

EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the Executive was held on Wednesday 19 July 2023.

PRESENT: C Cooke - Elected Mayor (Chair), Councillors P Gavigan, P Storey, J Thompson, Z Uddin and N Walker

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: M Brown, E Craigie (Local Democracy Service) A Johnstone and J Weston

OFFICERS: M Adams, S Bonner, G Field, C Heaphy, R Horniman, A Humble, A Perriman and E Scollay

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors T Furness and M Storey

23/1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

23/2 **MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 20 JUNE 2023**

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 20 June 2023 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

23/3 **BREASTFEEDING BOROUGH DECLARATION**

The Mayor and Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health submitted a report for Executive's consideration.

The report presented an overview of the importance of Breast Feeding (along with current data) and the benefits to both mother and child and the wider community. The report set out how the adoption of the Breast-Feeding Boroughs Declaration across Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland would increase local breastfeeding rates and reduce health inequalities.

The report gave an overview of what it meant for South Tees to become a Breast-Feeding area and the benefits for Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland. The report also set out the ten commitments that would be delivered through the existing and well-established Infant Feeding Steering Group across South Tees. These would hopefully increase breastfeeding rates, reduce bottle (formula) fed culture and normalise breastfeeding across the civic, community and service levels to support the best start in life for children across South Tees.

It was recommended Executive approve the adoption of the Breast-Feeding Boroughs Declaration as a Local Authority and agree to promote themselves as a Breast-Feeding Borough. It would do this by implementing the ten declarations to increase breast feeding rates across South Tees, whilst also preventing the worsening of health inequalities.

Across South Tees it was recognised the difference that early experiences and responsive parenting could make to an infant and young person's health, well-being, and future life chances. Those who breastfed were likely to have better maternal health and wellbeing and bond better with their baby. As breastfed children got older, they also had better attachment with their parents and built better relationships with others.

Many thought the benefits of breastfeeding were purely nutritional; not realising that breastfeeding also protected the health of mothers and their children. Reductions in the risk of infants developing illnesses and protection against childhood diseases later in life were well researched. Evidence also suggested that breastfed babies benefited from improved brain development.

OPTIONS

Do Nothing: This would have resulted in possible decreases of breast feeding rates across South Tees and worsening of health inequalities.

ORDERED That Executive:

- 1. Approve the adoption of the Breast-Feeding Boroughs Declaration as a Local Authority.**
- 2. Agree to promote themselves as a Breast-Feeding Borough by implementing the ten declarations listed at appendix C in the report.**

REASONS

The programme supported the strategic direction of the Children's Trust in Middlesbrough and the Children and Young People's Partnership in Redcar and Cleveland.

The budget aligned to this programme was £10,000 from within existing budgets for Middlesbrough and R&C Public Health. This would support the development of the Breast-Feeding Boroughs branding; professional images of local people; the continuation of the Breast-Feeding Welcome Scheme licence (venues registering as breast feeding friendly) and permanent signage and UNICEF Baby Friendly Accreditation.

The benefits to breast feeding for the health of the mother and child showed resounding evidence that breast feeding saved lives, improved health, and cut costs in every country worldwide (UNICEF). Breast feeding protected children from a range of illnesses which included infection, diabetes, asthma, heart disease, obesity as well as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (cot death). The benefits to maternal health included protecting mothers from breast and ovarian cancers and heart disease.

Breast feeding contributed to significant savings to the NHS. A NICE costing report estimated that Baby Friendly accreditation would start to save a facility money after three years, owing to a reduction in the incidence of certain childhood illnesses. Moderate increases in breast feeding translated into cost savings for the NHS of many millions of pounds, and tens of thousands of fewer hospital admissions and GP consultations (UNICEF Baby Friendly report).

Breast Feeding Boroughs would support to normalise breast feeding and increase the rates of breast feeding at initiation and 6-8 weeks. A similar campaign which was successfully delivered in Blackburn with Darwen, resulted in the continuation of breast feeding for months after birth.

23/4

HEALTHY WEIGHT DECLARATION

The Mayor and Executive Member for Adult Social Care submitted a report for Executive's consideration.

The purpose of the report was to seek approval from Executive to progress with Middlesbrough Council's adoption of the Healthy Weight Declaration, ensuring it was aligned to the Council's 'Health and Wellbeing' recovery plan and the wider Public Health South Tees Strategy, which a particular focus to reduce obesity levels and thereby improve both the health of local communities and those working for the council.

The report also outlined the aim of the HWD to increase the number of people living in Middlesbrough who are a healthy weight and to improve nutrition and hydration outcomes across the town.

The report provided a summary of the current obesity rates in Middlesbrough for children and adults either overweight, living with obesity or living with severe obesity. It demonstrated the HWD 16 commitments that provided strategic vision and aspiration for the council. It also offered a rationale and platform to connect council teams, bringing them together to raise awareness about the importance of healthy weight and to deliver interventions.

Being overweight or living with obesity increased the risk of serious health problems, including disability, disease and death, and had substantial long-term economic, wellbeing and social costs. Diet and obesity-related ill-health had a huge financial impact on the NHS with

estimates that it cost the UK around £6 billion each year, before we consider the economic and societal impacts due to reduced productivity and obesity-related illness that made people unable to work.

In Middlesbrough, an estimated 71% of adults (18+) were overweight or living with obesity, with 28% mothers living with obesity in early pregnancy.

OPTIONS

No other options were put forward as part of the report.

ORDERED That Executive:

- 1. Agree to signing the Healthy Weight Declaration as a tool to gain leadership support and promote the Local Authority's commitment to addressing obesity.**
- 2. Identifies an elected member champion who will help to progress the HWD through the democratic process.**
- 3. Identifies opportunities for leaders to promote the HWD as part of a wider system.**

REASONS

It was important that Executive had oversight of the Local Authority's commitment to achieving the HWD. The HWD would be integral to achieving this by enabling all Directorates across the council to consider the impact they could have to promote and encourage healthy weight.

23/5

RISK AND OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance submitted a report for Executive's consideration.

The report set out the Risk and Opportunity Policy 2023-2026. The policy formed part of the corporate governance policy framework underpinning the Council's Strategic Plan and set out how the Council would ensure that risks were effectively managed, and opportunities exploited to deliver strategic priorities for the town.

The Risk and Opportunity Management policy sets out the Council's approach to risk and opportunity management to ensure there was an effective, consistent and joined up approach to risk across the Council that would:

- ensure that proactive risk and opportunity management was embedded within the culture of the Council, and was integral to business planning and performance management;
- ensure that the risk and opportunity management cycle and associated processes were implemented consistently and proportionately across the Council; and
- communicate the Council's approach to risk and opportunity management to all employees and stakeholders.

OPTIONS

No other options were submitted as part of the report.

ORDERED That Executive approve the Risk and Opportunity Management Policy 2023-2026 which was appended to the report at Appendix One.

REASONS

The policy was being updated to ensure the content remains relevant and complied with latest legislation and best practice.

Decisions relating to Agenda Items one to seven will come into force after five working days following the day the decision(s) was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures.

23/6 **ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.**

23/7 **SPECIAL URGENT ITEM: GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT: NEXT STEPS - RESOURCING THE FINANCIAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMMES**

The Mayor and Executive Member for Adult Social Care submitted a Special Urgent report for Executive's consideration.

The purpose of the report was for Executive to consider and approve proposals to draw down from the Corporate Contingency Budget in order to fund additional resources to deliver elements of activities identified as part of the next phase of the Corporate Governance Improvement journey, as identified in the Corporate Governance Improvement: Next Steps report approved at full Council on 5 July 2023.

The Council faced significant financial challenges during 2023/24 and over the medium-term, as reflected by the conclusion in the recent CIPFA review reported in February 2023 and in the External Auditor's Annual Report for 2020/21, considered by the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee, on 29 June 2023.

Phase three of the Council's Corporate Governance Improvement Plan was reported to Council for information on 5 July 2023. The diagram below sets out its structure. The report sought funding to support action in relation to two of the programmes of work that will be delivered by the overall improvement plan. As the Plan continued to be scoped and developed collaboratively with the Advisory Panel that was outlined in the 5 July 2023 Council meeting, there may be further reports brought forward on resourcing to this body. Reports on progress against the plan, scoping etc would be taken to Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee and full Council.

OPTIONS

Other options relating to the use of existing finance staff and the recruitment of suitably experienced permanent staff to undertake the work required were considered. However, the lack of existing capacity and the requirement to deliver improvements at pace, as outlined in this report, meant those options were not suitable.

ORDERED that Executive:

- 1. Note the requirement of additional resources across corporate support services to support delivery of the financial recovery and resilience programme of work within the Corporate Governance Improvement Plan**
- 2. Note the requirement for initial funding to commence elements of work within the Cultural Transformation programme of work within the Corporate Governance Improvement Plan**
- 3. Approve the total additional expenditure of up to £491,800 associated with these additional resources, along with the necessary procurement activity to be funded from the available Corporate Contingency Budget.**

REASONS

The Corporate Governance Improvement Plan ensured an inclusive approach to addressing the issues identified in the CIPFA diagnostic work and EY's Value for Money judgement and that the Council's commitments were appropriately resourced to support successful delivery of the essential activity with the corporate governance improvement plan. Failure to effectively tackle the fundamental issues identified by the Council's External Auditors, CIPFA and the Council could result in government intervention.

As the report associated with Agenda Item eight was deemed Special Urgent, decisions arising will come into force immediately and are not subject to call in procedures.

