

Local Government Act 1972

Borough of North Tyneside

Thursday, 16 January 2020

At the meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Tyneside duly convened and held on Thursday, 16 January 2020 at 6.00 pm in Chamber - Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY at which a quorum of Members were present, that is to say: -

Present

Councillor W Lott (Chair)
N Redfearn (Elected Mayor)

Councillor K Barrie	Councillor L Bartoli
Councillor G Bell	Councillor T Brady
Councillor S Brockbank	Councillor B Burdis
Councillor J Cassidy	Councillor K Clark
Councillor D Cox	Councillor S Cox
Councillor N Craven	Councillor J Cruddas
Councillor E Darke	Councillor L Darke
Councillor C Davis	Councillor D Drummond
Councillor P Earley	Councillor R Glindon
Councillor S Graham	Councillor M Green
Councillor M Hall	Councillor J Harrison
Councillor Janet Hunter	Councillor John Hunter
Councillor N Huscroft	Councillor C Johnson
Councillor J Kirwin	Councillor K Lee
Councillor F Lott	Councillor G Madden
Councillor M Madden	Councillor P McIntyre
Councillor A McMullen	Councillor L Miller
Councillor J Mole	Councillor T Mulvenna
Councillor A Newman	Councillor P Oliver
Councillor E Parker-Leonard	Councillor A Percy
Councillor S Phillips	Councillor B Pickard
Councillor M Rankin	Councillor W Samuel
Councillor J Stirling	Councillor M Thirlaway
Councillor J Walker	Councillor J Wallace
Councillor M Wilson	

Apologies: Councillor J Allan, A Austin, L Bell, C Burdis, S Day, K Osborne, J O'Shea, M Reynolds, P Richardson and F Weetman

C47/20 Whitley Bay Town Cup

The Chair announced that the Whitley Bay Town Cup had been awarded to Beach Access North East in recognition of the work undertaken by the charity in giving wheelchair users the opportunity to access the beach and the benefits it can bring to

individual and families.

The Chair presented the Cup to Stephen Miller, Andy Divers and Lorna Moore who addressed the Council and thanked the Authority for awarding the Cup to the Beach Access North East.

C48/20 Public Questions

1. Question to the Elected Mayor by Dr Groom

What evidence does North Tyneside Council have that members have opposed or even raised objections to the ICS? In becoming part of the ICS what safeguards have you obtained on behalf of North Tyneside residents to ensure services will not be privatised?

Councillor M Hall responded as follows

First of all, may I thank Dr Groom for the question, I know our residents are supportive of the NHS and many are keenly interested in how it is run.

Secondly, I would like to be quite clear that, in common with all of my Elected colleagues, Members, the Mayor and our MPs we all have worked hard over a long period to promote and protect health services to the people of North Tyneside.

If you have spoken to senior NHS leaders who work with North Tyneside I am certain they will confirm that they have felt keenly, the accountability we have brought to bear on behalf of our residents. That accountability has consistently demonstrated a focus on serving our local communities and performing as strongly as possible.

I am sure Dr Groom will have spotted, even during a particularly difficult winter, all of our NHS colleagues have continued to perform better than the rest of the country.

In terms of privatisation, as a retired GP, I am sure Dr Groom has a clear understanding of the range of commercial arrangements that exist to ensure the NHS can function. It is often lost on the wider public that many of our clinicians operate through a contractual arrangement and are not directly employed by the NHS.

In terms of the specifics of your question:

I have an enormous body of evidence that demonstrates elected representatives working with the NHS to develop and protect services for North Tyneside.

At this stage, there has been no need to “oppose” or object to the ICS as it relates to North Tyneside residents because there have been no proposed changes to services that would raise concern.

However, last week, at my request, as Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, Sir Jim Mackey of Northumbria Health Care, Mark Adams of North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group and Paul Hanson, our Chief Executive briefed the Board in detail.

They specifically focussed on the work of the Northern Integrated Care Partnership – which I am sure Dr Groom will know is the portion of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System that relates to North Tyneside – and the difference it would make to residents.

Sir Jim talked through some clinical changes and some shared innovation with Newcastle Hospitals. Mark talked about the work we are doing together on prevention, and Paul talked about work NHS colleagues are supporting on climate change, local supply and some excellent plans for NHS employers to target vulnerable groups and communities for jobs in the NHS.

In closing I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank all the health and social care colleagues who work for the residents of North Tyneside, particularly through a very tricky winter.

Dr Groom asked the following supplementary question:

The councillors in this room provide the only democratic accountability within that local integrated care system. We ask you not to collude with the political decisions about our NHS. The building blocks are now in place and we have a Tory government for at least 5 years and they have got the political means to complete the privatisation of the NHS.

We have already seen significant amounts, Margaret might call it commercialisation, I call it privatisation locally around urgent care and out of hours. As a GP I've witnessed the deterioration of Mental Health Services and had to discuss with parents the only way they'll get services for their young people is if they pay privately. My question is given that North Tyneside Council appears to be an equal partnership with North Tyneside CCG on developing the ICS what risk assessments have been carried out specifically by North Tyneside Council officers with regards to the ICS and the possibility of this developing into a private health system, which is underpinned by private insurance?

Councillor Hall responded as follows:

Can I assure the group that has come tonight to ask this question that no way would North Tyneside Council agree to any privatisation of any sort in North Tyneside; that in working together we get better results than challenging for nonsensical reasons this decision making.

We work together with the NHS, we work together with the CCG and we provide a very good service or the best service we can for the residents of North Tyneside.

2. Question from Mr Christie

When will North Tyneside Council take the next step and close streets off to allow children to safely walk, cycle or scoot to school in safety, without drivers putting their lives in danger?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:
Thank you for your question.

Firstly, can I say I absolutely agree with you, children are indeed our future and yes they do deserve a safe environment to thrive, learn and play.

I think it is important to note that already in North Tyneside, well over half of school pupils – around 60% – get to school either on foot, or by other more sustainable means; in fact the number who cycle to school reaches 10% at some of our schools.

As I'm sure Mr Christie will be aware the school run is not something which is isolated to the borough of North Tyneside: there are traffic problems outside of schools up and down the entire country.

However, I cannot accept the premise that children in North Tyneside are unable to go to and from school safely.

Providing safe routes to and from school has been a top priority of ours for some time. And we have a myriad of initiatives to help children to get to school safely. This includes:

- Using our brilliant team of school crossing patrols;
- The installation of improved crossing facilities and numerous other physical road safety measures;
- Working extensively with schools to address points of concern; and
- Road safety education and training, which was delivered to over 7,000 pupils in the last school year.

Our North Tyneside Transport Strategy aims to encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of transport through our design process and through promotional and partnership working. It is also clear that we will improve safety for all road users, address road safety concerns and reduce casualties, whilst at the same time, increasing cycling and walking.

We have also produced a Travel Safety Strategy that recognises that parking pressures around schools at peak times can lead to difficulties for residents and children and it highlights the value of taking part in initiatives around travel safety including messages around health, air quality, and congestion reduction.

Our 'Go Smarter in North Tyneside' programme is aimed at creating healthy, low traffic neighbourhoods around schools. When we began this programme we concentrated on the schools where many pupils were driven to school for short distances, often less than half a mile.

Through this programme we have involved school children in 'street audits' to identify cycling and walking improvements, and we have often delivered those on the ground in the same year. We have also run events such as car-free days, where we encourage children along with their parents to take up healthy and active travel to and from school.

2018 was the first full year of the Go Smarter programme and it has helped schools reduce school car journeys by as much as 15% in some areas.

In March 2019, we took part in a nationwide trial of 'School Streets'. In fact Monkseaton Middle School was one of only 43 schools in the country to take part. This event involved closing the street outside the school to traffic for an hour at the start and end of the school day, creating a safe and enjoyable space to walk, cycle and play. As Mr Christie rightly recognises, this was welcomed by parents, children and residents.

We await Sustrans' evaluation report on this national initiative and North Tyneside, and as part of the Tyneside Air Quality Plan we are actively seeking funding from government to deliver a wider programme of 'school streets'-type initiatives. If successful we hope to commence work this calendar year.

I'd like to assure Mr Christie safe routes to school will remain a top priority of this Council and we will continue to deliver and update our programme of initiatives, and work with

partner organisations to implement measures which will support healthy and active travel to school in the borough. And we are keeping a close eye on the national picture.

C49/20 To receive any Declarations of Interest

Councillor D Cox declared a registerable personal interest in relation to Item 6 – Council Tax Empty Home Premiums as she owned a second property.

Councillor S Cox declared a registerable personal interest in relation to Item 6 – Council Tax Empty Home Premiums as he owned a second property.

C50/20 Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2019

Resolved that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 28 November 2019 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair.

C51/20 Timetable of Meetings 2020/21

The Council received a report which presented the proposed programme of meetings for the 2020/21 municipal year, including designated Council meetings to hear public questions.

It was moved by Councillor B Pickard and seconded by Councillor J Stirling that:

(1) the programme of meetings for 2020/21, as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved; and

(2) the meetings of the full Council proposed for 23 July 2020, 26 November 2020 and 21 January 2021 be those at which questions will be taken from members of the public.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 51 votes to 0 votes.

C52/20 Council Tax Empty Home Premiums

(Note: Councillors D Cox and S Cox withdrew from the meeting for this item).

Council considered a report that recommended proposed Council Tax premium levels being applied to all relevant properties from 1 April 2020.

It was moved by Councillor R Glendon and seconded by Councillor B Pickard that:

Council

- (a) note the recommended level of premiums which are set out as option 1 at 1.6 of the report;
- (b) agree that, with effect from 1 April 2020 and 1 April 2021, the Council Tax empty homes premiums as set out in Option 1 of paragraph 1.6 of the report will apply across the Borough;
- (c) agree that, in line with Government recommendation owners of properties that can demonstrate that the property is actively being marketed for sale or rent at a reasonable level are exempt from the Council Tax empty homes premium on that

property; and

- (d) agree that the Head of Resources be given authority to determine if any exemption from the Council Tax empty homes premium should apply to a particular property as considered appropriate and that this delegated authority be recorded in the Officer Delegation Scheme of the Authority's Constitution.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 51 votes to 0 votes.

C53/20 Chair's Announcements

In her announcements the Chair mentioned the many Christmas events that she had attended which included the first indoor Christmas Market in the Quadrant which had raised over £1000 for her charities.

The Chair had taken part in a Citizenship ceremony and the Council had hosted a British Empire medal ceremony where 5 members of the region had received an award.

The Charity Ball sales were going well with over 150 places being sold and the Chair thanked those who were unable to attend but had made donations for the event.

C54/20 Elected Mayor's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Elected Mayor.