

North Tyneside Council

Report to Council

18 July 2024

Title: Questions by Members of the Public

Notice has been received of the following questions from members of the public to be put to the Council meeting.

1. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr Latham of Whitley Bay

I am writing to hopefully receive an update on the Murton Gap project. I am a local Monkseaton resident renting and wanting to buy my first home in the area I call home near my children's school. Murton Gap fits this bill.

The Robinson Fields development is well underway however there has been no update in some time on the houses to be built by other developers and when we can expect to see some serious progress on building these homes?

2. Question to the Elected Mayor from Ms Bowen of Whitley Bay

From a local resident concerned about Health and Climate Change

Even if we stopped all fossil fuel usage today, the UK's food emissions alone would exceed the 1.5 degrees limit set by the Paris Agreement. Food accounts for $\frac{1}{3}$ of greenhouse gas emissions, the majority of which comes from meat and dairy. A 2023 Oxford University analysis found that plant-based diets resulted in 75% less greenhouse gas emissions, water pollution and land use.

Our food systems are incredibly inefficient. 83% of farmland worldwide is used to farm animals but it only supplies 18% of global calories. Transitioning to plant-based diets would create an opportunity to return three quarters of agricultural land to nature. Tragically, Britain has lost more of its natural biodiversity than almost anywhere else in Western Europe.

Furthermore, a study last year by the Office of Health Economics found that just removing meat from weekday lunches alone could prevent hundreds of thousands of cases of heart disease. And increasing plant-based options can help us all eat more fruit and vegetables. In 2018, only 18% of UK children were eating five portions per day.

North Tyneside Council boldly declared a climate emergency in 2019. And your Carbon Net Zero Action Plan is ambitious but it lacks sufficient emphasis on food emissions. Page 13 of the Plan states "The authority provides a range of healthy balanced meal options in schools and operational buildings which includes non-meat options." But can you go much further?

Several councils, including Edinburgh, Norwich, Lambeth, Exmouth, and Haywards Heath, have endorsed the Plant Based Treaty and initiated real actions to reduce food emissions, such as carbon labelling in schools, plant-based cookery workshops for caterers, promoting Veganuary, and providing fruit and vegetable vouchers for low-income communities.

Will this council boldly confront the climate and health crises by endorsing the Plant Based Treaty?

3. Question to the Elected Mayor from Ms Kinney of North Shields

Following what was meant to be a temporary move by the Queen Alexandra Sixth Form College and its subsequent ending of 6th form provision, when will a 6th form reopen in North Shields to replace this lost provision, given John Spence, Marden and Norham High Schools do not have 6th forms?

4. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mr Rides of North Shields

Given the incoming Government commitment to doubling the size of the co-operative sector, what actions are planned by North Tyneside Council to achieve this goal locally?

5. Question to the Elected Mayor from Ms Pearson of Whitley Bay

I'd like to pose questions to the meeting in relation to water quality in Cullercoats Bay.

I recently submitted a FOI to Northumbria Water and they informed me that the beach at Cullercoats is the responsibility of North Tyneside council. Of course, without clean water, the beach will always be dirty.

What are the council doing to make sure Northumbria Water are fulfilling their side of cleaning up the problem?

What steps are North Tyneside council taking to ensure that Northumbria water are putting actions in place to improve water quality in a timely manner?

When can we expect Cullercoats Bay water to be at a standard equivalent to Longsands and Whitley Bay?