

Local Government Act 1972

Borough of North Tyneside

26 July 2018

At the meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Tyneside duly convened and held on Thursday 26 July 2018 at 6.00 pm in The Chamber at Quadrant at which a quorum of Members were present, that is to say: -

Present

Councillor T Mulvenna (In the Chair)
N Redfearn (Elected Mayor)

Councillor A Austin	Councillor C Johnson
Councillor G Bell	Councillor J Kirwin
Councillor L Bell	Councillor F Lott
Councillor T Brady	Councillor W Lott
Councillor S Brockbank	Councillor G Madden
Councillor B Burdis	Councillor M Madden
Councillor C Burdis	Councillor P Mason
Councillor J Cassidy	Councillor D McMeekan
Councillor K A Clark	Councillor A McMullen
Councillor D Cox	Councillor J Mole
Councillor S L Cox	Councillor A Newman
Councillor EN Darke	Councillor P Oliver
Councillor L Darke	Councillor J O'Shea
Councillor C Davis	Councillor A Percy
Councillor S Day	Councillor S Phillips
Councillor D Drummond	Councillor C B Pickard
Councillor R Glindon	Councillor M Reynolds
Councillor S Graham	Councillor L Spillard
Councillor M A Green	Councillor J Stirling
Councillor M Hall	Councillor M Thirlaway
Councillor J L L Harrison	Councillor A Waggott-Fairley
Councillor E F J Hodson	Councillor J I Walker
Councillor John Hunter	Councillor J Wallace
Councillor N J Huscroft	

C20/07/18 Minute's Silence

A minute's silence was observed in respect of the passing of former Councillor Peter Latham who had represented Benton Ward from 1998 to 2004.

C21/07/18 Public Questions

1. Question to the Elected Mayor by Mr F Austin of Whitley Bay

Whilst many are pleased to see the refurbishment of the Spanish City area, can I ask what plans she intends to implement to ensure that the wider community of Whitley Bay, in particular the traders of Park View and Town Centre, will also benefit?

The Elected Mayor responded as follows:

I am delighted to be able to report that visitor numbers continue to increase in the area. An additional 16,000 people visited the coast over the weekend of the Spanish City opening. Also an array of new businesses have opened in Whitley Bay due to the regeneration of Spanish City and the master plan for the seafront.

I am pleased to be able to report that 46 new businesses have already started up across the town in the last six months.

Local businesses will also benefit from additional parking in the vicinity of the Spanish City and increased signage, which will direct visitors into the Town Centre.

Overall, the regeneration of Spanish City, creating 140 new jobs, is helping to put Whitley Bay back on the map and increase confidence in the town resulting in millions of pounds being invested by the private sector. This includes the Premier Inn and Beefeater development next to Spanish City which saw a £1.4m investment and the creation of 59 jobs, while estimates suggest a further £2.25m has been invested by smaller, independent firms.

I am pleased to tell you that we have received some fantastic feedback from residents and businesses including that the redevelopment makes Whitley Bay a destination again and every café, restaurant and business will benefit from it.

I understand that after talking to our traders this is the overwhelming view of the members of Whitley Bay Chamber of Trade who have increased their membership from 20 to 275. The Council have also established a Town Centre Task Group, chaired by the Deputy Mayor, to support town centre businesses and encourage collaboration.

This group also delivers initiatives in the town centres to increase footfall and generate more business and only today I received a phone call from a business person in Whitley Bay to say thank you for what you've done; the footfall is increasing day by day and everybody in the Chamber of Trade is delighted with what you have achieved and done for Whitley Bay.

Mr Austin asked the following supplementary question:

Given that a sizeable proportion of the funding of the regeneration came from the Government via the Coastal Community Fund, can I ask if she has any plans to apply for further funding in order to extend the regeneration north of the Rendezvous Café?

The Elected Mayor responded as follows:

I have to tell you that this is on the agenda and everything at the end of the day is about making that area much better but there is a bid in already for that.

2. Question to the Elected Mayor by Mr L Bartoli of Tynemouth

In light of the increased pressures and rising costs of parking to both residents and businesses in Tynemouth, can the Mayor tell us when a comprehensive review into parking in Tynemouth was last carried out?

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

The Council has just reviewed its arrangements for parking in the entire borough and agreed a Parking Strategy at Cabinet on 11 September 2017.

Right now, as a result of this Strategy being approved, we are in the middle of a comprehensive review of Permits, Waiting Area requests and residents' requests for Restrictions.

The last fundamental parking review that was specific to Tynemouth took place in 2010, with a further review that included an extension to include additional streets in 2014. This review also included Percy Park, Percy Park Road, Seafield View and Oxford Street.

We do keep parking arrangements under constant review as we are fully aware that parking is an emotive and challenging issue. Particularly when you consider large parts of the Borough were built well before the growth in car ownership – Tynemouth is one of these areas, and the consideration has always been and will remain how best to balance the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

Mr Bartoli asked the following supplementary question:

It's clear from Councillor Johnson's answer that the parking reviews in Tynemouth are well out-dated I think 2010 and 2014 were last quoted and clearly those are well out of date particularly in light of the increased popularity of Tynemouth with articles naming it the best place to live in the North East recently. Could I ask the Elected Mayor if she would consider a halt in the punitive and discriminatory price rises to our parking permits and until a more comprehensive and updated strategy for Tynemouth could be completed?

Councillor Johnson responded as follows:

Mr Bartoli, I said the whole borough had a review in 2017. While it took in every area in the borough and not just Tynemouth, there was a specific one for Tynemouth in 2014 but the entire borough's parking arrangements were reviewed in 2017. The balance in Tynemouth now seeks to support business, residents and visitors alike.

There are 89 spaces on Front Street which cater for visitors, there are over 500 bays for residents' permit parking and over 350 pay and display parking bays, as well as free parking for 76 cars in Priors Haven car park.

While undoubtedly it is a challenge parking, we will continue to manage demand in a transparent, coherent and consistent way as clearly set out in our recently approved Parking Strategy.

We believe the strategy at the moment is working best for Tynemouth and we will always continue to listen to visitors, our residents and businesses alike.

C22/07/18 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Bolger, P Brooks, N Craven, P Earley, Janet Hunter, P McIntyre, K Osborne, M Rankin, W Samuel and F Weetman.

C23/17/18 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

C24/07/18 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 17 May 2018 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair.

C25/07/18 Children Services Update: Outcome from Inspections and Mental Health and Wellbeing

Following an introduction by Councillor M Hall, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing, Wendy Burke, Director of Public Health, accompanied by Nick Flavell, Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Children's Services gave a presentation which provided an update on the Children, Young People and Learning service.

The presentation provided an overview of the findings of recent external inspections in relation to:

- Help and Protection
- Special Educational Needs and Disability
- 0-19 Children's Public Health
- Adult Learning
- Focused Visit Front Door

The presentation also focussed on promoting, protecting and improving children and young people's mental health and wellbeing on North Tyneside and described how the Authority was supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people across the borough.

The Chair of Council invited Members to ask questions and to make comments.

Members thanked the officers for their hard work and dedication in achieving positive results from the various inspections.

The Chair thanked the officers for their presentation.

C26/07/18 Motions

Motion signed by Councillors A Newman, C Johnson and C B Pickard

It was moved by Councillor A Newman and seconded by Councillor C Johnson that:

Britain's public transport system is becoming a national embarrassment. Prices continue to spiral out of control while the private operators who run the services often run into difficulties, resulting in the franchises collapsing well before their renewal date.

The financial sustainability of the region depends on a good transport network, especially in view of the impact of Brexit and the move towards devolution. A good rail network will allow for the efficient movement of people and goods around the region, and will be a key factor in attracting businesses to our region.

The east coast railway was brought into public ownership in 2009 after the collapse of the two previous operators, GNER and national express. During its time in public ownership it operated at a substantial profit. In 2014 the Government, ignoring the advice of many organisations, re-privatised the line. The new operator operating under the name Virgin trains ran into difficulties and as predicted by many, including this Council, the franchise collapsed. This is the third private operator to run the vital East Coast line into the ground. What is also clear is that since privatisation in 1996 the East Coast line has only been successfully run under public ownership. Despite this the government, after taking over from yet another failed franchise, intends to return the franchise to a private operator in 2020.

This Council believes that the East Coast main line should not be put back into the hands of another private operator, but that it should remain in public ownership. We therefore ask the Mayor to write to the Secretary of State for Transport, Chris Grayling outlining our support for retaining public ownership over the East Coast main line.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 44 votes to 4 votes.

C27/07/18 2017/18 Annual Financial Report

A report was considered seeking full Council's approval of the 2017/18 Audited Annual Financial Report in accordance with Section 9 (2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Councillor R Glindon, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, welcomed Ms D Harold from Mazars, the Authority's External Auditors, who presented the Audit Completion Report.

The audit of the 2017/18 accounts was substantially complete and an unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements and value for money conclusions would be issued. The Audit Completion report had been presented to the Audit Committee on 25 July 2018. No material errors had been identified in the financial statements. However, the audit had identified a need to revalue elements of the Authority's portfolio due to a large increase in the cost of construction index used to value buildings and Council was informed that measures had been put in place for this to be addressed.

A number of disclosure errors identified during the audit had been corrected and were reflected in the Annual Financial Report. A number of Internal Control issues had been

raised and discussed with Mazars. Actions had been agreed to respond to those issues raised.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of Ms Harold and Councillor Glindon, which were responded to appropriately.

It was moved by Councillor Glindon and seconded by Councillor B Pickard that:

- (1) the Audit Completion Report, submitted by the Authority's external auditors Mazars, be approved and the draft Letter of Management Representation be agreed; and,
- (2) the 2017/18 Audited Annual Financial Report be approved.

The Motion, on being put to the meeting, was approved by 44 votes to 0 votes, with 5 abstentions.

C28/07/18 Designation to Statutory Roles

A report was received that requested Council to designate an Officer of the Authority to the statutory role of Head of Paid Service in the light of the forthcoming departure of Patrick Melia, Chief Executive who was currently designated as the Head of Paid Service.

In view of the departure of Vivienne Geary, the Head of Law and Governance, Council was also requested to designate an officer of the Authority to the statutory role of Monitoring Officer and similarly to allocate the roles of Returning Officer, Electoral Registration Officer and Acting Returning Officer.

It was moved by the Elected Mayor and seconded by Councillor B Pickard that:

Council designate (1) Paul Hanson as Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer, Electoral Registration Officer and Acting Returning Officer with effect from 1 August 2018; and (2) Louise Watson as the Monitoring Officer with effect from 1 September 2018.

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

C29/07/18 Appointment of Independent Persons (Standards Committee)

A report was received that requested Full Council to renew the existing appointments of the current holders of the roles of Independent Person, to set a maximum term of office and to appoint an additional third Independent Person, from 1 August 2018, bringing the total to three.

The Localism Act 2011 placed a statutory duty on the Authority to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its elected and co-opted members. The Act required the Authority to have local arrangements to handle any misconduct complaints including the appointment of Independent Persons.

Members thanked the current Independent Persons for their work.

It was moved by Councillor F Lott and seconded by Councillor B Pickard that:

- (1) the number of Independent Persons be increased to three;

- (2) a maximum ten year term of office for an Independent Person be implemented as a matter of best practice;
- (3) Mr George Clark, Ms Stella Gardner and Dr Stuart Green be appointed as the Authority's Independent Persons pursuant to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 for a period of four years to 31 July 2022; and
- (4) the consequential amendments to the Local Arrangements for dealing with Complaints under the Code of Conduct, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

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

C30/07/18 Common Seal

Resolved that the Common Seal be affixed to all deeds and documents required for carrying into effect the various decisions of the Council made since its last meeting.

C31/07/18 Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced that since he had become Chair of the Council on 17 May, he and the Deputy Chair had undertaken 71 pieces of work, with 90% of them being undertaken in the Borough.

One of the events the Deputy Chair had attended was to award certificates to Kumon students at the Linskill Centre, where children as young as 8 years old had received certificates that were equivalent to GCSE qualifications.

The Chair informed Council that the highlight of the duties he had undertaken to date was his attendance at a ceremony on HMS Calliope where Mr George Crawley, a 95 year old man from Whitley Bay, had received the Legion of Honour.

The Chair announced that Jim Sadler, one of the civic drivers was retiring and asked for applause in appreciation for his services to the Council over the years.

The Chair also referred to the opening of the Dome on 21 July and he hoped people would visit and use this iconic building.

C32/07/18 Elected Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor thanked Patrick Melia who was attending his last Council meeting in North Tyneside, prior to taking up the post of Chief Executive at Sunderland City Council and wished him well in his new role.

The Mayor stated that during Patrick's time at North Tyneside Council he had done a tremendous job in leading significant projects across the borough, as well as working on the North of Tyne devolution project.

At this point the Mayor stated that over the last year she had met a number of Government Ministers and their focus was on working together for the people and place rather than politics. She had asked Mary Glendon MP to request Ministers help to move things forward and they had agreed to do so.

Patrick had also led a change programme that had helped the organisation to become more efficient and work better for the borough's residents. She reiterated that putting

residents first was a priority and many improvements had been made in the borough which were appreciated by residents judging by the regular positive feedback she received from them.

The Mayor also wished Paul Hanson every success when he took up the role of Acting Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service in August.

Finally, the Mayor thanked Viv Geary, Head of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, who was leaving the Authority after 30 years of dedicated service, and wished her every success in the future.

C33/07/18 Questions by Members of the Council

Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor N J Huscroft

In connection with the Housing Developments at Wallsend affecting Station Road North.

The Risings has now been completed and the Benton Rise development has reached the trigger number. Therefore, can you please inform the Council when the works to improve the traffic flow etc. on Station Road North will commence?

I understand that this work was agreed as part of the Planning Conditions and Decision.

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

Planning Condition no.30 of the planning permission for the Benton Rise development requires the developer, Persimmon's, to provide highway improvements to mitigate the traffic flows generated by the development.

The highway elements of the works will be carried out in phases and are programmed to commence in September 2018.

Councillor Huscroft asked the following supplementary question:

I was under the impression that there were certain trigger points and that's the reason for the question because obviously the residents are aware that when the planning permission went forward there were trigger points for work to be done as soon as they were reached.

Councillor Pickard responded as follows:

Yes there are, but the road works have to be planned in conjunction with Highways England and because of the number of traffic flows taking place they have had to plan the work through. Obviously Norham Road will be finished by then, also the A19 will be substantially finished close by and although the works start in September it is a programme that goes on for about 18 months to deliver it, so by the time Station Road has to be closed off at some stage for major works the other two roads will be open at that particular time.

It is for that reason, and it has nothing to do with the trigger points or any issue with the trigger points, but it's purely to do with highway convenience to still allow flow of traffic because if you close that road when the other two are closed you'll have major problems. I will get officers to give you the full programme.