

MEETING OF MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

At the Meeting of Middlesbrough Council, lawfully convened, and held in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough on 5 September 2018.

PRESENT: Councillors R Arundale, S Biswas, S E Bloundele, J Brunton Dobson, Mr D Budd, D P Coupe, S Dean, J Goodchild, A Hellaoui, T Higgins, C Hobson, J Hobson, B A Hubbard, L Lewis, T Mawston, D McCabe, J McGee, L McGloin, J McTigue, G Purvis, P Purvis, J Rathmell, C M Rooney, D Rooney, J Rostron, M Storey, M Thompson, J A Walker, N J Walker, V Walkington, M Walters, J Young and L Young

OFFICERS: M Allinson, S Bonner, J Bromiley, B Carr, L Henman, A Hoy, D Johnson, S Lightwing, A Pain, K Parkes, T Parkinson and S Reynolds

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors Councillor J Blyth, Councillor R Brady, Councillor D J Branson, Councillor M Carr, Councillor D Davison, Councillor E Dryden, Councillor T Harvey, Councillor N Hussain, Councillor T Lawton, Councillor F McIntyre, Councillor J Mohan, Councillor M Saunders, Councillor J Sharrocks, Councillor Z Uddin.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None Declared

1 ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

There were no Announcements or Communications for this meeting.

2 MINUTES - COUNCIL - ORDINARY MEETING - 18 JULY 2018 AND EXTRAORDINARY MEETING 18 JULY 2018

The minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting and the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 18 July 2018 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chair stated that eight questions from members of the public had been submitted, the details of which had been circulated with the agenda. The Chair advised that as four of the questions that had been submitted from members of the public related to Dixons Bank, he would invite the four people that had submitted questions 2/18, 3/18, 5/18 and 8/18 to put their questions to the Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure and the Executive Member would then respond to the questions.

Questions 2/18, 3/18, 5/18 and 8/18 were put to the Executive Member.

In response to question 2/18, the Executive Member advised that the report did state that the noise levels were high at present, but Arup who had carried out the work, had identified that the impact of the road scheme upon future noise levels would be negligible and have little impact on current levels. The Executive Member advised that the Council would be putting in measures such as low noise resurfacing materials during the work.

In response to question 3/18, the Executive Member advised that the promise that was made was that the consultation responses would be collated in the final Executive report, and would include any mitigation measures put forward, e.g. environmental work. This had already happened and was referenced at paragraphs 24-57 of the report.

In response to question 5/18, the Executive Member advised that improvements to local bus works were carried out a few years previously, and park and ride had been actively discussed, however the proposed location would fall within the Redcar and Cleveland boundary, and would require their approval. The Council was also looking at the inclusion of sustainable

transport measures which had been suggested within recent development guidance for housing development sites, such as Nunthorpe Grange. More information on wide-ranging measures would be coming forward later in the year.

In response to question 8/18, the Executive Member advised that regardless of so called 'caveats', the South West Middlesbrough Microsimulation Model Forecasting Report Addendum, also issued by Arup on 9 December 2016, was clearly supportive of the scheme in that it recommended its implementation by 2020.

The Chair invited the member of the public that submitted question 4/18 to put his question.

In response to question 4/18, the Executive Member advised that there were no plans to downgrade the Bypass as part of the Nunthorpe Grange development, and that its status would remain as it had for the last 50 years.

The Chair advised that the member of the public that had submitted question 6/18 was unable to be present at the meeting and had requested that the Chair put the question on her behalf. The Chair put the question and invited the members of the public that had submitted questions 7/18 and 9/18 to put their questions to the Executive Member.

In response to question 6/18, the Executive Member advised that the consultation, giving residents the opportunity to give their views, had been wide-ranging and had included public meetings, adjacent properties being consulted, exhibitions and press releases. The consultation was undertaken between 2012 and 2014, during the preparation of the Housing Local Plan through its various stages. The Housing Local Plan was formally adopted by the Council in November 2014.

The link road was identified in Policy H21 (e) in the 2014 Housing Local Plan and it stated that it 'was accessed from both the B1380 and A1130 creating a link road through the development', (page 52) and it formed part of an integral component of the Plan's policies.

The matter was further considered in a public forum by an Independent Inspector, appointed by the Government who, in her consideration of the Local Plan, supported the inclusion of the road, recognising its need and role, and subsequently finding the Local Plan to be sound. Further consultation would be taking place, following the approval of the Stainsby Masterplan at the Executive on 4 September 2018.

In response to question 7/18, the Executive Member advised that the baseline noise measurements were taken in broad accordance with the Calculation of Road Traffic Noise, Shortened Measurement Procedure which identified the time window of 10.100 and 17.00 hours for measurements to be taken. As the results of the assessment were derived from predictive modelling and the noise measurements used as verification, the Council did not intend to conduct a further survey at this point in time.

In response to question 9/18, the Executive Member advised that the minimum number of houses on the whole site was likely to be 1,670 (as set out in the Local Plan). The exact number would depend upon the overall design of the scheme, which would ultimately be the subject of public consultation.

Whilst the 2014 Local Plan referred to part of the site being used for office development, this would not now form part of the refresh, and that area would be retained as open space or Country Park.

The Executive Member thanked the members of the public that had submitted questions and advised that he would provide a copy of his responses to the questions, in writing.

4

MAYORS STATEMENT AND REPORT

The Mayor stated that he would like to outline the context that the Council was currently working in and outline what the Council was doing, the progress so far and what others could do to assist with this.

The Mayor advised that Local Government finances had been constantly under pressure for many years and the ongoing policies of austerity had affected services such as Health, Fire and the Police as well as local Councils. The cuts did not just happen, they were as a result of political choices.

The latest example of Councils affected by the cuts had been Northampton Council however the National Audit Office had warned that 15 other local authorities were in danger of effectively going bust in the near future. The Mayor advised that those Councils that had not increased Council Tax were most at risk. The Government assumption was that Council Tax increases would form part of their assessment with regard to a local authority's spending power.

In terms of what progress the Council had made in functioning in the face of austerity, the Mayor advised that the Council's Investment Strategy was working and listed the following examples of investment in the town:

- East of Centre Square development;
- Tees Advanced Manufacturing Park (TeesAMP) was expanding;
- Plans for redevelopment at Middlesbrough Railway Station were advanced;
- Teesside University continues to develop;
- The recent Town Hall refurbishment;
- The progress in developments at Albert Road by Jomast;
- Employment continues to grow as investment increases and this was monitored on a 3 monthly basis;
- The number of small business start-ups continues to grow;
- House building continues to grow at record levels;
- Developers and employers active in Middlesbrough refer to Middlesbrough as a city and people want to live and work in the town.

The Mayor stated that the Council was creating a better Middlesbrough and he urged Members to join in and celebrate the success of the town.

The Mayor advised that the Monitoring Officer had discovered that the recent increase in school meals had not gone through the proper process and as a result, the proposed increase would not go ahead at the present time. A full and proper process would be initiated and a report would be submitted to the Executive in due course.

A number of Members commented on the Mayor's report.

In response to a suggestion that Members forego special responsibility allowances and whether a vote could be taken on the issue, the Chair advised that there was no provision to take a vote under the Mayor's Statement.

In response to a query with regard to whether any of the Council's projects mentioned earlier in the Mayor's report were subject to an audit review, the Mayor confirmed that he was not aware of any audit investigations.

In terms of funding of the associated projects, they were funded by a combination of funding which could include funding from the Council, Tees Valley Combined Authority and private sector funding.

5 **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 Council meeting (Sections 3 and 4).

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

a) Supporting the conversion of vacant property

A Member referred to page 4 of the report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy and commended the Council on supporting the conversion of vacant property, in particular, the luxury apartments at St James House.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy advised that the supporting the conversion of vacant property initiative was happening as a result of the Council's Investment Strategy, the designation of Enterprise Zones and the political will and the will of Council officers to make the town a success and attract businesses to the town.

b) Going Forward

A Member referred to page 7 of the report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy and posed a question with regard to issues with broadband.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy advised that only the Government would have the power to force British Telecom to provide effective broadband for the area. The new Albert North, mentioned in the Mayor's Statement, promised fast broadband speeds. The Executive Member advised that he would ask the question on what was being done to achieve fast broadband speeds throughout the town, and provide a response to the Member concerned.

c) Supporting the High Street/City Centre - Business Support

A Member referred to page 3 of the report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy and commended the Executive Member with regard to the initiative in relation to Supporting the High Street/City Centre - Business Support.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for City Centre Strategy thanked the Member for his comments and advised that the initiative was due to the Council's Investment Strategy and he stated that success breeds success. He stated that the recent refurbishment of the Town Hall was an example of what could be achieved.

d) The Nagar Kirtan and Middlesbrough Mela

A Member referred to page 1 of the report of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities in relation to the Nagar Kirtan and Middlesbrough Mela events and commended the Council regarding the fact that they were involved in three different festivals celebrating diversity which included Eid in the Park, Nagar Kirtan and Middlesbrough Mela. The Member stated that it was fantastic to see how well the people of Middlesbrough supported the festivals.

e) The Nagar Kirtan

A Member referred to page 1 of the report of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities in relation to the Nagar Kirtan event and commented on the lack of attendance of elected politicians at the Nagar Kirtan festival.

The Executive Member advised that he had attended the Mela and Eid in the Park and although it was not always possible for Members of the Council to attend all of the events, the Council did assist organisers of the events by providing infrastructure and road closures. The Executive Member stated that Middlesbrough was a town that celebrated all of the cultures and religions in the town.

f) Stronger Communities

A Member referred to page 3 of the report of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities in relation to Stronger Communities and stated that she wished to clarify if the correct process for reporting a crime was to the Police and not to a Ward councillor as had

been stated at a recent meeting in a church hall.

The Executive Member stated that he could not comment on the meeting, but he advised that crimes should be reported to the police. He stated that it was important that incidents of crime were reported to the police so that police forces could direct resources where they were needed.

g) Hemlington Ward

A Member referred to page 8 of the report of the Executive Member for Culture and Communities in relation to Hemlington Ward and commented on the Hemlington Together week that had been organised by the Police, MBC, Ward Councillors, Habinteg Housing, Thirteen Group and LINX. The group had looked at hotspot areas for anti-social behaviour and crime in the Ward and this had resulted in one young person being taken to court. The Member highlighted the importance of multi-agencies working together.

The Executive Member advised that he had worked as a Council officer in the Ward in the past. He thanked all of the Councillors, staff and residents and agencies who worked together to improve the area.

h) NEMP Business Plan - this question was subsequently withdrawn at the meeting.

i) Housing

A Member referred to page 1 of the report of the Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure in relation to Housing and queried with regard to the percentage of housing developments that had been built on brownfield land since the last local elections in 2015 and in relation to the 2150 houses referred to in the Executive report, where these houses were located. The Member stated that he was happy to receive the response in an email.

The Executive Member advised that he would provide the figures and the list that the Member had requested. He also clarified that the actual figure for housing developments in Middlesbrough that had been built on brownfield land or previously used land since 2010 was 2510. The Executive Member also pointed out that it was a struggle to unlock brownfield land as the Council needed to have access to unlock the land and as a consequence this was one of the reasons why the Council was looking at Housing Delivery.

j) Housing

A Member referred to page 1 of the report of the Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure in relation to Housing, in particular, the Stainsby Grange scheme and the community consultation. The Member queried whether this would be extended to other Wards. The Member advised that the consultation on Nunthorpe Grange scheme had lasted for 4 weeks and during that time some residents may have been on holiday.

The Executive Member advised that a four week consultation was an appropriate length of time for the consultation process. In terms of Nunthorpe Grange, the Executive Member advised that the consultation period had now closed.

k) Grove Hill

A Member referred to page 1 of the report of the Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure in relation to Grove Hill. The Member congratulated the Executive Member on the development of 92 new homes on brownfield land on Bishopton Road in Grove Hill as the new homes would make a great difference to the area and the regeneration of the town.

The Executive Member stated that it was good to see the progress in the building of new homes in Grove Hill, It was a struggle to unlock brownfield sites and often the building on

brownfield sites also included conversions. The Executive Member advised that the Council was looking to set up a Housing Delivery Vehicle to unlock the brownfield sites under the Council's ownership. The Council would also speak to private owners of brownfield sites about unlocking those sites and working with them.

l) Middlesbrough Promise

A Member referred to page 2 of the report of the Executive Member for Education and Skills in relation to the Middlesbrough Promise and she queried whether the Executive Member could expand on the aim of the project.

The Executive Member advised that the aim of the Middlesbrough Promise was to improve the life chances of children and young people in Middlesbrough, particularly to ensure that they were happy, healthy, ready to learn and aspirational. The Middlesbrough Promise involved children and young people, school staff, external organisations, Councillors, the Council, governors and parents, all working towards the same goal so that Middlesbrough would be a good place to bring children up.

Part of the project was to encourage children to read. Middlesbrough was already a reading town and a recent Summer Challenge which aimed to encourage reading had involved 600 children. The Executive Member advised that adults should be role models for children to encourage them that reading was a good thing.

m) Capital Works at Teesside Crematorium

A Member referred to page 1 of the report of the Executive Member for Environment and Commercialisation in relation to the capital works at Teesside Crematorium and complimented the Executive Member on the recent works carried out and requested that the Council's thanks be passed on to the staff at the crematorium.

A Member referred to the new canopy at the crematorium which he advised was welcomed. The canopy however did not have any side or back panels and did not protect people in inclement weather and it needed re-visiting. The Member stated that he had been advised that the works had cost £40,000 and he queried whether the works had been subject to the tendering process.

The Executive Member thanked the Member with regard to her comments about the improvements at the crematorium. The teams had worked hard. A Scrutiny Panel had looked at bereavement services and they had recognised that the Council needed to invest in the crematorium and the baby memorial garden was a welcome new addition to the crematorium for bereaved parents.

With regard to the comments regarding the new canopy at the crematorium, the Executive Member advised that she did have some headline figures but she would follow this up with a formal response. In terms of the Member's comments regarding the canopy, the feedback was welcomed and the Executive Member advised that she would take the comments back to the appropriate officers. The process did go through the tendering process and property services had won the tender. The Capital Project costs amounted to £475,000 but this included the installation of two new canopies, (one at St Bede's Chapel and one at St Hilda's Chapel), structural repairs to the Chapel of Remembrance and the refurbishment of St Hilda's Chapel and the recent refurbishment of St Bede's Chapel. The Chapel of Remembrance was almost ready and it was hoped to have a completion date in the next few days and the Executive Member stated that she would advise the Member once she had been informed of this date.

n) Newham Grange Leisure Farm

A Member referred to page 4 of the report of the Executive Member for Environment and Commercialisation in relation to Newham Leisure Farm and commended the Council on the refurbishment works to the Leisure Farm which made it a great place to visit and he congratulated those involved in the refurbishment.

The Executive Member thanked the Member for his comments. There had been huge increase in visitors to the Leisure Farm and the Executive Member provided statistical data with regard to the increase in visitors. The feedback with regard to the improvements had been excellent. The cafe was also due to be refurbished over the winter period and additional infrastructure would be installed.

o) Universal Credit

A Member referred to page 1 of the report of the Executive Member for Finance, Governance and Support in relation to Universal Credit roll-out in Middlesbrough.

The Member advised that the Council had recently passed a motion in relation to the roll-out of Universal Credit and he highlighted his concerns regarding the issues facing those people subject to claiming Universal Credit and the support provided to claimants. In particular, the Member highlighted that claimants were required to make a face to face appointment with the DWP following completion of the on-line form and many claimants were not aware of this requirement. The Member referred to the work that the Council had done to assist claimants and he urged all Members to attend the Member Briefings to assist in directing residents to the appropriate support.

p) Universal Credit Roll-Out in Middlesbrough

A Member referred to page 1 of the report of the Executive Member for Finance, Governance and Support in relation to Universal Credit roll-out in Middlesbrough.

The Member referred to the initial five week delay in Universal Credit claims being paid and other administrative issues causing further hardship to claimants. He queried whether the Chair could use discretion to allow Members to only claim the basic allowance for a six week period and use the unclaimed money to benefit children.

The Executive Member advised that Middlesbrough Council were doing everything they could to address the issues surrounding the roll-out of Universal Credit. With regard to the issue about claimants being required to have bank accounts, one of the Mayor's election pledges was to establish a community bank and this was due to be in place by the end of the year. The process was complex and there was benefit advice available in terms of providing access to computers or taking claimants through the process. The Executive Member received regular updates following the implementation of Universal Credit to highlight and deal with any emerging issues. The Council was also offering budgeting assistance and this was also available from other organisations. The face to face appointment issue had also been raised in the Financial Inclusion Group. The Council had also learned from issues encountered by other authorities that had already implemented Universal Credit and had put things in place prior to the implementation in Middlesbrough.

The Executive Member also addressed the suggestion put forward regarding Members Allowances and advised that Members Allowances and Special Responsibility Allowances were set by an Independent Remuneration Panel following national guidance. The amount of money that would be saved would have little effect on the issues caused by the implementation of Universal Credit and the measure put forward by the Member would have no effect on him.

The Executive Member pointed out that up until April this year people on Universal Credit were entitled to free school meals for their children and the Children's Society had fought for this to continue. From 1 April 2018 the Government had determined that anyone earning over £14,700 would lose their entitlement to free school meals for their children. The Executive Member advised that the majority of people claiming Universal Credit would be working.

A Member clarified that in relation to Members Allowances, he did not refer to Special Responsibility Allowances he was referring to communication and phone allowances.

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

7 **MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE REPORT**

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 2018.

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance presented the report.

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

a) That the Local Average Interest rate for the period 1st October 2018 - 31st March 2019 be set at 3.916%

b) That this rate be used for all Housing Mortgages for this period.

8 **MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions submitted within the specified deadlines for Members Questions for this meeting.

9 **NOTICE OF MOTION**

Consideration was given to Motion No. 133, moved by Councillor Rathmell and seconded by Councillor Hubbard of which notice had been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rules No. 53-60 as follows:

'In January of 2017 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government wrote to every council leader in the country urging them to adopt the IHRA's definition of anti-Semitism.

Our authority, along with the other Tees Valley authorities has not yet done so.

I take this opportunity to ask members to show the wider public that we can lead locally on this issue as we have on so many others.

Therefore, this council agrees that the authority adopts in full the IHRA's definition of anti-Semitism at the earliest possible opportunity.'

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

'This Council adopts in full, and including all the examples, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of anti-Semitism'.

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**.

10 **NOTICE OF URGENT MOTION (IF ANY)**

There were no urgent motions for this meeting.

11 **APPOINTMENT TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES 2018 AND RECONSTITUTION OF CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD AS A FORMAL COMMITTEE.**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report which sought Members' approval to nominations for

appointment, arising from vacancies and resignations from Committees, and requested that Members note that the Corporate Parenting Board (which was an Outside Body of the Council), had reverted back to an Advisory Committee of the Executive.

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

1. That the following appointments to Committees be agreed:

Schedule C Appointments:

Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel

Councillor McGloin appointed

Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Walters appointed

Health Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Lewis appointed

Licensing Committee

Still 2 vacancies (1 initially reserved for Independent and 1 initially reserved for Labour)

Planning and Development Committee

Councillor Rostron appointed

Corporate Health and Safety Committee

Councillor Dean appointed

2. That it be noted that the Corporate Parenting Board (formerly the Forum for Looked After Children), had reverted back to an Advisory Committee of the Council, with revised Terms of Reference.