

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Council

### Date: 23 July 2015

#### ITEM 1

Title: Questions by  
Members of the Public

Notice has been received of the following questions from members of the public to be put to the Council meeting.

**1. Question to the Elected Mayor by Mrs Brenda Charleston of Wallsend**

Why when we are trying to encourage families and tourism in North Tyneside the public toilet facilities are never open till the stated time on the website of 9pm. I have found them closed much earlier, one as early as 4 pm. Is this the way forward to encourage families to stay and spend money in the borough?

**2. Question to the Elected Mayor by Mrs Linda Arkley of North Shields**

Whilst the North East economy is growing, it is also missing out on Billions of Pounds worth of investment and the opportunity of being part of a "once in a life time" devolution deal with the Government. Can the Elected Mayor tell me what meetings, representations and discussions she has held personally with the Secretary of State Greg Clark concerning devolution and having a Regional Elected Mayor? Will she actively campaign for a Regional Mayor in order to ensure that we can bring money and long term investment to the automotive and advanced manufacturing industries, along with financial services and life sciences which are central to future employment prospects in the North East?

**3. Question to the Elected Mayor by Mrs Glynis Barrie of North Shields**

Since the Combined Authority took responsibility for overseeing the Tyne & Wear Metro service, the service has worsened. Can the Mayor explain what action she is taking to improve the service, and when will the residents of North Tyneside see an improvement?

**4. Question to the Elected Mayor by Mr Frank Austin of Whitley Bay**

Recent reports have shown that the decision taken by Northumberland County Council to suspend parking charges throughout the County has been a huge success. Tourism has increased substantially and many Town Centres within Northumberland are reporting increased footfall and turnover (as high as 24% in some areas) for Local Traders and businesses. In addition, shops which have stood empty for some time have now re-opened with new businesses emerging.

I would therefore, once again, like to ask the Elected Mayor to consider introducing a similar scheme in North Tyneside, which would lead to an increase in tourism and allow traders and businesses to maximise their customer potential and, more effectively, compete against out-of-town shopping centres such as Silverlink.

I would stress that the existing restrictions and penalties would still be expected to stand.

**5. Question to the Elected Mayor by Mrs Wendy Adams of Whitley Bay**

Until recently, Council Plans regarding Whitley Bay's Seafront Regeneration included the proposal to construct a quality 5\* Hotel with additional facilities like conferencing & spa suites, next to the Dome. However, this has now been downgraded to a Budget Hotel with no additional facilities.

Unlike the promised 5\* outfit, this will directly compete with existing accommodation provision and is unlikely to bring in additional visitors: (a) without the add-on facilities and (b) prior to significant progress on the overall regeneration. It will simply spread existing visitors even more thinly than at present.

Many Proprietors are extremely concerned about the detrimental effect to their businesses, livelihoods and in many cases, their own homes. It's feared a new hotel of this nature will lead to closures, possible bankruptcy and for those who live-in, Proprietor's own homelessness. Alternatively they may be forced to accommodate a less desirable client group simply to survive. This would compound the already problematic issues of increased anti-social behaviour & crime and isn't something most existing businesses wish to do.

Furthermore, unlike the purchasing policies of Corporate Chains, existing proprietors shop locally, supporting other small businesses in the process. Therefore closures are likely to cause further detriment to the local economy of the Town.

Would the Mayor explain fully the decision to downgrade this plan and agree that any premature building of a new budget hotel is likely to have an adverse and potentially disastrous impact on many existing accommodation providers and other retail & leisure outlets throughout the town centre?

Finally would the Mayor be prepared to meet with sector representatives to discuss this matter further?