

Local Government Act 1972

Borough of North Tyneside

Thursday, 20 July 2023

At the meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Tyneside duly convened and held on Thursday, 20 July 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 B Burdis (Chair)
N Redfearn (Elected Mayor)

Councillor L Bones	Councillor C Burdis
Councillor S Burtenshaw	Councillor K Clark
Councillor D Cox	Councillor S Cox
Councillor N Craven	Councillor J Cruddas
Councillor E Darke	Councillor C Davis
Councillor D Drummond	Councillor P Earley
Councillor S Graham	Councillor I Grayson
Councillor M Hall	Councillor T Hallway
Councillor J Harrison	Councillor A Holdsworth
Councillor V Jamieson	Councillor C Johnson
Councillor H Johnson	Councillor J Johnsson
Councillor C Johnston	Councillor J Kirwin
Councillor G Madden	Councillor L Marshall
Councillor I McAlpine	Councillor P McIntyre
Councillor A McMullen	Councillor J Montague
Councillor J Mudzingwa	Councillor T Mulvenna
Councillor M Murphy	Councillor T Neira
Councillor A Newman	Councillor P Oliver
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 A Spowart
Councillor J Walker

Councillor M Thirlaway
Councillor J Wallace

Apologies: Councillor L Arkley, Councillor L Bartoli, Councillor G Bell, Councillor L Bell, Councillor M Fox, Councillor Janet Hunter, Councillor John Hunter, Councillor F Lott, Councillor W Lott and Councillor M Wilson

C20/23 Minute Silence

A minute's silence was observed in respect of the passing of former Councillor Oswald Burt, who had represented North Shields Ward from 1988 – 1995.

C21/23 Public Questions

1. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr Appleby of Cullercoats

In May, Capita Plc was subject to a major data breach, the second this year.

Can you confirm what exposure the council, it's employees, residents and other stakeholders have suffered due to breaches at Capita (in this or any previous incident), and what known losses or damages have been incurred?

As one of the Councils key contractors, this is obviously something of great concern, and represents an on-going risk. Can you confirm what is the extent of data Capita manages on the council's behalf, either directly or via partners or intermediaries (such as pension funds), and whether the council is satisfied that existing contractual and technical safeguards are sufficient?

Councillor A McMullen responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:

The Authority takes cyber security extremely seriously.

When the IT team learned of the incident, immediate action was taken to minimise exposure to any risk, both for the Authority's own data or of any customer data we hold. I am pleased to confirm that there has been no data loss or damage as a result of this or any other incident.

The Authority was made aware of the Capita data breach through several

sources. Whilst information was being sought from Capita, the police and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), the decision was taken to switch off all technical connections and isolate any systems involving Capita.

This did cause temporary disruption to some services, however these were all restored within 3 days. However, this was only done after assurances had been provided from Capita and the NCSC that cyber-incident had been contained.

Following the incident, reassurances were sought from Capita about the potential impact of the data breach on North Tyneside Council and our customers. The Authority has received written assurance from Capita's Managing Director for Local Public Services, Paul Abraham, that the attack was limited to 4% of Capita's servers and none of these servers are used to provide any services to North Tyneside Council, therefore the Authority's data is not at risk from this incident.

The Authority has been informed that a detailed forensic analysis is in progress for the servers that have been impacted and that we will be notified if this does highlight any new risk to Authority data.

2. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr Steele of Tynemouth

As part of my concerns about NTC's progress towards making North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030 can you tell me what policies, procedures and training the council has in place to prevent vehicles (particularly council vehicles) from idling (to improve air quality) and pavement parking (to improve active travel)?

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

We have 400 vehicles in the Council's fleet; 16 vehicles are now electric and 6 are hybrid. We are moving to replace diesel vehicles at the end of their economically useful life, and we will replace these with electric models where available. It is important to understand that up to half of the carbon footprint of a vehicle's life is generated in its construction, so it is important environmentally to use vehicles to the end of their economic life. We have recently installed additional electric vehicle charge points at our Killingworth depot to support the change from diesel to electric. Naturally this change from diesel to electric helps both our Carbon Net-Zero 2030 ambitions and air quality.

We have delivered specific training to our team that includes instructions on both idling and not parking on pavements. However, due to the nature of some of the services that the Council delivers, for example kerbside waste collections, some vehicles will idle but we work hard to keep this to a minimum.

Regarding air quality, I am pleased to report that North Tyneside has good air quality with nitrogen dioxide annual mean concentrations well below the UK air quality objectives and we have campaigned to discourage engine idling as part of the Council's "Go Smarter" programme.

The Council has published an ambitious Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan and is making good progress in delivering it. The Borough's carbon footprint is down by almost half and the carbon footprint of the Council's operations is down by over a half. The action plan is currently being refreshed and will be presented to September Cabinet, alongside an update on performance with key highlights.

Thank you once again for your question.

Mr Steele asked the following supplementary question:

What steps could a member of the public take if they do come across vehicles idling, especially Council vehicles?

Councillor S Graham responded as follows:

I would encourage the public to take a photograph of any incidents and send this to the Council's customer First Centre, with information about the time and location of the incident, so this can be fully investigated to find out why and if action can be taken. For example, it may be that it is a vehicle emptying bins on the prom and the engine must be left running to allow the machinery needed to lift the bins to be used.

C22/23 To receive any Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest were reported as follows:

Councillor I Grayson – Registered Interest – Item 5 Motion 1 – Member of the Board

of the Teacher's Building Society. Cllr Grayson indicated that he would leave the meeting for this item.

C23/23 Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2023 (Annual Meeting)

Resolved that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 18 May 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair.

C24/23 Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2023 (Extraordinary Meetings)

Resolved that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 18 May 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair.

C25/23 Motion1

(Councillor I Grayson left the meeting at this point)

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

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.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 42 votes to 2 votes.

C26/23 Motion 2

It was moved by Councillor Erin Parker-Leonard and seconded by Councillor J Mudzingwa that:

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

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 48 votes to 2 votes.

C27/23 Motion 3

It was moved by Councillor I McAlpine and seconded by Councillor L Bones that:

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 its 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 its appearance and that of our coastal horizon.

An amendment was moved by Councillor C Johnson and seconded by Councillor J O'Shea as follows:

Delete the following wording at paragraph 3

"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 its beauty".

And the 3rd bullet point

3. In the interim, commit to painting of the Lighthouse to restore its appearance and that of our coastal horizon.

Add a new paragraph 4 as follows:

In 2017 the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) confirmed funding for the site to be fully refurbished, unfortunately the planning committee rejected the planning application.

And a new Bullet point 3 as follows:

3. Reconfirm the Mayor and Cabinet's commitment to include the repainting in next year's budget proposals. As doing it in year would require borrowing outside what is already allocated in the Authority's budget which would lead to additional borrowing costs £100,000 per year for the next decade whilst considering it in the budget for next year would not come with additional borrowing costs.

The amended motion therefore read:

St Mary's Lighthouse

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To safeguard the lighthouse's future and to preserve the beauty of our coastal horizon, Council asks the mayor 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. Reconfirm the Mayor and Cabinet's commitment to include the repainting in next year's budget proposals. As doing it in year would require borrowing outside what is already allocated in the Authority's budget which would lead to additional borrowing costs £100,000 per year for the next decade whilst considering it in the budget for next year would not come with additional borrowing costs.

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

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

C28/23 Motion 4

It was moved by Councillor J Johnsson and seconded by Councillor L Bones that:

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.

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

Delete the wording at paragraph 2

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.

Delete the wording at paragraph 4 as follows:

establish a cross-party working group to review the Tree Management Policy

Delete the wording at paragraph 6 as follows:

The group should be asked to

Add wording at paragraph 3

In certain instances

Add bullet points as follows

- Undertake a review of the council's current tree management policy
- Refer the policy to the cross party Green Sub-Committee for consideration before it goes to Cabinet.

The amended motion therefore read:

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.

In certain instances, 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;

- Undertake a review of the council's current tree management policy
- Refer the policy to the cross party Green Sub-Committee for consideration before it goes to Cabinet.

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 and 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.

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

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

C29/23 Motion 5

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

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.

An amendment was moved by Councillor K Clark and seconded as follows:

Delete the following wording at paragraph:
in many of our estates.

Add the following wording at paragraph 1
both locally and nationally

Add new paragraphs 3 and 4 as follows:

Council notes that lots of North Tyneside is directly under Airport regulations and it may not always be possible to use drones in these areas.

Council notes the 1200 officers in the Northumbria Police cut by the Conservative

Government since 2010.

Add the following wording in paragraph 3:
explore the practicality

add new paragraphs at 7 and 8 as follows:

Council believes Northumbria Police would be best placed to use drones to tackle anti-social behaviour as opposed to the Council.

Council asks the Mayor to write to the Home Secretary urging them to provide the funding for Northumbria Police to restore all officers lost to cuts since the Conservative Government came in to power.

The amended motion therefore read as follows:

Drones to tackle anti-social behaviour

Dangerous motorbike riding is a real issue both locally and nationally 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 lots of North Tyneside is directly under Airport regulations and it may not always be possible to use drones in these areas.

Council notes the 1200 officers in the Northumbria Police cut by the Conservative Government since 2010.

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

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

Council believes Northumbria Police would be best placed to use drones to tackle

anti-social behaviour as opposed to the Council.

Council asks the Mayor to write to the Home Secretary urging them to provide the funding for Northumbria Police to restore all officers lost to cuts since the Conservative Government came in to power.

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 43 votes to 7 votes.

The substantive motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 43 votes to 2 votes.

C30/23 Request for Dispensation pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972

Council received a report that sought approval for a dispensation in respect of Councillor John Hunter under section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, based on medical grounds.

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

Council agrees to grant a dispensation for Councillor John Hunter pursuant to Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, for a period up to and included 31 January 2024, and approves Councillor John Hunter's non-attendance at meetings of the Authority in that period on medical grounds, and

Council agreed that the best wishes of the Council to be conveyed to Councillor John Hunter at this time.

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

C31/23 Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced a number of events he had attended since being elected Chair these being:

Wildside Urban forest School, Shiremoor
Citizen Ceremony

Northumberland and North Tyneside Scout Camp
The Falklands War Ceremony
Armed Forces Day
The Sea Cadets 80th year celebrations
Muriel Greens Ceremony of Alderwoman
Shiremoor and District Childrens Gala
Opening Boots, Silverlink new Hearing Care and
the presentation of certificates to graduates of the 2 Matters Awards.

C32/23 Elected Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor stated that many people were experiencing difficult times due to issues like the cost of living crisis and highlighted some of the ongoing work to help support residents and to make sure that they have access to good quality services.

This included:

- North Tyneside Primary School Based Initial Teacher Training SCITT being judged as Outstanding in May 23.
- Ready for School Nursery was also judged to be Outstanding during June 23.
- The Working Well North Tyneside pilot in North Shields had attracted over 3500 visitors since November 2022. With another facility planned for Wallsend. This had given residents of North Tyneside an opportunity to be interviewed and to be offered training and help they need to get into work.
- The service was recognised in the most recent Ofsted Inspection with an overall grading of 'Good' for the service Employment & Skills.
- North Tyneside Adult Learning Service was judged to be Good in June 23, with a rating of outstanding in Adult learning programmes, Provision for learners with high needs, Leadership and management and Behaviour and attitudes.

The Mayor commended staff for doing an excellent job in providing these services in North Tyneside.

C33/23 Questions by Members of the Council

1. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor J Wallace

"Healthy Start Grants are available to some pregnant women and some families with children under 4 years old, to enable them to buy additional healthy food such as milk, fruit and vegetables, and to get free vitamins, all of which contribute to a healthier lifestyle with long term benefits.

The take up in England is around 66% but much higher in Scotland.

Can the Elected Mayor tell me what steps the Council has taken to encourage applications for these grants in North Tyneside?"

Councillor K Clark responded as follows:

Thank you for raising such an important question. The national Healthy Start Scheme is a lifeline for eligible pregnant women and families with children under 4, providing access to good food: fruit, vegetables, milk and vitamins which are so important to give children the best start in life at a time when families are increasingly struggling to put food on the table.

The latest data for North Tyneside shows that uptake of the NHS Healthy Start scheme is 66% as of June 2023. This figure is similar to the overall uptake of Healthy Start in England, as noted in Councillor Wallace's question.

The Council is committed, along with our NHS and local voluntary and community sector partners, to increasing the uptake of Healthy Start, as part of our joint approach to ensuring every child has the best start in life. We know that during those very early years, a nutritious diet is essential for growth and development.

The Council's Director of Public Health has recently led the development of an action plan with partners that is focused on raising awareness of the Healthy Start Scheme among our residents and a range of frontline workers to encourage all eligible families to apply. The Council promotes the Healthy Start scheme through a variety of ways including:

- Our health visitors provide Healthy Start vitamins and talk to families at all

key contacts about the Healthy Start scheme and provide practical support for those eligible to apply.

- We deliver bite size training sessions to a range of frontline staff so that they have the knowledge to talk to families about Healthy Start and can offer practical help with completing online forms.
- We display Health Start promotional material on the Council's website, social media and our family hubs and customer first centres;
- The poverty partnership network has raised awareness of the scheme and we have shared promotional materials to encourage of take up with families on low income through the Bay Food Bank and the Bread-and-Butter initiative; We anticipate that rates of take up will increase over the coming months as partners work together to deliver the action plan.

Councillor J Wallace asked the following supplementary question:

Whilst I note the steps taken, it is disappointing that the take-up is still only at two thirds of those eligible. What follow up steps are being taken to encourage people to take advantage of the scheme?

Councillor K Clark responded as follows:

As you have outlined, we are currently on level with the national picture. Of course we wish to increase that number hence the action plan that is in place which contains all the elements I have outlined. That plan is being implemented and we expect that uptake will increase due to this positive action.

2. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor M Thirlaway

At least 100 people in North Tyneside were denied a vote during the local elections in North Tyneside with potentially many more put off from turning up to the polling stations in the first place. Does the Elected Mayor agree with me that central government should be making it easier for people to vote legally and that compulsory photographic identification at polling stations is unnecessary, undemocratic, and amounts to voter suppression, especially in more deprived area?

The Elected Mayor responded as follows:

I agree that any change that could act as a barrier to people voting is a concern. I know there are arguments both for and against voter id, but I do have concerns that this was a solution to a problem that did not exist – nationally, cases of voter fraud have been extremely rare.

Thankfully, our elections staff did everything they could to make it as easy as possible for people to vote – this included the preparation before the election and on the day itself. Some of this additional activity was funded nationally.

However, you will also remember that this Chamber agreed to send a letter to all households to reinforce the local and national advertising campaigns that we had in place. This was not funded nationally and came at a cost of about £40,000 from North Tyneside budgets – but we agreed that as local democracy is so important, it was necessary.

Our electorate is made up of just under 157,000 people. 69% of the electorate is eligible to vote at a polling station, with the remaining 31% having registered for a postal vote.

That means 108,000 people were eligible to vote at a polling station. Our records show that 261 electors applied for a ballot paper but were initially refused because they could not show the required Voter ID. Of those, 161 returned with valid photographic identification and were issued with a ballot paper.

It is too early to say definitively whether this impacted disproportionately on deprived communities, but I share your concern that this could be the case. We also don't know how many voters were put off from even attempting to vote in the first place.

So, in conclusion, whilst 99.5% of those voters who attended a polling station did vote – meaning our process was still valid – at least 100 residents missed out on their right to vote.

Councillor Thirlaway asked the following supplementary question:

Will the Elected Mayor write to the Prime Minister and ask him to repeal compulsory photographic identification at polling stations and to scrap his proposed reforms due in the autumn, and will she share the response with all members?

The Elected Mayor responded as follows:

I certainly will and thank you Cllr Thirlaway.

2. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor L Bones

In September 2022 Council passed a motion asking the Mayor to invite the PCC to give an update on progress on her policing priorities annually to Full Council, and take questions from members on the update. This is the last meeting before a year will have passed without an annual update and opportunity to scrutinise the PCC. Can the Mayor confirm whether Ms McGuinness has been invited and declined or hasn't been invited in the first place?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

Thank you for your question Councillor Bones.

I can confirm that I did indeed write to Kim McGuinness, the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner on 30 September 2022, following the motion, to invite her to provide an update on progress with her policing priorities to full Council.

Although this was planned to be at this Council meeting it has had to be postponed due to the Police and Crime Commissioner having to undergo surgery on her hand following an accident.

The Police and Crime Commissioner does want to attend this meeting in person and not send a substitute, which is why we have delayed this.

I do hope that the Police and Crime Commissioner will have recovered in time to attend the next Council meeting on 21 September 2023.

In the meantime, I am sure you will join me in wishing her a speedy recovery.

Councillor L Bones asked the following supplementary question:

Can the Deputy Mayor please confirm that the Police and Crime Commissioner will attend the meeting in September should she be well enough, and will she take questions from Members?

Councillor C Johnson responded as follows:

The Police and Crime Commissioning will be attending the next meeting in September, providing she recovers from her surgery and is well enough.