

North Tyneside Council

Report to Council

21 July 2022

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 Laurie Zebik of Forest Hall

Why is the SEND school provision in North Tyneside so incredibly low, especially nursery placements? There are 3 special schools in the Borough and the need is much higher. Why is more investment not being put into this? Our children deserve more than this. Their needs and education are currently not met. We as parents should not have the added stress and worry of finding a suitable school place in an already challenging and stressful situation. Our children and families are pushed aside constantly.

Also why is the 'local offer' predominantly charities? Why don't the council use more funding to offer support and activities for SEND children, adults and their families. It's extremely difficult to attend events to start with and the lack of accessibility and inclusion isolates us further. SEND families bottom of the pile again like we are worthless citizens. The Borough is appalling for support and opportunities. The council need to stop relying on good will and the work of charities and support all of their residents, not brush issues under the carpet.

2. Question to the Elected Mayor from Mark Lee of Wallsend

Why is it that money seems to be there for 'areas of contemplation' paving, but apparently not for clearing paths from fallen and overhanging/leaning trees in WOODLAND PATHS IN RISING SUN COUNTRY PARK?

There is one woodland path in particular that has a tree decorated in memory of a loved one. It has been blocked off since storm Arwen. Locals are walking around the fallen trees, but it's not exactly safe as there are trees leaning against other trees, which in my opinion could fall at any time.

3. Question to the Elected Mayor from Penny Remfry of Whitley Bay

In order to meet the Council's 2030 zero net carbon target residents will have to reduce their domestic energy use considerably. What measures have the Council taken to provide the workforce and other support needed to enable residents to retrofit their homes in order to do this?

4. Question to the Elected Mayor from Alan Steele of Tynemouth

In 2019 the Council declared a 'Climate Emergency' and last year brought their Carbon Net Zero target for the borough and authority forward to 2030. In pursuance of these targets the council committed to produce an updated 'Climate Emergency Action Plan' in 2022. What progress has been made on this, when will it be published and how will local residents and groups have an input into it?

What governance arrangements are the Council putting in place to oversee the implementation of the revised Action Plan?

5. Question to the Elected Mayor from Ian Appleby of Cullercoats

In response to bringing forward the net Carbon Zero Target for the borough to 2030 last year, the Council committed itself as part of its "Our North Tyneside Plan" to produce a renewed Climate Emergency Action Plan in 2022 detailing how it intended to achieve the target.

It is now half way through the year. What progress, if any, has been made on this, when will the Action Plan be published and how will local residents and groups have an input into it?

What governance arrangements, including the Climate Emergency Board's membership and meetings held to date, are the Council putting in place to oversee the implementation of the revised Action Plan and communicate this important work to the public in an open and transparent way?

6. Question to the Elected Mayor from Andrew Macardle of Forest Hall

Youth Services have been reduced significantly over recent years.

The Conservative Government's choice - and let us be clear that it was a choice - to adopt a policy of austerity has reduced funding over the last ten years. The pandemic meant that many surviving services were closed. We are now facing a cost-of-living crisis, meaning that many families are struggling to meet basic living expenses.

As a result, it is children and young people who are deprived of services and activities that previous generations had enjoyed.

There is a strong argument that the lack of opportunity, lack of structured environment - coupled with a desperation for a distraction from the current hardships - have led to a rise in anti-social behaviour, as we have seen on the metro, on our high streets and with fires started in a number of our parks and woodland across the Borough.

It is important to note that this is not to blame those anti social behaviours on young people, merely to highlight the link between lack of opportunities afforded and the space left for chaos.

In order to provide that opportunity, providing services for young people, what plans do North Tyneside Council have to invest in youth services - particularly services offered at no cost to families who are currently struggling.