

## **EXECUTIVE MEMBER UPDATE TO COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Mayor Chris Cooke

**DATE OF MEETING:** 15 July 2026

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

### **Updates:**

- The budget roll out is close to completion, with applications for funding for the town-wide youth provision now closed, marking one step closer to achieving a major scheme that was set out in the budget.
- The first milestone of 10 by 10 has been reached, and I am currently appealing to businesses and organisations to get involved and see how they can benefit the lives of our young people right here in Middlesbrough.
- There has been a lot of progress made to improve Albert Park, with a plan for CCTV agreed upon, which will be rolled out as soon as possible. There has also been a full refurbishment of the tennis courts, allowing local people to go along, keep fit and have fun, no matter their age or ability. There have also been new bins fitted, improving not only the cleanliness of the park, but the visual aspect too.
- We also have an exciting second half of the year to look forward to, with the Turner prize coming in December, for which the shortlisted artists have now been selected. Also, by Autumn we will find out if Middlesbrough has made the shortlist for City of Culture.

## **1. HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Update:**

#### **1.1 New Southlands community hub set to transform opportunities in East Middlesbrough**

- 1.1.1** I am pleased to confirm that residents in East Middlesbrough will soon benefit from the newly completed Community and Sports Hub, on the site of the former Southlands Centre on Ormesby Road. This state-of-the-art facility represents a significant investment in the area and marks an important milestone in our efforts to deliver high-quality community infrastructure.
- 1.1.2** Delivered by Middlesbrough Council in partnership with the Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation, the new Southlands Hub will provide top-class sports facilities alongside a modern community space.
- 1.1.3** This new hub will provide a base for a wide range of activities, including grassroots football, youth provision, employability training and wider community initiatives. It is designed to bring opportunities directly into the

heart of East Middlesbrough, supporting residents of all ages to get active, build skills and improve their life chances.

- 1.1.4** This is exactly the sort of investment that residents in East Middlesbrough deserve. I am delighted we have reached the stage where we can hand the facility over to the Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation so it can begin delivering real benefits. This development brings not only high-quality facilities, but more importantly meaningful opportunities for local people to thrive.
- 1.1.5** This project has been made possible through strong partnership working, including support from the Sky Bet EFL Building Foundations Fund, which contributed £100,000 towards the development. It reflects a shared commitment to raising aspirations, improving health and wellbeing, and strengthening communities through accessible and inclusive opportunities.

## **1.2 Neighbourhood Caretaker team doubled to improve local area**

- 1.2.1** I am pleased to report that Middlesbrough's Neighbourhood Caretaker service has now doubled in size, marking a major step forward in our work to improve the look and feel of neighbourhoods across the town. The team has increased from 16 to 32 Neighbourhood Caretakers, significantly expanding our capacity to make a visible difference in every community.
- 1.2.2** As part of this expansion, eight caretakers are now based in each of the Council's four neighbourhood areas – north, south, east and west. This ensures a stronger, more consistent presence on the ground and allows teams to respond more quickly to local issues raised by residents.
- 1.2.3** The decision to double the size of the team forms part of a £1.7 million investment approved in this year's Council budget. This funding is focused on creating cleaner neighbourhoods, improving public spaces and boosting pride in our communities by investing in the services that matter most to residents.
- 1.2.4** Neighbourhood Caretakers carry out a wide range of day-to-day tasks that make an immediate and visible impact. Their work includes removing graffiti, cutting back overgrown weeds, repainting benches, repairing fences and improving play parks, helping to make neighbourhoods cleaner, safer and more welcoming.
- 1.2.5** Residents have been clear that they want to feel proud of where they live, see cleaner streets and have better places for their children to play. Our Neighbourhood Caretakers have already made a real difference since the service was introduced last summer. By doubling the size of the team, we are building on that success so they can do even more, in every part of Middlesbrough.
- 1.2.6** Over the past year, the teams have completed hundreds of jobs across the town, transforming a wide range of community spaces and responding quickly to environmental issues reported by residents. Their work is a key part of our neighbourhood-based approach, with each area supported by a dedicated local manager and staff focused on keeping communities clean and tidy.

- 1.2.7** The expansion of the Neighbourhood Caretaker team is part of a wider programme of investment in neighbourhood services. This includes bringing park keepers back to key parks, increasing street cleaning, and employing additional staff to care for the town's becks. Together, these measures demonstrate my commitment to investing in our neighbourhoods and ensuring Middlesbrough is a town where people can take pride in the places they live.



## **2. The Time Ahead**

### **Update:**

#### **2.1 Major funding boost to bring youth services to every ward**

- 1.1.1** I am pleased that a significant funding package will be rolled out to expand youth services across Middlesbrough, ensuring that young people in every ward have access to safe, supportive and inspiring opportunities. The fund was made available for community groups, charities and youth providers to apply for (which has now closed), marking a key step in delivering my commitment to universal youth provision across the town.
- 1.1.2** When I launched the Middlesbrough Childhood Guarantee, I made it clear that every young person in Middlesbrough deserves somewhere safe, welcoming and inspiring to spend their time. I also pledged to bring youth services to every ward, because everyone should have the same opportunities, no matter where they live. This funding is an important step on that journey, helping to strengthen existing services and enable new provision for young people aged 10 to 16, and up to 18 for those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 1.1.3** While this funding will benefit the whole town, priority will be given to areas where provision is currently limited. These include Marton East, Marton West, Nunthorpe, Stainton and Thornton, Ladgate, Trimdon, Acklam, Linthorpe and

Park wards. This targeted approach will help us address inequalities and ensure no young person misses out due to where they live.

- 1.1.4** This funding represents a major step forward in my ambition to ensure every young person in Middlesbrough has access to high-quality opportunities. By working in partnership with our local organisations, we can create safer, stronger communities and give our young people the opportunities they deserve to thrive.
- 1.1.5** The applications for funding have now closed, and they will go to a decision-making panel. We expect the newly funded services to be up and running by October 2026.

## **2.2 Local organisations asked to get involved in the 10 by 10 programme**

- 2.2.1** Local organisations and businesses across Middlesbrough have been asked to get involved in supporting the 10 by 10 programme, a key part of my Childhood Guarantee. This call to action is about working together to give children and young people opportunities they will remember for life.
- 2.2.2** The 10 by 10 programme aims to ensure that every child in Middlesbrough can experience ten memorable activities before their tenth birthday, regardless of their background or family circumstances. It is designed to inspire young people, build confidence and help them see what is possible for their future.
- 2.2.3** Organisations from across the arts, culture, sport, leisure, community and education sectors have been invited to take part in delivering the programme. In particular, local employers have been asked to support the initiative by offering workplace visits and opportunities that can inspire young people about future jobs and industries.
- 2.2.4** Businesses operating in specialist and growing sectors, including Middlesbrough's digital and tech industries, have been encouraged to get involved and help showcase the exciting career opportunities available locally. These real-world experiences can play a vital role in raising aspirations and broadening horizons for children growing up in our town.
- 2.2.5** The programme builds on a successful pilot delivered in primary schools over the past year, which demonstrated the positive impact that high-quality experiences can have in helping children discover new interests, develop skills and better understand what Middlesbrough has to offer.
- 2.2.6** The 10 by 10 programme forms part of my wider Childhood Guarantee, a long-term commitment to making Middlesbrough the best place in the country to grow up. This includes ensuring youth provision is available in every ward, alongside additional funding to allow Bring it on Boro!, the Holiday, Activities and Food programme, to run during every school half-term.
- 2.2.7** By asking local organisations and businesses to play their part, we are strengthening our collective ability to support children and young people. Through partnership working, we can raise aspirations, open doors and create opportunities that will have a lasting impact on the next generation.

## **2.3 First look at the new development in Middlehaven**

- 2.3.1** This ambitious project is being delivered through a partnership between Middlesbrough Council and regeneration specialists Capital & Centric. Together, we are bringing forward plans for new houses and apartments, alongside leisure and retail uses that will help re-establish Middlehaven as a thriving place to live, work and spend time.
- 2.3.2** It is particularly exciting to see Middlesbrough's historic Old Town Hall at the heart of the proposals. Work is already underway to demolish a 1960s extension and restore the clocktower at this Grade I-listed building as part of the new 'Over the Border' chapter, supported by funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- 2.3.3** The development sits in a highly strategic location, close to Middlesbrough College and the site of the new Outwood Riverside secondary school, which is currently under construction. It also neighbours the town's thriving digital and tech sector, now the fastest growing in the UK outside London, helping to create the right conditions for a confident, growing town centre community.
- 2.3.4** Capital & Centric brings a strong track record of delivering bold regeneration projects on complex brownfield sites across the country. The company has appointed world-renowned architects MVRDV, working alongside acclaimed designers shedkm, to develop an ambitious, creative and high-quality vision for Middlehaven.
- 2.3.5** I am pleased that the Council's Executive agreed to invest £3.6 million of Towns Fund funding to take this project forward to the stage where a construction contractor can be appointed. This investment is a clear statement of our confidence in Middlehaven and its potential to support population growth, local businesses and wider regeneration.
- 2.3.6** This partnership represents a significant opportunity for Middlesbrough. By respecting our heritage while looking forward with confidence, we can create a new neighbourhood full of energy and ambition, helping Middlehaven to thrive once again for the benefit of everyone in our town.



## **2.4 TVCA Local Growth Plan Released**

- 2.4.1** The Tees Valley Combined Authority has published its new Local Growth Plan, setting out a clear vision for economic growth across the region. As part of the Plan, each Tees Valley borough has been identified according to its key strengths, assets and opportunities, helping to create a more coordinated and targeted approach to investment and business development.
- 2.4.2** The Plan identifies Middlesbrough as the region's Digital Core, recognising its established strengths in the digital, technology, gaming and creative sectors. It sets out an ambition to strengthen Middlesbrough's role as a leading digital and technology hub through investment in digital and transport infrastructure, the delivery of the Tees Valley Investment Zone, town centre regeneration, enhanced connectivity and the development of a smart region that supports innovation, business growth and the attraction and retention of talent.
- 2.4.3** This place-based approach provides a clearer and more coordinated offer to investors and businesses. By engaging directly with TVCA, businesses can be guided towards the locations best suited to their requirements, ensuring opportunities are aligned with the strengths of each area while promoting investment across the wider Tees Valley economy.
- 2.4.4** The Local Growth Plan provides a shared framework for the future development of the Tees Valley. It seeks to build on the distinctive strengths of each borough, strengthen the regional economy and clearly articulate the opportunities, assets and ambitions that make Tees Valley an attractive place to live, work, invest and visit.

