Net realisable value is based on estimated selling price less further costs to completion and disposal. Provision is made for obsolete and slow moving stock.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

#### 1.10 Taxation

The academy trust is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the academy trust is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by chapter 3 part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

#### 1.11 Pensions benefits

Retirement benefits to employees of the academy trust are provided by the Teachers' Pension Scheme ('TPS') and the Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS'). These are defined benefit schemes and the assets are held separately from those of the academy trust.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the academy trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary based on quadrennial valuations using a prospective unit credit method. The TPS is an unfunded multi-employer scheme with no underlying assets to assign between employers. Consequently, the TPS is treated as a defined contribution scheme for accounting purposes and the contributions are recognised in the period to which they relate.

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the academy trust in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to net income or expenditure are the current service costs and the costs of scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs as incurred. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset is also recognised in the statement of financial activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in other recognised gains and losses.

#### 1.12 Fund accounting

Unrestricted income funds represent those resources which may be used towards meeting any of the charitable objects of the academy trust at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted fixed asset funds are resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by funders where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose.

Restricted general funds comprise all other restricted funds received with restrictions imposed by the funder/donor and include grants from the Education and Skills Funding Agency/Department for Education and Local Authority.

#### 1.13 Agency arrangements

The academy trust acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 bursary funds from ESFA. Payments received from ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the statement of financial activities as the trust does not have control over the charitable application of the funds. The funds received and paid and any balances held are disclosed in note 24.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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#### 2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Accounting estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

##### Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

The academy trust makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed below.

##### **Local Government Pension Scheme**

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 19, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2023. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability. The UK corporate bond yields at 31 August 2023 are at their highest levels for many years resulting in higher accounting discount rates at the year end. This places a significantly lower value on the pension obligations compared to last year and will be one of the main reasons a net asset has been reported. We have ensured that our assumptions are appropriate for the Academy Trust and the valuation has been based on the following estimates:

- There is a minimum funding requirement in relation to LGPS
- There is the ability to recover a surplus through the ability to reduce future contributions (not refund)
- In calculating the surplus, the present value of current and past service costs is offset against the future contributions over the future period
- The present values in the above calculations are calculated using an annuity representing participation into perpetuity.

There is no known intention to exit the LGPS and therefore the economic benefit of a refund would be highly unlikely and on that basis recognition of an asset is considered inappropriate. We have however considered the economic benefit available to the Academy Trust as a future contribution reduction and whether it is appropriate to recognise the net asset in full. Under FRS 102, a net asset restriction may apply as the prevailing view is that a minimum funding requirement for future service exists in the LGPS. We requested our actuaries consider the impact of the minimum funding requirement on the asset ceiling and as a result we have restricted the asset to £nil based upon an asset restriction calculation. We consider this to be appropriate and a more accurate reflection of the pension positions as at 31 August 2023.

##### **Land and buildings**

The trust's land and buildings are occupied on a 125 year lease from the local authority. In the view of the trustees, the risks and rewards of occupying the site have been substantially transferred to the trust and therefore the land and buildings have been recognised as a donation on conversion and capitalised within the restricted fixed assets fund. The land and buildings are valued on the basis of valuations provided by the ESFA/local authority

##### **Depreciation**

Depreciation is calculated as to write off the cost of an asset off over its useful economic life. The accounting policies are disclosed in the accounting policy above.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

### 3 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	-	-	20,500
Donated fixed assets	-	-	-	2,881,645
Capital grants	-	364,397	364,397	13,467
Other donations	9,744	1,200	10,944	4,523
	<u>9,744</u>	<u>365,597</u>	<u>375,341</u>	<u>2,920,135</u>

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

### 4 Funding for the academy trust's educational operations

Educational operations	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>DfE/ESFA grants</b>				
General annual grant (GAG)	-	1,800,000	1,800,000	1,560,000
Other DfE/ESFA grants:				
- Pupil premium	-	95,162	95,162	89,190
- Teachers pension	-	141,613	141,613	98,466
- Teachers pay	-	-	-	27,298
- Supplementary grant	-	130,339	130,339	-
- Others	-	24,293	24,293	1,988
	-	2,191,407	2,191,407	1,776,942
<b>Other government grants</b>				
Local authority grants	-	2,598,882	2,598,882	2,626,633
Special educational projects	-	-	-	500
	-	2,598,882	2,598,882	2,627,133
<b>COVID-19 additional funding</b>				
<b>DfE/ESFA</b>				
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	80,316	80,316	25,914
<b>Non-DfE/ESFA</b>				
Other COVID-19 funding	-	552	552	5,945
	-	80,868	80,868	31,859
<b>Other incoming resources</b>	12,955	-	12,955	17,560
<b>Total funding for educational operations</b>	12,955	4,871,157	4,884,112	4,453,494
<b>Catering income</b>	19,197	-	19,197	20,215
<b>Total funding</b>	32,152	4,871,157	4,903,309	4,473,709

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

### 5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Hire of facilities	650	-	650	150
Catering income	14,396	-	14,396	11,078
Trip income	1,005	-	1,005	15
Other income	167,753	-	167,753	151,276
	<u>183,804</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>183,804</u>	<u>162,519</u>

### 6 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Short term deposits	2,463	-	2,463	156
	<u>2,463</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,463</u>	<u>156</u>

### 7 Expenditure

	Staff costs £	Non-pay expenditure Premises £	Other £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Expenditure on raising funds					
- Direct costs	168,236	-	10,250	178,486	166,007
Academy's educational operations					
- Direct costs	2,931,097	-	311,393	3,242,490	3,089,048
- Allocated support costs	1,162,904	576,923	256,139	1,995,966	2,230,753
	<u>4,262,237</u>	<u>576,923</u>	<u>577,782</u>	<u>5,416,942</u>	<u>5,485,808</u>

#### Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2023 £	2022 £
Operating lease rentals	4,507	2,411
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	262,846	205,136
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- Audit	10,050	9,100
- Other services	4,575	2,400
Net interest on defined benefit pension liability	26,000	88,000
	<u>297,978</u>	<u>297,047</u>

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

### 8 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>Direct costs</b>				
Educational operations	4,050	3,238,440	3,242,490	3,089,048
<b>Support costs</b>				
Educational operations	19,197	1,976,769	1,995,966	2,230,753
	<u>23,247</u>	<u>5,215,209</u>	<u>5,238,456</u>	<u>5,319,801</u>
			<b>2023</b> £	<b>2022</b> £
<b>Analysis of support costs</b>				
Support staff costs			1,162,904	1,447,608
Depreciation			262,846	205,136
Technology costs			46,505	38,292
Premises costs			314,077	291,804
Legal costs			-	47
Other support costs			183,098	229,922
Governance costs			26,536	17,944
			<u>1,995,966</u>	<u>2,230,753</u>

### 9 Staff

#### Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were:

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	3,213,644	2,930,645
Social security costs	283,759	252,700
Pension costs	764,834	1,260,645
Staff costs - employees	<u>4,262,237</u>	<u>4,443,990</u>
	4,262,237	4,443,990
Staff development and other staff costs	24,980	29,503
Total staff expenditure	<u>4,287,217</u>	<u>4,473,493</u>

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

### 9 Staff

(Continued)

#### Staff numbers

The average number of persons employed by the academy trust during the year was as follows:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Teachers	104	88
Administration and support	31	37
Management	4	4
	<u>139</u>	<u>129</u>

#### Higher paid staff

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer national insurance contributions) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	1	1
£70,001 - £80,000	2	1
£100,001 - £110,000	-	1
£110,001 - £120,000	1	-
	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>

#### Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer national insurance and pension contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £447,317 (2022: £416,773).

### 10 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One or more of the trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the academy trust. The principal and other staff trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of principal and staff members under their contracts of employment, and not in respect of their services as trustees.

The value of trustees' remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

L Greig (CEO):	
Remuneration	£115,001 - £120,000 (2022: £105,001 - £110,000)
Employer's pension contributions	£25,001 - £30,000 (2022: £25,001 - £30,000)

During the period ended 31 August 2023, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £nil were reimbursed or paid directly to trustees (2022: £nil).

Other related party transactions involving the trustees are set out within the related parties note.



# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

#### 11 Trustees' and officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice, the academy trust has purchased insurance to protect trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £5,000,000 on any one claim and the cost for the year ended 31 August 2023 was £229 (2022: £229). The cost of this insurance is included in the total insurance cost.

#### 12 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings £	Leasehold improvements £	Computer equipment £	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>						
At 1 September 2022	4,570,825	875,463	170,084	847,551	143,815	6,607,738
Additions	1,400	-	-	616,551	23,694	641,645
At 31 August 2023	4,572,225	875,463	170,084	1,464,102	167,509	7,249,383
<b>Depreciation</b>						
At 1 September 2022	328,708	89,752	108,734	490,717	120,751	1,138,662
Charge for the year	104,177	-	33,051	115,289	10,329	262,846
At 31 August 2023	432,885	89,752	141,785	606,006	131,080	1,401,508
<b>Net book value</b>						
At 31 August 2023	4,139,340	785,711	28,299	858,096	36,429	5,847,875
At 31 August 2022	4,242,117	785,711	61,350	356,834	23,064	5,469,076

Leasehold land and buildings were valued on a depreciated replacement cost basis as at 31 March 2014 by Mouchel on behalf of the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

### 13 Fixed asset investments

Catcote Futures, a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in the United Kingdom, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hartlepool Aspire Trust.

The principal activity of the subsidiary for the last relevant financial year was that of an educational resource for students age 19 and beyond.

The aggregate amount of funds and the results of this undertaking for the last relevant financial year were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Net incoming resources for the year	116,915	116,071
Total funds	834,784	717,869

### 14 Stock

	2023 £	2022 £
Shop stock	4,054	4,634

### 15 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	277,479	312,700
Amounts owed by group undertakings	144,136	113,730
VAT recoverable	53,089	25,727
Prepayments and accrued income	113,500	268,233
	588,204	720,390

### 16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	129,778	28,301
Amounts owed to group undertakings	7,383	-
Other creditors	25,358	55,978
Accruals and deferred income	678,454	332,075
	840,973	416,354

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

### 17 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2023 £
<b>Restricted general funds</b>					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	515,623	1,800,000	(1,815,007)	(240,559)	260,057
Pupil premium	12,345	95,162	(107,492)	-	15
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	80,316	(80,316)	-	-
Other Coronavirus funding	-	552	(552)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	5,300	(5,300)	-	-
Other government grants	55,292	2,598,882	(2,388,721)	(36,689)	228,764
Teachers pension	-	141,613	(141,613)	-	-
National tutor grant	-	20,193	(20,193)	-	-
Supplementary grant	-	130,339	(130,339)	-	-
Other restricted funds	81,978	-	(77,830)	-	4,148
Pension reserve	(528,000)	-	(185,000)	713,000	-
	<u>137,238</u>	<u>4,872,357</u>	<u>(4,952,363)</u>	<u>435,752</u>	<u>492,984</u>
<b>Restricted fixed asset funds</b>					
Inherited on conversion	1,430,204	-	(33,290)	-	1,396,914
DfE group capital grants	341,053	364,397	(12,139)	(13,872)	679,439
Capital expenditure from GAG	437,893	-	(97,349)	291,120	631,664
Assets transferred from Catcote Futures	205,298	-	(4,978)	-	200,320
Buildings donated by Local Authority	2,811,915	-	(56,711)	-	2,755,204
Assets donated by DfE	27,659	-	(15,368)	-	12,291
Private sector capital sponsorship	215,054	-	(43,011)	-	172,043
	<u>5,469,076</u>	<u>364,397</u>	<u>(262,846)</u>	<u>277,248</u>	<u>5,847,875</u>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>5,606,314</u>	<u>5,236,754</u>	<u>(5,215,209)</u>	<u>713,000</u>	<u>6,340,859</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General funds	<u>207,673</u>	<u>228,163</u>	<u>(201,733)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>234,103</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>5,813,987</u>	<u>5,464,917</u>	<u>(5,416,942)</u>	<u>713,000</u>	<u>6,574,962</u>

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### 17 Funds

(Continued)

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

General Annual Grant must be used for the normal running costs of the academy. Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the academy trust is not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it can carry forward at 31 August 2023.

Other government grants include funding for pupils with special educational needs and out of borough income.

Other restricted funds consist of National Lottery funding received in stages between 2020 and 2022 of which £4,148 remains unspent at the year end.

The inherited fixed asset fund reflects the fixed assets acquired from Catcote School and the Local Authority on conversion. Depreciation on these assets is charged against this fund.

DfE capital grants consist of a devolved capital grant of £40,752 and CIF funding of £323,645, £13,872 has been spent on maintenance with the balance spent on capital in the year.

Unrestricted funds can be used for any purpose at the discretion of the academy.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

#### 17 Funds

(Continued)

Comparative information in respect of the preceding period is as follows:

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2022 £
<b>Restricted general funds</b>					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	512,294	1,560,000	(1,298,775)	(257,896)	515,623
Pupil premium	22,909	89,190	(99,754)	-	12,345
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	25,914	(25,914)	-	-
Other Coronavirus funding	-	5,945	(5,945)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	1,988	(1,988)	-	-
Other government grants	130,424	2,627,133	(2,702,265)	-	55,292
Teachers pension	-	98,466	(98,466)	-	-
Teachers pay	-	27,298	(27,298)	-	-
Other restricted funds	71,724	23,450	(13,196)	-	81,978
Pension reserve	(4,813,000)	-	(806,000)	5,091,000	(528,000)
	<u>(4,075,649)</u>	<u>4,459,384</u>	<u>(5,079,601)</u>	<u>4,833,104</u>	<u>137,238</u>
<b>Restricted fixed asset funds</b>					
Inherited on conversion	1,471,124	-	(40,920)	-	1,430,204
DfE group capital grants	351,236	13,467	(10,183)	(13,467)	341,053
Capital expenditure from GAG	224,368	-	(57,838)	271,363	437,893
Assets transferred from Catcote Futures	210,276	-	(4,978)	-	205,298
Buildings donated by Local Authority	-	2,835,545	(23,630)	-	2,811,915
Assets donated by DfE	-	46,100	(18,441)	-	27,659
Private sector capital sponsorship	264,200	-	(49,146)	-	215,054
	<u>2,521,204</u>	<u>2,895,112</u>	<u>(205,136)</u>	<u>257,896</u>	<u>5,469,076</u>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>(1,554,445)</u>	<u>7,354,496</u>	<u>(5,284,737)</u>	<u>5,091,000</u>	<u>5,606,314</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General funds	<u>206,721</u>	<u>202,023</u>	<u>(201,071)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>207,673</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>(1,347,724)</u>	<u>7,556,519</u>	<u>(5,485,808)</u>	<u>5,091,000</u>	<u>5,813,987</u>

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

### 18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	General £	Restricted funds: Fixed asset £	Total Funds £
<b>Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:</b>				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	5,847,875	5,847,875
Current assets	234,103	1,333,957	-	1,568,060
Current liabilities	-	(840,973)	-	(840,973)
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>234,103</b>	<b>492,984</b>	<b>5,847,875</b>	<b>6,574,962</b>
	Unrestricted Funds £	General £	Restricted funds: Fixed asset £	Total Funds £
<b>Fund balances at 31 August 2022 are represented by:</b>				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	5,469,076	5,469,076
Current assets	207,673	1,081,592	-	1,289,265
Current liabilities	-	(416,354)	-	(416,354)
Pension scheme liability	-	(528,000)	-	(528,000)
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>207,673</b>	<b>137,238</b>	<b>5,469,076</b>	<b>5,813,987</b>

### 19 Pension and similar obligations

The academy trust's employees belong to two principal pension schemes: the Teachers' Pension Scheme England and Wales (TPS) for academic and related staff; and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-teaching staff, which is managed by Teesside Pension Fund. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2016, and that of the LGPS related to the period ended 31 March 2019.

There were no outstanding or prepaid contributions at either the beginning or the end of the financial year.

#### Teachers' Pension Scheme

##### Introduction

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for teachers in academy trusts. All teachers have the option to opt out of the TPS following enrolment.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme to which both the member and employer makes contributions, as a percentage of salary. These contributions are credited to the Exchequer. Retirement and other pension benefits are paid by public funds provided by Parliament.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

#### 19 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

##### Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2016. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 5 March 2019.

The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- employer contribution rates set at 23.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% employer administration charge)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £218,100 million, and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £196,100 million giving a notional past service deficit of £22,000 million
- the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, is used to determine the notional investment return. The current SCAPE rate is 2.4% above the rate of CPI. The assumed real rate of return is 2.4% in excess of prices and 2% in excess of earnings. The rate of real earnings growth is assumed to be 2.2%. The assumed nominal rate of return including earnings growth is 4.45%.

The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2024.

The employer's pension costs paid to the TPS in the period amounted to £328,041 (2022: £303,929).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website.

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The academy trust has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The academy trust has set out above the information available on the scheme.

##### Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contributions are as noted below. The agreed contribution rates for future years are % for employers and % for employees.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of academy closure, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013 and on 21 July 2022, the Department for Education reaffirmed its commitment to the guarantee, with a parliamentary minute published on GOV.UK.

Total contributions made	2023 £	2022 £
Employer's contributions	391,000	333,000
Employees' contributions	130,000	111,000
Total contributions	521,000	444,000

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

#### 19 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions	2023 %	2022 %
Rate of increase in salaries	3.95	4.05
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.95	3.05
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.20	4.25
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.95	3.05

The current mortality assumptions include sufficient allowance for future improvements in mortality rates. The assumed life expectations on retirement age 65 are:

	2023 Years	2022 Years
Retiring today		
- Males	20.5	21.7
- Females	23.5	23.5
Retiring in 20 years		
- Males	21.3	22.9
- Females	25.0	25.3

Scheme liabilities would have been affected by changes in assumptions as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Discount rate + 0.1%	5,357,000	6,188,000
Discount rate - 0.1%	5,657,000	6,524,000
Mortality assumption + 1 year	5,287,000	6,102,000
Mortality assumption - 1 year	5,727,000	6,610,000
CPI rate + 0.1%	5,646,000	6,510,000
CPI rate - 0.1%	5,368,000	6,202,000

The academy trust's share of the assets in the scheme	2023 Fair value £	2022 Fair value £
Equities	4,796,100	3,963,040
Cash	262,800	815,920
Property	1,511,100	1,049,040
Pension asset not recognised	(1,063,000)	-
Total market value of assets	5,507,000	5,828,000

The actual return on scheme assets was £285,000 (2022: £325,000).



# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

#### 19 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities	2023 £	2022 £
Current service cost	550,000	1,051,000
Interest income	(257,000)	(90,000)
Interest cost	283,000	178,000
Total operating charge	576,000	1,139,000
Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations	2023 £	2022 £
At 1 September 2022	6,356,000	9,934,000
Current service cost	550,000	1,051,000
Interest cost	283,000	178,000
Employee contributions	130,000	111,000
Actuarial gain	(1,748,000)	(4,856,000)
Benefits paid	(64,000)	(62,000)
At 31 August 2023	5,507,000	6,356,000
Changes in the fair value of the academy trust's share of scheme assets	2023 £	2022 £
At 1 September 2022	5,828,000	5,121,000
Interest income	257,000	90,000
Actuarial gain	28,000	235,000
Employer contributions	391,000	333,000
Employee contributions	130,000	111,000
Benefits paid	(64,000)	(62,000)
Pension asset not recognised	(1,063,000)	-
At 31 August 2023	5,507,000	5,828,000

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

#### 20 Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		47,975	2,070,711
Adjusted for:			
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income		(364,397)	(2,895,112)
Investment income receivable	6	(2,463)	(156)
Defined benefit pension costs less contributions payable	19	159,000	718,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	19	26,000	88,000
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets		262,846	205,136
Decrease in stocks		580	180
Decrease/(increase) in debtors		132,186	(94,686)
Increase in creditors		424,619	255,625
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>		<b>686,346</b>	<b>347,698</b>

#### 21 Analysis of changes in net funds

	1 September 2022 £	Cash flows £	31 August 2023 £
Cash	564,241	411,561	975,802

#### 22 Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the academy trust's operations and the composition of the board of trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the academy trust has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the academy trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures. The following related party transaction took place in the period of account.

During the year, the academy recharged net service costs to its subsidiary company, Catcote Futures, of £139,736 (2022: £149,369) and the amounts owing from Catcote Futures at the year end was £114,136 (2022: £113,730). Amounts owing to Catcote Futures at the year end was £7,383 (2022: £nil).

Mrs L Robson, sister of Mrs L Greig (trustee and accounting officer), is employed by the trust as Head of Corporate Services. Mrs Robson's appointment pre-dated Mrs Greig becoming the AO. Mrs Robson was appointed in open competition through a competitive interview process by a recruitment panel. Mrs Robson is paid in line with the standard national pay scale and has received no special treatment as a result of her relationship to a trustee.

Mr S Greig, husband of Mrs L Greig (trustee and accounting officer), is employed by the trust as ICT Manager. Mr Greig's appointment pre-dated Mrs Greig becoming the AO. Mr Greig was appointed in open competition through a competitive interview process by a recruitment panel. Mr Greig is paid in line with the standard national pay scale and has received no special treatment as a result of his relationship to a trustee.

Mr R Kitson and Mr D Kitson, sons of Mrs S Lamplough (trustee), are employed by the trust.

In entering into these transactions, the academy trust has complied with the requirements of the Academies Trust Handbook 2022.

# HARTLEPOOL ASPIRE TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

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### **23 Members' liability**

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he or she is a member, or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he or she ceases to be a member.

### **24 Agency arrangements**

The academy trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for ESFA. The academy had a creditor £619 (2022: £1,599) brought forward and in the accounting period ending 31 August 2023 the trust received £14,374 (2022 £9,581) and disbursed £11,073 (2022: £10,561) from the fund. An amount of £3,920 (2022: £619) is included in other creditors relating to undistributed funds carried forward to the next academic year.

