

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL Wednesday 5th September 2018

Housing

1. Housing at the core of Middlesbrough's regeneration

The regeneration of Middlesbrough has become an internationally recognised success story. Earlier this year the Financial Times' FDI index placed Middlesbrough in the top 10 small cities for economic growth in Europe, ahead of the likes of Belfast, and housing investment has been at the centre of this revival.

In 2004/5 the total number of housing completions was just 245 units, by 2014/15, this had risen to 785 units, over trebling the levels of completions. As a consequence, for the first time in decades the population decline that Middlesbrough has experienced has been reversed.

We have kept our Local Plan up-to-date to ensure that the Council is in the lead in directing house building and ensure that we create vibrant, new, sustainable communities.

Whilst there have been some popular new developments in the south of the town, since 2010 almost two thirds – 64.8% - of all housing developments in Middlesbrough have been on brownfield land or previously used land. This equates to 2150 out of 3875 units.

Many of these brownfield sites are making major contributions to regenerating the town. For example, since 2010 there has been several hundred-housing completions in areas such as Grove Hill, Middlehaven, East Middlesbrough, Newport, North Ormesby and conversions within the City Centre, all of which have contributed to the regeneration of these areas and have been on brownfield land.

This has made a major financial contribution to the Council's finances, and the ability of the Council to maintain services for all its community in terms of Council Tax and New Homes Bonus – amounting to almost £19.5m in additional resources in over 10 years. Diversity of our housing development also means that Middlesbrough can now provide for a range and choice of housing type to meet the needs of its current community, is able to address the outward migration of its young people elsewhere, and able to accommodate new and future residents, attracted to the opportunities Middlesbrough offers.

2. Grove Hill

Thirteen have commenced the development of 92 new homes on the Bishopton Road in Grove Hill. The brownfield site, which was assembled through a Joint Venture arrangement between the Council and Thirteen, will include 39 bungalows and 53 two to four bed houses. The scheme is scheduled to complete in early 2020 and will constitute the first phase of the wider redevelopment of Grove Hill.

3. Housing Delivery Vehicle

A Shadow Board has been established to lead on the development of a Housing Delivery Vehicle (HDV) that will enable the Council to develop new homes across the borough. The Shadow Board will consider the different delivery models that can be adopted to achieve the ambition to deliver new high quality, affordable housing and will make a final recommendation to Executive on the preferred option in December.

4. Housing Market Study

The Council has been asked to contribute to the second stage of a study to look at the wider Tees Valley housing market, led by the Northern Housing Consortium. The key issue arising from it is that Tees Valley is clearly lacking in housing for the 'cosmopolitan' sector i.e. graduating students, young professionals etc. hence we are losing them to other areas. This sector needs to be located in or near to city centres, which can be accommodated in Middlesbrough, but work will be required to develop both the housing product and the vibrancy of the area.

5. Housing Event

Following on from the successful Housing Developer event that was held in April, a further event is being planned for the 25th September to enable local property/land owners to be provided with information such as market intelligence that can assist them to make informed decisions in respect of their development aspirations. It is recognised that many property/land owners have full time jobs, so it is proposed that it will be a breakfast forum to maximise potential attendance.

6. Stainsby Masterplan

An Executive Report has been prepared for consideration in September, that sets out the vision for the Stainsby scheme and the process for developing a masterplan in consultation with the local community. The Stainsby scheme incorporates one of the major allocations for new housing, as adopted in the Local Plan in 2014.

The report sets out the strategic vision for the new sustainable community with improved green open space – specifically setting out an ambition for a 'country park', unlocking previously inaccessible green spaces – private land with limited current use – which will flow from the top of Stainsby to the bottom. Of the scheme, open space will account for 53% - with 44% for housing and 3% for a local centre.

Planning

7. Planning Update

A planning application has been submitted by Jomast Developments for the conversion of the 'New Exchange Buildings' at Queens Square, Middlesbrough. The proposals seek to convert the office space to 2 commercial offices at ground floor with 12 two bed apartments on the upper floors. The building is one of Middlesbrough's 'Listed Buildings' and the scheme signals continued interest in re-using former office space within the Town Centre area following the recent approval of an application to convert Vancouver House to a mixed-use development incorporating hotel, banqueting and apartments approved by the Council's planning committee on the 27th July 2018.

Officers from the Council's Development Control, Planning Policy and Housing Regeneration teams visited a number of housing developments within the north east region recently, looking at key aspects of their layouts, design, relationships with surroundings, parking arrangements, pedestrian routes and many other aspects. The visits were intended to form the basis of debate around the quality and nature of

housing developments, derive an in-depth understanding of the positive aspects and also highlight elements which were not positive. This will support a continued focus on ensuring new developments coming forward in Middlesbrough achieve aspirations within the Local Plan, the Mayors Vision and Investment Prospectus documents.

8. Captain Cook Public House

A lease has been agreed with James Cook Endeavour Ltd for the Captain Cook Public House in Middlehaven. The proposal hopes to secure funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund under the Heritage Enterprise funding programme to restore and renovate the building.

The building will undergo a modern conversion to a bar / bistro with onsite rum distillery planned for the building. The Captain Cook has significant heritage value and is a Grade 2 listed building. Many of the original features will be retained and Lottery funding will support its long-term sustainability. A funding decision is anticipated in early 2019, with work progressing shortly thereafter.

Transport and Infrastructure

9. Road Safety

Every Year 6 pupil in Middlesbrough has received a free road safety magazine designed to offer not only road safety advice but also travel planning advice to ensure that children (and their parents) think about and plan a safe journey to their new secondary school.

A free child car seat checking event was held in partnership with Stockton-On-Tees Council on 16th August at Teesside Shopping Park. A car seat fitting expert joined road safety officers from both Councils to offer a free fitting check of new or older car seats, and to offer general advice and guidance on the correct type of car seat for every stage of a child's development.

10. New Northern Trains

In September, Northern Rail will begin an extensive training programme with their conductors and drivers on the 158 fleet of rolling stock. These will be rolled out across the North East through 2019, coming to Middlesbrough for the May timetable change. The trains will be getting a full refurb over the coming months to include new seats, carpets, décor and will include CCTV, WIFI and at seat power/USB sockets.

There will be a mix of part and full refurbishment in the first instance, with Northern planning to complete the programme by the end of 2019, with all old 'pacer' units to be fully removed from by 2020. The Council continues to work with Northern as one of the station operators to improve the customer experience and journey for all station and rail users.