

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Barrie Cooper

DATE OF MEETING: 29 March 2023

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members on areas of activity within my portfolio including performance against strategic priorities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority:

Roads and Highways

A66

Works are currently ongoing to replace the damaged VRS (crash barriers) at various locations on both eastbound, westbound and central reservation locations. Works are expected to take a further 8 weeks, taking place during planned overnight lane closures.

Resurfacing works to the westbound carriageway between Newport interchange and the boundary with Stockton Council are scheduled to take place from week commencing 20th March. The works will be carried out during planned overnight road closures and are expected to take 10 nights to complete. Works to the eastbound section between Newport interchange and the boundary with Stockton Council are scheduled to take place week commencing 17th April and are expected to take 7 nights to complete. Potholes and Footpath maintenance continues across the Town even though our teams are out spotting problems it would be helpful in Councillors not only reported defects themselves but encouraged their residents to do so using My Middlesbrough.

Verges and Footways

Works for 2022/23 are almost complete and the Works for 2023/24 have been identified and are currently being assessed and measured in order to put a programme together for the coming year.

Carriageway Resurfacing

We have awarded the second surfacing contract to Tarmac Trading Ltd though NEPO for stage 3 of the resurfacing programme which concentrates on the classified road network. Ward Members are being informed of works within their Wards as the programme progresses. The roads that have been resurfaced are those in the worse condition, which should have an impact on reducing the number of insurance claims, and also have a positive impact on the local areas throughout the town. Tender documents for the Carriageway work of the 2023 – 24 programme are being prepared.

Bridges & Structures

We have completed all but 4 principal inspections. The remaining inspections are on culverts, and we are working with contractors to remove silt build up in order for the inspections to take place. The reports are been compiled into a programme of works with a full updated schedule to be made available as soon as all the inspections are completed. We are progressing on planned works on A66 Newport/ Cannon Park Interchange, A66 Hartington Interchange, Borough Road Flyover. The contract for the repairs to column 20B have been awarded to a contractor and works schedule is to be confirmed.

Flood Management

We continue to work proactively on flood risk management through joint working with the EA and NWL. The ongoing use of Gully Smart will ensure the council has a clear picture of the size and condition of the asset, which will improve the long-term planning and maintenance of gullies. We are continuing to develop our knowledge of the network and the second survey of the network is to take place later this year. This will enable a risk-based approach to be taken in respect to gully cleaning.

Laboratory

Highways Laboratory have completed Coring Programme for the 2023/24 Carriageway works in Middlesbrough. The coring reports will aid the tender documentation sent out to asphalt suppliers/contractors for the upcoming road maintenance programme.

Traffic Signals/UTMC

The move into the UTMC facility at Fountain Court has gone well and has been occupied since December 2022. We now have CCTV access to Middlesbrough and Stockton areas and we are waiting to establish links to the other partner authorities shortly. We are linking our Mobile cameras up soon to fill in the gaps at junctions where we do not have coverage. We are installing journey time equipment and deliver information onto the VMS (Variable message signs) to enable drivers to access this information and make informed decisions. We use strategies to coordinate signal sites when there are issues on the network through the UTC (Urban Traffic Control) System and we closely monitor and influence the Tess Valley Network from our suite here at Fountain Court.

We are going to host Ben Houchen and Andy Preston after purdah has elapsed to showcase our facilities and offer a presentation to describe what we do.

Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries

The Council has been creating and regenerating Parks across the Borough, I have chosen to mention this one as it shows how well Councillors can work together.

Newham Way new play area, Coulby Newham ward

Work started week commencing March 13th, when it's completed we will see:

Brand new play area – swings, seesaws, multi-play unit with slide, tunnel and climbing blocks, various character-themed springies, explorer play panels, climbing frames, talking tubes, benches and fencing. New footpath link to MUGA.

Councillors Stefan Walker, Barrie Cooper, Luke Mason and David Branson said:
“Playgrounds are part of the fabric of a happy childhood, and we owe it to our young people to ensure they have the best possible equipment.



Ward	Project Details	Update / Status
<p>Marton West</p>	<p>Fairy Dell boardwalk - re-build of the wooden boardwalk beside the lake using recycled plastic.</p> <p>Bonnygrove park – footpath, fencing, new play equipment, play park flooring.</p> <p>Marton West Beck – seating / heritage trail</p>	<p>Scheme fully completed:</p>
<p>Ladgate</p>	<p>Upgrade of Easterside (Broughton Avenue) play park and upgrading of the torn / ripped outdoor football pitch.</p>	<p>Scheme underway, expected to be fully completed week commencing 20th March.</p>
<p>Coulby Newham</p>	<p>New children's play area at Newham Way</p>	<p>Works have commenced and are expected to be completed by end of March 2023.</p>
<p>Marton East</p>	<p>Create a stretch of footpath on the south side of Cypress Road, Marton, between Hawthorn Crescent and Rosewood Court.</p>	<p>Scheme fully completed:</p>
<p>Brambles Farm / Thorntree</p>	<p>New play area at Colmore Avenue / rear of Millbrook Avenue</p> <p><i>*The play area was originally proposed to be located at Beresford Buildings, Thorntree Shops however residents were opposed to this location.</i></p>	<p>Scheme is yet to commence – currently awaiting Planning Permission decision.</p>

Newport	Improvements at Glebe Road Park	Scheme fully completed.
Borough wide	Refresh of 18 play parks	Works have commenced and are expected to be fully completed by end of March 2023.
District shopping areas	Installation of large planters	Scheme fully completed.
Pallister Park	MUGA improvements	Scheme is yet to commence - the budget has been included in a bid to the Football Foundation's Play Zone Fund as match funding for investment in wider play park improvements across the town – the bid has been successful at the first stage and has now progressed to the next stage involving community engagement.
Albert Park	Fencing of Albert Park bowls and croquet greens	Planning Permission and Listed Buildings Consent have been obtained, currently waiting for steel/materials to be received by the appointed contractor and then the fencing will be installed – the install should take approximately 2 weeks and therefore the scheme will be completed shortly.
Thorntree Park	New LED lighting	Scheme now fully completed
Pallister Park and Thorntree Park	To provide additional children's play equipment across the identified parks	Scheme now fully completed

Environment Sustainability

As a Council we have agreed a target of 2029 for making the Council Carbon neutral and 2039 for making Middlesbrough Carbon neutral.

This is consistent with the government's long term goal of eradicating domestic UK emissions that contribute to human caused climate change by 2050.

With this in mind together with voluntary groups such as Borough Champs and the Rotary Club we have been planting trees, The Forestry Commission working with Tees Valley Combined Authority have made thousands of trees available for planting in the Tees Valley under the Heading of Trees on Tees, the ambition is to plant one million trees in the Tees Valley and with that in mind I attended a Forum held at Kirkleatham Walled Garden on 9th March.

Climate Action Middlesbrough and Middlesbrough Environment City have created a tree nursery and I look forward to being able to help plant those trees when they are old enough to survive on their own.

I have also been looking at Electric Bikes, Electric Motorbikes, Electric cars and vans, Hydrogen powered vehicles however the lack of infrastructure can be a barrier. Enquiries into charging points in carparks and streets via connections within street lights are ongoing an app called ZapMap is available showing all current charging points across the UK.

Flood risks. The £4.8million Marton West Beck Flood Scheme in Middlesbrough is complete. It reduces flood risk to around 500 homes and businesses from the beck, sea and surface water in central Middlesbrough. The project, which was led by the Environment Agency in partnership with Middlesbrough Council, includes upstream storage areas, an extended trash screen at Albert Park, and new and improved flood walls.

I would invite everyone to view the Environment Agency video on

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m05aexQ2-3k>

I have been monitoring the becks and reporting those that seem to be filling up with vegetation and I would ask all Councillors to do the same to protect our residents from the misery that homes being flooded brings.

Refuse & Recycling

The Waste team have continued to work hard with residents and our recycling contractors to try and reduce contamination – this work has included viewing the sampling process at Cumbrian Waste Management to identify the main issues in the recycling and then using this information to develop our communications and social media campaigns. The team have also carried out resident visits to provide advice on what can and cannot go into the blue lidded recycling bins.

Alongside the above the team have also attended the following events:

- Recycling Roadshow – Middlesbrough Bus Station & Parkway Centre
- Working with Thirteen to encourage recycling in a variety of locations
- Working with crews to identify contamination in blue lidded recycling bins

- Green Waste collections are to resume on Tuesday 11 April – the collections will be fortnightly – residents are advised to check the calendars online for their specific collection dates

- HWRC reverts to Summer opening hours from 1 April 8am to 7pm – seven days per week

- Waste Services undertook a staff training day on Monday 23 January – a variety of topics were covered including:
 - Focus Groups
 - Safety on the Highways
 - Prevent
 - Climate Change

MEC

Fairtrade fortnight was from 27th February through to 12th March to spotlight the harmful effect of the climate crisis on the future of our food.

This year's campaign was to highlight the message that whatever your budget and wherever you shop, when you choose Fairtrade, you support farmers to take care of the environment through Fairtrade's Price, Premium and Programmes.

Middlesbrough Environment City held two information events in the Green Hub based in Middlesbrough Bus Station speaking to residents about Fairtrade and climate Change, offering free Fairtrade Bananas and Banana Cake made with Fairtrade products to

try. The events were a huge success with residents knowing why they need to purchase Fairtrade products. This will help Middlesbrough keep it's Fairtrade Town Status when it is due for renewal next year.



Area Care

Tees Trees Testimony – Area Care assisted the Rotary Club in the planting of 100 trees along the river tees and received the following feedback

“On behalf of Erimus and our sister rotary clubs please accept and pass on our thanks to your team whose assistance in planting 'Tees Trees' was invaluable. It was a team effort and your guys were great!

The ability to involve twenty environmental science students from Middlesbrough College in the process was a significant bonus.

Particular thanks, apart from your good self and Andy who sparked the lightbulb moment are due to Peter Chapman (our best wishes for his speedy recovery), Geoff Robinson for picking up the pieces so quickly and Darren Appleton and his ever cheery team!

Today we completed planting our current stock and reached our planned destination opposite the Cupral building a short way downriver of Newport Bridge. Now something approaching one and a half miles of riverbank has been planted with native deciduous trees which over time should transform the riverscape of Billingham Reach.

I know that Tees Trees are on your watering routine and we shall make a point of regular visits over the coming months so that if repairs to staking or fastenings are required we can maintain our links with your team”





- The Urban Meadow areas will be prepared for sowing. An additional 10,000m² are to be added to this year's programme which will include extensions of some current areas and also some new areas throughout the town.
- Play area refurbishments/replacements are programmed for various sites throughout the town with many sites near to completion.
- The recruitment process for Area Care seasonal staff is now completed, with the successful applicant commencing employment with us on 3rd April.
- We always target to get the first grass cut of the season completed by the end of March. However, the recent wet and cold weather has prevented the start.
- We are in the process of securing funding from Tees Valley Combined Authority to improve the cleanliness of the town centre areas. The funding will enable us to recruit a number of dedicated "Area Care Caretakers" to support our existing staff & specifically to provide a deeper clean to the pedestrianised areas of the town.
- A number of different options/machines have been investigated with regards to Chewing Gum removal, this information has been forwarded to the Town centre management team to secure the finding through the Keep Britain Tidy initiative.
- Walk the ward meetings have commenced and will continue throughout the year. These "walks" are of great benefit in enabling the ward councillor to meet with our management team to identify/address arising issues.
- Area Care will commence with a new initiative called 'Added Value' this is to utilise the current cleansing staff throughout the town to carry out various works which should improve the aesthetics of the town

Green Strategy

- The latest community garden was unveiled at Trinity Church North Ormesby with the Mayor and Cllr Cooper in February.
- The Tees Valley Wildlife Trust have been working in Coulby Newham tidying up a derelict orchard and pond at Lingfield as well holding tree planting events as part of the Climate Action Middlesbrough programme.
- We are nearing the completion of Middlemarsh nature reserve project with the installation of a new sculpture and seating on the site to promote public access.
- Submitting a bid for government funding for on street electric car charging stations in the town where residents don't have drives or garages to charge EV's.

Catering Team

The decision to increase paid school meals was agreed as part of the recent budget proposals, the price increase will take place from 17th April 2023 (after Easter half term).

Current Meal Price:

Primary (including Nursery) Meal £2.15

Secondary Meal £2.25

Meal Price from 17th April 2023:

Primary (including Nursery) Meal £2.40

Secondary Meal £2.50

THE TIME AHEAD

Any Councillor who wishes to have a Ward Walkabout with myself or MBC Environment Officers simply needs to ask via email.

NAME Councillor Barrie Cooper

DATE 16th March 2023.