

**COUNCIL**

A meeting of the Council was held on Wednesday, 10 September 2025.

**PRESENT:** Councillors J Banks (Chair), J Kabuye (Vice-Chair), I Blades, E Clynch, Mayor C Cooke, J Cooke, D Coupe, D Davison, J Ewan, T Furness, L Henman, L Hurst, D Jackson, L Lewis, L Mason, D McCabe, M McClintock, J McConnell, J McTigue, T Mohan, I Morrish, J Nicholson, M Nugent, J Platt, S Platt, A Romaine, J Rostron, J Ryles, M Smiles, P Storey, J Thompson, S Tranter, Z Uddin, N Walker, G Wilson, J Young and L Young.

**OFFICERS:** C Benjamin, B Carr, T Frankland, A Glover, L Grabham, A Humble, R Johansson, C Jones, C Lunn, J McNally, E Scollay, K Whitmore and A Wilson

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillors D Branson, C Cooper, P Gavigan, S Hill, B Hubbard, N Hussain, T Livingstone and M Saunders.

25/38 **WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and read out the Fire Evacuation Procedure.

25/39 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

MEMBER	TYPE OF INTEREST	ITEM/NATURE OF INTEREST
Councillor M McClintock	Non-Pecuniary	Item 15 – a former colleague was a Member of the Independent Remuneration Panel; however, there had been no communications in respect of this matter.
Councillor L Young	Non-Pecuniary	Item 13 - employed as an Education Campaigns Manager for a national charity.

25/40 **MINUTES - COUNCIL - 9 AND 16 JULY 2025**

The minutes of the Council meetings held on 9 July and 16 July 2025 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

25/41 **SUSPENSION OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 4.13.2 - ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chair proposed a motion without notice to change the order of business in the agenda of the meeting in accordance with the Constitution paragraph 4.30.1 (c). The motion was seconded by the Mayor.

On a vote being taken, the motion was declared **CARRIED**.

**ORDERED** that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 4.57, Council agreed to vary the order of business to deal with the items in the following order: Agenda Item 13, Agenda Items 5 - 12, and Agenda Items 14 - 16.

25/42 **NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

Motion No. 175

The Chair advised this item had been withdrawn.

Motion No. 176

The Chair advised this item had been withdrawn.

Motion No. 178

Consideration was given to Motion No. 178 moved by Councillor McTigue and seconded by Councillor S Platt of which notice had been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rules No. 53-60 as follows:

“This Council resolves to:

Write to the government requesting it to carry out an urgent review of home schooling to ensure that:-

1. Any child so educated, receives a minimum level of education comparable with that which the child could have otherwise received, had the child been educated at an Ofsted inspected school.
2. Adequate child protection procedures are in place to ensure, so far as possible, that the child is safe and free from potential harm.
3. Ofsted has a requirement, to carry out inspections to assess the quality of education, care and training, to ensure that the parent, or whoever is providing the education, meet the required standards.
4. Public bodies such as the police and social services have a statutory right of access to ensure the safety and/or protection of the child.”

Councillor McTigue spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor S Platt spoke in support of the motion.

The Chair invited Members to speak to the motion.

At this point in the meeting, Councillor L Young declared a non-pecuniary interest, owing to being employed as an Education Campaigns Manager for a national charity. Councillor Young referenced the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill that was currently in the House of Lords and spoke in support of both the Bill and the motion under consideration.

Councillors Henman, McTigue and Smiles spoke in respect of the motion. Consideration was given to the number of home educated children in Middlesbrough; the safeguarding and authoritative arrangements that the Council currently had in place; and the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill.

On a vote being taken the motion was **CARRIED**.

Motion No. 177

Consideration was given to Motion No. 177 moved by Councillor J Platt and seconded by Councillor Storey of which notice had been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rules No. 53-60 as follows:

“Motion on the introduction of a Sports Persons Honours Board in Middlesbrough

This Council notes:

- Middlesbrough has produced a remarkable number of elite athletes across a wide range of sports, who have represented England at a senior level, including but not limited to:
  - Football: Brian Clough, Don Revie, Alan Peacock, Jonathan Woodgate, Stewart Downing
  - Rugby: Alan Old
  - Cricket: Chris Old, Bill Athey, Liam Plunkett
  - Athletics: Chris Tomlinson, Richard Kilty
  - Table Tennis: Carol Knight, Paul Drinkhall, Dennis Neale

- That these sportsmen and woman should have their outstanding achievements of representing England at senior level in their respective sports formally recognised.
- That the Council agrees in principle to commission and fund the creation of a permanent Honours Board listing the names of these individuals, and any others identified. Costs to be identified.
- That the Honours Board will be installed in a prominent location within Middlesbrough Town Centre, ensuring visibility and accessibility to residents and visitors alike.
- That the Council consults with local historians, sports organisations, and community groups to compile a comprehensive and accurate list of qualifying individuals. The lead in liaising with the bodies and agreeing the initial list for the honours board will be Councillor Jim Platt.

This Council resolves to:

Formally recognise the outstanding achievements of sportsmen and sportswomen born in Middlesbrough who have represented England at senior level in their respective disciplines since the end of the Second World War.

This will be by way of the introduction of a Sports Persons Honours Board which will serve as a public tribute to the town's sporting heritage, celebrating the talent and dedication of those who have brought national pride through their representation of England.

These individuals exemplify Middlesbrough's rich sporting legacy and a dedicated Honours Board would not only celebrate their achievements but also inspire future generations."

Councillor J Platt spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor Storey spoke in support of the motion.

The Chair invited Members to speak to the motion.

Councillor McTigue spoke in support of the motion.

On a vote being taken the motion was **CARRIED**.

25/43      **ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no Announcements or Communications for this meeting.

25/44      **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY).**

There were no valid questions submitted from members of the public, within the required timescale for this meeting.

25/45      **TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY (TVCA) UPDATE**

The Mayor advised that Agenda Items 7 ('Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) - Update') and 8 (Mayor's Statement and Report) would be considered concurrently; the following updates were provided:

- The Mayor had recently acquired the Finance portfolio and would ensure that all monies available to the town were secured to enable it to thrive.
- Work on the improvement plan continued, the outcome of which would be published in due course.
- Talks were continuing with the TVCA in respect of the Transporter Bridge, its infrastructure and heritage.
- In relation to environmental standards, it was hoped that additional Neighbourhood Caretakers would be employed soon.
- Regarding the Local Government Finance Settlement, a significant amount of lobbying had taken place to achieve the best possible result. The initial forecast was

not being taken as certain; the final allocation was awaited.

- IRIS, a specialist domestic violence and abuse programme, would be funded through the Middlesbrough Initiatives Fund. As part of the programme, a Domestic Abuse Coordinator would be appointed; enhanced grants would be available to schools on an application basis; a needs programme would be established; and a financial programme created.

A Member congratulated the Community Caretakers team in South Middlesbrough, as well as the wider Area Care teams, for the excellent work undertaken and positive feedback received from residents. A further Member supported this, whilst also expressing thanks to the Mayor for undertaking a ward walkabout. The matter of co-ordinating caretaking activities with other volunteer group activities was also raised. In responding to these comments, the Mayor highlighted the importance of environmental standards to all residents across Middlesbrough. It was noted that the Community Caretakers were a resource for the whole town, and investment in environment services was crucial to everyone.

A Member referred to individuals litter picking in their own time and queried whether litter picking equipment could be provided upon request. In response, the Mayor indicated that equipment would be made available; Newport Hub currently had some in stock. An upcoming report would include further information regarding a Neighbourhood Model and the utilisation of Community Hubs.

Members raised several queries, as follows:

- Reference was made to the national interest in immigration matters and a query raised around the use of hotels for housing asylum seekers. In response, the Mayor indicated that no hotels in Middlesbrough would be used for this purpose; an agreement had been made with government for a pause in the number of asylum seekers for this region. The Mayor referred to untrue rumours currently being circulated, and the need to be mindful of misinformation.
- Reference was made to Linthorpe Road cycle lane and a query raised regarding the timescale for removal. In response, the Mayor explained that the timescale was contractor based; Linthorpe Road would not need to be closed during the works, which was positive. Following a subsequent enquiry from the Member, the Mayor indicated that the proposed one-year timescale for removal of the cycle lane was acceptable, as the road would remain open throughout.
- Reference was made to the recent announcement of Town Guards and a request made for an update. In response, the Mayor explained that this was a Council proposal and in the early stages; the announcement was unplanned. The guards would not surpass the role/duties of the Police. The Mayor clarified that the Police and Crime Commissioner had secured four additional Town Centre officers to commence at the end of the year.
- A Member referred to asylum seekers and commented that, as human beings, asylum seekers had a right/need to be here and it was the Council's responsibility to look after those being persecuted. The Mayor agreed with this point and highlighted the importance of balancing numbers with the respect and treatment that asylum seekers deserved. Reference was made to the need for fair funding and ensuring that Middlesbrough was resourced sufficiently to help everyone.

## NOTED

### 25/46 MAYOR'S STATEMENT AND REPORT

As per Minute No. 25/45.

### 25/47 EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORTS

*Question in relation to the Report of the Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability.*

Councillor Wilson agreed to email her question to the Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability.

*Question in relation to the Report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture.*

Councillor Wilson on Changes to School Uniform.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture explained that Academies had control over their own uniform policies. New legislation would be introduced in 2026 which would have some impact, but in cases such as specific trouser style, there was nothing that the Council could do.

*Question in relation to the Report of the Executive Member for Children's Services.*

Councillor Clynnch on Joe Tynan.

The Executive Member supported Councillor Clynnch's message of thanks to Joe Tynan for the work undertaken during his two years at Middlesbrough Council, and wished to place a note of his gratitude on formal record. A new permanent Executive Director of Children's Services would be commencing in post in the near future.

*Question in relation to the Report of the Executive Member for Development.*

Councillor McCabe on HMO Article 4 Direction – 6 Months On.

The Executive Member explained that there were approximately 280 HMOs with over five occupants currently in Middlesbrough. 18 applications were currently being processed: 11 had been accepted; seven were being considered. Applications for HMOs could not be determined by officers if any objections had been received - those would be a matter for the Planning and Development Committee.

*Question in relation to the Report of the Executive Member for Finance.*

Councillor Morrish on Budget Forecast Year-End Outturn Position at Quarter One 2025/26.

The Executive Member explained that transparency in relation to budget-related matters is provided at every quarterly meeting. Reference was made to the budget monitoring process and the importance of recognising and addressing emerging issues to meet budget projections/expectations at year-end. Efforts had been made to rebuild the number of usable reserves, which had depleted by 75% from £16m down to £4m.

The Executive Member advised that a Members' briefing would be scheduled in respect of Children's Services. Reference was made to the provision of a range of other Council services, including youth provision, environmental and ward services, in relation to the current budget position.

*Questions in relation to the Report of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture.*

Councillors Wilson's enquiry related to Exclusions and Suspensions.

Councillor Thompson on Exclusions.

Councillor Uddin on Exclusions.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture explained that the Council could not force Academies to have a specific uniform code, but Academies needed to remain mindful of the reasons for excluding children from school.

23 Alternative Provision (AP) providers were on an Approved Tees Valley AP Framework. Of those 23, Middlesbrough Council currently used 7 of them.

Rather than a Pupil Referral Unit in Middlesbrough, there was the River Tees Multi Academy Trust (RTMAT), which acted in a similar capacity and were commissioned by day six following a permanent exclusion.

During the last financial year, the Council spent £5.369m on AP, which was an average of £23,000 per child.

Reference was made to impending legislation, i.e. the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, and the potential impact that this could have on this area of concern.

*Question in relation to the Report of the Executive Member for Children's Services.*

Councillor Uddin on Fir Tree.

The Executive Member commented that working on the frontline of Children's Services was not easy and that those staff had excelled on the improvement journey. Work was currently taking place to determine how children's homes could be best utilised to provide the best offer for children in Middlesbrough.

*Question in relation to the Report of the Executive Member for Development.*

Councillor Morrish on Nunthorpe Community Centre.

Owing to the potential for exempt information being discussed in a public forum, Councillor Morrish advised the Mayor and Executive Member that he would be willing to meet with them, or whomever, to discuss the contents of his question outside of the meeting.

25/48      **REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board presented a report, the purpose of which was to provide an update on the current position regarding progress made by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and the individual Scrutiny Panels.

The Chair of the Board thanked the Mayor for his attendance at the last meeting to provide an Executive Member Update. During that same meeting, the Board agreed its 2025/2026 work programme; the first topic to be investigated would be 'Poverty, its impact, and efforts to tackle it'.

At the Board's next meeting, the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture would be in attendance to provide an Executive Member Update. At the subsequent meeting, the Chair and chief officer for the Middlesbrough Development Corporation (MDC) would be in attendance.

A Member sought clarification as to whether meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board were public meetings. In response, the Chair of the Board indicated that they were.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions and to note the report.

**ORDERED** that the report was noted.

25/49      **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

25/50      **MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME**

There were no Members' Questions submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

25/51      **NOTICE OF URGENT MOTIONS (IF ANY)**

There were no Notice of Urgent Motions submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

25/52      **MEMBERS' SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES**

A report of the Director of Legal and Governance Services, on behalf of the Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration, was presented in respect of the Members' Scheme of Allowances.

Following its 2025 review of Members' allowances, the Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration recommended an increase to the Basic Allowance from £7,608 to £8,999 (the Teesside Average). The Panel also recommended freezing Special Responsibility Allowances, and all other allowances, at their current levels. Neither Basic nor Special Responsibility Allowances should reflect Staff Pay Awards.

The Council was asked to consider the Panel's recommendations and either accept or reject them. If, after having due regard of the Panel's recommendations, the Council rejected the Panel's proposals, it would need to create its own Scheme of Allowances.

The Chair invited Members to speak.

Councillor Morrish proposed a motion without notice to adjourn the debate until the next Council meeting. This would allow Members sufficient opportunity to meet with officers and consider the implications of any recommendations made/decisions taken. The motion was seconded by Councillor Clynch.

On a vote being taken, the motion was declared **CARRIED**.

25/53

#### **VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES 2025-2026**

A report of the Director of Legal and Governance Services (Monitoring Officer) was presented to seek Members' approval for nominations of appointment to vacant positions on Committees, Scrutiny Panels and Outside Bodies, due to vacancies that were not filled at the Annual Council meeting and resignations from Committees.

The report included a list of current vacancies on various Committees and Outside Bodies and nominations were put forward at the meeting by individual members.

**ORDERED** that the following appointments, allocated in accordance with the wishes of the political groups, be approved by Council:

##### **YOU MATTER TO US – CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

2 vacancies – Councillor S Platt appointed

1 vacancy remains

##### **CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY STEERING GROUP**

3 vacancies – Councillor J Thompson appointed

2 vacancies remain

##### **HARTLEPOOL POWER STATION LOCAL LIAISON COMMITTEE**

1 vacancy – Councillor I Blades appointed

##### **NORTH EAST REGIONAL JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

1 vacancy – no nominations

##### **STAYING PUT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

1 vacancy – Councillor D Davison appointed

##### **TENNIS WORLD**

2 vacancies – Councillors D Davison and J McConnell appointed

25/54

#### **REFRESH OF THE CONSTITUTION**

The Chair presented a report in respect of a refresh of the Constitution.

The Constitution and Member Development Committee had led a review of the provisions of the Constitution to remove duplication where possible and improve its usability. The current draft document in its entirety was presented to Full Council for approval.

The Chair referred Members to section 4.3 of the cover report, which stated that 'In addition to noting some technical amendments and typographical changes, the Constitution and Member Development Committee made the following further substantive amendments', which included that 'Chairs and vice chairs will be appointed by Committees'.

The Chair explained that at the Constitution and Members' Development Committee meeting held on 20 August 2025, it had been agreed that this would be amended to 'Chairs and Vice Chairs will be appointed by Full Council' - as was set out in the proposed Constitution.

The Chair highlighted that, for the avoidance of doubt, the proposed Constitution that had been circulated was correct, it was the cover report that did not reflect the up to date position, as agreed at the Constitution and Member Development Committee meeting.

In light of this, the Chair proposed an amendment to the cover report so it reflected what was agreed at the Constitution and Member Development Committee meeting.

The proposed amendment was to replace the sentence at paragraph 4.3 'Chairs and vice chairs will be appointed by Committees' with 'Chairs and Vice Chairs will be appointed by Full Council'.

Councillor L Young seconded the proposed amendment.

On a vote being taken the amendment was **CARRIED**.

The Chair invited Members to speak.

Councillor Walker referred to page 43 of the Constitution and noted that, in relation to the budget meeting, although mention was made of the mover, seconder and group leaders, it did not state that Members could speak on the budget report. It was covered elsewhere in the Constitution but, for clarity, Councillor Walker proposed that the following sentence be added at section 4.3.4 (h) iii – 'any Member not spoken may speak for up to 3 minutes'.

Councillor Storey seconded the proposed amendment.

On a vote being taken the amendment was **CARRIED**.

A Member commented that there were some minor governance issues that would be raised at a future meeting. In response, the Monitoring Officer explained that the Constitution was a live/working document; the Constitution and Member Development Committee was in place and a rolling programme of Constitution review had been established. It would be kept under review; an updated version would be presented to Council before the AGM next year.

The Chair thanked all those involved in updating the Constitution for the vast amount of work undertaken.