

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date:	Wednesday 17th September, 2025
Time:	4.30 pm
Venue:	Mandela Room (Municipal Buildings)

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Fire Evacuation Procedure

In the event the fire alarm sounds attendees will be advised to evacuate the building via the nearest fire exit and assemble at the Bottle of Notes opposite MIMA.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

4. Minutes - Overview and Scrutiny Board - 30 July 2025 3 - 12

5. Executive Member Update - Education and Culture 13 - 24

6. Executive Forward Work Programme 25 - 36

6.1 Forward Plan Actions Progress

- Development of Middlehaven Proposals to commence preparatory work for the comprehensive redevelopment of Middlehaven
- Capital Investment in Council Buildings Proposals to invest in major reconfiguration and repair of Council buildings
- Investment in Homelessness Proposals for investment alongside a social investor to purchase properties to reduce the expenditure on temporary accommodation

7. Draft Terms of Reference - Poverty, its impact, and efforts to tackle it. 37 - 38

To consider, discuss and agree the Terms of Reference for OSB's review topic: "Poverty, its impact, and efforts to tackle it."

8. Scrutiny Chairs Update
9. Any other urgent items which, in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered.

Charlotte Benjamin
Director of Legal and Governance Services

Town Hall
Middlesbrough
Tuesday 9 September 2025

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors L Young (Chair), J Ewan (Vice-Chair), D Branson, E Clynch, D Coupe, J Kabuye, L Lewis, M McClintock, T Mohan, I Morrish, J Platt, M Saunders, Z Uddin, G Wilson and J Young

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Scott Bonner/ Sue Lightwing, 01642 729708/ 01642 729712, scott_bonner@middlesbrough.gov.uk/ sue_lightwing@middlesbrough.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on Wednesday 30 July 2025.

PRESENT: Councillors L Young (Chair), J Ewan (Vice-Chair), D Branson, E Clynch, D Coupe, J Kabuye, L Lewis, M McClintock, T Mohan, I Morrish, J Platt, M Saunders, Z Uddin, G Wilson and J Young

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Mayor C Cooke

OFFICERS: C Benjamin, S Bonner, B Carr, A Glover, S Lightwing and E Scollay

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors

25/1 WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting and described the fire evacuation procedure.

25/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Nature of Interest
Councillor Clynch	Non-Pecuniary	Item 13 – Employed in Education Sector
Councillor McClintock	Non-Pecuniary	Item 7 – Governor at Middlesbrough College in relation to Mayor's Update
Councillor Young	Non-Pecuniary	Item 13 – Employed in Education Sector

25/3 MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - 9 APRIL 2025

The Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 9 April 2025 were submitted for the Board's consideration.

A Member proposed the following amendments:

- Page three - the first bullet point should read "Middlesbrough had a lower average life expectancy compared to the rest of England" rather than "Middlesbrough had a lower average life expectancy for England."
- Page five, paragraph 6 - the apostrophe should be removed from "Community Council's."

The proposed amendments were agreed, and the remainder of the Minutes for 9 April were approved as a correct record.

25/4 MINUTES - PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL - 14 APRIL 2025

The Minutes of the People Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 14 April 2025 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

25/5 MINUTES - PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL - 12 MAY 2025

The Minutes of the People Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 12 May 2025 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

25/6 EXECUTIVE MEMBER UPDATE - THE MAYOR

The Chair welcomed the Mayor to the meeting and invited him to deliver his presentation.

The Mayor stated his presentation would follow a similar format to his previous presentations to OSB and would be structured as Review, Celebrate and Preview. It was agreed the Mayor would take questions during his presentation rather than at the end.

The Review element of the presentation covered the Middlesbrough Priorities Fund, Public Sector Capital and Childhood Enrichment Team.

During his presentation the Mayor made the following points:

- The Priorities Fund supported several initiatives, split over two phases.
- The first phase included Youth Mutual Seed funding, an increase to grass verge budgets and improvements to the condition of shop fronts.
- The second phase of the Priorities Fund included initiatives such as the Homeless Intervention Team and the Iris Programme.
- The Iris programme would help GPs, and other health care professionals, identify cases of domestic abuse.
- The AI Interactive Coach was being trialled in Adult Social Care to assist Social Workers with administrative tasks when visiting service users.
- The Council was not providing money for Energy Assessments programme this but was providing advice and support to people about how to make their homes and businesses more energy efficient.
- The NEETs programme was based in East Middlesbrough.
- MusicINC was an important scheme and had received additional funding for new musical equipment.
- The Council had paid the first year of Multibank project which had provided essential items such as clothing.
- Increased support for Trading Standards was crucial as it helped the Council, and other agencies, tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- There needed to be a clear plan with regards to the Investment prospectus to attract investment to the town.
- In terms of the Public Sector Capital initiative, Middlesbrough College was cited as an example. It was projected that Middlesbrough College would not be able to accommodate student numbers by 2028/29. The Council had provided funds of £1.6 million to the College so it could cope with increasing student numbers. Aiding in this way helped reduce the level of NEET in the town and there was no additional cost to the Council for this investment. Similar projects were being developed and would involve working with the Police in efforts to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
- In terms of the Childhood Enrichment Team, there had been an additional £200,000 allocated to move from two periods of assistance (Summer and Christmas) to four periods of assistance (Summer, October Half Term, Christmas Half Term and February Half Term). Such assistance could be in the form of regular meals or childhood experiences. Such experiences provided a degree of stability for children. The initiative also included the 10 by 10 project, which provided 10 essential life enhancing experiences for children under 10 years of age. It was acknowledged this project needed to target children under 10 years old otherwise they would be locked into their secondary schooling.
- The 10 by 10 project was part of a wider suite of projects, which included the SHiFT programme and 50 Futures, both of which provided support for all families.

A Member queried how the Childhood Enrichment Team engaged with children. It was clarified there was a pilot in five primary schools including Newport, Ayresome, Sunnyside and Pennyman. By the end of the year the Council would know the extent of the funding requirement for the initiative. It was also clarified that the birthrate in Middlesbrough was approximately 3,000 per year.

The Mayor continued with this presentation and made the following points under the Celebrate section:

- Linthorpe Road Cycle Lane had a removal date of the 26 August at no cost to the Council.

A Member stated the Cycle Lane had been poorly designed from the outset and that political differences may have contributed to the delay of its removal. The Mayor commented there were unforeseen complications during negotiations with the Tees Valley Combined Authority that contributed to the delays. However, the Council was keen to learn from the experience, including how consultation exercises could be carried out more effectively.

A Member stated that, due to the afore mentioned delays and contention, there had been a reputational cost to the Council. The Mayor conceded this point and stated there was a long way to go before faith in the Council was restored. The Member further stated that, regarding consultation, this needed to be improved as Members often found out about important issues via social media rather than official channels. The Mayor responded that, in this case, the Combined Authority had carried out consultation in accordance with statutory guidelines, but the Council was in a position to bridge gaps in this approach, such as consultation with relevant Ward Members.

A Member queried if consultation should be carried out by the Council's publicity team rather than specific service areas. The Chief Executive commented the Council was reviewing its consultation practices which would ensure consultation was as robust as possible.

It was clarified the removal of the Linthorpe Road Cycle Lane would take approximately nine weeks. A conversation took place regarding the benefits of cycle lanes and how it was disappointing the Linthorpe Road Cycle Lane had not worked as hoped.

A Member queried if reviewing consultation practices would encompass Planning issues. It was clarified this would likely fall under a specific Planning policy.

In terms of the Linthorpe Road Cycle Lane removal, a Member asked if bus routes had been considered as part of this, as the current situation was unsuitable. The Mayor agreed and commented that retuning Linthorpe Road to its pre-cycle lane condition was not desirable given the location of some bus stops, such as that at Granville Road. Plans to remove the cycle lane needed to consider these issues.

The Mayor continued with this presentation and made the following points:

- The Turner Prize was being hosted in Middlesbrough in 2026 which was a significant achievement.
- Area Care Uplift had taken place which had seen Neighbourhood Caretakers undertaking improvement works to green spaces across the town.

A Member commented that the general condition of gulleys and paths was poor and needed attention. The Mayor commented that improvements were being made in this area including changing brush heads on road sweepers from nylon to metal. A machine that killed moss was due to be purchased but, importantly, a regular schedule of weed killing was needed.

A Member queried if the Council had children's play area inspectors. It was clarified the Council had one play fitter and this needed to be increased. There were sound reasons for increasing the budget in this area. The Chair commented that rather than just replacing or removing damaged play area equipment it needed to be proofed against vandalism. The Mayor agreed and cited equipment in Pallister Park as an example, including minor alterations to waste bins that would make them more effective.

A conversation took place regarding how regular maintenance on overgrown trees and wooden installations could have a significant impact both in terms of practicality and presentation.

A Member queried if improvements to area care would also apply to cemeteries. The Mayor commented that many cemeteries had voluntary organisations, such as Friends groups, that contributed to cemetery maintenance but agreed this was an area the Council could reexamine.

The Mayor continued with his presentation and made the following points:

- Projects that were in progress included the Old Town Hall.
- Church House was nearing completion which would contribute to wider economic

benefits.

- Pallister Park improvements were also at the design stage.
- Neighbourhood Hub designs were expected by the end of the year, if not earlier.

A Member commented that Newport Hub was working well but required investment. The Mayor stated there were some plans in place for this.

A conversation took place during which the Mayor clarified Church House would be private housing rather than social housing and that Hemlington was being considered for a Neighbourhood Hub in the south of the town.

The Mayor continued with his presentation and made the following points:

- The Council struggled when it received more money than expected and this was difficult to plan for. To address this there was a three-tiered approach, namely; cover the existing budget; cover service demand and grow select service areas that matched key priorities.
- The Council would have to double its current budget to return to pre-2010 levels.
- The Mayor frequently met with the Minister for Local Government to ensure Middlesbrough was receiving fair funding.
- Work was still required on fairer funding.

A Member queried what was meant by prepare for growth. The Mayor clarified this meant growing areas of the Council that had previously contracted which would entail increasing staff and budgets. Part of this work was to establish a separate work stream for additional income, if it was received.

A Member queried if pest control was an area that would benefit from such growth as this was an acute problem in certain areas of the town. The Mayor commented there would be improvements in this area.

The Mayor discussed Middlehaven and the developments taking place there. He stated there was a need to achieve a balance between work and living spaces, in conjunction with Town Centre needs. The Mayor commented that Ward Members would be involved in the plans toward the end of the year.

A Member queried if scrutiny could see details on this issue before it was considered at Executive. The Mayor stated that elements of the decision could be released to Members before being published. It was also stated the report considered by Executive would likely not contain significant detail as it would be a starting point. The Member responded if the report did not contain significant detail that would be an ideal opportunity for scrutiny to examine the issue. The Mayor agreed and stated that Ward Members would be consulted initially followed by the wider Membership.

The Mayor also discussed the recycling project that was being trialled at St Barnabas. While the relevant machine was awaited, the aim of the project was for residents to deposit used glass bottles in exchange for cash in order to improve recycling rates and achieve cost savings.

The Mayor stated that, as part of his portfolio he was responsible for several services in the Legal and Governance directorate. The Mayor identified several staff members within those services and thanked them for their work and achievements in their roles.

The Mayor responded to a query about empty properties and stated a plan was being put into place to address this issue.

A Member commented that in certain areas of the town retail was no longer available and, if leisure alternatives could not be found, demolition should be considered. The Member also stated that residents had concerns about the number of receptacles needed for the new recycling regime. The Mayor stated that, in terms of demolition for unused buildings, this was a consideration but could not provide details. In terms of the recycling regime, the Mayor appreciated the concerns of residents and the Council was doing what it could to mitigate any inconvenience.

A Member queried the length of the payment to Middlesbrough College. It was clarified as 20 years. The Mayor also stated the Council needed to take a more strategic approach to this kind of initiative.

A Member sought clarification on living and working spaces in Middlehaven. The Mayor stated there needed to be a coexistence of living space and work space in Middlehaven so that neither was predominant.

In response to a query about the Crown, the Mayor stated responsibility for the Crown had moved to the Middlesbrough Development Corporation and details on this would be its responsibility.

The Chair thanked the Mayor for his presentation and asked OSB to note the Mayor's presentation.

NOTED.

25/7

DELIVERY AGAINST THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE

The Mayor presented a report for OSB's consideration and noting.

It was explained the report had been considered by Members and approved at Executive on 16 July 2025. OSB was advised the report provided an overview of delivery against the Council's Continuous Improvement Plan. The plan captured strategic improvement actions being delivered within the organisation to ensure the Council could fully demonstrate its compliance with the principles of the Best Value Duty.

The Mayor stated he was hopeful that all actions in the plan would be completed.

Reference was made to recommendation six, sub action (b), which related to providing support to Executive Members so they could own and shape the Council's financial position. A Member queried if this should apply to all Members rather than just Executive Members. The Mayor stated he would be happy for this to apply to all Members.

A conversation took place regarding the Councillor Gateway system. A Member commented they would be happy to provide their feedback on the technical aspects of the Gateway system. It was confirmed that recruitment for a Gateway Officer was in progress, and they would reach out to Members for their feedback once in post. While the Mayor acknowledged the Gateway could be streamlined, some Members of the Board expressed their satisfaction with the system.

The Chair thanked the Mayor and asked OSB to note the report.

NOTED

25/8

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

The Democratic Services Officer presented the OSB Work programme report for the 2025/26 municipal year. Members were advised the report contained prospective scrutiny topics the Board could consider undertaking during the forthcoming year.

The Chair invited Members to comment on the report.

A Member suggested that a scrutiny topic into electoral registration would be beneficial as this informed important Council services, such as Council Tax. The Chair advised it would be prudent to wait for the full impact of the government's electoral reforms before examining electoral registration.

The Monitoring Officer advised that a briefing note on the government's reforms was being planned and could be circulated to OSB for their information.

A Member commented the topic "*Developing a Vision for the Town*" had been identified as a topic for the Place Scrutiny Panel. The Chair commented this review should remain with the Place Scrutiny Panel, but that OSB should invite the new Chair of the Middlesbrough

Development Corporation to attend OSB.

The Chair stated he was keen for OSB to undertake reviews, albeit on a strategic level but that OSB should also be prepared to undertake shorter reviews on emerging issues.

The Chair proposed that the suggested topic, *“Poverty, its impact, and efforts to tackle it”*, be undertaken by OSB. It was suggested this would be considered from a council-centric perspective and would examine poverty in terms of what support the Council offered to alleviate it.

The Chair also suggested that the topic *“The role of faith and belief in decision-making, civic life, and the work of Middlesbrough Council”* also be undertaken, although this could be a short review in the first instance.

A Member queried the nature of the Civics Working Group that had been created following a motion to full Council. It was clarified this was a working group comprising of Members across the political spectrum but was not a formal committee.

ORDERED that

1. A briefing note, identifying electoral reforms, be presented to OSB once prepared.
2. The new Chair of the Middlesbrough Development Corporation be invited to attend a future meeting of OSB.
3. The suggested topics *“Poverty, its impact, and efforts to tackle it”* and *“The role of faith and belief in decision-making, civic life, and the work of Middlesbrough Council”* be added to the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2025/26.
4. The Scrutiny Work Programme for 2025/26 be updated to reflect the agreed topics.

25/9

SCRUTINY - WORK PLANNING 2025/26

The Democratic Services Officer submitted a report seeking OSB's approval for the Scrutiny Work Programme for the 2025/26 municipal year.

The report detailed the prospective work programme as follows:

The Adults and Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel met on 21 July and agreed to include the following topics in its work programme:

In Depth Reviews:

- Healthy Place Making across the life course with a focus on children and young people.
- Domestic Abuse / Violence Against Women and Girls and how to tackle it.

Updates:

- Quarterly Monitoring of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Improvement Plan
- Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB) - Annual Report
- Director of Public Health, Annual Report
- Updates from the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee
- South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust - Draft Quality Account
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust - Draft Quality Account

The Children's Scrutiny Panel met on 15 July and agreed to include the following topics in its work programme:

In Depth Reviews

- Out of Area Specialist Provision
- Educational Attainment of Children in Care
- Supporting Children who are being exploited

Updates:

- South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership - Annual Report
- Performance data
- Children's Services financial information.

- SEND Local Offer

The Place Scrutiny Panel met on 17 July and agreed to include the following topics in its work programme:

In Depth Reviews

- Barriers to Regeneration (ongoing review)
- Commemorating Middlesbrough's Bicentenary in 2030
- Development of a Vision for the Town
- The Council's Role in Housing

Updates:

- Flood Risk Management
- RIPA (Regulation of Investigatory Powers) (Annual update)
- Community Safety Partnership (Annual update)
- Prevent and Channel (Annual update)

The Chair invited Members of OSB to comment on the report.

As there were no questions from Members it was agreed the report be approved.

ORDERED that the Work Programme 2025/26 for the Place Scrutiny Panel, as set out above, be approved.

25/10

PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY PROTOCOL

The Chair invited the Democratic Services Manager to present the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol to OSB.

Members were advised that the aim of the protocol was to better facilitate working relationships between Scrutiny and Executive. The draft Protocol had been shared with Scrutiny Chairs and Senior Management as well as presented to those Members in attendance at recent scrutiny workshops.

A Member commented they had taken a keen interest in this issue and was happy with the content of the draft protocol as it helped to codify the position as it was. The Member also stated that often Scrutiny did not have sufficient time to effectively examine issues before they were considered by Executive. As such, while the protocol was welcome, it did not provide a solution to this.

It was commented that the protocol was a first step. The next phase of this work would be to facilitate work between Scrutiny and the Executive to create a scrutiny conversation. Such scrutiny conversations would allow for informal discussions and potentially allow for more open and effective dialogue.

It was agreed that the Chair of OSB would work with Democratic Services to decide on the best way forward regarding the scrutiny conversation. A Member commented the draft Protocol should be seen as the first phase, and that a second phase would be needed.

The Mayor commented a timeline for decisions would be useful as there was often a limited timeframe associated with decisions considered by Executive.

ORDERED that

1. The Pre-decision Scrutiny Protocol be approved.
2. The Chair of OSB and Democratic Services work together to further develop the protocol.

25/11

EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report for OSB's consideration. A copy of the Work Programme was attached at Appendix A and Members were asked to raise any issues they had in relation to any of the items listed.

Members identified several entries on the Forward Plan which they felt required more information. Those items were:

- Development of Middlehaven Proposals to commence preparatory work for the comprehensive redevelopment of Middlehaven
- Capital Investment in Council Buildings Proposals to invest in major reconfiguration and repair of Council buildings
- Investment in Homelessness Proposals for investment alongside a social investor to purchase properties to reduce the expenditure on temporary accommodation

In terms of *Investment in Homelessness Proposals for investment alongside a social investor to purchase properties to reduce the expenditure on temporary accommodation*, the Mayor commented this was a wider strategic piece of work which included properties in a state of disrepair. A discussion took place about how such properties would be used and it was commented those houses would likely be for single occupancy purposes.

In terms of the Forward Plan entry regarding *Longlands Road Sustainable Transport Improvements*, the Mayor stated the decision may be delayed owing to additional works that were required, particularly on Longlands Bridge.

The Chair commented there were relatively few entries on the Forward Plan, and he encouraged as much information to be included on the Plan as possible.

The Chief Executive commented the Forward Plan tended to be shorter at this point in the year but that more decisions would be entered on to the Forward Plan in the autumn.

ORDERED that

1. More information be requested from the relevant Service Area relating to the following entries on the Forward Plan:
 - Development of Middlehaven Proposals to commence preparatory work for the comprehensive redevelopment of Middlehaven
 - Capital Investment in Council Buildings Proposals to invest in major reconfiguration and repair of Council buildings
 - Investment in Homelessness Proposals for investment alongside a social investor to purchase properties to reduce the expenditure on temporary accommodation
2. The report be noted.

25/12 FORWARD PLAN ACTIONS PROGRESS

There were no Forward Plan Actions following the previous meeting of OSB.

25/13 FINAL REPORT OF THE PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL - CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

The Chair of the Children's Scrutiny Panel presented the former People Scrutiny Panel's Final Report and draft recommendations in relation to its review of Children Missing Education.

The Chair of the Children's Scrutiny Panel expressed his thanks to all those involved in the report's creation.

The Board was asked to consider the following recommendations:

- a) Ensures that CME forms an integral part of Middlesbrough Council's Draft Poverty Strategy. CME, and its impact, should be explicitly referenced and included in any performance regime underpinning the strategy. Members of the Children's Scrutiny Panel should be briefed on how CME will feature within the Poverty Strategy no later than January 2026, or sooner if the strategy is available.
- b) Ensures that Education & Partnerships are fully prepared for the Children's Wellbeing in Schools Bill, in particular the monitoring of Elective Home Education and the implementation of a single unique identifier (SUI) for children. The Children's Scrutiny

- Panel should be briefed on the preparations, no later than December 2025.
- c) Establishes a Working Group between Primary Schools in the Central areas of Middlesbrough, Education and Partnerships, Stronger Communities and local Councillors to explore if further assistance can be provided in respect of the large transient community and the issues of school roll turnover. The Working Group should report back on its progress by March 2026.
 - d) Establishes a Working Group between Education & Partnerships and Stronger Communities to understand the nature of the higher rate of CME in the Romanian community. The Working Group should produce an action plan to help reduce this number against the baseline average of 22, at the time of the review. The Working Group should provide a progress update against their action plan to the Children's Scrutiny Panel by March 2026.
 - e) An update be provided to the Children's Scrutiny Panel that provides assurance to the on the ongoing work of assisting children at risk of permanent exclusion. This should happen no later than October 2026.
 - f) An update be provided to the Children's Scrutiny Panel on the new Alternative Provision and the restructure of the Inclusion and Outreach Model. This should happen no later than April 2026.

ORDERED that the findings and recommendations of the former People Scrutiny Panel be endorsed and referred to the Executive.

25/14

FINAL REPORT OF THE PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL - EMPTY PROPERTIES

The Chair of Place Scrutiny Panel presented the Panel's Final Report and draft recommendations in relation to its review into Empty Properties.

The Chair of the Place Scrutiny Panel thanked all those involved in the creation of the report and commented this was an important subject. He also stated that national government needed to reexamine the property rating system.

A Member queried what the Council Tax rates were for properties that were empty for longer periods. The Mayor stated properties empty for two years or more had 200% Council Tax imposed and those empty for five years or more the amount was 300%.

A Member stated they welcomed the report as it provided useful information on how to deal with empty properties in their ward.

The Chair of the Place Scrutiny Panel stated remedies to empty properties in Middlesbrough were available but were difficult to use.

The Board was asked to consider the following recommendations:

- a) Introduce a charge of 100% Empty Property Council Tax Premium after year 1 instead of year 2 which it is currently.
- b) Impose the maximum premium for properties which have been empty for 10 years or more.
- c) Ensure that all enforcement powers available to the Council such as Completion Notices and Demolition Orders in relation to empty properties are utilised where appropriate and justify any failure to do so.
- d) Produce a database of derelict empty properties and report annually to the Executive and/or the Place Scrutiny Panel.
- e) Review empty properties across the town by carrying out data matching using the electoral register, council tax list and business rate list.
- f) Make greater use of Compulsory Purchase Orders for residential properties and smaller commercial properties such as small shops below flats. For commercial properties investigate schemes such as the High Street Rental Auctions scheme.
- g) Explore how the Selective Landlord Licensing Scheme can be made into less of a deterrent to letting out empty properties, by allowing landlords to pay the Selective Landlord License fee over 60 monthly payments instead of up front. Also by providing a waiver of future payments if the landlord sells the property.
- h) Encourage Social Housing Providers to demolish uneconomical properties that cannot be brought back into use or encourage them to sell to other developers or owner

- occupiers and to reinvest any money generated into their current stock.
- i) Investigate if CPOs can be issued for unsafe buildings so that they can be demolished by the Council and associated costs passed onto the owner.
 - j) Explore ways of getting long-term empty properties back into use through affordable rents/full market rents or owner occupation as well as social rent.
 - k) Investigate if empty social housing properties that are difficult to let could be used by the council to provide temporary accommodation.
 - l) Explore all possible channels of funding and work with more developers, social housing providers and private landlords to bring empty properties back into use, including office to residential conversions.
 - m) Explore alternative ways of dealing with non-residential empty properties that have been taken out of the rateable value ratings where the owner shows no intention of developing the property. Seek to ask Government to change rules on the valuable rating system so not to be exploited/abused by landlords.

ORDERED that the findings and recommendations of the Place Scrutiny Panel be endorsed and referred to the Executive.

25/15

SCRUTINY CHAIRS UPDATE

Scrutiny Panel Chairs were invited to provide their updates to OSB.

The Chair of the Children's Scrutiny Panel advised OSB the Panel last met on the 15 July where it agreed its work programme for the forthcoming year. The next meeting of the Panel would be 15 September.

The Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel advised OSB the Panel had last met on 22 July where it agreed its work programme for the forthcoming year. OSB was also advised the Panel were keen to explore topics covering obesity in children and young people as well as domestic abuse. The Panel were also concerned about children's dental health. It was commented this issue could lend itself to a joint review between the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel and the Children's Scrutiny Panel.

The Chair of the Place Scrutiny Panel advised OSB the Panel had last met on 17 July 2025 where it agreed its work programme for the forthcoming year. OSB was advised the Panel had agreed two general areas to review which were housing development and the development of the town more generally.

NOTED

25/16

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

None.

Education and Partnerships

Overview and Priorities

September 2025



Education and Partnerships

- Working with schools
 - To reduce the number of exclusions and suspensions through sharing good practice, access to our Inclusion and Outreach Service, challenging and supporting schools on their exclusion policies and promoting greater inclusion
 - Driving strategies and support to improve outcomes for our young people
- Family Hubs
 - Supporting Family Hubs in engaging with families and breaking down access barriers
 - Improve the links between Health and Education
- Youth Justice
 - Driving delivery of the Youth Justice Plan
 - Strengthening Partnerships to support delivery of shared agendas

My Priorities

- Continue to work with schools to reduce exclusions and suspensions
- Supporting schools to improve the attendance of all children, particularly the most vulnerable.
- Preventing young people from entering the Youth Justice System and supporting those in the system to leave without reoffending
- Creating access to facilities to improve Early Years childhood experiences
- Enhance creative ways of learning
- Grant support for schools

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Culture

Overview and Priorities

September 2025



Culture

- Museums working with schools
 - Supporting schools on their education programme
 - Driving strategies to improve cultural offers to children
- Town Hall & Theatre
 - Financial sustainability
 - Community use
 - Audience growth
 - Supporting schools to use the Theatre
- Events
 - Capacity
 - Programming
- Archives
 - Future
 - TVCA and other Local Government areas



My Priorities

- Supporting Schools through cultural development.
- Increase capacity of events team.
- Supporting child literacy –
- Creating access to facilities to improve childhood experiences
- Enhance creative ways of learning

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Other Areas

Overview and Priorities

September 2025



- DASP
 - Strategic working with DA services and Partners
 - Challenging and supporting partners
 - Support The Survivors Panel
- Civics
 - Run informal civics committee
 - Ensuring cataloging of civics collection
 - Co-ordinate veterans events/support
- Anti-Poverty
 - Shape agenda and strategy
 - Lobby national government and local government partners
 - Embed policy

My Priorities

- Support DA service partners in cohesive way
- Challenge DA service partners, particularly the ICB
-
- Highlight the absolute need for a senior collections Officer
- Provide support and ideas to the events team around civics events with other councillors and veterans
-
- Starting with Children and childhood experiences and how to expand this
- Expand the impact of the multibank with partners
- Keep working with the North East Child Poverty Commission
- Making sure that policy change is embedded across the council in a crosscutting approach
- Embed findings and outcomes from the poverty sprint.



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MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Chief Executive – Erik Scollay
Relevant Executive Member:	Not applicable
Submitted to:	Overview and Scrutiny Board
Date:	17 September 2025
Title:	Executive Forward Plan
Report for:	Discussion
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Delivering Best Value
Key decision:	Not applicable
Why:	Not applicable
Subject to call in?	Not applicable
Why:	Not applicable

Proposed decision(s)
It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Board consider and Notes the content of the Executive Forward Work Programme.

Executive summary
<p>OSB has delegated powers to manage the work of Scrutiny and, if appropriate, it can either undertake the work itself or delegate to individual Scrutiny Panels.</p> <p>One of the main duties of OSB is to hold the Executive to account by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Executive and decide whether value can be added by Scrutiny considering the matter in advance of any decision being made.</p> <p>This would not negate a Non-Executive Member's ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.</p>

1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions

1.1 To make OSB aware of items on the Executive Forward Work Programme.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	<i>Aims within this ambition are to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attract and grow businesses to increase employment opportunities - Improve attainment in education and skills - Ensure housing provision meets local demand
A healthy Place	<i>Aims within this ambition are to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improve life chances of our residents by responding to health inequalities - protect and improve our environment - promote inclusivity for all - reduce poverty
Safe and resilient communities	<i>Aims within this ambition are to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support adults to be independent for longer - improve transport and digital connectivity - promote new ideas and community initiatives - reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
Delivering best value	<i>Aims within this ambition are to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure robust and effective corporate governance - set a balanced revenue budget and Medium Term Financial Plan to restore financial resilience and sustainability

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Board

- Consider and note the content of the Executive Forward Work Programme.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 OSB has delegated powers to manage the work of Scrutiny and, if appropriate, it can either undertake the work itself or delegate to individual Scrutiny Panels.

3.2 One of the main duties of OSB is to hold the Executive to account by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Executive and decide whether value can be added by Scrutiny considering the matter in advance of any decision being made.

3.3 This would not negate a Non-Executive Member's ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.

4. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate

4.1 Not applicable

5. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

5.1 No other options are submitted as part of the report.

6. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	Relevant Impact will be detailed in individual decisions.
Legal	
Risk	
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	
Reducing Poverty	
Climate Change / Environmental	
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	
Data Protection	

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Implement any decision of the Overview and Scrutiny Board with regard to the Executive Forward Work Plan.	Relevant Officer	As directed by OSB

Appendices

1	Executive Forward Work Plan
2	
3	

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
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sue_lightwing@middlesbrough.gov.uk



Executive Forward Plan - 1 April 2025 to 31 May 2026

FOR THE PERIOD 09 SEPTEMBER 2025 TO 31 MAY 2026

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Ref No. / Ward	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents	Member / Officer Contact
The Mayor							
I024094	Information Strategy 2025-2029 To approve the information strategy 2025-29	Executive 8 Oct 2025	A Healthy Place to Live		Public		1) The Mayor <i>Ann-Marie Johnstone</i> <i>Ann-Marie_Johnstone@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>
Deputy Mayor and Executive Member - Education and Culture							
I024184 All Wards	People Scrutiny Panel Report on Children Missing Education (CME) That Executive notes the background	Executive 8 Oct 2025	A Successful and Ambitious Town	KEY	Public		2) Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture <i>Trevor Dunn, Head of Access to Education</i> <i>trevor_dunn@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>

Ref No. Ward document was	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents	Member / Officer Contact
classified as: OFFICIAL	information and contextual factors contained within this report. This report is presented in support of the People Scrutiny Panel Report on Children Missing Education (CME).						
Executive Member - Adult Social Care							
I024050 All Wards	Domestic Abuse Strategy 2025-2028 For executive approval of Domestic Abuse Strategy developed by Middlesbrough Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership to fulfil statutory duties within Domestic Abuse Act 2021	Executive 12 Nov 2025	A Healthy Place to Live	KEY	Public		3) Executive Member for Adult Social Care <i>Claire Moore</i> <i>Claire_Moore@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>
I024213 All Wards	Levick Court Development of Respite Provision and partnership working with TEWV.	Executive 12 Nov 2025	Safe and Resilient Communities	KEY	Public		3) Executive Member for Adult Social Care <i>Suzanne Hodge</i> <i>suzanne_hodge@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>

Ref No. Ward The document was classified as:	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents	Member / Officer Contact
Executive Member - Children's Services							
Executive Member - Development							
I023748 Central	Development of Middlehaven Proposals to commence preparatory work for the comprehensive redevelopment of Middlehaven	Executive 12 Nov 2025	A Successful and Ambitious Town	KEY	Public		5) Executive Member for Development <i>Richard Horniman, Director of Regeneration</i> <i>Richard_Horniman@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>
I023750 All Wards	Investment in Homelessness Proposals for investment alongside a social investor to purchase properties to reduce the expenditure on temporary accommodation	Executive 12 Nov 2025	A Successful and Ambitious Town	KEY	Public		5) Executive Member for Development <i>Richard Horniman, Director of Regeneration</i> <i>Richard_Horniman@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>
I023751 All Wards	Capital Investment in Council Buildings Proposals to invest in major reconfiguration and repair of Council buildings	Executive 12 Nov 2025	A Successful and Ambitious Town	KEY	Public		5) Executive Member for Development <i>Richard Horniman, Director of Regeneration</i> <i>Richard_Horniman@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>

Ref No. Ward document was classified as:	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents	Member / Officer Contact
Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability							
OFFICIAL 1024028 All Wards	Place Scrutiny Report – Home to School Transport Service To inform Executive of the scrutiny review in the Home to School Transport Service and to set out the proposed actions of the Integrated Transport Unit to address the recommendations from the report.	Executive 8 Oct 2025	Delivering Best Value	KEY	Public		6) Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability <i>Ged Faint</i>
1024259 All Wards	EXEMPT Waste Disposal Options To seek executive approval for Middlesbrough Council to accept the preferred bidder with respect to the procurement of the energy from waste plant and to enter with the other relevant north east authorities a special	Executive 8 Oct 2025	Delivering Best Value	KEY	Fully exempt <i>commercial confidentiality</i>		6) Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability <i>Geoff Field</i> <i>geoff_field@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>

Ref No. Ward document was	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents	Member / Officer Contact
classified as: OFFICIAL	purpose vehicle to manage the waste disposal contract for MBC.						
I022892 Berwick Hills and Pallister; Brambles and Thorntree; Longlands and Beechwood; North Ormesby	Longlands Road sustainable transport improvements Proposals to improve sustainable transport opportunities along the Longlands Road corridor. The proposals cover a major transport corridor, covering several wards, at a significant cost	Executive 12 Nov 2025	A Healthy Place to Live	KEY	Public		6) Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability <i>Chris Orr</i> <i>Chris_Orr@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>
Executive Member - Finance							
I024029 All Wards	Household Support Fund 2025/26 amendment To agree changes required to the original delivery plan	Executive 8 Oct 2025	A Healthy Place to Live	KEY	Public		7) Executive Member for Finance <i>David nolan</i> <i>david_nolan@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>
I024225	Treasury Management Mid-	Executive 12 Nov 2025	Delivering Best Value		Public		7) Executive Member for Finance

Ref No. Ward document was	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents	Member / Officer Contact
classified as: OFFICIAL	Year Review - 2025/26 The report provides an update to the Executive on performance in relation to the Council's borrowing, investments, cash-flow, and prudential indicators, for the 2025/26 financial year to meet the requirements of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice and the Local Government Act 2003.						<i>Justin Weston</i> <i>Justin_Weston@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>
I024235 All Wards	Service Response to Final Report of the Place Scrutiny Panel Respond to Panel Recommendations	Executive 12 Nov 2025	A Successful and Ambitious Town		Public		7) Executive Member for Finance <i>Tami Egonu</i> <i>tami_egonu@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>
I024278	Annual Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators 2026/27 to 2029/30	Executive 4 Feb 2026	Delivering Best Value	KEY	Public		7) Executive Member for Finance <i>Justin Weston</i> <i>Justin_Weston@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>

Ref No. Ward document was classified as: OFFICIAL	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents	Member / Officer Contact
	The report outlines the Council's prudential indicators for the financial years 2026/27 – 2029/30 regarding the affordability of the capital programme, and sets the framework and approves the limits within which the treasury management operations for this period will work. It fulfils key legislative and guidance requirements in this area and is an essential part of the annual budget setting process.						
I024292 All Wards	Revenue and Capital Budget - Forecast Year-end Outturn position at Quarter Two 2025/26 The report advises the Executive of the Council's financial	Executive 3 Dec 2025	Delivering Best Value	KEY	Public		7) Executive Member for Finance <i>Andrew Humble</i> <i>andrew_humble@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>

Ref No. Ward document was	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents	Member / Officer Contact
classified as: OFFICIAL	position as at Quarter Two 2025/26						
Executive Member - Neighbourhoods							
Executive Member - Public Health							
I024150 All Wards	Recovery Solutions Delivery Model To set out future site delivery options for Recovery Solutions, our in- house substance misuse service, in response to recent operational challenges.	Executive 8 Oct 2025	A Healthy Place to Live	KEY	Public		9) Executive Member for Public Health <i>Jonathan Bowden</i> <i>Jonathan_Bowden@middlesbr</i> <i>ough.gov.uk, Rebecca Scott</i> <i>Rebecca_Scott@middlesbrou</i> <i>gh.gov.uk</i>

Overview and Scrutiny Board

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

17 SEPTEMBER 2025

Matter for Consideration:

For OSB to agree the Terms of Reference for OSB's review, "Poverty, its impact, and efforts to tackle it."

Background Information

At OSB on the 31 July 2025 Members resolved to consider the review topic, "Poverty, its impact, and efforts to tackle it."

It was agreed the topic should be undertaken through a "policy lens," and should focus on what policy initiatives, either current or planned, are in place to address poverty in Middlesbrough.

Draft Terms of Reference

With the agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair of OSB, the following Terms of Reference have been drafted to act as a guide for OSB to consider and discuss. It is OSB's decision to approve, reject or amend the draft Terms of Reference.

1. To understand the definition of poverty and what this means for Middlesbrough.
2. With a specific focus on demographics, understand the causes and impact of poverty in Middlesbrough.
3. To explore the strategies, plans and policies the Council has in place to address and alleviate poverty in Middlesbrough.
4. To understand what work is being undertaken with external stakeholders to address and alleviate poverty in Middlesbrough.

Recommendations and/or issues on which guidance is being sought:

Once agreed, the Terms of Reference will be scoped, and a schedule of work will be created and integrated into OSB's meeting schedule for 2025/2026.

(Scott Bonner 01642 729708 / Sue Lightwing 01642 729712)

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