

## **CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL**

A meeting of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday 23 June 2022.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Councillor Chris McIntyre, G Wilson (Vice-Chair), R Arundale, C Dodds, J Rostron and Z Uddin

**PRESENT BY  
INVITATION:**

**ALSO IN  
ATTENDANCE:**

**OFFICERS:** Susie Blood, Geoff Field, Richard Horniman and Caroline Breheny

**APOLOGIES FOR  
ABSENCE:** D McCabe and J Walker

### **22/1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

### **22/2 MINUTES - CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL - 19 MAY 2022**

The minutes of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel held on 19 May 2022 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

### **22/3 OVERVIEW OF SERVICE AREAS 2022/23**

The Chair welcome to the panel to the first meeting of the municipal year and advised that as per normal procedures, the panel would be provided with an overview from the Directors regarding their service areas.

The Chair firstly welcomed the Director of Regeneration and Culture, who providing the following information:

- The Director was responsible for the Regeneration and Culture Directorate.
- In terms of Regeneration, this comprised of Economic growth, Infrastructure, Planning, Capital Projects, Design Services and Housing, community learning, and Culture. Culture was within regeneration as a lot of its aims was improving the towns image, helping the economy to grow etc.
- In terms of what the Culture service comprises; Middlesbrough runs a number of venues - encompassing the Town Hall, Middlesbrough Theatre and Newham Grange Leisure Farm, which act on a commercial basis. Museums, namely the Dorman and the Captain Cook Birthplace Museum and Open Spaces including Stewart and Albert Parks. The next focus is developing the Dorman museum, where there is a capital programme being undertaken.
- Cultural Services also covering a range of events including the Orange Pip Market and Christmas events such as the Reindeer Parade. The Director also advised that there would be a number of new events next year. It also contributed to events such as the Mela and Discover Middlesbrough.
- The service also oversees the delivery of the contract with Sports and Leisure Management (trading as Everyone Active) as well as playing field provision.
- The Service was also responsible for Teesside Archives, which operates from the old county Cleveland partners, which has recently moved to its new home at the Dorman museum.
- Lastly, within Cultural Services, they operate Arts Development, consisting of arts and music projects and this is where the service find it easiest to secure external funding.

In terms of 2022/23 priorities, the Director outlined that there were a number of targets for

culture to achieve.

Within the Strategic plan, the priorities were as follows:

- Every child playing a musical instrument- programme being expanded at present
- Improve Thorntree and Pallister Parks (through the Town's fund)
- Increased ticket sales and attendances of events (all ticket sales are tracked)
- Complete improvements to Teesaurus Park (to be completed as soon as possible)
- Create three new annual events in 2022 (being scoped and will be launched in due course)
- All children to get an experience of live theatre (funding pending)
- Increase attendance at existing Council events
- Increase visitor numbers to museums and attractions
- Increase tickets sales for Town Hall performances

The Director finally provided some examples of cultural activities, including events in Teesaurus Park, Middlesbrough Cultural capital investment prospectus and he also advised that Middlesbrough has secured £4.2million through the Cultural development fund that will enable a number of cultural developments to be progressed, including the redevelopment of central library, to be more focused on children's literature.

Following the presentation, the panel made a number of comments, especially in relation to the Cleveland Show being reinstated. In response, the Director advised that it wasn't 100% sure why this was the case however quite often long standing events lost popularity. The Chair secondly introduced the Director of Environment and Community Services.

In terms of the overview of the department, it was split into 5 main areas:

1. Environment Services
2. Highways and Infrastructure
3. Property and Commercial Services
4. Community Services
5. North East Migration Partnership

The Director provided a broad overview of the services:

#### *Environmental 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.**
- Middlesbrough is the lead on Emergency planning.

In terms of stronger communities, the service was responsible for the following:

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

In terms of priorities for 2022/23 were as follows:

- Increase Cleanliness of the town and its physical Environment.
- Develop and Implement Green Strategy
- Tender for Main waste Disposal for post 2025/26
- Increase recycling
- Transporter Bridge
- Improve Highways Assets
- Light up the Town
- Provide efficient and effective front line services post pandemic.
- Implement Towns fund
- Reduce Environmental Crime
- Explore outcomes of Environment Bill and its implications for Middleborough
- Implement Green Strategy
- Improve A66 through Middleborough.
- Highways investment to improve roads
- Plant another 10,000 trees. ( tree planting days)
- Increase Wildflower coverage across Middleborough.
- Expand wild spaces across the town in introduce more growing spaces.
- Library development
- Transporter Bridge Investment
- Light up key Buildings across the town
- Front Garden Competition.
- Community growing areas

- Play areas in conjunction with town's fund.

Following the presentation, there was a discussion regarding household waste disposal and the main waste disposal site to ensure the site was ready for 2026. In terms of pest control, the Director advised that they were looking to instigate this in the summer, depending on recruitment of staff as well as recruitment of street wardens. In terms of recruitment, this was due to a number of factors including the change in the labour market.

The panel also commended the officers of environmental enforcement for the excellent work they do across the town. Both Directors were thanked for their presentations.

**AGREED-** That the presentations be noted and information be considered in decided the scrutiny work programme for 2022/23.

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### **SETTING THE PANEL'S WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23**

The Chair introduced the Democratic Services officer to present the report, the purpose of which was to assist Members of the Panel to consider and agree its work programme for the 2021-2022 Municipal Year.

A list of topical issues and the suggestions received in respect of the scrutiny panel's remit were contained in the submitted report. It was suggested that the Scrutiny Panel should select two topics for full review along with several updates.

Members discussed the topics suggested in the report.

Following the discussion, Panel Members agreed the following topics for review:

Main Topics:

1. Scrambling bikes, illegal quad bikes and e-scooters- what enforcement is in place/ has operation kickstart been rolled out to other areas of Cleveland?
2. The impact of private rented properties on areas of owner occupied properties-what can be done to mitigate negative effects.

The following updates would also be provided:

1. Future High street fund
2. Surveillance Policy
3. Preventing Terrorism
4. Community Safety Partnership
5. Cohesion/ Asylum Seekers and support for Ukraine families.
6. Previous scrutiny review – Cultural events

The panel also expressed an interest to visiting the new Art School as part of the wider Cultural programme..

**AGREED** that:

1. The information provided was received and noted.
2. The topics and reviews listed above, would be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for approval.

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### **PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE 2022/23**

A proposed schedule of meeting dates for the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel for the 2022-2023 Municipal Year was submitted for the Panel's consideration.

**AGREED** that the proposed meeting dates for 2022-2023 were approved.

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**CHAIR'S OSB UPDATE**

The Chair provided a verbal update on the discussion raised at the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 22 June 2022.

AGREED- That the update be noted.

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