

MEETING OF MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

At the Meeting of Middlesbrough Council, lawfully convened, and held in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough on 16 September 2015.

PRESENT: Councillors Bloundele (Chair), The Mayor, D Budd, Councillors Arundale, Biswas, Blyth, Brunton, Cole, Coupe, Cox, Culley, Davison, Dean, Dryden, Harvey, Hellaoui, C Hobson, J Hobson, Hubbard, Hussain, Lawton, Lewis, McCabe, McGee, McGloin, C M Rooney, D Rooney, Rostron, Saunders, Shan, Sharrocks, Taylor, Uddin, N J Walker, Walters and Young

OFFICERS: L Henman, B Holloway, A Hoy, J Lewis, S Lightwing, A Pain, K Parkes, T Parkinson, B Roberts, M Robinson, J Wells, K Whitmore

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors Brady, Goodchild, Higgins, Mawston, McIntyre, McTigue, J A Walker.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Item/Nature of Interest
Councillor Saunders	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Agenda Item 11 - Approval of Taxi Fee Structure and Associated Processes

15/22 **MINUTES - COUNCIL - 15 JULY 2015**

The minutes of the meeting of Middlesbrough Council held on 15 July 2015 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

15/23 **ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chair reported with sadness the death of former Councillor and Mayor, Kenneth Johnson Hall, on 12 September 2015. The Chair paid tribute to Kenn J Hall and his valued work over many years serving on several Council Committees and also as a School Governor. Members and all present stood in silence in his memory.

NOTED15/24 **MAYOR'S STATEMENT AND REPORT**

The Mayor referred to Government proposals on devolution that had the potential to be the biggest change in governance for a century. The Mayor stated that devolution would be a challenge to the Government to devolve power and money, to the Tees Valley Authorities to work together, for Middlesbrough Council and individuals. Further updates would be made to Council as more information became available.

Middlesbrough Council, alongside other Tees Valley Authorities, Tees Valley Unlimited, Arts Council England and others, announced the intention to launch a bid for UK City of Culture in 2025. The bid would need to be submitted by 2020 and would support developing tourism, social inclusion and economic and business growth. The Mayor stated that the centre of Middlesbrough was the obvious choice for a Cultural Enterprise Zone. The Mayor added that he had recently attended the third Middlesbrough Film Festival in Mink Bar and that many events were taking place that needed to be promoted more widely.

The Mayor had today attended the first birthday party for Dementia Awareness Cafes. Over 40 people had attended the event which was run by volunteers, Cafes had been established in North Ormesby and Acklam libraries and other venues throughout Middlesbrough. The Mayor commended the volunteers and Middlesbrough's library staff for the support the Dementia Awareness Cafes provided. The Mayor also referred to a dementia awareness training course that he had attended developed by Barclays Bank for training their staff to help

customers. The Mayor suggested that an opportunity could be provided for Councillors to attend similar training to help everyone move towards a town that was more caring.

Members commented on devolution, dementia awareness and ways of prevention and the Mayor responded accordingly.

NOTED

15/25

DEPUTY MAYOR AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORTS

(a) Planning and Development

A Member referred to the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Regeneration's report on recent significant planning applications and key developments throughout the town. It was highlighted that throughout the recession and austerity measures, Middlesbrough continued to secure development. The Executive Member agreed with the positive comments made and highlighted that the Council was keen to progress investment in businesses such as the newly opened Holiday Inn Express for the good of the town and country.

(b) TAMP Project Update

A Member sought assurance that the OWVC construction project would be completed on time and without further cost to the Council. The Executive Member confirmed that an additional contribution of £341,200 had been committed to accelerate the Project, and staff were working hard to ensure a timely completion. It was also highlighted that the Project had been altered and enlarged part way through.

(c) Housing Delivery Vehicle (HDV)

A Member asked why the joint venture with Erimus established in 2011 to kick start the regeneration of Grove Hill had taken four years to come to fruition. The Executive Member explained that the HDV was in fact an extension of the original joint venture and was a town wide initiative rather than being concentrated on one area.

(d) Response to Government Consultation on changes to Trade Union Legislation

A Member commented on the proposed Trade Union Bill and consultations. The Member highlighted that Councillors and Trade Unions worked together to ensure good industrial relations, support the workforce, provide for pensions, health and safety and better working conditions. The Member stated that the proposed legislation could drive a wedge between management and Trade Unions. The Executive Member for Finance and Governance agreed with the Member's comments and added that the proposals were unnecessary and counter-productive.

(e) Holiday Inn Express Hotel

A Member asked for a breakdown of the repayments for the loan the Council provided for the Project. The Executive Member for Finance and Governance agreed to provide the information requested.

(f) Middlesbrough Sports Village

Referring to the Middlesbrough Sports Village, a Member asked when the Velodrome would be opening. The Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport stated that during the three months since it had opened there had been 34,000 visitors. The Northern Athletics U15 and U17 Championships had taken place in August and excellent feedback had been received from all involved. The Velodrome would be launched on Friday 18 September 2015 and would be a specialist facility available to those accessing coaching programmes supported by qualified British Cycling coaches. Coaching sessions would be provided three days per week.

The Executive Member urged all present to visit the Sports Village.

(g) Wi-Fi in Middlesbrough Libraries

Members welcomed the installation of Wi-Fi in Middlesbrough libraries and asked for an update on the implementation of free Wi-Fi in the town. The Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport explained that this issue cut across both his portfolio and the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Regeneration's portfolio. In relation to free town-wide Wi-Fi it was hoped to roll that out next year and the Council was currently looking for partners to work with.

(h) Changes in Housing Law

A Member welcomed the introduction of changes to housing law to tackle some of the abuses carried out by landlords and hoped that they would be enforced throughout the town. The Executive Member for Adult Health and Social Care agreed with the comments made and stated that recently the Council had successfully closed down two houses of multi-occupation. The Executive Member also highlighted that unfortunately reduced resources would impact on how effective the Council could be in enforcing Housing Law.

(i) Parks

Reference was made to the Executive Member of Environment's report in relation to trees at Stewart Park that had been identified as dead or dying. Assurance was sought that the trees would be replaced. The Executive Member confirmed that there were plans to replace the trees.

(j) Executive Member for Communities and Public Health

Since the Executive Member was not present at the meeting, the Chair suggested that Members should submit written questions to him or ask them at the next meeting.

15/26 **REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

Council received and considered a report presented by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board outlining the work of the Board and Scrutiny Panels.

NOTED

15/27 **MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions for this meeting.

NOTED

15/28 **MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE 2015/16**

A report of the Executive Director for Commercial and Corporate Services was presented to set the Local Average Interest Rate for the six months commencing 1 October 2015.

Moved, seconded and **ORDERED** as follows:

1. That the Local Average Interest Rate for the period 1 October 2015 to 31 March 2016 be set at 5.155%
2. This rate be used for all Housing Mortgages for this period.

15/29 **APPROVAL OF TAXI FEE STRUCTURE AND ASSOCIATED PROCESSES**

A report of the Executive Director, Economic Development and Communities was presented to seek the Council's endorsement of the new proposed taxi licensing fee structure, prior to consultation.

Moved, seconded and **ORDERED** as follows:

1. Council approved the proposed taxi licensing fee structure, subject to the consideration of any objections raised during the up-coming consultation period.
2. Council would retain £48K of the £185K taxi licensing surplus within the 2014/2015 taxi licensing budget; this sum being equivalent to 10% of the budget. The remaining £137K surplus would be used to reduce the newly calculated vehicle licence fees by £50 per application/renewal until such time as the surplus was depleted.
3. The proposal to have an extended initial consultation period double from the legal minimum of 28 days to 56 days was approved.
4. The proposal to review the fees calculation process on a three yearly basis, in accordance with the delegation set out in the Constitution, unless particular circumstances demanded that it should be carried out earlier was approved.

15/30

UPDATE ON URGENT DECISIONS - AUGUST 2015-SEPTEMBER 2015

A report of the Chief Executive was provided to update Council with an update on special urgent and urgent decisions for the period August 2015 to September 2015.

The following special urgent decisions were taken, with the agreement of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board:

1. Teesside Advanced Manufacturing Park - TWI Building - Acceleration of Build.
2. Kerbside Recycling Service - Future Options.

NOTED