

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL Wednesday 15th February 2017

1. Planning and Development

Major applications being processed and awaiting decision are:

A detailed planning application for the erection of 50 dwellings east of Trimdon Avenue (behind Trimdon Avenue shops) was received before Christmas. The site is allocated for housing in the Middlesbrough Local Plan. Currently in the consultation phase, it has generated much local interest. It is expected that the application will be heard at Planning Committee in March. Officers will be seeking some positive changes to be made to the site layout.

Outline application for proposed Snow Centre development at land to the south of Scotts Road. It is anticipated that the application will be heard at the Planning Committee in March.

Outline application for residential development comprising 97 houses and 40 apartments at the Acklam Iron and Steel Works Club, Park Road South. Officers are working through the details of the scheme which is likely to include a partial review of the impacts of the loss of the playing fields.

Outline application for assisted living accommodation at land at Strait Lane, Stainton. The application has generated a great amount of local interest. Officers have met with the applicant to consider changes to the scheme which would potentially result in further local consultation and the application not moving to planning committee prior to March 2017.

Ladgate Lane (approved housing site). The applicant has submitted an application to vary 111 of the plots within the site, essentially moving house types around within it.

2. Stainton & Thornton Neighbourhood Area Designation

Stainton & Thornton Parish Council has applied to the Council to have the area of Stainton & Thornton Parish designated as a Neighbourhood Area in order that a Neighbourhood Plan can be drawn up.

The first stage of the Neighbourhood Planning process requires the Council to hold a four week public consultation event within the proposed Neighbourhood Area, and seek views in respect of the application from local residents and businesses. This consultation period will be from 20th January until the 20th February 2017. Following an assessment of the comments made the Council can approve or decline the application. If the Council approves the Neighbourhood Area designation, it can apply to the DCLG for series of grants (up-to £30k) to support the Parish Council progress its Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Middlesbrough Means Business

The breakfast exchange returns on 2 February at the STEM building Middlesbrough College. An opportunity for the business community to hear from Rob Earnshaw the new Director of Digital City. In addition David Shields from Welcome to Yorkshire will provide an update on the legacy bike library, the Tour de Yorkshire impact on the local economy and potential for involvement in future.

Other business workshops that are planned in Middlesbrough over the next few months to support the business community include an innovate Tees Valley workshop in partnership with Teesside University. Plus a 'Diversification into the Renewable Sector in partnership with TWI and NOF Energy. And a 'Doing business with the Public Sector' seminar at the Teesside Business Show (held at the Riverside) in partnership with FSB and NEPO.

4. Economic Snapshot News

Refurbishment of the former BHS is underway to accommodate new designer store Flannels along with a Sports Direct on the first floor.

The conversion of the long-term empty office, Permanent House to a Holiday Inn Express expansion is now complete.

There are currently three offers on the table for the upper floors of Centre North East. A bowling alley is confirmed for the first floor, a Chinese buffet restaurant are looking to take the basement space, a bar/coffee shop is looking to go on the ground floor and Turtle Bay is scheduled to open in the old Walkabout unit in March.

5. Unemployment Rates

Middlesbrough

16-64 years

The number of people unemployed in Tees Valley has increased slightly by 115 claimants from 16,170 in November 2016 to 16,285 in December 2016 with the rate remaining the same at 3.9%.

Dec 15	4.6%
Nov 16	4.7%
Dec 16	4.8%

18-24 years

The number of people aged 18-24 unemployed in Tees Valley has fallen by 50 claimants from 3,935 in November 2016 to 3,885 in December 2016 with the rate remaining the same at 6.5%.

Dec 15	5.6%
Nov 16	6.3%
Oct 16	6.1%

6. Borough Road Highway Improvement Scheme

Works to implement the Borough Road Highway Improvement Scheme commenced on site on Monday 6th February 2017. Developed in partnership with and part funded by

Teesside University, this scheme covers the section of Borough Road from its junction with Albert Road to its junction with Jedburgh Street, and has been designed to improve connectivity between the town centre and the university campus as well as reducing the potential for vehicle/pedestrian collisions to occur.

The scheme comprises a reduction in the width of the carriageway in the vicinity of the Central Halls (Teesside University's student accommodation block) from four lanes to two, relocation of the existing puffin crossing adjacent to the Gazette Buildings to a point directly outside the Central Halls and the introduction of a dedicated lane for right turning traffic at the junction of Borough Road and Woodlands Road. Teesside University will be reopening the pedestrian entrance at the northern end of the Stephenson Building to coincide with the relocation of the puffin crossing, thereby providing a direct route for students walking between the Central Halls and the university campus.

The new road layout will deliver a number of benefits compared to the existing arrangement. These include the creation of a more 'pedestrian friendly' environment, the introduction of a dedicated lane for vehicles turning right into Woodlands Road, thereby easing the movement of eastbound traffic on Borough Road and, subject to the outcome of an ongoing consultation exercise, the creation of a new on-street parking bay serving a number of properties on the north side of Borough Road. There is also potential to extend the scheme eastwards in future years to address the poor pedestrian safety record on this section of Borough Road.

The scheme is programmed for completion by the end of March 2017.

7. Tees Valley Access Fund

More than £3million has been secured by Tees Valley Combined Authority to encourage more people to cycle, walk and use public transport. The £3.23million Sustainable Travel Access Fund allocation for the Tees Valley is one of the largest amounts secured in the county reflecting the ambitious proposals submitted to the Department for Transport towards the end of 2016.

The fund will be used for targeted marketing to raise awareness and provide encouragement for the use of alternative modes of transport to the car. Information, training, support and, in some cases, equipment will be made available to help people travel to employment, training, education, health, retail and leisure facilities by foot, bicycle, bus and train. This is in addition to more than £8million of investment from the Tees Valley Combined Authority to support physical enhancements to walking and cycling networks, and access to the bus and rail networks.

In Middlesbrough, this will mean the continuation of previously successful projects such as the Town Rider Bus Service (in partnership with Middlesbrough College), The Bike Academy (with Middlesbrough Environment City), Independent Travel Training, a Tees Valley wide Personalised Travel Planning Programme and a Connect Schools project. The projects will receive 3 years funding and during this time create long term sustainability plans to ensure they are able to be self-sustaining at the end of the 3 year period.