

**GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**Thursday, 23 November 2017**

**PRESENT:** THE MAYOR COUNCILLOR P DILLON (CHAIR)

Councillors: J Green, A Thompson, J Adams, R Beadle, D Bradford, C Bradley, M Brain, L Caffrey, M Charlton, B Clelland, P Craig, S Craig, D Davidson, W Dick, S Dickie, K Dodds, C Donovan, A Douglas, D Duggan, John Eagle, K Ferdinand, M Foy, P Foy, M Gannon, A Geddes, B Goldsworthy, M Goldsworthy, J Graham, M Graham, T Graham, L Green, S Green, G Haley, M Hall, S Hawkins, M Henry, M Hood, L Kirton, J Lee, P Maughan, K McCartney, J McElroy, C McHatton, C McHugh, P McNally, M McNestry, P Mole, R Mullen, B Oliphant, M Ord, I Patterson, S Ronchetti, J Simpson, J Turnbull, J Wallace, N Weatherley, A Wheeler and K Wood

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors: H Haran, J Kielty, J McClurey, E McMaster, C Ord, C Davison and L Twist

**The Mechina School Choir gave a performance for Council members.**

**MARTIN HARRISON, SERVICE DIRECTOR, LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROPERTY SERVICES**

The Mayor advised Council that this was Martin Harrison's last meeting before his retirement from the Council. The Mayor thanked Martin for his support and advice at Council meetings and other Council bodies and projects.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That it place on record its' appreciation of Martin Harrison's excellent service and commitment to the work of the Council together with its best wishes for his future.

**CL59 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 21 SEPTEMBER 2017**

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2017 be approved.

**CL60 OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**(A) The National Learning Disabilities and Autism Awards**

The Mayor announced that Julie Todd, an employment support worker within

GATES employment service, won the 'Support Worker of the Year' at the National Learning Disabilities and Autism Awards.,

In recognition of this achievement the Mayor presented Julie with the award.

**(B) The Annual Road Safety Support Award for Individual Excellence in Promotion of Road Safety 2017**

The Mayor announced that Road Safety Support, a not-for-profit company providing specialist services to safer roads partnerships, awarded Peter Slater, Data Analyst in Communities and Environment, with the award for Individual Excellence in Promotion of Road Safety 2017.

In recognition of this achievement the Mayor presented Peter with his award.

**(C) Northumbria Police Special Recognition Award**

The Mayor announced that Nicola Johnson, Safer Communities Co-Ordinator in Communities and Environment, received the Northumbria Police Special Recognition Award. The award was received for the work undertaken to deal with Youth Anti-Social Behaviour.

In recognition of this achievement the Mayor presented Nicola with the award.

**(D) North East Local Authority Challenge**

The Mayor announced that a team from the Council were the winners at the NEREO organised North East Local Authority Challenge. The challenge offered aspiring managers an opportunity to gain exposure to issues outside of their normal working life and gave a taste of what senior management life is like.

In recognition of this achievement the Mayor presented the team, made up of representation from across the Council, with the award.

**CL61 PRESENTATION BY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

Alice Wiseman, Director of Public Health, attended the meeting and presented her annual report, the focus of which is inequality and, in particular, how disadvantage can cluster and accumulate for a person across their life.

**CL62 PETITIONS**

There were no petitions submitted.

**CL63 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Mr Mark Steele submitted the following question:

"Why did the executives of Gateshead council in their cabinet report of 16<sup>th</sup> of March

2010 state NIL to the following parts of their document presented to the cabinet and saddle the authority with future uninsurable liabilities from claims made against the authority from telecoms transmission illnesses?

- 13. Equality and Diversity Implications
- 15. Health Implications
- 17. Human Rights Implications

Small bodied animals, Women and Children suffer as yet to be recognised the greater impact from Microwave radiation exposure. No research is available that shows chronic exposure to microwave radiation is safe from the thousands of transmitters installed across the borough”.

Cllr J McElroy, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport, responded to the question.

Mr Mark Steele submitted a supplementary question:

“No environmental or health impact assessments or public consultation have been carried out in relation to the 31,859 experimental telecoms transceiver emitting microwave radiation 24 hours per day 7 days a week in contradiction of the Carbon Reduction Policy, positioned adjacent to people’s bedrooms and living spaces with some installations within the advised safe working distance to humans.

The executive officers currently have no research or advice appertaining to the chronic exposure to non-thermal microwave radiation or the potential biological damage caused by this experimental 5G 868-870 MHz microwave radiation frequency, a current carcinogen.

We have witnessed the near total collapse in small flying insects attracted to the lights then annihilated and very few small birds. As well as health complaints that include sore eyes, tinnitus, short term memory loss, anxiety, depression, insomnia, unexplained bleeding from the nasal passaged since the roll out.

On behalf of all those in the Borough who are suffering unexplained non-thermal induced detrimental health issues as a consequence, including; economic hardship especially on vulnerable groups to include electromagnetic sensitive persons, women, children, the unborn and disabled with metal implants that act as antenna increasing the hazard. We request a full environmental impact analysis and health review from ecologists, oncologists and biologists, expert scientists in their fields relying on the latest scientific data and published evidence to ascertain the effect on small flying insects, small birds and to confirm that this experimental 5G roll out is not the class 1A carcinogen as reported in recent, largest \$24 million USA NTP research study on non-ionizing radiation”.

Mr Steele was advised that a written reply to this supplementary question would be provided.

**CL64 PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVES ON COUNCIL BODIES DEALING WITH EDUCATION**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to appoint a parent governor representative and a Church of England representative to the overview and scrutiny committee that considers education matters.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the appointment of the Parent Governor Representative and the Church of England Representative be approved.

**CL65 GATESHEAD LOCAL PLAN - CONSULTATION ON MAKING SPACES FOR GROWING PLACES (MSGP) (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES, ALLOCATIONS AND DESIGNATIONS)**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of the MSGP Draft Local Plan for consultation.

COUNCIL RESOLVED -

- (i) That the Strategic Director of Communities and Environment be given delegated powers, following consultation with the portfolio holders for Transport, Environment Housing and Economy, to make any changes or updates to the LDS and to the SCI, as and when required.
- (ii) That Schedule 5 of the Constitution 'Non-Executive Functions Delegated to Managers' be amended to include the above additional delegation.

**CL66 REVIEW OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS IN COMMUNITIES & ENVIRONMENT AND CORPORATE SERVICES & GOVERNANCE**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval for the changes to service structures within the Communities and Environment and Corporate Services and Governance service groups.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the management structure changes be approved, with effect from:

- i. in the case of the Commissioning and Neighbourhoods Service, from 1 December 2017; and
- ii. in the case of the changes in Corporate Services and Governance, from 1 January 2018.

or such later date as agreed by the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, and further representations from trade unions.

**CL67 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2017/18 - SECOND QUARTER REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report that informed of the latest position on the 2017/18 Capital Programme and Prudential Indicators at the end of the second quarter to 30 September 2017. The report also considered the impact of CIPFA's Prudential Code on the capital programme and the monitoring of performance against the Statutory Prudential Indicators.

- COUNCIL RESOLVED -
- i) That all variations to the 2017/18 Capital Programme, as detail in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved as the revised programme.
  - ii) That the financing of the revised programme be approved.
  - iii) That it be confirmed that the capital expenditure and capital financing requirement indicators have been revised in line with the revised budget and that none of the approved Prudential Indicators set for 2017/18 have been breached.

**CL68 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME**

Consideration was given to a report recommending a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for the year 2018/19.

- COUNCIL RESOLVED -
- i) That the proposed scheme as set out in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the report be approved.
  - ii) That delegated powers be granted to the Strategic Director, Corporate Resources, to provide regulations to give effect to the scheme.

**CL69 ADDENDUM TO DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY**

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of additions to the Council's

Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

- COUNCIL RESOLVED -
- i) That the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy be amended to reflect the additional proposed policies set out in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 of the report, regarding the Local Business Rate Discount scheme, and paragraphs 18 and 19 of the report, for the Revaluation Business Rate Discount.
  - ii) That the Strategic Director, Corporate Resources, be authorised to manage this policy under the delegated authority to manage the Collection Fund in accordance with statutory requirements.

#### **CL70 REPORT FROM THE CABINET**

The Leader of the Council reported on a number of key issues currently affecting the Council.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the information be noted

#### **CL71 NOTICE OF MOTION - A1 IMPROVEMENTS**

Councillor J Wallace moved the following motion:

"This Council notes with disappointment the announcement by Highways England that work on upgrading the A1 between the Coalhouse roundabout and Birtley is to be delayed a year, with work scheduled to start in 2020 rather than 2019.

This Council believes that the improvements to this strategic road are vital to the economic prosperity of Gateshead and the surrounding area and a delay to implementation will be damaging to air quality.

This Council believes that a strong, representative devolution settlement, which includes Gateshead, would give our region a stronger voice to argue for greater infrastructure investment under a timetable that suits the local economy.

In the absence of such a beneficial settlement, this Council calls on Highways England to begin work on improving the A1 in 2019."

*The following amendment was submitted:*

3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, 1<sup>st</sup> line, after "devolution settlement", delete "which includes Gateshead" and add the following

**with robust governance; a fair financial settlement; substantial powers and functions and which includes Gateshead, Newcastle, Sunderland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, County Durham and Northumberland.**

The amendment was accepted by the mover of the original motion and therefore put as the substantive motion and duly carried.

COUNCIL RESOLVED -

This Council notes with disappointment the announcement by Highways England that work on upgrading the A1 between the Coalhouse roundabout and Birtley is to be delayed a year, with work scheduled to start in 2020 rather than 2019.

This Council believes that the improvements to this strategic road are vital to the economic prosperity of Gateshead and the surrounding area and a delay to implementation will be damaging to air quality.

This Council believes that a strong, representative devolution settlement, with robust governance; a fair financial settlement; substantial powers and functions and which includes Gateshead, Newcastle, Sunderland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, County Durham and Northumberland, would give our region a stronger voice to argue for greater infrastructure investment under a timetable that suits the local economy.

In the absence of such a beneficial settlement, this Council calls on Highways England to begin work on improving the A1 in 2019.

## **CL72 NOTICE OF MOTION - UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

Councillor M Gannon moved the following motion:

“This council recognises that the full service roll out of Universal Credit across Gateshead, which will occur over the next 6 months, will cause real hardship to many of Gateshead’s citizens.

The council is particularly concerned that this hardship will be compounded by the fact that claimants will have to wait a minimum of 6 weeks for their claim to be decided.

It is unacceptable that the children or parents, whose claims may eventually be approved, will not qualify for free school meals during the assessment period.

The council is additionally concerned that the requirement for online application discriminates against those without access to a computer or who do not have adequate IT skills.

The council instructs the Chief Executive to work with schools, partners and the

community sector to explore every means possible to mitigate the inevitable hardship that UC will cause for Gateshead's residents.

Council further instructs the Chief Executive to write to all Gateshead school Headteachers and Governors outlining the anticipated impacts of Universal Credit upon homelessness and child poverty, and whilst recognising current financial constraints upon schools request their assistance in ensuring that no children go hungry.

Furthermore Gateshead Council calls on the Governments to either reduce the 6 week waiting period for assessing universal credit claims and to introduce appropriate mitigation to ensure that vulnerable children do not go without free school meals, or to halt the introduction of UC until these issues are addressed."

*The following amendment was submitted:*

- (i) Add (i) between 'that' and 'this' in line 1 of paragraph 2.
- (ii) Delete '.' at end of paragraph 2 after 'decided' and add ';(ii) that homelessness could increase as a result of rent no longer being paid directly to landlords.'
- (iii) Replace 'or' with 'of' in line 1 of paragraph 3.
- (iv) Add 'DWP' between 'schools' and 'partners' on line 1 of paragraph 5.
- (v) Replace 'Governments' with 'Government' in line 1 of paragraph 7.

The amendment was accepted by the mover of the original motion and therefore put as the substantive motion and duly carried.

COUNCIL RESOLVED -

This council recognises that the full service roll out of Universal Credit across Gateshead, which will occur over the next 6 months, will cause real hardship to many of Gateshead's citizens.

The council is particularly concerned that (i) this hardship will be compounded by the fact that claimants will have to wait a minimum of 6 weeks for their claim to be decided; (ii) that homelessness could increase as a result of rent no longer being paid directly to landlords.

It is unacceptable that the children of parents, whose claims may eventually be approved, will not qualify for free school meals during the assessment period.

The council is additionally concerned that the requirement for online application discriminates against those without access to a computer or who do not have adequate IT skills.

The council instructs the Chief Executive to work with schools, DWP, partners and the community sector to explore every means possible to mitigate the inevitable hardship that UC will cause for Gateshead's residents.

Council further instructs the Chief Executive to write to all Gateshead school Headteachers and Governors outlining the anticipated impacts of Universal Credit upon homelessness and child poverty, and whilst recognising current financial constraints upon schools request their assistance in ensuring that no children go hungry.

Furthermore Gateshead Council calls on the Government to either reduce the 6 week waiting period for assessing universal credit claims and to introduce appropriate mitigation to ensure that vulnerable children do not go without free school meals, or to halt the introduction of UC until these issues are addressed.

## **CL73    QUESTIONS**

There were no questions submitted.

**Mayor.....**