
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel was held on 6 March 2019.

PRESENT: Councillors Storey, (Chair), Arundale, Branson, Hubbard, Lewis, Walkington and Walters

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: R Hunter and P Marshall, Environment Agency

OFFICERS: D Carter, J Hedgley, S Lightwing, C Orr, S Williams

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors Higgins and McGloin.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Interest at this point in the meeting.

1 **MINUTES - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL - 6 FEBRUARY 2019**

The minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel held on 6 February 2019 were taken as read and approved as a correct record.

In relation to the City Centre Strategy, a Member asked whether the Delivery Board with Property Owners had been established, or met, yet and whether there had been any progress in establishing a Tourist Information Office in Middlesbrough.

The Democratic Services Officer undertook to seek a response from the relevant Officers and circulate that response to all Panel Members.

2 **FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Public Rights of Way Officer presented the Panel with the Flood Risk Management Update. In line with The Pitt Report, recommendations 90 and 91, the scrutiny panel was required to review works carried out to manage flood risk and receive an annual summary of actions taken locally to manage flood risk.

Middlesbrough's drainage system was extensive and complex in nature, comprising open and culverted watercourses and a surface water/combined sewerage system. Flooding came from a variety of sources including surface water run-off, ordinary watercourses, and from surcharging sewers. Surface water flooding occurred when intense rainfall, often of short duration, was unable to permeate into the ground or enter drainage systems quickly enough, resulting in ponding or overland flows. This could cause considerable problems in urban areas. Due to the urban nature of Middlesbrough and the fact that water could not easily soak away due to the presence of clay close to the surface across the area, Middlesbrough was one of the worst areas in the north east affected by surface water flooding.

Members were shown a map highlighting areas of Middlesbrough most susceptible to surface water flooding. In collaboration with Northumbrian Water (NWL) and the Environment Agency (EA), strategic studies had been undertaken to highlight and prioritise the areas of greatest risk from flooding within each catchment area. Middlesbrough was covered by several catchment areas and each area had a Stage 1 and a Stage 2 study undertaken. Stage 1 focussed on collection, collation, analysis and prioritisation of information to identify areas of high risk from flooding. Stage 2 focussed on identifying opportunities within the top three or four high-risk areas to reduce or prevent flooding. By the end of 2019 /2020, Middlesbrough would have full coverage of Stage 1 and Stage 2 studies.

The studies would provide a clear picture of where the high-risk areas were and what schemes could be implemented to improve or eliminate the problem. The Middlesbrough East

Stage 1 Integrated Study undertaken in 2018 identified ten flood risk areas at Stage 1 and three or four priorities would be taken forward to a Stage 2 study. Middlesbrough East overlapped the boundary into Redcar and Cleveland Local Authority and the Stage 2 study would be a joint study with that Authority.

Middlesbrough Council had been invited to submit schemes to be included in the Environment Agency's Long Term Plan for Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA). Nine schemes had been submitted which would potentially protect 588 homes in Middlesbrough. The schemes included were in: Gresham Road and Newport, Pallister, Whinney Banks, Lawnswood Road, Berwick Hills, Connaught Road, Nunthorpe, Barrington Crescent, Thornfield Road, and Shevington Grove, Marton.

With regard to highway drainage, the Council continued to investigate the highway drainage system, which had not been previously recorded or mapped, to increase knowledge of the system and interactions with sewers and watercourses. The system was then repaired and cleansed as appropriate. The other thing affecting drainage was new developments and the Council worked with developers to ensure that Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) techniques were part of all major developments.

The Environment Agency currently had a six year programme called the Medium Term Plan, which would end in 2021. Middlesbrough Council had several schemes outstanding in that Plan including Saltersgill Fields Scheme. In 2018 the EA had requested further modelling to be completed and as a result the scheme was widened to include the area north of Easterside. The scheme involved the creation of ponds and scraps between Saltersgill Road and the allotments and a bund around the open space between the allotments and Marton Road. It was envisaged that around 306 properties would be protected and the scheme would be completed in 2019. The Outline Business Case (OBC) and funding had been approved by the EA.

The OBC for a small-scale scheme in Cornwall Close had been submitted to the EA for approval. This scheme looked to capture overland flows from the recreational field to the south of Cornwall Close and provide flood risk reduction to three properties. The scheme involved the creation of a bund and the deflection of surface water into highway drains on Cornwall Close.

The EA had also approved funding of further investigation work in relation to a scheme on Ormesby High Street. The scheme would look to capture overland flows from the farmland to the south of the National Trust property and protect properties from the flooding beck due to an under-capacity culvert. The scheme involved the creation of a bund within the National Trust land, creation of a flood defence wall and some property level protection. Discussions were taking place with the National Trust and the EA as they were looking to make changes to the trash screen on the culvert.

The Marton West Beck Scheme was a large scheme, which was being managed by the EA. A number of improvement options had been considered. The option chosen included upgrading the existing screen at Albert Park, reinforcing walls (Borough Road and Albert Park right bank), twin bunds on the existing minor watercourse and a bund/storage pond at Albert Park. The scheme also included the removal of Japanese Knotweed. Representatives from the EA who were present at the meeting presented the details of the scheme.

The cost of the scheme was £5.4 million. To date, £4.9 million of funding had been identified from local levy, Section 106 monies and Government grant aid. The EA was currently in discussion with various beneficiaries of the scheme to fund the gap of £0.5 million to enable an OBC to be submitted. The scheme needed to be approved within the current six-year programme, which would end in 2021, otherwise priority would go to other schemes that were fully funded and ready to go forward.

The Chair thanked the officer and representatives from the EA for their informative presentation.

AGREED that the information provided was received and noted.

3 **AIR POLLUTION**

The Head of Public Protection provided an update on the findings of recent modelling results in relation to NO₂ emissions. Middlesbrough had been challenged by the Government in relation to emission levels at two locations on the A66. One area was going through the town centre in Central Ward and the other where the A66 joined the A19. Using a national model, it was reported that both locations were exceeding national standards for NO₂. The Council was tasked to look at how those levels could be reduced in the shortest time possible.

Funding was provided to carry out local modelling and use local data to establish a more accurate picture of the NO₂ levels. The modelling that had been carried out had identified that the NO₂ levels were in fact considerably less than national modelling, with results of 26 and 32 being recorded at the two locations.

An Outline Business Case was presented to Government Minister in December 2018 and in January 2019, the Government confirmed that the work carried out demonstrated that there were no exceedances and the Council was no longer under direction. The Minister also reminded the Council that it still had a duty to monitor air quality.

The Head of Public Protection commented that this was good news and that the Council would continue to ensure that air quality in Middlesbrough was as good as it could be because there was no safe threshold. The Council was currently working with Redcar and Cleveland Council on a South Tees Clean Air Strategy. The first meeting of the Clean Air Workshop had been held recently and discussions had taken place about what could be done to make Middlesbrough as clean as it could be.

AGREED that the information provided was received and noted.

4 **MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL LED PROGRAMME PHASE 2**

Following a recommendation from the Panel's previous scrutiny review on LED Lighting, the Infrastructure Programme Manager provided an update on Phase 2 of the LED Programme.

The Transport and Infrastructure service area had worked to refine and provide a more robust case for the roll out of Phase 2 of the street lighting upgrade programme and the following details were provided:

- Fewer fittings would be upgraded following rationalisation of high-level estimation of inventory.
- Price per unit had been re-negotiated and the majority of fittings was now significantly cheaper.
- Energy costs had risen by 16% since the initial estimation.
- Carbon Tax saving assumptions from Central Government had reduced, thus reducing the level of savings possible.
- Salix Finance Limited would provide the Council with 99.8% of the funding (£2.491m) on an interest free loan.
- Middlesbrough Council would fund the remaining 0.2% of the value of the bid (£4k).
- The payback period for the revised programme was 8.3 years, which was 33% better than previously estimated.
- This would result in 100% of the inventory being upgraded, resulting in energy savings of £300K per annum.

The Head of Transport and Infrastructure highlighted the energy savings of £300K per annum which were in addition to the £450K savings from Phase 1. The new scheme represented an overall saving of £1.5 million on the original estimate for Phase 2.

Members thanked Officers for their work.

AGREED that the information provided was received and noted.

5 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD UPDATE**

The Chair gave a verbal update on items discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 5 March 2019.