

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL Wednesday 2nd September 2020

STRATEGIC

1. Cultural Partnership

The Cultural Partnership moved to a digital delivery format during the Covid 19 lockdown.

With the support of the ACE funded Project Coordinator Andrea Nixon, the partnership has continued to drive forward with its development plans, further reinforcing the security of the sector and importantly being led by the sector itself.

A new website is being created by the partnership that will profile the cultural sector and provide a reference point for creatives. The website is scheduled to launch in September 2020 and is being developed by Tees Valley Arts.

2. Locality Working

Operational delivery of locality working is now established in Newport and North Ormesby - at reduced capacity initially - through a shared briefing and joint work with named officers within the ward.

Teams involved are Area Care, Selective Landlord Licensing, Neighbourhood Safety, Wardens, Environmental Enforcement and Cleveland Police. The wider locality team link in with a shared briefing/action plan that is circulated and updated weekly. This will develop further to include other departments and partners as facilities open further and social distancing requirements ease.

Both the locality working community survey and the locality working partner survey are live. The community survey aims to give residents the opportunity to engage with the locality team to identify their concerns and priorities. Survey findings will directly inform the pilot schemes and any future roll out to other neighbourhoods.

3. Amazing Alleys

Work has also begun on a town wide alley regeneration project.

A working group is being finalised to assist residents to make over alleys and shared spaces within their communities.

Residents from 14 streets from across the town have already come forward to engage with the project and press releases, leaflet drops and on street engagement are planned for the coming weeks. A number of partners and voluntary groups have been approached to joint work across the town to ensure the project has the furthest reach possible.



PERFORMANCE

1. Covid 19

The Community Safety Team responded fully to the impact of COVID-19.

Some front line staff diversified with immediate effect from their everyday roles to join an army of Council staff who became the Help Boro Hub telephone support line. This ensured Middlesbrough's most vulnerable residents received food, essential medication and supplies as and when they needed it. As the systems were still being set up calls were coming in thick and fast, officers were taking up to 30-40 calls per day from distressed and often very anxious people trying to offer reassurance and support in a very uncertain climate.

As people across the country were urged to stay at home our Neighbourhood Safety Wardens continued to deliver a second to none service seven days a week across the borough. Supporting the Police in addressing breaches of COVID-19 restrictions, giving advice and guidance in an ever changing environment and direction.

Working in the town centre area of TS1 wardens have spoken to members of the public to highlight the awareness of Covid19 and the campaign to keep people at a safe distance on the pedestrian precinct. During this period wardens have carried out over 1,000 temperature checks and handed out UTB facemasks.

2. Operation Talla

Operation Talla was a joint approach with Cleveland Police and Middlesbrough Council which was a twofold approach to;

- Patrol "vulnerable locations" which could include places and businesses which could be on the receiving end of the public who don't want to abide by the rules.
- Targeting of areas where people are congregating such as town centre and Parliament Road in Newport.

Joint patrols and intelligence sharing with Street Wardens and CCTV is working well and we have made a number of arrests as a result.

3. FPNs/PSPO

Since April a total of 52 FPNs have been issued and there has been 550 PSPO instructions to change behaviour (warnings) since April 2020.

Warnings have been issued for various offences including cycling, begging, littering and drinking alcohol. Warnings are issued in the first instance and residents are educated. However, those who fail to adhere to warnings are issued with an on the spot Fixed Penalty Notice.

4. CCTV

Work is ongoing in the Newport Ward which will be completed shortly to provide an extra six CCTV Cameras in strategic locations.

Plans are also in place to take over the management and monitoring of the cameras in Easterside around at Broughton Ave shops, to provide five cameras to be monitored at the bus station and install a new CCTV pole and camera at the play area.

Working in partnership with Thirteen and Habintec Housing, CCTV cameras have been upgraded and extra rapid deployments cameras have been purchased to assist the partners to deal with the issues within the Hemlington Ward.

5. Motorbike Nuisance

Motorbike nuisance blights all communities in Middlesbrough.

We are developing a multi-agency motor vehicle nuisance plan, working closely with Cleveland Police and local social housing providers we aim to pool resources to tackle the issues effectively with long term investment into the solutions.

6. Environmental Enforcement

Following a walk about of the North Ormesby ward on July 23 – including ward councillor Ashley Waters, Street Wardens and Neighbour Safety Officers - a number of back yards were witnessed to be storing waste/items.

Initial warning letters have been sent to the land owners which gives the land owner seven days to remove the fly tipped waste/items. Failure to do so will result in a section 59 legal notice being served which requires the land owners by law to remove the waste from their land.

INVOLVEMENT AND PROMOTION

1. Reopening of Venues

Following the enforced government lockdown all cultural venues closed to the public. I am pleased to confirm that we are now taking steps to reopen the venues that closed where government guidance allows.

Teesside Archives – opened mid-July and is now accessible by appointment for onsite visits. The team are back on site full time and are delivering a full service. The need to have more of the archive digitalised and provide a more significant repository for born

digital files has become even more apparent during lockdown and is something that the team are now developing options for.

Dorman Museum opened on July 30 for pre booked visits only. Entry is still free but in order to control the number of people in the museum - and ensure covid safe delivery - a ticket system has been adopted. Feedback from the public has been very positive.

The Captain Cook Birthplace Museum will not open this season. Opening the museum during normal times requires recruitment of seasonal staffing which has not been possible during lockdown. The museum staffing resource has been concentrated on providing covid safe delivery at the Dorman. The CCBPM will reopen in spring 2021.

Newham Grange Leisure Farm reopened at the start of July following a four month closure period. The farm has taken progressive steps to return to business as usual to ensure that systems and controls in place work to allow for a covid safe visits.

Middlesbrough Theatre, like all performance venues across the country has remained dark during lock down. The spring program was originally reprogrammed into autumn and 2021 dates but work has now begun to reposition the entire autumn season into 2021.

The show however must go on and as soon as outdoor performances were permitted a summer season of outdoor theatre was quickly brought forward with three shows scheduled to take place. Alice in Lockdown and Wind in the Willows will be delivered at Newham Grange Farm and Twelfth Night will be performed in the Town Hall courtyard.

Middlesbrough Town Hall stage much like Middlesbrough Theatre, has remained dark for the last few months with no performances allowed to take place. The versatility of the building has allowed for alternative uses to be found many of which have involved the delivery of the emergency response to lock down. In the background, the Spring and Autumn program have gradually been repositioned to new dates throughout 2021.

The Big Mouth Comedy Club will be held on August 29, Twelfth Night on September 2 and comic Carl Hutchinson on September 19. These smaller socially distanced shows have a reduced capacity but will bring light back to the venues stages.

Our work with Sage Gateshead continues and we are glad to report that the classical season for 2021/22 is now being programmed and we are bringing back our much missed classical subscriber offer.

We are working closely with the Registry Office to grow our collective offer for weddings and private functions which we hope to see flourish in 2021. During the time that our larger space is unable to be used traditionally we have entered into an agreement with the Ministry of Justice for the use of the main hall and the courtroom as a Nightingale Court.

Community hubs and libraries re-opened on August 4, after having been closed for four and a half months. Nine community hub and library facilities opened with a click and collect type service only, including in Central Library.

All facilities are open on a part time basis – larger buildings are open three days a week and smaller venues for two days, with the reduced opening hours of 9.30am – 3.30pm.

Middlesbrough parks and playgrounds are all open and fully functional. Footfall into the parks is exceptionally high as families return to our open spaces for recreation as well as exercise.

Leisure Centres have now reopened delivering fitness classes and gym access with swimming pools are due to follow by the end of August.

2. Boro's Got Talent

At the start of lockdown, the Town Hall launched a virtual talent competition that called on our talented residents to upload a video of themselves showcasing their talent.

The competition received 100 entries with talents of all kinds submitted.

In the coming weeks a panel of judges will shortlist the entries down to a final ten. The lucky ten will be invited to join the Wildcats on stage for a live performance at the Town Hall as soon as it is able to open.

3. Phone Boxes

The first of a series of public art installations has begun to take the first steps towards creation.

The much-loved Town Hall phone boxes have been removed from their mounts to be repaired and made ready for artist Stephen Hurrell's light installation. The interactive piece will see bars of colour rise and fall as they respond to the sound and movement that surrounds them.

4. Events

Middlesbrough Mela – The 30th anniversary year will be delivered digitally following the association's successful Arts Council bid. Key features of Mela at home will include digital storytelling in three different languages, 400 art and craft packs distributed across the town and digital videos to help create fabulous things from the bits and bobs inside the packs. There will also be movement workshops on line that help with mindfulness, music making sessions and a Mela carnival costume competition. The Mela will also launch a brand new website that celebrates the last 30 years and looks forward to the next 30.

Despite being a market by name, Orange Pip actually has many other elements that would be very difficult to deliver within the current guidelines. Opportunities to deliver a covid safe market on centre square in September are being considered but will depend on further loosening of restrictions.

Cleveland Show will not take place in 2020 but is planning delivery for July 2021.

The Running Festival will not take place in 2020 but is now being planned for September 2021.

Octoberfest which was due to be delivered on Centre Square has also now moved to October 2021.

Delivery of Remembrance events are currently being considered by the armed forces. We hope to have confirmation on what is possible in early autumn.

A range of plans to celebrate the festive season have been developed with consideration of what the restrictions and guidelines may be at the time. We hope to have more certainty about what will be possible to deliver in early autumn.

5. Middlesbrough Lottery

The creation of a Middlesbrough Lottery has been approved. The lottery will be used to fund cultural activity throughout Middlesbrough. A timeline for the lottery to be launched will be shared in coming months. A prize of up to £25,000 is up for grabs.

6. Recovery

The cultural services teams have supported the wider authority to deliver the recovery program. Swapping their day jobs which in lots of areas where not deliverable to support the communities and businesses of the town.

Some of these tasks have included food parcel creation, emergency food package deliveries, answering phones in the Help Boro Hub and delivering the town centre ambassador service. The teams have shown passion, resilience and flexibility throughout despite all the challenges thrown their way.

7. Digital Library



Bedtime Story (With Tammy)

Tammy and Monty continue their fantastic work with the bedtime story content each week, alongside other self-generated and national digital content. This continues alongside our Digital App Borrowbox - a popular way of accessing stories and storytelling.

8. Help Boro Hub

An insights report scheduled for publication in September will document all the fantastic work carried out by libraries and other service staff from across the Council during the critical three month period when the country was in lockdown. During that period the Council supported more than 2,000 families across the town with prescriptions and shopping.



9. Newport Community Hub



Newport Hub has been involved in the distribution of cooked meals which have been provided by Applebridge and Middlesbrough Football Club. Applebridge and Middlesbrough



Football Club allocated £40,000 to this project. Five local schools have the opportunity to come to the hub and pick up cooked meals for their families on allocated days.

The hub is also participating in the Feast of Fun. This year the funding received will provide 15 food hampers that will be delivered to families in need every week for four weeks.

10. My Place

Since April the young people who attend My Place have been enjoying twice weekly virtual youth club sessions via Zoom.



The sessions have been great, with families also taking part. MusInc also support one of the sessions and young people have been accessing one to music lessons as a result of the sessions.