

Appendix 2 - Councillor Call for Action - Submission

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Calls For Action

The Southlands Centre

4th July 2018
Cllr Brian Hubbard

HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES	
04 JUL 2018	
ACTIONED TO:	
ACKNOWLEDGED BY:	

The initial issue Checklist

1 Are the concerns to do with the quality of public service provision at a local level?

This Councillor Call for Action is to address concerns in the community about the lack of playing fields & football pitches, this a ward already blighted by high rates of crime & disorder, antisocial behaviour. The loss of the play fields and football pitches will contribute to the already high rates of obesity and the associated health problems/risks associated with such.

2 Are the concerns individual complaints?

These are not relating to an individual or individual complaints, this is supported by the attached letters and also a petition of over 3,000 signatories..

3 Do the concerns relate to individual 'quasi judicial' decisions (e.g. Planning or Licensing) or to Council Tax or Non-Domestic Rates?

No, it does not however, in part also relate to the lack of safeguarding of local football pitches by Middlesbrough Council and failure to engage with both Sport England & the Football Foundation who have a beneficial interest in the land. These organisations have provided a grant to Middlesbrough Council to ensure a legacy of play fields and football pitches are retained in perpetuity to help tackle the concerns raised above and reduce the impacts of inactivity.

The Local Community Concern Checklist

4 Is the focus of concern on a neighbourhood or locality issue?

This Councillor Call for Action is not only a neighbourhood issue but also a locality issue.

5 Is the issue a genuine local concern?

It is of genuine concern and has been reflected by both the attendance at numerous public meetings, signatories to the petition [3,000+] and the number of telephone calls, emails and face to face discussions with residents held by all ward councillors.

The 'Championing a Request' Checklist

6 Resolving an issue.

The future of the Southlands Centre has been raised in writing to the Section 151 Officer and ignored, it has been raised at face to face meetings with both the internal & external auditors.

There is a petition but it cannot effectively, deal with the wide ranging community concerns. A petition is not a mechanism for dealing with information that has not been presented to the Executive and omitted from reports.

The Community Concerns are justified when both Overview & Scrutiny Challenge, onestops and a letter to the Section 151 Officer did not get open, transparent and full answers.

It was a separate approach to the Football Foundation based upon the community's concerns coupled with a Land Registry search that satisfied this.

7 When an apology, explanation or an assurance about a particular problem is enough to satisfy a community concern.

This is not applicable as the failings that have caused community concern are embedded so much so the auditors are still monitoring policies, processes.

The councils complaints process is not a suitable mechanism given the involvement of senior officers including the CEX about the future of the Southlands Centre.

8 If the above are not appropriate or have been tried and not succeeded.

:

- We have raised the issue with any local stakeholders who use the centre including but not limited to dance groups;
- We have held a number of public meetings inviting the local community to attend, we have taken onboard their concerns, had informal discussion and also formal public meetings with Executive members in attendance. Minutes of these meetings have been recorded and are available upon request.
- We have raised this issue at the local Community Forum and held a number of meetings discussing this topic. The community concerns are reflective of those submitted.;
- We have raised concerns with the appropriate Executive member in writing and unfortunately ;have not received an open and transparent response to concerns raised. We cannot raise concerns with the Executive Member about the beneficial interest in land of the Football Foundation or the interest of Sport England. It has never been a material consideration of the Executive member and officers, this is evidenced by its omission from reports.

Middlesbrough Council does not have a dedicated scrutiny officer and the matter has been picked up by Mrs Reynolds. The guidance has been updated by Mrs Reynolds without referral back to the committee nor delegated power to do so, in our opinion.

The 'Reality' Checklist

9 Be selective

Only agree to take on issues that have wide support: don't forget that for every group of residents that support a particular scheme, there will probably be another group that oppose it. Don't set yourself impossible objectives - don't set yourself up to fail.

Councillor Calls for Action are not a pathway to additional funding. If the Council has already decided not to take a particular course of action it might well be that the funding is not available. Use the One-Stop to get information BEFORE committing yourself to a particular course of action.

SECTION 2: HOW TO PROGRESS A CCfA

- 2.1 The members have been provided with the initial letter stating intention to progress a councillor call for action..
- 2.2 CCfA is the only option to address local need there have been a number of opportunities to address local need such as playfields and football pitches but in the absence of officer's and Executive Members approaching those with an interest in the land, discussing with them before proceeding down a course of action, no other route is available. Scrutiny is the only resolution available due to all other avenues being exhausted and the officers and members mentioned above being involved .
- 2.3
- submitting a One-Stop is not appropriate as the officers and members had not carried out sufficient due-dilligence to indentify local concerns or attempted to engage with interested parties.
 - A complaints procedure is not appropriate as the head of paid Service has had direct input into this decision which has resulted in the community concerns.
 - Advise has been provided regarding a petition but a petition will not and does not address the concerns of the community.
 - 2 Call in's have previously taken place and on each occasion audit found that the concerns of the MICA group, residents, businesses and community were valid but this was still ignored by Middlesbrough Council.
- 2.5 This is our formal request that the CCFA is advanced to committee for the reasons stated in the boxes below;

STEP 1: REGISTERING YOUR CCfA WITH SCRUTINY	
Actions to be taken	Action taken
Ensure that other appropriate avenues have been exhausted. [Explained above]	Onestops, Call in's, public meetings, writing to the Section 151 Officer, raising concerns with the Head of paid Service, informal community meetings, engagement with the Community Forum have all happened. The community concerns cannot be addressed via a petition not are they suitable for a petition, although one has been collected for due submission.

Define the issue. Set out, in writing, what the issue is this will avoid misinterpretation at a later stage.

The council since 2014 have failed to comply with its own policies and procedures governing the future of the Southlands Centre.

When Executive members have been furnished with reports information has been omitted.

When Officers have been challenged about the omissions they have failed to satisfy the concerns of auditors.

Middlesbrough Council have not engaged with all stakeholders, community groups, community users, the business community or residents about the future of the Southlands Centre.

There has been no mention in any report of communication with the Football Foundation or Sport England, in fact this was instigated by the MICA Group following a Land Registry search after the local community raised concerns.

There has been a vague promise of a community facility but sadly this has not been costed and no information has been provided. It was however a consideration of the Executive to decide the future of the Southlands Centre on this basis.

There has been no material consideration or engagement with Sport England or the Football Foundation about the communities concerns over the loss of playfields and football pitches [both 3G and grass].

There has been no consideration or reference to the shortage of playfields and pitches in Middlesbrough despite the authority being aware of the issue.

It was stated by the Executive Member for Finance & Governance that this will be sold for housing.

Due to the lack of process and governance compliance, the Head of Paid Service & Executive members involvement throughout the process it is only suitable for independent scrutiny.

STEP 2: ESTABLISHING THAT YOUR CCfAIS A COMMUNITY ISSUE	
Actions to be taken	Actions Taken
Obtain community views	We have held meetings with the Community Forum logging the community concern and opinions We have held informal public meetings as Ward Councillors logging public opinion and concern. We have advised on petitions and commenced with a petition to further demonstrate the genuine public concern..
Contact any relevant special interest or single interest groups in the area	We have contact the Football Foundation, Sport England and the Community Forum directly following our own due diligence and research due to omissions by Middlesbrough Council.
Get the matter raised at the Community Council	To Follow
STEP 3: TAKING UP THE ISSUE WITHIN THE COUNCIL	
Actions to be taken	Actions Taken
Raise the matter with the relevant Executive Member	The Executive member and Section 151 officer have been made aware of the issue which has sparked the community concerns. Neither have responded, previous issues which have been raised have resulted in an email back from the CEX alleging it is bullying and/or intimidating officers therefore Scrutiny is the only appropriate route. The Football Foundation & Sport England have been made aware.
Environment Department issues: raise at the Executive Surgery	N/A
Write to the Service Director.	See above
STEP 4: INITIATING THE CCfA FOR CONSIDERATION BY SCRUTINY	
Actions to be taken	Actions Taken
Contact the Scrutiny Support Team.	All of the actions above and detailed within this report have been reasonably taken.
Prepare a report to Overview & Scrutiny Board	Any steps which have not been completed fully are because the community cause for concern has been raised on a number of occasions previously and continued failings

	<p>by Middlesbrough Council officers ensure that members are not fully furnished with the facts to make informed decisions.</p> <p>On a number of occasions the narrative of the Southlands Centres future has changed with no sufficient reasons other than a failing has occurred and in order to appear compliant the narrative has changed.</p> <p>Basic due diligence would have identified that the Football Foundation and Sport England have an interest in the land by way of a covenant.</p> <p>Basic reporting would have identified that Middlesbrough has a shortage of playing fields and football pitches, this especially in a ward of high deprivation is detrimental to health and is likely to add to the high levels of antisocial behaviour.</p>
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SECTION 3: REGISTERING A CCfA WITH SCRUTINY

3.1 Contact has been made with Mrs Reynolds who has identified herself as the scrutiny officer for the purposes of this CCFA.

3.2

- Councillor Brian Hubbard
- 4th July 2018
- Councillors Mick Saunders, Jan Mohan, Dennis McCabe & Jon Rathmell

SECTION 4 – SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION OF YOUR CCfA

- 4.1 We request for the reasons stated that this matter is fully advanced to scrutiny. It is important as an authority to be seen to be open and transparent.

SECTION 5 – RESOLUTION REQUIRED

- 5.1 That the decision to close the Southlands Centre is placed upon hold until;
- the Officers & Executive Members of the authority take the process back to stage 1, which has never been complied with as supported by audit
 - Officers engage with those who have an interest in the land;
 - Officers report on the impact of the loss of the football pitches and playfields sufficiently;
 - Officers ensure that appraisals are accurate regarding the status of the Southlands, covenants etc
 - Officers report upon the impact to public health and antisocial behaviour following any proposed closure of the Southlands Centre.

This list is not exhaustive but a minimum proposed and reasonable requirement.

Brian Hubbard

From: Brian Hubbard
Sent: Tuesday, 22 May 2018 08:49
To: Brian Hubbard
Subject: Fwd:

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: jdavison08
Date: 15 May 2018 at 21:26:11 BST
To: _____

Hi my name is julie and involved with preistfields community group as a small bingo in which we were located at the southlands centre for a long time and then had to move to Glastonbury house this bingo is vital for the community it gets the elderly together as a group to enjoy bingo a natter and a cuppa. It will be a shame for southlands to close as it's a big part of the preistfields area and for the residents also. As we all no it does need a lot of work to be done in the building and this can be achievable if the time and money is well spent on the building and it's all about what the public need s in the area and not the councillors needs.

Thanks .

Yours sincerely
Mrs davison

Sent from my Samsung device

*** Email Security scanned this email for malicious content ***
*** IMPORTANT: Do not open attachments from unrecognized senders ***

FAO - Cllr Jon Rathmell

I am the Principal dance teacher at *Steps School of Dance*, based in Ormesby. We are a small friendly dance school and often take part in shows and competitions based in the Southlands Centre. There are dance events on almost every weekend and most half term holidays, with up to 600 people often attending these festivals.

There were so many activities available when I was a child attending this centre and at many other local facilities, including the Netherfields community centre. The Southlands had such a variety of activities available, from roller skating to trampolining, gymnastics, play schemes, football, basketball and so much more. There was something for everyone and every age. This inevitably kept me on the straight and narrow and helped me gain so many life skills. New sessions, classes which have recently set up are constantly under threat of the Southlands centre closing; which is the reason most businesses have moved out and sessions aren't as busy as they could be.

There are very few facilities with such a wonderful Theatre stage and venue which can support functions such as Championships, Dance Festivals, Shows, Fitness events, parties and so much more. The business could be thriving in this centre, the location is fantastic and all the council wat to do is knock it down to build houses and make more money. We need to work together to try and save our Centre and the facilities it has to support our activities, jobs and everyday life. Even if people could travel further afield, there simply isn't enough space for Everyone and every event. I don't think anyone has done the maths!!! Millions of pounds have just been set aside at Parliament for various Arts, including dance and we have no facility to Display this or educate locally.

This is already an overpopulated area with no local facilities and the loss of our centre will have a devastating effect on our local community as well as to many from further afield. Not only will this mean a loss of jobs, businesses, activity groups and a local community meeting point; it also means the loss of an amazing Theatre Hall. I bring my children to sessions on a weekly basis, as a local resident I don't want to see more children on the streets causing havoc, this is something already out of hand in this area. I can't see it getting any better by adding to a broken community without the support of activities. There are so many youngsters who have ASBO's and cause so much terror in our area, this will only rise without activities available at a reasonable price. Children are becoming obese more and more and also struggling with education.

It's a known fact that daily activity reduces stress, increases a healthier mind therefore will help improve learning and reduce obesity and Type 2 Diabetes. The cost of these illnesses cost the NHS money that would be better spent in the prevention rather than correction of peoples wellbeing. If a like for like building is built in the place of Southlands will it have the Theatre stage, Sports Hall etc.? I doubt it. We have lost so many local centres in the last few years, there has never been an alternative or new facility in its place, it's a disgrace. What will be available for my children aged 5 & 9 and myself and partner to attend? Neptune already have waiting lists for lots of sessions as does the Sports Village. Also the cost of public transport to these facilities is extremely expensive and not affordable to many of the community. I hope that we will save this centre and make it the thriving business centre it once was.

Kind Regards

Heather Davies

Dear Sir/madam

May 18/18

REF: Southlands Centre - Closure

As a local resident & user of the Centre for many years, the decision taken by Labour Councillors to raze Southlands to the ground is a disgrace & a puzzlement.

Information provided by Ellis Walker - Thompson at our 2nd public meeting - quote "Community engagement", question, where & when was the Community involved in the two years prior to the decision & where are the minutes? Many of their statements need to be looked at again.

With regard to the closure of the Leisure/Gym many senior citizens were members of the active 50+ group. Our 'Community engagement' was a short meeting with Staff who guaranteed us that the only change would be the location to the Neptune. Fake News! The class times changed, no ^{public} transport, no badminton, poor air conditioning, these being some of the reasons why many stopped attending. Recently the price has been increased, was that supposed to happen? Because we are now paying double, because of the lack of facility - ie. badminton. Location, location, yes we were moved to the Sports village and yes back again to the Neptune, Puzzelem is M'bro's loco "Putting people first!"

There is no need for a new building, Southlands Centre is a central hub & can be improved to meet the needs of the Community.

Margaret Woods -

Parkside Beckfield Resident -

Sheila Dring,

Middlesbrough.
16th May 2018

To Dave Budd Mayor of Middlesbrough

I am writing on behalf of the executive committee and the residents of Park End & Beckfield Ward.

Your plans for Southlands Centre have yet to be unveiled and we are told that this will be a take it or leave it choice, but your decision does not only affect the small businesses in Southlands but the residents as well.

The Park End & Beckfield Community Forum met with some of the business users in Southlands Centre and we found this to be a very informative exchange of information and this was from all who attended the meeting. Special consideration was given to the business user's views on the lack of any Enterprise Centre that their local council are offering.

We strongly recommend that Southlands Centre remains open and that this should be what your recommendation is when you have your next executive meeting.

This building will be the first in the country to be converted from a school to a vital resource centre for Middlesbrough residents particularly those in East Middlesbrough. We would like this to continue and develop further.

If you decide to close Southlands Centre this will also affect the Park End & Beckfield residents, all the groups that use the centre will have no where to meet as you have already taken Netherfields Community Centre of us and that was our only other option, if we lose the Southlands Centre the children, elderly people and the groups who use the centre will cease to exist and this goes back to people looking at four walls and for elderly people in particular a very lonely life. It could also mean the end of Park End & Beckfield Community Forum as we will have no where to hold our meetings could this be the beginning of the end of Community Councils?

PLEASE WHEN YOU MAKE YOUR DECISION THINK ABOUT THE RESIDENTS AND HOW THIS WILL AFFECT THEM. NO WERE TO GO AFTER 6PM PUBLIC TRANSPORT FINISHES AT 6PM.

Sheila Dring (chairperson)

To: Middlesbrough Mayor Dave Budd & all labour councillors.

I am sending this to all of you in case there is one of you that just might take note and do something to stop the closure of The Southlands Centre. As chair of Middlesbrough Community Bowls and Captain of the Southlands Team I would like to point out that if you close Southlands my bowls team will no longer exist and your reply will be find somewhere else I have tried with no success I know your think that this doesn't matter there's only eight to people in the team well your wrong it affects around 64 elderly people who can leave there homes travel a short distance for 2 to 3 hours mixing with people their own age enjoying the game ,a natter and cup of tea within walking distance from where they live.

Come on Middlesbrough Council wake up and smell the roses. You are slowly but surely taking any form of activity away from the elderly putting them back behind net curtains bored because they have no were to go, you claim we should keep agile but are blocking this by closing everywhere they can go.

Let's be honest most of you are past retirement yourselves and should understand how we feel and what we would be losing. Bowls is played during the day but if we had to play after 6pm how would we get to different venues when there are no busses after 6pm

Too tell us you will build us A new Hub but can't or won't tell us were just that it will be somewhere in East Middlesbrough not enough If you decide to demolish Southlands Centre (which you will because you can it doesn't matter about the residents) it has got to be on the land were Southlands is and the residents should be notified and allowed to have their say but I doubt that will happen

**SOUTHLANDS CENTRE IS A VITAL RESOURCE TO THE FOLKS IN THE PARK END & BECKFIELD WARD
YOU HAVE ALREADY CLOSED PARK END & NETHERFIELDS COMMUNITY CENTRES WHICH MAKES ME
WONDER IF YOU EVEN KNOW WE EXIST.**

Marion Milburn



Southlands Centre
Ormesby Road
Middlesbrough
TS3 0HG
07410987222
snackngo@mail.com

To Whom It May Concern

15th May 2018

Ref: Southlands Centre

I opened the café in Southlands Centre in April 2013 and for the whole 5 years the centre has been under threat of closure. I employ one permanent member of staff plus myself and occasionally I take on a third person as and when needed. I chose to open a business in Southlands because of the lack of a café in what was at the time a thriving Leisure/Business Centre, its location (5 minutes' drive from home), cheap rental fees, free parking and opening hours suitable for my requirements.

The majority of my customers come from within the centre itself, although we do have some regular customers who come from outside the centre, but over the past two years my business has seen a steady decline as more and more businesses and community users have been driven out either by scaremongering or literally being forced out and made to go elsewhere.

Prior to the takeover of Middlesbrough Council's Leisure Facilities in April 2016 several community groups were pushed out of Southlands into other centres such as the Neptune and Sports Village (over 50's, Stroke Group, Breathe-a-Cise etc.). None of these groups wanted to leave and would happily come back if the centre was to stay open. Many of the people who attended those sessions were my customers.

When the Council closed the gym and stopped putting on fitness classes in April 2016 a new Manager was brought in to run the community side of the centre. However, this person had no previous experience of running a centre such as Southlands and has done nothing whatsoever over the past two years to attract new businesses or users to the centre. His actual job title is Enterprise and Community Asset Transfer Manager which speaks volumes about the real reason why the Council put him in charge at Southlands. He was obviously brought in to oversee the closure of the centre by running it down, not to make it successful and profitable.

When the new Manager came in two years ago he should have had a plan in place to promote the centre and get the word out to the public that although the gym was closing, the centre itself was still open and had lots to offer. This was not done, in fact the complete opposite was done because the staff were initially told not to take bookings for parties etc. on the community side and no new businesses were allowed to come in. The Manager and therefore the Council were happy for the public to believe that the centre as a whole was no longer open, thus affecting the usage and occupancy levels massively.

For many years Southlands has been badly neglected, underfunded, mismanaged and not promoted properly and yet people still love the place and want to see it remain open. The building is badly in need of refurbishment but it is structurally sound and certainly not 'crumbling' as claimed by Mayor Dave Budd.

If the Council had not announced a year ago that they intended to close the centre by September 2017, the occupancy levels on the business side would be much higher than at present. Many businesses moved out as a direct result of the Council's action, not by choice. Almost all of those that left were regular customers of mine and this had a devastating effect on my business. In fact, the months between August 2017 and February 2018 were very difficult and it wasn't worth opening some weeks. During those months and in order to keep my assistant in a job I was actually working for nothing some weeks, and although the situation has now improved slightly, the business is only just surviving.

If Southlands does close then the Council will effectively be putting me out of business. Unlike the other business tenants who can relocate but still retain their customers, even though this will be traumatic and stressful for them, for me it would be like starting from scratch with all the risks that go with it. A customer base has to be built up over time and there is no guarantee that opening up elsewhere would prove successful, thus meaning that I may no longer be in a position to employ anybody else.

With regards to the sum set aside by the Council to help with relocation costs, I think they have underestimated massively the amount that would be required. Yet again they have just plucked a figure out of thin air but the actual cost is likely to be much higher than the £100,000 that they are quoting. The Council are very good at overestimating, for example the £200,000 cost of running Southlands that appeared in the 2017 report and in the Evening Gazette that was reduced to £122,000 when scrutinized, or the 8 years that they are saying it would take to get the occupancy level back up to 75% which is absolute rubbish, again just guesswork. Anybody who knows anything about Southlands knows that the building could be filled on both sides within a year if it is kept open and managed properly.

The Council claims to have worked tirelessly and made genuine attempts over the past two years to find a solution as to how to make the centre viable but they have done nothing of the sort. They have been trying to close the centre since Ray Mallon was Mayor. They do not carry out even basic repairs or maintenance, they do not employ staff who are capable of running the centre properly (from the Manager down), they do not promote the centre at all, and they do not listen to the public who do not want Southlands to be replaced by a 'fit for purpose community facility'.

The Council made the decision to close Southlands without having any discussions with the business tenants beforehand to see if anything could be done. None of the Labour Executive Councillors who were involved bothered to come along to speak to any of the tenants or the community groups to see how they would be affected if Southlands closes. Their decision last year was based on a report that was filled with inaccurate figures and information, and they have done exactly the same thing again now, relying on another report full of fake facts and figures.

After the decision was challenged a year ago, a group of business tenants, myself included, were meant to have been working with a group of Council Officers to try and work out a plan to keep the centre open. We were meant to have regular meetings and they assured us that they would be completely honest and transparent with us about what was going on. We actually only had 4 meetings in the space of a year, any information that we requested took weeks to be provided, the minutes of the meetings which were taken by one of their Officers were not always accurate and they took the first plan that we put forward as a starting point and used it against us to claim that we could not come up with a viable solution. Basically they completely misled us for their own ends and we were very foolish and naïve to trust them.

The past few years have been very stressful for everybody involved, both emotionally and financially. For me personally, the financial loss has been quite substantial and this is directly due to the Council's actions and those of the centre Manager in particular by driving out many of my customers. The situation has also put a strain on family life as the worry of closure has caused me many sleepless nights and the uncertainty has made it very difficult to plan for the future.

The Council and the Mayor in particular talk about having a 'vision' for Middlesbrough but they are being very short sighted by wanting to close Southlands and are missing out on a great opportunity to make the centre even better than it already is. The business and community sides work hand in hand to make it a unique place. Everybody who works here or uses the centre says how friendly it is and despite the state of disrepair that the building itself is in, people still want to come here. The Council should be proud of this centre and should be investing in it, not trying to demolish it. Centres like Southlands should not be about profit, although it could easily be very profitable with the right people running it. Southlands is a community within the community and the Council should be ashamed to even consider getting rid of it.

The closure of Southlands would be a massive loss for the community of East Middlesbrough and also much further afield. We have customers who come here for dance competitions and other big events from all over the north of England (Newcastle, Sunderland, Peterlee, Hartlepool, Doncaster etc.). I have spoken to hundreds, possibly even thousands, of people about this over the past two years and not one single person has said that closing Southlands is a good idea. It is about time the Council started listening to the people of Middlesbrough (and beyond) before it is too late.

Yours faithfully,

Lorraine Clifford – Snack 'n' Go



**Mortgage Services Ltd
Mortgage & Insurance Brokers**

FAO Brian Hubbard
Independent Councillors Middlesbrough

22nd May 2018

Ref-Closure of Southlands Centre

My company has been located in the Southlands Centre for ten years. Within this term we have established a quality client base which will be adversely affected with us having to relocate.

The financial burden put on the company due to relocation is a worrying factor and I feel the proposed compensation package would not be sufficient for most companies to cover associated costs.

The possibility of reducing my staffs working hours would be very likely which would not only put a strain on the staff themselves but also on the day to day working efficiency of the business which would mean reduced profitability.

The process the council has gone through to get to this decision has been nothing less than shambolic. The tenants were supposed to be consulted on all proposal and developments but this has not been the case and we have been lead a merry dance with what has been happening throughout the entire process.

Having been at the Southlands for such a long period I have seen many businesses arrive and depart the majority of which would still be here if it hadn't been for the negative attitude of the council.

The centre as a whole has been a hub for the local community and is still buoyant with dance competitions and many other social functions which, when the centre closes, would have no other suitable venues in the area to hold these events which would be a major blow to the local community.

Yours faithfully

John Mulcaster

Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority No 311532

Head Office

Southlands Business Centre, Ormesby Road, Middlesbrough TS3 0HB

Tel: 01642 290456 Fax: 01642 283472 www.jmmortgageservices.co.uk Email: info@jmmortgageservices.co.uk

JM Mortgage Services Ltd, Registered in England 4662482, Registered Office, Southlands Business Centre, Ormesby Road, Middlesbrough TS3 0HB

To whom it may concern.

Dots caterers.

Five years ago I moved to the Southlands Centre because Branthorne business centre was put up for auction by Middlesbrough Council.

I moved to the Southlands Centre for security for myself and my business. For the past two years

it's been such a stressful and worrying time for myself. The lack of information from Middlesbrough Council has been appalling. I have

had customers phoning saying I have closed down because of the Southlands Centre publicity. This

has really affected me and my business greatly. I am in a

situation at this time of not

knowing where and how I am supposed to relocate my business and the affects of the future.



Services Ltd

free view and TV aerial specialists

MWC Services
Southlands Business Centre
Ormesby Road
Middlesbrough TS3 0HB
01642 296276

Dear Sirs

My name is Martyn Wilson, and I am a business owner at the Southlands Business Centre. I am writing this letter to let you know of the impact in which your decision to close the business centre is having on my business and the impact it will have on the greater business community. I have operated within the business centre for fifteen years and have solid roots to the centre. I took an office at the centre many years ago because of its location, easy parking and a well supported staff presence - I would've found it hard to make the business a success without the help, support and easy location of the centre.

With the uncertainty surrounding the centre I have not felt confident to expand, and it has definitely held me back. You could say why don't you just move? First of all, why should I? The alternative office in Middlesbrough town center has no parking and would definitely not suit my business needs and growth plans. I have made many business connections over the years and would find it very difficult to change all my contacts and details, accounts and banking letterheads to name just a few.

My main concern of Middlesbrough Council is why do you think it is okay to close such an important business center without looking at the impact it will have on us - the business owners. I have had no consultation from you and you clearly avoided any input from us.

The government have supported small business in our area with the closure of the steel works and have recognised that the best way forward for growth since the loss of the steel works is to help start up new businesses. I hope you will agree that small to medium business are the lifeblood of our town. Why do you not support us and start up businesses? You clearly do not support us. You have been very short sighted and have put long term gain under short term profit which is typical of labour councillors. Can I just add that the last thing our community needs is a community shed, or should I say hub, and more private housing.

Martyn Wilson mwc Services

- Supply and installation of all aerials.
- Repairs carried out.
- Extensions installed.
- All work guaranteed.
- All work carried out to a very high standard.
- Very competitive rates.



Dear Councillor Hubbard

I can't begin to express how disappointed I am with the decision to close the Southlands Centre the whole process was a farce from people who lack honesty and integrity. Over the last two years I have been placed under immense pressure and stress by Middlesbrough Council, first with the announcement the centre could close to the letters pre-empting the Executive Subcommittees decision last year telling us we had 6 months, notice before the executive members had even made the decision.

I have worked tirelessly with friends and other business owners to produce a viable and sustainable model to keep the centre open, all the while we have been told to work with targets of 75% occupancy despite the continued decline in occupancy because of Middlesbrough Councils own doing. We received assurances not to worry as this is your responsibility and so long as we worked to the 75% occupancy figures in producing our model, this would be acceptable.

Upon submission the doors were closed and we were not engaged further by officers to revise our proposals despite being told the 75% occupancy we'd been told to work too was not sustainable as it was significantly less. All of which, we had pointed out to the officers and asked if we can reduce the occupancy figures to demonstrate a sustainable model on lower tenancy numbers. This was rejected and we were told our bid was final.

The last call I attend and spoke of my concerns, I even explained how officers had let the business owners down and we'd seen our businesses decline due to negative publicity about the future of the centre created by Middlesbrough Council. We received no active support to promote the centre as still been open and the centre manager was extremely passive in addressing this, he was seemingly more focussed on seeing the centre close. I suppose that is expected when you appoint an asset disposal manager to run a business centre the council has been considering closing for over 6 years now.

The council didn't even produce a business plan in case the centre remained open, that's how confident they were that it was closing and because of this alone I don't believe that a genuine attempt to keep it open even existed.

This will leave the town without an enterprise centre capable of competing with neighbouring towns, its as if they don't want the people of Middlesbrough to succeed.

I also think the fund set aside to relocate us is ridiculous, I think that they think that we are moving house, well I'm afraid its a lot more difficult than that with a lot higher costs coupled with downtime and loss of income, I have estimated at £18,000 for my business alone.



MJ PAT
SERVICES
PAT TESTING SPECIALISTS

All of this is has and is having a continued effect on my health with regular bouts of depression and anxiety

It has also had a huge impact financially, our competitors are now telling people that we are no longer trading because the Southlands has closed and our customers are looking elsewhere, this costs runs into the 1000's and will take years to get our name known again in a new place of business

Hopefully you can continue our fight in any way possible

Kind Regards

Mike Watson



ROSEMARY ELLENOR D.C.

Southlands Centre,
Ormesby Road,
Middlesbrough,
Cleveland.
TS3 0HB.

Dear Councillor Hubbard

I am very disappointed with Middlesbrough Council's decision to close the Southlands Centre, my place of work & where I have run my business for over 21 years.

Over the years I have been there I have seen a vibrant & extremely busy centre, where people were put on a waiting list for available space, degenerate to what it is now through the actions of Middlesbrough Council over the last 7 years to run the place down.

The uncertainty of these last few years has had a massive impact on businesses within the Southlands with many having already left. I have remained as I have built up a good reputation & am known throughout the area for what I do.

Re locating or "decanting" a term bandied about on the reports, seemingly so easy to say for those that don't have to do it, will be very upsetting & unsettling for me, also having to rebuild a following elsewhere when 21 years of association with the area & a place has to be reformed.

Moving will involve much extra work, time, expense & the stress & worry of all of this is taking its toll on my general wellbeing. I am having sleepless nights worrying over the outcome, where I am to go & how I am to afford new premises with the inevitable increase in rent coupled with the downtime to my business of a move & all that entails.

The council have mentioned an amount of money of £100,000, but divide that by the businesses remaining & it only amounts to under £3000. To re do my website alone would take up a large proportion of that, added to the removal costs, re marketing of my business with advertising, contacting my patients, flyers, letterheads, business cards & the downtime to do all of this & time taken to arrange it all the list goes on!

I am a sole trader & although I do not employ anyone I do bring in visitors from outside the area, these visitors use the local shops, petrol station, post office, cafe - in general boost the economy of the local area. This will all cease, there is bound to be an impact on the local economy from the closure of the Southlands. This is something the council don't seem to consider they just seem to have tunnel vision on savings in the short term & gaining money from an inevitable sale of the land to a housing developer.



ROSEMARY ELLENOR D.C.

Southlands Centre,
Ormesby Road,
Middlesbrough,
Cleveland.
TS3 0HB.

The likelihood is that my business will move out of Middlesbrough completely, other businesses have already moved out of the town. How short sighted are the council in their efforts to save money, yet not seeing the bigger picture with the need to encourage small businesses to the area not push them away.

Regards

Rosemary Ellenor D.C

R.S. Services.

Established 2002

Annex 3, Southland Centre, Ormesby Road,

Middlesbrough. TS3 0BH.

Dear Sirs

15th May 2018

Further to the proposed closure of the Southland Centre. **Tel Mobile: 07771884313**

It is of great concern that this may happen as my Company has been occupying an office space in the Southland Centre for nearly 16 years now.

It is going to be a major Nightmare .

Along with all the regulatory changes we have to restructure the way in which we carry out our business. The cost could be immense if this is to come about.

COSTS

All the Business paperwork to have a new address on, Agreements, Applications, Business Cards, Payment Cards,

Costs to change addresses in Company House, Data Protection, Money Laundering, Insurance Company, Ect.

Costs of moving all my office furniture.

New office Costs

Photo Coping Access or machine

Car parking costs also.

Being a Small business to start with I have found the Southland the ideal site to run my Company from .

Should I find I have to move out , then with all the extra stress of Restructuring due to regulations and the costing of the move and above needs I do not see that the actions being fair and is putting me in a position of considering the closure of my Company as a result.

Dennis Harding
I Hope there will be a better solution presented to me than the one that is intended at the moment
Sole trader

I also provide **Business Development Services.**

Dennis G Harding

R.S.Services

Registered and Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

A member of the Consumer Credit Association.



Steptoes Footcare Centre

Ormesby Road
Middlesbrough
Cleveland
TS3 0HB
01642 760333

enquiries@steptoes-footcare.co.uk

17th May 2018

With reference to the proposed Southlands Business Centre closure.

Our business has been an occupant at Southlands Business Centre for approximately 14 years. When we moved into the site it was an active, thriving business community with full occupancy, in fact a waiting list for units.

There have been many variable factors in the demise of the business centre, however I feel the councils lack of commitment to the centre is the prime cause. There are still people setting up small business ventures to which the Southlands Business Centre, if restored to a reasonable state of order and repair and with commitment as an ongoing concern should still be a great opportunity. I despair to think that any council could neglect people battling against all odds to commence and sustain a business venture. As major companies fail it is us small guys that start out with a few job opportunities which make the difference in future employment statistics. Keeping people in employment is so important to the well-being of communities and the individuals living in them in terms of socio economic, health and well-being. Employment also reduces government expenditure in benefits for unemployed people. It would be short sighted to close the Southland Business Centre, indicating a lack of commitment to the local area, business ventures and job opportunities.

For our current business to move away, withdraws a local healthcare facility to the population of the surrounding area and also to those who travel to us for specialist footcare from further away, in fact even from London! We have a very varied age catchment and our patients depend on us for their treatments, keeping them comfortable and mobile

If regular funds had been reinvested into Southlands Business Centre when it had full occupancy, and a commitment had been made to the future of the centre it would and still could have a positive future. This should still be the vision and then beyond to expand and promote further.

The uncertainty of the future over the past number of years has led to many businesses moving elsewhere. Our business has not invested in the practice there anymore because of the uncertainty, which is a very unfair and unreasonable position to put businesses in. A decision needs to be concluded with terms and conditions clearly and correctly communicated to all businesses.

I am absolutely disgusted at the poor communication to us as rent paying tenants. Running a business is stressful enough without having the added anxiety about the uncertainty of our future arrangements. We should be receiving regular emails and official letters of current events.

Jobs are our future. Where is the local councils' commitment to support our local people and community?

We as a business and individuals hope you see fit to reinvest in Southlands Business Centre.

Save our jobs and look after the community.

Yours Sincerely

**Catherine Garwood
Podiatrist
BSc Podiatric Medicine**

Wash and Go

Southlands Centre

Dear Councillor Hubbard,

I run a car wash service and am located at the Southlands Centre. I have been at the premises for over 8 months now, and in that time I have built up the business, which now sees regular customers returning to use my business.

But over the past three weeks since the announcement that the Centre is to close, my workload has fallen dramatically.

My share of profits is at a critical level, and all this is due to the unfair way in which the management working for Middlesbrough Council has portrayed the Southlands Centre and the business community.

The building isn't in total disrepair as stated, and it isn't the businesses who have underinvested in the Southlands Centre. That blame falls squarely on the shoulders of poor management at Middlesbrough Council.

The building shouldn't be demolished; as a tax payer of this town I am appalled at the thought of my council tax being used to demolish the Southlands Centre. The figure of around £500,000 has been mooted as to the cost of this folly. When you consider a further £100,000 plus to relocate the businesses that currently reside at the Southlands Centre, this makes no sense at all.

We are going to be left without an Enterprise Centre here in Middlesbrough, and we want you and other Councillors to continue the fight to keep the Southlands Centre open.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Peter Wilkinson

Mark lockwood

Kwik fit repairs

Unit 9

Southlands Centre

Dear sir/madam my name Mark Lockwood I run a white goods repair business in the centre , not only will the closure effect my business it already has.

For the past year or more I have had to constantly reassure customers that my business is still open and is not closing, I have without doubt seen a shrinking in the amount of work, with many customers saying after I have asked "oh I thought you had closed with the centre".

My business relies heavily on Google searches were you'll be asked 'do you want to see the closest to you' because of this I pick up a lot of work from around all of east Middlesbrough. If I was to move more into central Middlesbrough I would be in competition with many other companies .

Many customers I speak to often say we picked you because you were in the southlands centre, it gives people the confidence they have a place to return to if there is problem and that there dealing with a local small business.

Mark Lockwood

Dear Councillor Hubbard,

I am writing with regard to the business side of the Southlands Centre.

I have been part of the community in Southlands Business Centre for about 8 years. When I first began working here, there was cohesion within the businesses and a good rapport. The business centre staff and facilities available were really helpful and were part of the only contract I signed as a licensee.

Over the last few years the staff and facilities have been stripped away and it is disappointing that for so long a period there has been such a sense of insecurity and confusion because of the council's mishandling of this situation. This has caused the erosion of the business community in the centre and many businesses have been affected. There is a general air of uncertainty and much stress also the building has been totally neglected.

At a time when the Government is encouraging self-employment and small businesses it seems that Middlesbrough Council is abandoning the enterprise centre initiative. I feel discouraged and outraged that the Council is so against people in my position. Their negativity is reprehensible.

Apparently Stockton and Hartlepool Councils are supporting small businesses with their enterprise centres. Why isn't Middlesbrough doing the same?

This whole situation is having a negative effect on me. I am discouraged and disheartened and feel the insecurity of not knowing where I will be able to conduct my business in the future. Of course there will be the inconvenience of relocation, if I can find a new place, the cost to my business, i.e. while I am moving I cannot work and therefore will have loss of earnings; also the cost of informing my customers and suppliers of the change of address.

Stephen Kennedy

TeesValley Audio

David Brown

Window bevel design

Unit 10

Southlands Centre

Dear sir/madam my name is David Brown , I run a double glazing repair and decorative lead business in the centre , not only will the closure effect my business it already has.

For the past year or more I have had to constantly reassure customers that my business is still open and is not closing, I have without doubt seen a shrinking in the amount of decorative work, with many customers saying after I have asked "oh I thought you had closed with the centre".

The repair side of the business relies heavily on Google searches were you'll be asked 'do you want to see the closest to you' because of this I pick up a lot of work from around all of east Middlesbrough. If I was to move more into central Middlesbrough I would then be in competition with many huge window companies when customers do their Google searches and would lose out on a lot of jobs.

Many customers I speak to often say we picked you because you were in the southlands centre, it gives people the confidence they have a place to return to if there is problem and that there dealing with a local small business.

The last 2 years of uncertainty and the way this council has treated tenants in this centre has been hard on me physically and mentally, and as a person with Crohns disease this has left me missing many weeks of work while sick.

David Brown

Alan White

Upholstery

Unit 6

Southlands Centre

Dear sir/madam my name Alan White I run an upholstery business in the centre, not only will the closure effect my business it already has. The last 2 years of uncertainty has basically ruined my business, the walk in customers have all but stopped due to believing its closed already or because lack of repairs to the building has left it a mess, and phone calls are down 70% also.

Due to the stress of this and its effect on my health I was left with no choice than to close my business after 22 years.

Alan White



Dear Brian

Regarding your email

I decided to set up my business in the Southlands Centre in Nov 2016, this was on the promise that the centre would remain open to small businesses, with no actions in place to shut the centre down, otherwise I would have looked elsewhere.

I have always been keen to start up my own Care business, this is something I've longed to do since my grandma had passed away. It took a long time preparing and setting the business up and a lot of unpaid work to get it up and running. Gammi has always know my intentions to open a Care Company at price where people like my Grandma can be cared for without paying the costly price of care, as this is so expensive. The rates for the premises in southlands made it an ideal location for a business to set up and progress without the worrying of high rates and trying to make a better life.

I have taken on 27 staff and 3 staff from Middlesbrough college which all need to get to southlands for ie Training, handing paperwork in and meetings so southlands for me is in a good area so moving will affected my business not only for myself and office staff also for the staff in the community ie we are on a bus route, ample free parking for carers, local shops as we are open till 5 (snack and go close at 2pm).

Once getting the business up and running I looked at opening a Dementia day centre, again spoken with Gammi and Ste looked at the rooms and straight away was a good idea again rates for the room was low so again we can pass a good rate onto the client plus was going to speak with snack and go regarding lunches for the clients, so again more business coming into southlands. Myself and the team have spent again a lot of time (unpaid) sorting the day centre out and getting up and running to be told now southlands is closing so where does this leave me? I've taken on extra staff and all the advertising for new staff which is on going to get the day centre up and running.

Director.
Hand 2 Hold.

Dear Sir/Madame

My name is Craig Fletcher and I am lead tutor for a company called Educ8 group which is an alternative education provider. We currently Use the Southlands centre from Monday to Friday to tech our learners and use the classroom and the sports facilities such as the Sports hall, 3G football pitch and the gym room.

I am writing this letter to plead with you not to close the Southlands Centre. We have only recently moved to the centre, but we feel it is vital the centre stays open for us to maintain the current high standard of teaching and learning that we offer. The fantastic classroom and sports facilities enables us as teachers to plan and deliver good theory lessons and carry out good practical sports sessions. Without the Southlands centre a lot of what we are about as an alternative education provider wouldn't be possible. We need a brilliant centre (which the southlands are) to be able to teach these young learners and give them a good education which will help them later in life. The main reason I am writing this letter to you is to plead with you to keep the Southlands centre open because of all the young people it currently helps. All our young learners aren't in a mainstream school and majority of them have no other source of an education, so to close this centre would be taking away young people's only source of an education. We need these young people to obtain a good education as they are the future of this earth, we need them to take over Jobs being vacated by the older generation retiring.

The Southlands centre has so much to offer to a lot of people and that alone should be enough reason to keep this centre open.

Kind Regards
Craig Fletcher
Lead Tutor
Educ8Group

To whom it may concern,

My name is Melissa Whiteley, I work for a company called Educ8 Group which is an alternative education provider and my role here is a tutor. We use The Southlands Centre Monday to Friday to teach our pupils, we use the classroom, sports hall and the 3G football pitch.

I am writing to you to ensure The Southlands Centre does not close down. This facility enables us to offer a high standard of teaching and learning giving under privileged pupils another chance to succeed in life. These pupils have been taken out of mainstream school and we offer them a chance to gain qualifications that will get them into college resulting in job opportunities. Without The Southlands Centre Educ8 Group would not be able to continue meaning the pupils would either have to go back to mainstream school or worse they would have no form of education from any provider. Not only does The Southlands Centre offer us with excellent facilities and opportunities it provides for other members of the community; young and old. Therefore I plead with you to keep the centre open for the future generation.

Kind Regards,

Melissa Whiteley

Tutor

Educ8 Group

Southlands Centre

Unit 12

Stephen Woodworx Joinery Tel 01642 919404

How will the closure affect me and my business?

I tried a few times to get into business units over the years only to find all were taken or impractical (2nd) floor, after wild chance I called in 2yrs ago and joy of joys I got into my present unit only to find out the dark clouds of closure hung low over centre...

With the uncertainty of full site closing my unit has never been used to its full potential, I would have liked to have invested in machinery to grow my business and expand my niche services I offer my customers.

Financial burden?

How long is a piece of string...

I always targeted the centre as to use for a base of works and nucleus to spread from job to job around local area.

Moving/cast out... will put a vast strain and stress on me and any small business and unseen costs, transport/new letter heads/paper work/re advising/ time off work arranging move.

My unit has no passing trade but I feel for the other traders & people in the centre and also the local community who need the passing trade and £spends for business to survive/grow and also for local people to call into centre and use the building.

The area is crying out for night time activities/youth clubs to inspire the kids from the area to better themselves and build self-esteem rather than troll the streets and form gangs mug rob and deal drugs... costing tax payers £900000 in damage and policing costs.

People/kids need to be invested in and not tossed aside and told you are "merd"

Short slightness form the local Labour council who should be shining the beacon of light and helping not just selling the land for more sole less housing.

Rant over.

I would like to thank the people and unseen heroes working hard and many hrs unpaid to keep Southlands Centre open.

Regards

Stephen W.W.J.



Email sent to Sylvia Reynolds from Cllr Brian Hubbard on the 17 September 2018

RE: Call for action - addition to submission 16/8/18

Hello Sylvia

Yes, I wish to attend the OSB meeting.

There is a further submission, from Mr Ian McGuckin. He would like it to be taken into consideration that as a local resident looking onto the playing field directly across from his home, children have played on the grassed pitch for 20 plus years.

As a gesture of goodwill, Mr McGuckin used to wheel-barrow soil into the goalmouths and seed the areas, where dips would appear, when Middlesbrough Council failed to repair the pitches from time to time.

Mr McGuckin has lived at his address since 1973, and over the full length in time that the Southlands Centre has been in operation.

Thanks,

Brian