

# Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meeting

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 10.00am**

These Minutes are in draft form until approved at the next Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting and are therefore subject to amendments.

<b>Present:</b>
<b>Members</b> Cllr J Hobson (Chair – Middlesbrough Council) Cllr Harker (Darlington Borough Council) Cllr Harrison (Hartlepool Borough Council) Cllr C Hobson (Middlesbrough Council) Cllr Branson (Middlesbrough Council) Cllr Jeffrey (Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council) Cllr Nelson (Stockton Borough Council) Cllr Little (Hartlepool Borough Council) Cllr Sowerby (Darlington Borough Council) Cllr Stephenson OBE (Stockton Borough Council) Cllr Nicholson (Hartlepool Borough Council)
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b> Cllr Riordan (Stockton Borough Council) Cllr Smith (Vice Chair - Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council) Cllr Beall (Stockton Borough Council) Cllr Donoghue (Darlington Borough Council) Cllr Renton (Darlington Borough Council) Gary Macdonald (Group Director of Finance & Resources, TVCA)
<b>Officers in Attendance:</b> Peter Judge (Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer, TVCA) Helen Kemp (Director of Business & Skills, TVCA) Charlie Kemp (Head of Creative Place) Nicola Dean (Governance & Scrutiny Officer, TVCA)
<b>Also in Attendance:</b> Cllr Shane Moore, Leader of Hartlepool Borough Council and Creative Place Portfolio Holder

<b>OSC 01/22</b>	<b>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS &amp; APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  Apologies for absence were submitted as detailed above and it was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.
<b>OSC 02/22</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  No declarations of interest were received.

<p><b>OSC 03/22</b></p>	<p><b>APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR &amp; VICE CHAIR</b></p> <p>Peter Judge, (PJ), Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer invited nominations for the position of Committee Chair for the forthcoming civic year. Cllr John Hobson (JH) was nominated by Cllr Chris Hobson (CH), and this was seconded by Cllr David Branson (DB).</p> <p>The incoming Chair (JH) then invited nominations for the position of Committee Vice Chair for the forthcoming civic year. JH nominated Cllr Sandra Smith (SS), seconded by CH.</p> <p>The appointment to these roles will be submitted to the October Cabinet for ratification.</p>
<p><b>OSC 04/22</b></p>	<p><b>MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>th</sup> JULY 2022 AND 10<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2022</b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.</p>
<p><b>OSC 05/22</b></p>	<p><b>GROUP UPDATE</b></p> <p>Helen Kemp (HK), Director of Business &amp; Skills, provided a summary of the Group Update detailing the key activities of the Combined Authority since the last Committee meeting, including updates in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teesworks</li> <li>• Freeport</li> <li>• Teesside International Airport</li> <li>• One Public Estate</li> <li>• Tees Valley Business</li> <li>• Business Investment</li> <li>• Education, Employment &amp; Skills</li> <li>• Mayoral Development Corporations</li> <li>• Investment Zones</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Clean Growth &amp; Innovation</li> </ul> <p>The floor was opened to members for any clarification questions and members asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would TVCA be attending the Select Committee to provide evidence? HK advised that she did not believe TVCA had been invited.</li> <li>• What does the commencement of Net Zero Teesside consist of? HK advised that it would consist of ground preparation and then onto the build.</li> <li>• Has the Freeport full Business Case been shared with the Cabinet? HK advised that she would clarify what had been shared with Cabinet and check if this can be shared with the Committee. <b>Action: HK</b></li> <li>• Are the two companies that were interested in the cargo facility at the Airport in August, still interested now there is interest from numerous parties and what progress has been made? HK explained there has been a change in the market and she would need to get clarification from the Airport on who is now involved. <b>Action: HK</b></li> <li>• What is the Combined Authority view on the Active Travel investment of £600k South Bank to Normanby roadworks at a time when people are dealing with the cost-of-living crisis? HK confirmed TVCA do support Active Travel and the value in that and TVCA are looking at what more can be done on retrofitting homes and</li> </ul>

beyond. The LA highways team was noted as being able to input if there are other options available in the process.

- Do TVCA consider the development of work-based skills when entering contracts so that apprenticeships are provided, as figures are down, and employers often avoid them? PJ advised TVCA has a 20% social value criterion in its major procurements and thanks the member for his suggestion. It was confirmed that the guidance to bidders can be amended to encourage apprenticeships. HK also assured the Committee that work is ongoing with businesses for other reasons and having conversations with each on apprenticeships and educating businesses they can apply for a grant to help with the cost of an apprentice.
- To what extent has TVCA been in touch with government on financial implications due to nutrient neutrality and will the Government reimburse LA's? HK advised that TVCA has been in touch with Natural England and planners across the Tees Valley, and there has been different approaches across LA planning departments. It was explained there has been no indication from Government there will be any recompense for this. It was advised that there weren't full details on the Investment Zones yet but can share this as soon as possible. **Action: HK**
- Why isn't the Chief Executive or Mayor attending today? It was explained that the CEO was working on Investment Zone submissions ahead of the noon deadline. The Chair assured the Committee that Mayor Houchen now has a standing invitation to future meetings but is currently out of the country, not returning until Tuesday.
- Is there a stance for the CEO attending these meetings? Chair advised will try to do something about it.
- Where is the solar farm going at the Airport and which planning authority would this fall under? HK explained this is part of the Airport development and believed to be on the Darlington side but would need to clarify on this. **Action: HK**
- Are there any implications to the Airport on the housing elements that are being pushed with the Investment Zone's? HK explained housing is one part of the Investment Zones but didn't believe there were any implications and would confirm. **Action: HK**
- Part of the attraction of Investment Zones is giving 100% business rates relief, so can LAs affected by loss of income be guaranteed that whatever happens with Investment Zones, the business rates will go to LA's? HK explained she didn't have the details and would need to check. **Action: HK**
- Some evidence suggests that dredging should stop until a time in the future when the situation is made clear – can that be taken to the Mayor and ask if we can look at the possibility of stopping it? HK agreed to take this feedback to the Mayor.
- The MDC's update seems premature in the way it has been reported as this has not been confirmed as Hartlepool haven't agreed to it yet have they? Cllr Shane Moore (SM) advised there should have been a Members Seminar for HBC this week which has been scheduled for the start of November and confirmed whilst the legislation doesn't require full sign off from the Council it felt only right and proper to go through the democratic processes and the meeting will be an opportunity to scrutinise the plans. It was advised that the intention and expression of interest has been made, though not the decision made.
- Can the cushion buffers on the new cycle lanes on Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough be made into something that people can see as they appear to be creating issues in the dark, as well as accidents? HK advised that if this is something that can be changed it would be the design that would need to be looked at and that this can be fed back to the Transport team. **Action: HK**

- Can you expand on airport cargo and passenger numbers at the Airport? The Committee was advised that this detail was not to hand but that an answer would be sought. **Action: HK**
- Can the Scrutiny Committee formally request the CEO and Mayor approach the Select Committee to give evidence on the enquiry into crustacean deaths? PJ confirmed that the Committee can officially make recommendations to the Mayor and the Combined Authority. Cllr Steve Nelson (SN) proposed *“The Committee formally recommend that the Mayor and the CEO approach the Chair of the Parliamentary Select Committee and ask to be invited to give evidence in respect of the consideration/study into the causes of the crustacean die offs and that the Mayor gives to the Scrutiny Committee his current position on the cause of said die offs and if there’s any link to the dredging currently taking place and any current/planned or future dredging”*. The motion was seconded and it was agreed that a recorded vote would be taken - recorded vote with 10 Members in favour, and one abstention as follows:

Cllr Branson (Middlesbrough Council) - For  
 Cllr Harker (Darlington Borough Council) - For  
 Cllr Harrison (Hartlepool Borough Council) - For  
 Cllr C Hobson (Middlesbrough Council) - For  
 Cllr J Hobson (Chair – Middlesbrough Council) - For  
 Cllr Jeffrey (Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council) - For  
 Cllr Little (Hartlepool Borough Council) - For  
 Cllr Nelson (Stockton Borough Council) - For  
 Cllr Nicholson (Hartlepool Borough Council) - For  
 Cllr Sowerby (Darlington Borough Council) - Abstained  
 Cllr Stephenson OBE (Stockton Borough Council) - For

- How will business rates be distributed in relation to the freeport and Special Economic Areas? It was confirmed 50% to TVCA and 50% to LAs? It was suggested by a member that this should be changed for Investment Zones, in favour of local authorities, to assist with the funding pressures they face.
- Some skills activity is being geared to people in employment - how will that work? HK explained because we have a devolved Adult Education Budget the conditions can be changed as it is very much there to develop outcomes with employers to make sure people have skills. We can change the policy approach of AEB if anyone is wanting to go into a priority sector such as clean energy or aeronautical and it doesn’t matter what qualifications they have, so working with providers and employers on that. Encourage and put emphasis on delivery plan and changing ways they deliver.

The Committee noted disappointment in the absence of the Group CEO and Mayor at the Committee, identifying this as limiting the responses to questions asked by Members and there was concern that other activity appeared to take priority over Overview & Scrutiny.

The Committee agreed that the Mayor/CEO and/or Officers who had background information, needed to be present at future Scrutiny meetings for the meeting to be effective. It was noted that there is a need to re-think how information comes to the Committee as it was suggested that often, items are being brought after Cabinet have considered them with an example being given as the Skills Strategy. It was also requested that Freeport also needs to come to the Committee. **Action: Secretariat**

	<p><b>RESOLVED that: Members noted the Report and recommended that the Mayor and the CEO approach the Chair of the Parliamentary Select Committee and ask to be invited to give evidence in respect of the consideration/study into the causes of the crustacean die off's and that the Mayor gives to the Scrutiny Committee his current position on the cause of said die offs and if there's any link to the dredging currently taking place and any current/planned or future dredging.</b></p>
<p><b>OSC 06/22</b></p>	<p><b>CREATIVE PLACE UPDATE</b></p> <p>Cllr Shane Moore (SM), Portfolio Lead for Creative Place and Charlie Kemp (CK), Head of Creative Place at TVCA delivered to the Committee a presentation on Creative Place covering the scope, the delivery to date and that planned for the future.</p> <p>The presentation was well received, and it was agreed the slides would be shared with the Committee. Members commented that they were pleased that Creative Place had been put at the centre of TVCA and this was shown to be paying dividends. Members agreed the identity of each individual LA should remain but were happy to see the progress made with a high profile and all boroughs getting something out of it. When discussing local identity, Cllr Stephen Harker (SH) suggested it would be good to see the Mayor using "Tees Valley" rather than "Darlington", "Hartlepool" or "Teesside" when referring to the area.</p> <p>Members were invited to ask any clarification questions and the following questions were asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why, of the nine festivals, there were none for Stockton and the Waterfront festival was missing? SM advised that the process was subject to a bidding process and each LA bid in and if they never scored highly enough, others took priority. It was advised that SBC never bid into the process. The Festival of Thrift was confirmed to be moving to Billingham.</li> <li>• Our venues need protecting – would TVCA manage to protect them, so they are sustainable? CK agreed and explained the focus of this programme is building longer sustainability, as venues have a wider catchment area. "Priority Places" were explained to be those recognised for low levels of cultural engagement, and it was noted that the Tees Valley is the only Combined Authority that has been chosen as a "Priority Place" by the Arts Council. SM advised there is a need to work on the underlying issues to get people in and work with the industry to generate more money.</li> <li>• Regional and local identity has always been an issue in this region, with various names being used– Teesside, Tees Valley, Cleveland – does it have an impact on regional identification? CK advised that it is challenging and is something that is discussed with businesses. Website navigation was identified as challenging as the Tees valley is an emerging region but there is a desire for this to be not seen as a threat to regional identity so to still have that branding for example 'Enjoy Darlington' or 'Enjoy Redcar &amp; Cleveland' etc. but to still be part of 'Enjoy Tees Valley'. Members were informed that research has shown that younger people are identifying more with "Tees Valley" so it's thought that this identity will emerge over time as an umbrella brand that provides opportunity for all areas to come together.</li> <li>• How much work is being done to get the balance right so that big events are accessible to residents of the area and that we don't leave a population behind who can't afford them? CK discussed some of the outreach events undertaken around such events and agreed there does need to be a balance – Cook Islands Rugby League was discussed and the engagement with schools/free tickets/touring the region and working with children from some areas where they wouldn't get access</li> </ul>

	<p>otherwise. Buying locally was discussed and an example given for the Tall Ships that there's nothing left behind – that local businesses are the preferred suppliers and that the focus on growing the 9 priority festivals here, has a regional and international interest but is rooted in the community, free to access and includes wrap around programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SN noted as the Cabinet holder for Health, Leisure and Culture for SBC, it would be useful to discuss the comms for the Stockton and Darlington 2025 celebrations suggesting there was confusion on roles and responsibilities. It was agreed that contact details would be shared.</li> <li>• Do we see a time in the future where we might look at entering for City of Culture or anything similar? CK advised that the pandemic shaped our thinking on how we can achieve the same benefits but, in a way, inbuilt for the long term. It was felt that we can respond to competitive opportunities though it was important that we don't see those as being a quick win which we can achieve ourselves. SM re-iterated that the benefits can be achieved as the desire and drive are there, but it needs unity and what Creative Place has tried to do is look at the benefits of what that would have brought.</li> <li>• Do you get a sense that businesses are aware of what you're doing? CK advised that the Creative Place Advisory Group has been formed due to the reach/knowledge members have of their area. The Committee was assured that all activity comes with a communications plan and efforts are made to raise the profile of what is being delivered through the programme and this is to be monitored through the programme.</li> <li>• Do we have any transport/park &amp; ride facilities to use to take people to these venues for festivals etc. from each area of the Tees Valley, as often there is no parking or transport available? CK agreed this a good suggestion and explained that the team had been in discussions with the Transport team to map where there is likely to be interest to make sure public transport is in place for those festivals. Members were assured that there is direct engagement with festivals to determine and influence how they're encouraging people to travel to events, as well as acknowledging the importance of green energy.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED that: Members noted the Creative Place Update.</b></p>
<p><b>OSC 07/22</b></p>	<p><b>REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW &amp; SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – INVESTMENT PLAN REFRESH REFERRAL FROM CABINET</b></p> <p>In advance of the meeting, the Committee was provided with a Report detailing the findings from Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee meeting to review the decision in relation to the approval of the Investment Plan Refresh (Specifically recommendation 1).</p> <p>It was recommended that the Committee review, comment and agree the Report for submission at the October Cabinet meeting.</p> <p>Concerns were raised with the tone of the covering report in that it seemed to suggest that the only point that was raised was on the cost-of-living crisis raised by “one member”. Cllr Sue Jeffrey (SJ) noted that the Committee had identified that there was additional investment into the Airport and the South Tees Development Corporation, and the concern was that there was continued investment in big projects, but cost of living wasn't considered.</p>

	<p>PJ agreed, that he would arrange for report to be revised in this regard, and an amended copy circulated to members for comment and approval by the Chair. It was noted however, the turnaround for this would be tight given the Cabinet papers are to be published next week.</p> <p>It was explained that the Report will be presented to Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> October and as Chair, JH will be present. It was agreed that the feelings of the Committee are referred to Cabinet.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED that: Members endorsed the Report for submission at the October Cabinet meeting subject to the requested amendments and circulation to Committee for feedback.</b></p>
<p><b>OSC 08/22</b></p>	<p><b>DRAFT FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>A DRAFT Forward Plan for 22/23 was presented to the Committee for consideration.</p> <p>The Chair noted that as we approach the first Finance &amp; Resource Committee meeting in December, it may require someone else to deputise in the Vice Chair's absence but if so this will be requested closer to the meetings. SJ volunteered to be a part of the Sub Committee and it was agreed she would also be invited to the meetings that are to be arranged.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the planned item of Crustacean Deaths and what would require presenting to the Committee. Although it was acknowledged there had been two reports giving different outcomes, the chair suggested to await the outcome of the Select Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> October and an extraordinary meeting could be arranged to discuss the subject late November/early December, dependent on the findings. The need for Mayor Houchen to attend was emphasised and to coincide any meeting with his availability.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED that: Members endorsed the DRAFT Forward Plan.</b></p>
<p><b>OSC 09/22</b></p>	<p><b>DELEGATED DECISIONS</b></p> <p>A report was circulated to members detailing the Delegated Decisions taken by the Combined Authority since the last meeting.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED that: the details of the Report were noted.</b></p>
<p><b>OSC 10/22</b></p>	<p><b>DATE &amp; TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 10am at TVCA Offices.</p>