

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Council

19 September 2024

### Motions

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

#### **MOTION 1**

#### **Exempting pensioners from the new garden waste charge**

Proposer – Cllr Lewis Bartoli

Seconder – Cllr Claire McGinty

Signed by – Cllr Liam Bones, Cllr John Johnsson, Cllr Dr Olly Scargill, Cllr Jay Bartoli, Cllr Ian McAlpine, Cllr David Lilly

North Tyneside Council notes:

- The recent decision by the Labour cabinet to introduce an annual charge of £30 for garden waste collections, which will apply from March 2025.
- The financial difficulties faced by many pensioners in North Tyneside, particularly in light of the recent changes to the Winter Fuel Allowance, which may significantly reduce their income and increase their financial burdens.
- That pensioners are often on fixed incomes, and any additional charges for essential services, such as garden waste collection, could further strain their ability to meet basic living costs.

North Tyneside Council believes:

- That the introduction of a garden waste charge may disproportionately impact pensioners, who may already be facing difficult choices due to reduced financial support and rising living costs.

- That in recognition of the unique challenges faced by pensioners, particularly those related to changes in the Winter Fuel Allowance, it is appropriate and fair to offer them an exemption from this new charge.
- Gardening contributes significantly to pensioners physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.
- That providing an exemption for pensioners would demonstrate the Authority's commitment to supporting its most vulnerable residents and would help to mitigate the financial pressures they face.

North Tyneside Council asks the Mayor to:

- Request that cabinet explore an exemption from the £30 annual garden waste charge for all pensioners residing in the borough.
- Ensure that any exemption which may be introduced is easily accessible, with a straightforward application process, and is well-publicised to ensure that all eligible pensioners are aware of and can benefit from it.

## **Financial Implications**

Any exemption from the proposed garden waste charge would have a direct impact on the revenue generated, which was incorporated into the Authority's budget (at £0.600m) and medium-term financial plans and which helps to support the costs of service delivery.

It is not possible to estimate with certainty what financial impact this would have as the Authority does not hold any specific information that correlates households with someone over 65 and those that currently use the garden waste scheme. Current data shows that 28,526 households in the Borough have a resident aged over 65. The forecast for the income from the garden waste scheme was based on a take up rate of 30% across the Borough. If it is assumed that the 30% take up rate applied to those homes with an over 65 year old in it, and that this income would subsequently be lost under this policy, this would equate to a loss of circa £256k.

It should also be noted that the cost of administering the scheme would need to be taken into account, so that only eligible households received free collections. It is not possible to accurately estimate what this would be as it would be an additional task for the Customer Services staff taking the payment and a suitable way of confirming permanent residency of each householder would be needed to be designed.

As the scheme would become free for all households with anyone aged 65, it is likely that more households would enter the scheme than is currently assumed, which would have an impact on staffing, round design and vehicle utilisation.

Finally, as the payment scheme is now live, with over £0.106m collected to date it is likely that some of these payments would become eligible for a free service under this proposal. As such, additional administrative costs would be incurred to assess each case, contact residents and arrange a repayment.

Whilst the costs cannot accurately be estimated, both for future years but also for an in-year implementation, it is likely that they could be significant and in excess of £0.350m, which is more than 50% of the total income expected to be generated.

## **Legal Implications**

The Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 specifies the type of household waste for which collection and disposal charges may be made. That waste includes "Garen waste".

The Regulations therefore give discretion to local authorities to determine whether they wish to charge for the collection of garden waste or not and what level of charges should be applied.

## MOTION 2

### Pop-up recycling centres

Proposer – Cllr Liam Bones

Seconder – Cllr Ian McAlpine

Signed by – Cllr Lewis Bartoli, Cllr John Johnsson, Cllr Jay Bartoli, Cllr Dr Olly Scargill, Cllr David Lilly, Cllr Claire McGinty

North Tyneside Council notes:

- The unacceptably high levels of fly-tipping across North Tyneside, which continue to be a significant environmental and financial burden on the council and residents.
- The long-running “Clean-up Days” that are currently organised in housing estates funded through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). While these events have proven effective at reducing fly-tipping in areas where they operate, they are limited in scope and do not extend to all neighbourhoods within the borough, leaving gaps in coverage.
- Newcastle City Council’s “Pop-up Recycling Centres” initiative, which has successfully increased access to recycling facilities across the city, reducing the distance and effort required for residents to properly dispose of their waste and recyclables.

North Tyneside Council believes:

- That tackling the issue of fly-tipping requires the adoption of new and innovative approaches, especially in areas where existing waste management strategies don’t seem to work. The current clean-up initiatives, though beneficial, do not serve all areas equally, and new solutions must be explored to ensure borough-wide access to recycling services.
- The introduction of mobile, community-based “Pop-up Recycling Centres” could provide a flexible, convenient option for residents who may otherwise struggle to access static recycling centres. This approach could help reduce fly-tipping by offering regular, well-publicised opportunities for residents to dispose of their waste responsibly, closer to their homes.
- Expanding access to waste disposal facilities through pop-up centres would not only help combat illegal dumping but could also increase recycling rates, contributing to North Tyneside’s sustainability and waste reduction goals.

North Tyneside Council asks the Mayor and Cabinet to:

- Explore how a scheme of “Pop-up Recycling Centres” could be introduced across North Tyneside, including a detailed review of the Newcastle City Council model. This review should consider the frequency, locations, and types of waste accepted at the pop-up sites.
- Engage in a consultation process with residents, local businesses, and community groups to identify areas of highest need for improved waste disposal services and gauge public interest in the pop-up recycling scheme.
- Investigate potential funding streams to support the year-round operation of a pop-up recycling centres. This should include exploring external funding sources and how existing budgets such as Neet Streets can support this activity. Additionally, an assessment should be made of the potential cost savings from reduced fly-tipping, which could offset the costs of running the scheme.
- Request the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination and Finance Committee examine and report on the review and engagement report and outcomes.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with the motion. However, the detailed financial implications associated with introducing a new service could be significant and would need to be fully understood to ensure this did not add additional pressure to the Authority’s revenue budget. This would need to form part of a balanced budget proposal, which would form part of the 2025/26 budget.

## **Legal Implications**

The Authority is required to provide Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) which are reasonably accessible to the public under section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It’s up to the Authority how these Recycling Centres operate provided there is compliance with that section of the Act.

There may be other legal considerations to take into account, such as planning and/or highways legislation which would be considered on an individual basis if necessary.

## MOTION 3

### Disabled parking badges for residents with Parkinson's

Proposer – Cllr Dr Olly Scargill

Seconder – Cllr John Johnsson

Signed by – Cllr Lewis Bartoli, Cllr Liam Bones, Cllr Jay Bartoli, Cllr Ian McAlpine, Cllr David Lilly, Cllr Claire McGinty

North Tyneside Council notes that:

- Parkinson's Disease is a progressive neurological condition that severely impacts the lives of over 145,000 people in the UK, including residents in North Tyneside. The symptoms of Parkinson's can vary greatly from person to person and fluctuate not only day-to-day but even hour-to-hour, often including mobility issues, tremors, freezing, pain, and extreme fatigue.
- The Equality Act 2010 recognises Parkinson's as a long-term disability from the point it starts to affect daily life, with such effects worsening over time. People with Parkinson's are legally entitled to reasonable adjustments in public life to account for their mobility and safety needs.
- The Blue Badge Scheme provides vital parking concessions for individuals with severe mobility issues, allowing them to access destinations more easily. However, the current eligibility criteria, set by the Department for Transport, does not fully take into account the fluctuating and unpredictable nature of Parkinson's symptoms.
- Concerns raised by Parkinson's UK and members of the North Tyneside Parkinson's community indicate that many individuals with the condition are being denied Blue Badges, despite significant mobility challenges. The current application process does not adequately reflect the needs of those whose ability to walk may vary throughout the day, nor does it take into consideration the necessity for these individuals to be close to their vehicles due to sudden changes in symptoms.
- The Parkinson's UK Campaign highlights that the rigidity of the current Blue Badge criteria is deterring individuals with Parkinson's from applying, exacerbating feelings of isolation and creating unnecessary barriers to independence.

Council asks the Mayor to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Transport, calling on the government to review and amend the Blue Badge eligibility criteria to better account for fluctuating conditions like Parkinson's and other progressive neurological diseases, ensuring that mobility assessments reflect the full impact of such conditions on daily life and also introduce a clear, accessible appeal process for Blue Badge applicants who are denied, ensuring they are given an adequate chance to provide further medical evidence or clarification regarding their condition.
- Request that officers provide additional support and guidance to individuals with Parkinson's or other progressive conditions in navigating the Blue Badge application process.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with the motion.

### **Legal Implications**

Whereas it is the Department for Transport (DoT) which determines the criteria to be applied that enables people to either automatically be eligible for a Blue Badge or who may qualify for a Blue Badge, it is the Authority, applying the DoT criteria, who decide if a person is eligible for a Badge.

The Authority in determining a Blue Badge application must apply the criterial aid down by the DoT.

There are no legal implications in the Authority writing to the Secretary of State for Transport.