

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Council

### 21 September 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 Cath Davis, Gary Madden and Michelle Fox**

“North Tyneside Council notes that:

The decision of Cabinet to proceed with the creation of a North East Combined Mayoral Authority.

The North of Tyne Combined Authority Mayor, Jamie Driscoll, and Cabinet delivered on their pledge to deliver this devolution deal.

Council believes that:

The approach of the North of Tyne Combined Authority Mayor and Cabinet in working collaboratively with people from all backgrounds has been welcome.

The creation of a North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA) can unlock the potential of the people of the North East through continuing collaborative working and innovative solutions to the challenges in our region.

Council resolves to:

Write to the North of Tyne Combined Authority Mayor, Jamie Driscoll, and Cabinet commending them for the work that they have undertaken on behalf of the people of the North of Tyne.”

#### **Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority arising from this motion.

#### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this motion.

## **Motion 2 signed by Councillors Willie Samuel, Debbie Cox and Julie Cruddas**

Council notes that there are an increasingly wide range of concerns around the NHS directly impacting our residents. After 13 years of Conservative Government outcomes for our residents are increasingly concerning.

Council recently set up the cross-party emergency task and finish group to examine the effectiveness of emergency care, but the issue goes much wider than this. The Government's decision to remove targets for cancer diagnosis and treatment presumably because said targets were not being met is a worrying example of this trend.

Council therefore agrees to widen the remit of the task and finish group to look at all aspects of healthcare provision and policy which impacts on the workload of the NHS emergency response services and the effectiveness of that response.

### **Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority arising from this motion.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications to the Authority in widening the remit of the task and finish group.

### **Motion 3 signed by Councillors Hannah Johnson, Carl Johnson and Matthew Thirlaway**

Council welcomes the recent announcement by the Mayor and Cabinet that we are investing further in our estates with the neat streets campaign.

This is a welcome significant investment in staff and financial resources to further improve our area it will see new staff, vehicles and equipment deployed across North Tyneside, with a special focus on keeping housing estates, open spaces, town centres and the coastline neat and tidy.

Council calls upon the Mayor to write to all political groups on North Tyneside Council urging them to include this funding in their budget proposals for next year.

#### **Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority arising from this motion.

#### **Financial Implications**

The recent announcement confirmed that the Authority is investing in these services over the next 2 financial years. Some of that investment will take place in 2023/24, from funding sources already available and agreed as part of Budget-setting for 2023/24, namely the Service Improvement Fund.

The investment in the additional services in future years is not within existing base budgets and is forecast to require additional budget provision of £0.764m. This proposal will therefore form part of Cabinet's initial Budget proposals, which will be presented by Cabinet at its meeting on 27 November 2023.

The proposal will then form part of the Authority's budget engagement with a range of stakeholders during December 2023 and January 2024 including the Budget Study Group, which has cross party membership. Subject to that engagement and consultation, it will form part of the Cabinet's final budget proposals, which will be presented to full Council in February 2024.

## **Motion 4 signed by Councillors Sandra Graham, Eddie Darke and Debbie Cox**

North Tyneside council unanimously voted to declare a Climate Emergency. The council has also since created a net zero action plan and is making sound progress against it.

The Tyne & Wear Local Government Pension Scheme, holds investments in fossil fuel focussed companies.

North Tyneside council calls upon the mayor and our representatives on the pensions committee to

- Urge the pensions committee to reconsider its current investment in companies planning to increase extraction.
- explore shortening the timeframe for total divestment from fossil fuels.

### **Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority arising from this motion.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no immediate financial implications arising from the motion in terms of requesting the Pension Committee to reconsider its current investment and divestment plans for companies associated with fossil fuels. However, should a review by the Pension Committee result in a change from its current investment strategy, it could result in a change to the forecast returns used by the Scheme actuary to calculate the surplus or deficit on the Fund overall. This would have a consequential impact on the share of the surplus or deficit that is apportioned to North Tyneside Council.

It is not possible to quantify the potential impact that this could have on the Medium-Term Financial Plan at present given the inherent uncertainties of what the change could mean for the Fund and the Authority. For context, a 1% change in the employer's contribution rate for the Authority (which could be up or down) would equate to a change circa £0.180m per annum.

## **Motion 5 signed by Councillors Olly Scargill, Chris Johnston and Liam Bones**

### **Road Safety**

From speeding problems to road markings, we take seriously the complaints we receive from residents about dangerous driving, unsafe roads, and the often inadequate response to these problems.

It is regrettable that the Council's response to road safety issues can be too slow or defeatist – particularly when councillors are told that there is no problem because 'the average driver does not speed' or because 'there has not been a fatal accident'.

Council asks the Mayor to bring forward a speeding prevention plan, which includes:

- Change the way speeding problem areas are identified, moving away from the average to a system which reflects a mix of incidents numbers, police concerns, resident complaints, councillor reports and maximum speeds recorded
- Develop a strategy for dealing with anti-social driving outside of sociable hours
- Improve the way that Council logs and reports upon residents' speeding complaints and to frequently communicate this data to Northumbria Police
- Work more closely with the police on the installation of 20mph zones to ensure these can be effectively enforced
- Work with Northumbria Police to establish Community Speed Watch schemes in problem areas
- Introduce a system for councillors to request urgent junction protections be installed in areas of their wards where poor visibility is hazardous
- Prioritise the re-painting of faded junction lines over other road markings where the faded junction lines present a danger to drivers' safety

### **Legal Implications**

In bringing forward any Speed Prevention Plan, any proposals to undertake traffic calming or other highway works would be subject to the appropriate statutory decision-making arrangements.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications relating to the development of a Speeding Prevention Plan by officers. However, depending on the outcome of the Plan and decisions taken thereafter, the proposals may need to reconsider if any financial implications are identified, but these cannot be quantified at present.

## **Motion 6 signed by Councillors I McAlpine, Liam Bones and Olly Scargill**

Motion title: Pets as prizes

North Tyneside is privileged to hold a great many funfairs and similar events. In decades past it was considered the norm to win a goldfish or other small animal when in attendance. Contemporary views on animal welfare recognise the problems with unexpectedly handing out small animals to residents, who may be unprepared for the commitment that caring for them entails. Currently, North Tyneside strongly discourages this practice but has no formal provision in place to ban it outright on Council land.

Issuing pets as prizes is now widely acknowledged to be cruel and anachronistic. Above all else, the methods of their interim holding and transportation cause significant trauma to the animals and in some circumstances their death.

The RSPCA campaign actively on this issue with clear guidance, and this motion asks North Tyneside to join more than 50 other Local Authorities in prohibiting this practice at a local level. It is right for every resident to look after small animals if they wish to do so, but with the proper handover and aftercare available from proper pet distributors.

This council asks the Mayor to:

1. Immediately prohibit the practice of giving out pets as prizes.
2. Introduce appropriate measures to communicate, and enforce this, prior to the summer 2024 season.

### **Legal Implications**

Under section 11 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 a person commits an offence if they arrange for an animal to be given as a prize to a person who they reasonably believe to be under 16 years of age, and who is not accompanied by an adult. This is the only legislative limitation on the giving of animals as prizes in England and Wales.

In Scotland by contrast, it is an offence under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 for a person to give another person an animal as a prize and that would include the giving of a goldfish in a bag at a funfair.

The RSPCA have been campaigning for a ban on the giving of pets as prizes in England and Wales and have asked the public to “encourage” their local council to stop the giving of animals as prizes on council-owned land. A number of local authorities across the country have introduced a ban on the giving of animals as prizes on council-owned land.

As there is no outright prohibition in law to the giving of an animal as a prize in England and Wales a person that did so would not be acting unlawfully. It is not therefore possible for the Authority to introduce an outright ban across the Borough on the giving of animals as prizes which would go beyond the law of the land and if any such prohibition were to be introduced by the Authority, it could be open to legal challenge. That is likely to be the reason why the RSPCA in its campaign has specifically referred to the introduction of such a prohibition on council-owned land only.

The Authority could when granting permission for the use of its land to funfairs etc. specify in that permission that the giving of animals as prizes is prohibited in all circumstances.

### **Financial Implications**

In agreeing this motion, the Authority could see loss of income for leasing of Council land for events depending on whether those events have pets as prizes.

In addition, there would be a cost relating to the communication and advertising of the prohibited practice and costs of enforcement would also have to be taken into consideration.

However, at present it is not possible to quantify this as data is not held on those events that include pets as prizes on Council land. Any costs would therefore need to be accommodated within existing resources and be subject to further budget considerations once the figure can be estimated with certainty.