

EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the Executive was held on Wednesday 21 January 2026.

PRESENT: Mayor C Cooke (Chair) and Councillors I Blades, T Furness, P Gavigan, L Henman, J Rostron, J Ryles, P Storey and N Walker

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: D. Hodgson (Local Democracy Reporting Service)

OFFICERS: C Benjamin, S Bonner, C Cannon, G Field, L Grabham, R Horniman, A Humble and E Scollay

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: None

25/82 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

25/83 **MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 17 DECEMBER 2025**

It was raised that Cllr I Blades attendance at the meeting was not reflected in the Minutes.

Notwithstanding the above amendment, the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 17 December 2025 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

25/84 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR**

None.

25/85 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)**

None.

25/86 **QUESTIONS FROM ELECTED MEMBERS (IF ANY)**

None.

25/87 **MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY OR COUNCIL (IF ANY)**

None.

25/88 **REPORTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD OR A SCRUTINY PANEL (IF ANY)**

None.

25/89 **REPORTS FROM MEMBER BODIES WHICH ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE EXECUTIVE**

None.

25/90 **ADULT SOCIAL CARE & INTEGRATION - VISION AND STRATEGY 2025 - 2035**

The Executive Member for Adult Social Care submitted a report for Executive consideration. The purpose of the report was to seek approval for the Adult Social Care and Integration Vision and Strategy.

The Executive Member stated that current service models within Adult Social Care were coming under increasing pressure and were unsustainable due to rising demand for adult social care.

Middlesbrough experienced high levels of deprivation and persistent health inequalities with some of the highest levels of health inequality and poverty nationally. This impacted on life expectancy and wellbeing as well as contributing to higher levels and crime and poverty.

As such there was a need to assess issues facing service users to maintain their dignity and independence. This required a shift to prevention and early intervention to provide better outcomes for residents, which included providing care within people's own homes.

At this point in the meeting the Executive Members for Development and Finance, respectively, arrived at the meeting.

The Executive Member for Adult Social Care continued by stating Adult Social Care services were fragmented. Existing systems lacked full integration across health, housing, and voluntary sectors, limiting efficiency and outcomes for residents.

There was also a need to modernise and innovate, as technology had progressed significantly in recent years. As such the strategy introduced digital technology, Artificial Intelligence, and community-based solutions to improve independence and reduce reliance on costly long-term care.

The Vision included alignment with statutory duties and national policy such as the Care Act 2014 and the national integration agenda, which required councils to adopt person-centred, strength-based approaches, making the strategy essential for compliance and transformation.

A Member queried if the introduction of Artificial Intelligence would replace jobs in the service. It was clarified that the use of Artificial Intelligence would not replace staff, it would instead enhance service provision.

The Mayor commented that he welcomed the Vision and stated that it was right to focus on people living their best life rather than what others think it should be.

OPTIONS

Two options were submitted as part of the report:

- **Maintain the status quo:** This was not recommended due to the expected demand pressures during the lifetime of this strategy.
- **Short-term plan only:** This would lack strategic direction and sustainability and would offer no long term framework for the workforce.

ORDERED that Executive approve the Adult Social Care & Integration Vision and Strategy 2025–2035, along with the 2026/7 delivery plan.

REASONS

In some aspects of Adult Social care the current service models were unsustainable; the strategy introduced prevention, digital innovation, and co-production.

The strategy aligned with the delivery of Middlesbrough Council's statutory duties under The Care Act 2014, and national policy. It was an essential component in setting our strategic direction for the purposes of the CQC Inspection framework.

The strategy outlined the direction of travel to support financial resilience and improved outcomes.

25/91

INVESTMENT INTO HOUSING TO REDUCE TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION COSTS

The Executive Member for Development submitted a report for Executive consideration. The purpose of the report sought Executive approval to utilise grant funding and Section 106 resources to secure properties to alleviate the need for expensive temporary accommodation solutions via a range of options.

In December 2024 the Council's Executive approved a report allocating £6.141m of external

grant from the Government's Town's Fund and Levelling Up programmes for the provision of housing to reduce the number of people in temporary accommodation. The method of delivery outlined in the report was that the Council would directly purchase and hold the properties.

The principle behind the report was that by increasing the number of properties under the Council's control, a greater number of people at risk of homelessness could be accommodated at reasonable cost. The benefits of the approach would be an increase in the options available to people at risk of homelessness, and a corresponding reduction in the Council's expenditure on short term, external housing solutions.

Since the report was prepared, several other delivery options had been identified that would allow the Council to spread the risk inherent in the purchase of significant numbers of properties. This would also utilise the expertise of partners to potentially generate a greater impact for the same level of investment. Utilising a mix of different delivery methods would also allow the Council the flexibility to respond to the changing housing market, and the trends emerging in the data that reflected service user's needs.

Although the rationale, principles and business case remained current from the December 2024 report, the menu of options that were proposed was much wider than the original direct purchase option. The additional methods proposed for consideration, alongside direct purchase, were detailed in the report and were Partnership with The Ethical Housing Company; Partnership with a Social Investment Fund; and Third-party partnerships/ contracts.

It was intended that the detailed methods were all explored and utilised accordingly, where they balanced the best value for the Council's investment, with the appropriate spread of risk. The number of properties secured should either equal or exceed the 60 properties identified in the original report.

The detailed options, and therefore the recommendations of the report, related specifically to the use of capital expenditure to secure properties. Any contracting required with specific service providers relating to the support for tenants would still be required to go through the appropriate Council governance and other legal processes.

A Member queried, in relation to paragraph 4.10 of the report, if accommodation would be available to those already homeless as well as those at risk of homelessness. It was confirmed this was the case and that those in temporary accommodation would be charged rent via housing benefit.

It was also commented that veterans would also be eligible for temporary accommodation and that veteran's eligibility was now higher as part of the common allocation policy.

The Mayor commented that, in relation to paragraph 4.10 (b) the return to the Council's investment could be ringfenced to support homelessness going forward. A conversation took place during which it was commented that the recommendations in the report would also provide support to rough sleepers.

OPTIONS

Do nothing. The cost of accommodating people on a temporary basis in private sector provision (the current situation) was forecast to increase further as demand outstripped supply.

The local market was predominately focussed on the provision of accommodation only and was not offering support packages required to maintain tenancies and deliver positive outcomes for people with complex needs or care leavers.

As a result, the churn in placements would continue with tenancies continuing to fail, resulting in repeat homelessness, the costs of temporary accommodation to the Council would continue to rise and the option of long-term security in a home would not be a possible offer.

Commissioning expert services to work with the Council in creating more housing and support options allowed the Council to react to the need in the town. It would also allow the Council to work with providers who specialised in areas where the it currently had

little or no provision but would rely on having access to an appropriate stock of properties.

Utilising the proposed approach of spreading the risk across a range of options allowed the Council to ensure it always reflected the best approach.

ORDERED that Executive:

1. Approves the utilisation of £3.6m of retained Affordable Housing Section 106 developer contributions to replace the Towns Fund grant and bring the available resources back to the previously approved £6.141m;
2. Approves a revised menu of options to secure properties to alleviate the need for expensive temporary accommodation that would enable greater impact, flexibility and value for money than those previously proposed; and,
3. Delegates decisions relating to the appointment of the providers from within the menu of options to the Chief Officer with responsibility for Regeneration in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer, and the Executive Member with responsibility for Development.

AGREED that Executive:

1. Notes the decision of Executive, in December 2024, to invest resources from the Towns Fund grant (£4m) and Levelling Up Partnership grant (£2.141m) to secure properties to alleviate the need for expensive temporary accommodation solutions.
2. Notes the subsequent decision of Executive, on 12 November 2025, within the Middlehaven Housing report to utilise £3.6m of the aforementioned Towns Fund grant for the appointment of Capital and Centric as the Council's development partner.

REASONS

The options presented in the report for the provision of properties to alleviate the need for expensive temporary accommodation solutions, would contribute significantly to addressing the pressures the Council faces in providing accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.

25/92

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.

None.

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