



Borough Council
5 September 2024

Borough Council Minutes

25 July 2024

Present: Councillors Cunningham (*in the Chair*), Berkley, Brenen, Brown, Carter, Clare, Coombes, Curtis, Davies, Dawes, P Dean, S Dean, Dixon, Foggon, Ford, Foreman, Francis, Gibson, Gynn, Hamilton, Herbert, Keegan, Kennedy, Kilgour, Lamonte, Leask, K Maxwell, N Maxwell, McCabe, McHugh, Meling, Myers, Oliver, Owens-Palmer, Porthouse, Potts, Proudlock, K Roberts, T Roberts, Robertson, Smith, Strike, J Taylor, Traynor, Welsh, Wood, Yare.

46

Apologies: Councillors Ellison, Guy, Harrison, McKeown, Potts, Stonehouse, R Taylor, Thompson.

8

The Chair reminded the public that the meeting was being recorded and live streamed.

Members were reminded of the Code of Conduct and Council Procedure Rules.

1. Declarations of Interest

Councillor J Taylor declared a personal interest in Item 6 as Vice Chair of Standards Committee. She remained in the meeting during discussion and determination of the item.

Councillor K Roberts declared a personal interest in Item 6 as the Subject Member or Hearing C20a. He remained in the meeting during discussion and determination of the item.

Councillor Robertson declared a personal interest in Item 6 as he had represented Councillor K Roberts at Hearing C20a. He remained in the meeting during discussion and determination of the item.

Councillor Coombes declared a personal interest as Chair of the Friends of Temple Park. He remained in the meeting during discussion and determination of the item.

2. Minutes of the Meeting of Council 14 May 2024

Resolved: That the minutes of the Meeting of Borough Council held on 14 May 2024 be approved.

Matters Arising From Minutes

Councillor Robertson noted that he had not received a detailed response to his question on council tax arrears at the previous meeting and sought further clarification. A further response was provided in the annex to these minutes.

3. Mayor's Communications

The Mayor announced that the RICS North East Regional Awards, which show inspirational initiatives and developments in land, real estate, construction and infrastructure, had taken place on 3 June 2024 and South Tyneside were successful in the best public sector project for the Viking Energy Network in Jarrow.

The regional success would automatically enter South Tyneside into the RICS National Awards due to take place on 4 October 2024.

The Mayor advised that the speakers and loop system in the Council Chamber had recently been upgraded.

Members were reminded that they were only permitted to speak once on each agenda item.

Councillor McCabe left the meeting.

4. Community Safety Partnership Plan 2024-2027

Submitted: Report of the Director of Place and Communities

Councillor Foreman, Lead Member for Housing and Community Safety, presented the report which outlined the contents and priorities of the refreshed Community Safety Partnership Plan 2024-2027.

The Community Safety Partnership Board, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, is required to produce and publish a Community Safety Partnership Plan. The plan is updated annually to reflect local and national trends, utilising data and intelligence collected over 2022-23.

The key strategic priorities included in the plan were:

- Reducing Crime (including reducing reoffending)

- Addressing Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
- Putting Victims First
- Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour
- Delivering Community Confidence

The report was seconded by Councillor Dawes.

Councillor Francis noted the good work done by the Community Safety Partnership in 2022-23 although acknowledged it was worrying to see crime on the rise again, noting that lived experience told a different story to the figures.

Councillor Brenen raised concerns around the potential impact on safety if funding was reduced.

Councillor Owens-Palmer highlighted the success of the Community and Business Response Team and noted that funding for this was limited, and Members needed assurance that it would continue. Councillor Smith echoed this, praising the work done by the team in Hebburn town centre as a known hotspot.

In response to a query on steering groups, Councillor Dixon clarified that these comprise representatives from senior partners such as Northumbria Police, the NHS, and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service among others. It was advised that the Police and Crime Commissioner planned to attend a future meeting.

Councillor Foreman drew attention to actions within the report which would support the delivery of priorities, and encouraged Members to get in touch with questions and he would ensure they received a reply.

A named vote was requested and taken on the report. The votes were cast as follows:

For: 24 (Berkley, Carter, Clare, Dawes, P Dean, S Dean, Dixon, Foreman, Gibson, Keegan, Kilgour, Lamonte, Leask, K Maxwell, N Maxwell, McHugh, Meling, Porthouse, Proudlock, Smith, Strike, J Taylor, Traynor, Welsh)

Against: 20 (Brenen, Brown, Coombes, Curtis, Davies, Foggon, Ford, Francis, Gynn, Hamilton, Herbert, Kennedy, Myers, Oliver, Owens-Palmer, K Roberts, T Roberts, Robertson, Wood, Yare)

Resolved: That the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2024-2027 be noted and approved.

Reason for Decision: To ensure the Community Safety Partnership Board discharges its statutory duty, whilst also providing a full and considered response to complaints of crime and disorder through the collective allocation of partnership resources.

5. Good Neighbourhood Management Policy – Spotlight on Noise

Submitted: Report of South Tyneside Homes

Councillor Foreman, Lead Member for Housing and Community Safety, presented the report which provided information on the development of the Good Neighbourhood Policy which highlighted the approach of the organisation in dealing with non-statutory noise complaints.

The report was seconded by Councillor Carter.

Councillor Brown raised concerns about remedial work along the coastal strip in Horsley Hill, stating that there would be a period of noise and that residents had not been consulted. Councillor Leask clarified that a new Ecology Report was expected, and no works would be carried out until this was complete.

Councillor Kilgour praised the work done and emphasised it was important to celebrate successes, with Councillor Clare adding that the report highlighted ongoing good work and demonstrated how the Council was tackling what had been a huge problem.

A named vote was requested and taken on the report. The votes were cast as follows:

For: 31 (Berkley, Carter, Clare, Curtis, Davies, Dawes, P Dean, S Dean, Dixon, Ford, Foreman, Francis, Gibson, Gynn, Herbert, Keegan, Kilgour, Lamonte, Leask, K Maxwell, N Maxwell, McHugh, Meling, Porthouse, Proudlock, Smith, Strike, J Taylor, Traynor, Welsh, Yare)

Against: 13 (Brenen, Brown, Coombes, Foggon, Hamilton, Kennedy, Myers, Oliver, Owens-Palmer, K Roberts, T Roberts, Robertson, Wood)

Resolved: That the Good Neighbourhood Management Policy be approved.

Reason for decision: To ensure that appropriate policies are in place for responding to non-statutory noise complaints.

6. Update on the outcome of the investigation into and hearing of Complaint C20a

Submitted: Report of the Corporate Lead Legal and Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Councillor Carter, Lead Member for Governance, Finance and Corporate Services, presented the report which provided an update on the outcome of the investigation into and hearing of Complaint C20a.

An investigation into Complaint C20a concluded that there had been a failure by the Subject Member to comply with the Code of Conduct for Elected

Members. The Final Report was therefore referred to Standards Committee for a formal Hearing. The Standards Committee Hearing in respect of Complaint C20a took place on Monday 18 March 2024. Recommendations to Council were outlined in the report.

The report was seconded by Councillor Kilgour.

Councillor Clare stressed to all Members that Standards Committee was politically balanced and would only deal with the facts as presented.

Councillor Robertson queried whether decisions taken by the Standards Committee with regards to Hearing C20a were in line with Article 6 of the European Court of Human Rights. The Monitoring Officer clarified that as sanctions imposed were usually lenient and therefore courts agreed that the ECHR would not engage, and that Members would never be asked to agree to something which contravened the law.

Councillor Brenen explained that he could not support the sanctions as the Subject Member's actions had come at a period of high tension, and also because they could have an impact on his service to residents. Councillor Kennedy agreed that restricting access to email in such a way was not conducive to him carrying out his role as a Councillor.

A named vote was requested and taken on the recommendation to issue a formal censure. The votes were cast as follows:

For: 31 (Berkley, Carter, Clare, Curtis, Davies, Dawes, P Dean, S Dean, Dixon, Ford, Foreman, Gibson, Keegan, Kilgour, Lamonte, K Maxwell, N Maxwell, McHugh, Meling, Porthouse, Proudlock, Smith, Strike, J Taylor, Traynor, Welsh, Yare)

Against: 13 (Brenen, Brown, Coombes, Foggon, Hamilton, Herbert, Kennedy, Myers, Oliver, K Roberts, T Roberts, Robertson, Wood)

A named vote was requested and taken on the recommendation to restrict the Subject Member's access to Council facilities. The votes were cast as follows:

For: 30 (Berkley, Carter, Clare, Curtis, Davies, Dawes, P Dean, S Dean, Dixon, Ford, Foreman, Gibson, Keegan, Kilgour, Lamonte, K Maxwell, N Maxwell, McHugh, Meling, Porthouse, Proudlock, Smith, Strike, J Taylor, Traynor, Welsh)

Against: 14 (Brenen, Brown, Coombes, Foggon, Hamilton, Herbert, Kennedy, Myers, Oliver, K Roberts, T Roberts, Robertson, Wood, Yare)

A named vote was requested and taken on the recommendation that sanctions be effective from 25 July 2024 for a period of six months. The votes were cast as follows:

For: 31 (Berkley, Carter, Clare, Curtis, Davies, Dawes, P Dean, S Dean, Dixon, Ford, Foreman, Gibson, Keegan, Kilgour, Lamonte, K Maxwell, N Maxwell, McHugh, Meling, Porthouse, Proudlock, Smith, Strike, J Taylor, Traynor, Welsh, Yare)

Against: 13 (Brenen, Brown, Coombes, Foggon, Hamilton, Herbert, Kennedy, Myers, Oliver, K Roberts, T Roberts, Robertson, Wood)

Resolved: That:

- a) the report be noted
- b) the Council issue a formal censure to the Subject Member
- c) the Subject Member's access to Council facilities, namely the ability to email Elected Members and Council Officers, be restricted by way of all email communications sent by him to Elected Members or Council Officers either from his Council email address or any personal email addresses be diverted into a single email inbox, to be monitored on a daily basis on weekdays by Officers and for such communications to be forwarded to the appropriate individual or service for consideration and appropriate action; and
- d) that sanctions as agreed be effective from 25 July 2024 for a period of six months.

Reason for Decision: To ensure the Council complies with the decision notice of its Standards Committee in respect of Complaint C20a.

7. Spend on Community, Civic and Mayoral Hospitality

Submitted: Report of the Director of Governance and Corporate Affairs

Councillor Carter, Lead Member for Governance, Finance and Corporate Services, presented the report which provided information relating to the amount of spend on community events, civic events and mayoral hospitality over the period of 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

It was noted that an estimated 1600 people received hospitality at events hosted by South Tyneside Council over the reported period. This included schools, history groups, charity organisations, community groups, uniformed services, including armed forces, cadets and veterans, local businesses, sports organisations, and individuals, all of whom support the delivery of the Council's ambitions.

The spend included food, hot and cold soft drinks, catering staff costs, alcohol, and ancillary costs. A breakdown of figures was included in the report for information, with the total cost for hospitality spend being £18,593.82.

The report was seconded by Councillor Berkley.

Councillor Brown noted the importance of accounting for all money spent and recognised hospitality as a vital part of the civic events to celebrate communities in the Borough.

Councillor Curtis suggested that Elected Members should pay for their own food and drink.

Councillors Kennedy and Robertson requested that a breakdown of spend be provided to clarify how much was spent on alcohol. Councillor Carter responded that she would enquire if this was possible.

Councillor Carter drew attention to the numbers in attendance at recent events and suggested that when this was taken into account, the amount spent indicated value for money and demonstrated good engagement with residents.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason for decision: In accordance with the Protocol on Hospitality, outlined in the Constitution, Part E – Codes and Protocols, Section 14 – Protocol on Gifts and Hospitality for Councillors and Officers in order to support openness and transparency.

8. Appointing Membership of Committees of the Council

Submitted: Report of Director of Governance and Corporate Affairs

Councillor Carter, Lead Member for Governance, Finance and Corporate Services, presented the report which provided information to Council to assist with formally appointing vacant positions on a number of Committees following the by-election in the Primrose ward, held 27 June 2024, which saw Councillor Joan Hamilton duly elected.

Vacancies existed on the Contracts and Commissioning Scrutiny Committee, the Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee and the General Purposes Committee. It was recommended that Councillor Hamilton be appointed to the vacant position on each of these Committees.

Furthermore, to correct an administrative error in the papers issued at Annual Council held 14 May 2024, it was recommended that Councillor Strike replace Councillor Porthouse on the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating and Call-in Committee to ensure that all Chairs of Scrutiny Committees sit on the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating and Call-in Committee as required by the Constitution.

It was also noted that Councillor Hamilton would join the South Tyneside Alliance Group.

Resolved: That:
a) the report be noted

- b) Councillor Hamilton be appointed to Contracts and Commissioning Scrutiny Committee, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee and General Purposes Committee; and
- c) Councillor Strike replace Councillor Porthouse on the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating and Call-in Committee.

Reason for Decision: To ensure the committees of the Council are correctly appointed.

9. Breastfeeding Update

Submitted: Report of the Director of Public Health

Councillor Berkley, Lead Member for Adults, Health and Independence, presented the report which provided an oversight of the work currently taking place to increase breastfeeding rates in South Tyneside.

The report highlighted that breastfeeding was beneficial to both babies and mothers, and that breastfed infants had reduced risks of illnesses such as asthma, type 1 diabetes, acute ear infections and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

The rate of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks for England in 2022-23 was 49%, compared with 37% in the north-east. South Tyneside stood at 27%, the second lowest in the north-east, demonstrating a clear need for improvement. Of particular concern was that breastfeeding rates could be linked to levels of deprivation; those from the least deprived areas being much more likely to breastfeed and therefore increasing breastfeeding rates in the most deprived areas would help reduce health inequalities.

The report was seconded by Councillor Dawes.

Councillor Brown spoke on the importance of ensuring mothers and children were supported, and that the Council should do all it could.

Councillor Davies noted that businesses in South Tyneside were very accommodating to breastfeeding mothers, although there was still work to do to ensure parents could both feed and safely supervise any other children. He highlighted a necessity to divert resources to areas of greatest need.

Resolved: That:

- a) Council acknowledge the breastfeeding work taking place, seeking accreditation from the UNICEF Baby Friendly Community status and the promote at any opportunity the importance of benefits of breastfeeding to increase the rates in the Borough; and
- b) Council support the infant feeding/services offer launch during World Breastfeeding Week which runs 1 August to 7 August 2024, and any future campaigns.

Reason for decision: To fulfil actions in the Best Start in Life action plan and increase breastfeeding rates across the Borough.

11. To consider any questions received under Procedure Rule 8

One question had been received under Council Procedure Rule 8.

Mr David Munroe (member of the public) submitted the following question:

As the Council is always talking about its green credentials, will the Council support tenants by allowing them to install car electric charging points at their homes at the tenants own expense? Also, will the council support private companies installing roadside chargers at locations across the borough?

A written response to the question was to be provided to Mr Munroe within 7 days of the meeting.

12. To consider any petitions received under Procedure Rule 9

One petition had been received under Council Procedure Rule 9.

The petition called on South Tyneside Council to save the greenbelt – South Fellgate Housing Development. The petition relates to the South Tyneside Draft Local Plan 2023-2040, specifically in relation to Policy SP8 Fellgate Sustainable Growth Area.

The petition had 2248 signatories in total, with 992 of those signatories living in the Borough.

The petition stood referred to the Director of Place Strategy as the appropriate body for further consideration.

There were no petitions submitted to the meeting of Borough Council held 22 February 2024 due for update.

Councillor Leask left the meeting.

13. To consider any Motions received under Procedure Rule 10

The Mayor advised that two motions had been submitted under this rule.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Francis.

Motion 1

Motion on a Local Approach to Delivering Net Zero

South Tyneside Council acknowledges that climate change poses a significant threat to our community, with impacts ranging from extreme weather events to economic disruptions.

Urgent action is required to mitigate these effects and transition to a sustainable, low-carbon economy. We note that the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) has found that supporting a local approach for delivering net zero by 2050 would be at half the cost of a national approach and would deliver three times the financial returns to our communities. Furthermore, a fair transition to a local net zero economy can enhance prosperity and wellbeing across all areas of our community, ensuring inclusivity in the transition to a sustainable future. Additionally, transitioning to green energy has further economic benefits, with every pound spent on renewable energy, there are two and a half times more jobs, and twice the GDP growth than if the same pound was spent on fossil fuels.

We note the results of a recent LGA survey suggesting that 67% of councils are not confident in hitting their net zero targets. We recognise that local delivery of net zero is essential to the UK's commitments to net zero by 2050 and to 68% emissions reductions by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. We further note that, when it comes to adaptation, the LGA states that "Nationally we are not sufficiently prepared for the impacts of climate change, and central government must prioritise its work with local government to close this gap." We further note that "For many climate impacts it is the most vulnerable in society that will be most impacted and have the least ability to adapt" (CCC: The Just Transition and Climate Change Adaptation).

While South Tyneside Council has declared a Climate Emergency and set a goal for the Council to be carbon neutral by 2030, there is a pressing need for greater transparency in our progress towards these goals. Additionally, it is imperative that these targets extend beyond the Council to encompass all South Tyneside.

South Tyneside Council Resolves:

- To lobby the Government to empower councils to deliver local decarbonisation and adaptation action in every village, town and city by ensuring government departments and council leaders work together within a Local Net Zero Delivery Unit, overseen by a Delivery Board, with the authority to transform the funding and regulatory landscape, enabling councils, the local private sector and communities to accelerate delivery of local green transition. (This proposal was developed by UK100- a cross-party network of local leaders pledged to lead a rapid transition to Net Zero.

- Call on all UK parliamentary political parties to commit to giving Local Authorities statutory duties, powers and funding to enable a Net Zero transition in line with the UK's legal commitments.
- Request South Tyneside Council's party political group leaders write to their prospective national parties calling on them to make this commitment.
- To reaffirm its commitments, including revising the Sustainable South Tyneside Strategy to take decisive action to address climate change and to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, in line with national and international commitments to reach net-zero by 2050.
- To prioritise transparency in climate monitoring and reporting, including emissions data and progress towards achieving climate goals.
- To support the call for a Just Transition plan that ensures climate action and adaptation strategies are closely aligned with social outcomes, with a continued focus on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable members of our community.
- To commit to examining best practices in climate action and adaptation transparently, including the development of published climate strategies with SMART targets, and fostering effective partnerships with key stakeholders.
- To call upon local authorities and national leadership to prioritise climate action in their policy platforms and to push for funding to achieve climate and emissions targets.
- We call on our council leadership and our elected members to use every forum available to press the case for Statutory Duties and Powers, plus a Local Net Zero Delivery Board and Delivery Unit, to be put in place rapidly by the next government.

Signed Councillors: Francis (proposer)
Guy (seconder)
Curtis
Stonehouse
Yare
Ford
Davies
Herbert

The motion was seconded by Councillor Herbert.

An amendment to the motion was moved by Councillor Gibson, with changes as highlighted in bold:

South Tyneside Council acknowledges that climate change poses a significant threat to our community, with impacts ranging from extreme weather events to economic disruptions.

Urgent action is required to mitigate these effects and transition to a sustainable, low-carbon economy. We note that the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) has found that supporting a local approach for delivering net zero by 2050 would be at half the cost of a national approach and would deliver three times the financial returns to our communities. Furthermore, a fair transition to a local net zero economy can enhance prosperity and wellbeing across all areas of our community, ensuring inclusivity in the transition to a sustainable future. Additionally, transitioning to green energy has further economic benefits, with every pound spent on renewable energy, there are two and a half times more jobs, and twice the GDP growth than if the same pound was spent on fossil fuels.

We note that last year South Tyneside exceeded its emissions target, reducing emissions by 30% since 2018. As such we ~~We note the results of a recent LGA survey suggesting that 67% of councils are not confident in hitting their net zero targets. We~~ recognise that local delivery of net zero is essential to the UK's commitments to net zero by 2050 and to 68% emissions reductions by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. We further note that, when it comes to adaptation, the LGA states that "Nationally we are not sufficiently prepared for the impacts of climate change, and central government must prioritise its work with local government to close this gap." We further note that "For many climate impacts it is the most vulnerable in society that will be most impacted and have the least ability to adapt" (CCC: The Just Transition and Climate Change Adaptation).

While South Tyneside Council has declared a Climate Emergency and set a goal for the Council to be carbon neutral by 2030, ~~there is a pressing need for~~ **and we are currently in the process of updating our Sustainable South Tyneside Strategy to reflect our achievements in this sector and offer** greater transparency in our progress towards these goals. Additionally, **we recognise that** it is imperative that these targets extend beyond the Council to encompass all South Tyneside.

South Tyneside Council Resolves:

- **The Council will continue its work with UK100, we joined as a council in 2021. Local authorities generate 2% of emissions but have influence over 33%, and UK100 has helped us as a council to galvanise these connections to lobby for a wider commitment to Net Zero. The reporting mechanism of UK100 also offers another level of accountability for us as a local authority to ensure we are hitting our targets for Net Zero. Collaboration with other local authorities is a tenant of our commitment to UK100 and we are also active participants in the Local Energy Advice Demonstrator. However, we feel calling on any parties to make this link any stronger would likely infringe on the individualistic identity of each**

Council, so we will aim to maintain our collaboration, not increase it.

- ~~• To lobby the Government to empower councils to deliver local decarbonisation and adaptation action in every village, town and city by ensuring government departments and council leaders work together within a Local Net Zero Delivery Unit, overseen by a Delivery Board, with the authority to transform the funding and regulatory landscape, enabling councils, the local private sector and communities to accelerate delivery of local green transition. (This proposal was developed by UK100 – a cross-party network of local leaders pledged to lead a rapid transition to Net Zero.~~
- ~~• Call on all UK parliamentary political parties to commit to giving Local Authorities statutory duties, powers and funding to enable a Net Zero transition in line with the UK's legal commitments.~~
- ~~• Request South Tyneside Council's party political group leaders write to their prospective national parties calling on them to make this commitment. **We ask that the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Net Zero to celebrate everything we have done in this field, and request they visit the borough to highlight our innovative green projects.**~~
- To reaffirm its commitments, including revising the Sustainable South Tyneside Strategy to take decisive action to address climate change and to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, in line with national and international commitments to reach net-zero by 2050.
- To prioritise transparency in climate monitoring and reporting, including emissions data and progress towards achieving climate goals.
- To support the call for a Just Transition plan that ensures climate action and adaptation strategies are closely aligned with social outcomes, with a continued focus on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable members of our community.
- To commit to examining best practices in climate action and adaptation transparently, including the development of published climate strategies with SMART targets, and fostering effective partnerships with key stakeholders.
- To call upon local authorities and national leadership to prioritise climate action in their policy platforms and to push for funding to achieve climate and emissions targets.
- **We as a council are committed to supporting central Government in their efforts to devolve powers and make the transition to green energy a localised one. We call on our council leadership and our elected members to use every forum available to press the case for**

~~Statutory Duties and Powers, plus a Local Net Zero Delivery Board and Delivery Unit, to be put in place rapidly by the next government.~~

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Meling.

Councillor Smith noted that South Tyneside Council was one of only a small number of Local Authorities to declare a climate emergency on three levels, with Councillor Gibson adding that the Council was addressing many of the points in the original motion already.

Councillor Francis commented that it seemed unusual for the amendment to remove requests for funding.

A named vote was requested and taken on the amendment. The votes were cast as follows:

- For: 23 (Berkley, Carter, Clare, Dawes, P Dean, S Dean, Dixon, Foreman, Gibson, Keegan, Kilgour, Lamonte, K Maxwell, N Maxwell, McHugh, Meling, Porthouse, Proudlock, Smith, Strike, J Taylor, Traynor, Welsh)
- Against: 20 (Brenen, Brown, Coombes, Curtis, Davies, Foggon, Ford, Francis, Gynn, Hamilton, Herbert, Kennedy, Myers, Oliver, Owens-Palmer, K Roberts, T Roberts, Robertson, Wood, Yare)

The amendment became the substantive motion.

At this point in the meeting, the Mayor moved that as per Part D, Section 1, paragraph 7.1.1, a vote be taken to enable business to proceed over 3 hours since the commencement of the meeting. This was unanimously agreed.

Councillor Hamilton stressed the need for a full cost analysis to ensure that local infrastructure was able to cope with changes. She also highlighted the significant carbon footprint generated in production of EV batteries. Councillor Davies responded that EV batteries, in comparison to fossil fuels, would be net-neutral after four years.

A named vote was requested and taken on the amended motion. The votes were cast as follows:

- For: 26 (Berkley, Brown, Carter, Clare, Davies, Dawes, P Dean, S Dean, Dixon, Ford, Foreman, Gibson, Keegan, Kilgour, Lamonte, K Maxwell, N Maxwell, McHugh, Meling, Porthouse, Proudlock, Smith, Strike, J Taylor, Traynor, Welsh)
- Against: 13 (Brenen, Coombes, Curtis, Foggon, Hamilton, Herbert, Kennedy, Myers, Oliver, K Roberts, T Roberts, Robertson, Wood)
- Abstain: 4 (Francis, Gynn, Owens-Palmer, Yare)

The motion as amended was carried.

Councillors Foggon, Oliver and Robertson left the meeting.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Gibson.

Motion 2

Water Quality – Endorsement of the Findings of the LGA Coastal SIG's Coastal Water Quality Survey Report

In January 2022 South Tyneside Council was the first north-east local authority to declare an Ocean Recovery Declaration through the 'Motion For The Ocean'.

For many years we have seen the deterioration of our Ocean. This has led to a rise in public concern regarding sewage discharges, surface water run-off and the impact this has had on our communities. These include impacts on:

- Human health;
- Coastal habitat quality;
- Aquaculture/shellfish industries;
- Tourism

The Ocean Recovery Declaration focuses on minimising our impact on the Ocean at a local and national level, and South Tyneside Council have been working hard to collaboratively raise these concerns to those with responsibility for water quality.

The Local Government Coastal Special Interest Group (LGA Coastal SIG) carried out a Coastal Water Quality Survey Report and published its findings in February 2024.

The Council resolves to endorse its findings by:

Asking that the Leader of the Council and the Lead Member for Neighbourhoods and climate change to write to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs outlining South Tyneside Council's endorsement of the recommendations made in the Coastal Water Quality Survey Report commissioned by the LGA coastal SIG and to include within that letter an ask of Government that:

- Calls for an independent review of Water Companies without self monitoring.
- Calls for a dedicated Coastal Minister.
- Requests the presence of Environment Agency and Defra representatives at future LGA Coastal SIG meetings to help address the gaps in understanding of coastal water quality and responsibility for this.

- Calls for Environment Agency to be properly resourced to deal with increasing issues relating to coastal water quality.
- Requests that existing water quality testing be extended passed bathing season, the extension of testing to be carried out in all coastal waters and a review of the existing Pollution Risk Forecasting.

The Council also resolves that:

The Leader and the Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Elected Mayor of the North East, Kim McGuinness, and her cabinet, outlining South Tyneside Council's endorsement of the recommendations made in the Coastal Water Quality Survey Report commissioned by the LGA coastal SIG.

Signed Councillors: Gibson (proposer)
Carter (seconder)
Porthouse
Meling
McCabe
McHugh

The motion was seconded by Councillor Carter.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Gynn, with changes as highlighted in bold:

In January 2022 South Tyneside Council was the first north-east local authority to declare an Ocean Recovery Declaration through the 'Motion For The Ocean'.

For many years we have seen the deterioration of our Ocean. This has led to a rise in public concern regarding sewage discharges, surface water run-off and the impact this has had on our communities. These include impacts on:

- Human health;
- Coastal habitat quality;
- Aquaculture/shellfish industries;
- Tourism

The Ocean Recovery Declaration focuses on minimising our impact on the Ocean at a local and national level, and South Tyneside Council have been working hard to collaboratively raise these concerns to those with responsibility for water quality.

The health of our rivers and seas is deteriorating due to the failure of the Water Companies, as well as the pollution caused by our use of pesticides, herbicides and plastic.

The Local Government Coastal Special Interest Group (LGA Coastal SIG) carried out a Coastal Water Quality Survey Report and published its findings in February 2024.

The Council resolves to endorse its findings by:

Asking that the Leader of the Council and the Lead Member for Neighbourhoods and climate change to write to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs outlining South Tyneside Council's endorsement of the recommendations made in the Coastal Water Quality Survey Report commissioned by the LGA coastal SIG and to include within that letter an ask of Government that:

- Calls for an independent review of Water Companies without self monitoring.
- Calls for a dedicated Coastal Minister.
- Requests the presence of Environment Agency and Defra representatives at future LGA Coastal SIG meetings to help address the gaps in understanding of coastal water quality and responsibility for this.
- Calls for Environment Agency to be properly resourced to deal with increasing issues relating to coastal water quality.
- Requests that existing water quality testing be extended passed bathing season, the extension of testing to be carried out in all coastal waters and a review of the existing Pollution Risk Forecasting.
- **Call for the Water Companies to be brought into public ownership, to serve the people and the planet and not the shareholders.**
- **To ban the use of all herbicides and pesticides, in all environments other than farming, and to fully support farmers to transition to organic farming, which presently stands at 3% of farming land.**
- **To halt the production of any further single use plastic containers, where alternatives are already available on the market, and to continue this as new products become readily available in non-plastic forms.**

The Council also resolves that:

The Leader and the Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Elected Mayor of the North East, Kim McGuinness, and her cabinet, outlining South Tyneside Council's endorsement of the recommendations made in the Coastal Water Quality Survey Report commissioned by the LGA coastal SIG.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Curtis.

A show of hands vote was taken on the amendment.

The votes were as follows:

FOR: 10
AGAINST: 25
ABSTAIN: 4

The amendment was not carried.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Davies.

The amendment proposed to add the following to the original motion:

To write to the Secretary of State to call on the Government to fund and resource the rewilding of our coastal seas.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Ford.

Councillor Gibson offered reassurance that the Government was looking at every aspect of water quality and would invest in it appropriately.

Councillor Meling stated that 60% of councils were impacted by water companies discharging waste and this was simply unacceptable, particularly when the companies were self-regulated and money was being paid to shareholders. For these reasons, she was fully in support of steps taken by SIG to hold companies to account.

A show of hands vote was taken on the amendment.

The votes were as follows:

FOR: 17

AGAINST: 23

The amendment was not carried.

The original motion remained the substantive motion.

The original motion was unanimously agreed.

ANNEX 1 Does not form part of the Minutes of the Meeting.

QUESTIONS ARISING WITHIN THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL 25 JULY 2024

Item 2 – Minutes of 14 May 2024

Councillor Robertson asked for further clarification on the response provided in relation to instances of those who had been made bankrupt due to council tax debt.

Response:

Zero.

Item 4 – Community Safety Partnership Plan

Councillor Curtis sought further information on work being undertaken to tackle poverty in the Borough.

Response:

The Policy and Insight Team lead the Council's work around anti-poverty, engaging closely with partners through the multi-agency Poverty Group.

Further details on the anti-poverty work were available from the following sources:

- Local Government Information Unit article summarising our approach to the cost of living crisis (2023): [South Tyneside's cost of living intervention - LGiU](#)
- The South Tyneside Anti-Poverty Strategy agreed by Full Council in March 2024: [Anti-Poverty Strategy - South Tyneside Council](#)
- The next Anti-Poverty Summit is on Child Poverty, being held in October.

Item 11 – Questions under Procedure Rule 8

Mr David Munroe (member of the public) submitted the following question:

As the Council is always talking about its green credentials, will the Council support tenants by allowing them to install car electric charging points at their homes at the tenants own expense? Also, will the council support private companies installing roadside chargers at locations across the borough?

Response:

As with any alterations or additions to Council Houses, installation of charging points would require the prior written permission of the Council, which is considered on a case-by-case basis. EV infrastructure on private land could also require planning permission and we would advise where necessary. The Council would never unreasonably refuse consent or permission. However, the

Council may need to impose conditions and we would deal with those requests on an individual merits. Tenants can request the relevant application form to start the process via the following email address; connect2@southtynesidehomes.org.uk.

The Council is presently undergoing a fundamental upgrade and expansion of the public EV network on the adopted highway and many Council buildings. We are now well underway with completing Phase One of the renewal programme. This will replace old legacy units with modern, commercialised infrastructure. The programme is summarised within the article below. Over time we aim to install approximately 2,000 units over the life of the contract. <https://connectedkerb.com/stories-and-reports/update-on-ev-charging-infrastructure-for-south-tyneside-council-residents/>

Unfortunately, the Council will not be seeking to install, nor will we permit kerbside chargers on the public highway. This is because of the Highways Act of 1980 and the public liability due to trailing cables. Whilst we accept some Councils may be electing to accept this risk, they are few in number.