

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, 13 October 2022

PRESENT: THE MAYOR COUNCILLOR D BURNETT (CHAIR)

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors: M Brain, P Craig, D Duggan, L Green, S Green, P McNally, J Reay and J Turnbull

A minute silence was observed following the deaths of Alderman David Napier, Alderman Roger Highmoor and Tomasz Oleszak

CL37 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 21 JULY 2022

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

CL38 OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

(A) New Strategic Directors

Council welcomed the new Strategic Director of Adult Social Services and Strategic Director of Children's Services.

(B) Liberal Democrat Appointment

Council agreed that Councillor Amanda Wintcher replaces Councillor Sonya Hawkins on the Strategic Housing Board.

CL39 PETITIONS

Councillor Ron Beadle submitted a petition on behalf of residents living near Kells Lane Park regarding the park being locked overnight.

CL40 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr Tony Dowling submitted the following question:

“I speak on behalf of “Keep Our NHS Public North East”.

Further to the deeply flawed Health and Care Act 2022, you will be aware that “North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System” is now responsible for commissioning all healthcare for Gateshead from 1st July this year.

There are potentially a number of problematic areas associated with the new Integrated Care System, and some of these difficulties may be addressed and remedied locally through attention to the wording of the Constitution of the new “North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board”.

Issues that need to be clearly stated within the Constitution include:

- the ICS commitment to maintain a comprehensive health service, free at the point of need, and accessible to all residing in the area
- the need to exclude representatives from the private sector organisations on any ICS board or committee; this issue is noted in the Constitution, but there is a “let-out” clause which allows private sector involvement
- a commitment that NHS providers are the default providers of health services
- vigorous scrutiny, transparency and accountability with all new contracts
- a commitment that anyone who needs emergency care while present in Gateshead will receive the necessary treatment, whether or not they are registered with a GP in the county
- a commitment that the Integrated Care Board will include a Councillor from each local authority; the current Constitution identifies one elected member to represent 17 local authorities covering a population of 3 million. Locally, three additional Council officers are identified for the Board, but these are not elected members. There also need to be representatives from the range of health professionals and patient groups. This presence will uphold local democracy and transparency
- a commitment to hold all meetings of Boards and Committees in public, making papers available, and welcoming questions from the public
- the requirement for the full assessment of health and care needs, and availability of social supports, prior to patients discharge from hospital
- the need for all NHS providers within the area to adhere to nationally agreed pay, terms and conditions, as negotiated with NHS staff Unions

I would be grateful if you would please outline what Gateshead Council is doing with regard to each of these issues when in contact with officers of the Integrated Care System, and please confirm the Council’s stance is to support the principle that the NHS must be comprehensive, universal and free at the point of use and based on the clinical needs of patients – not on the new Integrated Care Boards’ financial considerations.”

Councillor Lynne Caffrey responded to the question.

CL41 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND STANDRDS COMMITTEE 2021/22

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of the Audit and Standards Committee Annual Report for 2021/22.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the Annual Report of the Audit and Standards Committee for 2021/22 be approved.

CL42 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 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report be approved.

CL43 TENANCY STRATEGY AND ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of a new Tenancy Strategy and Allocations Policy.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the Tenancy Strategy and Allocations Policy be approved.

CL44 APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC ANALYSTS

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of the appointment of Public Analysts.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the appointment of six Public Analysts, listed in the report, be approved.

CL45 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY 2022 - 2032

Consideration was given to a report seeking approval of a new Physical Activity Strategy for Gateshead.

COUNCIL RESOLVED - That the Physical Activity Strategy for Gateshead be approved.

CL46 NOTICE OF MOTION - FAIR TAX

Councillor Ron Beadle moved the following motion:

“Council notes that:

1. Polling from the Institute for Business Ethics finds that “corporate tax avoidance” has, since 2013, been the clear number one concern of the British public when it comes to business conduct.

2. Around 17.5% of public contracts in the UK have been won by companies with links to tax havens.
3. It has been conservatively estimated that losses from multinational profit-shifting (just one form of tax avoidance) could be costing the UK some £17bn per annum in lost corporation tax revenues.
4. The Fair Tax Mark offers a means for business to demonstrate good tax conduct, and has been secured by a wide range of businesses across the UK, including FTSE-listed PLCs, co-operatives, social enterprises and large private businesses.

Council believes that:

1. As recipients of significant public funding, local authorities should take the lead in the promotion of exemplary tax conduct; be that by ensuring contractors are paying their proper share of tax, or by refusing to go along with offshore tax dodging when buying land and property.
2. Where councils hold substantive stakes in private enterprises, influence should be wielded to ensure that such businesses are exemplars of tax transparency and tax avoidance is shunned.
3. More action is needed, however, as current and proposed new UK procurement law significantly restricts councils' ability to either penalise poor tax conduct (as exclusion grounds are rarely triggered) or reward good tax conduct, when buying goods or service.
4. UK cities, counties and towns can and should stand up for responsible tax conduct – doing what they can when existing frameworks and pledging to do more given the opportunity, as active supporters of international tax justice.

Council resolves to:

1. Approve the 'Councils for Fair Tax' Declaration.
2. Lead by example and demonstrate good practice in our tax conduct, right across our activities.
3. Ensure IR35 is implemented robustly and contract workers pay a fair share of employment taxes.
4. Undertake due diligence to ensure that not-for-profit structures are not being used inappropriately by suppliers as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates.
5. Demand clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers UK and overseas and their consolidated profit and loss position, given lack of clarity could be strong indicators of poor financial probity and weak financial standing.
6. Promote Fair Tax Mark certification especially for any business in which we have a significant stake and where corporation tax is due.
7. Support Fair Tax Week events in the area, and celebrate the tax contribution made by responsible businesses are proud to promote responsible tax conduct and pay their fair share of corporation tax.
8. Support calls for urgent reform of UK procurement law to enable local authorities to better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax conduct through their procurement policies."

On the motion being put it was declared to be carried.

CL47 NOTICE OF MOTION - PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

Councillor Dawn Welsh moved the following motion:

“Council welcomes the recent decision of the Labour Party Conference to support Proportional Representation.

Council believes that Proportional Representation in local elections would enable this Council to be more representative of the people it serves and therefore would benefit the people of Gateshead.

Council calls on the Chief Executive to write to ‘Councils for PR’ to confirm our support for Proportional Representation for Westminster and local elections.”

On the motion being put it was defeated.

CL48 QUESTIONS

There were no questions submitted.

Mayor.....