

MEETING OF MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

At the Meeting of Middlesbrough Council, lawfully convened, and held in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough on 11 January 2017.

PRESENT: Councillors S E Bloundele (Chair), R Brady (Vice-Chair), R Arundale, S Biswas, J Blyth, D J Branson, J Brunton, Mr D Budd, M Carr, J G Cole, D P Coupe, T Harvey, A Hellaoui, C Hobson, J Hobson, N Hussain, L Lewis, T Mawston, J McGee, L McGloin, G Purvis, J Rathmell, C M Rooney, D Rooney, J Rostron, J Sharrocks, M Storey, B E Taylor, M Thompson, Z Uddin, J A Walker, N J Walker, M Walters and L Young

OFFICERS: M Allinson, J Bromiley, B Carr, G Field, L Henman, A Hoy, E Ioannides, J Lewis, T Parkinson and B Roberts.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors Councillor P Cox, Councillor D Davison, Councillor S Dean, Councillor E Dryden, Councillor J Goodchild, Councillor T Higgins, Councillor B A Hubbard, Councillor T Lawton, Councillor D McCabe, Councillor F McIntyre, Councillor J McTigue, Councillor P Purvis, Councillor M Saunders.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None Declared.

16/66 MINUTES - COUNCIL - 30 NOVEMBER 2016

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 30 November 2016 were submitted and approved as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Amendment to Page 3 - 6a) Grammar Schools - Paragraph 2 - second line - change the words secondary modern schools to grammar schools.

16/67 ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

There were no Announcements or Communications for this meeting.

NOTED**16/68 MAYOR'S STATEMENT AND REPORT**

The Mayor advised that he wished to speak about three things at the meeting: (i) an update in respect of the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA); (ii) things in Middlesbrough and (iii) the Council meeting tonight.

The Mayor advised that all five authorities had consented to establishing a TVCA. The final process in respect of establishing the authority was still going through Parliament but it was anticipated that the combined authority would confirm the establishment of the TVCA from a combined authority point of view at their meeting scheduled for Friday. This would enable arrangements for the election in May 2017 of the Tees Valley Mayor to be made.

The TVCA had not yet received a confirmed figure for the Local Growth Fund which was funding used to invest in business and industry. Indications had been received that the figure would be substantially smaller than the authority had hoped for, but the Local Growth Fund was only one strand of funding that the TVCA could rely on.

Borrowing powers for the combined authority were to be created which would enable combined authorities to fund in advance of the £15m a year it was due to receive from Government for investment. This would provide the combined authority with more flexibility in respect of up-front funding.

Discussions were on-going with Government regarding housing and the possibility of creating a Tees Valley wide Investment Partnership which would give longer term funding for housing plans. The authority had also received business development funding to look at developing a business case to establish a Tees Valley Crossing and improvements to the East/West links between Tees Port and the A1M.

There was also a reasonable possibility that the combined authority would receive up to £3m funding for a Sustainable Transport Programme which included bike lanes and improvement to bus services etc.

The combined authority had also held a number of discussions with various departments of the Government in respect of its Industrial Strategy. The authority was pushing for funding for Carbon Capture Storage, a district heating system and a usable system for the high level of hydrogen produced in the area. Leeds city region had an ambition to become the first hydrogen city in the country and Middlesbrough had the hydrogen so opportunities could be available in terms of being part of this strategy. The South Tees Development Corporation was also being developed.

In terms of development in Middlesbrough, the ex BHS store and Walkabout were being developed with a view to open later in the year, a number of premises on Linthorpe Road were currently being refurbished/renewed and opened up again. Network Rail had announced a contract to improve the Middlesbrough Railway station.

The Investment Prospectus which was about development jobs and regeneration, would have an official launch later. There was a need to do something about social regeneration and link the two together. The Mayor stated that this year, there was some certainty about funding and a good financial base, the authority had lots of ambitions and plans and a very talented workplace and he expected 2017 to show real growth in Middlesbrough.

Finally, the Mayor made reference to the Councillors who had boycotted the Council meeting and the attendance at the two Members briefings in respect of Corporate Parenting and the refurbishment of the Town Hall.

A member queried with regard to where the funding would come from in respect of the remuneration for the Tees Valley Mayor and whether members of the Board would receive remuneration, The Mayor advised that the remuneration of the Tees Valley Mayor would be determined by an Independent Remuneration Panel. Funding of £15m was received from the Government for the TVCA. At the present time Middlesbrough was required to contribute £400k towards Tees Valley Unlimited and this figure would be substantially reduced so overall Council's would have to contribute less.

A number of members commented on the Mayor's report and the Mayor responded as appropriate.

16/69

DEPUTY MAYOR AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORTS

The Chair invited Members to raise items for general discussion arising from the Information Booklet of Executive Member reports which detailed activities carried out within the respective Executive Member portfolios (Section 1), Executive decisions taken (Section 2) or to be taken where known, prior to and following the meeting (Sections 3 and 4).

Members commented and posed questions in relation to the following matters and Executive Members responded where appropriate:-

a) Economic Snapshot News

A member referred to Point 9 of the report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Regeneration and he commented that it was pleasing to see the number of high end new businesses that had opened in Middlesbrough, in particular Great, Mac, Smiggle and La Patisserie Valerie.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Regeneration advised that the Centre for Cities recognised Middlesbrough as the centre for the wider area and he acknowledged the work carried out by officers and politicians in bringing the new business to town.

b) Breast Feeding Welcome Scheme

A member commented on the Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme which was launched on 21 November 2016. The Health Scrutiny Panel had looked at the low take up of the Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme in Middlesbrough and it had recommended that the scheme be strengthened and rolled out across more businesses. The scheme was a good opportunity for women in Middlesbrough to give children a good start in life. The member indicated that she was very supportive of the scheme and congratulated the staff involved in setting up the project.

The Executive Member for Communities and Public Health advised that he was very grateful to the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Dryden, and the members of the Health Scrutiny Panel who had driven the project forward. He stated that he had attended the launch, alongside public health professionals and had met with some of the mothers at the Muffin Break cafe, one of the premises that had signed up to the scheme, to find out about the scheme.

c) Lighting up Bottle of Notes for World Aids Day

A member indicated that she had attended the Lighting Up the Bottle of Notes for World Aids Day which was an opportunity for those who had lost friends and family to AIDS to remember them. The member commented that it was a very positive occasion for the town.

The Executive Member advised that he had attended the Lighting Up the Bottle of Notes for World Aids Day to speak on behalf of the Council. He advised that the occasion was a clear demonstration of the Council's philosophy and politics.

d) Stronger Families

A member referred to Page 2 of the Executive Member for Communities and Public Health in relation to The Junction - Making a Difference to the Lives of Young Carers and their families. The member indicated that she would like to have it noted that the Council were very grateful to the young carers for looking after family members suffering from a wide range of ailments. The Junction local charity was established in April 2016 supported carers from Middlesbrough from the age of 15-18 years. The charity was currently working with 109 carers, of which four were only six years old.

The young carers had been invited on a residential trip to the Isle of Tiree, in the Inner Hebrides, supported by the Hebridean Development Trust. The trip had developed co-operation and team building for the carers. The residential trips had been running for a period of four years.

The Executive Member advised that he did not want to miss the opportunity of paying tribute to the young carers in the town. They carried out fantastic work and the Council was doing all it could to support them. He acknowledged the excellent work carried out by The Junction, who provided a wide range of services and was pleased that the Council was working in partnership with the group.

e) Neighbourhood Safety Staff Member Award

A member stated that he wished to congratulate Julie Pearce on winning an award at the Annual Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Safety Awards ceremony for her work in tackling anti-social behaviour and he also wished to thank the Council and the team.

He also commented on the expansion of the Safe Places scheme throughout Middlesbrough and congratulated the Council on the expansion.

f) Captain Cook Birthplace Museum

A member queried whether the contract in respect of the building work on Captain Cook Museum had been awarded and whether work had commenced.

The member also congratulated Chris Hudson from the Environment Department on his presentation to the Stainton and Thornton Community Council with regard to the work of Middlesbrough Environmental Services which was received positively by members of the Community Council.

The Executive Member advised that work had commenced and was due to be completed by February 2017. The teams were also working on engagement and exhibitions. Members of the Council would be invited to a tour of the museum once the work was completed.

A member advised that he welcomed the refurbishment of the museum. The member advised that he had been contacted by one of the park runners who had raised £1600 within four weeks towards a defibrillator for Stewart Park which would be attached to a wall on the museum. The park runner had also organised for the ambulance service to provide training on the use of the defibrillator for free and the member congratulated the park runner on her efforts. Members were advised that on 30 January 2017, it was the tenth anniversary of Friends of Stewart Park and to mark the occasion, the group intended to purchase another defibrillator for the park.

g) Outwood Acklam - National Support School

A member commented on the fact that the Outwood Academy had been designated a National Supported School for Teaching and Leadership. He advised that he had visited the school a number of times and had been very impressed with the staff and pupils and the ethos in which the school operated especially in relation to respect.

The Executive Member advised that all the schools in Middlesbrough should be congratulated as they all operated around the ethos of respect.

h) Reading Town

A member referred to the Northern Children's Book Festival Gala Day held on 19 November 2016 at Central Library and mima. The member commented that reading with children from infancy was critical but it was also a source of pleasure. For Middlesbrough to have an identity as a Reading Town was good for children and their parents and she urged everyone to support the scheme.

The Executive Member advised that she concurred with the member's comments. Members were advised that it was a wonderful event and the Executive Member thanked those Councillors that turned up to the event with their favourite book.

i) Abingdon Road

A member thanked the Executive Member for the comprehensive report. He commented that Abingdon School was the first of the schools in the Tees Valley to be recognised as a School of Sanctuary. He advised that as a proud member of the Governing Body, he was pleased with the achievement and he congratulated the staff, children, Governing Body and the parents on achieving the award.

The Executive Member advised that schools in Middlesbrough worked hard to teach children and teach them respect and to do things in the community. Abingdon School was very welcoming particularly to children coming into the country as were other schools in Middlesbrough. The Executive Member advised that she was very proud and wished to thank all those involved in achieving the School of Sanctuary award and she advised that it was cascading to other schools in the town.

j) Safeguarding in Schools

The member requested that this question be deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

k) Programme Management Framework - Progress Reports

A member advised that he was pleased that the Programme Management Framework was being rolled out across the authority to ensure consistency and governance was applied across the authority in the delivery of projects.

The member referred to the fact that the Executive Member received briefings and updates in respect of major projects. He requested that the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel receive details of the information received.

The Executive Member explained that her role was to challenge and the meetings usually involved verbal dialogue. The Executive Member advised that if the member wanted information in respect of a specific project then he could discuss with the Chair of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel which information was required and the officers concerned could be contacted to provide the information.

16/70 **REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

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

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board reminded members that Scrutiny Training had been organised for all members as follows:

Tuesday, 17 January 2017:

Seminar 1: 10am - 12 noon 'Best Practice in Scrutiny'
Seminar 2: 1 - 3pm 'Effective Committee Meeting Skills in Scrutiny'

Thursday 19th January 2017:

Seminar 1: 10 - 12 noon 'Chairing Skills'

NOTED

16/71 **CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE 2017/2018**

The Strategic Director of Finance, Governance and Support submitted a report, the purpose of which was to set the council tax base for the financial year 2017/18.

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance presented the report. The Council had a 825 (2.0%) property increase in the council tax base. This was a result of the net new house building over the period. The tax base was a net increase of 755 (2.3%) band D equivalent properties and allowed for projected increases in housing stock. This was estimated to have reduced the need for budget reductions by approximately £1.084 million in 2017/2018 and an estimated £4m over a three year period. This was based upon the 2016-17 Basic Council Tax.

A member expressed concern regarding the Government's plans to allow Council's to provide additional funding for social care by allowing flexibility over the social care precept, so Councils could choose to raise council tax by 3%, rather than the 2% originally planned.

The Executive Member advised that any money raised through the social care levy, must be spent on social care and the Council would have to provide evidence of this fact. Members were advised that the Government planned to phase out the Revenue Support Grant. The grant would be reduced from £21m to £16.5m in 2019 and Council's would be expected to raise the difference in council tax locally.

ORDERED as follows:-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the council tax base for 2017/2018 be agreed as 32,924.
3. That the figures of 2,045 and 698 be agreed as the council tax bases for the parishes of Nunthorpe and Stainton and Thornton respectively for 2017/2018.
4. That the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Cleveland Fire Authority and the Parish Councils be notified of the 2017/2018 council tax base.

16/72 **MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions for this meeting.

NOTED

16/73 **NOTICE OF URGENT MOTION**

There were no urgent motions for this meeting.

NOTED

16/74 **NATIONAL SCHEME FOR AUDITOR APPOINTMENTS**

The Strategic Director of Finance, Governance and Support submitted a report with regard to the National Scheme for Auditor Appointments which sought approval to opt into the national procurement scheme for external auditor appointments.

Members were advised that the rules and processes for the appointment of external auditors for local authorities was changing. Following the abolition of the audit commissioning in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the administration for the appointment of current external audit contracts had been carried out by a Government appointed organisation called Public Sector Audit Appointments. Current contracts would come to an end following the 2017/2018 audit of accounts and the new rules would apply from the 2018/2019 financial year.

On 8 December 2016, the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee considered and supported the recommendation for the Council to agree the option to join the national procurement scheme for the appointment of external auditors.

The Council like all local authorities would have 2 choices or options.

(i) Firstly go through its own onerous and expensive procurement process and fulfil itself the significant conditions placed on it to establish a new audit panel and manage the audit quality requirements.

(ii) Alternatively the Council could join a national procurement process with the majority of Councils across the country and the Tees Valley and allow that process to be handled by public sector appointments who would absolve the requirement for the Council to carry out the procurement process, vet auditors, set up new panels but also achieve economies of scale that it could never hope to achieve alone.

It was therefore recommended that Council support option 2 to join the national procurement process.

ORDERED that the Council opt in to the national procurement scheme for appointment of external auditors led by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA).

16/75 **APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES, JOINT COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES 2016/2017**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report, the purpose of which was to seek Members approval to nominations for appointment arising from vacancies on Committees and to note resignations and appointments approved by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with his delegated authority.

Members were asked to consider nominations for appointment arising from the above.

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

1. That the following appointments for the 2016-2017 Municipal Year, nominated at the meeting, be approved and noted, until amended by Council/Executive (whichever was the latter).

Schedule B Appointments:

Corporate Health and Safety Committee - Councillor L Lewis

Schedule C Appointments:

Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel - Councillors Mawston, McGloin, D Rooney and Taylor

2. That the following Schedule C appointments, approved by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with his delegated authority be noted:

Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel - Councillor Storey

Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee - Councillor Storey

Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel - Councillor Storey