

# Local Government Act 1972

## Borough of North Tyneside

Thursday, 21 July 2022

At the meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Tyneside duly convened and held on Thursday, 21 July 2022 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Quadrant East, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY at which a quorum of Members were present, that is to say: -

### Present

Councillor P Oliver (Chair)  
N Redfearn (Elected Mayor)

Councillor L Arkley	Councillor K Barrie
Councillor L Bones	Councillor B Burdis
Councillor C Burdis	Councillor K Clark
Councillor D Cox	Councillor J Cruddas
Councillor E Darke	Councillor C Davis
Councillor S Day	Councillor D Drummond
Councillor L Ferasin	Councillor M Fox
Councillor S Graham	Councillor T Hallway
Councillor J Harrison	Councillor John Hunter
Councillor V Jamieson	Councillor C Johnson
Councillor H Johnson	Councillor C Johnston
Councillor J Kirwin	Councillor F Lott
Councillor W Lott	Councillor G Madden
Councillor L Marshall	Councillor P McIntyre
Councillor A McMullen	Councillor J Montague
Councillor J Mudzingwa	Councillor T Mulvenna
Councillor M Murphy	Councillor T Neira
Councillor A Newman	Councillor R O'Keefe
Councillor J O'Shea	Councillor E Parker-Leonard
Councillor A Percy	Councillor S Phillips
Councillor B Pickard	Councillor M Rankin
Councillor P Richardson	Councillor W Samuel
Councillor O Scargill	Councillor J Shaw
Councillor M Thirlaway	Councillor J Walker
Councillor J Wallace	Councillor G Westwater
Councillor M Wilson	

**Apologies:** Councillor L Bartoli, Councillor G Bell, Councillor L Bell, Councillor N Craven, Councillor M Green, Councillor M Hall and Councillor Janet Hunter

**C18/22 Minute Silence**

A minute's silence was observed in respect of the passing of former Councillor Joseph Bell who had represented Seatonville Ward from 2002 until 2004.

**C19/22 Public Questions**

**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.

*Councillor Steven Phillips responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:*

Thank you for the question

First of all, I want to be clear that as Cabinet Member and with the Officer Team we work hard to support families in the Borough to ensure all of our young people reach their full potential.

And that we realise every young person is different and every family and carer has a different experience.

However, I would like to make three points in response.

First, our aim across the Borough is that families, schools and the Council work together to make sure that, where needs can be met, children and young people in the Borough are educated in local, inclusive, mainstream provision. All the evidence suggests that this produces the best outcomes.

Second, where needs cannot be met, we aim to have the right provision. And, while I understand individual circumstances might be difficult, school provision is not low and investment has gone into this area.

Across our Additionally Resourced Provision and 5 Special Schools - since October 2017 for example, places have risen from 543 to 720 in October 2021 - a 25% increase.

That investment and approach was recognised in our recent Joint CQC/Ofsted Inspection.

Finally, this is a national issue. Demand for support for children and young people with

additional needs is rising across the country and the Government has had to initiate a national programme to cope with the associated costs. In North Tyneside, last year, we spent nearly £32m on these services.

I understand this is an issue about which people feel strongly. Who would not want the very best for their children? As a Council we do use all the resource at our disposal and do provide a full range of services.

I am sure you understand but in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015 Local Authorities must publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and care for children and young people with SEND.

The Local Offer has two purposes:

- (a) to provide clear, comprehensive, and accessible information about provision and how to access it; and
- (b) to make provision more responsive by directly involving children and young people with SEND in the development and review of those services.

By its very nature that includes a range of services offered by others.

In the last year the Local Authority has worked with our SEND Youth Forum, Parent Carer Forum and partners to review and update our Local Offer.

We are always aiming to improve our Local Offer and we always welcome feedback.

There is the facility to leave this feedback on the North Tyneside's Local Offer website.

To conclude with two practical examples.

As a result of this feedback the Local Authority has started a review of short breaks and activities in the borough.

A working group has been set up which includes our brilliant Parent Carer Forum.

They are currently going through an exercise of engagement and consultation with parents and carers, our SEND Youth Forum, and stakeholders across education, health, and care.

This will tell us what children, young people and their families need in the borough, and we expect to have a new framework of providers and additional services as we head into the spring of 2023.

Alongside this is our Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme, which has commissioned holiday activities for this summer, including those for children and young people with SEND. You can find out more about this on the Local Offer website.

*Laurie Lebik asked the following supplementary question:*

A lot of schools have wraparound care, where there is no provision for children going to specialist schools. What will you do to provide wraparound care for children who are attending specialist schools and during holiday times?

*Councillor S Phillips responded as follows:*

With regards to my response information was provided with regards to services available for holiday provision. In terms of wraparound care a written response will be provided.

## **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.

*Councillor S Graham responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:*

Thank you for this question. We recognise the importance of trees and the many benefits they bring to the borough. We currently manage and maintain approximately 140,000 trees which are spread across the borough in places such as streets, open spaces, parks, housing estates, school grounds and cemeteries.

During Storm Arwen and the 6 subsequent storms, we suffered unprecedented levels of damage to our tree stock and over recent months, our tree teams have been working hard to put this right.

With regards to the Rising Sun Country Park, I can report that a tree survey has been carried out as part of a woodland management plan for the park which has identified 50 trees on this path that require maintenance works. And as soon as the bird nesting season is over, we will be carrying out this work.

Public safety also remains a total priority for us and we have safety restrictions in place to manage access to certain areas of the park and we will ensure these remain in place until works are complete.

I hope this reassures you of the work plans we have in place for managing the trees at the Rising Sun Country Park and they will be addressed as soon as we are able whilst protecting the bird population.

Thank you again for raising this question with me.

*The Chair had agreed that a single response be provided to questions 3-5 below:*

## **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?

*Councillor S Graham responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:*

I am pleased to receive three questions from members of the public on the Council's Carbon Net-Zero 2030 policy commitment, something which is of great importance to the Mayor and Cabinet.

The timing of the questions is excellent; I am delighted to be able to tell you that Cabinet will receive the Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan at its meeting on Monday August 1<sup>st</sup> in a couple of weeks' time.

I would like to respond to the questions by explaining how engaging with residents and stakeholders has shaped the development of our action plan, then provide some details of the work we have already done to improve the energy efficiency of housing in the Borough, and the work we will do going forwards which is included in our action plan.

As a listening Council, the Mayor and Cabinet take great pride in engaging with residents and stakeholders in the shaping of our policies and plans.

The Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan has been shaped through a range of engagement activities;

- Our Residents Survey asked a number of climate related questions for the first time ever.
- We also worked with the North of Tyne Combined Authority to run our first ever Citizens

Assembly on climate change.

- These two new climate activities were particularly helpful in shaping our Action on Climate Change behavioural change campaign, which I am sure you will have seen across the Borough in recent weeks. Additionally, they have supported key strategic project development, such as establishing the business case for a large-scale housing retrofit programme.
- The Mayor and Cabinet are committed to listening to our young people in shaping our policies and plans and we have worked closely with the Young Mayor and young people's representatives in shaping the action plan.
- We have also worked with a number of large employers in the Borough to test our plan and share best practice, particularly through our 'Call for Evidence' day that we hosted during COP26. I'm pleased to tell you that this event has led to the creation of a Borough-wide outward facing Climate Emergency Board which will focus on reducing emissions from the business sector.
- Further engagement through our Residents Magazine, social media channels and future Residents Surveys will continue to shape our campaign and action plan.

Based on the views expressed during these engagement activities we have developed our action plan.

It is important that appropriate governance arrangements are in place and the development of the action plan has been overseen by the internal Council's Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Board, which I chair and is made up of senior officers from across the organisation. The board meets monthly and has coordinated the development of 150 actions that seek to reduce emissions across a number of key themes such as travel, waste, the Council's portfolio of buildings, vehicles and street lights, and of course housing.

This approach cuts across every aspect of Council delivery of services.

Over the past 15 years a range of low carbon and energy efficiency measures have been installed across our council owned homes:

- All cavity walls and lofts have been insulated.
- The majority of our Council homes have high efficiency condensing boilers and double glazing.
- 1500 homes have Solar PV.
- Non-traditional homes have benefitting from external wall insulation works; and,
- North Tyneside Living homes have all been upgraded to meet BREEAM 'Excellent' rating.

Because of this work we are a top performer when compared to the national averages for the energy efficiency rating of our homes. But the work does not stop there; we will see a further 17,000 measures installed through to 2030 spending over £32m.

All new affordable homes built by the Council from 2023 will no longer use gas to heat our new build homes and we will introduce low-carbon alternatives, this is two years ahead of the Governments Future Homes Standard that comes into force from 2025.

Our private households have benefitted through our innovative North Tyneside Warm Zone partnership installing energy efficiency measures in over 20,000 homes. The Council has also secured £8m in grant funding to install further energy efficiency and generation measures in around 900 private homes.

Through our Green Skills work we are looking at how we can invest in the local workforce to ensure we have the right skills to continue to install and maintain new green technologies in homes across the borough.

Our residents have asked for more information about how they can reduce their carbon footprint and our communications plan will continue to provide the information residents need to support on our collective journey to net zero.

However, we recognise that this journey is not always affordable for our households so we will continue to lobby for the financial support they need to retrofit their homes.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan will be refreshed annually, and a performance update will be provided to Cabinet each year detailing key achievements and progress made. This will be available on the Council's website.

I am very proud of the work that has been carried out to date and look forward to receiving the ambitious action plan next month at Cabinet.

*Penny Remfry asked the following supplementary question:*

With respect to retrofit issue, there is a high proportion of private landlords in North Tyneside. What plans the Council has to encourage landlords to retrofit or in other ways to reduce the carbon emissions of their properties.

*Councillor S Graham responded as follows:*

Thank you for the additional question and there is a hope through the climate change behavioural change website and additional information that is being published that people will see there is help available. The new climate change webpage will be a useful source of information for residents and provide tips to reduce energy consumption, available grants for home energy systems and links to the government endorsed impartial energy advice service in addition to frequently asked questions section to how to get solar power and air source heat pumps into homes.

We understand that it will be expensive for some and that more grant funding will be required and the Council will lobby the Government for funding. There is additional help through our housing service to help private landlords and providing them of any grants available to them.

*Ian Appleby asked the following supplementary question:*

Scope of the plan as well as carbon reduction measures will it also include mitigation and adaptation measures, individual welfare as we see increasing number of people suffering with the effect of climate anxiety. Will there also be a commitment making information about the that the Climate Emergency Board and the Carbon Net Zero 2030 Board public by publishing the minutes of these meetings.

*Councillor S Graham responded as follows:*

There will be a commitment to provide information to who sits on the Climate Emergency Board and the Carbon Net Zero 2030 Board and publish the minutes of meeting.

In relation to climate anxiety, it is hoped that the detailed information from the ongoing campaign will relieve anxieties. Such as the planting of 9000 tree to the northeast community forest that will aid the absorption of carbon, in addition to the many measure that will be detailed in the action plan, which will be published on the Council website in early August.

## **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.

*Councillor S Phillips responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:*

In terms of plans that the Council has for these services. There is a developing Universal offer for young people across the authority, mainly delivered through Community and Voluntary sector organisations. Some of these sessions are offered free and some at very low cost (e.g.£2). In addition to these groups, the Early Help service offers a range of more targeted groups all of which are free. This includes the Early Help Drug Alcohol Service (EHDAS) providing education sessions in schools and colleges, which are well attended. They also offer one to one work with young people.

Early Help staff work jointly with Project VITA (a Community Protection scheme with Police) with an aim to reduce anti-social behaviour in the community. The Early Help Drug and Alcohol staff go out with Community Protection to offer outreach support and engage young people and divert them back into more positive activities, such as discos at the Allen Memorial, roller discos, activities on Amberley field, boxing coaching and curb side sports etc. Staff are able to engage positively with young people who maybe using drugs and/or

alcohol to offer education and harm minimisation, this is generally well received and the young people can engage with activities and ideas as to how they can support each other to keep each other safe.

We are currently working on recommencing the Young Civics Course, similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award, it's a 6 week programme aiming to support young people to develop new skills. It is run by Early Help staff in partnership with schools and includes modules for planning an expedition and supporting the local community with volunteering, for example, in the past we have taken groups of young people to volunteer in Elderly Residential units or go litter picking.

We also have the Forest School in Shiremoor Children's Centre, which offers sessions teenage young carers, during school holiday periods. We also have Young Carers using the Children's Centres several evenings per week at Shiremoor and Howden. We are in the process of rebranding our Children's Centres to become Family Hubs promoting more of an inclusive and welcoming environment for all age groups.

We recently met with RISE North-East to explore how we could work together to offer activities to young people encouraging them to become more active, addressing inequalities within our local communities and supporting them with their mental well-being. This is work in progress but will strengthen our free to access, targeted offer to young people.

We are also working in conjunction with schools and leisure to support the Bike for Health Programme and a Play Street initiative.

## **C20/22            To receive any Declarations of Interest**

Declarations of interest were reported as follows:

Councillor L Bones – Item 6 Motion 2 - non-registerable personal interest that he is a member of a relevant lobby group.

Councillor O Scargill – Item 6 Motion 1 - non-registerable personal interest, he recently completed a educational placement at Northumbria Healthcare Trust.

Councillor J Harrison – Item 6 Motion 1 - non-registerable personal interest, he is a Public Governor of Northumbria NHS Foundation.

Councillor K Clark – Item 6 Motion 1 - non-registerable personal interest, is a Co-opted Governor on the NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor M Thirlaway – Item 8 – Storm Arwen Task & Finish Group Report - non-registerable personal interest as he has a relation employed by the Authority.

## **C21/22            Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2022**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 May 2022 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair.

## **C22/22            Return of Councillor Elected - Camperdown Ward By-Election 14 July**

**2022**

The Council received the return of the Councillor elected for the Camperdown Ward following the by-election held on 14 July 2022.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Peter Earley to the Council.

**C23/22          Motion 4**

It was moved by the Councillor E Darke and seconded by Councillor P Earley that:

North Tyneside Council thanks former Councillor Jim Allan for his many years of service to the Council. Jim was a Councillor over 30 years representing Wallsend, Valley, and the Camperdown wards during his time. He held many positions within the Council over the years including Deputy Mayor and Leader of the Labour Group while in opposition. We wish Jim the best of health for the future.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved unanimously.

**C24/22          Appointment of Officer under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972**

The Council received a report seeking approval under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.

It was moved by Councillor M Rankin and seconded by Councillor C Johnson that:

The appointment of Mr Jon Richie to be the Authority's Chief Finance Officers/Section 151 Officer with effect from 8 August 2022.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved unanimously.

**C25/22          Motion 1**

It was moved by Councillor M Rankin and seconded by Councillor W Samuel that:

North Tyneside Council believes that all NHS hospital staff should be entitled to free parking in hospital car parks. Over the last two years NHS hospital staff have rose to the challenge and helped defeat covid. The Conservative Government are happy to praise and clap for NHS hospital staff but fail to support them when it really matters.

The decision, by the Conservative Government, to rescind free parking for NHS hospital staff is a disgrace and is a dangerous message that they are unimportant now the pandemic is coming to an end. Our NHS hospital staff should be appreciated and supported at all times, not just during times of crisis.

North Tyneside Council calls on the Elected Mayor to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care demanding the Government acts to ensure all NHS hospital staff are

entitled to free parking in hospital car parks.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 49 votes to 1 votes.

## **C26/22          Motion 2**

It was moved by Councillor M Thirlaway and seconded by Councillor H Johnson that:

### Conversion Therapy Ban

North Tyneside Council notes that there are already fourteen countries with some form of national ban on LGBT+ conversion therapy, as well as many other states, cities, and provinces. We also note that NHS England has stated that all forms of conversion therapy are unethical and potentially harmful.

We believe conversion therapy poses a danger to LGBT+ people and is an affront to human dignity. We are, therefore, dismayed that, despite committing to an LGBT+ conversion ban in 2018, the Conservative Government has persistently failed to legislate such a ban and have subsequently placed LGBT+ people at significant risk of harm.

We are equally dismayed that the Conservative Government's proposed conversion therapy ban does not include gender identity and believe that any ban must protect trans and non-binary people.

North Tyneside Council calls on the Elected Mayor to write to the Prime Minister asking him to finally prioritise and legislate a conversion therapy ban that includes gender identity.

A recorded vote on the Motion, was requested by two Members present.

### **Votes for the Motion,**

N Redfearn, Elected Mayor and Councillors L Bones, B Burdis, C Burdis, K Clark, D Cox, J Cruddas, E Darke, C Davis, S Day, D Drummond, P Earley, L Ferasin, M Fox, S Graham, T Hallway, J Harrison, John Hunter, V Jamieson, C Johnson, H Johnson, C Johnston, J Kirwin, F Lott, W Lott, G Madden, L Marshall, A McMullen, J Montague, J Mudzingwa, T Mulvenna, M Murphy, T Neira, A Newman, P Oliver, R O'Keefe, J O'Shea, E Parker-Leonard, N Percy, S Phillips, B Pickard, M Rankin, P Richardson, W Samuel, O Scargill, J Shaw, M Thirlaway, J Walker and M Wilson.

### **Votes against the Motion**

### **Abstentions**

Councillors L Arkley, K Barrie, P McIntyre, J Wallace and G Westwater.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 49 votes and 5 Abstentions.

## **C27/22          Motion 3**

It was moved by Councillor Carl Johnson and seconded by Councillor Andy Newman that:

Honesty, integrity, and respect matter in politics.

In the previous two election cycles we've seen acts of dishonesty, deception, and often a lack of respect shown to fellow candidates. This Council therefore calls upon the Elected Mayor to write to all political parties who stood candidates in the 2022 local elections in North Tyneside calling on them to pledge to;

- To always make it clear on election literature which party it is from
- To not abbreviate the name of your political party on an imprint
- To not impersonate local media to use as a party-political platform
- To always ensure postal vote sign-ups are sent direct to the council
- To make clear on any social media account which political party is behind it
- To treat other candidates with respect
- To not impersonate another political party on literature
- To uphold the highest standards of integrity which the public expect from us

A recorded vote on the Motion, was requested by two Members present.

### **Votes for the Motion,**

N Redfearn, Elected Mayor and Councillors L Arkey, K Barrie L Bones, B Burdis, C Burdis, K Clark, D Cox, J Cruddas, E Darke, C Davis, S Day, D Drummond, P Earley, L Ferasin, M Fox, S Graham, T Hallway, J Harrison, John Hunter, V Jamieson, C Johnson, H Johnson, C Johnston, J Kirwin, F Lott, W Lott, G Madden, L Marshall, P McIntyre, A McMullen, J Montague, J Mudzingwa, T Mulvenna, M Murphy, T Neira, A Newman, P Oliver, R O'Keefe, J O'Shea, E Parker-Leonard, N Percy, S Phillips, B Pickard, M Rankin, P Richardson, W Samuel, O Scargill, J Shaw, M Thirlaway, J Walker, J Wallace and G Westwater and M Wilson.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 54 votes to 0 votes.

### **C28/22 Motion 5**

It was moved by Councillor O Scargill and seconded by Councillor L Bones that:

North Tyneside Council notes:

- The Dutch-style roundabout at Rake Lane has caused significant disruption over the last few months to local residents
- The total cost of the scheme was £1.5 million

North Tyneside Council believes:

- £1.5 million could, and should, have been spent on alternative proposals for active travel

North Tyneside Council asks the Mayor to:

- Reassure residents that every roundabout in North Tyneside will not become a Dutch-style roundabout
- Ensure all future cycling schemes have the support of local residents by putting them to a local referendum

An amendment was moved by Councillor C Johnson and seconded by Councillor S Graham as follows:

Under North Tyneside Council notes:

Add the following wording at the end of bullet point 1 – “while it was being constructed”

Add the following wording at the end of bullet point 2- “which was funded and agreed by the Conservative government including the standards of design they required”.

Delete the following wording;

“North Tyneside Council believes:

- £1.5 million could, and should, have been spent on alternative proposals for active travel”

Under North Tyneside Council asks the Mayor to:

Delete the wording – “have the support of local residents by putting them to a local referendum” and replace with “are subject to full public consultation with local residents”.

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 46 votes to 8 votes.

The substantive motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 50 votes with 4 abstentions.

## **C29/22            Appointment of Independent Persons**

Council received a report that sought approval to re-appoint one current holder of the role of Independent Person and to appoint two new Independent Persons to that role for a period of four years.

It was moved by the Elected Mayor and seconded by Councillor G Westwater that:

Council appoint Dr Stuart Green, Mrs Kerry Roffe and Mr Daniel John Entwisle as the Authority’s Independent Persons pursuant to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 for a period of four years to 31 July 2026.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved unanimously.

## **C30/22            Storm Arwen Task & Finish Group report**

Council received a report that provided the findings of the Storm Arwen Task & Finish Group. The group undertook a review following a Council Motion was debated at its meeting on the 20 January 2022.

Councillor B Burdis who was a member of the Storm Arwen Task & Finish Group presented the findings.

It was moved by Councillor C Johnson and Seconded by Councillor Sand Graham that:

Council notes the findings of the Storm Arwen Task and Finish group and agree to refer the report to Cabinet for its consideration.

The motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved unanimously.

### **C31/22 Chair's Announcements**

The Chair informed the meeting of some of the events she had attended since the last meeting, these included:

- The Falklands War remembrance service.
- The unveiling of the special reflection spaces that had been created in five areas across North Tyneside connecting the borough's 30-mile waggonway network. The areas were places for people to remember the loved ones that were lost during the coronavirus pandemic, offering a space to reflect on the impact the pandemic.
- The unveiling of a stained-glass window dedicated to the contribution of key workers during the pandemic by the pupils at Coquet Park First School in Whitley Bay.

The Chair also informed that her chosen charity was True Colour Theatre.

True Colours Theatre is an inclusive theatre school for children and young people that live in the North East of England. They create a space for children and young people where they can experience performing arts in an inclusive, non-judgemental, and nurturing environment.

### **C32/22 Elected Mayor's Announcements**

The Elected Mayor congratulated newly elected Councillor Peter Earley on his return to the Council as Councillor for Camperdown.

She also expressed her gratitude to all those involved in the planning and operation of the recent Mouth of the Tyne Festival. The Elected Mayor informed that the event had attracted over 100 thousand visitors and the Authority had received very good feedback from those who attended.

The Elected Mayor gave further thanks to all those officers who would be working to provide services and support to families over the school summer break.

### **C33/22 Questions by Members of the Council**

#### **1. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor Linda Arkley**

Is the Elected Mayor looking at the high levels of Anti-Social Behaviour in Cullercoats? As a matter of urgency will she meet with me to discuss the steps to be taken, to ensure the safety of residents and visitors?

*Councillor Elected Mayor responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:*

I am totally committed to keeping our residents and visitors safe and I take the issue of ASB very seriously, working closely with colleagues in Northumbria Police and also with the

PCC, Kim McGuiness.

In 2019 following reports of ASB on Cullercoats Bay and a review of how we manage our public open spaces, a joint approach with Northumbria Police was agreed and "Operation Coast Watch" became our annual plan for tackling ASB and associated environment issues such as littering.

Operation Coast Watch runs from spring through to the autumn, is a 7-day week operation, and is flexible depending on the weather forecast, we jointly review this according to what is happened and allows for extra resource and patrols in our high footfall areas when the weather is warm.

Then we activate and increase patrols. Police colleagues work jointly with our community protection team to patrol the open public spaces in the borough. They share the resource and plan individual operations depending upon need, intelligence and over the summer they engage with the residents and visitors and are on hand to respond quickly to anti-social behaviour. Police officers have the power to issue dispersal orders to those engaged in anti-social behaviour.

Both the Council's Community protection team and police officers can issue fixed penalty notices on the spot for any irresponsible use of alcohol in our public open spaces including beaches and issues around environmental crime such as littering.

As part of Operations Coast Watch in the joint work with the PCC, we work closely with Nexus focussing on the Metro stations at the coast including Cullercoats metro stations where the multi-agency teams are deployed to address ASB and also tackle underage alcohol use.

A new additional mobile and fixed CCTV monitoring is now a key part of the Coast Watch approach together with the joint work with the local community group Cullercoats Collective. They share their intelligence around large groups gathering, share the use of illegal substances, underage alcohol consumption and littering.

This collaboration working with them and taking this approach to tackle anti-social behaviour and environmental crime has made a difference.

Officers met with the Cullercoats Collective in February 2022 to begin planning the approach to the summer. The community group was pleased with how the operation ran in 2021 and have committed to providing support during this summer period.

Working together has worked, collectively both Northumbria Police and the Community Protection Team have seen a reduction in reported anti-social behaviour incidents over the last three summer periods and these have been attributed to a combination of increased visibility and quick enforcement action.

The most recent figures have shown a 42% decrease in reported incidents in 2021 compared to 2022 and 32% decrease in 2019.

We have clear evidence that this approach works, and I know that Council officers have very recently offered to meet with you to discuss the work we are doing in your ward and the impact it is having. I have also asked my Cabinet Lead Member for Community Safety, Cllr Carole Burdis to meet with you and the other Ward Members, including officers to discuss

these issues further and I will also attend.

*Councillor L Arkley asked the following supplementary question:*

We recognise that there are some outstanding issues and residents have requested if there is any further funding available to be used to increase patrols to tackle the issue in this area

*Councillor Elected Mayor responded as follows:*

I can assure you all considerations will be discussed to what additional resources are available at the meeting when arranged.

## **2. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor George Westwater**

Anti-Social Behaviour seems to be an increasing problem across the Borough. Can the Elected Mayor confirm that all possible steps are being taken, working with other public bodies, to combat the problem and what new measures are being implemented?

*Councillor C Johnson responded on behalf of the Elected Mayor as follows:*

As the Elected members I know how important it is to tackle the issues of ASB for our residents, our communities, our visitors and our businesses across the borough. This issue is a priority for the Council working closely with our PCC, Kim McGuinness and Police colleagues.

There has been an increase in ASB in our public spaces since early spring this year, but this is a national trend and it's not just an isolated issue within North Tyneside.

We responded immediately and our Community Protection Team and Police colleagues were very proactive, working closely to share intelligence and develop joint operational plans.

50% of our Community Protection resource is focussed on reducing ASB and additional staff have also been recruited to increase visibility and to have a wider presence during the spring and summer months. The team deliver a 7-day week service from 6am until 9pm and include community protection officers, environmental enforcement wardens and marshals. . New and additional mobile and fixed CCTV is also in place providing essential surveillance and enabling early intervention.

Together with the Police we have RAG rated, 52 open public spaces across the borough and have an action plan for each. This has helped to identify hotspot areas including but not limited to those on the coast and has assisted with our co-ordinated approach.

We have a range of different measures in place to tackle anti-social behaviour including Coast Watch, the award-winning project VITA which has funding for a further year to engage young people and offer diversionary activities. Operational respect takes prompt joint action with the police to stop issues escalating as well as using police powers to disperse large groups and arrest offenders.

In addition to this proactive joint action with police colleague in April the Elected Mayor asked the Deputy Mayor and me as Cabinet Lead for Community Safety to establish a North Tyneside Anti-social Behaviour Task Force that works with the senior leadership team, the

Chief Superintendent Mark Hall and Superintendent Sam Rennison. The purpose of the task group is to ensure that we have a joined-up approach to tackling anti-social behaviour and associated crime across the borough, aligned with the priorities of the PCC Kim McGuinness and in a way that builds public confidence. This approach will help develop a shared understanding of the issues and inform practical action and to focus on the areas with the highest prevalence of anti-social behaviour including the coast. I do stress this isn't just the coast, there are pockets everywhere, the public transport system and our open spaces.

The Task Force had its first meeting in June. It was well supported by a range of partners including the office of the PCC, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue, Northumbria Police, the Business Forum, secondary schools, Nexus, the Youth Justice Service and the Young Mayor. There are four elected Members are also part of the task force and the key priorities emerge from that first meeting and the taskforce will continue to meet every four to six weeks to review its effectiveness of the joint actions.

*Councillor G Westwater asked the following supplementary question:*

As a member of the anti-social behaviour group, I was a little concerned with Nexus decision not to renew the CCTV monitoring contract for metro stations within the borough, with no arrangement to be in place. Can you inform Council when we will have a reliable CCTV surveillance again and how the Council failed to ensure a seamless move to the new arrangements?

*Councillor C Burdis asked C Johnson to respond in his capacity of the Chair of the Joint Transport Committee as follows:*

It was a very great concern to me as well. I can confirm there is CCTV across the whole network in North Tyneside. The issue is accessing the CCTV live. Following the meeting I immediately met with Martin Kearney to ensure we get live access very soon.