

**MEETING OF MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL**

At the Meeting of Middlesbrough Council, lawfully convened, and held in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough on 6 September 2017.

**PRESENT:** Councillors S E Bloundele (Chair), R Brady (Vice-Chair), R Arundale, J Blyth, D J Branson, J Brunton, Mr D Budd, M Carr, D P Coupe, D Davison, S Dean, J Goodchild, T Harvey, A Hellaoui, T Higgins, C Hobson, J Hobson, B A Hubbard, N Hussain, T Lawton, L Lewis, T Mawston, D McCabe, J McGee, L McGloin, J McTigue, G Purvis, P Purvis, C M Rooney, D Rooney, J Rostron, M Saunders, J Sharrocks, M Storey, M Thompson, Z Uddin, J A Walker, N J Walker, V Walkington, M Walters, J Young and L Young

**OFFICERS:** M Allinson, J Bromiley, B Carr, P Clarke, L Henman, A Hoy, D Johnson, E Kunonga, J McCulloch, A Pain, S Reynolds, B Roberts and H Watson

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were submitted on behalf of Councillors Councillor S Biswas, Councillor E Dryden, Councillor F McIntyre, Councillor J Mohan, Councillor J Rathmell.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None declared

**1 MINUTES - COUNCIL - 26 JULY 2017 AND EXTRAORDINARY MEETING - 26 JULY 2017**

The minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting and the Extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 26 July 2017 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

**2 ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no Announcements or Communications for this meeting.

**3 MAYOR'S STATEMENT AND REPORT**

The Mayor referred to a report regarding Social Regeneration that had been submitted to the Executive on 5 September 2017.

The report set out the Council's ambitions in respect of social regeneration, and the approach that it proposed to take forward. The Mayor advised that when the Investment Prospectus had been launched it was highlighted at the time, that whilst the prospectus was about physical regeneration, social regeneration would also be addressed in the following few months.

Since the Investment Prospectus had been launched, a number of development projects and housing schemes had either commenced, had been completed, or had been secured including the following:-

- New Middlehaven relief road/bridge;
- Premier Inn, Wilson Street;
- Holiday Inn extension/Turtle Bay/Le Bistrot Pierre;
- Hemlington Grange housing development;
- Cleveland Police Community Safety Hub (Hemlington Grange);
- Boho 5, Digital business centre;
- The Curve, Teesside University;
- TWI, Research and Training Centre (TAMP);
- Urban Pioneers, Middlehaven; and
- Middlesbrough Railway Station enhancements.

The physical strategy was launched on the back of success and it had led to many developments including some funded by big and small private investors. The Police were currently developing in Hemlington and the University continued to develop and it was due to announce a 10 year programme later in the month.

The Mayor advised that the brief paper set out, in general terms, what the Council and its partners were trying to do. He stated that it was about empowering all people to play their part in the future of Middlesbrough. It concerned the economy, employment levels, educational attainment, improving health and wellbeing, physical environment and community life. The Council and its partners were launching the idea of going out into the community and asking people what they were going to do to help improve the future of Middlesbrough.

The Mayor advised that the Council's role was to regenerate the community, the people and the whole town. The Mayor advised that the Council had great ambitions, some were long term but already the Council had seen many physical improvements to the town. He advised that he would report back to Council in the future regarding progress made with the Council's plans for social and physical regeneration.

The Mayor stated that the recent Executive meeting had been attended by representatives from MVDA, Teesside University, Middlesbrough College, the Health Service, the Police and Fire Authority. The Mayor urged members to read the report regarding Social Regeneration, which had also been discussed at the Health and Wellbeing Board.

A member stated that she had been in attendance at the Executive meeting where the report had been discussed and she had been impressed by the understanding and the willingness of the different partners to work in partnership with each other. She stated that the paper would bring the residents of Middlesbrough with the Council in celebrating how the town moved forward.

A member stated that he worked with the Friends of Blue Bell Beck to help improve the green area of Acklam for the people of Acklam. He stated that it made a big difference to people's physical wellbeing and mental health and it was his contribution to improving the town. He stated that it was the sort of thing that didn't take a great deal of effort but it did make a big difference to people's lives.

The Mayor thanked the member and stated that these were the sorts of things that he had been referring to. He said it was a huge challenge to Ward Councillors to get out into the community and make things work.

#### 4 **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) Middlesbrough Railway Station

A member referred to page 1, paragraph 1 of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy report and requested that members be kept up to date with any developments in respect of Middlesbrough Railway Station.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy advised that meetings had taken place with all of the different agencies/franchises involved. The Council had secured funding for the Masterplan and was aiming to make improvements to the platforms so that trains could get in and out the station more easily. He stated that this was particularly important in respect of the 2020 launch of the service to London and the improvements to the Saltburn line and Newcastle route. The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy stated that he hoped that the government's decision not to electrify parts of the rail would not have a negative impact on the improvements.

##### b) Jobs and the redevelopment of the town centre

A member referred to page 2, paragraph 5 of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy report and stated that following on from the good news on social regeneration she queried whether the efforts in respect of the physical regeneration of the town centre had impacted positively on social regeneration.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy stated that there was lots of good news in his report. The Council had the Investment Prospectus which was aimed at creating jobs and opportunities. The population decrease had halted and had started to increase. It was important to push the positive agenda for the town.

The Executive Member advised that in a recent article that the press were working on in relation to Tees Business there were too many positive things going on in the town to fit into a small article. There were lots of positive things happening in the town to interest businesses:

- Advanced Manufacturing Park (working with the University to create high value jobs);
- BOHO digital city - created 1000 jobs - 2 businesses in BOHO had won awards and the digital business was spreading to Durham;
- Middlehaven - Latest programme - £10m
- Urban Park/Transporter - investment to bring tourism and wealth into the town;
- Acklam Hall and new Medical Facility; and
- Town centre - Centre Square East.

The Council was aiming to redress the balance between retail and business and was spending money on the public realm to attract businesses to the town. Over 250 new jobs had been created in the town centre. It was anticipated that 1500 jobs would be created as a result of the work in Centre Square. The Holiday Inn extension had created more jobs. The town had lost BHS but had gained Flannels, USC, Patisserie Valerie and the MAC store. A new Premier Inn was being built in Wilson Street. Over £7m had been invested in the town centre alone.

In terms of housing, Gleasons at Cargo Fleet were selling affordable houses before they were built. There had been developments in Grey Towers, Stainsy Hill and Stainton.

The Cultural Map of Middlesbrough showed that most jobs in the town centre were within either two minutes, five minutes or ten minutes walk from the town centre.

#### c) Benefits Take up Campaign

A member referred to page 3, paragraph 18 of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health report and noted the incredible success of the campaign and the multi-agency approach in helping people to access the various benefits over the previous two years. The member queried whether the Executive Member had information on the total amount of money claimed.

The Executive Member advised that the total amount claimed since the campaign started, up until the end of July 2017 was £6.3m. This figure showed how difficult it was for people to navigate round the benefits system. With the help of the Benefits Take Up Campaign, people were now accessing benefits that they were entitled to.

The Executive Member highlighted that, it was coming to the time of year when people were thinking about the winter time and heating and unfortunately there was a lot of fuel poverty in Middlesbrough. Since the gas and electricity industry had been deregulated the cost of fuel and energy had increased year on year. Energy prices had increased above the level of inflation but wages and benefits had not. The work carried out by those involved in the benefit campaign had assisted in alleviating some of the pressures.

The Executive Member also highlighted the Affordable Warmth Campaign which helped people to use their energy more efficiently and assisted in helping them to acquire cheaper energy.

The Executive Member stated that she would like to thank all of the volunteers, the voluntary agencies and the Council staff for all their hard work in making the Benefits Take-up Campaign a success.

d) The Live Well Centre

A member referred to page 3, paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health report and commented that the Live Well Centre was a fantastic development. The centre had also been visited by one of the Council's scrutiny panels.

The member referred to the BAME New Life New You diabetes prevention programme in partnership with Middlesbrough Environment City (MEC) and noted that 60 people had signed up for the programme and he queried with regard to the make-up of the 60 people in terms of gender/age/ethnicity.

The Executive Member advised that the Live Well Centre had been an enormous success and it was the first of its kind in this country. The age range of the 60 people that had signed up to the programme ranged from 25 - 72; 60% of the people were South Asian; 40% were of African origin and the attendees were mainly men.

MEC had, however set up a project for BME women on the same basis. The Executive Member advised that Type 2 diabetes was more prevalent in some communities. A number of other physical activity projects existed such as the Healthy Heart Project which was aimed at tackling issues associated with diabetes, blood pressure and obesity.

e) Nitrogen Oxide

A member referred to page 4, paragraphs 26 and 27 of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health report and commented regarding the two short stretches of road within Middlesbrough that had been identified by the DEFRA modelling exercise, that had been calculated to be in breach of the annual limit of 40 micrograms per cubic metre. Local measurements using diffusion tubes had indicated that the levels were compliant with the limits. The member commented that as the risks associated with exposure to Nitrogen Oxide were becoming known, he queried what steps the Council were taking in the short term and the long term to alleviate the risks.

The Executive Member highlighted that this issue was not just specific to Middlesbrough. Apart from the two small areas identified in the exercise, the rest of Middlesbrough had good, clean air. Five other cities were looking at this issue with DEFRA, with Leeds being the closest to Middlesbrough.

DEFRA were releasing funding (£100k) to conduct further investigations into the air quality, and a Feasibility Plan needed to be put together by November 2017. The Executive Member advised that she would report back to Council with any progress with regard to this issue.

f) Summer Holiday lunches for children

A member referred to page 4, paragraphs 20 and 21, of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health report and commented regarding the holiday activities and healthy lunches that were being offered to families in need across 14 settings, in the most deprived Wards across Middlesbrough.

The member congratulated the Council on providing the facility in terms of the premises, the staffing and the support and queried whether the Lunch Box project would continue at other times of the year, as it benefitted the most vulnerable in the society.

The Executive Member advised that the Council had submitted a bid for funding from the Lottery Fund and been awarded £10,000 to fund the project. Members were advised that the project was into its second year and it involved physical exercise, learning, reading, writing, cooking and trips out. The intention was for the project to continue through the October half-

term and Christmas. The Executive Member highlighted that the project was facilitated through the hard work of volunteers, teachers, nursery nurses and parents.

g) Performance Information

A member referred to page 4, paragraph 7 of the Executive Member for Children's Social Care report in respect of the statistics for Children Looked After (LAC), 467, Child Protection (CP), 263 and Children in Need (CIN), 1246 and he queried how Children in Need were assessed and what it meant to the town.

The Executive Member advised that Children in Need were children that were known to the Social Services Department and who may have referred by a school or other agency. It was where the Social Workers provided support to the child and its family and where some element of supervision was required.

The figures had reduced from the numbers from two years ago when the figure was in the region of 2000. The aim of the department was to reduce the figures further, and the department were currently working towards achieving this aim.

h) Adoption

A member referred to page 2, paragraph 3 of the Executive Member for Children's Social Care report in respect of Adoption and the Regional Adoption Agency and in particular, the figures for adoption recruitment in Middlesbrough, which had slowed down in recent months and she commented that this was a cause for concern.

The Executive Member advised that the Adoption Service in Middlesbrough was replicated in all of the other Tees Valley areas and across the country. Adoption Services were now banding together to achieve economies of scale and widening the base of potential adopters so that children had a better chance of finding families.

The position at the current time was that the five Tees Valley authorities had been working together for some considerable time and had looked at a number of different models with a view to setting up an agency on a sub regional basis. There was consideration of setting up a stand-alone agency and effectively taking it out of the local authority remit all together. The group however were working with voluntary agencies with a view to setting up a local authority joint enterprise. The local authorities themselves would create a Regional Adoption Agency. The group would then look for someone to head up the agency and staff would be transferred by TUPE across to the new agency. The purpose of this was to widen the pool so that children would find it easier to find families.

The Executive Member stated that he had great admiration for people that adopted. Part of the Council's role and the new agency's role was to encourage adopters from a wide range of backgrounds. All potential adopters were subject to rigorous training and Middlesbrough had examples of innovative best practice, such as they held national days for adopters where potential adopters from across the whole country were invited to attend, and this had been commented on by Ofsted.

Middlesbrough Council had a process in place, designed to ensure that adoption matches were sustained and this was an effective way of ensuring that the final match was successful. Middlesbrough had a practice where the child and the potential adopters met up prior to any matches been agreed, and this process had been commented on by Ofsted and was held as an example of national best practice. One of the aims of the Regional Adoption Agency was to build on the processes already in place and to share best practice.

i) Middlesbrough Mela

A member referred to page 1, paragraph 2 of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities report in relation to the Middlesbrough Mela and commented on the fact that the Mela, (which had been running for twenty seven years), had returned to Centre Square and had attracted over forty five thousand visitors over the two days that it was held.

The Police and Crime Commissioner had stated that the line up was phenomenal. The Mela again proved to be a fantastic way for diverse cultures to be recognised and celebrated. The event brought people together from all backgrounds and they all celebrated the MELA together.

The member stated that on behalf of the Muslim community he wished to thank Middlesbrough Council Events Team for helping to put on the event and he hoped that it would be supported the following year.

(j) Cleveland Show

A member referred to page 2, paragraph 3 of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities report and stated that as the Vice Chair of the Management Committee of the Cleveland Show he queried whether it was possible for the Middlesbrough Council marquee to be reinstated at the show, as it was an excellent opportunity to showcase Middlesbrough Council services.

The Executive Member stated that he recalled the Middlesbrough marquee as it was one of the highlights of the show along with the horticultural part of the show. He recalled that the appearance of the marquee had ceased because of issues of cost but he would make enquiries with regard to the current situation.

k) Town Meal

A member referred to page 1, paragraph 1, of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities report and queried why the date of the Town Meal had changed to Saturday, 1 July when the produce from schools was usually used for the Town Meal in September, as that was when the crops were harvested. The member highlighted, that there was very little produce that was ready for use in July.

The Executive Member advised that he was not aware of why the date of the Town Meal had changed but he would make some enquires and report back to the member concerned.

l) Nagar Kirtan

A member referred to page 3, paragraph 4, of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities report and commented that people from all over the area/country attended the Sikh Festival in Centre Square and he encouraged all members to attend. He suggested that the Mayor/Deputy Mayor and Executive Member attend the festival to speak.

The Executive Member advised that he would take the comments on board.

l) Town Centre Team

A member referred to page 6, paragraph 9, of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities report with regard to the Town Centre Team and commented that she welcomed the scheme and looked forward to any future updates.

The Executive Member advised that the Town Centre Team had been put together and the Police and University had also provided resources. He stated that the issue of begging divided everyone but there was a need to provide support. He stated that the Town Centre Team would enhance the experience of shopping, whilst providing the support required.

m) Libraries and the work volunteers are doing to keep them open

A member referred to page 8, paragraph 15, of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities report and commented that due to budget cuts some of the town's libraries were nearly lost.

The volunteer teams at Marton, Hemlington and Thorntree Community hubs had received

Special Volunteering Awards. Hemlington Community Hub had established a bank of volunteers working alongside staff to provide a quality service to the local community.

The hub provided valuable resources for children including access to computers. It was encouraging to see that the volunteers had received a Special Volunteering Award. The member encouraged others to volunteer for a few hours per month.

The Executive Member stated that he did not want to miss the opportunity to thank the volunteers and he assured members that the volunteers would be provided with all the support they required. He stated that volunteers were an asset to the town. He urged members to read the report and look at what they might be able to contribute to improve the quality of life for all.

n) Transport

A member referred to page 2, paragraph 4 of the Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure report and in particular to the Acklam Road/Newport Road corridor improvements. He stated that the improvements to Marton Road, to some degree, had been a failure, and needed further work doing on them.

The newly elected Member of Parliament for Middlesbrough South, had advised that funding was available for road improvements and that Middlesbrough Council could make a bid for this money. The member stated that there were still problems on Marton Road/Stokesley Road/Dixons Bank. The last time that a survey had been carried out was three years ago and the volume of cars at that time had been 20,000 a day through Marton. Since that time, many more houses had been built and traffic levels were increasing. The member queried whether a bid for funding had been made for this area.

The Executive Member advised that there was an ongoing programme of schemes in respect of issues on Marton Road. Some would be announced in the next few weeks and residents and Ward Councillors would be consulted and kept informed. The Council would be taking advantage of the bidding process once the guidelines for bids were available and they would be consulting with other authorities.

p) Boho and the redevelopment of that area

The above question was withdrawn at the meeting

q) Peer Review

A member referred to page 1, paragraph 7, of the Executive Member for Finance and Governance report in respect of the results of the Peer Review and the critical friend visit in July. The report had praised the Council for its significant progress, in particular for its strong, capable and streamlined senior management team in place with respected political leadership. The member congratulated the LMT and Executive in taking the Council forward and commented that she looked forward to further results in respect of the Council's key messages and tasks ahead.

The Executive Member thanked the member and advised that the whole Council had been involved in the Peer Review. There was a succession of items in the Executive Member reports regarding the Peer Review/Auditors reports to show how the Council was improving in governance and in a variety of other ways.

Many of the improvements had included difficult decisions and some restructuring which had proved to be successful. Regarding the Council going forward, the discussions at Executive and the report of the Mayor regarding social regeneration, addressed those issues. The Peer Review had stated that the Council also needed to focus on the human/people element, both inside and outside of the Town Hall. Because of the progress made, the Council no longer had a separate Council Improvement Plan, the minor things that remained to be completed would be reported in the quarterly reports.

**5 MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE**

The Strategic Director of Finance, Governance and Support submitted a report, the purpose of which was to set the Local Average Mortgage Interest Rate for the six months commencing 1st October 2017.

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance presented the report to Council.

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

- a) That the Local Average Interest Rate for the period 1st October 2017 to 31st March 2018 be set at 4.674%.
- b) That this rate be used for all Housing Mortgages for this period.

Councillor Jacob Young indicated that he wished it to be recorded in the minutes that he had voted for the two recommendations.

**6 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME**

There were no Members questions for this meeting.

**7 NOTICE OF MOTION**

Consideration was given to Motion No. 124, moved by Councillor Arundale and seconded by Councillor C Hobson of which notice had been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rules No. 53-60 as follows:

Middlesbrough Bus Station

'Middlesbrough Council agree to undertake further public consultation concerning the relocation of the bus station so that the wider community can voice their opinion/concerns.'

Councillor Arundale stated that he was concerned about the proposal to relocate the bus station as he had not seen any plans or was not aware of the proposed new location of the bus station. He stated that it was hard to understand why the Council were planning to demolish the existing bus station.

Councillor Hobson reserved her right to speak later.

The Mayor advised that discussions had been held in February/March regarding the bus station. The Mayor reiterated that the Council did not have any plans at present, to demolish the bus station. Any future developments could mean that the bus station would need to be relocated but there would always be a bus station in the town.

An amendment to the Motion was moved by Councillor L Young and seconded by Councillor Rostron as follows:

'This council backs the Mayor's pledge that there will be a bus station in the centre of Middlesbrough. The council will undertake a public consultation concerning any relocation of the bus station and development of Teesside Media and Innovation Village, so that people in the wider community can express their opinions at an appropriate time'

Members voted on whether to accept the amended Motion. The amendment was declared **CARRIED**.

The above became the substantive motion and the motion was put to the vote.

On a vote being taken the substantive motion was declared unanimously **CARRIED**.

**8 NOTICE OF URGENT MOTION**



There were no urgent motions for this meeting.

9 **CHANGE OF DATE OF COUNCIL MEETING**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report, the purpose of which was to seek Council's agreement to reschedule the forthcoming Council meeting, from 18 October 2017 to 1 November 2017.

Moved, seconded and **ORDERED** that the forthcoming Council meeting scheduled for 18 October 2017 be rescheduled to 1 November 2017.

Councillor Jacob Young indicated that he wished it to be recorded in the minutes that he had voted for the recommendation to change the date of the forthcoming Council meeting.

10 **RESPONSE OF THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP WITH REGARD TO THE GRENFELL TOWER TRAGEDY**

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure presented a report, the purpose of which, was to update Council on the actions that were being taken in response to the Grenfell Tower incident in Kensington and Chelsea on the 14th June 2017.

Members were advised that the report represented the start of a process and further updates would be brought before Council as appropriate.

The Executive Member referred to paragraph 5 and 6 of the report which stated that Thirteen had confirmed that they had inspected all relevant premises in Middlesbrough, including conducting an appraisal on fire alarm systems. None of their buildings in Middlesbrough were fitted with the cladding materials used on Grenfell Tower. In addition the use of sprinkler/suppression systems was being explored.

A report was to be taken before the Board of the Thirteen Group to consider the options available. Thirteen had also been visiting tenants within their high rise buildings and providing fire safety information and answering any concerns from residents. All fire risk assessments were in place for the high rise buildings, assessments were carried out on an annual basis. Concierge teams were undertaking daily floor checks and reporting any fire safety related defects as a priority.

As part of the risk assessment undertaken by the Council in response to the incident, it was also proposed to review the Homelessness Strategy to address/consider how mass homelessness would be addressed following such an incident.

Part of independent inquiry into the Grenfell Tower incident was to examine the Council's response in the recovery stage following the incident. The Emergency Management Response Team was also to consider how best to prepare for dealing with the aftermath of such an incident. It was proposed that this be the focus of a future emergency training event.

The group would continue to monitor and assess the situation and further guidance and outputs from the Government to assess the implications of these for Middlesbrough, and propose an appropriate response, as necessary.

In addition to the above actions, a number of enquiries had been received, by all parties, from residents concerned about the safety of the external wall insulation that had been applied to a number of older terraced properties to make them more energy efficient. The Council had assurances from two of the schemes involved; Go Warm, and British Gas; that the system and products were safe and represented a low fire risk. This had been confirmed by Cleveland Fire Service. Regardless of this, where residents were concerned about risks, officers from the Council would discuss these concerns with them and seek to address and resolve any issues.

**NOTED**