

Local Government Act 1972

Borough of North Tyneside

Thursday, 22 July 2021

At the meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Tyneside duly convened and held on Thursday, 22 July 2021 at 6.00 pm in Bowling Green - The Parks, Howdon Road, North Shields NE29 6TL at which a quorum of Members were present, that is to say: -

Present

Councillor D Drummond (Chair)
N Redfearn (Elected Mayor)

Councillor L Arkley	Councillor K Barrie
Councillor L Bartoli	Councillor L Bones
Councillor T Brady	Councillor S Brockbank
Councillor B Burdis	Councillor C Burdis
Councillor J Cassidy	Councillor N Craven
Councillor E Darke	Councillor L Darke
Councillor C Davis	Councillor S Day
Councillor P Earley	Councillor S Graham
Councillor M Green	Councillor M Hall
Councillor J Harrison	Councillor John Hunter
Councillor C Johnson	Councillor H Johnson
Councillor C Johnston	Councillor J Kirwin
Councillor F Lott	Councillor W Lott
Councillor G Madden	Councillor M Madden
Councillor P McIntyre	Councillor J Mole
Councillor A McMullen	Councillor J Montague
Councillor T Mulvenna	Councillor A Newman
Councillor J O'Shea	Councillor P Oliver
Councillor A Percy	Councillor S Phillips
Councillor B Pickard	Councillor M Rankin
Councillor P Richardson	Councillor W Samuel
Councillor J Shaw	Councillor J Stirling
Councillor J Walker	Councillor J Wallace
Councillor Westwater	Councillor M Wilson

Apologies: Councillor J Allan, Councillor G Bell, Councillor L Bell, Councillor K Clark, Councillor D Cox, Councillor S Cox, Councillor J Cruddas, Councillor Janet Hunter, Councillor E Parker-Leonard and Councillor M Thirlaway

C19/21 Public Questions

1. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr G Spedding of North Shields

What will the Mayor do to develop wards that currently suffer extreme poverty and feel left behind by North Tyneside Council - such as Chirton Ward and Preston Ward - and if there will be any further funding allocation to help alleviate poverty in the borough?

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

We have put in place funding and a range of measures to give direct support the poorest people and families in North Tyneside wherever they live. We are also determined to tackle the long standing inequalities that exist in our borough and that we know have been made worse by the pandemic.

I am extremely proud of our Poverty Intervention Fund that has made a difference to people's lives. This has included vouchers to help our poorest families to be able to afford to feed their children over the school holidays and to get school uniform, coats or shoes. We have also supported our poorest pensioners by helping them to get the benefits they are entitled to as well as support with hot meals over the winter.

Our innovative approach to introduce poverty proofing in all of our schools will mean that our children and young people do not feel the stigma that can be common if their families are on a low income.

This year we have allocated £600,000 in the Council's budget to provide this much needed lifeline for our poorest families who very sadly do live in poverty.

Much of this direct financial support for families will go to people living in Chirton ward as this is one of our most deprived wards in the borough and where almost 3,000 people live in an area that is in the 10% most deprived in England. Preston ward however is one of our least deprived wards and no residents there live in the 10% most deprived areas in England.

However, regardless we will support any resident of the borough who needs support from us as we always have done.

2. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr J Christie of Wallsend

Within the roles and portfolios assigned to Cabinet members, one of those roles is that of a Cycling Champion.

As a Council organisation, there is a lot of publicity generated about the role of Bikeability for school children, and the occasional advertisement of Bikeability courses for adults too.

Whilst this publicity is welcome, there still appears to be a disconnect between what the Council perceive what cyclists experience, and the actual reality.

A full, practical, understanding of Bikeability would be of great benefit to any Cycling Champion of the Cabinet. This would supplement any regular cycling that individual undertakes in, and around, the Borough.

It would also highlight how seriously the Mayor, and the Cabinet, view Cycling in the

Borough, strengthening the integrity of how the role is viewed by its citizens, and the cycling community.

Putting to one side the ongoing cycling consultation, please can the Mayor and Cabinet commit to any current, and future, Cycling Champion to undertake the full, practical, Bikeability course to Level 3 standard?

Councillor S Graham responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:

Thank you for the question.

We are indeed very proud of our Bikeability scheme and quite rightly promote the scheme as we think it is really important for children and sometimes adults to take part. In the past 4 years over 7000 children have successfully passed through the scheme.

The purpose of the scheme is to give those attending skills and confidence to cycle regularly and consider the bike as an everyday mode of transport.

This is just one of a number of initiatives supporting our aim to help more people in the borough cycle more easily and more often.

As the new cycling champion, I am committed to promoting the scheme and it will of course take me some time to gain a detailed knowledge of all aspects of the scheme. As for taking part myself I am gradually building up my own confidence. I have bought an e-bike and hope to be attending (or peddling towards) an adult version of the course in the near future.

3. Question to the Elected Mayor from Ms P Remfry of Wallsend

Given the Council's commitment, contained in its Local Plan, to building a further 5,000+ homes in the borough over the next 10 years, what plans are in place to ensure that the carbon emissions from these new homes support the Council's net zero carbon target for the borough for 2030? Does the Council have plans to ensure that houses currently being built have higher energy standards than originally planned by the developers?

Councillor S Graham responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:

Thank you for your question.

For housing developments that already have planning permission and are in accordance with current building regulations there is no legal basis whereby the Council can place additional, more stringent standards on their construction.

However, it is important to note for such development the improvements in construction techniques and energy efficiency will mean that each home, while providing much-needed accommodation for our residents, will be substantially more energy efficient

Ms Remfry asked the following supplementary question:

Lots of houses are being built at the moment under existing regulations, which means in five years' time people living in those houses will have to spend money themselves to retrofit them. Does the Council have any powers to get the developers to increase the energy standards to the properties they are building at the moment?

Councillor S Graham responded as follows:

I believe I already answered that part of the question. At the present time, we do not have the legal powers over the current building regulations where we can place additional stricter conditions on their construction, we are retrofitting quite a lot of the Council stock, installing air source heat pumps wherever we can when funding becomes available, and I hope in the future that consumer demand will be such that developers will change the way they put heating systems in in particular so that people don't have to rip out boilers and put something else in, but we all know they are quite expensive at the moment and until the price drops the market will play for the most profit in private development. It's different where Councils are building, we will look more carefully at that and get real value for money, but at present there is nothing we can do to enforce this with private developers.

C20/21 To receive any Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest were reported as follows:

Councillor L Arkley – Item 5 – Motion 5 - non-registerable personal interest as she is a Trustee of a Residential Organisation which administers finances for those who rent.

Councillor K Barrie – Item 5 – Motion 5 - non-registerable personal interest as he is a Trustee of a Residential Organisation which administers finances for those who rent.

Councillor L Bartoli – Item 5 – Motion 5 - non-registerable personal interest as he owns a private property and is an officer of Conservative Federation who own two properties.

Councillor L Bones – Item 5 – Motion 5 - non-registerable personal interest as he is an officer of Conservative Federation who own two properties.

Councillor S Brockbank – Item 5 – Motion 5 - registerable personal interest as he is a renter of residential properties.

Councillor J Harrison – Item 5 – Motion 5 - registerable personal interest as he is a landlord of a rented property in North Tyneside.

Councillor C Johnston – Item 5 – Motion 5 - registerable personal interest as he is an officer of a rented property.

Councillor P McIntyre – Item 5 – Motion 5 - non-registerable personal interest as she is a Trustee of a Residential Organisation which administers finances for those who rent.

Councillor J Montague – Item 5 – Motion 5 - registerable personal interest as he is a landlord of a rented property.

Councillor J O'Shea – Item 5 – Motion 5 - non-registerable personal interest as he is a Trustee of Housing Charity.

Councillor J Stirling – Item 5 – Motion 5 - registerable personal interest as he is a landlord of a rented property in North Tyneside.

Councillor J Wallace – Item 5 – Motion 5 - registerable personal interest as she is a landlord.

Councillor B Burdis – Item 6 - registerable personal interest as he works for a Member of Parliament.

Councillor C Burdis – Item 6 – non - registerable personal interest as her husband works for a Member of Parliament.

Councillor E Darke – Item 6 - registerable personal interest as he works for a Member of Parliament.

Councillor S Day – Item 6 - registerable personal interest as she works for a Member of Parliament.

Councillor C Johnson – Item 6 - registerable personal interest as he works for a Member of Parliament.

C21/21 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 20 May 2021 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair.

C22/21 Motion 1 – Suicide Prevention Training

It was moved by Councillor J Wallace and seconded by Councillor S Brockbank that:

In June last year, Mrs Rose Paterson took her own life, a tragic loss. Suicide is a preventable death and the Rose Paterson Trust, established in her honour, is encouraging everyone to undergo a 30 minute online suicide awareness course.

It aims to provide a better understanding of the signs to watch for and the skills needed to approach someone who may be struggling, whether through social isolation or suicidal thoughts. It aims to give people the skills and confidence to help someone who may be considering suicide.

The free course is available on the website zerosuicidealliance.com

We ask the Council to provide an opportunity in work hours for all members of staff to take this training, so that, should it be necessary, they may be able to help fellow officers, family, friends and members of the public.

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

C23/21 Motion 2 - Highways Funding

It was moved by Councillor K Barrie and seconded by Councillor C Johnston that:

Pavements and pothole repairs are some of the most commonly raised issues with local councillors. All councillors will know how dangerous broken pavements and potholes can be to pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike.

North Tyneside Council recently received a £1.8 Million funding boost from Central Government to fix potholes across the borough. The funding is intended to fix existing

potholes but will also be available for local authorities to undertake longer term road resurfacing work to prevent potholes from appearing in the first place.

North Tyneside Council currently hold over £67 Million in reserves, of which £20 Million are not ring fenced. With potholes across the borough worsening and pavement repairs being put on hold, Council asks the Mayor to set up an emergency pavement and pothole repair fund, match funding Central Government's contribution, therefore ensuring North Tyneside get back on top of our crumbling roads and pavements.

An amendment was moved by Councillor S Graham and seconded by Councillor C Johnson as follows:

Delete paragraphs:

"North Tyneside Council recently received a £1.8 Million funding boost from Central Government to fix potholes across the borough. The funding is intended to fix existing potholes but will also be available for local authorities to undertake longer term road resurfacing work to prevent potholes from appearing in the first place.

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and replace with:

"The Conservative Government made a cut of 30.32% to the pothole repair budget last year which equates to £1.27 million pounds which is a huge decrease in funding and capacity to repair potholes.

Council notes that the Mayor has already set up an emergency pavement pothole repair fund and an additional £2 million pounds has been invested by the Labour Cabinet's budgets in recent years. Council therefore calls upon the Mayor to continue investing an additional £2 million pounds per year into an emergency pavement and pothole fund.

Council further calls upon the Mayor to write to the government asking them to reverse their cuts to potholes repair funding to allow the council to repair and invest in even more roads and pavements resurfacing and potholes fixing".

A recorded vote on the amendment was requested by two Members present.

Votes for the amendment

N Redfearn, Elected Mayor and Councillors T Brady, B Burdis, C Burdis, J Cassidy, N Craven, E Darke, L Darke, C Davis, S Day, D Drummond, P Earley, S Graham, M Green, M Hall, J Harrison, John Hunter, C Johnson, H Johnson, J Kirwin, F Lott, W Lott, G Madden, M Madden, A McMullen, J Mole, J Montague, T Mulvenna, A Newman, P Oliver, J O'Shea, A Percy, S Phillips, B Pickard, M Rankin, P Richardson, W Samuel, J Shaw, J Stirling, J Walker and M Wilson.

Votes against the amendment

Councillors L Arkley, K Barrie, L Bartoli, L Bones, S Brockbank, C Johnston, J Wallace and G Westwater.

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 41 votes to 8 votes.

A recorded vote on the Motion, as amended, was requested by two Members present.

Votes for the Motion, as amended (the substantive Motion)

N Redfearn, Elected Mayor and Councillors T Brady, B Burdis, C Burdis, J Cassidy, N Craven, E Darke, L Darke, C Davis, S Day, D Drummond, P Earley, S Graham, M Green, M Hall, J Harrison, John Hunter, C Johnson, H Johnson, J Kirwin, F Lott, W Lott, G Madden, M Madden, A McMullen, J Mole, J Montague, T Mulvenna, A Newman, P Oliver, J O'Shea, A Percy, S Phillips, B Pickard, M Rankin, P Richardson, W Samuel, J Shaw, J Stirling, J Walker and M Wilson.

Votes against the Motion, as amended (the substantive Motion)

None.

Abstentions

Councillors L Arkley, K Barrie, L Bartoli, L Bones, S Brockbank, C Johnston, J Wallace and G Westwater.

The motion, as amended, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 41 votes to 0 votes, with 8 abstentions.

C24/21 Motion 3 - Police Officer Numbers

It was moved by Councillor S Brockbank and seconded by Councillor L Bones that:

Since his election, the Prime Minister has forged ahead with his pledge to recruit more police officers, with an ambitious target of 20,000. Additionally, the Home Office has accepted the recommendations of an independent panel to increase the starting salary of the constables, to make the force an attractive career option.

During lockdown, we have seen reports from residents in North Tyneside relating to anti-social behaviour in a range of our communities, with the key question being asked: When will the PCC allocate more of the available resources to our non-urban policing priorities?

Keeping citizens safe is the first priority of government and ensuring residents get a good deal in North Tyneside, should be the first priority of this Council.

We call upon the Elected Mayor to write to the PCC and request, as a matter of urgency, that she allocated more constables to our area to meet the need which is clearly evident.

An amendment was moved by Councillor C Burdis and seconded by Councillor M Rankin as follows:

Delete the word *ambitious* in the first sentence and the wording:

“Additionally, the Home Office has accepted the recommendations of an independent panel

to increase the starting salary of the constables, to make the force an attractive career option.

During lockdown, we have seen reports from residents in North Tyneside relating to anti-social behaviour in a range of our communities, with the key question being asked: When will the PCC allocate more of the available resources to our non-urban policing priorities? Keeping citizens safe is the first priority of government and ensuring residents get a good deal in North Tyneside, should be the first priority of this Council”.

and replace with

“However this will only lead to the level of police officers being of a similar level to what they were at the end of the last Labour Government meaning the government has let North Tyneside residents down by under resourcing the police force for the past decade by way of example between 2010 and 2020 we lost 1142 officers and the Government cut almost a 1/3 of the police budget.

We note that Mayor Redfearn has made clear in her refreshed ‘ Our North Tyneside Plan’ is that a secure North Tyneside is a priority for the Mayor and Labour group and we will work with the police and the PCC to get the best deal for residents of North Tyneside.

We welcome the news from Kim McGuinness that Northumbria force is recruiting officers way beyond the government target using precept money to recruit even more officers as a direct result of listening to residents with her crime and police plan”.

Maintain the paragraph:

“We call upon the Elected Mayor to write to the PCC and request, as a matter of urgency, that she allocated more constables to our area to meet the need which is clearly evident”.

Add paragraph:

“We also call upon the Elected Mayor to write to the minister of state for crime and policing, Kit Malthouse and request that that the government increase officer numbers not only to the 2010 level but to surpass them in order to meet the challenges faced by Northumbria police force”.

A recorded vote on the amendment was requested by two Members present.

Votes for the amendment

N Redfearn, Elected Mayor and Councillors T Brady, B Burdis, C Burdis, J Cassidy, N Craven, E Darke, L Darke, C Davis, S Day, D Drummond, P Earley, S Graham, M Green, M Hall, J Harrison, John Hunter, C Johnson, H Johnson, J Kirwin, F Lott, W Lott, G Madden, M Madden, A McMullen, J Mole, J Montague, T Mulvenna, A Newman, P Oliver, J O’Shea, A Percy, S Phillips, B Pickard, M Rankin, P Richardson, W Samuel, J Shaw, J Stirling, J Walker and M Wilson.

Votes against the amendment

Councillors L Arkley, K Barrie, L Bartoli, L Bones, S Brockbank, C Johnston, P McIntyre, J Wallace and G Westwater.

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 41 votes to 9 votes.

The motion, as amended, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 41 votes to 0 votes, with 8 abstentions.

C25/21 Motion 4 - Fair Tax Declaration

It was moved by Councillor M Wilson and seconded by Councillor P Richardson that:

North Tyneside Council notes that:

1. The pressure on organisations to pay the right amount of tax in the right place at the right time has never been stronger.
2. Polling from the Institute for Business Ethics finds that “corporate tax avoidance” has, since 2013, been the clear number one concern of the British public when it comes to business conduct.
3. Almost two-thirds (63%) of the public agree that the Government and local councils should consider a company’s ethics and how they pay their tax as well as value for money and quality of service provided, when undertaking procurement.
4. Around 17.5% of public contracts in the UK have been won by companies with links to tax havens.
5. It has been conservatively estimated that losses from multinational profit-shifting (just one form of tax avoidance) could be costing the UK some £7bn per annum in lost corporation tax revenues.
6. The Fair Tax Mark offers a means for business to demonstrate good tax conduct, and has been secured by organisations with a combined annual income of £50bn and more than 6,500 outlets and premises, including many social enterprises and co-operatives.

North Tyneside Council believes that:

1. Taxes are very important in ensuring that public services are paid for.
2. Tax enables us to provide services from education, health and social care, to flood defence, roads, policing and defence. It also helps to counter financial inequalities and rebalance distorted economies.
3. As recipients of significant public funding, local authorities should take the lead in the promotion of exemplary tax conduct; be that by ensuring contractors are paying their proper share of tax, or by refusing to go along with offshore tax dodging when buying land and property.
4. Where substantive stakes are held in private enterprises, then influence should be wielded to ensure that such businesses are exemplars of tax transparency and tax avoidance is shunned - e.g., no use of marketed schemes requiring disclosure under DOTAS regulations (Disclosure Of Tax Avoidance Schemes) or arrangements that might fall foul of the General Anti-Abuse Rule.
5. More action is needed, however, current law significantly restricts councils’ ability to either penalise poor tax conduct or reward good tax conduct, when buying goods or services.

6. UK cities, counties and towns can and should stand up for responsible tax conduct - doing what they can within existing frameworks and pledging to do more given the opportunity, as active supporters of international tax justice.

North Tyneside Council Calls upon the Mayor to:

1. Approve the Councils for Fair Tax Declaration.
2. Continue to ensure contractors implement IR35 robustly and pay a fair share of employment taxes.
3. Not use offshore vehicles for the purchase of land and property, especially where this leads to reduced payments of stamp duty.
4. Undertake due diligence to ensure that not-for-profit structures are not being used inappropriately as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates.
5. Demand clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers and their consolidated profit & loss position.
6. Promote Fair Tax Mark certification for any business in which we have a significant stake and where corporation tax is due.
7. Support Fair Tax Week events in the area and celebrate the tax contribution made by responsible businesses who say what they pay with pride.
8. Support calls for urgent reform of EU and UK law to enable local authorities to better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax conduct through their procurement policies.

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

C26/21 Motion 5 - Protect Renters - Ban on Evictions

(Note: Councillors L Arkley, K Barrie and P McIntyre withdrew from the meeting for this item).

It was moved by Councillor A Newman and seconded by Councillor C Johnson that:

North Tyneside Council Notes:

- A ban on evictions was introduced to protect renters from the effects of the pandemic.
- The temporary ban on bailiff-enforced evictions introduced in March 2020 and has been extended several times since it started. On the 31st May 2021 the ban on evictions has been lifted.
- A recent survey commissioned by The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and conducted by YouGov, reveals clear warning signs that point to a spike in evictions and homelessness as the ban lifts.
- There are 400,000 households already expecting to be evicted currently.

- In addition 450,000 households are currently in arrears with rent.
- Almost a fifth of this group (18%) have been in arrears for more than four months (meaning landlords in England will only be required to give four weeks' notice of eviction now that the ban has been lifted).

North Tyneside Council Believes:

- We believe that unless further support is provided to help those facing eviction, such as grants or interest-free loans from the government to help pay off rent arrears, hundreds of thousands of private renters will be at risk of homelessness. As we head into the autumn, this situation could become even more acute.
- JRF is calling for a targeted package of grants to support renters in arrears, administered through the existing Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) system. The £180m currently available through DHPs this year is nowhere near sufficient to support the 450,000 renters in arrears. A boost to DHP payments, together with improved guidance and ring-fenced funding for arrears, would be sufficient to re-set the housing market and enable renters to recover economically at pace with the rest of the country.
- The Local Government Association (LGA), charities and Labour are uniting to call on ministers to fulfil a manifesto commitment to end “no-fault evictions”, which allow landlords to evict tenants without giving a reason.

North Tyneside Council call upon the Mayor to take the following actions to reduce the effect on the most vulnerable in our society.

- To write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick MP.
- To call for his support with the JRF's suggestions regarding DHP funding as stated above.
- To call for the government to issue interest free loans to be introduced for renters to help pay off arrears.
- To call for the government to act on its 2019 commitment to end Section 21 eviction powers which enables no fault evictions.

The motion on being put to the meeting, was approved by 46 votes to 0 votes, with 2 abstentions.

C27/21 Review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries

(Note: Councillors B Burdis, C Burdis, E Darke, S Day and C Johnson withdrew from the meeting for this item).

The Council received a report on the initial proposals of the review of the Boundary Commission for England in relation to the Parliamentary Constituencies within the North Tyneside Council area.

Cabinet had considered those initial proposals at its meeting held on 28 June 2021 and, whilst opposing those proposals for the reasons set out in the report, had agreed that the views of full Council be sought before the Elected Mayor responded to the Commission on behalf of the Authority.

It was moved by Elected Mayor Norma Redfearn and seconded by Councillor M Rankin that:

the Council does not support the initial proposals of the review of the Boundary Commission for England in relation to the Parliamentary Constituencies within the North Tyneside Council area for the reasons outlined by Cabinet.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 36 votes to 9 votes.

C28/21 Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced that he had been invited to open the new running track located at Churchill playing fields on the 4 July 2021. He praised and thanked the North Shields polytechnic, Cabinet Members and the Council for their work for the establishment of a first-class running track in North Tyneside.

C29/21 Elected Mayor's Announcements

In her announcement the Elected Mayor expressed her gratitude to all Councillors, the Council Staff and volunteers who continued to work on behalf of all residents.

She stated that facing the pandemic continued to be difficult for many people both in North Tyneside and across the country and encouraged everyone to continue to take all the necessary public health precautions to safeguard themselves and others.

C30/21 Questions by Members of the Council

It was noted that no valid questions had been received from Members of the Council for this meeting.