

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Council

### 20 July 2023

#### **Title: Motions**

Notice has been received of the following motions from Members of the Council to be put to the Council meeting.

#### **Motion 1 signed by Councillors W Samuel, C Johnson, K Clark**

Council notes that the increase in interest rates is causing severe difficulties for many of our residents. With an estimated 6.5 million households across the country to be impacted by the Tory mortgage penalty by 2025. As fixed rate mortgages come to an end, many are having to take out new mortgages with people across North Tyneside facing on average a £2000 increase per year. Those living in the private rented sector are also facing a significant increase with the average rent being 12-15% higher than this time last year and rent has increased on average for 13 consecutive quarters.

It is disappointing that banks and building societies are failing to assist borrowers who are struggling to meet their mortgage costs by offering payment holidays, longer repayment terms and interest only products. At the same time, they are failing to offer savers similar rises in interest rates as those they impose on borrowers.

We note that the Government have sought to agree a voluntary framework to address this, but Council believes this approach falls short of what is required.

Council asks the Elected Mayor to write to the Prime Minister:

- To express the dismay of the residents of North Tyneside at his refusal to legislate to require banks and building societies to assist borrowers and avoid repossession of homes and spiralling increase in costs due to a Conservative made cost of living crisis.

- To call for the Prime Minister to immediately bring forward policy to tackle the tory mortgage penalty and to end the crisis In the private rented sector.

**Legal and Financial implications in relation to this Motion will be circulated prior to the meeting.**

## **Motion 2 signed by Councillors E Parker-Leonard, M Fox, C Burdis**

North Tyneside council is proud to be a safe and welcoming workspace. We always strive to create a workspace where everyone is free to be themselves and continue to try and support the LGBTQ+ community to feel safe at work. We want to continue to transform the workplace culture to make it a more welcoming, diverse, and inclusive space for everyone.

North Tyneside Council's Pride Network have stated that this year pride has been particularly important, given the rise both nationally and internationally in anti-LGBT+ rhetoric and violence.

We call upon the Elected Mayor to:

- Explore the feasibility of taking part in Stonewalls Workplace Equality Index
- Explore the feasibility of NTC becoming a Stonewall Diversity Champion

**Legal and Financial implications in relation to this Motion will be circulated prior to the meeting.**

### **Motion 3 signed by Councillors I McAlpine, L Bones, L Bartoli**

#### **St Mary's Lighthouse**

St Mary's lighthouse is one of the Borough's most iconic landmarks, visible along much of the North East coast and from towns across North Tyneside and Northumberland. It brings tourism to the area and forms a hub for vital marine conservation activities.

The lighthouse has been a muse to many an artist and photographer and is so iconic that it adorns much of the council's own publicity.

Sadly, in recent years, the exterior has been deteriorated by the elements, placing a noticeable dark shadow on the north side and a blot on North Tyneside's coastal landscape. Residents and tourists now frequently mention the faded and stained condition of the landmark, disappointed that more is not being actively done to maintain it's beauty.

In 2018 a 2.1 million refurbishment proposal was approved by the planning committee, to be funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Sadly the bid for the funds was declined later that year, with the council committing to explore other options to carry out the repairs.

To safeguard the lighthouse's future and to preserve the beauty of our coastal horizon, Council asks the mayor to commit to:

1. Publish options looked at so far to secure alternative funding for the refurbishment proposal.
2. Confirm it is still the Council's intention to perform these (or other) refurbishment works to safeguard the future of the site.
3. In the interim, commit to painting of the Lighthouse to restore it's appearance and that of our coastal horizon.

**Legal and Financial implications in relation to this Motion will be circulated prior to the meeting.**

#### **Motion4 signed by Councillors J Johnsson, O Scargill, L Bones**

Review and Update of the Tree Management Policy for Improved Balance between Residents' Needs and Tree Maintenance Council recognises the invaluable contribution that trees make to our Borough, including their role in shaping the landscape, providing habitats for wildlife, and playing an essential role in the ecosystem to combat climate change.

However, residents have raised numerous concerns regarding the reactive nature of maintenance of trees by the Council. Many trees within our Borough, particularly in residential areas, exhibit disproportionate size and proximity to residential properties, resulting in significant problems. These issues include the obstruction of light and heat, excessive leaf fall blocking drains and gullies, and property damage caused by falling branches.

The Council's current Tree Management Policy places an imbalanced emphasis on the needs of these problematic trees, with insufficient consideration for the welfare and interests of residents residing in close proximity to them. In order to ensure that residents' concerns are adequately considered in decision-making processes, it is necessary to review the existing policy. This new approach will aim to enhance the aesthetic appeal of our area, minimise property repairs, reduce insurance claims, and significantly improve the quality of life for many residents.

Therefore, the Council asks the Mayor to establish a cross-party working group to review the Tree Management Policy.

The purpose of this review is to strike a better balance between the needs of our residents and the maintenance of trees within our Borough. The group should be asked to propose practical measures, including routine pruning practices, to proactively address tree-related issues before they escalate.

By working with residents, we can develop a policy that better aligns with their needs and expectations, while acknowledging the importance of trees in our Borough.

**Legal and Financial implications in relation to this Motion will be circulated prior to the meeting.**

**Motion 5 signed by Councillors O Scargill, L Bones, L Bartoli**

**Drones to tackle anti-social behaviour**

Dangerous motorbike riding is a real issue in many of our estates. Unfortunately, the nature of this means it can be very difficult for Police to catch and identify perpetrators. We need to utilise new technology to help stop this happening.

Council notes that drones have been used by Police forces across the country to help stop dangerous motorbike riding.

Council asks the Mayor to give the community protection team the resources to purchase drones and training for this purpose, helping stop dangerous motorbikes and anti-social behaviour.

**Legal and Financial implications in relation to this Motion will be circulated prior to the meeting.**