

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 19th April, 2018.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chair), Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson and Cllr Norma Wilburn.

Officers: Neil Schneider (CE), Julie Danks Judy Trainer, Peter Bell (DCE), Ged Morton (HR&L), Garry Cummings (F&BS), Martin Gray (CHS), Reuben Kench (CL&E), Chris Renahan, Jamie Stephenson (ED&D), Ann Workman (AH), Jamie McCann (CS).

Also in attendance: Cllr Derrick Brown (Chair of Place Select Committee), Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Chris Clough and his wife.

Apologies: Cllr Jim Beall and Cllr Michael Smith.

CAB 1/18 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the evacuation procedure was noted.

CAB 2/18 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Steve Nelson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 5 - Scrutiny Review of Disabled Parking (Task and Finish Review) as his wife was a recipient of a Blue Badge.

Councillor Nigel Cooke declared a personal prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 6 - Community Assets Update as he was a Board Member of Tees Valley Music Alliance. Councillor Nigel Cooke withdrew from the meeting and left the room during consideration of the item.

Councillor Steve Nelson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 – Economic Climate Update as his son worked for Marks and Spencer.

CAB 3/18 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2018.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

CAB 4/18 Scrutiny Review of Disabled Parking (Task and Finish Review)

Consideration was given to a report that presented the Place Select Committee findings and recommendations following the Task and Finish Scrutiny Review Security of Disabled Parking.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Council introduce prosecution for fraudulent use of blue badges, on the basis of the Council recouping the costs incurred and that appropriate training for Civic Enforcement Officers be carried out in order to facilitate this.

2. An audit of the location and suitability of disabled bays (for both wheelchair and non-wheelchair users) be conducted in order to assess the nature and extent of improvements required to disabled bay provision within Stockton Borough Council owned car parks, both on and off street.

3. Prior to any new car parks being developed by the Authority in the future, Disabled Motoring UK and/or other Disability Advisory Groups be consulted to ensure we are meeting the needs for those who are using them.

CAB 5/18 **Community Assets Update**

Consideration was given to a report that gave an update on Community Assets including the transfer programme. It provided updates on the more recent transfers seeking approval for one-off funding requests and two additional lease/transfer requests.

The Council had a Community Asset Transfer Strategy – Let’s Share - which was agreed by Cabinet in 2011 and reviewed in 2017.

The Strategy continued to be successful with a steady number of requests for transfer over the years. Onsite, a Community Building Trust, had been established and now operated the following facilities:

- Elmwood Youth and Community Centre
- Robert Atkinson Youth & Community Centre
- Grangefield Youth & Community Centre
- Stillington Youth & Community Centre
- Norton Community Resource Centre
- Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre
- Billingham Campus Sport Block

The Council had received additional transfer requests for the Primrose Hill Community Centre and the Fairfield Boys Club.

The Primrose Hill Community Centre had been empty for a considerable period. It was previously approved for asset transfer but unfortunately was not progressed. The Council had received an approach from a number of community groups who wanted to work together, led by EPIC, and were looking to develop a Community Interest Company with a view to asset transfer. In order to progress this it was proposed that a short-term lease was entered into with EPIC, as lead and a one-off cost of £40,000 to address immediate maintenance issues in order that the building could be opened.

The Fairfield Boys Club building was leased to a local charitable organisation ‘Keep the Dream Alive’ in 2015. This had proved extremely successful, the organisation had accessed significant external funds and operated a vibrant, well supported centre. They had approached the Council to progress Asset Transfer as there was an opportunity to access additional funding, however this was dependant on a 25 year lease. It was therefore requested to agree in principle to the transfer subject to a robust business case, and agree that the final decision be delegated to the Director of Finance and Business Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

In addition to Asset Transfer arrangements there were a number of organisations who ran community buildings across the Borough on behalf of the Council.

The track record of these organisations was good. Experience had shown that a transition period was often needed in order for organisations to stabilise and reach their full potential. Indeed, this was the case with the asset transfers outlined above.

Following the liquidation of Know How North East in 2015, the Council had continued to ensure that the Clarendons Community Centre remained open as there continued to be strong support from the community for the building to provide services such as the post office and convenient store, NHS doctors surgery and a workclub for job seekers support and advice. Following a review with Catalyst, a business case was received from BELP which anticipated that grant funding would be available. Exploration of this funding continued at pace, however, in order to help with transition, bridge the gap and produce a sustainable plan for the next 3 years a one-off parachute payment of £60,000 was required.

CornerHouse@Newtown took over the responsibility of the community building less than 2 years ago and had developed the business in this short period. The Council had recently withdrawn its usage of the building in response to wider savings plans. CornerHouse@Newtown were proactively marketing the vacant space created and were confident that this would be successful in the medium-term. Given the organisation was still very much in transition one-off parachute funding of £42,000 was suggested in order to stabilise the business in the short-term.

Tees Music Alliance operated the Georgian Theatre building and had been instrumental in developing the Cultural Quarter area of the town into a thriving attraction of bars and restaurants. They had achieved growth in trade since the reopening of the extended facilities, however, required additional support in the short-term while they transition to the new expanded programme of events. They were working with Tees Valley Community Foundation and it was likely that this would require an element of match funding of up to £60,000.

RESOLVED that:

1. The extensive asset transfer programme to date be noted.
2. One-off funding requests up to £202,000 be agreed as outlined in the report to be funded via existing community and maintenance budgets.
3. A lease to EPIC be agreed in advance of the development of a Community Interest Company for Primrose Hill Community Centre.
4. Approval of the asset transfer of the former Fairfield Boys Club building to 'Keep the Dream Alive' be delegated to the Director of Finance and Business Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council following the submission of an approved detailed business case.

Economic Climate Report

Consideration was given to a report on the Economic Climate.

The report, and subsequent quarterly updates, provided Members with an update on information published in Stockton's Local Economic Assessment 2017 as well as key recent economic announcements.

The report was presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. The emphasis of each report focuses on a particular theme as follows:

- People – labour supply
- Place – key economic development locations
- Business – key sectors and businesses
- Economic Performance Summary Report and Economic Growth Plan monitoring

Each thematic report was presented in four sections:

- i. Economic Dashboard – presented a number of key indicators which were monitored at least quarterly, and included a position statement against the two indicators of growth relevant to the 'People' chapter
- ii. Updates – summarising key announcements and developments:

- updates – announcements with implications across key sectors, the region and nationally
- business announcements – announcements from some of the key businesses within the Borough
- strategic locations – a brief update on any new development at strategic employment locations across the Borough
- training & skills – provides an update on emerging news relating to skills needs and provision

Internet links had been included, where possible, to provide digital viewers of the report with more information on each announcement.

- iii. Theme Review – An in depth focus, and the substantive part of the report, on key statistics affecting business, people or place. Most of the referenced statistics in the review are produced annually and cannot be updated quarterly.

- iv. Case Study – A relevant case study for the theme. For example, the 'Business' case study in the report focuses on the Chemical Industry in the Borough.

Member's attention was drawn to the following areas of the report:

With regard to the strategic updates in the North East Business Awards 2018 (Teesside Heat), 12 companies with a presence in Stockton-on-Tees were nominated for 10 awards, which attracted award sponsorships from a wide variety of companies. Of the awards where winners were announced at the Dinner held on 22nd March, the following Stockton-on-Tees businesses were winners:

- Company of the Year
Quorn Foods
- Heart of the Community Award
North Star Housing Group
- Innovation Award
Applied Scientific Technologies
- Small Business Award
WhiteWash Laboratories Ltd
- Tourism & Hospitality Award
Wynyard Hall

With regard to economic performance, economic output in Stockton-on-Tees was over £4 billion and made up 31.5% of the £12.8 billion output of Tees Valley. The total value of economic output of Stockton-on-Tees was estimated to be £4.04bn in 2016 (provisional), which was £394m higher than in 2011; equating to a 10.8% rise.

The Process, Chemicals and Energy sector has been identified by the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership as being particularly important to the economy. Driven by the presence of unique assets, niche industrial specialisms and high value jobs the sector is of significant importance and value to the Stockton-on-Tees, Tees Valley and the wider national economies.

45% of all sector jobs in Tees Valley are based in Stockton-on-Tees businesses. These jobs have high earnings that are above the average national hourly rate, and contribute to a high value and productive sector.

The case study was the chemical industry. The oil and gas delivered by pipeline to the gas processing plant and oil reception and storage facilities at Seal Sands was the major economic driver of the whole petrochemicals, energy and bio-resources cluster in Tees Valley. The petrochemicals industry in Stockton was based around CF Fertiliser's operations in Billingham and fine and speciality chemicals based mainly at Seal Sands and Billingham.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the work being undertaken be supported.

**CAB
7/18**

Littering Fixed Penalty Notice Tariff

Consideration was given to a report that outlined some of the changes around legislation relating to littering and in particular how the offence was dealt with in Stockton-on-Tees.

Cleaning up the streets and countryside costs the taxpayer almost £800 million a year and so maximum on-the-spot fines for dropping litter would almost double from April next year from the limit of £80 to £150 in order to deter and punish the anti-social minority who continued to drop rubbish.

In future councils would also be able to impose these fines on the owners of vehicles from which litter was thrown, even if it was discarded by someone else.

The government was clear these fines should not be abused simply as a means of raising money, so guidance on how fines should be applied would be issued to councils.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The Fixed Penalty for littering be set at £130.00.

The minimum Fixed Penalty for littering be set at £90.00 if paid within 7 days.