

MEETING OF MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

At the Meeting of Middlesbrough Council, lawfully convened, and held in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough on 24 January 2018.

PRESENT: Councillors S E Bloundele (Chair), S Biswas, J Blyth, D J Branson, J Brunton Dobson, Mr D Budd, M Carr, D P Coupe, D Davison, S Dean, T Harvey, A Hellaoui, T Higgins, C Hobson, J Hobson, N Hussain, T Lawton, L Lewis, L McGloin, J Mohan, J Rathmell, C M Rooney, D Rooney, J Rostron, M Saunders, M Storey, M Thompson, Z Uddin, J A Walker, N J Walker, V Walkington, M Walters, J Young and L Young

OFFICERS: J Bromiley, B Carr, G Field, L Henman, A Hoy, D Johnson, J McCulloch, T Parkinson, S Reynolds and B Roberts.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors Councillor R Arundale, Councillor R Brady, Councillor E Dryden, Councillor J Goodchild, Councillor B A Hubbard, Councillor T Mawston, Councillor D McCabe, Councillor J McGee, Councillor F McIntyre, Councillor J McTigue, Councillor G Purvis, Councillor P Purvis, Councillor J Sharrocks.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None Declared

17/41 MINUTES - COUNCIL - 6 DECEMBER 2017

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 6 December 2017 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

17/42 ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

There were no Announcements or Communications for this meeting.

17/43 MAYOR'S STATEMENT AND REPORT

The Mayor commented on the recent collapse of the Carillion Group. The Mayor stated that locally the collapse posed a problem for many apprentices and for some staff employed at James Cook University Hospital. Work was ongoing to mitigate the difficulties for those concerned and the Mayor commented that he hoped that the people working on this issue would continue to work with the people at JCUH, and the apprentices affected by the collapse of Carillion, to ensure that they had a decent future.

The Mayor advised that the launch of the Community Bank had been agreed at the Executive meeting held on 23 January 2018. The next stage in the process was to begin the tendering process to appoint a provider for community banking services in Middlesbrough.

The idea of a Community Bank was supported by banks and building societies. The Community Bank would be a useful tool that the Council, the CAB and other organisations could refer people to as it would provide a wide range of financial services to a number of people who would not usually have access to them. It was important to point out that the creation of the Community Bank would not affect the services of any of the existing Credit Unions. It was anticipated that the bank would be operational from late summer.

A member stated that he wished to advise members with regard to the work that the Council was doing, following the collapse of Carillion, to assist apprentices to get back into suitable employment or training. He stated that there were currently 130 apprentices on the training site and about 40 of the apprentices were Middlesbrough residents. From 31 January 2018 the apprentices would fall under the remit of the Construction Industry Training Board and they were looking to find suitable employment or training opportunities for the apprentices.

The DWP and the National Careers Service had met with the Training Centre to offer rapid

response support for the staff and the apprentices to provide further support and training to find new employment. It was available to anyone under notice of redundancy or that had been made redundant. One company had made a commitment to take on some of the apprentices (ERW Joinery) and this was a great initiative which was welcomed. The Council would be making efforts to encourage other companies coming to Middlesbrough to take on their social responsibilities by employing some of the apprentices.

17/44

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) Tuxedo Royale

A member referred to page 3, paragraph 6 of the report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy in relation to the Tuxedo Royale.

The member commented that he had recently had friends from London visit the town and they had visited the Transporter Bridge and he stated that the tour guides did a great job. Unfortunately the tour guides had to refer to the derelict Tuxedo Royale as it could be seen from that view. The member commented that he was pleased to see the Council was taking action to deal with issue of the Tuxedo Royale as the removal of the boat was important to the regeneration of the town. He stated that he wished to congratulate the Council on enabling the work on the dismantling of the boat to commence and he commented that it was good to see that the works were progressing and the town was moving forward.

The Executive Member stated that the boat was becoming an eyesore and the Environment Agency were classing it as controlled or hazardous waste. This was the reason why the boat was being dismantled and also because no organisation had submitted a viable funded business plan in respect of the future of the Tuxedo Royale.

b) Council Accommodation

A member referred to page 2, paragraph 2 of the report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy in relation to Council Accommodation. The member queried whether Council staff would be relocating into the new office accommodation in Centre Square.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy advised that this would be subject to a separate report to Executive and everyone would be informed of it.

c) Splash Utilities

A member referred to page 3, paragraph 4 of the report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy in relation to Splash Utilities.

The member stated that it was good to see that Splash Utilities had decided to base themselves in Middlesbrough as it provided many employment and training opportunities. It would help people obtain the best deal they could in the current economy. The company had been considering both Leeds and Middlesbrough as a possible location for the company and they had opted for Middlesbrough as Middlesbrough was portrayed in a very positive way and this was largely down to the leadership of the Mayor and Middlesbrough's investment ambitions. It also showed that the Council's Investment Strategy was working, in terms of improving Royal Middlehaven House and facilitating Splash Utilities in locating to Middlesbrough and bringing jobs and training opportunities to the town. The member stated that he wanted to congratulate the Council in bringing this investment to Middlesbrough.

The Executive Member advised that Splash Utilities had chosen Middlesbrough as a location for the company because they liked what the city had to offer. The owners of the building, Python Properties had indicated that they were pleased as there had been a considerable amount of money spent on improving the property. The owner of Python Properties had also noted that there had been real investment in the area over the last few years which was positive for the town.

d) Salons for Screening Magazine

A member referred to page 3, paragraph 17 of the report of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health in relation to Salons for Screening Magazine.

The member stated that she would like to congratulate the organisations mentioned in the report in respect of a local scheme for cervical screening, given the national dip in ladies attending screening appointments. The issue of screening and cancer was a worrying situation but it was a preventative measure. The member urged everyone to encourage women to attend screening appointments.

The Executive Member stated that she was impressed with the work that had been carried out in relation to this issue. Volunteers had made a short film about the topic and had posted it on the Web and the film had already achieved over 3000 views.

e) Action by Responsible Authorities to Review of Alcohol Licences

The Chair of the Licensing Committee referred to page 6, paragraph 31 of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health report in respect of Action by Responsible Authorities to Review of Alcohol Licences.

The member referred to page 6 of the Executive Member report relating to paragraphs 31, 32 and 33 with regard to the Action by responsible authorities to review of Alcohol Licences.

The member advised that multi team operations had been carried out in the previous year, from June with HMRC, Licensing and the police. The member commented that it was important to remember that those reviews were carried out diligently by these responsible authorities including the Council's own enforcement officers from licensing and trading standards. The member stated that she would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the thorough investigation of wrongdoing by licensees in the town. The member emphasised that the operations had been carried out by hardworking officers and they deserved recognition for their commitment to ensure the health and safety of the residents of Middlesbrough.

The member advised that some of the town's licensed premises had "grandfather rights" and as a consequence they did not carry with them updated conditions on licences such as CCTV and prohibition of certain high volume drinks etc. When an application for a review of a licence was submitted to the licensing committee, it provided the opportunity to amend those licenses where appropriate, which ensured that the licensing objectives were met and upheld and if not then they could be enforced, reviewed and action taken to protect the people of Middlesbrough, their health and wellbeing and guard against crime and disorder.

The member commented that many areas were suffering from issues such as crime and disorder and health problems, (causing impact as it had been shown by Public Health on the NHS) all connected to alcohol and it was the duty of the Licensing authority to ensure that only responsible people held alcohol licenses in Middlesbrough. It was highlighted, that, despite the many cut backs that the Council, had endured over the years they still had teams of dedicated officers, (including the Council's own democratic services personnel who through hours of hard work ensured that everything was ready for the sub committees). The member stated that she would like to commend to the people of Middlesbrough these officers for all the hard work they carried out to ensure that licensed premises were properly run for the benefit of the town.

The Executive Member stated that she would ensure that the member's comments were passed on to the staff concerned. Members were advised that since the Executive report had been written, two off licences had subsequently had their licences suspended. The Executive Member advised that the Council had also recently signed up to an Alcohol Strategy. All organisations had been subject to cuts but they strived to maintain a good service.

f) Troubled Families

A member referred to page 3, paragraph 6 of the Executive Member for Children's Services report in relation to Troubled Families.

A member stated that he would like to congratulate the Executive Member and the team from Children's Services Troubled Families and Job Centre Plus for organising a recruitment event which saw over 200 people attend, following which 8 people commenced work, 16 attended job interviews and 31 commenced training. He also thanked the DWP and the education department from HMP Holme House for their work in relation to the provision of up to date benefit awareness for prisoners.

The Executive Member stated that the work of teams like the Troubled Families Team was very important because the intervention work that they carried out prevented further difficulties in the future, in terms of preventing children going into care. Their work was a very important element of the Children's Services Strategy.

The member advised that the funding of Troubled Families came via Central Government and it did support various activities including Children's Centres. It was highlighted that this funding was only guaranteed until 2020 following which, there were no guarantees that the Government would continue to provide funding. The Council were having to examine how this service would be supported. Children's Services were currently preparing a business case to transfer from Government funding to mainstream Council funding which would cause pressure on other aspects of the budget. The Council would seek to continue the important work carried out by the Troubled Families Team.

g) Magical Christmas - Christmas Lights Switch on

A member referred to page 1, paragraph 1 of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities report in respect of the Christmas market and he queried how many people had attended the market and why the market had closed early.

The Executive Member stated that he would make inquiries with regard to the figures for attendance and the costs associated with the Christmas market and report back to the member concerned but he stated that he was not sure that the market had closed early as it was never intended to remain open throughout all of the Christmas period.

h) Interim Policy on Conversions of Residential Properties

A member referred to page 1, paragraph 1 of the Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure report in respect of the Interim Policy on Conversions of Residential Properties.

The member stated that she wanted to draw attention to the development and use of the interim Policy on Conversions of Residential Properties that had been put together in response to concerns expressed in relation to this throughout the town. The member also wanted to highlight the impact that changes of this type, conversion of residential dwellings into flats could have on the character and culture of an area and also on the wellbeing of the residents and the nature of the town and to encourage everyone to be alert to these changes where permission had not been sought for those alterations. The member stated that the policy was an important step forward.

The Executive Member stated that the policy had been established in response to requests from communities either through their Councillor or other forums had asked the Council to do. The policy had received cross party support as it could affect all parts of the town. It was not a

blanket ban but it did determine quality or whether it enhanced or was detrimental to the area and it allowed planning officers to act accordingly.

i) Safer Bus Station Award

A member referred to page 3, paragraph 8 of the Executive Member for Environment and Commercial Services report in respect of the Safer Bus Station Award.

The member commented that she was delighted that the Middlesbrough Bus Station had received the Safer Bus Station Award for the second year running. The Lead Officer Auditor had commented that Middlesbrough was the best example of a bus station in the north east and had thoroughly deserved the award. The member emphasised that it was very important for the town to retain its bus station.

The Executive Member advised that she would pass the member's congratulations on to the staff concerned.

j) Funding of Local Government

A member referred to page 1, paragraph 1 of the Executive Member for Finance and Governance report in respect of Funding of Local Government.

The member congratulated the Executive Member on the presentation of the report in respect of the display of graphs and charts which made the report easier to understand. The member highlighted that, in 2019 - 2020, 60p of every pound would be spent on caring for the elderly and vulnerable adults. This was up from 41p in 2010 - 2011, which was a concern as by contrast, 1p in every £1 would be spent on street cleaning and flood defences, under 5p in every £1 would be left to fund all libraries, leisure centres, parks, museums and arts. The member requested the Executive Member to expand on the difficulties in respect of the imperatives that the Council faced in the funding that the Council had to provide and the impact on other services.

The Executive Member thanked the member for her comments on the report as it did explain things better. Work was ongoing about communicating to the people in Middlesbrough in a better way to explain where their money went and how the Council expenditure was spent.

The LGA had commented that there was a massive funding gap but the Government were removing funding from Councils. If, by 2020, we were spending more money on social care, there would be less money for other things.

The reason why people were paying more Council Tax is because the Government were removing funding that was paid by tax payers and no longer distributing it to the Council.

17/45 **REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

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

17/46 **COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2018/2019**

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance presented a report, the purpose of which was to set the Council Tax base for the financial year 2018/2019.

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

That Council:

a) Note the contents of the report.

b) Agree the Council Tax Base for 2018/2019 as 33,121.

c) Agree 2,082 and 724 as the Council Tax Bases for the parishes of Nunthorpe and Stainton and Thornton respectively for 2018/2019.

d) Agree to notify the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Cleveland Fire Authority and the Parish Councils of the 2018/2019 Council Tax Base.

17/47 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN UPDATE**

The Mayor presented a report, the purpose of which was:

1. To provide members with an update to the Medium Term Financial Plan in response to the Local Government Finance Settlement figures received on 19 December 2017, the National Pay Award offer and continued national funding pressures in relation to Children's Social Care.

2. To propose a change in the Council Tax increase set out in the Strategic Plan report of 6 December 2017.

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

That Council:

a) Note the contents of the report.

b) Agree to consult on increasing Council Tax for the financial year 2018/19 by 2.99% plus the Adult Social Care Precept of 2% (4.99%) rather than the figure of 1.99% plus the Adult Social Care Precept of 2% (3.99%).

17/48 **MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME**

The detail of the specific question was included at Agenda Item 11.

Question 5/17 - Councillor T Lawton to the Executive Member for Finance and Governance - Regarding the dismantling and the future of the Tuxedo Royale

In response to the question from Councillor Lawton, the Executive Member for Finance and Governance confirmed that the Council had seen the survey report in relation to the dismantling of the Tuxedo Royale. This issue had been referred to when a question with regard to the Tuxedo Royale was raised at a previous Council meeting, when it was clarified that some information could not be released as it was contained within an exempt report. The report carried out by Turner and Townsend could not be made public, as they had signed a confidentiality agreement with Able.

There was also no evidence to suggest that the council had rejected other more competitively priced offers to seek out an alternative to the dismantling. Turner and Townsend had carried out a review and due diligence exercise and had confirmed that the Able cost breakdown represented a true reflection of costs to deconstruct and dispose of the ship, assessed against current market costs and the ship's existing condition. The Council had not received any firm offers in respect of the future of the Tuxedo Royale.

In respect of whether the Council would make public any documentation and communication between the Council and all third party inquiries of interest in the future of the Tuxedo Royale, the Executive Member advised that if the member wished to get in touch with the third parties and obtains their permission to release the information, then the Council could consider releasing the information.

Councillor Lawton stated that the Council had no financial responsibility for the Tuxedo Royale and he stated that the Council had made a gift of £400k to Able to dismantle the boat and Able would retain the profits which could be a six figure sum.

The Executive Member reiterated that due diligence had been carried out by Turner and

Townsend and emphasised that the Council had not gifted any money. The authority had a responsibility to the town and the boat was an eyesore.

17/49 **NOTICE OF URGENT MOTION**

There were no urgent motions for this meeting.

17/50 **2025 VISION FOR MIDDLESBROUGH (FAIRER, SAFER, STRONGER) PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Mayor presented a report, the purpose of which was to advise Council of the strong progress made to date in delivering the Mayor's Vision for Middlesbrough in 2025 - Fairer, Safer, Stronger, and to outline plans for the coming year and beyond.

The Mayor referred to the list of the 101 achievements to date in respect of the Mayor's Vision. The report highlighted the progress made through the Investment Prospectus. The measures contained within the Investment Prospectus were monitored and measured on a quarterly basis.

In terms of future plans, the Mayor indicated that it was vital that social regeneration kept pace with physical regeneration. The Council intended to create community conversations which would enable the people of the town to be open about what they wanted to happen within the town and this would inform the development of a Social Regeneration Strategy, to be agreed by Executive in 2018. This would provide a steer on how the Council and its partners would work together with local communities to deliver social regeneration in the town.

Members commented on the following issues:

- A member thanked the Council for introducing the Selective Landlord Licensing Scheme and commented that he would like to see the scheme rolled out across the town.
- A member commented that he had been involved in the Mela for over 20 years and he thanked all of the people and organisations that had been involved in the Mela over the years and reminded members that it was due to take place, the second week in August.
- A number of members commented that the 101 achievements were very positive for the town and that the Council should be proud of the achievements.

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

That Council note the strong progress made to date in delivering the Mayor's Vision for Middlesbrough in 2025 - Fairer, Safer, Stronger, and plans for the coming year and beyond.