

## **CABINET**

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday 12 October 2023.

**Present:** Cllr Robert Cook (Leader), Cllr Nigel Cooke (Cabinet Member), Cllr Lisa Evans (Cabinet Member), Cllr Clare Gamble (Cabinet Member), Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Cabinet Member), Cllr Steve Nelson (Cabinet Member) and Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE (Cabinet Member).

**Officers:** Mike Greene (CE), Garry Cummings (DCE&F, T&P), Ged Morton, Geraldine Brown, Peter Bell (CS), Elaine Redding, Eddie Huntington (ChS), Reuben Kench (CS,E&C), Carolyn Nice, Jane Edmonds (A,H&W) and Marc Cole (R&IG).

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Marc Besford and Cllr Carol Clark

**Apologies:** , .

### **CAB/33/23 Evacuation Procedure**

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

### **CAB/34/23 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **CAB/35/23 Minutes**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **CAB/36/23 Council Plan Update**

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the priorities included in the Council Plan 2023/26.

The report focused on the implementation of the Council Plan 2023/26. The report was therefore the mid-year update on progress during 2023/24.

An update on each of the Council Plan priorities was set out as an attachment to the report. The report indicated significant progress in all areas of the year's priorities.

Cabinet considered a Powering Our Future report on 13 July 2023. This included approving a recommendation to 'Agree a new approach to strategic planning being introduced during 2023 leading to a new Council Plan being approved in June 2024'.

In order to fully complete the work involved including a resident's survey, face to face engagement with communities, gathering and analysis of insight and intelligence to develop a new Vision for the Borough and engagement with key partners it was recommended that the new Council Plan is approved in October / November 2024.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The report be noted.
2. A new Council Plan be approved in October / November 2024.

### **CAB/37/23 Minutes of Various Bodies**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution or previous practice the minutes of the meeting of the bodies indicated below were submitted to for consideration:-

SSP – 19 July 2023  
TSAB – 14 June 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes be received.

### **CAB/38/23 Care and Health Innovation Zone**

Consideration was given to a report that set out a draft Vision to develop a Care and Health Innovation Zone at Teesdale and the adjacent Marshalling Yards. This exciting, once in a generation opportunity could deliver a nationally significant cluster that realises benefits for the whole of the Tees Valley.

The draft Vision had four main aims:

- To breathe considerable new life into Teesdale Business Park and ensure all 50 hectares are fully utilised. We will create the buzz and dynamic environment that Teesdale has always promised but has, as yet, not fully delivered.
- To bring forward the holistic regeneration of the 60 hectares Tees Marshalling Yards site for both employment and housing and other ancillary uses.
- To grow all aspects of the health, public-health and social care sector, and their supply chains, in Teesdale and the Marshalling Yards and make us a recognised UK cluster
- To integrate the new Care and Health Innovation Zone with Stockton-on-Tees Town Centre and enhance connectivity through transport and active travel links.

Achievement of the draft Vision had the potential to deliver 9,000 direct jobs at the site, generating annual Gross Value Added (GVA) worth £470 million to the Tees Valley economy. At the same time, it would reduce health inequalities, improve connectivity, drive innovation and deliver skills that the sector needs to succeed.

The Vision had been developed in partnership, and core partners had identified the following workstreams to drive forward the shared ambitions:

- Masterplanning and Infrastructure
- Health and Social Care Integrated Clinical Facilities and Capital Delivery
- Innovation and R&D
- Commercial / Business Growth

- Education and Skills.

In July 2023, Cabinet agreed to develop a Masterplan and business case for regeneration at Teesdale and the Marshalling Yards, based around potential for a Care and Health Zone.

Following Cabinet agreement, the Council had worked closely with a number of core partners to shape and test thinking, and to develop a draft Vision for the Zone.

Discussions with partners identified a significant scale of potential, based around three mutually reinforcing and major opportunities:

- Teesdale Business Park – at 50 hectares was one of the UK’s biggest brownfield regeneration schemes of the late 1980s / early 1990s. It is now underutilised and in need of fresh momentum.
- Tees Marshalling Yards - At 60 hectares, one of the largest remaining brownfield regeneration sites in the UK, adjoining Teesdale Business Park and at the heart of the Tees Valley.
- Care and Health Sector – a significant employer and a cornerstone of UK innovation and R&D. A growth sector with substantial needs for modernisation/reorientation of its estate.

Successful delivery of the Vision had significant potential for Stockton-on-Tees and Tees Valley, including:

- Grow economic prosperity – it is estimated 9,000 jobs will be located directly on-site . This level of job creation could generate annual Gross Value Added (GVA) worth £470 million to the Tees Valley economy, with more through multiplier effects.
- Drive down health inequalities – by using the site for leading edge health provision, promoting new models of health and social care integration and establishing Stockton-on-Tees at the forefront of advances in service delivery.
- Deliver homes that people need – with the potential to accommodate a further 3,600 houses and a range of new residential care facilities.
- Establish greater visibility for the Tees Valley as a national player in the health and social care sector, by developing a focal point that will attract national interest and nationally significant occupiers.
- Address skills shortages - which are currently impacting service delivery and mean we are hampered in our efforts to address health inequalities.
- Support our fiscal base – through the capture of significant Business Rates and Council Tax, which can allow us to finance a range of essential services for our residents, at a time of unprecedented strain on public sector finances.
- Promote Pride in Place – enhancing the attractiveness of Stockton-on-Tees as a place to live, work and grow a business.
- Successfully develop brownfield land in sustainable locations – with potential to deliver 110 hectares of brownfield development, in a central location that has the potential to be extremely well served by the public transport network.

The Council had worked with key partners to develop the draft Vision for the site, and to understand anticipated impact. A strong partnership approach would also be needed to as we move to delivery.

A Partnership Board had been established to:

- Drive delivery.
- Attract investment.
- Develop innovative approaches to meet infrastructure requirements.
- Provide strategic direction for workstream activity (further detail below).

Alongside the Council, the Board comprised representation from:

- Teesside University.
- Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust.
- North Tees NHS Trust.
- Education Training Collective (Stockton Riverside College).
- Tees Valley Combined Authority.

A portion of the Marshalling Yards sits in Middlesborough Local Authority area, and it was therefore proposed that a discussion takes place with Middlesborough Council to develop and implement the Vision as part of a Tees Valley-wide opportunity.

Five complementary workstreams had been identified to drive forward the Vision and turn our ambitions into reality. These were:

#### Masterplanning and Infrastructure

This workstream would:

- Develop a Masterplan for Teesdale and Marshalling Yards (covering ambitions for: care & health provision, education and skills, business premises and support for innovation, residential provision).
- Build investor confidence and attract investment to deliver the Masterplan.
- Improve public transport and active travel links.

#### Health and Social Care Integrated Clinical Facilities and Capital Delivery

This workstream would:

- Confirm service delivery needs across organisations and capital requirements to enable this.
- Confirm timescales for future capital and service needs as part of a regional approach
- Make the case to Government for a state-of-the clinical facilities on the site.

#### Innovation and R&D

This workstream would:

- Identify opportunities for Innovation / R&D aligned as part of a Stockton-based approach to building a Care and Health Cluster.
- Identify opportunities for business incubation and accelerator hubs.

#### Commercial / Business Growth

This workstream would:

- Identify opportunities for sector growth and supply chain development.
- Confirm business requirements for commercial premises.
- Identify opportunities for multi-occupier buildings.

#### Education and Skills

This workstream would confirm education and skills needs to deliver the Care and Health Innovation Zone and explore funding solutions.

This would include working with Teesside University and Stockton Riverside College to explore growth of healthcare education provision.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The draft Vision and approach to develop the Care and Health Innovation Zone (paragraph 8 of the report) be agreed.
2. The partnership arrangements as set out at paragraphs 10-12 of the report be agreed.
3. The workstream areas and packages of work set out at paragraphs 14-19 of the report be agreed.
4. Discussions begin with Middlesbrough Council to develop and implement the Vision as part of a Tees Valley-wide opportunity.

### **CAB/39/23 Selective Licensing of Private Rented Accommodation**

Consideration was given to a report on Selective Licensing of Private Rented Accommodation.

As members may recall a report was presented to Cabinet in November 2022 which detailed the outcome of a Selective Licensing option appraisal. Subsequently approval was granted to explore Selective Licensing in 3 areas of the borough (Central Stockton, North Thornaby and Newtown).

Following a detailed assessment of each of these areas, approval was sought to commence consultation on the proposed implementation of Selective Licensing in the three designated areas of Central Stockton, North Thornaby and Newtown. Central Stockton and North Thornaby were proposed on the basis that they were areas that were or were likely to become areas of low housing demand, had high concentrations of private rented properties (well above the national average) and were experiencing high levels of deprivation. Newtown was proposed as an area experiencing significant and persistent problems caused by high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, with high concentrations of private rented properties (well above the national average) and was experiencing high levels of deprivation. The Council would charge a fee to cover the cost of operating a Selective Licensing scheme, this would be a ring-fenced account solely in connection with the scheme. As the Council was seeking to support responsible landlords, a £50.00 discount per property would be offered for landlords who were members of the Council's Voluntary Accreditation Scheme or PLuSS (Private Landlords Supporting Stockton) or were members of a nationally recognised landlords' association.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The evidence base to support the introduction of Selective Licensing of private rented accommodation in three designated areas (Central Stockton, North Thornaby and Newtown), as detailed in the attached Selective Licensing Scheme Proposal and Appendix 1 of the report Evidence Base be noted.
2. Approval 'in principle' be granted to pursue a Selective Licensing scheme in Central Stockton, North Thornaby and Newtown as detailed within the attached Selective Licensing Scheme Proposal.

3. Subject to the above, Officers be instructed to commence a detailed programme of public consultation to ensure that the Council takes “reasonable steps to consult with persons who are likely to be affected by the designation”, as required Section 80(9) Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 and in accordance with relevant Government guidance.

4. A further report be presented back to Cabinet following the conclusion of the above public consultation exercise. This report will inform Cabinet of the outcomes of the consultation and allow Cabinet to determine whether to make a Selective Licensing designation (covering Central Stockton, North Thornaby and Newtown) or not.

### **CAB/40/23 School Performance 2022-23**

Consideration was given to a report on School Performance 2022-2023.

The report presented a summary of provisional headline performance data for the academic year 2022-2023 in all Key Stages for all providers across the Borough.

Primary schools continued to perform well. 93% of schools were good or better (including previous judgements of schools not inspected since academy conversion). This was in line with the average for the region and above average for England. This reflected the sustained impact of the work of the Education Improvement Service in monitoring, challenging, intervening and supporting the sector.

Although outcomes had not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, outcomes for Stockton-on-Tees pupils in the primary sector were above provisional national average for 2023 on every measure.

Secondary outcomes were returning to the 2019 figures and were above 2023 national averages in all areas. This was also the first time no allowances were made in the results since 2019. These results had been self-reported by the schools and academies themselves.

Post-16 outcomes continued to perform well and pass rates were up again. The area where they were not above national averages was in the top scores (A\* and A) which reflected the regional picture.

Many schools in the Borough had seen much higher than usual numbers of pupils joining the school during the 2022-23 academic year, often from other countries. For example, there had been 197 transfer requests for new arrivals from Nigeria alone. In some schools, new arrivals have had a significant impact on performance outcomes as pupils have not learned the English curriculum.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The standards and achievements across the Borough be noted.
2. The strong overall performance of Stockton-on-Tees schools at both primary and secondary phases be noted.

### **CAB/41/23 Customer Service Excellence Compliance Assessment**

Consideration was given to a report on Customer Service Excellence (CSE)

CSE was a national quality mark that acknowledged organisations that demonstrated a customer-focused commitment to all that they did. The rigorous assessment process included a review of relevant documents, followed by an on-site inspection to observe practical evidence.

There were 5 criteria that must be satisfied with a number of elements within each. "Compliance plus" was awarded to those elements where exceptional strength was demonstrated.

Assessment followed a 3-year cycle, with a full assessment in year 1 followed by 2 annual reviews to ensure standards were maintained. Stockton Council had been accredited with Customer Service Excellence since 2010 and had demonstrated continuous improvement through every assessment cycle.

The 3-year cycle started with a full assessment in July 2022. As a result of the assessment the Council achieved full compliance across all 57 aspects of assessment with "compliance plus" awarded for 14 elements.

The 12-month review took place in July 2023. The Council retained full certification, achieving full compliance across all 57 aspects of assessment with "compliance plus" awarded for 16 elements, 2 of which were in addition to the 14 achieved at the full assessment in 2022.

The second 12-month review would take place in July 2024.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

### **CAB/42/23 Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy Interim Review**

Consideration was given to a report Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy Interim Review.

For Cabinet to consider the views and comments received from the General Licensing Committee, transport trade and other interested parties following consultation on the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy and to make recommendations to Council.

The current private hire & hackney carriage licensing policy was approved in 2022 following a full public consultation.

In November 2022 following requests from the trade the transport policy was reviewed. The changes were approved and the requirements on new hackney carriage vehicle specification was relaxed. Since this policy change the hackney carriage vehicle fleet had increased by 35 vehicles, hackney carriage wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) have increased by 2.

The licensed trade made a request for the policy to be reviewed again and for this policy change to be reversed. A 21-day public consultation was undertaken giving stakeholders opportunity to comment.

The public consultation survey was available online and links were directly sent to all licensees, members and interested parties.

There were 105 responses to the consultation. In summary the proposed policy wording was supported. Details of the responses was included with the report.

The proposed policy wording is below and would mean any applications for new hackney carriage vehicles would need to be wheelchair accessible, existing hackney carriage vehicles would still be able to be replaced like for like.

#### Current Wording

##### Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV)

WAV's that are currently licensed may be replaced with a like for like vehicle e.g. another WAV that complies with current policy.

Departure from policy in exceptional circumstances e.g. medical grounds will be considered on a case by case basis.

The hackney carriage and private hire trade will continue to be encouraged to licence a proportion of their fleet as Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles.

#### Proposed Wording

All new applications for hackney carriage vehicle licences are required to be wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Hackney carriage vehicles which are currently licensed may be replaced with a like for like vehicle e.g.

- WAVs may be replaced with another WAV which complies with current Policy.
- Saloons (5 seats) may be replaced with another Saloon which complies with current Policy
- MPVs (more than 5 seats) may be replaced with another MPV which complies with current Policy

The private hire trade will continue to be encouraged to licence a proportion of their fleet as Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles.

The Licensing Service continue to explore ways to increase the WAV fleet, this is a national issue, these vehicles cost more to purchase, run and maintain and drivers cannot charge more for WAV journeys under disability legislation.

A full review of the policy was expected later 2023 or early 2024, after the publication of the Department for Transport's Best Practice Guidance document, which was consulted on in 2022 and was expected in Spring 2023.

This matter was considered by the General Licensing Committee on 8 August 2023 the committee recommended the proposed changes be considered by Cabinet and Council.

Following Cabinet, Council will consider the matter on 22 November 2023. Following approval any changes agreed would come in to effect on 1 December 2023.

If revised, the trade would be informed of the new policy via email and via private hire operators and the SHCDA. Changes would also be publicised on the trade Facebook page and via the Council website. In addition the policy changes would be added to future trade meeting agendas.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The content of the report be noted.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

2. The proposed change to the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy be approved with an implementation date of 1 December 2023.