

## **ASHLEY WATERS**

### **EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

#### **STRATEGIC**

##### **Infrastructure**

1. Funding of £60,000 has been identified for the installation of two new crossing points (following successful consultation) as follows.
2. The Avenue (Linthorpe) – A zebra crossing is proposed outside of St Edwards Primary school. Although plans have been in process for some time, this investment follows the recent incident where by a School Crossing Patrol Officer was involved in a collision with a vehicle at the location. The improvements will assist greatly in highlighting the demand at the location, and providing a safe crossing point for school children, and the general public, helping to encourage more active travel.
3. Newham Way (Coulby Newham) – A zebra crossing is proposed on Newham Way, connecting North/South pedestrian/Cycling infrastructure either side of the carriageway. Newham way intersects a number of these key routes, and providing this crossing will assist residents accessing local amenities.

##### **Infrastructure Connectivity**

4. Middlesbrough Council has been working to bring next generation broadband to the town, as part of an investment of over £42m, through CityFibre's plans to help replace the UK's legacy copper networks - with gigabit-capable full fibre optic connectivity. Practically every home and business will gain access to next-generation broadband.
5. The state-of-the-art infrastructure is forecast to boost business productivity and innovation, deliver millions of pounds in economic benefits for Middlesbrough and help the region to recover from the economic downturn - while giving residents and businesses access to the UK's fastest broadband services of up to 1,000 megabytes per second.
6. Detailed planning is already underway as CityFibre designs a network capable of serving Middlesbrough's current and future demands. Upon completion, the network will be in reach of nearly every home and business in the area, providing a platform for a new generation of "smart city" applications and the roll-out of 5G mobile services.
7. MAP Group (UK), based in the Tees Valley, is constructing the network on behalf of CityFibre. They will be using modern build techniques, including, where possible, utilising

existing underground and over ground infrastructure to ensure a fast and successful roll-out. Their teams are following social distancing protocols to ensure their own safety, as well as that of the general public.

- CityFibre will be further engaging with Middlesbrough Council and local communities in coming months, to ensure a fast and successful roll-out. Ward Councillors will be briefed as plans are finalised for the local community, with residents being kept informed by door-to-door teams and mailings ahead of works commencing in their streets.

### **Business Support**

- During the Covid-19 epidemic, the Government has made available a range of business grants and financial support. Part of this package is the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs). Middlesbrough businesses are being signposted to available support. Especially BBLs which is 100% backed by Government and requires no personal guarantees.
- As at 19<sup>th</sup> October, Middlesbrough Businesses have accessed £88m of combined CBILS and BBLs. Nationally latest figures are:

<b>Data up to close of business</b>	<b>Value of Facilities Approved</b>	<b>Number of Facilities Approved</b>	<b>Total Number of Applications</b>
18 October	£17.16bn	73,094	159,277
<b>BBLs</b>			
18 October	£40.20bn	1,336,320	1,660,845
<b>CLBILS (large)</b>			
18 October	£4.57bn	623	1,034

## **PERFORMANCE**

### **The Digital City**

- Boho 8 is making great progress, with all units now on site and completion expected by January 2021. Advanced discussions are being held with four businesses about taking all units on completion – a mix of businesses taking additional space, and those expanding into the Boho Zone. There has been a recent trend of businesses taking significantly more space due to growth over the last six months, with this development allowing us to secure a number of high growth businesses within Middlesbrough.

### **Centre Square**

- Despite the UK office market assumed to be subdued during the prevailing crisis; the Council has let the majority of the 93,896 sq. ft. of new office space provided at Centre Square to international and UK businesses.
- Four tenants have been secured with 97% of Centre Square One let and 68% of Centre Square Two let; with significant interest in the remaining space.

14. All tenants are expanding their current operations and employment. The privately funded, multi-million pound fit-outs are underway in both buildings – it is expected that occupancy will commence in the New Year, Covid restrictions permitting. The new tenants are:-

- Causeway (digital).
- GB Bank (financial services).
- XPS (pensions).
- Firstsource (outsourcing).

### **TeesAMP**

15. Phase 1 provides 180,000 sq. ft. of high-quality light industrial units c. 60,000 sq. ft. (or 33%) of the units available have been let to a number of specialist companies, with a terms agreed on a further 69,000 sq. ft. and awaiting referral to solicitors. The new tenants are:-

- Firth Vickers Engineering (Paralloy Ltd.)
- Sulzer Chemtech (UK) Ltd.
- Durata UK Ltd.
- Dynoremaps.
- Nixon Safety Supplies.
- Close Protection Security.

### **National Centre of Excellence**

16. TeesAMP has been selected by the Government as the location for a National Centre of Excellence to research and develop the use of hydrogen technology to power transport. TVCA is set to invest £14m in the project. The Council finalised the terms of the sale and exchange of contracts completed on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The National Centre of Excellence will be built next to the TWI technology and training centre, in partnership with Teesside University. It is expected to be operational within 18 months.

### **Pyrolysis Plant**

17. The Executive previously approved the sale of a northerly plot to CPIL to develop the plant in 2017. The plant – which will recycle plastic waste – awaits detailed planning approval, further to which the land transaction will complete.

### **Plot 23**

18. On 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020, the Executive approved a report which approved the sale of Plot 23 to CPIL in order to facilitate a £7.5m investment by an advanced manufacturing technology based business; which would bring 50 jobs initially, rising to 175 jobs in the long-term. The Council and CPIL are now close to finalising the detailed aspects of the transaction to secure the investment.

### **Town Centre Economy - Rio Brazilian Stackhouse**

19. The Rio Brazilian Steakhouse was scheduled to open in the former Bistrot Pierre premises at the beginning of November however due to national lockdown it has now been put back to beginning of December.
20. The restaurant (part of the Tomahawk Steakhouse group) has received an outstanding response on social media. The recruitment process was a huge success and they have now appointed to all positions (36 new staff employed in addition to 40 at Tomahawk Steakhouse at Acklam Hall).

## **Albert North**

21. The multi-million pound regeneration of Albert Road continues as it becomes home to more successful businesses. SIXTEEN26 Albert North (formally Sun Alliance House) is now at full occupancy with Big Bite and SockMonkey Studios joining other creative and digital businesses, complementing the already thriving digital sector based in the Boho Zone. Bespoke male groomers, King B, are also a recent addition to the ground floor units alongside Cocoon & Bauer, Pie Jackers, Alkaline Kitchen and Ananda Wellbeing. Work will commence shortly on transforming the former Barclays Bank building to further expand the digital and creative hub, helping to create a vibrant business community. Circa 42,000 sqft has been let in SIXTEEN26 and including the ground floor F&B / retail and leisure units to date circa 48,000 sqft has been let in just over a year.

## **INVOLVEMENT AND PROMOTION**

### **Infrastructure Safety**

22. Council Officers hosted a Covid-secure and successful **Let's Cycle Safety!** Event at Riverside Park on Monday 2 November which involved members of the Cleveland Road Safety partnership – supported by Middlesbrough Environment City (MEC). It was a positive event, where officers spoke to a variety of cyclists covering all age groups and genders. MEC carried out bike services and repairs to nine cycles, with MEC adding, “We carried out some pretty important repairs to those that did attend.”
23. The event was promoted on Council, MEC and Let's Go Tees Valley social media channels with a reach of:
- Facebook:
    - 1864 people reached
    - 70 engagements (Likes, reactions etc. ;)
  - Twitter:
    - 697 impressions
    - 13 engagements (Retweets, likes etc. ;)
  - Instagram:
    - 7 likes
    - 116 people reached

(This was promoted alongside our regular Dr. Bike session, for the record)

All Coronavirus H&S protocols were followed, creating a safe and secure day.



