

## THE EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the Executive was held on 12 June 2018 at 1:00 p.m. in Mandela Room, Town Hall, Middlesbrough.

**PRESENT:** Councillors J Brunton Dobson, M Carr, C Rooney, D Rooney, J Rostron, M Thompson, N Walker and L Young.

**INVITEES:** Councillors T Higgins and J Walker.

**OFFICIALS:** J Bromiley, K Parkes, T Parkinson, S Reynolds and H Watson.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Mayor D Budd and Councillor J Sharrocks.

18/1 **MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 15 MAY 2018**

The minutes of the Executive held on 15 May 2018 were read and accepted as a true record.

18/2 **MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR PROPERTY MEETING HELD ON 20 APRIL 2018**

The Minutes of the Executive Sub-Committee for Property meeting held on 20 April 2018 were noted.

18/3 **STANDARDISED MEANS TESTED MODEL FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS CARERS: CONNECTED PERSONS AND SPECIAL GUARDIANS**

The Lead Executive Member for Children's Services and the Executive Director for Children's Services submitted a report to outline the benefits, and consider any associated risks, of adopting the Department for Education standardised means testing model for financial support for Family & Friends Carers.

The report outlined the legislative context and the background to the requirement for the Local Authority to update its Family & Friends Carers Policy. It summarised the benefits, and impact, of adopting the Department for Education standardised means testing model for financial assessment for Family & Friends Carers.

The support services that Local Authorities must provide family & friends carers, in accordance with the Children Act 1989, are outlined within the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005; updated 2016 and the Department for Education's Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities: Family and Friends Care 2010. The guidance sets out a framework for the provision of support to family and friends carers, including practical and financial support for family & Friends carers and special guardians.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

The Department for Education had developed a model means test for financial support for Family and Friends Carers (see Appendices 1 and 2 for details and associated payment calculator). Whilst this was suggested model only, the Department for Education recommends its use by Local Authorities as the model was fair and ensured a consistent approach to arriving at support payments, ensuring that Family & Friends carers are treated equitably within the context of what is affordable within existing Local Authority budgets.

The current means test adopted by Middlesbrough was based upon a deficit model, which had resulted in the Local Authority being subject to significant criticism from the Courts, adversely impacting upon its own credibility within the legal arena. Consultation with the Council's Legal Service has further confirmed that this has also led to the unnecessary making of a number of Care Orders, to secure the weekly age related foster care allowance for friends carers, whether they have been positively assessed in accordance with the Fostering Regulations, or not. It has also resulted in unbudgeted backdated payments.

**Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

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The Department for Education had developed a model means test for financial support for Family and Friends Carers (Appendices 1 and 2 of the report for details and associated payment calculator). Whilst this was a suggested model only, the Department for Education recommends its use by Local Authorities as the model is fair and ensures a consistent approach to arriving at support payments, ensuring that Family & Friends carers are treated equitably within the context of what is affordable within existing Local Authority budgets.

The current means test adopted by Middlesbrough is based upon a deficit model, which has resulted in the Local Authority being subject to significant criticism from the Courts, adversely impacting upon its own credibility within the legal arena. Consultation with the Council's Legal Service has further confirmed that this has also led to the unnecessary making of a number of Care Orders, to secure the weekly age related foster care allowance for friends carers, whether they have been positively assessed in accordance with the Fostering Regulations, or not. It has also resulted in unbudgeted backdated payments.

A group of kinship carers attended and addressed the meeting in support of the report.

**ORDERED**

**That Executive consider formal approval of the Department for Education standardised means testing model for financial assessment for Family & Friends Carers.**

**REASONS**

The decision was supported by the following reasons:

- **A systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate, and improve the effectiveness of the financial means test process when assessing what, if any, financial support Family & Friends Carers may be entitled to from the Local Authority.**
- **To increase the credibility of the Local Authority within the legal arena and reduce vulnerability in terms of formal complaints and judicial reviews, and associated financial costs.**

18/4

**CAR PARKING REVIEW**

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure and Executive Director of Growth and Place, submitted a report to update the Executive on a review of car parking. The report also sought Executive endorsement to implement a series of improvements to car parking that would contribute to Middlesbrough Council's city-scale aspirations.

The report provided an overview of the changes required to facilitate an efficient car parking offer in the city centre, drawing on a detailed review undertaken by Fore Consulting. Recommendations are made to reflect changes in parking policy in the pricing associated with individual car parks.

The report outlined that the commission was to provide a two stage review, covering both strategic issues, and the operational effectiveness of the current provision. The review looked at what the Council could implement to address the short, medium and long-term challenges/opportunities.

### **Reasons for recommendations**

The recommendations were considered to be the most appropriate course of action for the Council, to ensure that car park users are experiencing the highest quality customer experience as possible in terms of modern practices befitting regional, city centre aspirations and to attract further inward investment.

The recommendations would align with the capital investment of the 'pay on exit' system to be implemented in Zetland MSCP this year. Implementing 'pay on exit' would also be used as an evidence based intervention, assessing the customer experience and demand associated with the offering this service to customers. The recommendations would also ensure that investment in maintenance and development of the parking service can be sustained in future years; so the standard remains that of a successful city centre.

The changes to the tariffs allow the Council to begin to assess how a zoning approach for car parking could work in the longer term in the city centre, as the promotion of Zetland MSCP as 'commuter car park' is expected to release capacity within car parks located closer to the retail sector. This ensures that the management of traffic is more contained within the centre; allowing shoppers to have greater access to the parking offer in the retail centre, where evidence demonstrates a higher turnover of car parking spaces.

The recommendations would also align and complement the work being undertaken on a series of city centre improvements, which are developing the public realm at key locations to create enhancements to the environment and improve accessibility, connectivity and perceptions around the pedestrian experience. This investment has been key in attracting many new and exciting restaurants, bars and retailers and has also been pivotal in the support of Middlesbrough's emerging independent quarter. It is essential that the car parking offer complements this investment; supporting both day and night time economies and creating an accessible and safe environment for visitors and residents alike.

### **Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

Do nothing. This option is not recommended because the car parking service is one of the first services commuters, shoppers and visitors use when arriving in the city centre. As a result, having modern and flexible provision demonstrates additionality and ambition to be at the heart of the city region and being in line with other comparable city regions, outlined in the Fore Consulting Review.

### **ORDERED**

**That the Executive approves following improvements and changes to the operation of the car parking service in the short term;**

- a. **Implement 'pay on exit' at Zetland MSCP**
- b. **Retain two hours free parking for shoppers at Captain Cook Square**
- c. **Remove two hours free parking in commuter car parks (Zetland MSCP & Station Street)**
- d. **Increase charging by 40p per day in cheaper commuter car parks to align pricing (Zetland MSCP, Amber Street and Station Street)**
- e. **Increase tariffs by 20p in all other car parks**
- f. **Put parking restrictions in place at Middlehaven and Gresham**
- g. **Apply charge of £10 for lost parking permits**

### **REASONS**

**The decisions were supported by the following reasons:**

**The Council will provide an improved car parking offer for all users of the service in the city centre in the short-term; allowing time to review the effectiveness of the recommendations to inform both the medium and long-term offer. This would complement the capital investment in the wider public realm improvements across the**

**city centre, providing an improved experience for commuters and visitors.**

**Car park users will see an increase in tariffs in the identified locations. The increased revenue enables the Council to ensure that the car parking service receives appropriate investment to sustain the current service levels, along with being well positioned to further invest in the service as the local economy develops and the availability of car parking decreases. This will result in a greater demand on both the public and private sector car parking in the city centre.**

18/5

## **HOUSING DELIVERY**

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Infrastructure and the Executive Director for Growth and Place submitted a report which sought endorsement for the Council to undertake proactive intervention in the housing market, and sought approval to commence an option appraisal of potential housing delivery models to bring forward the development of high quality, affordable homes and create a place for all.

In order to facilitate the development of Middlesbrough as a vibrant, modern growing city, the Council aims to drive the development of high quality, affordable homes and create a place for all. As a result, Middlesbrough was embarking on the most ambitious house building programme in recent history.

Significant investment has been put in by the Council to facilitate the housing growth so far, both through the development of supporting infrastructure and in preparing for the release of new sites.

This investment, and the Council's control over much of the supply of land has enabled a degree of control to be exerted over the number of completions to date. As the market is expected to continue providing the same successful product on the commercially viable sites in the south of the town, there is a need for the Council to exert the same control to ensure that those sites in less commercially viable areas are also developed, and that the affordability, quality and choice of housing provided continues to meet the town's aspirations – even at the more affordable end of the market.

The Council was committed to ensuring that future housing growth occurs in a more balanced way and is based on the principles of well-designed neighbourhoods with a sense of place and identity, with access to schools, green spaces, amenities and transport. To ensure this commitment is reflected in the housing product being developed, and to facilitate the sustainable growth of the town there is a need to take a more proactive role in determining what is built, and where.

It was envisaged that some form of special purpose housing delivery vehicle would provide the Council with the ability to exert influence over the market, and address the identified gaps.

The report will establish the need for the Council to take proactive intervention in the housing market, in order to exert greater control over the pace and quality of housing development. The report will request approval to establish a Shadow Board who would consider a detailed option appraisal, the recommendations of which will be reported back to Executive at a future date

### **Reasons for recommendations**

The Localism Act 2011 and the 2012 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) self-financing reforms have afforded local authorities the opportunity to adopt a number of delivery models to develop new housing. The issues being identified in Middlesbrough around the provision of affordable, quality homes have led to consideration of how such models could be applied locally.

Developing a shadow board to explore the different options, governance and management arrangements, would enable a robust decision to be taken at a future Executive meeting around the nature of the proactive role being taken by the Council.

**Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

The shadow board would be responsible for considering the different models of delivery, and the implications for the Council in terms of governance and finance. Prior to the establishment of the shadow board, the only other option available for consideration would be to continue the existing approach. As this approach was not currently addressing the identified gaps, it was not being recommended.

**ORDERED**

**That the Executive:**

- a. **endorses the need for the Council to intervene in the housing market in order to exert greater control over the pace and quality of development;**
- b. **approves the establishment of a Shadow Board to consider a detailed option appraisal of housing delivery models; and,**
- c. **That Councillors Lewis Young, Denise Rooney and NJ Walker be appointed to sit on the Shadow Board.**

**REASON**

**The decisions were supported by the following reason:**

**The decision would require the Council to establish a Shadow Board to consider an option appraisal on potential housing delivery models.**

18/6

**MIDDLESBROUGH COMMUNITY SURVEY 2017**

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance and Strategic Director for Finance, Governance and Support, submitted a report to summarise the findings from the 2017 Middlesbrough Community Survey and set out for the consideration of the Executive proposed actions in response.

In line with its commitment to sector-led improvement, in 2016 the Council commissioned the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a peer review of its approach to communications. Undertaken in early 2017, this was reported to Leadership Management Team in April of that year and has since informed the ongoing development of marketing and communications activity within the Council.

One of the LGA's recommendations was to reinstate a regular householder survey to identify what citizens think of the council, their priorities and how they access information. The Council had not undertaken such a survey since the 2009 Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Survey, with the then Coalition Government abolishing the statutory requirement for biennial Place Surveys in 2010. The Council accepted the LGA's recommendation, and the Middlesbrough Community Survey was undertaken by a third party provider during October-November 2017.

The report outlined that the overall findings of the survey were positive, with Middlesbrough performing at a level on a par with or above comparators for many measures. The survey identified a number of areas of focus, which will be addressed in the main by the forthcoming Social Regeneration Prospectus, to be reported to Executive during 2018/19.

**Reasons for recommendation**

To ensure that the views of local residents are taken into account in the development of the Council's strategies and plans, ultimately improving satisfaction with the local area and the Council itself.

**ORDERED**

**That the Executive notes the findings from the 2017 Middlesbrough Community Survey, and agrees the next steps set out in the report to ensure that the Council responds**

**effectively to these findings.**

#### **REASON**

**The recommendation was supported by the following reason:**

**The views of local residents will be taken into account in the development of the Council's strategies and plans, ultimately improving satisfaction with the local area and the Council itself.**

18/7

#### **CUSTOMER STRATEGY 2018-2022**

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance and Strategic Director for Finance, Governance and Support submitted a report to set out achievements of the Customer Strategy 2015-2018 and present a revised strategy for the period to 2022.

In June 2015, the Executive approved a corporate Customer Strategy for the period 2015-2018. This strategy set out a vision to transform delivery of services over the next 3 years, providing customers with excellent service and access to self-serve through an extensive range of e-services. The strategy was underpinned by a programme covering the following project areas:

- developing a customer charter;
- delivering an employee development programme to embed the charter's principles;
- introducing a new customer relationship management system;
- redesigning the Council's website, intranet and customer portal;
- redesigning Middlesbrough House as the Council's principle customer centre; and
- delivering a marketing and communications campaign to promote the new approach.

The Customer Strategy 2015-2018 has been successful in developing a culture of customer excellence within the Council and improving the accessibility of Council services. The proposed strategy for 2018-2022 extended this approach across all services, focusing on understanding customer needs meeting them effectively and efficiently, and validating and communicating the Council's achievements.

#### **Reasons for recommendation**

To ensure that the Council's customers continue to be at the heart of what it does, and that a consistent approach to customer excellence is delivered across all services.

#### **Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

- To not update the Customer Strategy. This was not recommended given the centrality of customers to the Council's approach to transformation, and would give rise to an inconsistent customer experience across services.
- To merge the Customer Strategy with another corporate strategy, such as the Digital Strategy. This was not recommended as it brings the risk of the profile of customer excellence being subsumed within the drive towards service digitisation, which cannot alone meet the needs of all customers, and will never meet the needs of some, more vulnerable customers. It was important therefore the Customer Strategy is maintained, and has a separate identity within the organisation

#### **ORDERED**

**That the Executive approves the proposed Customer Strategy 2018-2022.**

#### **REASON**

**The decision was supported by the following reason:**

**The Council's customers would continue to be at the heart of what it does, and a**

**consistent approach to customer excellence will be delivered across all services.**

18/8 **DIGITAL STRATEGY 2018-2022**

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance and Strategic Director for Finance, Governance and Support submitted a report for approval of a proposed corporate Digital Strategy for the period to 2022.

Council approved the Strategic Plan for 2018-2022 on 28 March 2018. Under the 'Business imperatives' aim, the plan sets out a range of strategic priorities to deal with the £26.9m shortfall in the Council's finances to 2021/22, as set out in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) presented to Council on 7 March 2018.

One of these priorities was to through our digital strategy, make it easier to access our services online and by phone. This report sets out this strategy to 2022, and aims improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services through the use of digital solutions that are well-used by customers and employees elsewhere in their everyday lives.

The proposed strategy sets out a systematic approach to ensure that the Council fully exploits digital solutions in the achievement of its strategic objectives across four key themes: engagement, intelligence, workflow and agility. The strategy will deliver improved outcomes for citizens and for employees.

**Reasons for recommendation**

To ensure that the Council adopts a systematic approach in adopting digital solutions, maximising the significant contribution that these can make to the achievement of strategic and operational priorities.

**Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

There are two other main potential decisions:

- To have no specific strategy for digital. This was not recommended as it would result in an uneven approach to the deployment of digital solutions within the Council, with limited benefits delivered.
- To integrate the approach to digital within another corporate strategy, such as the Customer Strategy. This was not recommended as digital has a much wider application within the organisation, and requires a separate identity to communicate this.

**ORDERED**

**That the Executive approves the proposed Digital Strategy 2018-22.**

**REASON**

**The decision was supported by the following reason:**

**Digital solutions will be deployed systematically across services, utilising a digital by design approach to ensure that no citizen is unduly disadvantaged by digital transformation.**

18/9 **REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS**

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance and Strategic Director for Finance, Governance and Support submitted a report that sought approval of revised frameworks for corporate performance and risk management, and a new format for quarterly performance reporting to the Executive.

The report outlined that the streamlined Strategic Plan 2018-22 approved by Council on 28

March 2018, offered the opportunity to further improve post-quarterly reporting to the Executive on expenditure against budgets and performance. This report proposed a revised format for these reports, within the context of revised performance and risk management frameworks for the Council, reflecting learning over the past three years.

The report refreshes the Council's performance and risk management frameworks, with a specific focus on enhancing the reporting of performance to members and local residents.

#### **Reasons for recommendation**

To ensure continuous improvement in corporate performance and risk management and provide for a more effective reporting of performance to elected members and local residents.

#### **Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

The other potential decision was to retain current arrangements. While acceptable from a corporate governance perspective, this was not recommended, as the proposed arrangements provide for better consideration of strategic issues and enhanced and regular communication of performance to local residents, which at present is done at an ad hoc basis.

#### **ORDERED**

- **That the Executive approves the revised performance management framework (Appendix 1) and risk management framework (Appendix 2)**
- **That the Executive approves the proposed revised quarterly performance reporting format (Appendix 3), to be implemented from Quarter One 2018/19, and that a summary version of this be included in LoveMiddlesbrough magazine going forward.**

#### **REASONS**

The decisions were supported by the following reason:

**Quarterly reporting to Executive will focus on key strategic matters only, and the performance of the Council would be better communicated to local residents.**

#### 18/10 **COUNCIL, OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - MATTERS FOR RECONSIDERATION**

There were no items for consideration.

#### 18/11 **ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL FINAL REPORT - FLY-TIPPING AND ENFORCEMENT - SERVICE RESPONSE**

The Environment Scrutiny Panel had undertaken a review on fly-tipping and enforcement.

The Scrutiny Panel made ten recommendations upon which a response was sought from the relevant service area.

The Executive Member for Environment and Commercial Services and the Executive Director for Growth and Place submitted a service response to the recommendations of the Environment Scrutiny Panel. A copy of the response was attached at Appendix II.

The Chair of the Environment Scrutiny Panel presented the final report to Executive.

The Executive Member Environment and Commercial Services for presented the service response.

#### **ORDERED**

**That the Action Plan put together in response to the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations be approved.**



**REASON**

**To ensure effective enforcement is in place in Middlesbrough in relation to fly-tipping and, over the next three years, to achieve a significant reduction in fly-tipping across Middlesbrough and to improve the condition of back alley cleanliness resulting in financial savings to the Council.**

18/12

**SOCIAL CARE AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL - ASTER CARE HOME (FORMERLY BELLE VUE CARE HOME) - SERVICE RESPONSE**

The Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel had undertaken a review regarding Aster Care Home (Formerly Belle Vue Care Home).

The Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel made 1 recommendation, upon which a response was sought from the relevant service area.

The Executive Member for Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and the Executive Director for Adult Social Care submitted a service response to the recommendations of the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel. A copy of the response was attached at Appendix II.

The Chair of the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel presented the final report to Executive.

The Executive Member for Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health presented the service response.

**ORDERED**

**That the Action Plan put together in response to the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations be approved.**

**REASON**

**The Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel will be provided with more comprehensive information about safeguarding activity during the preceding quarter.**

The decision(s) will come into force after five working days following the day the decision(s) was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures.