

North Tyneside Council Report to Council Date: 29 November 2012

ITEM 7

Title: Motions

Notice has been received of the following motions from Members of the Council to be put to the Council meeting.

1. Motion signed by Councillors Jim Allan, Norma Redfearn, John O Shea, Carole Gambling and Tommy Mulvenna

'This Council requests that the Council's Monitoring Officer looks to determine whether the distribution of " the Widening Horizons December Issue" during an election period in November, across the borough was in accord with the Council's protocols and guidance on the use of council resources during any election period. A report on the conclusions be presented to a future Council Meeting.'

Legal Implications

The proposed report to be presented to a future meeting of Council will contain details of any legal implications arising from its findings.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this motion beyond the use of staff time funded from within current budget.

2. Motion signed by Councillors Jim Allan, Norma Redfearn, John O Shea, Carole Gambling and Tommy Mulvenna

'This Council expresses its dissatisfaction at the cancellation of the PSA event at Wallsend Town Hall on 16 October and the attempt to cancel a subsequent meeting of the Labour Party, apparently based upon a community lettings policy of North Tyneside Council, because they were classified as being political.

Council therefore requests that the Chief Executive considers the implications and operation of any such policy, and reviews the two matters referred to above, and reports back to a future Council meeting, on

- i) the existence of such a community lettings policy
- ii) the availability of the policy to elected members, council staff, and members of the public

- iii) his review of the two matters referred to.'

Legal Implications

The proposed report to be presented to a future meeting of Council will contain details of any legal implications arising from the proposed review.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this motion beyond the use of staff time funded from within current budget.

3. Motion signed by Councillors Jim Allan, Norma Redfearn, John O Shea, Carole Gambling and Tommy Mulvenna

"This Council seeks clarification of the lease arrangements for the pitch and putt golf facility on the Links in St Mary's Ward. In particular, the Clauses contained within the lease which require landlord approval to change and/or alter or extend the building. Council would like a full explanation on who has the responsibility for agreeing the lease and which Cabinet Member was involved in agreeing the lease."

Legal Implications

The explanation presented to a future meeting of Council will contain details of any legal implications arising.

Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications arising directly from this motion

4. Motion signed by Councillors Jim Allan, Norma Redfearn, John O Shea, Carole Gambling and Tommy Mulvenna

'That North Tyneside Council

- i) supports the bottom up process in the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 that enables councils and their communities to drive the action and assistance that central government gives in promoting thriving local economies and sustainable communities;
- ii) notes that the Act gives councils the power to make proposals to government for action and assistance from government to promote sustainable communities, and that those proposals can be for, but are not restricted to, new powers or a transfer of powers or public money and function from central control to local control;
- iii) notes that the Act defines sustainable communities broadly, that definition having the 3 aspects of the improvement of the local economy, protection of the environment, and promotion of social

- inclusion, including participation in civic, political and democratic activity;
- iv) notes that new regulations for the Act made in June 2012 improve the process and make it more favourable for councils in the following ways - councils' proposals are submitted directly to the government, there will no longer be short listing, councils can submit proposals whenever they are ready as the process is now ongoing, there will be a time limit of six months on the government to consult and try to reach agreement with the Selector (currently the Local Government Association) regarding councils' proposals and to then respond to those proposals. Councils that choose to submit proposals may now decide how to consult (subject to specific requirements on consultation under the Act or associated regulations) and try to reach agreement with representatives of communities in their areas on what proposals to submit;
 - v) notes that the government has formally invited all Local Authorities to use the Act by submitting proposals;
 - vi) resolves to request that Cabinet use the Act by responding to this invitation and taking forward consultation upon and submission of proposals for action and assistance from central government each year for the next three years and that Cabinet then review the outcome of this activity and consider whether to continue to use the Act;

Council requests that a report be brought forward to Council on the opportunities or circumstances that North Tyneside Council could use to their advantage and/or benefit the Borough.'

Legal Implications

The Sustainable Communities Act 2007 sets up a process by which councils can drive government action. Councils are given the power to make proposals to the Secretary of State, as to how government can 'assist councils in promoting the sustainability of local communities'. The Secretary of State is then under a duty to 'reach agreement' with councils, via their representative body, the Local Government Association (the LGA - called 'the selector' in the Act) on which proposals will be given priority.

The Act seeks to open up the work of local communities to greater transparency by including local people in the proposal process.

The Act specifies that when making their proposals to the Secretary of State, councils must involve local people by setting up (or recognising if they already exist) 'panels of representatives of local people' (or citizens' panels). Councils then must seek to 'reach agreement' (not just consult) with those panels regarding ideas for proposals to put to the Secretary of State for government action. Under the Act, the measures for local sustainability include thriving local regeneration, environmental protection and social inclusion, including active democratic participation.

In accordance with Section 9D of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) the responsibility for making proposals to the Secretary of State under the provisions of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 rests with Cabinet.

Financial Implications

It should be possible to do some initial research using staff funded from current budgets. There could be financial implications arising for the Council in the future and these would be reported to Cabinet and / or full Council at the relevant time.

5. Motion signed by Councillors Jim Allan, Norma Redfearn, John O Shea, Carole Gambling and Tommy Mulvenna.

That this Council is seriously concerned with the recent news *, which indicates that university applicants from North Tyneside have shrunk by a staggering 23%. Council requests the Strategic Director of CYPL to produce an initial report on the circumstances of such a reduction and a proposed action plan to reverse this massive decline.

*Observer 11 November 2012 – “Middle Class pupils shun Universities as Fees rises.

Full Observer article:

Middle-class pupils shun universities as fees rise

Demand for places falls by up to 20% in richer areas as families see costs soar out of reach University applications have fallen by almost a quarter in some parts of the country, including some of the most affluent regions, figures reveal.

The hardest hit is North Tyneside, a part of the country with higher than average unemployment, where there was a 23% drop in the number of applications to university this summer.

However the first national breakdown of university applications, based on parliamentary constituencies, provides evidence that traditionally affluent middle class parts of the country have seen a disproportionate number of young men and women reject university as an option.

Amid difficult economic times and a trebling of [tuition fees](#), in areas such as Banbury, near Oxford, where unemployment rates are traditionally among the lowest in the country, there has been a 22% fall in applications to universities, from 4,400 to 3,427.

Even the prime minister's own well-heeled constituency, Witney, in west Oxfordshire, has seen an 18% drop, from 4,088 applications in June 2011 to 3,353 this summer. And George Osborne's Tatton constituency, in Cheshire, has seen a 16% fall in applications, from 3,958 in 2011 to 3,314 this year.

The demand for degree courses from British [students](#) has dropped by more than 50,000 – almost 9% – this year, with the University and College Admissions Service also concluding that there was evidence of a sharper fall in application rates for young people from wealthier backgrounds, compared with poorer teenagers.

It is believed that demand among the middle classes has plummeted quicker than it has among applicants from poor families because they are not able to take advantage of a generous system of living grants and tuition fee waivers.

The fall coincides with a decision to almost triple the cap on annual tuition fees to as much as £9,000 in 2012, although the fees regime means that no one need repay their debts until they earn more than £21,000.

One of the best performing constituencies was Rochdale, which has one of the worst youth unemployment rates in the country, but where there was a 6% increase in applications from 4,723 to 5,013 this year. Birmingham Yardley, where 8.1% of the population is unemployed, also saw an increase in applications from their young people of 4% from 3,743 to 3,902.

Gareth Thomas, Labour MP for Harrow West, who uncovered the statistics, said: "These figures suggest that the ambitions and university aspirations of young people from middle-class families have taken a big hit as a result of the huge hike in tuition fees.

David Cameron doesn't understand just how much £9,000 fees are making [young people think twice about going into higher education](#) – even young people in his own constituency."

Liam Burns, president of the national union of students, said young people would be marching in London in protest at the government's [higher education](#) policy at the end of this month.

He said: "These figures show the scale of the gamble the government has taken with the futures of young people from right across the country.

"David Willetts and Vince Cable can play down the drop in applications all they like, but families and communities across the country are seeing their dreams of going to university disappear before their eyes.'

Legal Implications

The proposed report to be presented to a future meeting of Council will contain details of any legal implications arising.

Financial Implications

There are no immediate financial implications of this motion beyond the use of staff time funded from within current budgets. If this motion was approved, and an action plan developed, this could potentially have financial implications for the Council and therefore a further report would be submitted to Cabinet and/or full Council, as appropriate, detailing the full financial implications and method of funding.

6. Motion signed by Councillors Michael Huscroft, Nigel Huscroft and David Ord.

‘This Council requests the Cabinet to bring forward proposals to increase expenditure on roads and pavements over the next 10 years to eliminate the backlog of repairs, as reported to Cabinet on 12th November 2012, (as highlighted in the Asset Management Plan).

To meet this proposal Cabinet is requested to increase capital expenditure in the local Transport plan capital works by £2.5m per year, and to continue with the £1m Area Forum Road and Pavement recovery programme to the year 2022/23.’

Legal Implications

Responsibility for delivery of the Capital Plan is a matter for Cabinet, subject to the limitations of such resources, and financial thresholds (for instance in relation to borrowing) set pursuant to the Council’s Financial Regulations.

Financial Implications

The proposed 2013-2023 Capital Plan presented to Cabinet on 26 November includes continuation of the Roads and Pavements scheme at £1.000m pa from 2014/15 until 2022/23 (total £9.000m). It also includes an additional Highways Maintenance scheme at £1.000m pa for five years from 2013/14 (total £5.000m). The revenue costs of borrowing for these are included in the 2013-15 Financial Plan (£0.023m 2013/14, £0.179m 2014/15). (The cost after 10 years would be approx. £1.563m pa).

The revenue costs of additional borrowing to increase the Highways Maintenance scheme to £2.5m pa over the 10 year Capital Plan would be £0.034m for 2013/14, £0.201m for 2014/15. The annual cost of borrowing for the extra £20.000m for Highways Maintenance after the 10 years investment would be £2.233m.

Any decision to accelerate expenditure into 2012/13 would result in an increase in the cost of borrowing , the value of which would depend on the amount accelerated.