

1. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor K Barrie

“Can the Mayor give an update on the developments at Wallsend Parks?”

Answer

The developments at Wallsend Parks represent a 10-year £7.7m investment in Richardson Dees Park, the Hall Grounds and the Arboretum.

The project has attracted £2.6m in Heritage Lottery Funding and is being delivered in two phases.

The works to the Park Lodge have started. The refurbishment of the bowling greens has started and will be completed in time for next season.

The bowls pavilion, café and toilet extension is well underway. The restoration of the band stand is almost complete and new lighting columns have been installed within the Parks.

The project is now entering a critical phase where large scale civil engineering works will start throughout the Parks. This work includes:

- Draining and construction work to the water courses and lake
- The creation of a new promenade beside Wallsend Hall
- The restoration of Crow Bank
- The construction of the “lost footbridge” and
- The opening of an underground culvert to create a new waterside walk

These works are extensive and require large scale equipment.

Richardson Dees Park and the Hall Grounds will close from Monday 3 December reopening on a phased basis from next spring.

The Project Team have been asked to keep Members and residents fully informed of progress. Due to the popularity of the play site, the team have been asked to work with Kier North Tyneside to see if access to the play site could be made safe during the forthcoming holiday period.

2. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor A Austin

“Could the Mayor give an update on the works at Foxhunters football facilities?”

Answer

The site is now set up and a temporary access road for heavy goods vehicles has been created. Work is ongoing on the building sub-structure, drainage and service connections. The steel frame is programmed to go up prior to the construction industry’s Christmas break.

The work is currently on target and subject to weather conditions is scheduled to be open and available for use in early summer next year.

This new much needed facility, which will be occupied and run by Whitley Bay Football Club, will provide first class changing facilities for the Club, teams and opponents to use, together with a community room and an external floodlit small sized pitch which local clubs and community groups will be able to hire and use.

3. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor D Sarin

“How will the outsourcing of the roads maintenance budget benefit the Borough's residents?”

Answer

Capita Symonds, the Council's new technical services partner will bring a wealth of highway maintenance expertise and best practice that has been developed within other partnerships across the country. North Tyneside will benefit from this and are already looking at new and innovative highway maintenance techniques that will provide better value for money and get the best use out of resources. Capita also has the ability to influence the supply chain and secure better unit rates for highway work which will result in more work being undertaken on the ground.

4. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor P McIntyre

“What progress is the council making in reducing energy consumption and reducing its carbon footprint?”

Answer

Last year the Council reduced our carbon footprint by nearly 10%, that's a saving of nearly 4,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

- We reduced gas consumption by 13%
- We reduced electricity consumption by 5%
- We reduced diesel consumption by 5%
- We reduced water consumption by 24%

5. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor S Mortimer

“North Tyneside Council has recently been judged to have the best maintained environment in England and Wales for a borough with between 100,000 and 200,000 residents. How was this achieved?”

Answer

The top awards and national recognition have been achieved at the recent Clean Britain Awards, and the Council retained its 5 star award (the highest grade rating for environmental management).

The Council have also won a Gold award for the best medium sized local authority (100 - 200,000 population). Best in category, and the overall National Winner Award which in effect is the highest achievement possible for all entrants, from all categories.

This is a fantastic achievement for the Council and the Environmental Services Team.

6. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor J McLaughlin

“The Borough's waste management is widely appreciated by residents. Can these high standards be maintained within a programme of cost reduction?”

Answer

Waste management services are valued by our residents, in fact our weekly collection of household waste and our fortnightly collection of recyclable waste is consistently rated as one of our most valued services matched with some of the highest resident satisfaction levels

The Council have an excellent track record of maintaining the delivery of our high standards whilst delivering efficiencies.

Through better procurement and reviews of our collection processes and management resources we have delivered over £400,000 of efficiencies from this service over the last two years.

The Council has also been successful in a bid to the government's Weekly Collection Support Scheme (WCSS) which results in an additional £3,355,000 of funding for this service and ensures the continuation of our commitment of retaining a weekly collection of household waste whilst continuing to improve these important services and drive up recycling levels.

7. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor S Mortimer

“What action is the council taking to safeguard the borough's ash trees?”

Answer

There are no known occurrences of Ash Dieback in North Tyneside but the Council are taking this threat seriously and continue to monitor the situation.

Following the Government's announcement of a national emergency relating to Ash Dieback disease and their published guidance this has been translated this into a number of specific actions and delivery plans for North Tyneside.

A joint response is provided for Questions 8 and 9:

8. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor M Finlay

“Can the Mayor explain to the Council why the redevelopment of Wallsend Park and Hall Grounds is so far behind schedule and why they will be closed for an extended period and has she been able to act upon my suggestion that at least the children's playground should be left open during the school holidays when there will be little or no heavy work going on?”

9. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor N J Huscroft

Will the Mayor agree to investigate keeping Richardson Dees Park at least partially open while works continue in the Park?

Many residents have asked that access is maintained. While acknowledging that safety is of paramount importance, can the Mayor agree to look into maintaining safe pathways in the Park and keeping the Play Area open, perhaps by using strategically placed fencing?"

Answer

Some of the early work on site took longer than planned and as a consequence of the exceptionally wet spring and summer and more extensive than originally planned utility work that was required.

The Team have been asked to look at whether it is possible to safely allow access to the play site over the holiday period.

Wallsend has two additional open spaces, Prince Road Arboretum and Wallsend Burn, which is one of North Tyneside's largest recreational green spaces. The Arboretum, known locally as The Valley, and Wallsend Burn will remain open throughout.

This disruption for park users and local residents will be made up for by the fantastic improvements that are happening to Wallsend Parks.

Improvements which will benefit users and residents for many years to come.

10. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor B Burdis

"Can the Mayor confirm that, from the date of the handover to Capita Symonds, Highways section vehicles spent two days in the depot being washed and polished because no-one had thought to apply for the necessary operators' license to enable them to go onto the roads?"

Answer

On the day of the handover (Thursday 1 November 2012), the transferring fleet was subject to a full condition survey in accordance with the requirements of the Asset Transfer Agreement.

The operators licence was in place on Thursday 1 November 2012 and no detrimental impact on service was experienced that day.

On Friday 2 November 2012 the fleet was fully operational.

11. Question to the Elected Mayor by Councillor N J Huscroft

"Will the Mayor agree to arrange a briefing for elected members of Wallsend Wards to give an update on the current position with regard to the regeneration of Wallsend Town Centre and the North Banks of the Tyne?"

Answer

A briefing can be provided to the Wallsend Ward Members to allow them details of the current position.