

## EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Executive Member for Development

**DATE OF MEETING:** 27 November 2024

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

### 1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES

Maximising economic growth, employment, and prosperity in an inclusive and environmentally-sustainable way.

### 2. UPDATE:

#### STACK

- 2.1 Middlesbrough's very own STACK, food and entertainment venue is preparing to open for the run up to Christmas. The facility will transform space under the A66 as a novel use of space, hosting five street food vendors, two bars, music and entertainment. STACK is anticipated to be a huge draw to Middlesbrough's nightlife and a welcome addition to Middlesbrough's rail station gateway and the Historic Quarter.

#### LiveWell

- 2.2 Middlesbrough residents can enjoy access to new and expanded health and wellbeing services as the LiveWell centre opens in it's new Cleveland Centre headquarters. The completed facility will be handed over in Mid-December and is anticipated to be fully operational by the new year. The project represents a win / win as we aim to transform the oversupply of retail space in the town with alternative uses, whilst improving resident access to health and wellbeing services.

#### Employment Hub

- 2.3 The new Skills and Employment Hub planned for the Cleveland Centre has met it's first major development milestone. The planning application or a change of use at the site means that work will commence in the new year on a dedicated centre to give Middlesbrough residents new skills and qualifications, along with access to the latest employment opportunities and support. The construction contract will be delivered throughout 2025 with opening in early 2026.

#### Captain Cook Cinema

- 2.4 Works have commenced on the latest phase of the transformation of Captain Cook Square into a major leisure destination. Contractors are on site to convert units to a three-screen boutique cinema. Works will run through early 2025 with the cinema planned to open in summer 2025. A tenant operator has been contractually secured and are excited to bring new films, classic screenings and major TV events, in style and comfort.

### **Coco and Rum**

- 2.5 Is the latest addition to Middlesbrough's nightlife. Coco And Rum have opened a Thai-fusion restaurant and Bistro in the former Bar TS1 unit on Linthorpe / Southfield Road. A beautiful setting has been created with an extensive food and cocktail menu, to give the people of Middlesbrough a new culinary treat.

### **Southlands Community Facility**

- 2.6 The Secretary of State has given the green light to planning permission for the new Southlands Community and Sports facility. At the Executive meeting of 13 November 2024, the lease of the completed facility has been agreed with Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation to bring high-level sports to the site and scope to expand provision in the future. The centre will be a real boost to East Middlesbrough and can serve as the focal point for sport and community initiatives for the local residents. Construction tenders were submitted on 18th November 2024. Contractors will be appointed shortly and the construction phase is anticipate to run between January and November 2025.

### **Autumn Budget**

- 2.7 Business Support Officers are assessing the opportunities arising from the recent Autumn Budget Statement. Of note are the changes to:

1. Business Rates reliefs – Retail Hospitality and Leisure relief extended to 25/26 with a 40% rates relief.
2. Employer National Insurance – Enhanced contribution rates and raised thresholds for small businesses.
3. Indications that existing funding programmes will be reshaped, abandoned or extended, with more details anticipated in the March 2025 Budget Statement.

Businesses will be supported with the latest information, advice and guidance to navigate any changes and maximise access to the new and emerging business support and funding landscape.

### **Executive Decisions**

#### **Southlands Centre (Approved)**

- 2.8 This report was approved by the Executive for Middlesbrough Council to partner with Middlesbrough FC Foundation and provide them with a 25-year lease to manage the new proposed Southlands Community Facility and Sporting Hub.

## **Review of alternative operating models for the Captain Cook Birthplace Museum (CCBM) (Approved)**

- 2.9 This report was approved by the Executive for continuing the operation of the existing CCBM through the securing revenue support from an external partner, whilst working with the said partner to develop a new museum facility to replace the existing building.

## **Corporate Asset Management Plan 2024/25 - 2027/28 (Approved)**

- 2.10 The size, shape and location of our land and property portfolio is vitally important to enabling the success of the Council's ambitions. It provides assets for the delivery of our public services; it helps create jobs and economic growth; as well as income to invest in our services. The strategic management of this valuable resource is important to the Council and to the communities we serve. To achieve this Executive approved the Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) as the strategic plan which sets out how the property portfolio will support the Council Plan, Transformation Programme and provide direction for the ongoing management of the portfolio over the next three years to 2027-28.

## **Christmas in the Town Centre 2024**

- 2.11 This year's Christmas programme is fast approaching, aiming to attract families and increased numbers into the Town Centre to enjoy many of the festive favourite events and attractions taking place.
- 2.12 To start things off this year's Christmas Light's Switch On will take place at Centre Square, on Thursday 28th November including the usual build up of music and performance, before the big switch on. To coincide with this year's event a number of the town's Food and Beverage businesses have partnered with Middlesbrough Council to provide a selection of family offers, helping to showcase many of the fantastic restaurants, bars and cafes on offer. There is also free after 3pm parking on the day of the event.
- 2.13 The Town Centre will also see the return of the hugely popular Snowmen on the w/c 25th November, until early January. The snowmen, each of which depicts one of the 12 Days of Christmas will be on show at locations across the town centre, with limited number of maps available to compliment the trail.
- 2.14 Additionally the last weekend before Christmas, will see the return of the Orange Pip Market Festive Edition. Taking place in the Town Hall the Christmas Pip will include more of the region's artisan food trucks, festive treats and music.

## **Middlesbrough in the National News**

- 2.15 Middlesbrough is the fastest growing tech hub in the UK! Whilst London areas still hit the top 5 spots in terms of salary expectations Middlesbrough has hit the number 6 spot as the fastest growing tech industry in the UK. With only 165 tech companies, it has a growth rate of 13.79% and an average hourly wage of £15.13 and is being hailed as 'one to watch' for new graduates, career starters, and to make a mark in the industry.