

COUNCIL

A meeting of the Council was held on Wednesday 5 July 2023.

PRESENT: Councillors J Rostron (Chair), J Walker (Vice-Chair), J Banks, I Blades, D Branson, E Clynch, C Cooke - Elected Mayor, J Cooke, C Cooper, D Coupe, D Davison, S Dean, J Ewan, T Furness, P Gavigan, TA Grainge, L Hurst, N Hussain, D Jackson, D Jones, J Kabuye, L Lewis, T Livingstone, L Mason, D McCabe, M McClintock, J McConnell, J McTigue, I Morrish, J Nicholson, J Platt, S Platt, A Romaine, J Ryles, M Smiles, M Storey, P Storey, J Thompson, S Tranter, Z Uddin, N Walker and G Wilson

OFFICERS: S Bonner, M Brown, B Carr, C Heaphy, R Horniman, S Lightwing, A Perriman, J Weston and K Whitmore

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors S Hill, B Hubbard, M Nugent and M Saunders

23/14 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

23/15 **MINUTES - COUNCIL - 24 MAY 2023**

The minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 24 May 2023 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

23/16 **ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chair requested that, when voting, members leave their hands up until after their vote had been counted.

23/17 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY).**

There were no valid questions submitted from members of the public, within the required timescale for this meeting.

23/18 **THE MAYOR'S STATEMENT**

The Mayor referred to the following in his statement:

Long Term Plans and Strategies

The Mayor advised that the Council was currently working on the Local Plan, an Anti-Poverty Strategy, a Cumulative Impact Policy, the Strategic Revision, and an Article 4 Direction.

The Mayor advised that in terms of the Local Plan, the statistics in relation to the town's age of the population were concerning. By 2040, it looked as if there would be a large increase in the older population and a decrease in the younger work age population.

It was planned to build affordable suitable accommodation within the town centre to encourage young people to stay and work in the town.

Community Safety

The Mayor advised that wardens were now returning to the estates and the plan was to build up the number of wardens back to 24. In addition to the wardens, there would be a Neighbourhood Safety Officer and the Flying Squad. It was important to increase the number of wardens to enable them to work across all the estates.

Proceeds of Crime

The Mayor stated that it was important that when the Council prosecuted people for offences such as selling illegal tobacco, that the Council gained as much benefit as it could from the proceeds of crime other than the Council's legal costs. This would ensure that criminals committing crime in Middlesbrough could not benefit from the proceeds. He advised that work to achieve this aim, was ongoing.

Ward visits

The Mayor advised that he was working on visiting each ward in the town. He invited councillors to join him when he was visiting their ward to raise any issues pertinent to their individual wards. Off-road bikes appeared to be an issue in most wards. The Mayor also stated that as part of the visits, it was important to ascertain why health inequalities existed in certain areas of the town.

Members commented on the Mayor's statement.

In response to a query from Councillor Smiles with regard to whether the Mayoral Development Corporation could be discussed, the Chair clarified that any questions should relate to the Mayor's statement.

In response to queries regarding Street Wardens, the Mayor advised that the Council currently employed eight Street Wardens, four per shift and the aim was to build that number back up to 24. The reduction in the number of Street Wardens had impacted on the town.

The Mayor advised that the Council had received an initial grant towards funding the Street Wardens and they had also applied for "Hot Spot Policing and Community Safety' initiative" funding from the Police and Crime Commissioners office for one year with the possibility of extending it for a further year subject to Home Office funding.

The Mayor advised that in the previous budget, any income generated by the warden's service such as the income generated from parking fines, had not been allocated back to the service. Over £100k had been generated by the service in one year, but this had not been recognised through the budget process. The Mayor advised that if the income generation had been included, it may have impacted on the previous decision to reduce the number of wardens.

Councillor Thompson advised in terms of funding, that the Council had been able to maximise funding for the Community Safety Team, which included the Street Wardens and the Fly Tipping squad, for another twelve months. The funding was realised from various sources which included the Indigenous Growth Fund from the TVCA, a Home Office Grant and the existing core budget. The initial funding had been allocated from the Indigenous Growth Fund and had been given after the May election.

In terms of claiming income from the Proceeds of Crime, the Mayor advised that the organisation that assumed lead for an investigation would usually be responsible for claiming and allocating any proceeds of crime.

Councillor Mason commented on the appointment of Chairs and Vice Chairs of committees. The Chair clarified that any questions should relate to the Mayor's statement. Councillor Mason was advised that he could raise the issue through the questions on notice process.

Councillor Hurst advised that he would like to meet with the Mayor to discuss reports on health inequalities. The Mayor advised that he would like to look at the wards that were most affected by health inequalities.

In response to a query from Councillor M Storey with regard to how often the Local Plan Working Group would meet and who would be involved, the Mayor advised that it would be a small working group that would likely include a representative from any group working on a Neighbourhood Plan, local business's, developers and the Thirteen group. It was hoped that the Local Plan would be finalised by the end of the following year.

Councillor Furness advised that timescales in terms of the completion of the Local Plan were included in his report.

Councillor Coupe queried whether the Mayor could ensure that the membership of the Local Plan Working Group was cross-party. The Mayor advised that he would look at the structure of the group. It was important that businesses, developers and Thirteen were consulted.

ORDERED that the statement of the Mayor be noted.

23/19

UPDATE TO EXECUTIVE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

In accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, the Mayor advised members of the following amendment to the Executive Scheme of Delegation:

The Mayor (or whoever he decides to nominate) to exercise the Council's rights as a shareholder in BCCP Limited on behalf of the Teesside Pension Fund.

ORDERED that the amendment to the Executive Scheme of Delegation be noted.

23/20

THE MAYOR AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORTS

The Chair invited Members to raise items for general discussion arising from the Information Booklet of Executive Member reports which detailed activities carried out within the respective Executive Member portfolios (Section 1), Executive decisions taken (Section 2) or to be taken where known, prior to and following the meeting (Sections 3 and 4).

Question in relation to the report of the Mayor and Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Councillor Smiles in relation to homelessness.

The Mayor stated that the issue with the PSPO's was that they would have to be administered. The Council currently had a limited number of wardens, and the Council would need to consider whether their priority would be tackling bin rummaging.

In terms of homelessness, the Mayor spoke about priorities and how limited resources could be used effectively to prevent homelessness and how homelessness impacted more generally.

Questions in relation to the report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture

Councillor Clynych in relation to child poverty/poverty strategy.

The Executive Member advised that she had contacted LocalMotion and they were currently conducting a consultation listening programme to provide a baseline and to put the voices and experiences of residents who were facing the worst poverty at the heart of any poverty strategy.

The Executive Member advised that she had also linked up with MVDA, You've Got This, Youth Focus, the Council's Public Health Team, the North-East Child Poverty Commission, the HAF Team and the IPPR and various local authorities to look at best practice. All of the information and evidence gathered would be co-ordinated, once the outcome of the LocalMotion consultation was received.

Councillor McCabe in relation to Middlesbrough Development Corporation.

The Executive Member advised that Middlesbrough House was the preferred temporary accommodation site for the extension to Outwood Riverside. The car park that was located there was required for a playground for the children. Middlesbrough Development Corporation had advised that they required the car park, and therefore refused to consent to it being used as an outdoor play area. As a consequence, the Council was required to find another site for the extension to Outwood Riverside.

Councillor Mason in relation to schools in the local area, specifically college and sixth form provision.

The Executive Member advised that the question submitted by Councillor Mason was in relation to an earlier draft of the report, which was circulated in error. The Executive Member clarified that the Council did not have any responsibility for sixth form provision across the town. However, the Executive Member advised that if Councillor Mason had any further queries, he should email her and she would respond to him via email.

Councillor Smiles in relation to museums.

The Executive Member advised that the Council was looking at installing new power points in Centre Square and Albert Park which would enable the Council to host new live, big events. This would mean that companies would not have to bring in large generators, which were not particularly environment friendly. The Council also had a stage, which could be hired out to other local authorities. There was currently a waiting list of other local authorities wanting to hire the stage, which would generate income for the Events Team.

Questions in relation to the report of the Executive Member for Community Safety

Councillor Blades in relation to Neighbourhood Action Partnerships.

The Executive Member advised that the Joint Area Action Groups were a Multi-agency approach focusing on crime and anti-social behaviour and councillors were invited to attend and raise issues in their ward. The meetings were suspended during the Covid pandemic.

As a result of the anti-social behaviour that was taking place in the Newport and Hemlington wards, the Locality Neighbourhood Partnership was set up and through this approach there had been some successes in the two wards, but there was still further work to be done.

The Council was aware of the situation at Norfolk shops, but there had been a 50% reduction in anti-social behaviour/crime at this location. To build on this, there was no plans to re-establish the Joint Area Action Groups as the focus of these groups was primarily on anti-social behaviour and crime. A Multi-agency approach was required. As a result, the Executive Member advised that she would be introducing four Neighbourhood Action Partnerships across Middlesbrough i.e.

- North (based at Newport Hub),
- East (to be confirmed),
- South (based at Hemlington Hub)
- West (to be confirmed).

The Executive Member referred to a map included in her report which outlined the areas contained in each Neighbourhood Action Partnership and details of the partners involved.

The Neighbourhood Action Partnerships would be multi-agency hubs based in each area and an electronic newsletter and statistics would be produced on a regular basis so that people would know what was happening in each location. The Executive Member stated that she would like to work with all councillors regarding what they would like to see in the newsletter.

Question in relation to the report of the Executive Member for Environment

Councillor Gavigan in relation to potholes.

The Executive Member advised that over the last year, the Council had repaired 5000 potholes. The Council had done a good job repairing the potholes, however repairing potholes by filling them in would not solve the problem. The only way to repair the potholes properly was to resurface the roads but resurfacing roads was expensive. It was estimated that it would cost £30 per square metre to resurface a road.

Potholes were an issue for local authorities across the country. Without adequate funding from the government, the Council was unable to resurface all the roads affected. When the Council received the appropriate funding required to properly repair potholes, it would carry out the work.

Question in relation to the report of the Executive Member for Finance and Governance

Councillor M Storey in relation to Executive responsibility' and 'Financial and Strategic Planning

The Executive Member advised that budget monitoring had been happening over the previous years but there had not been any Executive Member involvement. The Executive Member stated that the Council was going to be facing some very challenging times ahead and it was important that Executive Members and officers worked together, and that Executive Members took responsibility for the finances within their portfolio. All Executive Members had indicated their willingness to be involved to help improve the financial situation of the Council.

The Executive Member advised that rather than use the term budget monitoring, there was a change of emphasis, and the new term was budget challenge. Instead of officers forecasting a budget overspend, the challenge from Executive Members and Senior Officers would be to query regarding which solutions the officers proposed, to mitigate the overspend.

The Executive Member stated that it was important that Council spending remained within the allocated budget. In relation to the budget and performance, the budget should not be considered in isolation, it should align to, and fund the priorities of the Mayor and the Council. By connecting the performance and the budget, the Council was demonstrating best value for the residents of Middlesbrough.

Questions in relation to the report of the Executive Member for Regeneration

Councillor Morrish in relation to Nutrient Neutrality Executive decision.

The Executive Member advised that the map also included land at Coulby Newham in addition to the land at Marton West. He advised that there would be an Executive decision to decide what the Council would do with the land. He advised that he was open to speaking to all those with an interest about the future use of the land. He stated that it was in the Council's interest to have the land designated as green space.

Councillor Hurst in relation to Linthorpe Road Cycle Lanes.

The Executive Member advised that he and the Mayor had discussed the issue of removal of the cycle lanes with officers of the Council. The removal of the cycle lanes was currently being costed. If the Council removed the cycle lanes completely, the grant funding would be lost and any further funding would also be lost.

23/21 URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

23/22 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

There were no Members Questions submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

23/23 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

There were no Notice of Motions submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

23/24 NOTICE OF URGENT MOTIONS (IF ANY)

There were no valid Urgent Notice of Motions submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

23/25 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT NEXT STEPS

The Mayor and the Chief Executive submitted a report, the purpose of which was to present the work of the Corporate Governance Improvement Board.

The Mayor presented the report. He highlighted that the date in Paragraph 36 of the report with regard to the submission of a report to Executive in relation to the resourcing of the Improvement Advisory Panel should be July 2023.

In response to a query with regard to the cost to the authority of the Improvement Advisory Panel, the Mayor advised that contingency funding would be set aside, and the Council would be looking to the Local Government Association to provide extra improvement funding. The definitive costs were not currently available, but it was anticipated that the figures would be available before the item was due to be considered by the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee.

ORDERED that the progress made to date be noted and the proposed focus of the next phase of the Council's governance improvement journey be endorsed.

23/26

VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Council received a report which sought nominations for appointment, following resignations from Committees and Outside Bodies and vacancies that remained outstanding following the Annual meeting.

The report included a list of current vacancies on various committees and and outside bodies and nominations were put forward at the meeting by individual members.

ORDERED that the following vacancies allocated in accordance with the wishes of the political groups, be approved by Council:

Committee Vacancies

Licensing Committee

1 vacancy (Labour)
Councillor Ryles appointed

Live Well Board

3 vacancies
Councillor Uddin and M Storey appointed

1 vacancy

Works Council

2 vacancies

No nominations

Outside Bodies Vacancies

Cleveland Fire Authority

Councillor Hussain has replaced Councillor Thompson (To be noted)

Durham, Darlington, Teesside, Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby STP Joint Committee

3 vacancies
2 Labour 1 MICA

Councillor Cooper appointed
2 Labour vacancies

Hartlepool Power Station Local Liaison Committee

2 vacancies

Councillor Coupe appointed
1 vacancy

Linthorpe Community Centre

1 vacancy

Councillor Furness appointed

Middlesbrough Oberhausen Town Twinning

1 vacancy

Cllr Thompson appointed

Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency

1 vacancy

Councillor Uddin appointed

NEREO

1 vacancy

Councillor Hurst appointed

River Tees Port Health Authority

1 vacancy

No nominations

Tees Valley Health Joint Scrutiny Committee

1 vacancy Labour

Councillor J Walker appointed