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PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Place Scrutiny Panel was held on Monday 27 April 2026.

PRESENT: Councillors D Branson (Chair), A Romaine, D Coupe, J Ewan, D Jackson, J Kabuye, T Mohan and I Morrish

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: G Taylor (Erimus Rotary Club)

OFFICERS: J McNally, T Frankland, R Horniman and A Glossop

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor B Hubbard

25/69 **WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

25/70 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Item/Nature of Business
Councillor D Jackson	Non-pecuniary	Item 6 – existing relationship with Erimus Rotary Club.

25/71 **MINUTES - PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL - 16 FEBRUARY 2026**

Some minor amendments to the minutes of the Place Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 16 February 2026 were proposed. It was agreed that these would be incorporated, and the minutes were then approved.

25/72 **MINUTES - PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL - 30 MARCH 2026**

Some minor amendments to the minutes of the Place Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 30 March 2026 were proposed. It was agreed that these would be incorporated, and the minutes were then approved.

25/73 **MIDDLESBROUGH'S BICENTENARY - MIDDLESBROUGH ERIMUS ROTARY CLUB**

The District Environment Lead from Erimus Rotary Club was in attendance and began his presentation by advising the Panel that the club was currently planning a project of three dimensions which incorporated the past, present and future and offered positive answers to all three of these elements. In terms of Middlesbrough's past, the town was built on ironmaking and dominated global steel production.

The Rotary Club had plans for a heritage trail and was undertaking a project whereby they produced replicas of Tees-built bridges and buildings along the River Tees which had united people, cities and continents such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Tyne Bridge and many more. The club worked with local colleges to manage costs and Members heard that there were training schemes where students produced the metal structures. They planned to place seated areas along the trail with scannable QR codes that would play a video and tell local stories but needed support to deliver this.

The Panel heard that the existing Tees Heritage Walk, organised in collaboration with local colleges, had raised significant funds for charity since its first year. However, the need for improved security measures was highlighted as there had unfortunately been some criminal damage which local donors had supported the Club in repairing back to standard.

Future plans included more hedgerow planting, incorporating more trees, scheduled for this autumn courtesy of the Tees Community Forest initiative and wildflowers would be planted through a partnership with Middlesbrough Council and Councillor Peter Gavigan. These small steps would transform the riverscape over time. The club had already sown wildflower borders and planted Buddleias within five local primary schools and one Academy this spring.

As mentioned, the Rotary Club would benefit from increased CCTV in partnership with local riverside-based companies for mutual benefit. The result would be a 'Secure Greenway' joining two major conurbations bringing health and wellbeing benefits to all of its users. A Member queried where funding for the CCTV would come from and it was confirmed that Erimus did not have easy answers at this stage but it needed to be safe with constant monitoring.

Erimus Rotary was now an active member of TUNN (Tees Urban Nature Network), participant in GCNE (Green Corridors North East) and were working toward a linkage with National Trust at Ormesby Hall and Yatton House.

Erimus was a founding member of a group seeking to develop a Passport to Culture across the Tees Valley. This type of initiative would encourage local museums and attractions to collaborate and persuade local people to visit the culture that is on their doorstep. It could also play a positive part in the Bicentenary plans and City of Culture ambitions.

The rapidly growing Teesside technology scene was referenced and the challenges that Middlesbrough faced in regard to reputation and image were highlighted as a barrier to growth. Many exciting and positive things were happening in the town and Middlesbrough had a rich and unique heritage; it was important that we collectively championed and promoted this.

AGREED that:

1. The information provided was received and noted.
2. Ideas discussed in the presentation would be taken away and considered as part of the developing Bicentenary celebrations.

25/74

SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS - VERBAL UPDATE

The Development and Control Manager was in attendance to provide an update on Section 106 Agreements. A Section 106 Agreement was a legally binding contract between a local planning authority and a developer/landowner that was deemed to make the development acceptable. It could include affordable housing, schools, transport improvements and other additions. Neighbourhood Plans provided a framework for the type of provisions that would be sought through Section 106 agreements.

Members heard that the Council had to ensure that anything asked for did not make the scheme unviable and had to be reasonable and justifiable. Agreements were the result of extensive negotiations and any requests made were challengeable and judicial reviews or the Ombudsman could be used to investigate and challenge any complaints so it was important that the Council acted correctly. Consultations with local people were carried out before permission was granted for new developments but it was often difficult to argue that specific things were necessary to approve the development as evidence had to be provided.

Middlesbrough Council was trying to be more creative in what was requested within the agreements, incorporating wider goals such as reducing car reliance and things that would benefit further than one specific development. The complexities of highways improvements and the traffic modelling behind any requests were discussed as this often affected several areas across the town, not just where the development was located.

Members were also advised that agreements contained 'trigger points' which were negotiated milestones that activated development obligations such as a specific number of completed houses. Work was being done to make Section 106 agreements clearer and more transparent enabling easier tracking, particularly as any unspent funds must be returned.

A Member queried what type of monetary figures the Council could expect from current developments and it was confirmed that approximate figures were £50-60m from three or four housing sites. Concern was raised that there were no guarantees in place to ensure that the Council would receive the agreed funds as promised.

Members noted that it would be useful if guidance could be shared with Councillors on Section 106 agreements to help improve understanding and manage expectations as there had been

27 April 2026

experiences where it had been challenging for the Council to secure the contributions that were originally agreed.

The Development and Control Manager concluded the update by advising Members that they were welcome to engage with the Section 106 process where possible and could contact him via email.

AGREED that:

1. The information provided was received and noted.
2. Guidance would be shared with all Councillors around Section 106 Agreements.

25/75

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD UPDATE

The Chair provided a verbal update on matters considered at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 15 April 2026. Agenda items included:

- Scrutiny Chairs Update
- Executive Forward Work Programme
- Forward Plan Actions Progress
- Final Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (Short Review) - The Council's Approach to Poverty
- Draft Terms of Reference – OSB Short Review - What role do Faith and Belief Groups play in Civic Life in Middlesbrough
- Continuous Improvement Plan – Progress Update
- Executive Member Update – The Mayor
- Executive Member Update – Neighbourhoods

AGREED that the information provided was received and noted.

25/76

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Place Scrutiny Panel was provisionally scheduled for Monday 6 July 2026 at 1:30pm, subject to agreement at the Annual General Meeting.

25/77

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

None.