



North Tyneside Council

# Council Supplemental Agenda

To All Members of the Council

Wednesday, 15 January 2025

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Tyneside to be held in **Chamber - Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY** at 6.00 pm on **Thursday, 23 January 2025** for the transaction of the following business.

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Motions with Legal and Financial Implications.	

Yours faithfully

Interim Chief Executive

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# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Council

23 January 2025

### Motions

Notice has been received of the following motions from Members of the Council to be put to the Council meeting.

#### Motion 1

#### The Jay Report Recommendations on Grooming Gangs

Proposer - Cllr Olly Scargill

Seconder - Cllr Liam Bones

Signed by: Councillor Dave Lilly

This Council endorses the request of colleagues at Oldham Council in their call for a national inquiry into rape gangs and believes it is inappropriate for government ministers to expect local Councils to conduct inquiries of such importance or to be able to appropriately resource them, especially under the current legislation which means any such inquiry would be unable to compel witnesses to give evidence.

Council notes the recent comments of Professor Alexis Jay, chair of the Child Sexual Abuse inquiry established by the Conservative government in 2016, who has said of her review recommendations that “locally people

need to step up to the mark and do the things that have been recommended”.

Council therefore agrees to meet this challenge and asks the Mayor to implement all of the Jay Review recommendations that can practicably be adopted locally. The acting Chief Executive should be the named responsible person for their implementation.

This should include as a minimum:

- Exploring and implementing ways to make employees aware of the need to report safeguarding concerns to the authority in their roles and private lives.
- Ensuring that all employee contracts are explicit in the requirement for us all to report child sexual exploitation.
- Considering how a mandatory reporting clause can be embedded into Council contracts through procurement processes so that all Council contractors or grant recipients must agree to a mandatory reporting statement.
- An ongoing public communications plan on the best ways to report child sexual exploitation.

Council also asks the Mayor to write to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls to join cross-party calls for a time limited national inquiry into rape gangs.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with the motion.

### **Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority associated with this motion.

## Motion 2

### Fairness in Social Housing Allocation

Proposer – Cllr Liam Bones

Seconder – Cllr Olly Scargill

Signed by: Councillor Dave Lilly

#### This Council Notes:

- The demand for social housing in North Tyneside has grown significantly, with the Homefinder service now receiving an average of 50 applications per day compared to 20 applications five years ago.
- The previous Conservative Government’s plan to prioritise British nationals and long-term residents in council housing allocations was intended to ensure fairness and restore public confidence in the allocation process.
- The current Labour Government has chosen to abandon this policy, removing the “UK connection test” – a decision that risks further undermining trust in the social housing system and failing to address the concerns of our communities.

#### Council Believes:

- British nationals and long-term residents who have contributed to the system deserve to be prioritised in social housing allocations.
- The Labour Government’s decision to scrap plans for prioritising British nationals demonstrates a lack of understanding of the concerns faced by residents across North Tyneside who are waiting for social housing allocations.
- A fair, transparent housing allocation system that prioritises those with strong local connections is essential to maintain public trust and community cohesion.

Council Resolves:

To request that the Elected Mayor of North Tyneside write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to:

- Express this council's disappointment in the Labour Government's decision to abandon the "UK connection test" and plans to prioritise British nationals and long-term residents in social housing allocations.
- Call on the Government to urgently reconsider this decision and introduce measures to ensure British nationals and long-term residents are given appropriate prioritisation in housing allocation policies

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with the motion.

### **Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority associated with this motion.

### **Motion 3**

#### **Compensation for 1950s born women affected by changes in the State Pension Age ("WASPI" women)**

Proposer - Cllr Ian McAlpine

Seconder - Cllr Liam Bones

Signed by: Councillor Cllr Dr Olly Scargill

In March 2024, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman made a landmark ruling calling for a one-off compensation payment to women born in the 1950s who were impacted by changes to the state pension age.

The report upholds the view of the Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) campaign that the change in State Pension age from 60 to 65 (subsequently raised to 66) was not properly communicated. This left many financially unprepared for their retirement, with little to no time make alternative arrangements.

In December 2024, the government announced it would not provide the compensation recommended by the Ombudsman.

This council has previously expressed its own view that a one-off compensation payment (as then recommended by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on State Pensions) should be offered to the women affected.

Council notes that

- The PHSO's report lays out necessary compensation measures that should be implemented by the government in full;
- A swift resolution is still needed to address this ongoing injustice, as this cohort of woman are still dying waiting for compensation;
- This injustice continues to have a profound effect on the individuals involved, and the wider community in North Tyneside and on local government and public sector finances.

Council calls upon The Elected Mayor to write to the local Members of Parliament and to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to:

- Reaffirm the council's commitment to the 1950s women, and to reiterate the effects of the injustice to upon them, their families and the communities in North Tyneside.
- Request on behalf of the residents of North Tyneside that the compensation measures laid out in the PHSOs report are implemented.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with the motion.

### **Legal implications**

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority associated with this motion.



## **Motion 4**

### **Introduction of a single social tariff for water bills in England and Wales.**

Proposer – Cllr Claire McGinty

Seconder – Cllr Liam Bones

Signed by: Councillor John Johnsson

The National Pensioners Convention (NPC) is deeply concerned about projected poverty levels following statements from the Secretary of State. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has acknowledged that up to 100,000 pensioners in England and Wales could fall into poverty because of cuts to winter fuel payments. The NPC is shocked by the government's admission.

Water bills are projected to increase by an average of 36% over the next five years, which will be a significant concern for older people who are already facing high bills.

People who are not on water meters have their water bills calculated based on the rateable value of their property. The amount of financial support someone receives for their water bill should not be influenced by the address of the property. The (NPC) along with other charities have written to the Minister for Water and Flooding to make a case for a single social tariff.

Council believes swift action is needed to end the unfair postcode lottery by introducing a single water social tariff which would provide fair and consistent support for those in financial hardship.

Council calls upon the Mayor to write to the Minister for Water and Flooding, Emma Hardy, making the case for a single social tariff for England and Wales.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with the motion.

### **Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority associated with this motion.

## Motion 5

Reviewing the Impact Assessment of Grant Funding to Voluntary, Community, and Social Organisations (VSCOs) and Community Interest Companies (CICs)

Proposer – Cllr Liam Bones

Seconder – Cllr Olly Scargill

Signed by – Cllr John Johnsson

Council notes:

- The importance of providing grant funding to Voluntary, Community, and Social Organisations (VSCOs) and Community Interest Companies (CICs) to deliver valuable community services and initiatives.
- The responsibility of the Council to ensure that public funds are spent effectively, transparently, and in the best interests of residents.
- Ongoing pressure within the Council's finances resulting in reducing staffing numbers within the authority.
- The recommendation of the Budget Study Group that "Cabinet considers the amount of funding provided to voluntary and community sector organisations, especially in light of the requirement to reduce directly employed staff."

Council believes:

- That grant funding must deliver measurable benefits for local residents and communities, prioritising service delivery.
- That there is a need for robust scrutiny of the financial practices of organisations receiving public funds to ensure accountability and public trust.

- That councillors should provide full transparency about any personal financial benefits derived from grant-funded organisations to avoid any conflict of interest or perception of impropriety.

Council resolves to:

Ask the Mayor to Conduct a review of its grant funding policies, with particular focus on how the impact of grant funding to VSCOs and CICs is assessed. This review should ensure:

- Grant funding provides maximum benefit to the communities served.
- Adequate safeguards are in place to prevent disproportionate payouts to directors of CICs from public funds.
- That monitoring and reporting requirements are strengthened to ensure transparency and accountability.

Ask the Monitoring officer review ways the Members' Declaration of Interests form could be strengthened to ensure any members benefiting financially from a VCSO or CIC which receives the majority of its funding from North Tyneside Council are transparent and easily understandable to the public.

Report back to Council within six months with both the Mayor's review and any recommendations from the Monitoring Officer for any necessary policy changes or updates based on the outcomes of the review.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with the motion.

In accordance with the Transparency Code, the Authority publishes details of all expenditure incurred which is over £250 on its website <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1271/transparency>.

## **Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority associated with this motion.

Any changes to the Authority's Code of Conduct for Members in relation to declarations of interests would require the matter to be considered and approved by Full Council.

In undertaking any review it should be noted that information relating to sources of income, such as from the Authority, an organisation has may be difficult to quantify and identify by a Member who is for example employed by such an organisation. Those employees may not necessarily be entitled to this information from their employer and also may not be entitled to disclose this information to a third party such as the local authority. Many VCSO's and CIC's are either charities or a form of incorporated organisation, as such there are obligations place on those organisations by the relevant regulatory bodies to publish their accounts and provide information into relation to their income. The Authority is already obliged to publishes its spend in excess of £250 on its website.

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