

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: Thursday 11th February, 2021
Time: 4.00 pm
Venue: Virtual Meeting

AGENDA

Please note: this is a virtual meeting.

The meeting will be live-streamed via the Council's Youtube channel at 4.00 pm on Thursday 11th February, 2021
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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive any declarations of interest.
3. Minutes - Overview and Scrutiny Board Call-in - 18 December 2020 - Residual Waste Collections 3 - 4
4. Minutes - Overview and Scrutiny Board - 14 January 2021 5 - 20
5. Executive Forward Work Programme 21 - 28
6. Middlesbrough Council's Response to COVID-19
The Chief Executive and Director of Public Health will be in attendance to provide the Board with an update in respect of the Council's response to COVID-19.
7. Executive Member Update: Executive Member for Regeneration 29 - 30

The Executive Member for Regeneration, Councillor A

Waters, will be in attendance to update the Board on his aims and aspirations, progress made to date and to highlight any emerging issues relating to his portfolio.

8. Final Report - Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel - Social Cohesion and Integration 31 - 52
9. Scrutiny Chairs Update
Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel - Councillor J. Thompson
Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel - Councillor J. Platt
Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel - Councillor S. Hill
Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel - Councillor L. Garvey
Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel - Councillor C. McIntyre
Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel - Councillor M. Saunders
Health Scrutiny Panel - Councillor J. McTigue
10. Date of Next Meeting - Thursday, 11 March 2021 at 4.00 p.m.
11. 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
Wednesday 3 February 2021

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors J Thompson (Chair), M Storey (Vice-Chair), C Cooke, D Coupe, L Garvey, A Hellaoui, T Higgins, S Hill, T Mawston, C McIntyre, J McTigue, J Platt, M Saunders and Z Uddin

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Chris Lunn, 01642 729742, chris_lunn@middlesbrough.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on Friday 18 December 2020.

PRESENT: Councillors J Thompson (Chair), M Storey (Vice-Chair), C Cooke, D Coupe, L Garvey, A Hellaoui, T Higgins, T Mawston, C McIntyre, J McTigue, J Platt, M Saunders and Z Uddin.

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillors B Hubbard, D McCabe, E Polano, J Rathmell, J Walker, G Wilson, C Wright and A Preston (The Mayor).

OFFICERS: C Benjamin, C Breheny, B Carr, G Field and C Lunn.

20/60 **MEETING DEFERRAL**

This meeting had been scheduled to consider a Call-in in respect of 'Residual Waste Collections'.

The Chair advised the Board that, due to technical difficulties, the meeting could not be live-streamed. Therefore, to comply with the regulations of *The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392*, the Chair advised the Board that the meeting would be deferred to a future date.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on Thursday 14 January 2021.

PRESENT: Councillors J Thompson (Chair), M Storey (Vice-Chair), C Cooke, B Cooper (as substitute for Councillor Hill), D Coupe, L Garvey, A Hellaoui, T Higgins, T Mawston, C McIntyre, J McTigue, J Platt, M Saunders and Z Uddin.

PRESENT BY INVITATION: D Best - Independent Chair, Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board
Councillor D Davison - Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
A Preston (The Mayor).

OFFICERS: M Adams, S Bonner, C Breheny, G Cooper, A Glover, A Humble, C Lunn, T Parkinson, S Reynolds, J Savage, E Scollay, P Stephens and I Wright.

APOLOGIES

FOR ABSENCE: Councillor S Hill.

20/61 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

20/62 MINUTES - OSB CALL-IN - 20 NOVEMBER 2020

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (Call-in in respect of Future Accommodation) held on 5 November 2020 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

20/63 MINUTES - OSB - 3 DECEMBER 2020

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 3 December 2020 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

20/64 EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Chief Executive submitted a report which identified the forthcoming issues to be considered by the Executive, as outlined in Appendix A to the report. The report provided the Overview and Scrutiny Board with the opportunity to consider whether any item contained within the Executive Forward Work Programme should be considered by the Board, or referred to a Scrutiny Panel.

NOTED**20/65 MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

The Chief Executive, the Director of Public Health and the Head of Revenues and Benefits were in attendance to provide information to the Board regarding the Council's response to COVID-19.

The Director of Public Health delivered a presentation to the Board.

Regarding the latest COVID-19 position and the rolling seven-day rate of cases per 100,000 of the Middlesbrough population, as at 12 January 2021: 72 new cases had been added to the system; 675 new cases had been diagnosed; 478.8 rate per 100,000 population; and 177.30 COVID-19 deaths per 100,000 population, which reflected a predicted post-Christmas spike. Increases were a result of the new

variant that had been identified (between 65-70% of cases were of the new variant, which was more infectious) and also the extent of mixing on Christmas Day when the restrictions were relaxed. Lockdown seemed to be having a positive effect, with numbers reducing significantly, but the peak was important when considering the impact on hospitals.

The number of people admitted to hospital with a COVID-19 diagnosis had increased from around 28/29 December 2020. There was currently 185 in-patients (the figure did not include positive cases from within the community detailed previously); 28 of which were in Critical Care. There were significant operational pressures for the hospital, which would get worse; current modelling was based on a potential peak of 300 beds occupied by people with COVID-19. It was highlighted that figures would start to increase further as a result of those infected over the Christmas period, which was a significant concern for professionals across the system.

In terms of COVID-19-related deaths across Middlesbrough, the current statistics (as at week ending 1 January 2021) reflected the significant steps that had been taken to protect care homes and populations in general; whilst there had been an increase in cases in the community, the number of deaths had been significantly lower. Protection activity had included additional testing; ensuring that people were not discharged with a positive diagnosis from hospital into care homes, or from the community into care homes; and additional support for vulnerable people in communities. Unfortunately, however, it was anticipated that the increased activity at James Cook University Hospital, as described previously, would cause an increase in these figures over the coming weeks and months.

Regarding lockdown three response activities and the support provided to businesses and residents, details would be provided as part of the Head of Revenue and Benefits' presentation to the Board.

It was indicated that all Council services had been reviewed to understand where provision would be impacted further by lockdown three restrictions.

Lockdown three guidance / regulation implications for those attending education settings, such as primary or secondary school would see Early Years (nurseries, etc.) registered child care and other supervised child care activities continued, and childcare bubbles were permitted. Primary and secondary schools were now closed until at least 15 February 2021, but primary schools were open to vulnerable children and children of key workers. The number of those children was higher than in comparison to previous lockdowns, with schools needing to support both this and the planned testing programme that would be initiated in schools. Support in respect of the testing programmes had been provided by Public Health and Teesside University. The aim of the testing was to minimise the impact of a positive case by reducing the number of bubbles that would be required to isolate.

Additional funding was expected to support schools to provide food parcels / meals to those eligible children. Where this was not possible, a national voucher scheme would be accessible for the duration of school closures.

For vulnerable children and adults, the guidance issued for lockdown two / tier four had been reviewed and would continue for lockdown three.

The Public Protection Service was monitoring compliance with business restrictions and responding to requests for advice and to complaints. Mention was made of work that would be undertaken in relation to supermarkets (including the wearing of face coverings and the number of people allowed into retail space at any one time), which would commence shortly.

In terms of shielding support, this varied from that provided during the previous lockdown; Government direction was to encourage the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable to access existing channels of support i.e. registering for online shopping priority slots, rather than Local Authority provision of food parcels, etc. Help Boro call handling demand during lockdown two was low, although longer term arrangements for Help Boro were being developed.

In terms of the vaccination programme, as at 6 January 2021, over 6,000 first vaccines had been administered to Middlesbrough residents and, to date, the North East had had the highest number of vaccines delivered. The programme currently focused on Health and Social Care Workers and people aged over 80, but was now moving into the over-75s. Vaccination sites in Middlesbrough comprised James Cook University Hospital, North Ormesby Health Village and Thorntree Surgery. Mass roll-out sites within Middlesbrough were also currently being explored, which would significantly increase access to vaccines.

Regarding community testing, the target population for testing was approximately 10-20% of residents aged 11yrs+, and equated to 11,985 -23,971 of the Middlesbrough population.

The proposed testing approaches would mitigate inequality, protect vulnerable people and reduce transmission in high risk settings. These approaches included routine testing of key workers; and testing in large high risk work places with a larger proportion of low paid jobs (e.g. food processing plants), as employees were more likely to live locally in areas of greater deprivation and therefore more susceptible to COVID-19.

Three targeted community testing sites had been identified initially: Newport Community Hub, North Ormesby Hub and Marton Sports Village. It was explained that as there was only one pool of staff available, support for testing sites would be off set against support for vaccination sites, which was the more important endeavour within the programme. Work was currently underway to address the staffing requirements which would, in the main, be met by Local Authority employees, i.e. casual staff and those able to be redeployed into alternative roles. Key partners, including the Fire Brigade and local Voluntary Community Support organisations, had offered support in terms of assisting local people to access testing and understand the provision available should they be required to isolate.

Targeted community testing would be deployed over a six-week period from early February 2021 and would consider economically deprived areas, BAME communities and areas with high positivity (factors that tended to overlap), but which had low testing rates. Circa. 500 tests per week were anticipated in those settings based on work undertaken in Grangetown, where just under 400 people had been tested in almost a one-week period. Targeted community testing was also about holding conversation and building community capacity on what people could do to protect themselves and their families, and increase understanding of COVID-19.

The Head of Revenues and Benefits delivered a presentation to the Board.

Revenues and Benefits were privileged to have access to all Middlesbrough residents and businesses, which consisted of 65,000 Dwellings and 4,500 Businesses.

Since the onset of COVID-19, the service had been a key player in delivering over £34.6m of financial support to both residents and businesses. A further circa. £11.5m would be provided from 5 January 2021. The Council had been both a key driver and player in ensuring the success of Middlesbrough's business community over the course of the pandemic, and was very keen to work closely with the community.

The service was currently delivering / had delivered 16 initiatives (a further three to follow), which cut across a number of services. These amounted to more than 12,000 additional hours of activity; providing financial support to partnering organisations to reduce food poverty. Circa. 3000 businesses had been supported, with additional funds to support circa. 2000 businesses in January 2021 and over the coming months. Circa. 40,000-plus residents had been provided with, or were due, additional financial assistance (e.g. a top-up to Council Tax reduction; funding for food hampers; free school meals, etc.); and provided funding to 12 partnering organisations to help them deliver solutions that underpinned what the community needed at the present time.

The service had paved the way in developing numerous policies, which were progressing at speed. It was highlighted that in a number of instances, the service was the first in the Tees Valley to launch and pay schemes. There had also been national recognition / press recognition for innovative ideas. A number of policies and reports had been prepared that sought Executive approval, and the Council was being compared to City counterparts due to the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes being put in place.

Details of the various support schemes / initiatives provided to businesses and residents were outlined to Members, which included: Mandatory and discretionary business grants; Lockdown grants; Council Tax support payments to 16,000 residents; Free school meals (i.e. turning around a solution for circa. 7600 children in 48 hours, with excellent feedback being received from the local community); and Winter fund payments (aimed at over 12,500 children, this was currently on phase three after two very successful phases, which had been opened to further families as a consequence of responding to local feedback). A seven stage scheme had also been devised to support couples and single individuals impacted financially by COVID-19, and 80 Community Support Crisis payments of £500.00 had been made. Some of the schemes had been delivered, whereas others were currently open. A process flow to assist businesses had been designed in order to facilitate their access to support. It was indicated that three further support schemes / initiatives had commenced from 5 January 2021: 'New Tier Four'; 'New Closed Scheme' (linked to tier four); and 'New Lockdown Grant'. With regards to the tier four grant, guidance had been issued on 13 January 2021, the Council went live with the solution yesterday, and made the first payment today, which was excellent. To date, 150 applications had been received.

Revenues and Benefits had been working with partnering organisations to reduce food poverty and the strategy focused on initial, mid, and longer-term solutions. A budget of £244,000 had been made available to fund a number of food / essentials programmes across the town, with such partner organisations as: Middlesbrough Foodbank; Together Middlesbrough; Middlesbrough Environment City; Echo Shops; and Cleveland Fire Brigade. Examples of activities undertaken were provided to Members.

The Revenues and Benefits Service had held Customer Services Excellence for over 18 years. On 7 and 8 January 2021, the service had been fully re-assessed for further three-year accreditation; the result was currently pending.

Following the presentations, the Chief Executive and the Mayor thanked all of the teams involved in the delivery of this work and commended the activity undertaken.

Members were afforded the opportunity to ask questions of the Chief Executive, the Director of Public Health, and the Head of Revenues and Benefits.

A Member made reference to the 80 crisis payments paid out and queried how many applications were made above the 80 that were given out. In response, it was

explained that if individuals did not qualify for a crisis payment, i.e. they did not meet the policy, those individuals were allocated to a separate funding stream, and therefore most of those payments were processed via another scheme.

A Member referred to the vaccine rollout and raised concerns in respect of harder-to-reach communities / individuals who were not registered with GPs, and who may not understand the process. It was queried how all communities would be encompassed within the programme. In response, the Director of Public Health advised that work was currently taking place in this regard, with consideration being given as to how access into those communities could be achieved and information / support provided. It was critical that all communities were safe and highlighted that, should any Members have any concerns when vaccines were roll-outed to more general communities, to please raise them, as it was important to understand and address any potential barriers to vaccine take-up.

A Member made reference to vulnerable children and key workers currently attending and working in Middlesbrough's schools and queried the current position in terms of their progress and health. In response, the Director of Public Health advised that he was not aware of any particular issues. It was explained that teams based within Public Health and Education were supporting schools with the mitigation measures to be put in place around social distancing, wearing masks, etc., and assisting schools with local contact tracing details to minimise the size of bubbles when people needed to go home. The Director of Public Health would liaise with the Director of Prevention and Partnerships to determine whether any specific issues had been raised in relation to this, and feedback further information as applicable.

Members commended the work undertaken by the Revenues and Benefits Service and congratulated all involved for the achievements made and recognition received.

A Member made reference to lockdown three guidance in respect of education, and queried whether there were now more primary school children in Middlesbrough being identified as essential workers' children and vulnerable children. In response, the Director of Public Health advised that specific figures could be obtained, although it was understood that the numbers were higher during this lockdown than in the original lockdown. It was anticipated that there would be some national restriction implemented to address this.

A Member made reference to business grant funding and queried whether businesses were actively being contacted and advised as to the types of support available. In response, the Head of Revenues and Benefits advised that an email account had been set-up for the majority of these customers; reference was made to an email that had been circulated earlier in the day to over 600 businesses. Contact was also made via telephone and social media, with a very high success rate being achieved. The approach had been tailored to meet the needs of the businesses, which was based on the feedback received from them.

A Member made reference to supermarkets and small stores and commented upon the enforcement of wearing face masks. It was felt that support from the Police would be required to ensure compliance. In response, the Director of Public Health advised that the Public Protection Team would be commencing visits to supermarkets to determine compliance and take action as appropriate.

In response to a query regarding the number of Council employees testing positive for COVID-19, the Chief Executive advised that of all sickness at present, 15% was COVID-19 related. There had not been any major staffing issues arise as of yet; there had been some difficulties experienced in Adult Social Care and Children's

Social Care with COVID-19, but to date, there had been no operational problems encountered.

A Member made reference to Cleveland Police Officers and queried whether front-line Constables could be prioritised for the COVID-19 vaccination. In response, the Chief Executive advised that a very clear national priority list was being worked through. It was explained that within the staff groups, there was a group called 'other' - it was currently being looked at as to which roles this could include. It was explained that a number of different occupational groups were putting cases forward, but the programme was NHS-led and therefore outside of the Local Authority's control. The current focus in terms of the priority list were Health and Social Care-based roles. The Director of Public Health advised that the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations had a list of nine priority groups based on age and underlying health conditions; the only staff groups were Health and Social Care-based because they supported the vulnerable people. There was a move to move to other key work areas, such as Police and Fire personnel, with a national advice document recently being released. This would be reviewed to determine the level of influence that the Local Authority could bring. The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration advised that one of the top four priority groups that the Government planned to work through by the end of February was frontline Health and Social Care workers; a current vaccination programme involving the Council's Health and Social Care workers was currently underway at James Cook University Hospital. In Middlesbrough, there were approximately 4500 Health and Social Care workers, with reference being made to the new booking system that had been established.

A Member made reference to testing and high risk workers and queried whether school staff would be included within this. In response, the Director of Public Health advised that testing in schools was a national programme; school staff would be tested twice per week. The programme was currently operating in secondary schools and would be rolled-out to primary schools shortly. Mention was made of work undertaken with Teesside University in providing support to schools.

A Member made reference to schools and the ways in which the pandemic was being dealt with. It was queried whether uniformed guidance / policies / practice should be provided to schools to provide operational consistency. In response, the Director of Public Health advised that work was being undertaken with schools in order to share good practice; visits had also been undertaken to advise on mitigation measures and improve those as required. Schools were independent, but officers were advising and assisting as much as possible.

A Member raised a query regarding the varying strains of the virus and the effectiveness of the vaccination. In response, the Director of Public Health referred to the flu vaccination and the ways in which it targeted different strains of that virus. In 2017/2018, the vaccination did not align with the strains presented in that year, and therefore the respective mortality rate was particularly high. Vaccinations were developed on current strains and predictions made as to how they could mutate. COVID-19 would continue to mutate in the same way as flu did. It was understood that the vaccines currently available were as effective against the new variants that had emerged. Consistent review of this was undertaken by Public Health England and pharmaceutical companies.

Following a request for clarification in respect of a five day business grant payment, the Head of Revenues and Benefits advised that this related to a tier four payment (classed as a closed scheme). It was explained that when the Local Authority moved into tier four, there was a small amount of payment covered for that period. This was followed by a further payment for the lockdown period, and then a further

supplementary payment (therefore three payments linked to that one element).

The Chair thanked the Chief Executive, Director of Public Health and Head of Revenues and Benefits for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

AGREED that the information provided be noted, and the agreed action be undertaken.

20/66

EXECUTIVE MEMBER UPDATE: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, Councillor D Davison, was in attendance at the meeting to update the Board on her aims and aspirations, progress made to date, and to highlight any emerging issues relating to her portfolio. The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration, and the Director of Public Health, were also in attendance at the meeting.

The Executive Member explained that her portfolio area had been exceptionally busy since March 2020 due to COVID-19; a strategic plan had been put in place and would be progressed.

It was intended that Dementia Friendly Middlesbrough would be further developed to support those with dementia and their carers, and to further connect with businesses and the community. Work had commenced prior to the onset of COVID-19, with Marton Community Centre being approached during the initial stages (the Centre now held Dementia Friendly status). A training session for those Members involved in the operation of the Centre would be undertaken in the near future.

The Executive Member wished to pursue Age Friendly Community Status for Middlesbrough in order to reduce the prevalence and impact of loneliness and isolation, with support potentially being sought from other Elected Members to provide assistance in local communities.

It was intended that an integrated model of support for Middlesbrough, bringing together services of domestic abuse, homelessness, substance misuse and mental health to a vulnerable person's model, would be launched and delivered from 1 April 2021. Procurement of Public Health services had been completed; core teams would be placed within community settings in Newport and North Ormesby.

A virtual wellbeing network would be established to support communities. Three training sessions would be held and it was envisaged that all Elected Members would be invited to attend.

The Health and Wellbeing Regional Board had been established, of which the Executive Member had joined. Sessions allowed Local Authorities in the North East to share experiences and best practice.

The Executive Member attended regular safeguarding meetings; Middlesbrough held green status in this regard.

The work of the two directorates, Adult Social Care and Public Health, was commended by the Executive Member.

Following the update, Members were afforded the opportunity to ask questions.

A Member made reference to dementia training that they had previously attended and commented that they would highly encourage others to attend wherever possible.

A Member made reference to Dementia Friendly Status and queried how this would be expanded to achieve more businesses / organisations signing up. In response, it was indicated that planned activities would include working with Elected Members and looking at areas, such as groups of retail units, to have all respective businesses signed up. In follow-up, the Member felt that a strategic and wider-ranging approach was required to ensure that a greater variety of organisations could be signed up, and indicated their support to assist with this.

In terms of a holistic approach to issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence and vulnerable people, clarification was requested as to which Executive Portfolio these aligned to, as some matters were believed to fall under the Deputy Mayor and Lead Member for Children's Services portfolio area. In response, it was explained that the two Executive Members had shared the work in this regard.

A Member raised concerns regarding the grouping together of substance abuse, domestic violence and homelessness, with consideration being given towards those accessing the facilities and the provision of safe space, and queried whether separation could be achieved. In response, the Executive Member advised that service delivery would be provided by different people; working together facilitated referrals from one service to another where required. The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration assured the Member that this point had been recognised. It was explained that bringing these services together and utilising a shared information system and process minimised the requirement for the same individual to access multiple settings to answer the same questions; reduced the safeguarding risk around information; and allowed adoption of a methodology across all of these groups based on response to trauma. In follow-up, the Member referred to perceived views of individuals accessing such support services; mention was made of an existing service that provided support from female members of staff to victims of domestic violence. It was felt harder to achieve this where, at the point of entry, there were multiple-facets, as opposed to specific services within one locality. In response, this was acknowledged: different services had been commissioned, but thorough consideration would be given as to how this would be branded and identified to avoid any negative perception.

A Member thanked the Executive Member for the assistance provided with enquires that had been raised on previous occasions.

A Member referred to dementia care training previously undertaken and requested that training for Elected Members (whether new or refresher) be undertaken, virtually if required. In response, the Executive Member advised that this would be looked into.

A Member queried how the process of signing more organisations / businesses up to Dementia Friendly Status would be achieved. In response, and to provide an example, it was explained that the Executive Member and an officer from Public Health had visited several retail businesses in Marton, provided details, and asked them to register as dementia friendly. A training session for staff would be arranged in due course. It was hoped that Elected Members would assist by approaching different businesses / organisations / venues and request that individuals register and undertake training. The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration advised that the basic Dementia Friendly training module focused on raising awareness; for businesses, the training focused on recognition and support provision for those with dementia. The Executive Member explained that when businesses applied to be dementia friendly, visits to the premises were made to determine suitability for those with dementia, with aspects such as entry points and flooring being looked at.

A Member referred to the Executive Scheme of Delegation and noted that there were 79 different items assigned to the portfolio area, which was significant. It was

commented that additional information could perhaps have been provided in relation to other areas not covered during the initial presentation, such as workplace health, obesity, physical activity strategies and mental health. In terms of COVID-19, it was felt that these areas were critical. In response, the extent of the portfolio was acknowledged. The Chair indicated to the Board that a copy of the Executive Member's portfolio remit had been provided in advance of the meeting, and therefore opportunity had been made available for specific areas to be identified in advance of the meeting.

A Member referred to the BAME community and difficulties encountered in working with individuals in respect of COVID-19. Support to assist the Executive Member in this regard was offered, which was gratefully accepted.

A Member referred to boarded properties being inhabited, which impacted upon physical and mental health, and queried whether any work was being carried out to audit these properties and make sure that landlords were held to account. In response, the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration advised that different routes would need to be taken to address specific circumstances, i.e. whether this referred to individuals whose property was in a state of disrepair and was therefore boarded-up; whether it was individuals who had broken into a previously boarded-up property and the landlord was therefore not aware; or whether it was about the poor condition of a rental property.

The Chair thanked the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration, and the Director of Public Health, for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

AGREED that the information provided be noted, and the agreed action be undertaken.

20/67

STRATEGIC PLAN AND QUARTER TWO OUTTURN REPORT

The Head of Strategy, Information and Governance was in attendance at the meeting to present the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 – Progress at Quarter Two 2020/2021 report. The Head of Financial Planning and Support was in attendance to present the Revenue and Capital Budget – Projected Outturn Position as at Quarter Two 2020/2021 report. The Director of Finance was also in attendance.

The Head of Strategy, Information and Governance delivered a presentation to the Board.

The submitted report updated on the Strategic Plan approved by Council on 15 January 2020. As previously raised at OSB, COVID-19 had resulted in a serious impact on the Council's planning, which had resulted in a currently ongoing refresh of the Strategic Plan, with consultation activity being carried out. A revised document would be submitted to Council at the end of February 2021, and a Strategic Plan work plan to Executive in March 2021.

Details were provided in relation to the Council's 'People' Strategic Objectives, with reference being made to the impact of crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and the trends that had been seen in Middlesbrough, which were reflected nationally (i.e. crime had decreased during lockdown and increased post-lockdown; the opposite had been seen in respect of ASB). It was difficult to take a long-term view of crime and ASB in Middlesbrough, but various initiatives were being implemented to help reduce this, e.g. installation of additional CCTV cameras; granting of new powers to Neighbourhood Safety Officers; and a grant funding scheme for household CCTV.

A Green Strategy consultation had been launched, which would address how the CO₂ emission gap would be met in following the reversal of the decision to implement fortnightly residual waste collections.

Children's Services had continued to see the number of children subject to statutory intervention rise, although Looked After Children did peak in July 2020 and had been reducing since. Reference was made to the Ofsted improvement plan and the achievements made to date, with positive feedback being received from the Commissioner and Department of Education.

Recovery work within the Town Centre had been paused due to tier three restrictions and subsequent lockdown

With regards to the 'Place' Strategic Objectives, it was indicated that the Investments Prospectus remained on target, but there were potential risks to it due to the economic downturn following COVID-19.

Regarding 'Business' Strategic Objectives, the economic impact of COVID-19 was still awaited to be seen, but claims had increased between May and September 2020.

Reference was made to the 'End Child Poverty Campaign' report, which had identified Middlesbrough's Local Authority area as the one where child poverty had increased most significantly in the years since 2014.

It was highlighted that all of the matters raised had been picked up as part of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

In terms risk management issues, a risk review had been undertaken. Reference was made to the Brexit trade and security deal, the impact of which would continue to be monitored and reviewed.

The Head of Financial Planning and Support delivered a presentation to the Board.

Regarding the revenue position, the total projected outturn at Quarter Two was £4.405m; COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 elements had been split to enable the effects of COVID-19 to be seen. There was a £9,000.00 underspend on the non-COVID-19 elements and an estimated financial effect in 2021 of £4.414m. The report detailed the non-COVID-19 elements of this, with the main variances per directorates being illustrated.

The main non-COVID-19 area was Children's Services; details of the current position were provided in the report.

COVID-19 spends pertaining to both Government funding and the costs were detailed in the report, however, it was noted that these figures did change rapidly.

Pressures / reductions on income to the Council, such as car parking and culture activities, were indicated, with details being provided in the report.

The Council had not been able to achieve some planned savings and there were also some pressures on Council Tax and Business Rates income.

In terms of the capital position, there was an underspend of circa. £4.6m against a revised budget of £55m, which was largely due to a delay in schemes as a result of COVID-19.

Details regarding reserves and borrowing reserves were provided. In terms of borrowing reserves at Quarter Two, the Council had £27.4m total reserves. It was

highlighted that not all of this was available for use; the figure to observe concerned the general fund, which was £10.6m. A minimum level of £9.4m had been set for 2020/2021. Reference was made to a report to Full Council on 2 September 2020, which detailed planned coverage of the projected overspend on COVID-19, and the use of the general fund reserve in that regard.

Appendix 1 of the report detailed virements, and Appendix 2 provided details of the schemes on the investment strategy.

The Director of Finance indicated that the position will have progressed since the end of Quarter Two; work was currently taking place in respect of Quarter Three, which would be submitted to Executive on 16 February 2021. It was noted that an Extraordinary OSB meeting would be taking place to consider the current budget consultation.

Following the update, Members were afforded the opportunity to ask questions.

A Member queried the process and flexibility of transferring funds between different budgets. In response, the Head of Financial Planning and Support explained that the mechanism to achieve this would be to either identify the transferred fund as a virement appended to Executive reports, or to action it as part of the Council budget report, which was submitted annually in February.

A Member referred to Children's Services and expenditure in relation to Looked After Children, and queried progress regarding the expansion of the Authority's own care homes. In response, the Head of Financial Planning and Support explained that there had been a slight delay due to COVID-19 in some instances; reference was made to one care home that currently supported five children although had provision for nine. It was anticipated that nine children would be supported by 30 April 2021, which was positive progress. Reference was made to the recent declining number of Looked After Children, which was also positive.

The Director of Finance advised that the impact on Children's Services was a good example of how uncertain the impact of COVID-19 had been on individual budgets. Consideration was given to vulnerable families and individuals and the variables involved in providing support, particularly during the pandemic. It was indicated that the opening of new facilities was delayed by the first lockdown when all building work ceased, but all were now up and running, e.g. Daniel Court and the Future for Families Hub. Reference was made to Quarter Three results, which were currently being processed, which appeared to show a sustained reduction in the number of Looked After Children, and in the cost of placements of children. It was felt that this was reflective of the improvements in practice that had been achieved. Members were advised that when the budget was set, a £2.913m central demand pressure reserve had been allocated, which was part of the underspend on central budgets. This had been held against Children's Services as required, therefore those figures would vary slightly at Quarter Three.

A Member referred to page 38, paragraph 53 of the report, and raised concerns regarding the Council's estimated payment of £1.1m to SLM. It was explained that because SLM was a Leisure Trust, the Council would not be able to claim reimbursement from a Government fund. In response, the Head of Financial Planning and Support explained that this situation had now changed and the Council would be eligible to claim under the DCMS (and therefore that figure would reduce at Quarter Three). In follow-up, the Member queried the Council's responsibility for the buildings if SLM could not manage the three leisure centres. In response, the Chief Executive advised that the buildings were still under the Council's ownership; SLM purely managed the delivery of leisure services under a Council-issued contract. If SLM went out of business, those services would either be re-contracted or returned

back in-house. Restrictions set by the Government had forced closure of the centres, which had affected income levels; there were no operational issues.

A Member referred to paragraph 15 of the report and Public Health's projected budget savings of £266,000 due to reduced activity for demand-led services, such as stop smoking, etc., which was felt to be a large figure. It was queried whether any concerns had been raised in relation to this reduction, and whether there were any wider Public Health impacts anticipated through reduced uptake. In response, the Head of Financial Planning and Support advised that services had not been taken up due to COVID-19 restrictions; this was an issue that would need to be monitored by the service area. The Chief Executive noted the impact from both a financial and health service perspective. Reference was made to the COVID-19 Recovery Plan; a six-month piece of work to understand the impact of COVID-19 on public health outcomes, particularly where already existing gaps had widened, would be undertaken as part of this. It was anticipated that the finalised report would be released in circa. eight months' times.

A Member referred to paragraph 87 of the report and queried the criteria and expectations around financial expenditure for the £235,000 that Middlesbrough Development Company had set aside for the Council's Empty Homes Initiative. A response from the respective service area would be sought.

A Member requested clarification in relation to budgets and underspends. The Director of Finance advised that, as a basic rule, this followed the rule for key decisions. If £150,000 was to be moved from one area to another, this required Executive approval; a process that could be undertaken throughout the year. From a financial perspective, the bottom line would be monitored to ensure that underspending did not result in a negative position.

The Chair thanked the Head of Strategy, Information and Governance, the Head of Financial Planning and Support, and the Director of Finance for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

The Chair reminded all in attendance of the Extraordinary OSB meeting in respect of the budget consultation, which had been scheduled for 27 January 2021.

AGREED that the information provided be noted, and the agreed action be undertaken.

20/68

TEESWIDE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD - ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020 AND STRATEGIC PLAN 2020/2021

The Independent Chair of the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB), and the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration were in attendance at the meeting to present information regarding TSAB's annual report 2019/2020 and strategic plan 2020/2021.

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration provided an introductory overview of the TSAB, providing details in relation to structure and functioning. It was explained that this had been a particularly challenging year for TSAB in light of COVID-19, but work had continued remotely, with face-to-face visits being undertaken where risk assessments allowed. It was felt that this continued delivery was testament to the dedication and flexibility of the staff involved.

The Independent Chair introduced himself to the Board and outlined details of his professional background and experience. Members were appraised of the Chair's intentions for the TSAB over the coming year, which would focus on the examination of cross-cutting issues, such as health, community safety and safeguarding, and

consider how these could be progressed to further the Board's efficiency and effectiveness. The report to be presented today was retrospective rather than forward-looking, but feedback from Members in respect of the Board's priorities for 2021/2022 would be welcomed.

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration explained that there was a statutory requirement within Adult Social Care to have a Safeguarding Adults Board; TSAB comprised six statutory partners (i.e. Cleveland Police; Hartlepool Borough Council; Middlesbrough Council; Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council; Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council; and South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group and Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group), as well as 18 non-statutory partners.

Reference was made to the range of sub-groups that operated under the main Board. These were: Communication and Engagement; Learning, Training and Development; Operational Leads; Performance, Audit and Quality; and Policy, Practice and Procedure. The Audit and Quality sub-group was chaired by the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration. It was acknowledged that although there was one shared over-arching group of policies and procedures, safeguarding was undertaken slightly differently across Tees, and therefore there was merit in the partners committing to work in a more consistent way to achieve a greater utility from the data available.

Members heard that in terms of investigative work and adult safeguarding, statutory investigations entitled Section 42 Enquiries were carried out. There had been a 66% increase in the number of Section 42 Enquiries for adults aged 18-24 in the last year.

There had been a decrease across the locality in respect of Safeguarding Concerns received from care homes. Although this was welcomed, it also raised some questions as to why this was the case. Consideration was given to COVID-19 and related restrictions that had resulted in fewer staff entering care homes/settings. Work was currently taking place to determine reasoning around this.

There had been a 70% increase in Safeguarding Concerns received from NHS secondary care settings, and more cases identified from Social Care itself. It had been a busy year, and it was indicated that the numbers would stand out as being anomalous when the year was looked back on in the future.

The report detailed a variety of statistics in relation to the type of abuse being reported, including neglect; acts of commission; physical abuse; financial abuse; and modern slavery. A Breakdown of the number of Safeguarding Concerns raised in each Local Authority area was also provided.

A business plan was included in the report, which detailed aims around protection, prevention, partnership and professional accountability. The TSAB documents were public and available on the TSAB website.

It was highlighted that the purpose of the Board was to educate and raise awareness around adult safeguarding. A Quality Assurance Framework operated on an annual cycle, which provided opportunity to assess whether a satisfactory safeguarding service was being delivered; a key aspect of the Independent Chair's role was to hold the statutory partners to account. It was indicated that there had been an improvement in Middlesbrough's Quality Framework returns this year.

The Independent Chair referred to the TSAB website and highlighted the array of information available for people to access. Mention was also made to the live consultation activity currently taking place, which was concerned with TSAB's 2021/2022 priorities. It was felt that, in particular, large change would relate to

COVID-19 and how the Board responded to that.

In response to an enquiry regarding the discharge of individuals with COVID-19 from hospitals into care homes, the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration advised that in the early stages of the pandemic, there had been some individuals discharged from hospital without clarity on their COVID-19 status. This had been in response to direction from Government, which was concerned with getting people out of hospital, and was at a time when adherence to normal barriers and PPE was a sufficient response. This had changed over the course of the pandemic. It was explained that the instruction from the Department of Health and Social Care prior to Christmas was that anyone being discharged with a positive COVID-19 status was to be transferred to a designated setting, which was a care home that had particularly been assessed by the CQC as being safe to accept individuals who were COVID-19 positive. These had been set-up in Middlesbrough, and still operated, although they had not been widely used. It was felt that the reasoning for this was that if individuals had been COVID-19 positive and released to a care home, in most instances they had been quite unwell, and by the time they were fit enough to be released from hospital, the isolation period would have passed. The situation was far more stable now than it was previously.

Following an enquiry raised in relation to restrictions around care home visits, consideration was given to the impact that this had had on residents, their families and care home staff. A number of elements were noted, including: the need for care home staff to balance individuals' rights against collective safety; infection prevention control and associated provisions; and focus upon the vaccination programme in moving forwards.

The Chair thanked the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration and the Independent Chair of TSAB for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

NOTED

20/69 FINAL REPORT - CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL - SOCIAL COHESION AND INTEGRATION

Item deferred.

20/70 SCRUTINY CHAIRS UPDATE

The Scrutiny Chairs / Vice Chairs provided verbal / written updates in respect of the work undertaken by their respective panels since the last meeting of the Board.

An Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel meeting in respect of Members' Communications had been scheduled for 27 January 2021.

A discussion ensued in relation to the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel's investigation into the topic of pest control, with consideration being given to such matters as: Issues raised across Middlesbrough; Payment for pest control services; Enforcement around pigeon feeding; and Potential facilitators for infestation.

NOTED

20/71 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 4.00 P.M.

The next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board had been scheduled for Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

NOTED

20/72

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

Additional Scrutiny Meetings

The Chair advised that an Extraordinary OSB meeting in respect of the Council's budget consultation had been scheduled for 27 January 2021 at 4.00 p.m.

The Call-in meeting in respect of Nunthorpe Grange Farm Disposal, which was adjourned on 18 December 2020, would reconvene on 29 January 2021 at 1.00 p.m.

Following the reversal of the decision to implement fortnightly residual waste collections, the Call-in meeting to consider this, which was adjourned on 18 December 2020, would no longer be required.

NOTED

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Report of:	Chief Executive
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Submitted to:	Overview and Scrutiny Board – 11 February 2021
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Subject:	Executive Forward Work Programme
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Summary

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

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?
Information	No	N/A	N/A

Contribution to delivery of the 2020-23 Strategic Plan		
People	Place	Business
Open and transparent scrutiny supports all elements of the Mayor’s Vision.	Open and transparent scrutiny supports all elements of the Mayor’s Vision.	Open and transparent scrutiny supports all elements of the Mayor’s Vision.

Ward(s) affected
All Wards affected equally

What is the purpose of this report?

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

Why does this report require a Member decision?

The 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.

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.

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

What decision(s) are being asked for?

It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Board consider the content of the Executive Forward Work Programme.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

No other options were considered.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

Legal

Not Applicable

Financial

Not Applicable

Policy Framework

The report does not impact on the overall budget and policy framework.

Equality and Diversity

Not Applicable

Risk

Not Applicable

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

Implement any decision of the Overview and Scrutiny Board with regard to the Executive Forward Work Programme.

Appendices

The most recent copy of the Executive Forward Work Programme schedule is attached as Appendix A for the Board's information.

Background papers

Executive Forward Work Programme.

Contact: Chris Lunn
Email: chris_lunn@middlesbrough.gov.uk

APPENDIX A

Ref No. / Ward	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents
Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health						
I008314 All Wards	Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel's Final Report - Physical Activity for Older people (aged 65+) Service response To provide a service response to the recommendations in the Scrutiny report around physical activity in older people.	Executive 16 Feb 2021			Public	
Executive Member for Regeneration						
I008559 Hemlington	Hemlington Grange - Statement	Executive 16 Feb 2021			Public	
I002486 Newport	Gresham Housing Phase 2 – Long Term Lease That Executive approves the disposal of Phase 2 of the Gresham Housing Site to Thirteen Housing Group on a 999 year lease.	Executive 16 Feb 2021		KEY	Public	
I008313 All Wards	Middlesbrough Council Local Implementation Plan That the Executive approves the draft LIP to proceed to public consultation.	Executive 16 Feb 2021		KEY	Public	

Ref No. / Ward	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents
1002489 North Ormesby	Re designation of the North Ormesby Selective Landlord Licensing to consider the outcome of the 10 week public consultation and to recommend that the area in North Ormesby is redesignated for selective landlord licensing	Executive 16 Feb 2021		KEY	Public	
1008288 Central	Future Council Accommodation Update Revisiting the options appraisal for the Council's future accommodation and identifying the preferred option.	Executive 16 Mar 2021		KEY	Public	
1008514 Central	The future development of Middlehaven Arrangements for the future development of Middlehaven, including the partnership arrangements with a major developer.	Executive 16 Mar 2021		KEY	Public	
1002484 Central	Boho Residential Towers - Site Disposal That Executive approves the proposal to proceed with the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in land at Middlehaven in order to facilitate the development of the Boho Residential Towers.	Executive 18 May 2021		KEY	Public	

Ref No. / Ward	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents
1008516 Nunthorpe	Voluntary registration of land at The Avenue, Nunthorpe as a Village Green Nunthorpe Village Green That Executive approves an application seeking the voluntary registration of land at The Avenue, Nunthorpe as a Village Green.	Executive 16 Mar 2021				
Deputy Mayor and Lead Member for Children's Social Care						
1008317 All Wards Page 25	Children's Services Improvement Programme Quarterly update To provide members of the Executive with an overview of the strategic and operational actions undertaken in the last quarter against the Children's Services Action Plan 2020/21	Executive 16 Mar 2021		KEY	Public	
Executive Member for Finance and Governance						
1008209	Equality and Diversity Policy Triennial refresh of policies to ensure ongoing compliance with the Public Sector equality duty: Equality Monitoring Policy Equality and Inclusion Policy Impact Assessment Policy Monitoring of Hate Incidents Policy	Executive Member - Finance and Governance 11 Feb 2021			Public	

Ref No. / Ward	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents
1008260 All Wards	Community Asset Transfers That the Executive approves the recommendation to seek expression of interests for future potential execution of community asset transfer leases for Brambles Farm Community Centre CC, Langridge Initiative Centre, The International Centre and 22 Holylake, seeking more detail from the four organisations that have already expressed an interest and allowing for a further six weeks to enable other parties to submit their own expressions of interest in the four locations.	Executive 16 Feb 2021		KEY	Public	
1002457 All Wards	Community Benefit From Land Sales Policy TBC	Executive 16 Feb 2021			Public	
1002451 All Wards	Revenue and Capital Budget - Projected Outturn position as at Quarter Three 2020/21 To advise the Executive of the Council's financial position at Quarter Three 2020/21, including the projected effect of Covid-19 on the Council's finances. To approve the proposed revenue budget virements over £150,000, and to approve the proposed revised Investment Strategy to 2022/23.	Executive 16 Feb 2021		KEY	Public	

Ref No. / Ward	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents
1008206 All Wards	<p>Revenue Budget, Council Tax, Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy 2021/22</p> <p>To present to Executive for endorsement the recommended Revenue Budget, proposed Council Tax increase and Capital Strategy Report for 2021/22. These will then be presented to Full Council on 24 February 2021 for approval.</p> <p>To present for noting by Executive the refreshed Medium Term Financial Plan position for 2021-24.</p>	Executive 16 Feb 2021		KEY	Public	
1008572 All Wards	Tender Pipeline Approval 2021/22 To approve Middlesbrough Council's tender pipeline for 2021/22 and agree delegation of award to the relevant Director.	Executive 16 Feb 2021		KEY	Public	
1008210	Surveillance Policy Surveillance Policy sets the governance framework for decisions to undertake covert directed surveillance where there is a legitimate reason to do so.	Executive Member - Finance and Governance 30 Apr 2021			Public	

Ref No. / Ward	Subject / Decision	Decision Maker and Decision Due Date	Council Strategy	Key / PFP	Likely Exemption	Background documents
Executive Member for Environment						
1008176 All Wards	Proposed School Cleaning Price Increase 20/21 That Executive considers the proposed school cleaning price increase for financial year 2020/2021 and approves the proposed recommendations.	Executive 16 Mar 2021		KEY	Public	
Executive Member for Communities and Education						
1008185 All Wards	Community Safety Plan 2020-2022 That Executive approves the Community Safety Plan 2020-2022 as agreed by the Community Safety Partnership on 23rd October 2020.	Executive 16 Mar 2021		KEY	Public	

Executive Portfolio:	Executive Member for Regeneration
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Ashley Waters
Lead Officer:	Director of Regeneration and Culture
SCOPE OF PORTFOLIO	
<p>The Executive Member for Regeneration will have responsibility for delivering the Mayor's Priorities with regard to ensuring a fair access to high-quality homes, fair access to secure, well-paid jobs and meaningful training, strengthening and diversifying our local economy, and strengthening our transport links.</p> <p>The Executive Member for Regeneration will be responsible for Council policy on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Inward investment • Economic development • Housing development • Planning and Building Control <p>Policy Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Plan • Local Transport Plan <p>Other Plans and Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment Prospectus • Regeneration service plan • Policies and strategies for housing activity • Development briefs and master plans • Public rights of way • Surface water management • Selective Landlord Licensing <p>Service Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Growth • Capital Projects 	

- Housing Growth
- Development Control
- Planning Policy
- Building Control
- Transport
- Infrastructure

In circumstances where it is considered that an Executive Member would have a prejudicial interest the matter will be referred to the Deputy Mayor.

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

**FINAL REPORT OF THE CULTURE AND
COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL –
COMMUNITY COHESION AND INTEGRATION**

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AIM OF THE INVESTIGATION

1. The aim of the investigation was to examine community cohesion in Middlesbrough and what work was being undertaken by the Council and its partners to support and develop this.

MAYOR'S VISION

2. The scrutiny of this topic fits within the following priorities of the Mayor's Vision:
 - Making Middlesbrough look and feel amazing.
 - Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour head on
 - Ensuring Middlesbrough has the very best schools

COUNCIL'S THREE CORE OBJECTIVES

3. The scrutiny of this topic aligns with the Council's three core objectives as detailed in the Strategic Plan 2020-2023¹:
 - People - We will work with local communities to redevelop Middlesbrough's disadvantaged estates, and introduce locality working with our partners, placing services at the heart of communities.
 - Place - We will make Middlesbrough look and feel amazing, working closely with local communities to make sure that our roads, streets and open spaces are well-designed, clean and safe, and revitalising unused buildings and heritage assets.
 - Business - We will create positive perceptions of our town on a national basis, improving our reputation, and attracting new investment, visitors and residents.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

4. The terms of reference for the scrutiny panel's investigation were as follows:
 - A) To examine the factors affecting community cohesion.
 - B) To determine how community cohesion is measured in Middlesbrough and to receive relevant statistical information.
 - C) To examine the work that the Local Authority and its partners are undertaking to promote community cohesion and integration.
 - D) To identify best practice and evidence-based approaches to build and strengthen cohesive communities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

¹ Middlesbrough Council's Strategic Plan 2020-2023

5. Community Cohesion can have different meanings depending on the context in which it is placed. However, for the purposes of this review, the Community Cohesion agenda was largely shaped following the so called “North Town Riots” in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford in 2001. Caused, largely, by racial tensions a national report, led by Ted Cante, found people were living parallel and polarised lives. It found residents from White and Asian communities essentially lived in separate communities. The report contained 67 recommendations covering a variety of factors that needed to be addressed to reinforce social cohesion.²
6. Following this, the LGA issued *Guidance on Community Cohesion*, containing the following definition of Community Cohesion:
 - There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities The diversity of people’s different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued;
 - Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
 - Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.³
7. While the impact of the Cante report’s recommendations are debated, Middlesbrough has taken those principles and built upon them.
8. In order to support a cohesive community, Middlesbrough defines itself as a place where everyone:
 - Lives in cohesive communities, feels safe and are protected from harm;
 - Gets on well with each other;
 - Is proud of where they live;
 - Is active in their communities and engaged in local democracy and;
 - Has access to high quality, joined up services which safeguard our most vulnerable.
9. To help deliver this, the Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme was introduced in 2003 to “pioneer community cohesion programmes in their geographical areas”.⁴ As one of 14 Councils to be a “Pathfinder”, Middlesbrough received funding to assist with this programme.
10. Funding for the Pathfinder Programme focused on work with diverse communities, schools and wider partners both from public and voluntary sectors with results stating,

“no serious racial tensions, but a range of issues associated with deep-seated and extensive deprivation, with 70 per cent of the town’s population living in deprived wards. The exception to a generally harmonious racial situation is the harassment and humiliation that appears to be a common experience for asylum seekers.”⁵
11. The report also noted that most of the Council’s projects that aimed to address social cohesion met their objectives.

² Ratcliffe, P. (2012). 'Community cohesion': reflections on a flawed paradigm. *Critical Social Policy*, 32(2), p3 pp. 262-281.

³ LGA, 'Community Cohesion – an action guide' 2002 p7

⁴ Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme – The first six months (Home Office & Vantagepoint Management Consultants) 2003, p1

⁵ Blackman *et al*, “A Better Place to Live: Social and Community Cohesion in Middlesbrough” (Social Futures Institute – Teesside University), 2004, p5

12. Overall the report found that “the main lesson learned from Middlesbrough’s Community Cohesion Pathfinder is that face-to-face contact between groups of people who rarely meet is the best way of breaking down cultural barriers.”⁶
13. Following the Pathfinder initiative, the Council set up the Middlesbrough Cohesion Partnership (the Partnership), led by the then Mayor, Ray Mallon, representing a range of stakeholders from Health, faith, disability, LGBT and age related groups as well as the Police and Teesside University. While the Partnership was initially very successful, there was an increased perception the Partnership was the responsibility of the Council. Following the austerity agenda and resulting Council restructures, ongoing support for the Partnership became untenable and it was dissolved.

TERM OF REFERENCE A TO EXAMINE THE FACTORS AFFECTING COMMUNITY COHESION

14. There are a myriad of factors that affect community cohesion including economic, demographic and ethnographic factors. However, by examining the work carried out by the Council in pursuance of the community cohesion agenda the factors affecting community cohesion can be extrapolated, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support (RAAS)

15. One of the first initiatives to address community cohesion has been Middlesbrough’s approach to resettlement of Refugees and Asylum Seekers (RAAS) since 2004.
16. The Panel had previously expressed their concern about the welfare of Asylum seekers in the Town and how it could challenge the seemingly unequal distribution of Asylum seekers in Middlesbrough.
17. Middlesbrough Council help to support Asylum seekers via the North East Migration Partnership and the Local Authority Asylum Seeker Liaison Officer Project (LAASLO). Although the number of Asylum seekers in Middlesbrough is small with 580 (or 4 in every 1,000 of the population as of December 2019), this does make up 13.5% of the Asylum seeker community in the North East.
18. Nevertheless, while a small proportion of the population, they remain vulnerable, having distinct characteristics and support needs.
19. At the commencement of national asylum dispersal in 2000/2001 the Council had employed a dedicated Asylum and Refugee Support Team. Initially, it was the Council’s responsibility to house people classed as RAAS, for which it received funds accordingly. However, from 2012 this role was contracted to the private sector; with Jomast (and latterly Mears Housing) being sub-contractors of the national contractor, G4S.
20. Central Government initially provided ‘enabling’ funding for wider integration and support for RAAS directly to local Councils. This was changed when a number of Strategic Migration Groups (SMG) were established across England and Wales. SMG acted as forums for local authorities, statutory agencies and the voluntary sector could discuss how migration in all of its forms impacted the regions. Initially hosted by Newcastle City Council, Middlesbrough

⁶ Ibid, p7

Council began hosting the migration group in 2015 following a petition to the Home Office in light of increased numbers RAAS being located in the Town.

21. Coupled with this process, the Council also acknowledged there was significant barriers in engaging with the Town's faith groups and began working with the Middlesbrough Inter-faith network, established to represent all faiths across Middlesbrough.
22. Having an ethos that touched on issues surrounding poverty, social isolation and mental health, the Network was awarded £20,000 for community groups to submit bids for. Unfortunately, the Council's ability to maintain its current levels of commitment to the Network is under review owing to its time intensive nature.
23. The Council has also developed new teams and mechanisms to build on existing work including:
 - Ethnic Minority Achievement Team (EMAT)
 - North East Strategic Partnership (NEMP)
 - Controlling Migration Fund (CMF)
 - Stronger Communities Middlesbrough (SCM)

EMAT

24. Middlesbrough's EMAT is based in Newport HUB and comprises a range of professionals. It works within schools to assist students who have English as Another Language (EAL) and to promote educational attainment of BAME students. The EMAT also assist students from Traveller communities, whether that be from within school or via Virtual School.

North East Migration Partnership (NEMP) – discussed in detail at Terms of Reference C

25. NEMP is hosted by Middlesbrough and acts as a link between Councils across the North East and the Home Office. Within NEMP there are thematic sub-groups, including the Regional Chief Executives sub group, VCS group, and the North East Directors of Public Health network. NEMP have also established local inter agency-groups.
26. The Council's former Strategic Cohesion and Migration Manager Chaired the Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Migration sub-group. This was an opportunity for those on an operational level working with RAAS to discuss and resolve local issues and concerns. Any unresolvable issues at the local level is escalated to a Regional level and, potentially, Government.
27. The group meets four times a year with representatives including the Home Office, Mears Housing and other key partners from both voluntary and public sectors.

Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) Programme

28. The Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) was launched in November 2016, to help local authorities mitigate the impacts of migration on communities in their area. Comprising two elements, and lasting between 2016 and 2020, Councils could bid for money from a fund totalling £100 million, as well as being able to draw on £40 million of Home Office Immigration Enforcement staff time.⁷

29. Successful bids were submitted, for which three projects securing funds in Middlesbrough, all of which were independently evaluated by the University of Birmingham;

- *Data mapping (discussed in detail in Terms of Reference B)*. Due to a lack of contemporary, and reliable, statistical data about Middlesbrough's population the Council commissioned Teesside University to collate all publicly available data in regards to the Town's communities. As a result, a report and a toolkit have been produced with training on relevant data collection to be delivered to key Council staff as well as external partners, including the voluntary sector.
- *Education* - working within schools had seen changes within student profiles. This included recruiting teaching assistants, delivering language support as well working with partners. The Education project aimed to address challenges of accommodating increases in International New Arrival children. The project played a significant role in bringing communities together, as well as developing a sustainable programme that Middlesbrough schools can use should they experience resource and integration-related challenges.

Schools within the project's remit were predominantly within Newport and North Ormesby wards, with those schools delivering training to other schools on mitigating and managing the impact/ of similar pressures.

- *Stronger Communities Middlesbrough (SCM)* - looking at cohesion and integration and working within 3 priority wards (Thorntree & Brambles Farm, North Ormesby and Newport) across Middlesbrough (see below).

Stronger Communities Middlesbrough (SCM)

30. One of the more significant community projects borne from the Controlling Migration Fund was Stronger Communities Middlesbrough (SCM). SCM aimed to support residents, facilitate a process of integration and foster an environment that residents could live in with shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities. SCM's work focussed on three priority Wards; North Ormesby; Newport and Thorntree and Brambles Farm.

31. While all three wards shared similar challenges socio-economically, residents in Thorntree and Brambles Farm expressed concern about levels of immigration in Middlesbrough.

32. The SCM team consisted of one full time and two part time members of staff. The project was awarded £300,000 over two years, largely for staff salaries (including £10,000 to internal finance department) the £60,000 grant program, and related activities.

⁷ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government "Controlling Migration Fund Prospectus" 2018 p4

33. SCM's work encompassed three key "strands" of activity:

1. Improving community cohesion and integration;
2. Improving tension monitoring and conflict resolution practices across Middlesbrough;
3. Welcome new communities to Middlesbrough.

34. Within these "strands" the following thematic actions had been carried out:

Community Cohesion and Integration

- Engaged with communities and organisations;
- Worked in partnership with local services, internal and external agencies;
- Hosted seven community conversations;
- Delivered four funding workshops;
- Launched Middlesbrough City of Kindness event;
- Identified residents for Advisory groups in each ward;
- Organised a number of events and workshops including; Newport HUB Islamic Diversity Centre community lunch (to break down the myths about Muslims);
- NUR fitness celebration event;
- International Women's day 2019 and;
- Supported residents with small grants to deliver culture cooking together and creative song writing/ poetry workshops.

35. These events have been key to breaking down barriers and improving resident's understanding of different faiths.

36. The above actions led to some important successes:

- Community conversations that focused on supporting unity and providing a safe space for local residents to discuss their experiences;
- The Middlesbrough City of Kindness event, launched in November 2018 with the strapline, *Our Communities Our Middlesbrough* and #kindboro. Local businesses donated refreshments and the event which brought together residents and key partners from the three priority wards, with participants signing pledges including random acts of kindness;
- A number of Funding Workshops were held designed to give residents the confidence and knowledge to apply for funding worth £60,000;
- Youth Talent Show (funded via SCM grant) used music and culture to engage young people across Middlesbrough.

37. One of the Council's principle aims was to improve the way in which community tensions and issues were identified, recorded and responded to. To this end a robust multi-agency response was required which would place residents at the heart of tackling hate crime, as well as supporting vulnerable communities. To affectively monitor community tensions, a monitoring action plan has been created that captures any issues identified by the Council or its partners. In response to the Covid pandemic a communications plan was also implemented as some communities felt they were being forgotten. Communications are

tailored to different audiences to ensure relevant information is sent to the relevant community.

38. To assist with this process several initiatives were undertaken including:

- Undertaking a review of internal Community Tension Monitoring processes;
- Developing a new Middlesbrough Council online reporting mechanism;
- Developing e-learning packages for all staff and;
- Commissioning an external facilitator who delivered two workshops for front line practitioners and for youth workers across the town.

Welcoming New Migrants to Middlesbrough

39. Consultation with residents and relevant interest groups was carried out in order to undertake important initiatives to welcome new migrants to Middlesbrough.

40. For example, Orientation Workshops have been developed which have identified and supported 17 volunteer translators speaking 25 different languages to provide assistance to new migrants. Work has been carried out in priority Wards – Central and Newport specifically - with partnerships formed with Cleveland Police and volunteer translators as well as councillors, Community Safety Officers, PSCO's, Street Wardens and other key partners being invited to each session.

41. To date 16 orientation sessions have been delivered, engaging over 400 residents who spoke more than 25 languages. The sessions also helped to recruit 17 volunteer translators with 10 volunteers having completed levels one and two Translators' Accreditation Courses. A Volunteer Policy has been devised to that will support volunteers from newer communities.

42. Importantly, the Council has been identified as exercising good practice by regional partners in this regard.

43. Support and advice has also been provided to new migrants on a range of different matters, including registering with a GP/dentist, how to appropriately access emergency services and how to be a good neighbour. The Police have also delivered sessions on UK laws including knife crime, prostitution, equality, inclusion and hate crime. Each session included a number of key stakeholders including Ward Councillors, Street Wardens, PCSO, Community Safety Officers and MP's Case Workers.

Volunteers

44. As with all community activities, volunteers are a key resource with volunteering being promoted within different communities. Volunteers have been encouraged to gain translation/ accreditation qualifications which has seen an increase in volunteer numbers, particularly from RAAS communities. As such, 22 RAAS volunteers now work with various teams across the Council as well volunteer guidelines being adopted by key partners across South Tees to recruit volunteers from diverse communities.

45. In recognition of their work, three SCM volunteers were nominated for Middlesbrough Civic Champions awards. The SCM team also won Middlesbrough Council's Team of the year in 2019 as well as the Community Safety award at the Tees Valley BME Achievement Awards 2019.

46. SCM has now moved into Phase two CMF, which will focus on working with priority school communities:

- Abingdon (primary);
- Sacred Heart (primary);
- North Ormesby (primary);
- Ayresome (primary);
- Breckon Hill (primary);
- Unity City Academy (secondary) and;
- Outwood Acklam (secondary).

47. When working with schools the SCM team will develop orientation packs for International New Arrivals and deliver training for key community connectors on where to report problems as well as establish and support Advisory Groups

48. As described above, project funding expired in September 2020, therefore the activities above are designed to be sustainable to ensure community cohesion work can be maintained with limited Council support.

TERM OF REFERENCE B

TO DETERMINE HOW COMMUNITY COHESION IS MEASURED IN MIDDLESBROUGH AND TO RECEIVE RELEVANT STATISTICAL INFORMATION.

49. To understand Middlesbrough's demographic position the Panel requested information relating to a data mapping project undertaken as part of the Controlling Migration fund (CMF). Carried out by Teesside University, its aim was to better understand Middlesbrough's cultural makeup, the scale and impact of recent demographic changes, any associated challenges this brought, and to act as an evidence base to secure additional funding from Government.

50. Teesside University worked with partners including Cleveland Police, Public Health, the Voluntary and Community Sector, local schools and all Council departments to map all known data across those organisations. As well as providing a demographic overview, the exercise also helped determine the demand on services and how organisations can best respond to these demands.

51. The data mapping exercise has been recognised as best practice by MHCLG (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government) as well as subsequent work on creating a data mapping toolkit. MHCLG were keen to share this learning nationally with other local authorities experiencing similar demographic changes.

52. It is recognised that since the last census of 2011 there has been significant demographic changes within the Town particularly regarding increases of migrants and international arrivals.

Middlesbrough's International Population

53. The Data Mapping exercise found that Middlesbrough's non-UK born and non-UK populations had increased from 8% in 2011 to 11% in 2019. This increase included:

- Economic migrants
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- International students

Potential Challenges found by Data Mapping

54. From the data mapping exercise, three key factors were identified:

- Socio-economics: migrants mainly reside in areas already experiencing multiple pressures e.g. significant levels of anti-social behaviour, higher levels of domestic abuse, unemployment and crime within the settled community, which contribute to increases of hate crime reports (with international new arrivals predominantly falling victim to hate crime).
- Views about community change: there have been tensions in terms of public space, environmental issues and cultural differences. There are some far-right views in the Town and within the community there were pockets of community tensions between International New arrivals and the settled community.
- Housing: Low cost private housing was commonly identified as a 'pull' factor to central areas; Middlesbrough's response to the Integrated Communities Green paper, outlined that asylum seekers were generally placed by the Home Office in areas of cheap housing.

55. Middlesbrough's settled population is declining, potentially having serious implications for Council funding levels. Indeed, more UK-born young people leave Middlesbrough owing to a lack of prospects, however an increase in International New Arrivals appears to help to keep population levels stable.

56. Increasing numbers of non-UK born children has proven challenging for schools already at or above admission capacity. It is difficult to plan school intake, however the EMAT (Ethnic Minority Achievement Team) try to ensure every international arrival family registers with them, allowing them to determine what services are required and to forecast school intake numbers.

57. In terms of school admissions and education; the Panel learned there are particular challenges with supporting and accommodating the Roma/Traveller community. For example, family may have an extended absence of leave/ move away without informing the school. However, a school place must be kept open for 28 days, adding further pressures. Whilst the percentage of Travellers was very small across Middlesbrough, the above factors nevertheless cause significant pressures on teaching staff and school place availability.

58. Generally Council services face pressures as a result of demographic change, particularly around housing and environmental services due to language barriers and different cultural and social practices. For example, in the 2011 census, 1.6% of international arrivals were unable to speak English with 78 main languages spoken across the town. It was also found

that there was an inappropriate use of services, such as attending A & E for general health conditions (as this would be the norm in their home country).

59. From the data mapping exercise an area of concern for the Panel was the identification of mental health issues. Due to the limited amount of intermediate level mental health services available, including specialist support, this could lead to additional problems for community cohesion and integration.

Opportunities

60. Whilst the Council has no control over where international arrivals are placed, the new local housing provider contracted by the Home Office (Mears Housing) is working with the Council and listening to concerns over distribution spread and numbers.

61. Whilst there were tensions reported in some communities, the Panel were advised that Middlesbrough had always been built on migration and had generally always been seen as a welcoming Town.

62. The data also revealed positive contributions from migration. For example, an increase in skilled workers arriving in the UK and international students bringing qualifications in tech (forging links to BOHO) as well as facilitating a growing level of cultural acceptance. Migration also helped to plug skill gaps, with a large number of International New Arrivals providing vital roles in the NHS, for example.

63. Statistics also showed that by the time International New Arrival children leave key stage four, there are out performing settled children and contributing to increased educational attainment in schools. Evidence suggests that non UK-born children are also more engaged in education, have a more culturally tolerant outlook and, town wide, their educational attainment is higher. Schools have also seen positive outcomes in terms of increased global awareness with UK born children benefitting from learning different languages (some schools have over 30 languages).

64. It was indicated that situations creating service pressures can be tackled via improved orientation of new arrivals into the Town as well improved cohesion work to increase cultural understanding and acceptance between communities.

65. The Panel learned of the benefits from better community data, including:

- Accurate and up to date demographic information available for managers. From this, managers can implement SMART plans for services and allocate resources that are more reactive to service users.
- Better targeting of services and special measures into 'hotspot' areas - there is now a move towards locality based working to identify what the challenges are within a specific area. This issue is discussed as part of Terms of Reference D below.
- Provides accurate, robust, evidence for funding/ grant applications through identification of service demand.

66. With specific grant funding ceasing after 2020, Government has advised that a degree of self-sustainability is required for projects to continue beyond 2020. To achieve this several plans

have been put in place for Schools to provide training to other schools on addressing capacity and integration challenges as well as the Council delivering roadshows with key partners on how data mapping can present the key findings.

67. The data mapping exercise helped to identify tangible themes that could be enacted to improve outcomes related to community cohesion. These included:

- An improvement to local data collection through coordinated and consistent approaches across council departments and with public sector partners.
- Develop a dashboard of data sources, training and tools and undertake regular analysis and reporting including the development a 'best practice' toolkit.
- That the Council and partners incorporate international migration as a theme in strategic needs assessments and continue to deliver orientation programmes and community based cohesion work (via Stronger Communities Middlesbrough).

TERM OF REFERENCE C

TO EXAMINE THE WORK THAT THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND ITS PARTNERS ARE UNDERTAKING TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY COHESION AND INTEGRATION

68. Partnership working is crucial to developing community cohesion. To this end, the Panel received information relating to how the Council and its partners undertake work to achieve further cohesion and integration.

Cleveland Police

69. The lead for Community Cohesion based operations is the Chief Inspector for Community Engagement. Within his remit were the following departments:

- Community engagement team;
- Crime prevention;
- Early Intervention Officers;
- Hate crime investigation;
- Mental Health Liaison and;
- Offender management team.

70. Cleveland Police acknowledges that, in terms of community policing, it had lost touch with a number of its communities in recent years. While there were a number of factors associated with this breakdown, the most significant was attributed to the removal of Neighbourhood Policing.

71. Recently Neighbourhood Officers had been redeployed to Response Teams to cope with increased demand. However, this had largely removed the presence of officers in communities, resulting in a lack of confidence in the police amongst some communities. This was coupled with a lack of on-the-ground intelligence about community issues.

72. Such conclusions were supported by the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) report that identified Cleveland Police did not sufficiently engage with, or listen to, local communities. In response, the recently appointed Chief Constable has promised to introduce a number of initiatives, including the reintroduction of Neighbourhood

Officers. Whilst exact details have not been finalised, the intention was to reintroduce Neighbourhood Officers from April 2020 with the hope of deploying one Neighbourhood Officer per Ward, based centrally or within Coulby Newham. As a result of the Covid Pandemic this process had not been fully completed, but the intention remains.

73. Importantly, the reintroduction of Neighbourhood Officers would be in addition to existing PSCO provision, and further complimented by the increase in Neighbourhood Wardens, following successful funding bids to the Tees Valley Combined Authority. The increase in Neighbourhood Safety presence would not be confined to a select number of areas, but would be adopted on a town-wide basis.
74. A further method to develop community was the introduction of the Community Engagement Team, consisting of five uniformed officers and two Community and Diversity Officers. The team's primary aim is to reach out to every community in Middlesbrough, and the wider Cleveland Force area, to build better relationships, learn about community dynamics, and address any concerns, needs and demands.
75. The Police would work closely with local Councillors, the Council's Community Safety Teams and neighbouring Councils to achieve the best results. It was also hoped the Safer Community Partnership would be rejuvenated, thereby providing a platform to discuss issues within the community with all key partner agencies.
76. Coupled with these initiatives, Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) would also be refreshed, which were required for each Police Force across the UK. The IAGs acted as a sounding board for the Police and Police and Crime Commissioner to consider best approaches to issues raised, such as racist graffiti in an area, hate crime and so on.
77. Communication is an essential part to reporting crime and anti-social behaviour. It was found that some members of the community may not feel comfortable calling the police, but making contact through social media sometimes removed that inhibition. Consequently, the Police have placed increased emphasis on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.
78. In order to understand community concerns and remove barriers, Cleveland Police's Community and Diversity Officer (a civilian role), works closely with the community/ voluntary sector passing on referrals from partner agencies, where a home visit is required. Initially, the role was focussed on the refugee and asylum seeker community, but now broadened its remit to include all strands of diversity issues. Results from home visits and wider conversations have been positive, with a specialist officer assigned to investigate a case if appropriate.
79. Importantly, the Engagement Team is extremely supportive of all communities and wants to ensure all voices are heard and feel valued. To this end they work to ensure communities know who the key contacts are both within Neighbourhood Policing, PSCO provision, and the wider Police Force.
80. The Police and Crime Commissioner's Office also plays an important role in building community relationships that help to secure community cohesion. For example the Police and Crime Commissioner's Consultation and Engagement Officer ensures all communities are engaged across the Cleveland Force area.
81. The Police and Crime Commissioner is passionate about ensuring all voices are heard and operates a '*Your Force, Your Voice*' initiative. Part of this initiatives is to target specific 'hard

to hear' groups, who may otherwise be underrepresented such as refugees and asylum seekers, (through the Regional Refugee Forum) and the LGB&T community, (through Hart Gables).

82. As part of the mechanisms to build community relationships the Police, and the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, are held to account by several scrutiny processes, including a Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel. Use of the stop and search function, arguably, impacts upon some sectors of the community disproportionately, including young people and the BAME community. For this reason, Cleveland Police has a Young Person's Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel and a BAME Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel.
83. Previously the Government announced that Stop and Search was being overused, which led to a sharp decline in its use. Work is ongoing within Cleveland Police to increase the targeted use of stop and search. Frontline officers have undergone training on the correct use of this function, as it needs to be used under the correct circumstances, be lawful and proportional.
84. The Panel also heard that the OPCC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager leads on the *Everyone Matters* programme, which is carried out by a relatively new team consisting of five Officers, two Managers and three Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officers.
85. The team adopts a change management approach around Cleveland's people, partners and communities. *Everyone Matters* was introduced by the Police and Crime Commissioner, but has been reconfigured and developed since the recommendations made by HMIC. Best practice guidance from the National Chiefs Council outlines the importance of having good data on our communities, including geo-demographic information which can be used to create community profiles.
86. While increased community police presence was critical to improve community cohesion, it would take time to achieve but future updates would be provided as requested.

North East Migration Partnership (NEMP)

87. In an effort to coordinate migration issues, Migration Partnerships exist in every English Region, with Scotland and Northern Ireland having national partnerships. The North East Migration Partnership (NEMP) was formed in January 2015 as a result of the rising Asylum Seeker numbers in the Region. NEMP has Lead Officers and Members for each Local Authority with Middlesbrough's being the Director of Environment and Commercial Services and the Executive Member for Culture and Communities and Education respectively. Middlesbrough Council currently hosts the NEMP.
88. Together with Local Authorities, Police, Department of Work and Pensions and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations NEMP, acts as a strategic board, works as a critical friend of the Home Office, producing light touch reports, mid-year and end-of-year report as well as regular review calls. The Panel were advised that there are six staff members within NEMP who are fully funded by the Home Office. Governed and monitored by the Home Office, NEMP had recently been granted three year indicative funding (subject to review).
89. NEMP coordinates all Refugee and Asylum Seeker (RAAS) programmes and acts as a single point of contact to improve data, information and communication around RAAS issues as well as inform policy and guidance.

90. Statistically, as of September 2019, Middlesbrough had 595 asylum seekers. Regionally, the numbers of Asylum seekers in the North East has remained the same for the last two years, whereas the numbers nationality have increased.

91. NEMP also delivered key projects which encourage community cohesion, which include;

Middlesbrough Welcome and Orientation Pilot

92. Delivered in partnership with Middlesbrough and Cleveland Police, the pilot used volunteer interpreters to work with International New Arrivals around what was acceptable when accessing emergency services in the UK. Work illustrating how to best access emergency services identified some health concerns of those seeking asylum, whereby large numbers of asylum seekers had poor dental health with many suffering from mental health issues. Importantly, however, Middlesbrough had facilities in place to help deal with such concerns including a dedicated asylum seeker doctor's surgery which was complemented by the arrivals clinic in Stockton.

93. The pilot had been so successful that NEMP applied for funding through the Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) and were awarded £150,000 to develop a regional induction programme. This would have specific modules on health, parenting, and positive relationships and about the local area.

94. The programme would also look at developing a digital induction. A Refugee and Asylum Seeker Orientation Task and Finish group had also been created and the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Consultation Group had been created for service user input. NEMP were also working with the Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to make the sessions sustainable, and training community interpreters.

Employment Routeways

95. Formed in conjunction with the DWP and the VSC, the project was used by the DWP and Local Authorities to help prepare people for employment by providing ESOL classes to ensure standards of English were employment ready. Work is continuing on the development of a dedicated website to map all services for refugees and asylum seekers. This will allow service users to search for activities and resources, such as ESOL classes and social activities, in their local area and beyond. Induction and welcome sessions would be available on-line with videos and interactive exercises.

Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS)

96. Also known as the Syrian Resettlement Scheme, the VPRS was introduced by the Home Office to assist resettle 20,000 vulnerable persons from the Middle East and North Africa by March 2020. The North East have assisted 8% or 2,000 refugees under the VPRS. Scotland have the biggest percentage of VPRS within the UK at 16%, and the East Midlands with the smallest percentage of VPRS within the UK at 4%.

97. The VPRS is a voluntary scheme with Local Authorities given the choice whether they wish to participate. The programme is fully funded and allows local authorities to develop systems and support, with most North East Councils taking part. A breakdown of the number of refugees per Council Area are as follows:

- Newcastle- 500
- Gateshead- 400
- Redcar and Cleveland- 250-300
- Hartlepool- 180- 200

98. Although the programme was funded, there would nevertheless be challenges going forward, especially as those being resettled were likely to be the most vulnerable and therefore could add additional pressures to Local Authority services, at least initially. In addition while Local Authorities determine how many families to take per year, they tend to be extended families and soon grow once they settle.

99. The Panel noted that Middlesbrough was currently not part of the scheme but it was likely a paper would be submitted to Executive in the near future and fully supported the work of the VPRS.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

100. Largely, UASC arrive into Local Authority Care through Government schemes such as the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS), Dubs or National Transfer Scheme.

101. Local Authorities are provided with funding for every looked after UASC at a rate of £798 per week up to age 17, and £200 per week for care leavers age 18 and over. The Department for Education publishes annual statistics on the number of UASC looked after by Local Authorities in England with the latest data accurate as at 31st March 2019. The latest statistics outlined that the total number of UASC in England increased by 11% to 5,070, representing around 6% of all children looked after.

102. Key facts from the project were:

- Most UASC are male (90%) and are aged 16 and over (85%);
- The top regions in England to host UASC were: London (34%), South East (19%), East of England (11%) and West Midlands (10%);
- The North East has the lowest number of UASC in England with a total of 40 and represents less than 1% of the total;
- In this region only Redcar and Cleveland (10 UASC), Newcastle (9 UASC) and Hartlepool (7 UASC) have more than 5 UASC and participate in the scheme.

103. It was noted that Middlesbrough does not currently participate in UASC, and that there were no definite plans to do so in the near future.

Public Health

104. Working jointly between Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland, Public Health South Tees primary aim is to improve Health and Wellbeing, it operates an asset based approach, working directly with communities, learning about their health needs and tailoring public health services accordingly.

105. Through the *Making Every Contact Count* (MECC) initiative, tangible results can be achieved

even through small interactions by directing people to smoking cessation, drug and alcohol services or general signposting. The MECC initiative also contributed to five ways of wellbeing in which information collected when interacting with Public Health connects them with local communities, volunteering and learning new skills. Development of a website was underway to help target specific communities to specific services.

TERM OF REFERENCE D

TO IDENTIFY BEST PRACTICE AND EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES TO BUILD AND STRENGTHEN COHESIVE COMMUNITIES.

106. To build on the initiatives and join arrangements identified above, the Council have instigated a policy of Placed Based Working. Its intention is the creation of a “joined up system...to address the underlying causes of community problems”⁸. It is hoped to empower local communities to take charge of their own future.
107. Using Wigan Council’s *Deal for the Future* initiative as an example of best practice, Place Based Working, or Locality Working, involves the co-location of several statutory services out of the Town Centre and into the relevant locality. In Middlesbrough’s case, this includes services such as Community Safety, Area Care, Education, Asylum Support, Libraries and Hubs, Adult and Children Social Care (including Mental Health Support) Early Help and Youth Offending. Dependent on community need, co-location may also include Housing providers, Police and Fire Services as well as commissioned services such as drug and alcohol support and homelessness support.
108. In putting communities at the heart of Council activity, a Place Based approach allows links to be made with other community based initiatives such as Empower.
109. The Council’s Head of Stronger Communities advised the Panel that two pilot areas had been identified. Identification of those pilot areas followed a significant baseline data mapping exercise using a number of quantitative and qualitative methods. Ongoing analysis was being carried out to further understand what assets communities had, including physical (such as Schools and Churches) and people (such as community activists). By doing this it is hoped that services can be effectively targeted and residents can fully engage in their wider communities.
110. The Wards identified as pilot areas following the exercise were Newport and North Ormesby as both appeared to experience significant problems relating to racially motivated crimes; anti-social behaviour; female victims of violent crime and alcohol and substance misuse. The pilot is currently in the first year of its two year lifespan.
111. Implementation of Locality Working was scheduled to take place over three phases; Phase 1 -Enforcement and Environment (whereby workers from those Services would be co-located); Phase 2 - Individual and Family Support (whereby Looked After Children and Asylum Support services would be co-located depending on community need) and Phase 3 - Partnership Involvement (whereby key partners will be engaged). Due to the ongoing Covid situation, the overall implementation of Locality Working has slipped, but progress has been made. For example, Phase 1 has now been completed with staff now located in their respective Hubs. Coupled with this, Data Modelling and Resource Allocation has taken place in preparation for

⁸ Middlesbrough Council Executive report, 8 October 2019, p2

Phases 2 and 3.

112. The success of Locality Working will be measured via a number of metrics, which will inform wider Council strategies. Some of those metrics will be a perception survey issued six months apart with a view to it becoming annual. It will ask residents about their perceptions to influence decisions; community cohesion and confidence levels in the Council and its partners to tackle local issues. This will be complemented with information relating to recorded rates of crime and Anti-Social Behaviour as well as health indicators such as the percentage of pregnant women smoking at the time of delivery.

CONCLUSIONS

113. The scrutiny panel reached the following conclusions in respect of its investigation:

114. The Council's community cohesion related initiatives have adhered to the principles of the Cattle Report, attempting to break down barriers that are based, largely, on cultural differences.

115. The Council has done well to secure significant project funding from the Controlling Migration Fund, but it must now focus on making those projects self-sustaining.

116. It is critical that the Council, and its partners, have access to reliable, accurate and up-to-date quantitative and qualitative data. This enables services to be direct service using SMART principles.

117. Communities should not be seen, or treated, as passive recipients of Council services. Instead, they should be empowered to have more input into decision making and service delivery are in their respective localities.

118. Middlesbrough's demographics have changed considerably over 10 years. This has presented significant challenges for services across the Council. However, this change has also presented opportunities that the Council is trying to capitalise on.

119. The reintroduction of Neighbourhood Policing and an increase in Street Warden provision will be critical in understanding community tensions and need.

120. Effective partnership working is paramount for community cohesion initiatives to be effective. Place Based Working will help to coordinate and facilitate this.

RECOMMENDATIONS

121. That the Council develop a Community Cohesion Strategy for Middlesbrough that:

- Ensures all aspects of community cohesion work is co-ordinated and monitored.
- Informs the Council's existing social regeneration agenda and is monitored through existing performance reporting processes.
- Is in place by the end of 2022/23.

122. Given recent staffing changes, as well as the discontinuation of funding for key projects after 2021 and the uncertainty brought about the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council should look to ensure the current Strategic Cohesion and Migration Manager is sufficiently supported via a robust staffing structure beyond 2021.
123. That the Executive consider including Middlesbrough in the Refugee Resettlement Scheme.
124. To assess progress against its objectives, the Panel should receive an update on the progress of Place Based Working no later than November 2021.

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ACRONYMS

BAME - Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
CMF - Controlling Migration Fund
DWP - Department of Work and Pensions
EMAT - Ethnic Minority Achievement Team
HMIC - Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary
IAG - Independent Advisory Groups
LAASLO - Local Authority Asylum Seeker Liaison Officer Project
LGA - Local Government Association
LGBT - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
MECC - Making Every Contact Count
MHCLG - Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government
NEMP - North East Strategic Partnership
OPCC - Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
PCSO - Police Community Support Officer
RAAS - Refugee and Asylum Seekers
SCM - Stronger Communities Middlesbrough
SMG - Strategic Migration Groups
SMART - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely
UASC - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
VPRS - Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme

COUNCILLOR C MCINTYRE - CHAIR OF CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

The membership of the scrutiny panel is as follows:

Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel 2020-2021

Councillors C McIntyre (Chair), L Lewis, (Vice-Chair), R Arundale, C Dodds, J Goodchild, L Mason, J Rostron, M Saunders, J Thompson.

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