

COUNCIL

A meeting of the Council was held on Wednesday 15 October 2025.

PRESENT: Councillors J Banks (Chair), J Kabuye (Vice-Chair), I Blades, D Branson, E Lynch, C Cooke - Elected Mayor, J Cooke, D Coupe, D Davison, J Ewan, T Furness, P Gavigan, TA Grainge, S Hill, B Hubbard, L Hurst, N Hussain, D Jackson, D Jones, T Livingstone, L Mason, J McConnell, J McTigue, T Mohan, I Morrish, M Nugent, J Platt, S Platt, A Romaine, J Rostron, M Saunders, M Smiles, P Storey, Z Uddin, N Walker, G Wilson and L Young

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillors

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

OFFICERS: S Bonner, S Lightwing, A Johnstone, A Wilson, L Zipfell, B Carr, K Whitmore and R Williams

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors C Cooper, L Henman, L Lewis, D McCabe, M McClintock, J Nicholson, J Ryles, J Thompson and S Tranter

25/55 WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and read out the Fire Evacuation Procedure.

25/56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

25/57 MINUTES - COUNCIL - 10 SEPTEMBER 2025

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 September 2025 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

25/58 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reminded Council that in October 2024 a Motion was carried that recognised the importance of supporting those who had experienced the loss of a baby. In keeping with that commitment, Middlesbrough Council wished to acknowledge that today, 15 October, was National Baby Loss Awareness Day. This day culminated in a wave of light at 7 pm, where people across the globe would light candles and leave them burning for at least one hour. The symbolic gesture honoured and remembered babies who died during pregnancy, at birth, or in infancy and offered a moment of reflection and solidarity to all those affected.

25/59 MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor moved his report as written whilst highlighting two approaching deadlines as follows:

- Pride and Place Funding – the Mayor hoped to have further details to announce at the November Council meeting.
- The Fair Funding Formula and changes – the Mayor was expecting further details by the end of October 2025.

Questions in relation to the Mayor's Report

Councillor Saunders on Supporting Young People.

The Mayor explained that the Youth Fund was open to applications from other partners and not just Middlesbrough Council. The Mayor commented that he thought the Council had applied to the Fund but would confirm this.

Councillor Saunders on regeneration funding for East Middlesbrough.

The Mayor explained that meetings would need to take place with representatives from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to understand the boundaries of the funded area. The current information supplied was based on output areas from 2021 and were unclear. The funding would have a capital/revenue split – 37% revenue, 63% capital. A management board to allocate the funding would need to be established by next spring and conversations would take place to decide who the partners should be. The Mayor also commented that the project needed to be community led.

Councillor Branson on Area Care Teams.

The Mayor stated that with the additional investment that had been allocated to area care, problems that residents had been facing for a long time had started to be tackled. Overgrown areas or play parks that were not up to standard were now being addressed and tidied up. The Mayor reminded Councillors of the investment made in last year's budget and the trajectory of travel, to ensure that the Council continued to invest in areas such as Environment, wherever possible.

Councillor L Young on Community Caretakers.

The Mayor explained that the Community Caretakers had undertaken approximately 120 jobs and activities across the town to date. It was vital to ensure that the Council continued this investment. The next project was the refurbishment of Saltwells Park. The Mayor commended the Community Caretakers and the Area Care staff for the work they had undertaken.

Councillor Lynch on Fair Funding Review.

The Mayor stated that members of the Council had lobbied very hard to ensure that Middlesbrough received a fair share of funding. The Mayor was fairly confident that Middlesbrough would receive an improved settlement but urged all Councillors to continue to lobby the Government to ensure the best outcome for Middlesbrough.

25/60

EXECUTIVE MEMBER UPDATES

Question in relation to the update of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care – Councillor Rostron.

Councillor Lynch on the Middlesbrough Independent Living Services.

The Executive Member thanked Councillor Lynch for complimenting the Connect Service and agreed to pass on his thanks to all staff for work undertaken recently. The Independent Living Service had also been recognised nationally as exemplary, which was a great achievement and the Executive Member added her thanks to all staff. The Independent Living Service was vital to the community and vulnerable residents. The number of people who were able to remain in their own homes was largely down to the work of this Service. For service users, their families and carers, there was the reassurance of access to 24/7 assistance. The Executive Member also highlighted a link in her update to videos produced by the staff which provided further details of the services provided, which included the Affordable Warmth Team. Councillors' attention was drawn to information leaflets provided by the Affordable Warmth Team that were available at the meeting.

Question in relation to the update of the Executive Member for Children's Services – Councillor Henman.

Councillor Jones agreed to email her question to Councillor Henman.

Questions in relation to the update of the Executive Member for Development – Councillor Furness

Councillor Morrish on empty shops.

The Executive Member concurred that the Government had granted some local authorities enforcement powers to tackle empty shops by putting vacant commercial properties up for rental auction. Middlesbrough Council was currently offering grants of up to £5000 to local businesses to assist with signage and lighting, as well as improvements to doors and windows.

Councillor Uddin on the criteria for applying for grants to improvement shop fronts.

The Executive Member explained that a pot of £180,000 was available from the Middlesbrough Priorities Fund. Applications would be accepted from business owners and quotations would be required. The Executive Member agreed to forward further information on the scheme to all Councillors and asked them to encourage eligible businesses to apply.

Questions in relation to the update of the Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability.

Councillor Saunders on a damaged culvert on Ladgate Lane.

The Executive Member informed Council that a contract had been awarded for the remedial work required and the contractor had started investigatory work. Whilst it was acknowledged that it was inconvenient, temporary traffic lights were in place as a safety measure. Ward Councillors would be given an update on the timescale for completion of the works once the information was available.

Councillor Jones on collection of side waste.

It was confirmed that there had been no policy change in relation to the collection of side waste. Expected tonnage did not include side waste and its collection would interfere with the rounds being completed on time. Therefore, the Area Care teams collected side waste. It was hoped that next year's recycling changes would improve the situation.

Councillor Wilson on the purchase of black bins.

The Executive Member asked Councillor Wilson to email the details of the specific case he had raised and stated that he would resolve the issue.

Councillor Hubbard on the costs and funding for new bins.

The Executive Member confirmed that the Council had received grants for food waste collection and enhanced recycling costs. The Executive Member agreed to email the detailed costs to Councillor Hubbard.

25/61

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)

No valid questions had been submitted by members of the public, within the required timescale for this meeting.

25/62

PETITIONS (IF ANY)

No valid petitions had been submitted for this meeting.

25/63

REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) presented a report, the purpose of which was to provide an update on the current position regarding progress made by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and the individual Scrutiny Panels.

The Chair informed Council that arrangements had been made for the Chair of the Middlesbrough Development Corporation (MDC) to attend the next meeting of OSB.

However, due to Middlesbrough Council having representation on the Tees Valley Combined Authority's scrutiny panels, the MDC had subsequently declined the invitation. The Chair stated that the invitation remained open and hoped that it would be taken up in future.

The Chair invited Members to note the report.

ORDERED that the report was noted.

25/64

LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION MODIFICATIONS - DELEGATED AUTHORITY

A joint report of the Director of Regeneration and Executive Member for Development was presented to seek confirmation that the Council formally requests the appointed Planning Inspector to recommend modifications to the Middlesbrough Local Plan, where necessary, in order for it to be found sound during the Independent Examination. The report also sought approval to delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development, to agree a list of proposed modifications with the Planning Inspector and undertake the consultation associated with this process.

The implications of the recommendations had been considered by the appropriate Council Officers and were set out in the submitted report.

Members sought assurance that Councillors would be informed and consulted on any major changes that might affect ward areas. The Executive Member confirmed that Councillors would be consulted.

ORDERED that Council approved:

1. A formal request from the appointed Planning Inspector, under Section 20 (7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to recommend modifications to the Middlesbrough Local Plan, where necessary, in order for it to be found sound during the Independent Examination; and
2. The delegation of authority to the Director of Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development, to agree with the Planning Inspector a list of proposed modifications and undertake the consultation associated with this process.

25/65

SOUTH TEES YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE PLAN 2025-2026

A joint report of the Interim Director of Education and Partnerships and the Executive Member for Education and Culture was presented to seek Council approval of the South Tees Youth Justice Service Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26.

The Youth Justice Plan was a legally required strategic document as set down by Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and by National Standards for Youth Justice. Section 40 stated that it was the duty of each local authority, after consultation with partners, to formulate a youth justice plan which outlined how youth justice services in the area were to be provided and funded. The plan provided an overview of the work of the Youth Justice Service over the previous year, including an overview of performance against the 3 main Youth Justice National Indicators. The Plan also outlined the priorities for South Tees Youth Justice Service (STYJS) in 2025/26 and how those priorities would be achieved.

The Deputy Mayor highlighted that following a recent inspection, the service had been graded as "Good".

ORDERED that Council approved the South Tees Youth Justice Service Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26.

25/66

REVISED POLITICAL BALANCE

A report of the Director of Legal and Governance Services (Monitoring Officer) was presented to seek approval for the revised allocation of places on committees and sub committees for the Municipal Year 2025-2026 in accordance with the current political balance of the Council.

A report was presented to Full Council at the meeting held on 9 July 2025 detailing the revised political balance of the authority. Since that time, there had been a change in group

membership and the political balance of the Council therefore needed to be revised. The rules, duties, and principles outlined in the report to the Annual Meeting remained applicable.

The report sought Full Council approval for the revised allocation of places on committees and sub committees for the Municipal Year 2025-2026 in accordance with the current political balance of the Council. The decision was recommended to ensure that places on committees were allocated in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

ORDERED as follows that Council approved:

1. the revised allocation of seats on Committees that are subject to the rules relating to political balance as follows:

Labour - 69 places

Conservative - 11 places

Middlesbrough Independent Councillors Association (MICA) - 26 places

Liberal Democrat - 6 places

Marton East Independent Group (MEIG) - 6 places

Unallocated - 14 places

2. that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to fill the unallocated seats as indicated in paragraph 4.4 of the report and make any necessary further adjustments to remove or replace Members where directed by the relevant Group or Member.

3. that nominations for the vacant places be sought and, where necessary voted upon.

4. that any committee established prior to the next review be appointed on the basis of the places shown in Appendix 1, Table 3, attached to the submitted report.

5. the following appointment was approved:

Audit Committee – Councillor Morrish.

25/67

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the first Annual Report of the Audit Committee. This report included details of the range of work undertaken over the period under review, the key issues identified and discussed, and a summary of the recommendations from the effectiveness review undertaken by the Local Government Association.

The Chair thanked the Audit Committee Members and two Councillors who had substituted at meetings during the last year. Eleven meetings had been held over the course of the year and the Committee had turned around three years of accounts for the Council and the Teesside Pension Fund.

The Audit Committee would continue with business as usual for the forthcoming year and work through the recommendations included in the report.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Morrish, who had been appointed to the membership of the Audit Committee earlier in the Council meeting.

ORDERED as follows that Council noted the:

1. Content of the first Annual Report of the Audit Committee, set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report.
2. Issues that had been considered by the Committee and the outcome of the review of its effectiveness and the proposed actions to further strengthen audit arrangements.

25/68

UPDATE ON URGENT DECISIONS (IF ANY)

No Urgent Decisions had been taken since the last report to Council.

25/69 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS ON NOTICE (IF ANY)**

No Members' Questions on Notice had been submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

25/70 **MOTIONS ON NOTICE (IF ANY)**

No Motions on Notice had been submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

25/71 **URGENT MOTIONS ON NOTICE (IF ANY)**

No Urgent Motions on Notice had been submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.