

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2020

EDUCATION

1. South Tees Youth Offending Service

South Tees Youth Offending Service (STYOS) is now delivering interventions to young people at risk of committing crime and anti-social behaviour or where there are behaviours impacting upon their education, training or employment. This preventative work was introduced in September 2020 with the overall objective being to reduce the number of first time entrants in to the criminal justice system.

2. Schools

It's been a delight to visit a number of primary schools over the last half term – in a Covid safe way of course. It's excellent to learn about what makes each of our schools unique and to build up relationships with headteachers and staff. I want them to know that we as an authority are here to support them and make sure our children achieve their full potential.

The Ethnic Minority Achievement Team (EMAT) has provided speedy and varied support to schools for their COVID response – such as creating videos in various languages to help relay important messages to parents. The team is now working closely with schools to develop remote teaching packages for pupils with English as an additional language.

3. Hullabaloo

Hundreds of babies have received a free Hullabaloo pack as a result of some fantastic partnership working between Middlesbrough Council's School Readiness Team, South Tees Public Health and The Hullabaloo Theatre.

Families of babies born during Covid lockdown were contacted by the School Readiness Team and offered a free resource pack developed by the Hullabaloo Theatre, aimed at promoting babies' creative and imaginative development through play. Parents of these babies missed out on the social element of attending baby groups like the ones delivered from children's centres, which are vital for peer support and receiving information, advice and guidance on baby's development. During these calls staff were able to provide this support, whilst getting families registered with the children's centres.

4. Bath, Book, Bed

Children's centres, libraries and The National Literacy Trust's 'Middlesbrough Reads' supported The Book Trust's 'Bath, Book, Bed' campaign a little differently in September. This time we went digital using our Family Information Service Facebook page. Our first digital Bath, Book, Bed Week reached 3.4k people during the week generating 57 responses from families sharing their bed time top tips, favourite family bedtime story and

ideas for bath time fun. Four lucky winners received either a bundle of books or a bath time fun pack.

CULTURE

5. Town Hall Phone Boxes

I'm thrilled to give an update on our Town Hall phone boxes which have returned following refurbishment. They look very smart and were renovated by a Middlesbrough company.

They now await their arty makeover, which will see them fitted with an art installation featuring 'sound bars' that will respond to surrounding noise. This work is scheduled to take place in January.



6. Middlesbrough Town Hall

The Town Hall continues to provide space for the Nightingale Court Service to be delivered as well as socially distanced lecture space for Teesside University. These hires fill our largest spaces Monday to Friday and will be in place until the end of the year with options to extend the hire until March 2021 when we are hopeful we will be able to return to a more traditional program. We continue to work with hirers and promoters to reschedule shows and events planned for 2020 into 2021.

Regional promoters are keen to deliver small scale socially distanced events within the Crypt, Fire Station and Court Room as soon as Covid restrictions allow us to – some of

these events will include our monthly Big Mouth Comedy Club, the launch of Folklines Fridays and Crypt music sessions.

In October we launched the Middlesbrough Town Hall AIR (artist in residence) project, which has had a very positive reaction from not only the public and local artists, but also the BBC – which has now partnered with us to deliver ‘AIR Sessions from the Crypt’ online.

The first session featured Amelia Coburn who herself is a BBC Young Folk Award nominee and has reached 17k people since the streaming took place. This was followed by further weekly streaming sessions of the other AIR cohort members Shakk, Michael Gallagher and Jodie Nicholson, with the final live streaming session featuring Dylan Cartlidge. We are thrilled that the project has launched with such support online and look forward to a time when delivery within the town hall will be possible once again.

For a short time the Middlesbrough Town Hall performing arts school and Musinc project were able to return to delivery on site and it was wonderful to welcome young people back to the venue to perform and learn again. Both projects have now returned to an online delivery model in response to lockdown restrictions but we hope for a swift return to live delivery as soon as guidance allows.

I’m very happy to report that Middlesbrough Town Hall’s application to the Cultural Recovery Fund was successful and we have been granted £209,000 from the fund to support us during the pandemic. Some of this funding will be used to purchase equipment that will allow cinema and live streaming to be delivered by the venue in the coming months.



7. Middlesbrough Theatre

Middlesbrough Theatre was due to reopen for its first socially distanced performances in November but this was sadly impacted by the announcement of a further national lockdown leading to the cancelation of these performances.

We have been fortunate in being one of 20 theatres nationally to have received funding from the Theatres Trust to install hygiene facilities to make us Covid secure. We will be in a strong position to offer both audiences and visiting companies alike the best possible facilities we can re-open.

8. Newham Grange Farm

After a very busy socially-distanced Summer season at the farm, the Autumn weather historically brings a decline in farm visitors as flip flops are swapped for wellies. But this year the farm's popularity has not swayed even a little bit - a massive 8,210 visitors booked and paid on line to visit the farm in October with 6,650 people visiting in October half term alone. The security of having a socially distanced controlled outdoor experience has proved to be a huge hit with families from across Teesside.

To celebrate Halloween, the farm put on a socially distanced Halloween trail with hay bale art featuring giant spiders and skeletons and pumpkin picking. The activity was a huge success. We were fully booked from October 24 – October 31 (NB: The farm capacity is reduced in line with Covid Risk assessment).

Plans for Christmas are developing in conjunction with events team and we are hosting Newham Grange Festive Farm special which is programmed to take place from December 5 – December 24.

9. Events

A full Christmas events programme was planned during the Summer with 'Plan B' options ready should a Tier 2 or 3 lockdown be brought into place. Sadly full lockdown will now prevent all the Plan B hyper local community events - including the parade - from taking place.

But Christmas is not lost! As well as some wonderful activity taking place at Newham Grange Farm we will also deliver a virtual Christmas light switch on. The switch on will feature our very own Santa and his mischievous elves who are on quest to get the Christmas lights turned on in Middlesbrough Town Centre. The virtual switch on is designed to offer a fun alternative option to the traditional switch on.

A Christmas window is also currently being created with a gingerbread Middlesbrough skyline theme and will be visible within the town centre.



10. Middlesbrough Museums

Visitor numbers to the museums have developed a very definitive trend with mid-week visitor numbers outside of school holidays remaining low but Friday and Saturday figures regularly hitting the pre booking allocation.

Digital engagement with the museums has never been so popular and in line with this increased following we are developing a digital video exhibition of toys through time which will be delivered by none other than Santa himself.

COMMUNITIES

11. Wardens

Despite recently imposed restrictions, the town centre remains busy and parking issues continue to affect traffic management. Penalties have been issued in several locations throughout the ward - although some drivers were dealt with through guidance and advice.

To support local businesses, wardens have conducted several welfare checks to local firms to see how best they can support them. Wardens and police officers (who work as part of the town centre team) also work closely with retail security guards by increasing vigilance for known shoplifters. Last weekend wardens assisted Cleveland Centre Security with the detainment of a known prolific shoplifter who had stolen items from Boots.

Wardens regularly support people when injured. This month, wardens were called to assist an elderly male who had sustained a nasty fall resulting in cuts and abrasions to his face and hands. Wardens wish to express their thanks and appreciation to the two nurses and member of the public for their assistance with this incident.

Headteachers contacted me about dangerous parking outside their schools. As a result I asked wardens to visit schools at drop off and pick up times and ticket those who are parked inappropriately. This operation is still ongoing at schools across the whole of Middlesbrough.

12. Community Safety Partnership

The AIM (Active Intelligence Mapping) partnership directs resources and sets short-term action plans in line with current crime and disorder issues and priorities. This work is carried out through a fortnightly tactical assessment of crime and disorder in conjunction with Cleveland Police and other partners identifying emerging trends. Current priorities include youth related antisocial behaviour and criminal damage in Thorntree, Berwick Hills and Pallister wards, Trimdon Avenue shops and the Saltersgill area of West Middlesbrough. Partners have committed resources to target these areas with dispersal orders, enforcement and youth services outreach.

Middlesbrough's Community Safety Partnership has, amongst other responsibilities, a duty to monitor Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR's). In relation to some of the recommendations from recent DHR's we are supporting a fundraising initiative to enable the delivery of the IRIS Programme (Identification and Referral to Improve Safety). This model is an evidence-based health intervention, to improve the GP response to domestic abuse. My Sister's Place, a specialist domestic abuse service in Middlesbrough, has been confirmed as a formal partner within the IRIS programme and has secured part of the funding necessary to implement the model within Middlesbrough. CSP members have also agreed to part fund the project over the next two years.

13. Digital Libraries



Our top reading duo, Tammy and Monty relaunched their popular “Time for a Story” videos during the half-term break. Tammy also posted a number of activity videos throughout the week including a Lego Club.