

Local Government Act 1972

Borough of North Tyneside

Thursday, 16 March 2023

At the meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Tyneside duly convened and held on Thursday, 16 March 2023 at 6.00 pm in Chamber - Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY at which a quorum of Members were present, that is to say: -

Present

Councillor P Oliver (Chair)
N Redfearn (Elected Mayor)

Councillor L Arkley	Councillor K Barrie
Councillor L Bartoli	Councillor G Bell
Councillor L Bones	Councillor B Burdis
Councillor C Burdis	Councillor D Cox
Councillor N Craven	Councillor J Cruddas
Councillor E Darke	Councillor C Davis
Councillor D Drummond	Councillor P Earley
Councillor S Graham	Councillor M Hall
Councillor T Hallway	Councillor J Harrison
Councillor Janet Hunter	Councillor John Hunter
Councillor V Jamieson	Councillor C Johnson
Councillor H Johnson	Councillor C Johnston
Councillor J Kirwin	Councillor F Lott
Councillor W Lott	Councillor G Madden
Councillor L Marshall	Councillor P McIntyre
Councillor A McMullen	Councillor J Montague
Councillor T Mulvena	Councillor M Murphy
Councillor A Newman	Councillor R O'Keefe
Councillor J O'Shea	Councillor E Parker-Leonard
Councillor S Phillips	Councillor B Pickard
Councillor W Samuel	Councillor O Scargill
Councillor J Shaw	Councillor M Thirlaway
Councillor J Wallace	Councillor G Westwater
Councillor M Wilson	

Apologies: Councillor L Bell, Councillor K Clark, Councillor S Day, Councillor L Ferasin, Councillor M Fox, Councillor M Green, Councillor J Mudzingwa, Councillor T Neira, Councillor A Percy, Councillor M Rankin, Councillor P Richardson and Councillor J Walker

C80/22 To receive any Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest were reported as follows:

Councillor L Bartoli – Disclosable Pecuniary Interest – Item 5 Motion 4 – wife is Chief Operating Officer of Northumbria Healthcare Trust. Cllr Bartoli indicated that he would leave the meeting for this item.

Councillor L Bones – Personal Interest – Item 6 – family member is employee of North Tyneside Council.

Councillor D Cox – Personal Interest – Item 6 – family member is employee of the Council.

Councillor J Cruddas – Personal Interest – Item 6 – family member is employee of the Council.

Councillor J Harrison – Registerable Interest and Dispensation – Item 5 – Motion 4 – Council Governor of Northumbria NHS Trust.

Councillor W Lott – Personal Interest – Item 6 - family member is employee of North Tyneside Council.

Councillor F Lott - Personal Interest – Item 6 - family member is employee of North Tyneside Council.

Councillor M Murphy – Disclosable Pecuniary Interest – Item 6 – wife is employee of North Tyneside Council.

Councillor W Samuel – Disclosable Pecuniary Interest - Item 5 – wife is employee of the North Tyneside Council.

Councillor O Scargill – Personal Interest – Item 5 – Motion 4 – as a medical student has had placements with Northumbria NHS Trust.

Councillor M Thirlaway – Personal Interest – Item 6 – family member is employee of North Tyneside Council.

C81/22 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2023.

Resolved that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 January 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

C82/22 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2023.

Resolved that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 February 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

C83/22 Motion 1

It was moved by Councillor R O'Keefe and seconded by Councillor E Parker Leonard that:

North Tyneside council notes:

That shift work is becoming increasingly common in many industries and often includes late night working, often working after most public transport has finished for the evening.

Many shift workers are increasingly worried about their safety travelling to and from work at night.

The work our Police and Crime Commissioner has done into trying to address residents' concerns with safety. Including the safer transport app, attracting funding from the Government and investment into the multi-agency security team.

North Tyneside council believes:

Unite the unions Get Me Home Safely campaign, which calls on employers to take all reasonable steps to ensure workers can get home safely from work at night, is greatly needed and should be supported.

The weakness of enforcement of the law against sexual assault, including up-skirting on public transport is appalling and only 2% of victims go on to report sexual harassment on public transport.

North Tyneside council:

Asks the Licensing committee to explore the possibility of putting a condition in place on licensed premises which requires them when opening late to provide free and safe transport home for their staff.

Calls upon the Mayor to write to NEXUS and the private bus operators to introduce more late night services to get shift workers to and from work.

Write to the Government to ask them to extend the £2 fare offer for buses beyond the end of June and to also provide funding to allow metro to continue the £2 offer which Tyne and Wear councils funded for the first 3 months of the year.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved unanimously.

C84/22 Motion 2

This Motion was withdrawn.

C85/22 Motion 3

It was moved by Councillor L Bartoli and seconded by Councillor C Johnston that:

During the Authority's recent budget setting process there was a commitment to have 100 new litter bins across the Borough which should be welcomed because keeping the area

clean should always be a top priority for the Authority.

Unfortunately, the extra bins will only help solve the problem of litter if they are regularly emptied, maintained and the area around the bin cleared. Bins can fill up quickly, particularly in the popular tourist locations and can be damaged for a variety of reasons. Providing a simple system for allowing the public to report bins being full or damaged will help the Authority respond quickly and effectively.

Council requests the Mayor to consider introducing a scheme similar to that used by Glasgow City Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council by using existing technology to assist with this reporting process. The scheme would: -

- Attach unique QR code stickers to the bins which can be scanned with a smartphone and will identify the exact location of the bin.
- Link this to the Authority's "Report It" section on its website and if possible provide information on when the bin is next due to be emptied – this will avoid the need to report a bin that is due to be emptied the same or next day.

Residents can then report bins that are damaged, need emptying or the area around them cleaned.

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

- Amends the first sentence of paragraph 4 to insert 'Council Thanks the Mayor for already having plans in place to introduce' and delete 'requests the Mayor to consider introducing'
- Adds a final paragraph to read 'Council requests the Mayor write to all members updating them on the progress council have made since they started to look into this during the last financial year.'

The amended motion therefore read:

During the Authority's recent budget setting process there was a commitment to have 100 new litter bins across the Borough which should be welcomed because keeping the area clean should always be a top priority for the Authority.

Unfortunately, the extra bins will only help solve the problem of litter if they are regularly emptied, maintained and the area around the bin cleared.

Bins can fill up quickly, particularly in the popular tourist locations and can be damaged for a variety of reasons.

Providing a simple system for allowing the public to report bins being full or damaged will help the Authority respond quickly and effectively.

Council thanks the Mayor for already having plans in place to introduce a scheme similar to that used by Glasgow City Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council by using existing technology to assist with this reporting process. The scheme would: -

- Attach unique QR code stickers to the bins which can be scanned with a smartphone and will identify the exact location of the bin.
- Link this to the Authority's "Report It" section on its website and if possible, provide information on when the bin is next due to be emptied – this will avoid the need to report a bin that is due to be emptied the same or next day.

Residents can then report bins that are damaged, need emptying or the area around them cleaned.

Council requests the Mayor write to all members updating them on the progress council have made since they started to look into this during the last financial year.

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, was agreed unanimously.

The amended substantive motion, on being put to the meeting, was agreed unanimously.

C86/22 Motion 4

(Councillor L Bartoli left the meeting for this item)

It was moved by Councillor L Bones and seconded by Councillor O Scargill that:

NHS healthcare is at the top of residents' priorities and the Government are committed to reducing NHS waiting lists, with over £3 billion extra per year to help tackle the backlog caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. However locally residents are still forced to travel out of North Tyneside to access 24-hour emergency care, which is particularly difficult for residents that do not drive.

North Tyneside Council believes that our residents would receive better healthcare provision within the borough if 24-hour accident and emergency care was re-instated at Rake Lane and the walk-in centre at Battle Hill reopened.

North Tyneside Council notes that it was a conscious decision taken by the NHS trust to relocate these services out of the Borough.

North Tyneside Council asks the Mayor to :

- Write to the NHS Trust asking them to set up a taskforce, with local authority involvement, to improve access to emergency care in North Tyneside, with a particular focus on restoring 24-hour accident and emergency at Rake Lane and walk-in services at Battle Hill
- Write to the Secretary of State for Health to commend the additional investment that has been given to clear the NHS waiting lists, and outline our priorities for returning these two care services to North Tyneside.

An amendment was moved by Councillor W Samuel and seconded by Councillor C Johnson that:

- Paragraph 1 - That 'and the Government are committed to reducing NHS waiting lists, with over £3 billion extra per year to help tackle the backlog caused by the

Covid-19 pandemic.’ be removed from the first sentence and the following sentence be added to the end of the paragraph ‘This is compounded by the consistent failure of ambulances to respond within target times for call outs including heart attacks and strokes and having to waste valuable time queuing to discharge their patients to A&E.

- Paragraph 2 – the following be added: ‘and if the Conservative Government provided the resources to allow this to happen.’
- Paragraph 3 be amended to read: North Tyneside Council notes that it was a conscious decision taken by Northumbria Healthcare Trust to relocate these services out of the Borough and to refuse to reverse that decision despite repeated requests.
- To add at paragraph 4 – ‘It is widely accepted by experts that to deal with the ever-increasing number of the population over 65 that NHS spending should rise every year at inflation +4 percent as it did during the last Labour Government, The Conservative Government have only done this once in their 13 years in power.’
- Paragraph 6 – to delete ‘commend the additional investment that has been given to clear the NHS waiting lists, and’ and add ‘and to ask him to provide the resources to do it.’

The amended motion therefore read:

NHS healthcare is at the top of residents’ priorities. However locally residents are still forced to travel out of North Tyneside to access 24-hour emergency care, which is particularly difficult for residents that do not drive. This is compounded by the consistent failure of ambulances to respond within target times for call outs including heart attacks and strokes and having to waste valuable time queuing to discharge their patients to A&E.

North Tyneside Council believes that our residents would receive better healthcare provision within the borough if 24-hour accident and emergency care was re-instated at Rake Lane and the walk-in centre at Battle Hill reopened and if the Conservative Government provided the resources to allow this to happen.

North Tyneside Council notes that it was a conscious decision taken by Northumbria Healthcare Trust to relocate these services out of the Borough and to refuse to reverse that decision despite repeated requests.

It is widely accepted by experts that to deal with the ever-increasing number of the population over 65 that NHS spending should rise every year at inflation +4 percent as it did during the last Labour Government, The Conservative Government have only done this once in their 13 years in power.

North Tyneside Council asks the Mayor to : -

- Write to the NHS Trust asking them to set up a taskforce, with local authority involvement, to improve access to emergency care in North Tyneside, with a particular focus on restoring 24-hour accident and emergency at Rake Lane and walk-in services at Battle Hill.
- Write to the Secretary of State for Health to outline our priorities for returning these two care services to North Tyneside and to ask him to provide the resources to do it.

The amendment, on being put to the meeting was approved by 40 votes to 7.

A recorded vote on the amended substantial motion was requested by two members

present:

Votes for the motion:

Dame N Redfearn, Elected Mayor and Councillors L Arkley, K Barrie, G Bell, L Bones, B Burdis, C Burdis, D Cox, N Craven, J Cruddas, E Darke, C Davis, D Drummond, P Earley, S Graham, M Hall, T Hallway, J Harrison, Janet Hunter, John Hunter, V Jamieson, C Johnson, H Johnson, C Johnston, J Kirwin, F Lott, W Lott, G Madden, L Marshall, A McMullen, J Montague, T Mulvenna, M Murphy, A Newman, P Oliver, R O'Keefe, E Parker-Leonard, J O'Shea, S Phillips, B Pickard, W Samuel, O Scargill, J Shaw, M Thirlaway, J Wallace, G Westwater and M Wilson.

Votes against the Motion:

None

The motion was agreed by 47 votes to 0.

C87/22 Motion 5

It was moved by Councillor O Scargill and seconded by Councillor L Bones that:

Local Plan Motion

As reported in the Guardian earlier this year, many local authorities across the country have paused their housebuilding plans following the government's decision to drop mandatory targets. Like Dorset Council, who announced they would be delaying the implementation of their Local Plan last year.

North Tyneside Labour's plan to build 3,000 houses at Rake Lane is incredibly unpopular with local residents, with many raising serious concerns about the impact on traffic congestion (especially in such close proximity to the Dutch-style roundabout), local healthcare services and school places – as well as the environmental impact on the loss of our green space.

Council notes that several local authorities across the country have paused their housebuilding plans. Council believes the Local Plan is unpopular with local residents, and new homes should be built in appropriate locations, protecting green space at the murton gap.

Council agrees to undertake the preparation of a new Local Plan once a revised NPPF has been published. Council requests the revised local plan explores the possibility to remove the Murton Gap strategic site from the Local Plan, protecting our green space and aligning with residents views.

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

- Amended paragraph 1
- Removed paragraph 2 and 3.
- Added new paragraphs as paragraphs 2,3 and 4:

- Added additional wording to paragraph 4; and
- Removed the final paragraph.

The amended motion read:

'As reported in the Guardian earlier this year, Council notes many local authorities who were already preparing new plans following the government's proposal to drop mandatory targets. Like Dorset Council, who do not have an adopted Local Plan, who announced they would be delaying the implementation of their Local Plan last year.

Council notes that the North Tyneside local plan as adopted and agreed by the Conservative Secretary of State cannot be scrapped and will continue to be the document upon which planning decisions are made until a new plan is formed.

Council notes that many authorities who do not have adopted, up to date plans are seeing developers running riot, building on the greenbelt, not building enough affordable housing, not getting the required infrastructure agreed because of the lack of an up to date adopted local plan.

Council notes that while the Conservative Government have announced planning reforms this is not the first time, they have promised to empower local residents in their decision making on planning which have ultimately failed and it is this which had led to the council having to include sites like the Murton gap in the its plan.

Council agrees to undertake the preparation of a new local plan once a revised NPPF has been published and the Levelling Up and the Regeneration Bill becomes an Act of Parliament.

Council requests that the new local plan reviews the need to include all developable sites in the borough including Murton Gap to see which sites to include in the new local plan to meet the Conservative Government's house building target which is likely to be at least 800 homes a year.'

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

Votes for the Motion:

Dame N Redfearn, Elected Mayor and Councillors G Bell, B Burdis, C Burdis, D Cox, N Craven, J Cruddas, E Darke, C Davis, D Drummond, P Earley, S Graham, M Hall, T Hallway, J Harrison, Janet Hunter, John Hunter, V Jamieson, C Johnson, H Johnson, J Kirwin, F Lott, W Lott, G Madden, L Marshall, A McMullen, J Montague, T Mulvena, M Murphy, A Newman, P Oliver, R O'Keefe, E Parker-Leonard, J O'Shea, S Phillips, B Pickard, W Samuel, J Shaw, M Thirlaway and M Wilson.

Votes against the Motion:

Councillors L Arkley, K Barrie, L Bartoli, L Bones, C Johnston, P McIntyre, O Scargill, J Wallace and G Westwater,

The amendment was agreed by 40 votes to 9 votes.

The amended substantive motion, on being put to the meeting, was agreed by 40 votes to 9 votes.

C88/22 North Tyneside Council Pay Policy 2023/24

Council received a report which set out the Pay Policy statement for 2023/24.

It was moved by the Elected Mayor and seconded by Councillor C Johnson that:

Council approves the Pay Policy statement for 2023/24 and authorises publication of the Pay Policy.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved unanimously.

C89/22 Designation of Monitoring Officer and Amendment of the Officer Delegation Scheme

Council received a report about the designation of the Authority's Monitoring Officer, in the light of the appointment of Mr Stephen Ballantyne as the Head of Law, and necessary changes to the Officer delegation scheme.

It was moved by the Elected Mayor and seconded by Councillor C Johnson that Council:

- Designate Stephen Ballantyne as the Monitoring Officer for the Authority with effect from 1 April 2023;
- Agree that authority be given to the Head of Law to exercise the functions set out in the Appendix to this report with effect from 1 April 2023 and that the Officer Delegation Scheme be amended accordingly, and
- Agree that the Head of Law be authorised to make the consequential amendments to the Authority's Constitution and associated documents.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved unanimously.

C90/22 Review of Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

Council received a report setting out the review of the allocation of seats to political groups following notification of the formation of a new political group, the Independent Group.

It was moved by the Elected Mayor and seconded by Councillor C Johnson that Council:

- Approve the revised allocations of seats to political groups as shown in the Appendix to the report;
- Agree that the leaders of the political groups will inform the Monitoring Officer of their respective group's nominations of Members to each of the Committees of the

Authority by 12 noon on Friday 17 March 2023.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved unanimously.

C91/22 Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced that she had recently attended:

- The funeral of veteran Brian Turner of Forest Hall branch of the British Legion
- An award ceremony for Ukrainian adult learners;
- A Citizenship ceremony.

C92/22 Elected Mayor's Announcements

The Elected Mayor thanked those Councillors who will be standing down ahead of the election in May for their hard work, and wished them well for the future.

Members had an opportunity to address the meeting if they wished.

The following Councillors addressed the meeting:

Councillor K Barrie

Councillor L Arkley

Councillor C Johnson

Councillor G Westwater

Councillor J Kirwin

Councillor E Parker Leonard

C93/22 Questions by Members of the Council

1. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor L Bones

Can the mayor please explain whether or not she thinks spending over £26,000 on a new Council logo is a good use of taxpayers money?

The Elected Mayor responded as follows:

I can assure Council that £26k has not been spent on a new council logo.

As part of our comprehensive programme to improve customer service we have invested in a range of changes to our external communications to meet digital accessibility standards and to improve consistency. This will also enable our residents to better recognise Council services through a consistent approach.

This has included designs for improvements to our website, leaflets, posters other external communications and the development of a fully digital version of our current council logo.

I am pleased to be able to report that this investment was able to be made using the extra revenue generated through the sale of advertising space across the borough.

Investing in this way ensures that we can improve our full range of communications to our customers and deliver a better service for our residents.

Again, £26k has not been spent on a new council logo alone as suggested by Councillor Bones.

Councillor L Bones asked the following supplementary question:

A recent Freedom of Information request confirmed that £26K was spent on the new logo so the Elected Mayor's response is misleading to members of the public and this chamber. The £26K spent on the logo comes after spending £50k on an advertising campaign to promote climate change. This is despite the Mayor having a communications team of approximately 10 people which costs over £500k to this authority. Why doesn't the Mayor have confidence in her communications team to put together these campaigns and logos – why is she spending tens of thousands of pounds going to external companies?

The Elected Mayor responded as follows:

The question from Councillor Bones was 'can the mayor please explain whether or not she thinks spending over £26,000 on a new Council logo is a good use of taxpayers money?'. I explained how the money was spent and what it was spent on. Contrary to what has been said and been published I will repeat that this Council has not spent £26K on a new logo.

2. Question to the Elected mayor by Councillor M Thirlaway

Will the Elected Mayor explain what impact the Government's decision not to award Levelling up funding will have on the Wallsend Masterplan and the North Shields Masterplan?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

We were obviously very disappointed with the Government's response to the Levelling Up Fund bids as there were strong cases for investment in Wallsend and North Shields Fish Quay, which would have supported some of our most deprived communities.

Without securing this funding, Nexus and the Council will need to identify alternative funding to replace the North Shields Ferry landing which is in need of replacement by 2025.

For Wallsend, we are still committed to delivering on our ambitions; creating a town that our residents and businesses can be proud to call home, and that visitors from all over want to come and enjoy.

We know what a positive difference our investment has made in other parts of the borough, and how much the regeneration of Wallsend means to our local residents and businesses – so we will continue to explore avenues to secure the funding we need to make these plans a

reality. A bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund was submitted in February to support our proposals for Segedunum and how we can maximise its potential as a visitor attraction.

Almost £2m of grant funding for Wallsend town centre has already been secured from the North of Tyne Combined Authority's Town and High Streets Innovation Programme to help us fund events, support for businesses, shop front grants and improved walking and cycling routes in Wallsend. We are now developing these initiatives and will shortly be launching the shop front grants scheme for businesses in the town centre.

We have also completed our engagement on the draft Wallsend Masterplan, the feedback is now being assessed and a report seeking approval of the final Masterplan is due to be considered by Cabinet in May.

Councillor M Thirlaway asked the following supplementary question:

Even without the Levelling Up funding is North Tyneside Council still committed to the regeneration of Wallsend and North Shields.

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

A disgraceful decision from the government that has got worse since. The Levelling Up department has a £2.5 billion underspend but couldn't find £4 million to give to North Tyneside.

Absolutely we are very nearly there on North Shields with various different projects that are progressing as we speak. We are still committed to moving the ferry landing to Western Quay.

We are also completely committed to delivering the Wallsend Masterplan. This is not the first time we have been knocked back by this government and I'm sure it won't be the last, but hopefully there will be a Labour government soon. But we will ensure we deliver the Wallsend Masterplan in full.