

## **EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Deputy Mayor & Executive Member for Education and Culture

**DATE OF MEETING:** 09 July 2025

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

### **COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES**

Successful & Ambitious Town

A Healthy Place

**Update:**

#### **1. HIGHLIGHTS**

- Orange Pip
- Sonic Arts Week
- Museum in schools
- Cleveland Philharmonic Choir – Conductor John Forsythe MBE retirement concert celebration
- Day Fever – Hosted our first event in May with more dates booked through 2025
- Family shows – Ministry of Science, The Enchanted Princess Ball, Tom Fletchers Dinosaur Rock Show
- MFC Player of the Year Awards & Teesside Junior Football Alliance Awards
- Sold out music shows with James & The Snuts
- Hosted several School Tours, Young Readers Event & Zoe's Place Fundraising Event
- Omid Djalili, Geoff Norcott, Danny Baker, Julian Clary, Katherine Ryan
- Theatre – The Bench by Jeff Brown & inclusive community event, Starr In The Community
- Middlesbrough Food Partnership conference, My Voice Matters conference, MCLS Job Fayre, Wedding Fayre in partnership with Diamond Events
- Wedding ceremonies within the Courtroom
- Final concerts in May of Classical Season 24/25
- Upbeat and Open Orchestra weekly sessions continue to run during term time.
- Play On, Bandjam and MTH Performing Arts continue to run weekly.
- Musinc have hosted 2 work experience placements so far this term, with another scheduled for later this term.

- The End Times Schools Concert took place on 9<sup>th</sup> June with an audience of 128 from 4 schools and 9 home ed families.
- A wonderful film capturing Musinc's annual Shine Festival – an inclusive choral festival for singing groups across the North East - has just been released. You can view it by clicking this link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYVFjm43bbl>
- Building work started on the new Outwood Riverside Secondary School

### **Update:**

- 1.1 Our Orange Pip season started earlier than usual this year as we opened on Saturday 3 May with a special VE Day-themed Orange Pip marking the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WW2. The event featured a vintage-themed street party with live music, lindy dancing, traditional games, family-friendly activities, and artisan market stalls. VE Day was also officially commemorated on Thursday 8 June with a service and beacon lighting at the cenotaph attended by councillors and veterans.
- 1.2 June started with the ever-popular Ali Brownlee 5K & 2K run, which this year took place in the town centre, starting and ending in Centre Square, with circa 1,000 participants. Party in the Park took place from 6-8 June at Stewart Park. Sadly, due to heavy rainfall, Eid in Albert Park was cancelled on 6 June.
- 1.3 We have once again welcomed four Cultural Ambassadors as supporters of our cultural events programme in 2025. Holiday Inn Express, Stagecoach North East and Teesside University have renewed their commitment from last year, and we have welcomed Thirteen to this year's cohort. The £20K raised through the programme is being made available to communities to host their own community events festivals through our Community Grants programme.
- 1.4 Middlesbrough Town Hall was delighted to host a dinner on behalf of Arts Council's National Council on 14<sup>th</sup> May as part of a 2-day visit to the Tees Valley. Guests at the dinner included the Chair and Chief Executive of ACE (Nicholas Serota and Darren Henley), the Middlesbrough Mayor and representatives from the creative sector in the region.
- 1.5 The new Classical Season launched for priority bookers on 9<sup>th</sup> June, with full on sale on 12<sup>th</sup> June. The programme, in partnership with The Glasshouse, will include the following 7 concerts:
  - Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra – 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2025 at 7:30pm
  - Royal Northern Sinfonia – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 7:30p,
  - Royal Northern Sinfonia – 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2026 at 3pm
  - The Halle – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 7:30pm
  - Royal Northern Sinfonia – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7:30pm
  - Royal Northern Sinfonia – 26<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 3pm
  - Royal Northern Sinfonia – 24<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 3pm
- 1.6 In addition to the above, we are working with The Glasshouse to develop further opportunities for collaboration through BBC Introducing, BBC Proms, and an upcoming Big Sing event whilst refurbishment takes place on one of their main venue spaces.

- 1.7 We have received confirmation from Arts Council that the Town Hall will be part of the NPO extension to 31 March 2027. Following the Spending Review, Arts Council will now resume discussions with DCMS (Department of Culture Media and Sport) about extending the Portfolio to 31 March 2028, and will be in touch with more detail about this process in due course.
- 1.8 Musinc's Youth Music Catalyser application for 2026-2028 has been submitted and the final outcome is expected in October
- 1.9 As part of Middlesbrough Museums in your Classroom, we're working on a 3-year project with Year 6 pupils from Beech Grove Primary which aims to engage children in creative responses to loaned objects from the collection and to improve literacy levels. Pupils are busy working with the museum team and a local artist to create a museum in their school and had a successful launch at their school on the 24<sup>th</sup> June. The posters designed by the children will be exhibited across the town centre to show their own ambition for their futures.
- 1.10 Toddler Takeover took place at Captain Cook Birthplace Museum in April. 20 Nursery children from Marton Manor Primary attended the takeover, themed around life as a sailor.
- 1.11 A new Time Travelling Detective Agency Workshop has been developed which focuses on changes within living memory between 1970s and 1990s aimed at KS1. The workshop was piloted by 60 year 1 pupils from Newport Primary and received very positive feedback.
- 1.12 3 outreach workshops were delivered to Year 4 at Hartburn Primary on 'Christopher Dresser: Inspired by Nature' to support their local heritage week.
- 1.13 Whippet Up have been commissioned to continue their weekly health and wellbeing sessions at Dorman Museum. The sessions engage community members that have their own health challenges and have been referred by a GP or a practice professional. The aim of the group is to support people's wellbeing through creative practices.
- 1.14 New play equipment has been purchased for the Dorman Museum as well as bringing back in to use previously commissioned pieces from the British Museum in your Classroom playscape. The play equipment including puzzles, imaginary play and 3D dino bones adds an additional layer to the museum experience, while also increasing the dwell time and visitor fulfilment of our family audience.
- 1.15 Following a successful bid to ACE in 2024 with a local animation company, 5 information friendly animations have been developed that tell the story of Captain Cook. We worked with pupils from Breckon Hill Primary to guide the content to ensure its appeal to children and young people. The animations went live at the Captain Cook Birthplace Museum in May Half Term.
- 1.16 Funding from the Tees Valley Museums Group NPO and The Space has supported the creation of a new digital projection for the domed roof of the Nelson Gallery which starts with Earth & Space and ends in the hopes and aspirations of a future Middlesbrough.

- 1.17 Recent events have drawn more visitors including: Periplum Trailblazer Carriage: magic shows that activated the community curated Spellbound Exhibition increasing audiences by more than 60%; Big Science workshops; Balloon Modelling; and Local History Month, which included collection store tours, talks on Christopher Dresser, the history of curry in Teesside, Max Locke and the Middlesbrough Magic Circle. These events have broadened our appeal, offering diverse, engaging experiences that enrich the overall visitor offer.

## **Teesside Archives**

### **Digital Preservation:**

- 1.18 At a recent meeting of the Joint Archives Committee in May, we took a briefing paper to provide more details on the investment required into the Archives Service to support the storage and preservation of born digital and other digitised material held by Teesside Archives and its partners.

The paper outlined the current challenges around managing digital files on hard drives. Digital formats become outdated and without an appropriate digital preservation system information will become unreadable in the future.

- 1.19 Preservica has been identified as the most suitable digital preservation system for our purposes. Whilst the initial purchase costs could be funded through New Burdens money already received by the Archives, there is a question around how the additional annual ongoing revenue costs would be supported by all 4 local authorities. Further work is now being undertaken with the Lead Officers from the four boroughs with a view to taking a proposal to the next meeting in October.

## **2. THE TIME AHEAD**

### **Update:**

- Nagar Kirtan (Centre Square): Sunday 13 July
- Orange Pip (Baker & Bedford Street, plus family pop-up in Captain Cook's Square): Saturday 26 July
- Teesside Air Festival (Stewart Park): 9-10 August
- Middlesbrough Mela – 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary year (Albert Park): 16-17 August
- Orange Pip Market collaboration with Carnival: Saturday 30 August
- Middlesbrough 10K (start/end in Centre Square): Sunday 31 August
- National Literacy Trust Big Boro Book Bash & Poetry Slam
- Theatre - 5 Mistakes That Made History, Science Museum, Tom Gates Epic Show, The Princess Ball
- Borderlands Anniversary of Riots Event
- Billingham International Folklore Festival, Taste Of Africa Awards & Showcase, Bernie Slaven This Is Your Life, Luna Night Market, Middlesbrough College Graduations
- Audience With, Comedy & Music - Professor Alice Roberts, Joe Thomas from The Inbetweeners, Jimmy Carr, Georgie Carroll, Jason Manford, Rhod Gilbert, The Lightning Seeds, Jimeoin, Elvana, Skindred, The Younguns,

Fishermans Friends, Henning When, Amanda Owen: The Yorkshire Shepherdess, The Southmartins

- Summer Wedding ceremonies & receptions
- Middlesbrough Pride
- Christmas Parties
- Open Orchestra's end of year performance will take place on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 1.45-2.15pm at MTH.
- MTH Community Choir hold their Summer Concert on 14<sup>th</sup> July.
- Amplify is taking place on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July featuring performances from Bandjam Juniors and Seniors.
- Family Festival taking place on 18<sup>th</sup> August, and will include BSL interpretation for all workshops.