

North Tyneside Council

Report to Council

20 January 2022

Title: Motions

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

1. Motion signed by Councillors G Westwater, L Bones, S Brockbank

On the 27th September 2017 Council agreed to sign up to the non-legally binding International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of Antisemitism, and the supporting guidelines. This was subsequently adopted within the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. With Holocaust Memorial Day just a few days away and with many new faces in the Chamber we are asking for Councillors elected after September 2017 and those that were not able to be present to be given the opportunity to show our support for this definition and for the remaining Councillors to reaffirm their support.

We request Council votes to endorse and reaffirm our commitment to the IHRA's definition of Antisemitism.

This will send a clear message that Antisemitism will not be tolerated within North Tyneside Council.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition of Antisemitism and supporting guidelines state:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as anti-Semitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

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

2. Motion signed by Councillors L Bones, P McIntyre, S Brockbank

Tyne Tunnel charges

Council notes the difficulties some residents have faced with the change in Tyne Tunnel payment to a cashless service. At present residents have to pay the toll online or at a Paypoint by midnight the day after their journey. Some residents have been shocked by the lack of publicity around the changes in advance of their introduction, and some residents have reported fines being issues despite tolls having been paid.

Council also notes that a petition has been running online (<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/tyne-tunnel-fines>) and has, at time of writing, received over 10,000 signatures. That petition asks that TT2:

- “1. Cancel all unpaid toll charges issued in the last 6 months prior to 1st January 2022.
2. Increase the time period for which to 'pay later' from 48 hours to 5 working days.
3. Engage in a concerted advertising campaign to ensure people are fully aware of how the Tyne Tunnel now works and encourage frequent travellers to sign up for a pre-paid account.
4. Scrap the current penalty charge system and replace with the following more ethical structure: For those who miss their deadline to pay should receive an initial fine of no more than £20, which should be reduced to £5.00 if paid within 14 days of the date the fine was generated. These amounts are more ethical and affordable to the average user of the Tyne Tunnel - many of whom come from working class backgrounds or may be suffering from hardship due to the current economic climate. If paying a penalty charge then the original 'toll fare' should be taken out of the fine paid so that people are not being charged extra. If a person fails to pay the initial £20 fine within 28 days, it should rise to no more than £40 and only after a period of 42 days should this be passed to a debt collection agency where "additional administrative charges" of no more than a further £25 should be added.
5. Review the appeals process and produce clear guidance that is publicly available on what the policies of TT2 Limited are in relation to travel through the tunnel, what the toll prices are, and the penalty charge procedures. Ensuring that each individual case is considered carefully and with sensitivity.”

(Petition © Gary Spedding)

Council therefore asks the Mayor to write to TT2 asking them to take the action requested in the petition.

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

3. Motion signed by Councillors W Samuel, S Day, C Burdis

Cost of Living

Council notes with alarm the pressures on the cost of living for residents in North Tyneside.

Already facing the Government imposed cuts in Universal Credit and the National Insurance tax hike in April combined with rising inflation families in the borough will struggle to make ends meet.

To add insult to injury, it looks possible that the standard variable tariff for energy is likely to be increased by around 50% pushing many residents into fuel poverty.

Council asks the Elected Mayor to write to the Government asking that all possible measures, such as a reduction in VAT are looked into with a view to mitigating the impact of these increases on our people.

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4. Motion signed by Councillors C Johnson, S Graham, C Davis

Storm Arwen

North Tyneside council notes:

- Storm Arwen caused devastating damage right across North Tyneside, many homes, businesses, and public places were severely damaged with many forced to move out of their homes in the run up to Christmas.
- North Tyneside council's staff did some incredible work to assist residents in the greatest need on immediately following the storm and continue to do so in the aftermath and clean-up.

North Tyneside Council believes:

- The Conservative government's response was totally inadequate.

North Tyneside Council calls on the Mayor to:

- Write to the Prime Minister to raise our concerns with the way the situation was handled and to commit to providing funding to aid the recovery.

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