

# Local Government Act 1972

## Borough of North Tyneside

Thursday, 24 September 2020

At the virtual meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Tyneside duly convened and held on Thursday, 24 September 2020 at 6.00 pm at which a quorum of Members were present, that is to say: -

### Present

Councillor D Drummond (Deputy Chair) (in the Chair)  
N Redfearn (Elected Mayor)

Councillor J Allan	Councillor A Austin
Councillor K Barrie	Councillor L Bartoli
Councillor G Bell	Councillor L Bell
Councillor T Brady	Councillor S Brockbank
Councillor B Burdis	Councillor J Cassidy
Councillor D Cox	Councillor S Cox
Councillor N Craven	Councillor J Cruddas
Councillor E Darke	Councillor L Darke
Councillor C Davis	Councillor S Day
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 F Lott
Councillor P McIntyre	Councillor A McMullen
Councillor L Miller	Councillor J Mole
Councillor A Newman	Councillor P Oliver
Councillor J O'Shea	Councillor E Parker-Leonard
Councillor B Pickard	Councillor M Rankin
Councillor P Richardson	Councillor W Samuel
Councillor J Stirling	Councillor M Thirlaway
Councillor J Walker	Councillor J Wallace
	Councillor M Wilson

**Apologies:** Councillor C Burdis, Councillor K Clark, Councillor W Lott, Councillor M Madden and Councillor T Mulvenna

### **C67/20      Former Councillor Phil O'Keefe**

Members observed a minute's silence in memory of Phil O'Keefe, a former Councillor for Chirton and Camperdown Wards, who had recently passed away.

**C68/20            Declarations of Interest**

Councillor A McMullen declared a registerable personal interest in relation to Motion 1 as his employer had business connections with the company Talk Talk.

Councillor P Earley declared a registerable personal interest in relation to Item 5 – Freedom of the Borough as he was a trustee of North Tyneside Carers Centre.

**C69/20            Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 March 2020 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair.

**C70/20            Motions**

**Motion 1 signed by Councillors M Thirlaway, F Lott and M Hall**

It was moved by Councillor M Thirlaway and seconded by Councillor F Lott that:

North Tyneside Council notes the Government's decision to replace Public Health England with the National Institute for Health Protection.

We condemn the decision to appoint Baroness Dido Harding as the temporary chair of this new organisation.

We believe Baroness Harding is an unsuitable appointment due to her lack of experience and expertise in public health and her failure as Head of the NHS Track and Trace during the coronavirus outbreak.

We believe Baroness Harding's appointment is a political decision that fails to prioritise public health during a worldwide pandemic.

North Tyneside Council requests that the Elected Mayor writes to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care expressing our opposition to this appointment.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 39 votes to 6 votes.

**Motion 2 signed by Councillors M Rankin, C Johnson and B Pickard**

It was moved by Councillor C Johnson and seconded by Councillor B Pickard that:

Council notes:

- that the COVID-19 crisis has had a profound impact on the Council's staff, services, and income;
- that, at the start of the crisis, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government urged councils to do "whatever was necessary" to control the spread of the virus;
- that the Secretary of State also promised full financial reimbursement to councils for the financial impact of the crisis;
- that, despite three welcome tranches of money, the Council still faces an in-year financial shortfall;

- that the Government changed the distribution formula between allocations of funding, skewing resources away from urban areas with higher levels of COVID to shire counties and rural areas, with lower levels of COVID;
- that the LGA estimates the financial gap facing the local government sector to be £7.4bn;
- that recent IFS analysis reports that councils are facing a “perfect storm” of funding and that many will have to make in-year budget cuts as a result of the failure of Government to fully compensate for losses.

Council believes:

- that the Government should honour their promise to reimburse councils in full for financial losses;
- that it would be a national outrage if councils were forced to reduce services and lay off the staff who have gone the extra mile to support our communities through the crisis.

Council calls upon the Mayor to:

- write to the Secretary of State to ask him to honour his pledge to fund councils fully;
- sign up to the Unison campaign Back the #10BillionBailout for local services (see <https://action.unison.org.uk/page/63837/petition/1?locale=en-GB>);
- campaign for a decent and fair settlement for local government in the forthcoming Spending Review.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 41 votes to 6 votes.

### **Motion 3 signed by Councillors C Davis, W Samuel and B Burdis**

It was moved by Councillor C Davis and seconded by Councillor W Samuel that:

This Council resolves to endorse the Covid Bereaved Families Campaign and, therefore, calls on the Government to start an immediate public inquiry into the Covid-19 Pandemic, with the first part of the inquiry to start immediately.

Lessons need to be learned and applied quickly to prevent further loss of life, as happened in the aftermath of the Hillsborough tragedy, which led to immediate improvements to safety in football stadiums.

We also agree with the families’ call for the Government to provide adequate support to those who have lost someone to Covid-19. To date, there has been little to no recognition of the trauma of losing someone in this way or that there will be additional strain on bereavement and mental health support services. We believe all families should be able to access adequate support wherever they are in the country.

The North Tyneside Council offers its condolences to the bereaved in North Tyneside and throughout the UK. By meeting the demands of the bereaved families, the Government can protect other families from needlessly suffering the overwhelming grief that they are experiencing.

The UK has one of the highest death tolls in the world in the Covid-19 Pandemic, with over 45,000 excess deaths. Gaps in the country's pandemic preparedness, delays to locking down, inadequate supplies of PPE and the policy of discharging ill-people into care homes have all been identified as having contributed to the high death toll. As we head into winter it's vital that we prepare for a potential second wave.

North Tyneside Council requests the Elected Mayor to vigorously promote the petition from the Campaign, [covidfamiliesforjustice.com](https://covidfamiliesforjustice.com), and to press the inquiry on the Government through our two local Members of Parliament.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 41 votes to 5 votes.

#### **Motion 4 signed by Councillors J Allan, J Harrison and B Burdis**

In moving this Motion, Councillor J Allan clarified that the independent report referred to had in fact been commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and that the Local Government Association had supported the findings of the report.

It was moved by Councillor J Allan and seconded by Councillor J Harrison that:

North Tyneside Council supports the independent report commissioned by the Local Government Association. Responding into the quality standard of homes delivered through change of use for permitted development rights, the independent report rightly backs our long-standing concerns over the detrimental impact on local communities of rules allowing home conversions without planning permission. It provides further evidence on why it is more vital than ever that planning should remain local. and requests that our Elected Mayor write to inform the Government and the Local Government Association of our views.

The independent report rightly supports our concerns in North Tyneside over the detrimental impact on our local communities of having rules that would allow home conversions without planning permission. It provides further evidence on why it is more vital than ever that planning should remain local.

The report highlights how these conversions mostly avoid making any contribution to local areas, which is a requirement of the local planning system, and fail to meet adequate design standards and create worse living environments.

Under these new rules, communities will have no way to ensure developers build high-quality affordable homes in the right places, provide any affordable homes as part of the development, along with infrastructure that provides enough schools, promotes greener and more active travel, and tackles climate change.

We urge the Government to act on these independent findings and remove permitted development rights. Developers must no longer be allowed to bypass the planning system and local communities must be able to have a say on all new developments in their area.

It is vital that councils and local communities have a voice in the planning process and are able to oversee all local developments so councils can deliver resilient, prosperous places that meet the needs of our communities.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 42 votes to 0 votes, with 5 abstentions.

**Motion 5 signed by Councillors A Newman, M Wilson and C Johnson**

It was moved by Councillor A Newman and seconded by Councillor M Wilson that:

**Objection to the Internal Markets Bill**

We share widespread concern over the government's admission that the Internal Markets bill breaches international law. The United Kingdom is built in and subject to the rule of law and international law is just as important as domestic law. Undermining this vital principle will fatally weaken faith in our commitment to international law and the repercussions will affect the whole country, not just North Tyneside.

We therefore ask the Mayor to write to the Prime Minister outlining this Council's objection to breaching international law and urging him to withdraw the bill.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 42 votes to 6 votes.

**C71/20 Freedom of the Borough**

A report was considered that informed Council of nominations received for Ylana First and the North Tyneside Carers Centre to be awarded the Freedom of the Borough.

In accordance with the Authority's procedure for the award of the Freedom of the Borough, the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee had received a report at its meeting on 2 March 2020 and had agreed to recommend both nominations to Council for consideration.

Council was informed that, due to exceptional circumstances, the nomination for Ylana First had been agreed following urgent consultation with the Elected Mayor and political party group leaders and a presentation had been held in July 2020.

The North Tyneside Carers Centre had been proposed by Councillor C Davis seconded by Councillor M Wilson.

Supporting information was detailed in the report in relation to the nominations.

The Council was asked to consider the nominations taking into account the provisions of section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, which permitted the Council to admit to be honorary freemen persons of distinction and persons who had, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Borough. Any decision to admit the nominee was required to be approved by not less than two thirds of Members voting thereon at the Council meeting.

It was moved by the Elected Mayor and seconded by Councillor S Day that:

- (1) the award of Freedom of the Borough to Ylana First be ratified; and
- (2) the North Tyneside Carers Centre be awarded the Freedom of the Borough.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 45 votes to 0 votes.

**C72/20            Annual Review of the Constitution**

The Council received a report on the Annual Review of the Constitution and associated documents undertaken by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Constitution Task Group.

The report contained recommendations to the main Constitution (Audit Committee terms of reference) and Contract Standing Orders to ensure that they continued to be fit for purpose and provide a framework which ensured the efficient discharge of the Authority's business by allowing for decision making at the appropriate level.

It was moved by Councillor F Lott and seconded by Councillor B Pickard that:

Council approve the proposed changes to the Constitution and Contract Standing Orders set out in Appendix 1 to the report and refer the approved changes to the Elected Mayor for her consent in accordance with Article 15 of the Constitution.

An amendment was moved by Councillor K Barrie and seconded by Councillor J Wallace, as follows:

Contract Standing Orders: to replace 'For contracts valued at up to £10,000, the Budget Manager concerned may invite one quotation' with 'For contracts valued at up to £10,000, the Budget Manager concerned may invite two quotations'.

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, was rejected by 40 votes to 5 votes.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 41 votes to 5 votes.

**C73/20            Chair's Announcements**

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Drummond extended his best wishes to Mr Michael Taylor in his retirement and thanked him for his community service of 53 years with 21<sup>st</sup> troop of the Whitley Bay Scouts.

**C74/20            Elected Mayor's Announcements**

The Elected Mayor provided an update on local restrictions that had been introduced in the light of the increasing rates of Covid-19 infection in the North East. She stated that the Leaders and Elected Mayors of the seven North East local authorities and the North East Combined Authority had approached the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to request support and resources in applying the local restrictions in an attempt to protect the community and aid recovery.

She also provided details of two coronavirus walk-through testing sites within the borough, one at The Parks Leisure Centre, North Shields which had opened today, and the other at Coronation Street Car Park, Wallsend, that would be opening tomorrow.

The Mayor expressed her gratitude to all Local Authority staff and volunteers for ensuring the continued operation of all essential services throughout the pandemic. She noted that many of the staff were amongst the lowest paid, however they continued to place their own safety at risk to serve the North Tyneside Community.