

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

Date: Monday 10th July, 2023
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Spencer Room, Town Hall

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Economic Development, Environment & Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel, held on 22 March 2023 3 - 6
Item for Information
4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Culture & Communities Scrutiny Panel, held on 23 March 2023 7 - 10
Item for Information.
5. Overview of Environment & Community Services 11 - 18

The Director of Environment and Community Services will be in attendance to provide the Panel with an overview of the services provided across the Directorate and will also highlight the strategic and departmental priorities for the coming year.

Recommendation: That the Panel notes the information provided and considers the information when formulating its Work Programme at the next meeting.
6. Proposed Schedule of Meeting Dates for 2023/24 19 - 20

Recommendation: The Panel is asked to consider the proposed schedule of meeting dates for 2023/24 and to agree a finalised schedule.
7. 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
Friday, 30 June 2023

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors: J Ryles (Chair), J Banks, J Ewan, TA Grainge, L Mason, I Morrish, M Nugent and S Platt (+1 vacancy).

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Joanne Dixon, 01642 729713, joanne_dixon@middlesbrough.gov.uk

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel was held on Wednesday 22 March 2023.

PRESENT: Councillors M Saunders (Vice-Chair), D Branson, C Dodds, A Hellaoui and B Hubbard

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: R Ellis, Deputy Chief Finance Officer, Leeds City Council

OFFICERS: S Lightwing

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Arundale, T Furness, T Mawston and J Thompson

22/65 **WELCOME AND EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

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

22/66 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

22/67 **MINUTES - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL - 15 FEBRUARY 2023**

The minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel held on 15 February 2023 were taken as read and approved as a correct record.

22/68 **BUSINESS RATES POOLING**

The Deputy Chief Finance Officer from Leeds City Council gave a presentation on Business Rates Pooling.

The Local Government Finance Act 1988, Schedule 7B, Part 9 allowed for Pooling of Authorities for the purposes of Business Rates. The Secretary of State could designate two or more authorities as a Pool. A Pool was treated as one authority for the purposes of Business Rates Retention. Top up and Tariff authorities could come together so that the Pool in totality became the top up authority and Tariff authorities would therefore no longer pay a levy to Government. Instead tariff authorities paid levy payments to the Pool and the funds were retained regionally.

The Pool, under its own governance arrangements, decided how the funding would be used. The key risk was that if one or more authority fell into safety net, there would not be a safety net payment from Central Government, until the whole Pool fell into safety net. (92.5% for Leeds City Region). The Pool would therefore have to meet the safety net payment from levy payments or from member authorities.

Each year around August/September, the Government issued an invitation to Pool. The deadlines to apply were usually very tight. New pools needed to start early to have time to finalise membership.

The Government required notification of the members of the Pool and which authority would be the lead authority. The Government also required details of the Pools' Governance arrangements and how 'residual benefits and liabilities' would be distributed. A return identifying membership and a model Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for governance and distribution of funding had to be completed and submitted.

Model Memorandum of Understanding was agreed by the Section 151 Officers of all

authorities in the pool, with the Chief Executives settling any disputes. The Leeds City Business Rates (BR) Pool's governance structure was a Joint Committee formed of the Leaders of the seven member authorities (or their nominees) and had its own terms of reference.

The Lead Authority was responsible for:

- Coordinating the application process each year.
- Payment of top up to top up authorities and receipt of tariffs from tariff authorities and receipt of Pool top up from Government.
- Coordinating and administering proper Governance procedures.
- Finalising levy payments and any safety net payments.
- Forecasting and monitoring the key risks and benefits.

Under the Government model MoU the distribution of the additional funding retained regionally was as follows: the first call would be any safety net payments to member authorities. Any residual benefit after this, would be split 50% to top up authorities in proportion to their top ups and 50% to levy paying tariff authorities in proportion to their levy payment into the Pool.

Leeds City Region BR Pool had taken a slightly different approach:

- First call would be any safety net payments to member authorities, any residual benefit was split as follows:
- Joint committee could directly make grants to regional projects, any residual benefit was returned to members and split as follows:
 - 25% in proportion to growth above the baseline
 - 25% in proportion to population
 - 25% to top up authorities in proportion to their top ups
 - 25% to levy paying tariff authorities in proportion to their levy payment into the Pool.

Since its inception in 2013/2014, the additional funds retained regionally by the Leeds City BR Pool totalled approximately £142 million. Regional projects supported by the Pool included:

- Transforming Leeds Events project - £1.6m
- Wakefield Waterfront Arts Event Space project - £1.5m
- Tour de Yorkshire (4 years) - £1.5m
- Bradford District Health & Social Care project - £1.2m
- Adventure Phase 2 project - £563k
- Screen Yorkshire Careers project - £502k
- WY Fibre infrastructure support project - £500k
- York Castle Gateway regeneration project - £410k
- Stalled Housing Site Brokerage project - £350k

Some points to consider prior to setting up a Pool were detailed in the presentation and highlighted.

Membership

- The number of members – large enough to make it worthwhile but not so large to make administration unmanageable.
- Consider the nature of membership e.g. Mayoral Combined Authority and areas commensurate with encouraging regional growth.
- Balance of top up and tariff authorities, when all top ups and tariffs are added together it was best to have a 'top up pool' so no levy will be payable to Central Government by the Pool.

Risk assessment

- Making sure that no authority in the Pool was close to a safety net payment as this was a loss of funding to the region.

Administration costs

- An administration fee for the lead authority.

Redistribution

- The redistribution of residual benefits and liabilities. Different methodologies and their impact. There were very tight deadlines in the process so it was best to have an agreement at the start as this had to be included in any application to Pool.

The Governance Arrangements for the Pool

- The Leeds City Region Pool had a joint committee arrangement to ensure member involvement in the decision-making process. The model MoU issued by the Government suggested agreement between S151 officers which reduced administrative burdens. Consideration needed to be given as to which approach was preferred as this also had to be included in any application to Pool.

Referring to the annual application and the tight deadline, a Member asked whether extra staff were recruited or whether the work was met from within existing resources. The Leeds pool had been set up largely within existing resources with some additional support. As the administering authority, Leeds City Council had charged approximately £30K and this figure was likely to increase in 2023/204 as the Pool was 10 years old. If it was likely that additional costs would be incurred, the Pool would get agreement to top slice any extra administrative costs.

The Officer suggested that the Council should calculate whether there would be a levy that would be retained in the area and whether there was a business case for creating a pool.

Members agreed that the next step should be to ascertain what the business rates baseline for Middlesbrough and the other Tees Valley Local Authorities was. If the information provided a case for further exploration of a business rates pool, it was suggested that other Tees Valley Authorities could be consulted.

AGREED as follows that:

1. the information provided was received and noted.
2. enquiries would be made with the Council's Finance Department regarding business rates baselines.

22/69

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD UPDATE

The Chair provided a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 22 February 2023.

It was highlighted that the Children's Finance Improvement Plan had been considered at the meeting. Scrutiny Panel Members discussed their concerns regarding the resourcing of Children's Services and the number of young people currently in the care of Middlesbrough Council.

22/70

CRUSTACEAN DEATHS WORKING GROUP

Councillors Branson and Hellaoui provided an update on the latest meeting of the Working Group which had taken place on 3 March meeting. The Working Group had received evidence from an expert from Newcastle University who provided detailed scientific information about the crustacean deaths and was of the opinion they were caused by pyridine.

The next meeting would receive evidence from representatives from Teesworks. The Working Group wanted to establish whether there was a safer way of disposing of the material that was being dredged from the river.

AGREED that the information provided was received and noted.

22/71

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

The Vice Chair thanked all Members for their contributions to the Panel during the past year. The Vice Chair agreed to send a card expressing the Panel Members' good wishes to the Chair.

CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday 23 March 2023.

PRESENT: Councillors C McIntyre (Chair), G Wilson (Vice-Chair), C Dodds, D McCabe and Z Uddin

OFFICERS: S Blood, G Field and M Walker

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors M Nugent, J Rostron and J Walker

22/35 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

22/36 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest received at this point in the meeting.

22/37 **MINUTES- CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL - 26 JANUARY 2023**

The minutes of the Culture and communities scrutiny meeting held on 26 January 2023 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

22/38 **TOUGH ENOUGH? ENFORCEMENT IN MIDDLESBROUGH AND ITS IMPACT ON CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR- REVIEW UPDATE**

The Head of Stronger Communities was in attendance provide an update review on Tough Enough? Enforcement in Middlesbrough and its impact on crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Head of Service advised that there was a lot of work being undertaken in the background, including the community trigger process in Middlesbrough and this is a well established process that supported and attended by external partners as appropriate to the complaint. An action plan was in place to cover the recommendations from the report and progress of these would be updated to the committee in due course.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

22/39 **MIDDLESBROUGH COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP- AN UPDATE**

The Head of Stronger Communities was in attendance to provide an update on the Community Safety Partnership.

The update was as follows:

Town Centre Team

External grant funding had been sourced to fund a number of things in the Town Centre, all of which are aimed at providing reassurance and support to existing businesses, attracting and supporting new businesses and making the Town Centre an inviting place to visit and invest.

The funding comes from two sources , the TVCA IGF grant and the Towns Fund and it will fund a number of thigs including the following:

- Dedicated Town Centre Enforcement Team to respond to crime and anti-social behaviour (to fund a town centre enforcement manager and 12 enforcement officers)
- Extension of the PSPO in the TS1 area (This was complete)
- Re-establish Middlesbrough Retail Crime Partnership/Shopwatch arrangements
- Promotional campaign focused on not to give money to beggars
- Increase CCTV in town centre (£15,000)
- Increase youth provision in town centre to divert people away from ASB and Crime
- Deep clean the town centre

- And increased area care staff

This was currently being introduced and it would cover a 2 year period. Further updates would be provided to scrutiny of required.

Community Safety Partnership

The CSP continues to meet every 2 months and partners discuss key strategic issues relating to community safety.

The CSP Plan was extended for 12 months to give senior leaders time to review the priorities and decide what the priorities should be for the next 2 years. This will be completed with new priorities by 31st March 2024. This process will be informed by a strategic intelligence assessment that will review data from a range of sources looking at patterns and trends of crime and ASB and will include details relating to geographic locations and hotspots.

The CSP has a number of statutory areas that it needs to focus on and these include

- Crime and ASB
- Reducing Reoffending
- Prevent
- Serious Violence

The current plan priorities were:

Priority 1—Perceptions and Feeling Safe

Objectives

- Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour (Inc. environmental crime)
- Improving community cohesion and resilience
- Delivering the prevent agenda

Priority 2 - Tackling the Root Causes

Adverse Experiences

Objectives

- Improve mental health
- Reduce child exploitation (including CSE)
- Reduce substance misuse
- Reduce domestic violence
- Reducing serious violence

Priority 3 - Locality Working, Inc. Town Centre

Reconfigure relationships between statutory organisations and the community. Encouraging and supporting a collaborative approach and building capacity within the community.

Objectives

- Working with communities (doing 'with' not 'to')
- Improving environmental cleanliness
- Addressing underlying community issues
- Reducing Violence, business crime and acquisitive crime
- Reducing re-offending
- Reduce Begging

The Head of Service was thanked for her update.

AGREED- That the update be noted.

22/40

CHAIR'S OSB UPDATE

The Chair provided a verbal update in relation to the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 22 February 2023.

The following agenda items were discussed:

- Executive forward work programme.

- Quarter 3- Corporate performance update
- Quarter 3- revenue and capital budget
- Children's finance improvement plan
- Statutory finance report
- Mayor's budget proposals

The Chair also advised that the two final reports from the children and learning scrutiny panel and our own panel (Culture and communities) on off road bikes were presented and agreed.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

22/41

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

Appreciation

As this was the last meeting of the municipal year, the Chair showed his appreciation to the panel for their support and work over the last year.

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Environment and Community Services Overview.



Environment and Community Services

- Environment Services
- Highways and Infrastructure
- Property and Commercial Services
- Community Services
- North East Migration Partnership

Environment Services

- **Waste services and recycling** – Domestic refuse, recycling and green waste collections, collection of household bulky waste, Waste Disposal Contract. Pest control.
- **Area care** - Green Strategy, Play areas, and alley cleansing, grounds maintenance and animals and needles, street, trees and arboriculture, burials, parks maintenance.
- **School Catering**

Highways and Infrastructure

- **Highway engineers** - Bridges and Structures, Highway Maintenance, vehicle crossings, highway inspections and intervention, flooding issues, beck maintenance, highway emergency response, winter maintenance (includes gritting and snow clearance), Street Lighting.
- **Fleet services** – Vehicle and machinery repairs, MOTs, car hire, servicing of Middlesbrough Council vehicles, fuel

Property and Commercial Services

- **Transporter Bridge**
- **Metz Bridge Travellers Site**
- **Building Maintenance and Project Management**
- **Building Cleaning, Caretaking and Security Services**
- **Operational Manager for Bereavement Services**
- **Integrated Transport Unit.**

Other

- **Lead on Emergency Planning**

Stronger Communities

- Libraries and hubs
- Community Safety Partnership
- Neighborhood Safety
- Migration
- Enforcement
- Flying Squad
- Pest Control
- Volunteers

Priorities

- Increase Cleanliness of the town and its physical Environment.
- Develop and Implement Green Strategy
- Tender for Main waste Disposal for post 2025/26
- Provide efficient and effective front line services.
- Reduce Environmental Crime
- Reduce crime and antisocial behaviour.

- Explore outcomes of Environment Bill and its implications for Middleborough
- Implement Green Strategy
- Improve A66 through Middleborough.
- Highways investment to improve roads
- Library development
- Bridge Investment
- Community growing areas
- Update Community Safety Plan and partnership
- Expand Locality working

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

10 JULY 2023

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES FOR THE
2023/2024 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To agree the proposed schedule of meeting dates, for the Environment Scrutiny Panel, for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year.

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 12 September 2023	11.00am	Mandela
Monday, 9 October 2023, OR Tuesday, 10 October 2023	10.00am 11.00am	Mandela
Monday, 13 November 2023, OR Tuesday, 14 November 2023	10.00am 10.00am	Mandela
Monday, 11 December 2023	10.00am	Mandela
Tuesday, 9 January 2024, OR Monday, 15 January 2024	10.00am 10.00am	Mandela Mandela
Monday, 5 February 2024, OR Tuesday, 6 February 2024	10.00am 10.00am	Mandela
Monday, 4 March 2024, OR Tuesday, 5 March 2024	10.00am 10.00am	Mandela
Tuesday, 2 April 2024	10.00am	Mandela

COUNCILLOR JAN RYLES

CHAIR OF ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

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