

Report of:	<i>Executive Director of Growth & Place, Kevin Parkes</i> <i>Executive Member for Culture and Communities: Mick Thompson</i>
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Submitted to:	<i>Executive 18th December 2018</i>
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Subject:	<i>Middlesbrough Place Brand</i>
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Summary

Proposed decision(s)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Executive approves the new Middlesbrough place brand. 2. That the Executive approves a 12 month launch programme for the Middlesbrough place brand as outlined in this report. 3. That the Executive delegates the detailed implementation of the Middlesbrough place brand to the Executive Member for Culture and Communities: Councillor Mick Thompson.

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?¹
Decision	Yes	No	No

Contribution to delivery of the 2018-22 Strategic Plan		
Business Imperatives	Physical Regeneration	Social Regeneration
The Middlesbrough place brand is an important tool in attracting investment and securing future Council Tax and Business rate growth to support the long-term financial stability of the Council.	The introduction and marketing of a place brand for Middlesbrough is fundamental in ensuring that the Council's aspirations for physical regeneration are delivered. It will establish Middlesbrough as a destination for those who want to live, learn, work, enjoy and invest in Middlesbrough.	The introduction of the place brand will contribute to the development and delivery of the Council's social regeneration agenda as we establish Middlesbrough as a great place to live, learn, and work. The brand is a key tool in engaging local residents in the social regeneration agenda and for engendering pride in Middlesbrough

Ward(s) affected
<i>All Wards</i>

What is the purpose of this report?

1. One of the Council's Corporate Priorities for 2018/19 is the launch of a new place brand for Middlesbrough and this report seeks approval of the place brand, associated work and its launch. The place brand has emanated from collaboration, consultation and co design with circa 1000 people. We believe that ultimately this will allow it to have gravitas, allows it to be meaningful and representative of the people of Middlesbrough. Over a period of 12 months, a comprehensive engagement, consultation and design process has been undertaken in partnership with Hemingway Design, which has included both businesses and residents of the town. This has included the formation of a Place Brand Board, an arms-length partnership-led steering group that unites Local Authority, businesses (Inc. business support groups), cultural organisations developers, community groups and local leaders who can influence the place brand implementation and take on responsibility for future decisions and place brand development that has the most positive impact.
2. The result of this process has been the production of a Middlesbrough Story, a narrative that encapsulates what Middlesbrough is and our aspirations for it.
3. The work has also resulted in a proposed branding for Middlesbrough as a coherent creative concept that compliments the place brand story and provides the graphic tools to represent it. This report presents the narrative and the place brand to Executive for final approval. It is proposed that the launch of the new place brand takes place as part of a 12 month programme during the whole of 2019. This launch will be based on utilising existing events and activities to get maximum impact at the lowest cost.
4. The first event as part of this launch will be the 130th anniversary of the Town Hall celebrations on the weekend of 26th and 27th January. This will be followed by the launch of the "Brilliantly Boro" campaign in February as a key part of the launch of the Council's Social Regeneration prospectus. Further events will take place throughout the year which will support the objectives that aim to implement and increase awareness of the place brand both digitally and experientially.
5. This report provides an overview of the narrative and the Place Brand and seeks approval from Executive to adopt the branding and to also launch the brand in January 2019 as outlined.

Why does this report require a Member decision?

6. The introduction of a place brand will have a significant and long-lasting impact on how people will perceive Middlesbrough. This will impact on residents and local businesses in all wards of Middlesbrough.

Report Background

7. In 2017 Hemingway Design were commissioned to create a place brand for Middlesbrough that represents the past but moves Middlesbrough clearly into a position to maximise the opportunities available through its ambitious plans for Physical and Social Regeneration.
8. Over a six-month period Hemingway Design undertook a period of consultation. From the results of this consultation the proposed approach to the place brand was established. This wide engagement has been critical in developing the narrative and brand as well as getting buy in from the communities and business.

What is a Place Brand?

9. A place brand is a comprehensive visual identity and marketing campaign that affords an area a new and community-led identity, then communicates that story to its target markets.
 - It's not just a logo or a strapline
 - It tells your story of place –and helps everyone tell the same story
 - It provides a coherent visual identity and tone of voice
 - It's something that everyone (residents, visitors and business community) can feel proud of and stand behind
 - Remember –a place brand is distinct from a developer own brand and from a Council brand

10. What's it for?

- Help attract inward investment and jobs
- Build local pride
- Attract new people to live and work in the area
- Retain young people in the area
- Encourage local people to spend more time and money in the area
- Provide a springboard for marketing activity
- Enable a coordinated approach to place making and improvements to the public realm
- Empower people and raise aspirations – espouse opportunity and big thinking

11. Why it's important

- Projects a professional, coherent image to the world
- If done well, partners and developers will support and buy into it
- Builds confidence in an area
- Makes local residents feel good about where they live

The Middlesbrough place Brand

12. The aim of the place brand is: “To improve the town’s reputation, attract new investment, visitors and residents, and enhance civic pride.”
13. The Middlesbrough place brand does not reflect council boundaries but rather the physical area that Middlesbrough represents in others eyes.
14. Middlesbrough requires an effective, ambitious and sensitive place brand to communicate a distinct identity and sense of place for the town over the next 10-15 years.
15. The language used and the story told will be positive, clear, timely and consistent at all times.
16. The place brand objectives, its purpose and values were established at the outset of the project and these were to:

17. Brand Objectives

- Describe Middlesbrough, consistently and comprehensively
- Change the perceptions of Middlesbrough;
- Increase the recognition of Middlesbrough;
- Create desire and demand for Middlesbrough; and
- Instil confidence and excitement in Middlesbrough.

Brand Purpose

18. “To make Middlesbrough a regional and national destination for anyone with the passion to succeed and in doing so secure a meaningful future for every Middlesbrough resident.”

19. Brand Values

- communicate in the simplest way possible; and
 - follow the Plain English Campaign rules
20. In addition to the Objectives, Purpose and Values; **the five pillars of Middlesbrough’s voice** were established through consultation with key stakeholders. These are:
 - Spirited but not excitable.
 - Proud but not arrogant.
 - Innovative but not boastful.
 - Fierce but not volatile.
 - United but not exclusive.

The Brand Story

21. One of the most powerful aspects of a place branding campaign, is the shared narrative. This is the story that encapsulates the essence of Middlesbrough. A major part of the branding work has been to engage partners and stakeholders in developing a narrative that we all embrace and support. Stakeholders have agreed not only to support the narrative but to also champion the narrative and the brand.

22. We asked local people; what makes Middlesbrough unique? Overwhelmingly, the number one response was the observation that Middlesbrough defines itself by **THE PEOPLE...**

The Middlesbrough story is:

“The heart of any place is its people, but Middlesbrough isn’t just any place.

Our people can’t be contained within its heart – they are the eyes, the hands and the minds that together make this place proudly unique.

Talk to any resident and they’ll tell you: Middlesbrough defines itself by the people. Tough, resilient, entrepreneurial, honest and warm, these shared core values create an unshakable unity that has been the cornerstone of life here since the 1800s.

Together, we transformed a small patch of earth in North East England into Ironopolis: the birthplace of the steel and iron revolution that saw ‘Made in Middlesbrough’ stamped onto iconic landmarks all over the globe.

Brick by brick, idea by idea, innovation after innovation they find strength in one another to achieve incredible things against impossible odds.

They are a Can Do people and this is a Can Do Place.”

The Core Themes for the Campaigns

23. The Core Themes are a series of ideas informed by the objectives that communicate the key themes from the place brand story. The themes will inform key messaging and future campaigns.

Innovators, Inventors and Investors

24. If you needed any convincing, ask yourself: what do celebrated explorer Captain Cook and multi-millionaire entrepreneur Steve Gibson have in common? They were both born right here in Middlesbrough. Our next generation of Boro-ites are no different to the ones that came before; harnessing the same spirit that built great industries, they are driving innovation to build a bright economic future. The Boho Zone’s tech developers and designers are on the cutting edge of emerging digital technology, meanwhile Britain’s creatives are flocking towards the region for our internationally acclaimed gallery, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art.

City in the Centre

25. Thanks to this new wave of entrepreneurs, the world’s gaze is being drawn back to Middlesbrough – a cultural and digital hub in stark contrast to Britain’s crowded, greyscale cities. The newly regenerated Bedford and Baker streets are teeming with vibrant independent businesses, trendy cafes and micropubs, giving rise to our new nickname: ‘The Shoreditch of the North’. Middlesbrough’s monthly artisan food market, Orange Pip, launched in 2016 to incredible success – so much so, in fact, that it had to expand into neighbouring streets after three months and resulted in a £1million business boom to the local economy. All of this dynamism vibrates happily alongside lush green public spaces, including 120-acre Stewart Park, and twelve beautiful Grade I and II listed buildings punctuate the Middlesbrough skyline.

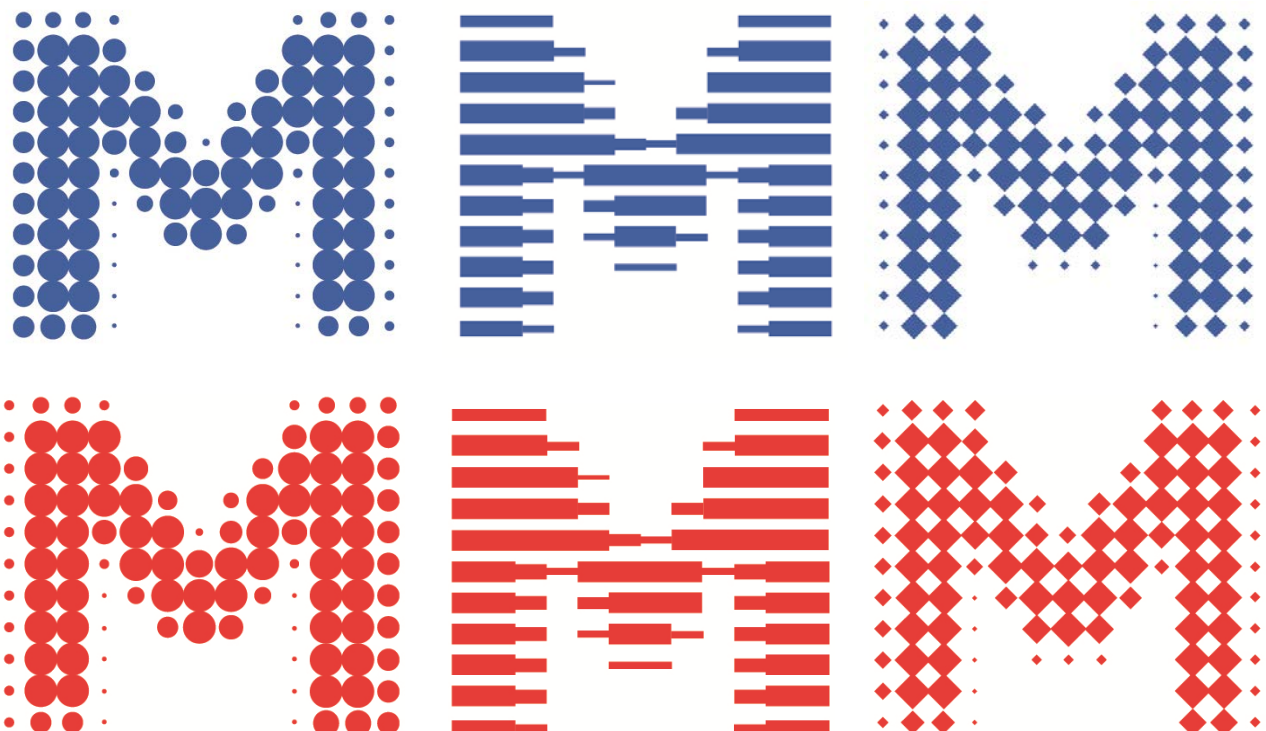
26. One of the most treasured parts of Middlesbrough life is our location; the pretty seaside towns of Redcar and Saltburn can be reached in just twenty minutes, and the North York Moors National Park with its ancient trees and heather moorland is even closer. Our easy access to white sandy beaches and rambling countryside, while remaining rooted in the very centre of the Tees Valley, offers a balance of lifestyles that very few places can match – and it all comes at a better price, too. The cost of living in the North East is the lowest in the UK and Middlesbrough beats nearby Newcastle, York and Leeds on value for money. Plus, international investors are already spotting the commercial opportunities here, making Middlesbrough a real alternative to the nation’s overheating large cities.

Passion, Pride and Purpose

27. Above all, we’re proud of our lot. Middlesbrough’s heritage, community, landscape and sheer quality of life is something we’ll passionately fight for, because we – and we alone – made it happen. Ironopolis may have built the world, but we’re staying right where we are. This is our home and it’s **#BrilliantlyBoro**.

The Logo and Branding

28. The new dynamic Middlesbrough logo brings together the three core themes of past, present and future.



29. Following extensive consultation with partners and internally with the Council, it is proposed that we adopt the strapline Can do people, Can do place. This can be seen below with the logo.



MIDDLESBROUGH

Can do people
Can do place

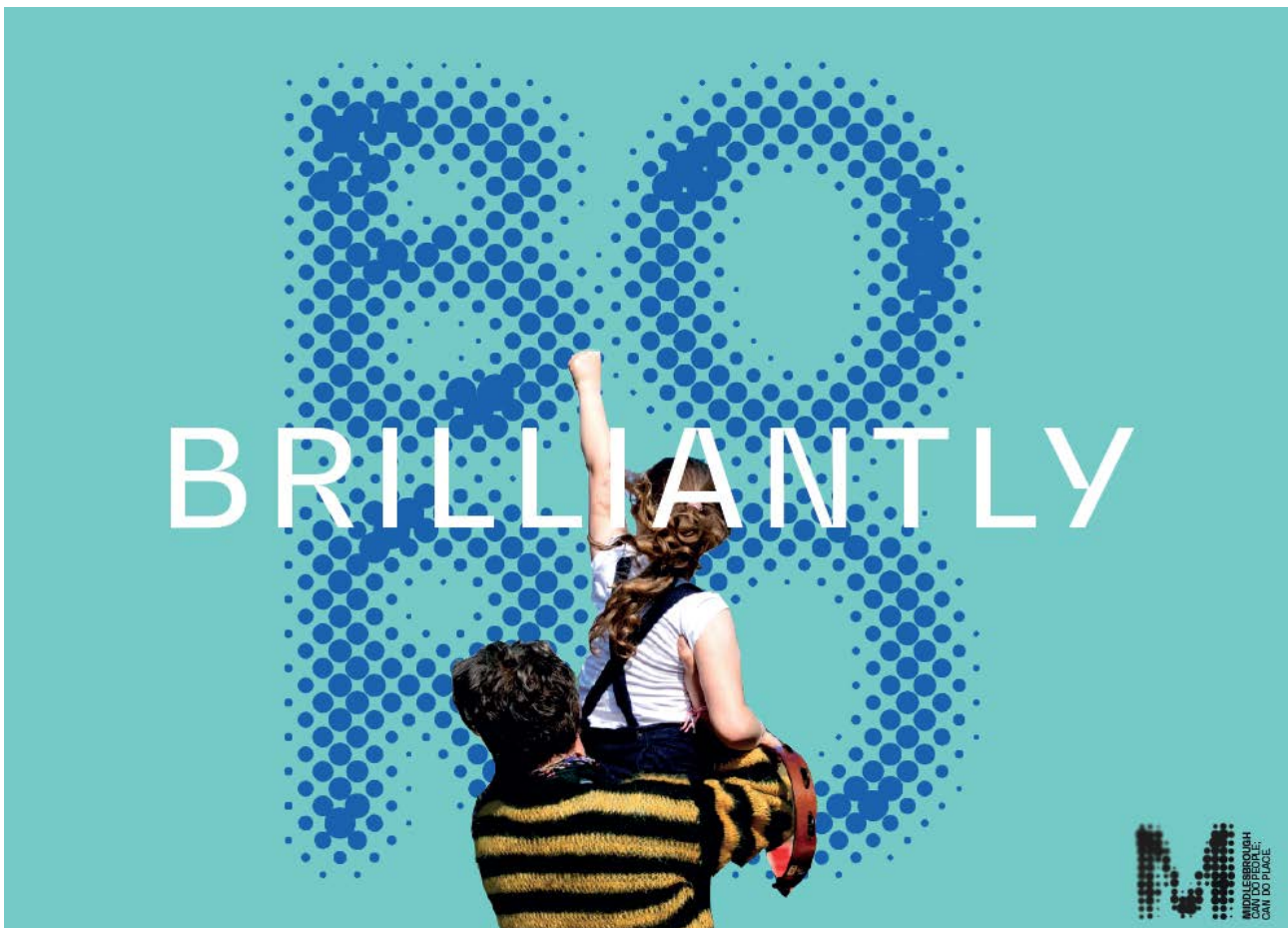
30. The new logo stands apart from others due to it being developed as a digital animated logo that is particularly relevant to Middlesbrough's digital industry but also recognises the importance and power of digital marketing. Having a digital logo provides the maximum reach through websites. The animation cannot be demonstrated in paper form, however it combines the three "M"s above and has been demonstrated to Executive previously.

The Launch

31. The launch of the brand will represent the multiple roles it will be required to fulfil in the coming years, and as such cannot be a single event, but rather a programme of different engagements that bring the brand to life over a 12-month period. Overtime the brand needs to affect change across Middlesbrough through signage, flags and banners to printed and digital marketing. These changes will take place wherever possible as part of existing schemes that the Council and its partners have planned in the coming 12 months and beyond.
32. The first event to feature the place brand will be the Town Hall 130th Birthday at the end of January. This will be a public celebration of Middlesbrough and its people.
33. Following this, a programme of appropriate opportunities will be drawn together to ensure the brand reaches out across the whole of Middlesbrough. A campaign has been developed as part of the branding that is considered to have particular resonance locally, this is the "Brilliantly Boro" campaign. An example of this branding is shown below and this will be used in February to launch the Council's Social Regeneration Prospectus. The Brilliantly Boro launch will again be community focused and bring the champions of the Middlesbrough communities together.
34. A full 12 month roll out plan is being developed in partnership with Hemmingway Design and the Place Brand Board. The exact details of this roll out plan are not available at this time and this report recommends that the Executive Member for Culture and Communities be delegated the necessary authority to finalise the detail prior to launch. It is known that events will include the launch of the next investment prospectus, the Opportunity Middlesbrough strategy and the City Centre Strategy.

The Brilliantly Boro campaign branding.

35. To support the social regeneration agenda, the Brilliantly Boro campaign can become a catalyst to improve external perceptions and generate local pride by showcasing our communities, assets and positive associations that make Middlesbrough brilliant.
36. #BrilliantlyBoro will promote Middlesbrough through the eyes of its community.
37. Part of this campaign will be a call to action that encourages residents, the business community and visitors to contribute their own thoughts and content (photography and videos) by using the #BrilliantlyBoro hashtag.
38. Utilising the insight, knowledge and the emotion of the people who know the town best to tell an authentic story. An example of the branding is shown below.



39. What decision(s) are being asked for?

- 1) That the Executive approves the new Middlesbrough place brand.
- 2) That the Executive approves a 12-month launch programme for the Middlesbrough place brand
- 3) That the Executive delegates the implementation of the Middlesbrough place brand to Executive Member for Culture and Communities: Mick Thompson and Director of Culture, Communities and Communication: Adam Allen

Why is this being recommended?

40. Over a 6 month period Hemingway Design gathered information about Middlesbrough through:
 - a review of relevant primary and secondary research, economic information, local strategies, and recent consultancy reports;
 - an analysis of the touch points' where audiences interact with the place;
 - a focus group discussion with the local SME business and education sector;
 - an online place brand portal and perceptions survey that gathered over 400 responses;
 - an analysis of the online opinion from bloggers, regional news sites and national media;
 - a social media analysis; and
 - workshops at MIMA and Orange Pip and one-to-one conversations with local businesses, residents and visitors.
41. From this analysis Hemingway Design developed the proposed brand as the Place brand for Middlesbrough in the future.
42. The brand has been developed in collaboration with the Middlesbrough Branding Group, made up of the key Middlesbrough stakeholders, who on 27 September agreed to support and where appropriate adopt the proposed brand for Middlesbrough.
43. The costs of the implementation of the Place brand will be covered from existing budgets over the coming year.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

44. The alternative to the introduction of the new place brand is to remain as we are with a mix of identities for Middlesbrough that leave potential visitors and investors confused as to the purpose of the place. This would also not have the same impact as a professionally developed brand such as the one proposed.
45. This alternative approach would see Middlesbrough's identity continue to develop, but will take longer to unite what Middlesbrough represents. During this time opportunities will be missed, as potential investors look at alternative locations that have a stronger identity than Middlesbrough.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

46. This decision will see the adoption of a high profile, professionally developed brand that can be adopted by commercial and public sector partners. Over time this will influence perceptions of Middlesbrough, presenting it as a positive and attractive place to live and work. The launch of the branding over a 12 month period as part of existing activity will minimise cost and help address criticism that rebranding exercises can sometime attract.

Legal

47. All intellectual property rights relating to the branding will be transferred to the Council from Hemmingway Designs.

Financial

48. The costs for the launch will come from existing expenditure plans.

Policy Framework

49. The recommendations of this report will not impact on the existing policy framework.

Equality and Diversity

50. An extensive consultation has taken place on the branding and design principles adopted to ensure they are appropriate for those with visual impairments.

Risk

Risk Description	Owner	Likelihood (1-5)	Impact (1,2,3,5,7)	Risk Score	Mitigating Actions
Lack of appropriately experienced resources	Adam Allen	3	5	15	Need to utilise current Council expertise and back fill where necessary
Investment does not match ambition	Adam Allen	4	5	20	Need to agree appropriate plans for launch and implementation
Reputational damage if not delivered to a high standard	Adam Allen	2	5	10	Plans in place for a 12 month launch
Lack of buy in from key Middlesbrough stakeholders	Adam Allen	3	5	15	Already engaged in joining the Place brand Board as Ambassadors for the programme.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

51. Work needs to be undertaken with partners and internal services to finalise the additional details of the launch plan.

Appendices

52. None Attached

Background papers

53. No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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