

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, 23 May 2019

PRESENT: THE MAYOR COUNCILLOR M HOOD (CHAIR)

Councillors: J Adams, V Anderson, R Beadle, M Brain, C Buckley, D Burnett, L Caffrey, M Charlton, P Craig, S Craig, C Davison, W Dick, S Dickie, P Diston, K Dodds, C Donovan, D Duggan, J Eagle, K Ferdinand, M Foy, P Foy, S Gallagher, M Gannon, A Geddes, F Geddes, J Gibson, B Goldsworthy, M Goldsworthy, T Graham, L Green, S Green, H Haran, H Kelly, J Kielty, L Kirton, J Lee, P Maughan, J McClurey, K McClurey, J McElroy, E McMaster, P McNally, M McNestry, M Ord, R Oxberry, I Patterson, S Ronchetti, J Simpson, J Turnbull, J Wallace, R Waugh, A Wheeler and K Wood

APOLOGIES: Councillors: D Bradford, B Clelland, A Douglas, G Haley, M Hall, S Hawkins, K McCartney, R Mullen, B Oliphant, C Ord, J Reay and N Weatherley

CL10 DEBORAH HILL, SERVICE DIRECTOR, LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

The Mayor advised Council that this was Deborah Hill's last meeting before her retirement from the Council.

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

CL11 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD 21 MARCH 2019 AND 17 MAY 2019

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meetings held on 21 March and 17 May 2019 be approved as a correct record.

CL12 OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

(A) Special Olympics World Games

The Mayor welcomed Sandra Armstrong, from Felling, who was selected to represent Great Britain in swimming at the 2019 Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi in March.

Sandra helped Great Britain win gold in the 4 x 25 metre freestyle relay. She then won gold in the individual 25 metre freestyle race and finished 6th in her 25 metres backstroke final.

The Mayor presented Sandra with her medals.

(B) Ravensworth Road Scheme

The Mayor advised members that the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors had recognised the achievement of the Council and its partner, Keepmoat Homes, in relation to the Ravensworth Road regeneration scheme by awarding it “Regeneration Project of the Year”.

The scheme radically transformed this area of Dunston, formerly occupied by the famous “Dunston Rocket” tower block. This tower block and adjacent deck access flats have been replaced by a low rise, sustainable new neighbourhood comprising 45 dwellings which have now all been sold, a 47 bed older persons housing scheme, an Aldi store, a new doctor’s surgery and pharmacy, and a pocket park.

The Mayor presented Andrew Sloan, the Project Manager; Jill Turner, the Demolition Contract Manager; and Jason Speed from Property Services with the award.

(c) Fleet News Hall of Fame

The Mayor informed Council that Graham Telfer, the Council’s Fleet Manager, has been inducted into the Fleet News Hall of Fame. This was in recognition of his role as a pioneer of low emission and safety initiatives. Fleet News referred to his work in monitoring and trialling new and emerging technologies in a search for carbon reduction and minimisation.

The Mayor congratulated Graham for receiving this honour which was deserved recognition of his work and achievements with the Council.

CL13 PETITIONS

There were no petitions submitted.

CL14 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions submitted by members of the public

CL15 PROVISIONAL WORK PROGRAMMES

Consideration has been given to the provisional work programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2019/20.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the provisional work programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2019/20 be approved.

CL16 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

Consideration has been given to proposed amendments to the Council’s

Constitution.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the proposed changes to the Council's Constitution, as set out in Appendices 2-4 of the report, be approved.

CL17 HIGHWAYS DEVELOPMENT FEES AND CHARGES

Consideration has been given to a revised and new scale of fees and charges for highway functions associated with new development.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the revised adoption agreement developers' fees and the new street naming and numbering charges, as set out in Appendices 2 and 3 of the report, be approved.

CL18 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.

CL19 NOTICE OF MOTION - CLIMATE CHANGE

Councillor Catherine Donovan moved the following motion:

Council notes:

That the impacts of climate breakdown are already causing serious damage around the world.

That the 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C', published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in October 2018, (a) describes the enormous harm that a 2°C average rise in global temperatures is likely to cause compared with a 1.5°C rise, and (b) confirms that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector.

That all levels of government (national, regional and local) have a duty to act, and that as a proactive local authority this Council recognises that we should not wait for national government to change its policies to act.

That strong policies to cut emissions also have associated health, wellbeing and economic benefits.

Council therefore commits to:

The declaration of a 'Climate Emergency' that requires urgent action.

Make the Council's activities carbon neutral by 2030.

Achieve 100% clean energy across the Council's full range of functions by 2030.

Ensure that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030.

Support and work with all other relevant agencies towards making the entire area carbon neutral within the same timescale.

Ensure that political and chief officers embed this work in all areas and take responsibility for reducing, as rapidly as possible, the carbon emissions resulting from the Council's activities, ensuring that any recommendations are fully costed.

Work with, influence and inspire partners across the borough to help deliver this goal through all relevant strategies, plans and shared resources by developing a series of meetings, events and partner workshops.

Request that the Council and partners take steps to proactively include young people in the process, ensuring that they have a voice in shaping the future.

Call on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and ask local MPs to do likewise.

Councillor Jonathan Wallace moved the following amendment:

Add the following to the end of the motion:

We call on the Council to reach out to the voluntary sector in Gateshead to explore ways to help residents to reduce their environmental impact.

We call on the Council to hold an advisory group where members can put forward ideas regarding how residents can reduce their environmental impact. Due to the urgency of this issue, the advisory group shall be held before summer recess 2019.

On the amendment being put, it was defeated.

The original motion was put as the substantive motion and duly carried.

COUNCIL RESOLVED –

Council notes:

That the impacts of climate breakdown are already causing serious damage around the world.

That the 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C', published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in October 2018, (a) describes the enormous harm that a 2°C average rise in global temperatures is likely to cause compared with a 1.5°C rise, and (b) confirms that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C

may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector.

That all levels of government (national, regional and local) have a duty to act, and that as a proactive local authority this Council recognises that we should not wait for national government to change its policies to act.

That strong policies to cut emissions also have associated health, wellbeing and economic benefits.

Council therefore commits to:

The declaration of a 'Climate Emergency' that requires urgent action.

Make the Council's activities carbon neutral by 2030.

Achieve 100% clean energy across the Council's full range of functions by 2030.

Ensure that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030.

Support and work with all other relevant agencies towards making the entire area carbon neutral within the same timescale.

Ensure that political and chief officers embed this work in all areas and take responsibility for reducing, as rapidly as possible, the carbon emissions resulting from the Council's activities, ensuring that any recommendations are fully costed.

Work with, influence and inspire partners across the borough to help deliver this goal through all relevant strategies, plans and shared resources by developing a series of meetings, events and partner workshops.

Request that the Council and partners take steps to proactively include young people in the process, ensuring that they have a voice in shaping the future.

Call on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and ask local MPs to do likewise.

CL20 NOTICE OF MOTION - ENERGY PRICE COMPARISON SERVICE

Councillor John McClurey moved the following motion:

This Council calls on the Chief Executive to explore the option of setting up an energy price comparison service for Gateshead residents.

Councillor Martin Gannon moved the following amendment:

Delete all after "The Council" and insert ...

recognises the considerable work already undertaken by the Council and its partners

to tackle poverty and inequality in Gateshead through the Poverty Board.

We welcome the campaign (*Report from The Cabinet, Council Agenda, 23rd May 2019, Item 8, page 108*) which is being developed and will be launched shortly to tackle fuel poverty and to encourage and support all Gateshead residents to switch their energy supplier to access cheaper tariffs and reduce household energy bills.

We recognise that there are 11,600 fuel poor households in Gateshead, that's 12.8% of all households. This increases to 32% of residents over 65.

In the UK almost 60% of households are on the most expensive standard variable tariffs. Almost a quarter of all UK households (23%) have never switched supplier.

Recent figures from Ofgem show the average saving to a household switching their energy supplier is an average £308.22.

In response, a borough wide fuel poverty campaign for Gateshead is being developed. The campaign will be a collaborative initiative, using resources and expertise from the public and voluntary sector. It will focus on helping residents obtain reduced fuel bills via switching, energy efficiency, debt advice and income maximisation.

Initially a pilot, the approach will include training in fuel poverty awareness and the switching process to front line employees of the Council and its partners who have direct contact with residents to allow them to promote the campaign, encourage residents to switch and provide advice and support around switching and saving money. This training will be delivered by National Energy Action (NEA) which is a national fuel poverty charity.

The campaign will aim to help all residents in the borough. The most vulnerable residents, for example, those with fuel debt or other complex circumstances, will be supported with specialist fuel poverty advice delivered by partners from the voluntary sector. This will be an extremely important element of the campaign.

The campaign will also help promote and refer residents into both LEAP (Local Energy Assistance Programme) and ECHO (Emergency Central Heating Offer) which are launching via a partnership with AgilityEco in Gateshead early in June and will be available to households that meet the eligibility criteria.

On the amendment being put it was declared to be carried. The amendment was put as the substantive motion and duly carried.

COUNCIL RESOLVED -

This Council recognises the considerable work already undertaken by the Council and its partners to tackle poverty and inequality in Gateshead through the Poverty Board.

We welcome the campaign (*Report from The Cabinet, Council Agenda, 23rd May 2019, Item 8, page 108*) which is being developed and will be launched shortly to

tackle fuel poverty and to encourage and support all Gateshead residents to switch their energy supplier to access cheaper tariffs and reduce household energy bills.

We recognise that there are 11,600 fuel poor households in Gateshead, that's 12.8% of all households. This increases to 32% of residents over 65.

In the UK almost 60% of households are on the most expensive standard variable tariffs. Almost a quarter of all UK households (23%) have never switched supplier.

Recent figures from Ofgem show the average saving to a household switching their energy supplier is an average £308.22.

In response, a borough wide fuel poverty campaign for Gateshead is being developed. The campaign will be a collaborative initiative, using resources and expertise from the public and voluntary sector. It will focus on helping residents obtain reduced fuel bills via switching, energy efficiency, debt advice and income maximisation.

Initially a pilot, the approach will include training in fuel poverty awareness and the switching process to front line employees of the Council and its partners who have direct contact with residents to allow them to promote the campaign, encourage residents to switch and provide advice and support around switching and saving money. This training will be delivered by National Energy Action (NEA) which is a national fuel poverty charity.

The campaign will aim to help all residents in the borough. The most vulnerable residents, for example, those with fuel debt or other complex circumstances, will be supported with specialist fuel poverty advice delivered by partners from the voluntary sector. This will be an extremely important element of the campaign.

The campaign will also help promote and refer residents into both LEAP (Local Energy Assistance Programme) and ECHO (Emergency Central Heating Offer) which are launching via a partnership with AgilityEco in Gateshead early in June and will be available to households that meet the eligibility criteria.

CL21 QUESTIONS

No questions were received.

Mayor.....