

Financing and investment



Securing stable, long-term investment is essential to deliver a resilient and high quality employment and skills offer. This section outlines how core council funding, targeted programmes and strategic partnerships combined to support sustainable delivery, maximise value for money and enable ongoing innovation across the Hub and Hub on Tour model.

How we are funded

The Employment and Training Hub and Hub on Tour are built on long-term, core council investment supplemented by programme-specific funding and strong partnership contributions. This mixed model provides stability, reach, and the ability to innovate at pace.

- **Core council funding** – permanent staffing provides stability and supports long-term delivery beyond short-term programme cycles.
- **Capital investment** – approximately £750,000 funded the refurbishment of the Hub, with a further £50,000 invested to expand space as demand grew.
- **Programme-based funding** – dedicated resources from initiatives like the Care Academy and Youth Guarantee Trailblazer support specialist roles and tailored delivery.
- **Inward-investment alignment** – the Hub’s employer-focused model helps strengthen Stockton’s overall economic offer by supporting local labour market needs.



Sustaining our offer

Sustainability is achieved through core funding, a flexible delivery model and deep partnership integration, ensuring the Hub remains resilient and relevant as people's needs evolve.

- **Long-term financial stability** – the Hub is core-funded, meaning staffing and essential delivery remain protected even if external programme cycles change.
- **Integrated multi-agency ecosystem** – partners across public health, housing, mental health, training providers, VCSE and DWP co-deliver support, reducing duplication and increasing resilience.
- **Economic contribution** – by supporting employer recruitment pipelines and attracting new businesses into the borough, the Hub strengthens its long-term strategic value to the council.
- **Blending core funding with earned income and bids** – charge room hire to training providers (not employers) and use small external bids to support programmes such as Skills for Success.

Efficiency savings

The Hub achieves significant efficiencies by maximising existing assets, aligning partner activity and reducing duplication across the employment and skills system.

- **No costly satellites** – Hub on Tour grew from a low-cost summer roadshow, later aligning with Warm Spaces over winter. Hub on Tour uses existing venues and minimal equipment, keeping delivery inexpensive.
- **Using existing community venues** – this approach avoids additional estate costs by delivering outreach from spaces already embedded in local communities.
- **Employer recruitment efficiencies** – centralised support reduces the need for businesses to manage multiple outreach channels, improving hire speed and reducing overall system cost.



Key decisions

- Leaders invested heavily in a purpose built, high capacity central Hub to position employment support as a professional, growth oriented offer attractive to people, employers, and strategic partners.
- The Hub was intentionally embedded within the council's economic development agenda, strengthening its strategic influence, aligning with inward investment priorities, and enabling deep employer partnerships from day one.

Key learning

Insights from Stockton's approach highlight what it takes to build a resilient, high-performing employment support model that other areas can replicate.

- **Long-term core funding delivers stronger financial efficiency** – stable investment reduces the overheads, disruption and hidden costs associated with short-term, stop-start programmes.
- **Blended funding streams strengthen resilience** – combining council core budgets with targeted external programme funding diversifies financial risk and supports scalable, multi-year delivery.

“In other places, these kinds of services are often only funded for two years at a time, pending renewal, which makes it difficult to plan or keep staff. Here, the core team are permanently funded by the council. It means partners know we're here for the long term, and it's one of the reasons businesses keep coming back to us years later. You get the right staff when there's commitment behind it.”

Fallon Dunleavy, Employment and Training Hub Manager
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council