

Local Government Act 1972

Borough of North Tyneside

Thursday, 26 November 2020

At the meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Tyneside duly convened and held on Thursday, 26 November 2020 at 6.00 pm at which a quorum of Members were present, that is to say: -

Present

Councillor W Lott (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 C 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 S Day
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 J O'Shea
Councillor E Parker-Leonard	Councillor A Percy
Councillor S Phillips	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 F Weetman

C75/20 Minute's Silence

A minute's silence was observed in respect of the passing of former Councillors David Charlton, who had represented Camperdown and Howdon Wards from 1991 until 2011, and had served as the civic mayor of North Tyneside in 2000-01 and Barbara Stevens, who had represented Cullercoats and Collingwood Wards from 2000 until 2012.

C76/20 Public Questions

The Chair had agreed that a single response be provided to questions 1-8 below:

1. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr Maier

I understand that, following consultation with some local businesses, voluntary sector and residents through Stakeholder Workshops earlier this year, the Carbon Trust has prepared an Action Plan for North Tyneside in response to the Climate Emergency.

From the last Council meeting it has voted to implement only limited policies arising from the Action Plan, with a mandate for Officers to develop business cases for further actions as deemed appropriate. There is a real danger that momentum is lost. Given the significant and wide-ranging work set out in the report action clearly needs to be immediate and comprehensive.

Will you commit to implementing the Action Plan, as recommended by the Carbon Trust, in full - and if not, why not? Given that failure to implement the plan will mean missing the binding 2050 target.

2. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr Christie

Under the Tranche 2 funding of the Emergency Active Travel Fund, councils are expected to adhere to the Cycling Infrastructure Design Guidance.

All funding that North Tyneside Council will be requesting will have to ensure that all schemes meet the LTN 1/20 guidance, otherwise no funding will be granted, and this will have further impacts later down the line.

As North Tyneside Council has made a commitment to the Climate Emergency and Active Transport, in spite of the early removing of the Tranche 1 schemes, please can you advise how North Tyneside council will comply with LTN 1/20 and what that will look like?

3. Question to the Elected Mayor from Ms Hawkins

What active steps has the Council taken to reduce car use in the borough - to lower greenhouse gas emissions as well as reduce air pollution and encourage walking and cycling - since their Declaration of a Climate Emergency, such that they feel the Sunrise Cycleway is now surplus to requirements?

4. Question to the Elected Mayor from Ms Remfry

I understand that the Carbon Trust was commissioned by North Tyneside to develop its Climate Emergency Action Plan to move towards a carbon neutral borough by 2050 and it has now produced its report.

Does the Council fully support this Action Plan and intend to implement all its recommendations?

5. Question to the Elected Mayor from Ms Erskine

I understand that, following consultation with some local businesses, voluntary sector and residents through Stakeholder Workshops earlier this year, the Carbon Trust has prepared an Action Plan for North Tyneside in response to the Climate Emergency.

I also understand that the Cabinet has voted to implement limited policies arising from the Action Plan, with a mandate for Officers to develop business cases for further actions as deemed appropriate.

Will you commit to implementing the Action Plan, as recommended by the Carbon Trust, in full - and if not, why not (given the taxpayer money given to the Carbon Trust to prepare the recommendations)?

6. Question to the Elected Mayor from North Tyneside Green Party

We understand that, following consultation with local businesses, voluntary sector and residents through Stakeholder Workshops earlier this year, the Carbon Trust has prepared an Action Plan for North Tyneside in response to the Climate Emergency.

We also understand that the Cabinet has voted to implement limited policies arising from the Action Plan, with a mandate for Officers to develop business cases for further actions as deemed appropriate.

Will you commit to implementing the Action Plan, as recommended by the Carbon Trust, in full - and if not, why not (given the taxpayer money given to the Carbon Trust to prepare the recommendations)?

7. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr Percival

I understand that an Action Plan has been prepared for North Tyneside in response to the Climate Emergency. Will you commit to implementing the Action Plan, as recommended by the Carbon Trust, in full – and can you also clarify the process and next steps for setting detailed pathways, actions, budgets and timescales?

8. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr Appleby

I understand that, following consultation with some local businesses, voluntary sector and residents through Stakeholder Workshops earlier this year, the Carbon Trust has prepared an Action Plan for North Tyneside in response to the Climate Emergency.

I also understand that the Cabinet has voted to implement limited policies arising from the Action Plan, with a mandate for Officers to develop business cases for further actions as deemed appropriate.

Will you commit to implementing the Action Plan, as recommended by the Carbon Trust, in full - and if not, why not (given the taxpayer money given to the Carbon Trust to prepare the recommendations)?

Councillor C Johnson responded to the above questions on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:

Thank you for all 8 questions raised in relation to the Climate Emergency Action Plan and those associated to more environmentally sustainable travel and transport. Thanks to the Chair who has asked that I consider all 8 questions in my response.

In July 2019 the Council declared a Climate Emergency, setting a target to reduce the carbon footprint of the Authority and the Borough by 50% by 2023 and to become carbon neutral by 2050, in line with the timetable set by the government. Because of the work that has been done, we are very confident in being able to hit our 2023 target and put us in a strong position ahead of the curve.

We have worked hard this year, despite the restrictions brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, to produce a Climate Emergency Action Plan. To do this we have engaged with a range of organisations, including The Carbon Trust, interested individuals, and representatives of the community which was noted by Cabinet in October.

This Plan provides a framework for reaching carbon neutrality by 2050. I am personally overseeing this as the responsible Cabinet Member via the Climate Emergency Board that we commissioned.

To address the specific points raised in the questions I will go through them point by point:

We are absolutely committed to delivering the action plan. The Council has declared an emergency. I have reported twice to Cabinet outlining progress over the last 12 months alongside a national and international health crisis.

Council set clear targets when it declared a Climate Emergency. The Action Plan does not contain any specific recommendations (as has been suggested) rather it provides a strategic framework with suggested pathways to deliver the target.

The Climate Emergency Board will oversee delivery on the priority themes identified in the Plan which include the decarbonisation of heat, transport, energy supply including the increase of renewables and decarbonisation into our waste strategy.

In terms of timescales, we will be working as rapidly as possible but as you would expect, in a considered way and with pragmatism. We realise that a number of barriers will need to be overcome such as the availability of the relevant technology, capital investment and the will and support of Central Government.

Turning specifically to the points raised on transport, since the declaration of a Climate Emergency, we have secured substantial investment that has been used to retrofit the engines of all bus services along the Coast Road, reducing localised pollution and contributing to improved air quality.

Additional investment has also been secured to further develop our Strategic Cycling Network, with several new permanent links created with more planned over the next two years.

The successful trial of the Coastal Strip Cycle Lane has demonstrated the high level of demand for good quality segregated cycling infrastructure. The "Seafront Cycleway" was

delivered out of tranche 1 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund which was specific funding for temporary schemes of this type. We are now actively pursuing further funding to deliver a more permanent solution along the Coast. The scheme at the coast was absolutely successful. However there was an issue that we are sure we can address when we bring along a permanent scheme.

The success of the "Seafront Cycleway" is in part why we have successfully secured further funding from tranche 2 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund to improve our cycling infrastructure.

I can assure you that all schemes funded from this tranche have been independently reviewed by the Department for Transport, ensuring they provide segregated provision for cyclists in accordance with the most stringent design guidance.

An example of how this will look is the provision of 2-kilometre length of bi-directional segregated cycle lanes along the A191 Rake Lane, providing direct access from Whitley Bay and Monkseaton to Cobalt Business Park and links into the wider cycle network.

We are fully committed to delivering our ambitious Strategic Cycle Network Plan as set out in our Cycling Strategy and the usage and monitoring data collected during the temporary tranche 1 schemes provides the strong evidence base from which to secure future investment in similar schemes.

Finally, I want to emphasise that to truly make the Climate Emergency Action Plan successful, we will continue to work with everyone in the borough to help us with this global challenge of protecting our planet for generations to come. The Council alone cannot solve the climate emergency. We need to work together as a borough with everybody in the borough playing their part to ensure we meet our targets and we as a Council are absolutely committed to doing this.

Mr Maier asked the following supplementary question:

To address the climate emergency the previous government set out a road map to zero carbon housing to 2016. This government when lobbied by housebuilders scrapped that target and replaced it with nothing. When Boris Johnson announced his ten point plan a few days ago the new future homes standard was drafted to be moved forward to 2023. Again, housebuilders lobbied and just a few hours before the announcement it was removed. When regional spatial strategies were scrapped again by this government that took with it requirements for higher energy efficiency targets and renewal commitment.

Given this dire backdrop at national level without concerted local action houses given planning now and in the next five years will still be built to standards no better than seven to ten years previous. They will need to be retro-fitted to be on a useful level for our zero carbon stock in future. This is at a cost either to those residents, the Council or national government if we're lucky.

Will the Council commit to a definitive plan to work with other North of Tyne authorities to explore ways of using local policy and regulation to improve the energy efficiency of new housing in the borough?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

With regard to the government consultation North Tyneside Council, as I'm sure you can find on our website, did respond very stringently. We absolutely pushed for the highest standards in building control and in proper planning necessary for heating homes and decarbonisation. The government did back down on that which was very sad.

In terms of our own Council house stock we are absolutely committed to retro-fitting and any new stock that we build would be of the highest standard. We will continue to retro-fit to make our homes as energy efficient as possible. We have already started that work with heat source pumps and we are committed through our climate emergency action plan to get rid of all of our gas boilers from our Council stock by the end of the plan and replacing them with heat source pumps.

With regard to the North of Tyne we are already working at a North of Tyne level. The Mayor, Norma Redfearn chairs the Housing and Land Board which is working on plans to make more homes more energy efficient. The barrier they are running into at the moment is that developers are not willing to come forward with these plots and developers have land banked many plots around North Tyneside and around the country. We'll continue to work at a North of Tyne level to try to look at local policies to try to bring that forward. When we have done that it's through funding that the North of Tyne has unlocked to councils to allow them to get parts of the land built on with energy efficient homes that previously wouldn't have been built on. So, yes we will commit to looking at that.

Mr Christie asked the following supplementary question:

In relation to the cycleway specifically, one of the things that was noticed from the trial was the speed reductions of people driving within that particular area. One of the things that has come out a lot from that is whether or not tranche 2 will include the reallocation of road space from drivers so potentially the roads which are duelled to allow for the bi-directional cycle way to take place. It's interesting to note that Cobalt Business Park is been used as a hub for tranche 2 but no mention of whether the town centres or Silverlink are going to be included with that as they are potentially hubs for the wider borough to access as well.

In relation to the wagonways they are in dire need of updating because they are not particularly safe for people to cycle along at night and the cycle way has proved that people of all ages want to use good cycle ways which make them feel safe and I don't believe the wagonways make them feel safe. So, in relation to the question I want to ask Councillor Johnson is will tranche 2 specifically follow the cycle infrastructure guidance as specified in LTN 1/20?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

Mr Christie, as I'm sure you know LTN 1/20 is the guidance and it is what the government asked for. If that is the situation and I'm sure you have read the document it refers to if at all possible on a lot of occasions. But I can actually confirm that we will absolutely be reallocating road space when we look at tranche 2.

I just want to address a couple of your points that weren't included in your question but were included in your statement.

The Cobalt Business Park will be a hub because it is the largest employment site in the borough and eventually we are hoping to go back to those situations where people are coming into Cobalt Business Park. It's not just a hub because it's the Cobalt Business Park

and it's where people are commuting to, it's also one of the central points in our borough that links to all of the main cycle ways in our borough which includes linking to the Silverlink and beyond. The wagonways are part of our regeneration strategy and the Deputy Mayor took a paper a couple of months back to Cabinet with regard to the wagonways. Improvements are coming to the wagonways soon. We will always strive for the highest possible standards and we will be including in our tranche 2 a segregated cycle way on the highway network.

Ms Remfry asked the following supplementary question:

I want to pick up on Councillor Johnson's comment when he introduced the climate emergency action plan and said the Council is going to have to work with everybody in the borough.

Most of the housing in the borough is privately owned and all these house owners are going to have to change their boilers and retro-fit in terms of increasing the energy efficiency of their housing. How can you persuade the many private landlords in the borough to do that?

There are some really interesting ideas in the plan for community initiatives, but how are you going to promote these; how are you going to get communities together to do things like this? So, my question is how do you aim to involve everybody in the borough?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

One of the things we have to look at in the context of this Plan is that this is not something that will happen overnight. This is a 30-year action plan to get the borough to net zero.

At the moment the Council internally has created our Climate Emergency Board. We are creating business cases for all the internal stuff we can do. One of the ways we try to bring people through is by our recent State of the Area event which focused on the climate emergency action plan and we had some great discussion with stakeholders around the borough, residents and councillors, so it's getting people in the room. Eventually we are looking outwards; we are looking for an external board. We have managed to get agreement from some of the biggest polluters in the borough whether it be businesses, industry, charitable trusts or others to come on board and we will work with them to try and reduce their carbon emissions.

It's a case of trying to pull it all together and get it out there. It will not happen overnight. Some of the actions that will come are not there at the moment. We are developing those as we speak. We developed the Plan very quickly in the toughest of circumstances. We've had a year where naturally our main focus has been on the Coronavirus pandemic and protecting our most vulnerable residents and getting through this for our businesses and communities. However, we have kept the climate emergency work going all the way through. I know some other councils who certainly have not, but we've got a plan now, we're in the middle of implementing it and we're going to bring communities along with us.

Mr Steele on behalf of North Tyneside Green Party asked the following supplementary question:

The 2018-21 Plan stated that they were going to decarbonise and provide good cycle infrastructure by 2021. In the latest plan they talked about (section 4, page 55) decarbonising transport, providing goods, roads, pavements and cycle structures. How does that seem to

fit in with the closure of the sunrise cycleway and the reintroduction of south bound traffic on the A193?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

You will not be aware of the circumstances as you are not inside the Council, but the coastal cycle path was very successful and we're not denying that. However, there were some specific problems with the coastal cycle path with regard to the coastguard and coastal operations. There were delays to coastal operations and I'm not prepared and no other councillor in this borough would be prepared for coastal operations being delayed getting to an emergency in this borough. We have got to work with those organisations to get through this. We've got a great working relationship with them. They didn't object to the trial in the first place when they might have because they knew there was going to be a cycle lane. We are working on a permanent feature on the seafront to come forward with regards to that.

Mr Percival asked the following supplementary question:

Just picking up on the action plan which has four potential pathways leading to net zero carbon and you've said that it's not a case of choosing one pathway or another, but these are a framework to work within which for me at this stage is a little bit confusing. So, the action plan sets out really well what has to be done, but there's obviously still a lot of detail on how it will be achieved. So, I wonder if you could just clarify what the next steps are and the time scales and the processes from hereon forwards. So when might we expect to see more detailed plans and specific budgets being allocated and how will this be shared with the public so that we can follow what's going on?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

Internally within the Council we have already allocated a budget for certain projects. We've allocated about £10 million so far to projects including the action plan. That will include the retro-fitting at Killingworth depot which will see a massive reduction in carbon there. We've allocated another £4.3 million to a led lighting scheme which will see a mass reduction which will complete every light across the borough, except from the heritage posts, into LED which will see a massive saving. Internally the Climate Emergency Board are in the process of developing business cases on ten different workstreams (housing, organisational development, waste, communications, catering, internal fleet, built assets, borough wide, transport and energy generation) which will come forward for funding in the next year or so. Some of those are not projects that will be delivered in the next two or three years. Those projects are 10 to 15-year projects, particularly with regard to our housing stock and replacement of certain objects.

Externally within the borough, we as a Council have faced massive cuts over the last ten years. We do not have the funding available in the Council to provide funding to external organisations at the moment. The government are going to need to come forward with real funding and real drive and determination if we are going to achieve this because whilst we can look internally within the Council, and we've got some big plans to reduce the Council's footprint, the Council simply couldn't afford to help people replace petrol diesel motor cars. The government announced a 2030 ban on petrol diesel motor cars. Some of our poorest communities will not be able to upgrade their cars sadly by that time. The government need to come forward with a grant or scrappage scheme. Also, a lot of people have old inefficient boilers. The government are going to come up with a scheme to get those replaced.

Internally we've got plans and we've got funding in place. Externally for the borough we've got plans but the government need to step up and fund those in order for that to take place.

Mr Appleby asked the following supplementary question:

As was raised earlier the actions need to go beyond the Council to involve our communities and businesses and as Councillor Johnson just mentioned funding is a problem. Yes, money needs to be put forward for dedicated programmes to deal with these particular issues, but also there's a need to make sure that all the other Council spending is having a positive impact and one of the ways this can be done is through procurement policy. There's lots of potential there, you can have things like mandating reporting requirements so that you can have contracts that require ongoing improvement from suppliers, or you can put environmental credentials into things like tender assessments so that people are required to make the grade or compete on being greener. These measures are relatively quick to implement. They reach out to people outside of the Council and have a wider impact. They are low cost to the Council so they are not actually having to drive them and they have a cumulative impact because over time you build up more and more contracts that are requiring continuous improvement. It has a huge net benefit without dedicating specific funding for these measures so the sooner you start doing it the sooner that starts to build up.

Is the Council going to take the opportunity and take advantage of this? You could take an officer to start putting together a proposal right now and by the next meeting you could have something ready to take forward. Is this something that you are looking to get on with doing quickly?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

We work hard in procuring works Mr Appleby. We will always aim to get the greenest and best procurement that we do. Unfortunately, it's not always possible because cost is an issue. With over £100 million cut from our budget in the last eight years value for money for the residents is the main aim of this Council. Sadly, at the moment unless the government fancy stumping up some cash, value for money will be the aim for the residents in our procurement and for procurement at a regional level as well as we have to get agreement from other councils in the area – it's not just North Tyneside. For some issues the Council procures on its own, but a lot of procurement is done through NEPO.

So that's something we are looking at, something we have a plan on but overnight it's not going to change in terms of value for money will have to be at the heart of that. Contracts could run into the tens and twenty millions of pounds and the Council wouldn't be in a good situation financially if we included that in immediately. So, it's something we are looking at but it's not going to happen overnight.

9. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr Whalley

I am a resident in North Tyneside and have worked locally in the NHS full-time for over thirty years.

You are, of course, aware that lucrative contracts are awarded to private businesses and corporations for services that previously would have been provided in-house by the NHS. It is clear to us all that, very sadly, the privatisation of the NHS has been steadily increasing throughout the past decade and it is certainly a trend that I have witnessed as a clinician in

the NHS.

The ideologically-driven privatisation process often starts life rather innocuously and softly as a local one-off time-limited pilot or trial project with claims that the initiative is an "additional" service thus negating the need for public consultation. Following the pilot period, an inadequate evaluation and a glossy CCG presentation often serve to embed the private service more and more within our healthcare. The process is then wrapped up and masked by the privatised service being allowed to use and hide behind the trusted NHS logo.

You will also be aware that North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group recently commissioned a private company, Livi, to provide virtual Primary Care appointments to North Tyneside residents. Livi is an international digital healthcare company. This privatisation was sweetened by the CCG introducing it as a short-term pilot scheme but, as stated, the medium term dangers are both obvious and very significant.

In addition to this fundamental fact that North Tyneside CCG should not be running down the NHS and putting healthcare into the hands of profit-making companies with shareholders, there exist a number of operational difficulties. These include important issues such as

- poor continuity - it would be exceptional if a patient spoke to the same Livi GP more than once
- a lack of local knowledge - collaboration with local organisations and involvement in local systems of care are key features of work in Primary Care but Livi GPs, communicating with North Tyneside patients from across the whole of the UK, don't have a real life working knowledge of North Tyneside resources and systems
- practical difficulties associated with virtual assessments – for example, for those needing a physical examination, or for people with mental health problems
- increased health inequality – more vulnerable and older people are less likely to be using smartphones and ipads, and are also less likely to have access to broadband, spare minutes and data
- Looking at the bigger picture, the bottleneck in Primary Care is time – there are not enough GPs. This system takes more and more GPs out of local mainstream General Practice and locates them in virtual quick fix systems of dubious quality. One of the masked costs of privatisation is workforce shortage for the NHS, as private companies recruit NHS doctors. They are not "Add-ons" – they are "Takeaways" from our National Health Service.

I understand that the CCG failed to discuss this pilot scheme with North Tyneside councillors. This is not acceptable.

I am sure that you will agree that the fundamental issue relates to privatisation, and the fact that North Tyneside CCG chose to invest in an international healthcare company rather than our own local existing Primary Care Networks in North Tyneside.

When considering this issue, many people misguidedly quote an old counterargument by stating that "our General Practices are themselves privatised, so what is the problem?" but, believe me, there is a world of difference between hardworking GP partners in a localised Primary Care team and an international company, with a board of directors and with shareholders creaming off profits. The majority of GPs work to NHS contracts, follow NHS guidelines and see NHS patients. They do not compete for patients, or profit in the way competitive providers of healthcare do.

Likewise, some people will use the argument that the infrastructure and workforce is not

present – but I say that we need to be proactive in expanding our NHS to carry out such health-related work; North Tyneside CCG should be using these finances to invest in, and enable and support local GPs to manage the service. It is both shocking and a disgrace that North Tyneside CCG chose to go down this insidious privatisation route.

Finally, the pilot will be evaluated in a few months' time by the CCG, and the methodology typically used by the CCG is a matter of concern – I anticipate a superficial quantitative report on usage, response times, clinical presentation and outcomes, plus an attempt at a qualitative analysis using, perhaps, a carefully worded questionnaire, client satisfaction survey or direct quotes. There is a distinct lack of focus on the bigger picture – a lack of attention to a person's principles and values about whether the service should be a privatised business initiative or whether it should be provided in-house through a publicly accountable, publicly funded, publicly provided National Health Service. This is a crucial issue to consider as it will, of course, impact on our access to health services in years to come. This fundamental issue needs to be an important component of any evaluation.

My question to North Tyneside Council:

Given that North Tyneside Council is jointly responsible with the CCG for local health and social care provision under the terms of the "Integrated Care System", what will your involvement be regarding an evaluation of this service, and how will you ensure that a full and comprehensive review takes place?

Councillor M Hall responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:

Let me start by using this opportunity to once again put on record that North Tyneside Council is 100% opposed to any privatisation of the NHS and as long as Labour remain in control of North Tyneside Council it shall remain opposed to any privatisation of our precious NHS.

It gives me great pleasure to inform Council that the question has already been actioned. Members of Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Sub Committee are taking part in the Clinical Commissioners' Steering Group which will be evaluating the pilot of Livi which this question is about.

The CCG Evaluation Group will take the results of the evaluation to the Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Sub Committee for consideration by the whole committee. The evaluation of the pilot will be under the full scrutiny of all committee members.

We agree that North Tyneside CCG should not be putting healthcare into the hands of profit-making companies. They also know that new and changed services in our local NHS always get the close attention of North Tyneside Council. This has been demonstrated by the Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Sub Committee calling in the CCG's Livi pilot for scrutiny.

We've seen this year exploitation of the NHS by private businesses for huge profits by friends of government. A great example of how not to trust commercial arrangements.

I look forward to the evaluation of the Livi contract coming to the Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Sub Committee.

Mr Whalley asked the following supplementary question:

I've got the minutes here from the Council meeting in January this year and Councillor Hall stated then I can ensure that there is no way that North Tyneside Council would agree to privatisation of any sort in North Tyneside. We work together with the NHS and with the CCG. That was a statement made in January, so I'm puzzled how it's got to a state now where Livi GPs are working in North Tyneside. We need to be proactive in expanding our NHS to carry out such health-related work. We should be supporting local GPs to manage this sort of service. So, these Livi GPs are now working privately in North Tyneside. Can I ask what specifically the Council will do or the Health and Wellbeing Board to make sure that this does not happen again in North Tyneside?

Councillor Hall responded as follows:

Can I just point out that we haven't agreed to the Livi work in North Tyneside. In fact, by virtue of calling it into scrutiny shows that we will be taking every consideration of this scrutiny at Health and Wellbeing should it come back to there.

C77/20 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest were reported as follows:

Councillor C Davis – item 1 – Public Questions – non-registerable personal interest as her daughter works for the Carbon Trust

Councillor A Newman – item 5 – Motion 3 - non-registerable personal interest as his daughter is in the year group that may be affected by the situation regarding school examinations

Councillor K Clark – item 5 – Motion 3 - non-registerable personal interest as her daughter works in secondary education

Councillor W Samuel – item 5 - Motion 3 - non-registerable personal interest as his step-son may be affected by the situation regarding school examinations

Councillor S Phillips – item 5 - Motion 3 - non-registerable personal interest as he is a teacher and also an exam marker

Councillor M Rankin – item 5 - Motion 3 - non-registerable personal interest as his daughter may be affected by the situation regarding school examinations

Councillor L Bartoli – item 5 - Motion 3 - non-registerable personal interest as his son may be affected by the situation regarding school examinations

Councillor M Thirlaway – item 5 - Motion 5 - registerable personal interest as due to his employment he may potentially financially benefit from a one-off payment to social care staff as set out in the Motion. Councillor Thirlaway informed Council that he would not be taking part in any discussion or vote on this Motion.

C78/20 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 September 2020 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair.

C79/20 Motions

1. Motion - To ban the intentional release of balloons and sky lanterns on Council owned land

It was moved by Councillor A Austin and seconded by Councillor J Wallace that:

In recent years the release of large numbers of balloons and sky lanterns has increased, whether as a celebration or as a memorial to a loved one.

Whilst fully appreciating the emotions behind such events there is no doubt that when these lanterns and balloons return to the ground, they become simply litter, damaging our environment and threatening our wildlife.

This motion calls on Elected Mayor and Cabinet to consider a ban on the intentional release of balloons and sky lanterns for commemorative, social or publicity purposes, because of the serious environmental damage the resultant litter causes to marine life, birds, animals and the wider environment.

Balloons and lanterns can become a serious form of pollution for marine wildlife – the two main threats being ingestion (eating a balloon or pieces of balloon due to mistaking them for prey items such as jellyfish) or getting tangled up in balloon string or ribbon.

The list of marine creatures evidenced to have been affected by balloon entanglement and/or ingestion includes dolphins, whales, turtles, and seabirds, and so far includes 170 different species of marine life.

Lanterns and balloons (especially those filled with helium) can travel for many miles before coming back down to land, and farm animals have died after ingesting them.

Sky lanterns also pose a fire risk – in 2009 one sparked a blaze which claimed the life of a ten year old boy. Another caused a devastating fire at a zoo in Germany which killed 30 animals and birds.

There is a risk of fire to standing straw, thatch roofs, bales of hay, and crops in the summer months. Lanterns have been the cause of a number of false alarm call outs on the coast as people mistake them for distress flares. They can pose a risk to aircraft, and cost councils money to clean up.

We believe that the proposed ban should also apply to balloons described as "biodegradable" since evidence has shown that the latex they are made of can still take up to six months or more to degrade, and in that time, still poses a threat to the safety of our wildlife.

We fully appreciate that many of these balloon and lantern releases are linked to remembering lost loved ones, so we further request that the Elected Mayor and Cabinet identifies one or more pieces of land which could be repurposed as "Memorial Meadows" where grieving families can scatter wildflower seeds, and return to visit from time to time. This would serve to promote biodiversity, encouraging butterflies and bees, but would also allow loved ones to be remembered.

Bans are strongly supported by numerous organisations such as the RSPCA, the Marine

Conservation Society and the National Farmers' Union, and a great many councils throughout the UK have now banned intentional balloon and lantern releases, including locally Newcastle, South Tyneside and Northumberland.

This is a non-political issue of huge importance environmentally, and we hope all members present will support this important motion.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 55 votes to 0 votes.

2. Motion – Local Plan

It was moved by Councillor S Brockbank and seconded by Councillor P McIntyre that:

Since the passing of the Local Plan by North Tyneside Council there have been various national and local changes, which will impact on delivery of the potential number of houses indicated as part of the Council's Plan.

The Government's planning reforms will have a significant impact on the delivery of home building across the region, and country. These reforms were not known at the time of the development of North Tyneside's Local Plan.

I believe the population growth projections which were used by the Council to predict the number of incoming residents to live in these properties relies on older data than is currently available. As such, it is my view that the Local Plan is predicated on out-of-date information that may well impact on the number of homes required.

We call upon the Mayor to clarify to the residents of North Tyneside how she plans to address these areas of change.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was defeated by 43 votes to 7 votes.

3. Motion – Covid-19 Impact on Education

It was moved by Councillor C Johnson and seconded by Councillor M Rankin that:

Council notes:

- that the COVID-19 crisis has had a profound impact on children's education, particularly those in year 11 and year 13;
- that students in the borough and across the country have missed at least 5 months of face to face teaching;
- that there has been no guidance on a "Plan B" in the event that GCSE and A' Level examinations cannot take place;
- that in a number of subjects, including Maths and Science, teachers have been told there will be no changes to the content students will be examined on despite missing 5 months of face-to-face teaching;
- that the debacle of last summer results where the Conservative government initially denied many students their rightful results were entirely avoidable;

- that despite pupils now being back in school, many continue to miss face to face teaching due to self-isolation, and some pupils are now in their second 14 day period of isolation.

Council believes:

- that it will once again be the most disadvantaged pupils who suffer if the government do not act and layout their strategy for next summer's exams;
- that the announcement of a 3-week delay to next summer's exams is simply not good enough and does little in replacing 5 months of teaching;
- that it would be a national outrage if we end up in a situation like last summer when teachers who know their pupils best were ignored in favour of an algorithm which was not fit for purpose.

Council calls upon the Mayor to:

- write to the Secretary of State to ask him to immediately:
- review and reduce the content of next summer's examinations on account of students having missed 5 months face to face teaching.
- Immediately publish his "Plan B" should circumstances require that examinations be cancelled.
- work with teachers and school leaders to come up with a robust system of assessment, should examinations not be possible in the summer.
- ask exam boards to publish what support and consideration they will offer to students who miss additional teaching time due to Covid-19.

An amendment was moved by Councillor S Brockbank and seconded by Councillor P McIntyre as follows:

Delete after - 'that students in the borough and across the country have missed at least 5 months of face to face teaching;' and replace with:

- that teachers across North Tyneside have worked tirelessly to provide students with classes and work throughout the lockdown period and for any subsequent isolation period to prevent them falling behind;
- that teacher assessed grades were used this summer to ensure that every student received their CAG or calculated grade, whichever was higher meaning no student will have been prevented from progressing to the next stage of education;
- that a lack of real exam results disadvantage black and minority ethnic, working-class and other marginalised students, who are already under-represented in top universities.

Council believes:

- that social mobility and the life chances of students across North Tyneside will be negatively impacted by cancelling examinations, especially those of the most disadvantaged;
- that teachers are best placed, not councillors, to determine what work and/or measures should be put in place to allow students to catch up on missed learning;
- that should the unthinkable happen and examinations are cancelled students should receive their CAG or calculated grade whichever is higher and should be given the option of an examination should they be unhappy with their grade.

Council calls upon the Mayor to:

- Write to the Secretary of State offering full cooperation, including the use of council facilities if required to allow students to take examinations next year;
- Write to all secondary/high school teachers across North Tyneside asking what North Tyneside Council can do to help children catch up and as a result boost their life chances;
- Instruct the relevant cabinet member to formulate a plan to offset the mental health implications that time outside of education can have on young people and report back to the next meeting of Council.

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, was defeated by 45 votes to 7 votes.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 47 votes to 7 votes.

4. Motion – Child Poverty

It was moved by Councillor P Earley and seconded by Councillor B Burdis that:

Council notes that

Between 2014 and 2019 the greatest increase in child poverty across the UK was in the North East, where it rose nine percentage points.

That the North East has the second highest rate of child poverty in the UK at 35% and that this equates to almost 11 children and young people in a class of 30 who are now in poverty.

That in North Tyneside we currently have a child poverty rate of 31%

That whilst these figures are serious, they are even more alarming when noting that they do not take into account the devastating effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on household incomes.

Council believes

That it is unconscionable that so many of our children and young people are living in poverty but recognises that it is not an issue which North Tyneside Council can tackle alone and that it requires urgent action by national government to resolve the problem.

Council therefore supports the call by the North East Child Poverty Commission and the End Child Poverty Coalition for government, as a matter of urgency, to produce a

comprehensive plan to end child poverty and agrees that this plan should include

- Retaining the £20 a week uplift in Universal Credit (introduced at the start of the pandemic and due to be removed in April 2021);
- Ending the benefit cap and two-child limit;
- Investing in all children with an increase to child benefit of at least £10 per child per week;
- Uprating of housing assistance in line with inflation; and
- Extending free school meals to all families in receipt of Universal Credit, and to those with No Recourse to Public Funds.

and calls upon the Mayor to write to the secretary of state to urge her to bring forward a comprehensive plan to end child poverty.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 49 votes to 0 votes.

5. Motion - Social Care Staff

It was moved by Councillor M Rankin and seconded by Councillor P Earley that:

North Tyneside Council recognises the hard work and commitment of social care staff who have provided essential care to our most vulnerable residents during the coronavirus outbreak.

We welcome the Welsh Government's decision to pay social care staff a one-off flat rate payment of £500 and believe the UK Government should replicate this scheme for social care staff in England.

North Tyneside Council requests that the Elected Mayor writes to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care asking him to establish a similar scheme for social care staff in England.

An amendment was moved by Councillor S Brockbank and seconded by Councillor P McIntyre as follows:

Remove the second and third paragraphs and replace with:

“North Tyneside Council expresses its most sincere thanks to all key workers across every sector of the economy, from public sector employees to private businesses who have kept the country moving, for their commitment and hard work.

The first priority of government and this Council is to fight the virus and focus on saving lives. However, this Council requests that the Elected Mayor write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to express our support for the proposals he set out in his Spending Review that those on less than £24,000, including social care staff in care homes and who work as home carers, will be awarded a pay rise.”

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, was defeated by 47 votes to 7 votes.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 47 votes to 0 votes.

6. Motion – Commonwealth and Veterans’ Support

It was moved by Councillor A Newman and seconded by Councillor G Bell that:

We call upon the Elected Mayor to make the Authority’s armed forces champions and lead officers aware of the difficulties experienced by commonwealth veterans currently applying for leave to remain in the UK and ensure that those who are currently experiencing problems, whether financial or immigration difficulties, are not disadvantaged whilst their applications for leave to remain in the UK are ongoing.

We also call upon the Elected Mayor to write to the prime minister, Kevin Forster the minister of state for immigration, and Johnny Mercer the minister of state for veterans affairs outlining this councils support for all commonwealth veterans who have served a minimum of 4 years being granted automatic and free of charge right to remain in the UK and that any veteran who completes 12 years of service to be automatically given British Citizenship.

Further, we call upon the Elected Mayor to write to Mary Glendon, MP for North Tyneside and Sir Alan Campbell MP for Tynemouth, on behalf of this council, to ask that they} continue to press the government for a change in the legislation that affects those that have served diligently and honourably for this Country.

An amendment was moved by Councillor S Brockbank and seconded by Councillor L Bartoli as follows:

Add to the end of the second paragraph:

“unless any member of the Armed Services included in this motion have been Dishonourably Discharged due to serious criminal behaviour and may present a risk to the UK or the place they reside. “

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, was defeated by 45 votes to 6 votes.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 49 votes to 0 votes.

7. Motion – White Ribbon Campaign - Accreditation, ambassadors and pledges.

It was moved by Councillor E Parker-Leonard and seconded by Councillor J Mole that:

The White Ribbon Campaign works to end male violence against women by engaging with men and boys, raising awareness, influencing change and providing resources to make change happen. North Tyneside council agrees to call upon the Elected Mayor to support the White Ribbon Campaign.

According to the Office of National Statistics in 2019:

- Almost one in three women aged 16-59 will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime.
- Two women a week are killed by a current, or former, partner in England and Wales alone.
- In the year ending March 2019, 1.6 million women experienced domestic abuse.
- Since the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic, Refuge, the largest charity dealing with domestic abuse in the UK, reported a 700% increase to its helpline in just one day.

- We believe the mental, emotional, physical, social and financial consequences of domestic violence need to be formally acknowledged and addressed.

North Tyneside Council requests the Elected Mayor to identify, engage and encourage staff members to be White ribbon ambassadors. White Ribbon Ambassadors are volunteers who are men who engage with other men and boys to call out abusive and sexist behaviour among their friends, colleagues and communities to promote a culture of equality and respect.

North Tyneside Council requests the Elected Mayor to work towards Accreditation. White Ribbon Accreditation programme ensures organisations take a strategic approach to ending male violence against women by engaging with men and boys, changing cultures and raising awareness.

North Tyneside Council requests the Elected Mayor to encourage men to make the Promise to never commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women.
<https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/promise>

This would strengthen a message to our community that violence against women is unacceptable and that North Tyneside Council supports this message. These developments would improve organisational culture, safety and morale and increase the knowledge and skills of staff members.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 49 votes to 0 votes.

8. Motion – Fireworks

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

This Council calls upon our Elected Mayor and her Cabinet to seek a process to

- require all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people
- actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks
- write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays
- encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock 'quieter' fireworks for public display

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 55 votes to 0 votes.

C80/20 North Tyneside Council Living Wage

Council received a report seeking approval to pay a North Tyneside Living Wage (NTLW) based on the Living Wage Foundation's rate for 2019/20 of £9.30 per hour. This would be paid as a supplement to all those earning less than £9.30 per hour on the Authority's current pay and grading structure and back dated to April 2020. This risk was understood and had

been included in the 2020/21 Budget.

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

Council:

- (1) agree to a North Tyneside Living Wage as outlined in the report, which will be backdated to April 2020;
- (2) authorise the Head of Resources in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance, Head of Paid Service and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and Cabinet Member for Human Resources to put in place a pay supplement for the year 2021/2022 taking into consideration the financial impact on the Authority of the Real Living Wage;
- (3) authorise the use of the finance allocated via the budget setting process for 2020/21 to enable the implementation of this payment; and
- (4) authorise the Head of Resources, in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance to take all necessary steps to implement the recommendations above.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 54 votes to 0 votes.

C81/20 Chair's Announcements

The Chair thanked everyone who had contributed to her charities. She specifically referred to support given to help Operation Veteran gain a lease on a property in Nile Street, North Shields for use as a veterans' centre. She thanked all those who had been involved.

She also referred to the recent Remembrance Day events which had been very different this year and referred in particular to the video that had been produced of the laying of wreaths at various locations around the Borough.

The Chair conveyed her best wishes to everyone for Christmas and New Year and hoped everyone stayed safe in the present circumstances.

C82/20 Elected Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor thanked Councillor Pickard for all the work he had done on the Living Wage.

She thanked all those residents who had been in touch with her to praise the Authority's staff for their continued efforts in ensuring that essential services had continued to be delivered such as caring for vulnerable residents, keeping the borough clean, to teachers, catering and cleaning staff who had kept schools open.

She referred to the Chancellor's recent announcement to award NHS staff a well-deserved pay rise. However, she was disappointed at the announcement to freeze the pay of public sector workers despite many of them risking their lives on a daily basis in the current pandemic.

The Mayor conveyed her best wishes to public sector workers and wished everyone a safe Christmas. She urged everyone to exercise caution and to adhere to the rules and hoped

that by working together some sort of normality could return in 2021.

The Mayor also thanked the Chair of the Council for chairing this virtual Council meeting.

C83/20 Questions by Members of the Council

1. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor J M Allan

Could the Elected Mayor or her Cabinet member provide an update on the progress being made on the Climate Emergency Action Plan? It is now over twelve months since full council agreed to the proposal below and could be advised when local ward councillors will be invited to participate and make contributions to the work. Could the response also provide the names of the Climate Emergency Board members?

That Council:

1. notes the significant progress made to date by the Authority in reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

2. agrees that the Authority:

a. declares a climate emergency.

b. seeks to halve the Authority's and the Borough's carbon footprint by 2023, four years ahead of the current target.

c. commits that itself and Borough will be carbon neutral by 2050 in line with the national target; and

3. notes that Cabinet will receive an update report within six months.

4. requests the Elected Mayor to instruct the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport to:

a. publish an annual report on the Authority's website that details performance against carbon reduction targets; ITEM 6 Climate Emergency Declaration

b. includes young people in the development, delivery, and review of actions, ensuring that they have a voice in shaping the future.

c. work with partners across the Borough and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans.

d. call on Central Government to provide powers and resources to reduce carbon emissions;

e. ensure that all strategic decisions, budgets, and approaches to planning decisions are in line with this climate emergency declaration; and

f. ensure that the Authority Senior Leadership Team embed carbon reduction work across the Authority and take responsibility for reducing, as rapidly as possible, the carbon emissions resulting from the Authority's activities.

Councillor C Johnson responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:

Thank you for your question regarding the Climate Emergency Action Plan and for highlighting your enthusiasm, to contribute to its successful delivery.

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency, setting a target to reduce the carbon footprint of the Authority and the Borough by 50% by 2023, and to become carbon neutral by 2050.

Despite the significant and far reaching challenges that coronavirus has placed upon the Authority, its officers and our community, I am pleased to be able to report that the Climate Emergency Board has continued to meet to oversee the development and production of our

Climate Emergency Action Plan.

And Cabinet has been apprised of progress on a regular basis since the Declaration. The Board is co- chaired by myself and the Head of Environment, Housing and Leisure and membership is a team of lead officers having responsibility for the following workstreams: -

Phil Scott	Co-Chair
John Sparkes	Housing Workstream
Suzanne Duncan	Organisational Development Workstream
Colin MacDonald	Waste Workstream
James Moore	Communications Workstream
Barbara Patterson	Catering Workstream
Samantha Dand	Internal Fleet Workstream
Wayne Stark	Built Assets Workstream
Paul Nelson	Borough-wide Workstream
Nicholas Bryan	Borough-wide Workstream (Transport)
Michael Keenlyside	Energy Generation Workstream
Abi Tang	Youth Council Representative

Good progress is being made in each of the work streams and we are bringing forward business cases on them in the coming months. To give you a flavour:

- A £0.500m business case to install LED streetlights has been approved and installations will commence in January 2021 – with more to come
- There is now a dedicated Climate Emergency budget in the 2020/21 Investment Plan to support the work of the Board
- A feasibility study for the installation of renewable energy technologies on public buildings and adjacent land, has been completed and we are progressing the most viable cases through to consideration for the Investment Project Board (for example, solar car ports on car parks)
- The re-development and decarbonisation of the Killingworth depot site continues to progress, and the on-site solar PV electricity generation will help to reduce demand from the national grid by between 80-90%
- The Authority has expanded the range of materials that are included in kerbside recycling, to include pots, tubs and trays
- We have launched a 12-month e-Cargo bike trial for small and medium size enterprises in North Shields, Whitley Bay and Tynemouth for zero emission last-mile deliveries
- Secured provision of grants for upgrading North Tyneside taxis so they are compliant with the Tyneside Clean Air Zone due to come into operation in 2021; and
- Workforce and Organisational Development Plan now includes climate change as part of key organisational and workforce challenges.

And we have responded to a series of Government policy consultations over the summer

period associated with lowering carbon emissions

I would also emphasise that in all this activity, the Board continues to fully engage with our young elected representatives to shape our plans, including our Climate Emergency Action Plan, our work around waste, recycling and reducing single use plastics.

As we further develop the Action Plan, we will of course be seeking input from key stakeholders at a community level providing an ideal opportunity for direct input from Ward Members. I'm also working with the Chair of the Environment Committee, Councillor Brian Burdis to see how we can feed into his committee and how councillors can feed in.

As I'm sure you will already know, there was a key opportunity at this year's State of the Area event to once again engage on Climate Emergency issues with stakeholders, including Ward Members, discussing the Climate Change impacts on health, travel and transport.

As you would expect, our approach to engagement activity, which includes listening to Ward Members, continues to inform and refine our policy development.

Councillor Allan asked the following supplementary question:

What plans are there for speeding up the work on North Tyneside's policies particularly within the Local Plan and planning conditions? A great many decisions for new developments use a cost factor and building standards as reason for not introducing new products to reduce the impact on the climate.

Surely we could adopt policies that will become strong influences in building design, both domestic and commercial, with very little effort by North Tyneside Council. An example of planning conditions could be that commercial showrooms could be restricted to having their lights on throughout the night thus reducing the carbon footprint and saving power costs for the owners.

Councillor Johnson responded as follows:

As I'm sure you're aware I'm not responsible for planning. However, I do believe that any planning conditions should obviously be made by the Planning Committee and not by Cabinet. I do agree we can bring forward more planning documents to try and reduce our carbon footprint and that is certainly part of the housing workstream which is being led by John Sparkes and we'll be hopefully progressing that soon. We'll try to bring things forward. As I mentioned in my public questions we're also working with North of Tyne Combined Authority to bring forward more sustainable housing and more carbon neutral housing. So yes we are doing more and we have plans in place.

2. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor A Newman

I want to take this opportunity to Praise the Elected Mayor and the Cabinet's decision to provide free school meals to children during the half term holiday using funds from the Council's Poverty Intervention fund.

Can the Mayor confirm that the Poverty Intervention fund was set up before the pandemic with no additional support from the Conservative Government?

And can you tell me who on this Council supported its creation?

Councillor B Pickard responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:

I can confirm that the Poverty Intervention Fund decision was taken by the Mayor and Cabinet before the start of the pandemic. It was included as part of the Authority's budget for 2020/21. It was part of the draft budget proposals agreed by the Cabinet on 3 February 2020. The £1m funding came from the use of the Strategic Reserve without any additional support from the Conservative Government.

We considered it necessary to take action to support residents in the Borough who are experiencing poverty and financial hardship due to the increased detrimental impact of universal credit and other government welfare reforms.

Poverty and financial hardship has clearly been further intensified by this pandemic. As a result of our commitment we were already in a position to tackle holiday hunger and help out our hard-hit families and our older residents.

Councillor Newman asked the following supplementary question:

I, like many councillors, have been overwhelmed by the incredible generosity of individuals, charities and businesses in North Tyneside. Will the Mayor join me in commending the people, charities and businesses for their overwhelming support for the children affected by food poverty during the half term holidays?

Councillor Pickard responded as follows:

I'm pleased to endorse that comment. It was actually raised by a Labour Councillor that we should use local delivery and local charities to help us. That was a very good idea that came forward and we've been impressed by the amount of effort people have put in during the Autumn school holidays to make sure all those who needed a meal got them.

I would once again reiterate that we couldn't do this without the help and support of our voluntary organisations but also by individuals who are going out of their way to help in this present climate.