

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, 21 July 2022

PRESENT: THE MAYOR COUNCILLOR D BURNETT (CHAIR)

Councillors: J Adams, V Anderson, R Beadle, M Brain, C Buckley, P Burns, L Caffrey, B Clelland, P Craig, W Dick, S Dickie, P Diston, C Donovan, A Douglas, D Duggan, J Eagle, S Gallagher, M Gannon, A Geddes, F Geddes, J Gibson, B Goldsworthy, M Goldsworthy, T Graham, J Green, L Green, S Green, G Haley, M Hall, H Kelly, L Kirton, P Maughan, K McCartney, J McCoid, J McElroy, E McMaster, P McNally, M McNestry, L Moir, R Mullen, B Oliphant, A Ord, C Ord, M Ord, I Patterson, S Potts, J Reay, D Robson, S Ronchetti, J Simpson, J Turnbull, J Turner, J Wallace, R Waugh, D Weatherley and H Weatherley

APOLOGIES: Councillors: D Bradford, C Davison, K Dodds, S Hawkins, H Haran, J Mohammed, D Welsh, A Wintcher and K Wood

A minute's silence was observed following the death of Alderman Brian Coates

CL20 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 26 MAY 2022

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2022 be approved as a correct record.

CL21 OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council agreed that Councillor Jim Turnbull be taken off Planning and Development Committee and put on to the Appeals Committee and Councillor Tom Graham be taken off the Appeals Committee and put on to the Planning and Development Committee.

CL22 PETITIONS

Lead petitioner, Marie Walton, submitted a petition on behalf of residents living near Vigo Lane regarding the speed limit on the road.

CL23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions submitted by members of the public.

CL24 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT STRATEGIC HOUSING BOARD MEMBERS

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to appoint three independent members to Gateshead Strategic Housing Board.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the three candidates named in the report be appointed to the independent member positions on the Gateshead Strategic Housing Board for the terms of office indicated with effect from 21 July 2022.

CL25 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES - WORK PROGRAMMES 2022/23

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees provisional work programmes for 2022/23.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the provisional work programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2022/23 be approved.

CL26 INTRODUCTION OF A SHARED OWNERSHIP POLICY

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval for the introduction of a Shared Ownership Policy.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the Shared Ownership Policy be approved.

CL27 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2021/22 – YEAR END OUTTURN

Consideration was given to a report on the 2021/22 Capital Programme outturn and performance against the statutory Prudential Indicators.

COUNCIL RESOLVED -

- (i) That the Capital Programme Outturn for 2021/22 be noted.
- (ii) That the financing of the Capital Programme be approved.
- (iii) That it be noted that none of the approved Prudential Indicators set for 2021/22 have been breached.

CL28 PROVISIONAL REVENUE OUTTURN 2021/22

Consideration was given to a report setting out the outturn position on the 2021/22 revenue budget.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the appropriations to and from reserves be approved.

CL29 REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval for a number of amendments

to the Constitution.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the proposed changes to the Council's Constitution be approved, subject to the proposal relating to the 'Common Seal of the Council' being deferred.

CL30 TREASURY ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of the Treasury Annual Report 2021/22.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the Treasury Annual Report for 2021/22 be approved.

CL31 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2022/23 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report on the latest position on the 2022/23 Capital Programme and Prudential Indicators at the end of the first quarter.

COUNCIL RESOLVED -

- (i) That all variations to the 2022/23 Capital Programme be approved.
- (ii) That the financing of the revised programme be approved.
- (iii) That it be noted that Cabinet confirms that the capital expenditure and financing requirements have been revised in line with the amended budget and that none of the approved Prudential Indicators set for 2022/23 have been breached.

CL32 NOTICE OF MOTION - COST OF LIVING EMERGENCY

Councillor V Anderson moved the following motion:

"This Council notes that:

- On 1 April 2022, Ofgem increased the energy price cap by 54 per cent.
- In light of the increase energy price cap, the average standard tariff energy bill will increase by £693 per year. The average pre-pay meter energy bill will increase by £708 per year (Ofgem, 2022).
- On 6 April 2022, the Government increase National Insurance by 1.25 percentage points, which is projected to cost the average family in Gateshead an additional £600 a year.
- The Government has suspended the pensions 'triple lock' for 2022/3, meaning Gateshead's pensioners will see a rise of 3.1 per cent this year (instead of 8.3 percent under the triple lock formula). This year, this will cost

pensioners in Gateshead hundreds of pounds.

- Between April 2020 and March 2022 Gateshead Foodbanks distributed 17,972 food parcels (Trussell Trust, 2022)

This Council therefore declares a 'Cost of Living Emergency' and calls on the Government to:

- Immediately reduce the standard rate of VAT from 20 per cent to 17.5 per cent for one year, saving the average household in Gateshead a further £600 this year.
- Immediately re-introduce the pensions triple lock to support Gateshead's pensioners.
- Immediately restore the Universal Credit supplement of £20, which was cancelled by the Government in September 2021.

Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to express the Council's demands for VAT to be cut to 17.5%, for the re-introduction of the pensions triple-lock and for the £20 Universal Credit supplement to be restored.

Finally, Council calls for a local Cost-of-Living Emergency Summit, with stakeholders, including Citizen's Advice, Food Banks, Local Trade Unions, and Chambers of Commerce and will invite local MPs to attend this hybrid meeting."

In accordance with Council procedure, paragraph 17.6 of the Constitution, Council consented to the moving of the following amendment:

Insert the following bullet points at the start of paragraph 1.

- Inflation is running at its highest level for over 40 years (OBR).
- Two in five children living in Gateshead live in poverty, more than half of these children are in working families (North East Child Poverty commission).
- Between April 2020 and March 2022 Gateshead Foodbanks distributed 17,972 food parcels (Trussell Trust).

Delete from "This Council therefore declares..."

Replace with the following:

"This Council recognises that all this constitutes an emergency for many, and we already have a great record of responding to the needs of the whole community through existing strategies and structures, such as the Thrive Agenda, the Poverty Strategy and Board and the Health and Well-being Strategy and Board.

However, we believe there is more the Government can do to address these issues:

- Introduce a windfall tax on energy companies.
- Reverse the national insurance increases.
- Cut VAT.

- Re-introduce the pensions triple lock to support Gateshead's pensioners.
- Increase Universal Credit.
- End the cap on Child Benefit which is only paid for two children in a family.
- Extend free school meals entitlement to all children whose families are on state benefits, whether working or not.

We call on the Chief Executive of the Council to ensure that Government are aware of our views and that the Gateshead MPs are asked for their support.

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 that:

- Inflation is running at its highest level for over 40 years (OBR).
- Two in five children living in Gateshead live in poverty, more than half of these children are in working families (North East Child Poverty commission).
- Between April 2020 and March 2022 Gateshead Foodbanks distributed 17,972 food parcels (Trussell Trust).
- On 1 April 2022, Ofgem increased the energy price cap by 54 per cent.
- In light of the increase energy price cap, the average standard tariff energy bill will increase by £693 per year. The average pre-pay meter energy bill will increase by £708 per year (Ofgem, 2022).
- On 6 April 2022, the Government increase National Insurance by 1.25 percentage points, which is projected to cost the average family in Gateshead an additional £600 a year.
- The Government has suspended the pensions 'triple lock' for 2022/3, meaning Gateshead's pensioners will see a rise of 3.1 per cent this year (instead of 8.3 percent under the triple lock formula). This year, this will cost pensioners in Gateshead hundreds of pounds.

This Council recognises that all this constitutes an emergency for many, and we already have a great record of responding to the needs of the whole community through existing strategies and structures, such as the Thrive Agenda, the Poverty Strategy and Board and the Health and Well-being Strategy and Board.

However, we believe there is more the Government can do to address these issues:

- Introduce a windfall tax on energy companies.
- Reverse the national insurance increases.
- Cut VAT.
- Re-introduce the pensions triple lock to support Gateshead's pensioners.
- Increase Universal Credit.
- End the cap on Child Benefit which is only paid for two children in a family.
- Extend free school meals entitlement to all children whose families are on state benefits, whether working or not.

We call on the Chief Executive of the Council to ensure that Government are aware of our views and that the Gateshead MPs are asked for their support.

CL33 QUESTIONS

There were no questions submitted.

CL34 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items in accordance with Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

CL35 ANNUAL LEAVE

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval to increase annual leave entitlement for new entrants and those achieving 5 years' service.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the implementation of the annual leave proposal be approved.

CL36 JOINT LOCAL AGREEMENT (CONSTRUCTION SERVICES TRADE OPERATIVES) REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of a revised Joint Local Agreement with Construction Services Trade Operatives.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the revised Joint Local Agreement with Construction Services Trade Operatives be approved.

Mayor.....