

Riverside Mayor's Listening Event Notes

12 February 2015

Present: Norma Redfearn, Cllrs Carole Burdis, Frank Lott, Bruce Pickard, Ray Glindon, Lesley Spillard, John Harrison, John Stirling, Wendy Lott and four residents.

Welcome

Cllr Carole Burdis welcomed the four residents attending, explained about the council's approach to community engagement, ran through the information stalls available this evening, and introduced the Elected Mayor and her Cabinet colleagues.

Open Questions

As there had not been any advance questions from Riverside residents the Mayor asked for questions from attendees.

One resident shared some information about local history regarding the Swan family. As no other statements or questions were raised, the Mayor asked the ward councillors to share news about the ward.

Cllr Frank Lott spoke about: joint working between the council and businesses on the Fish Quay to resolve parking issues; plans to begin building on the Smiths Dock site; progress regarding the proposed demolition of flats in Bamburgh and Helmsley Drives; a forthcoming tour by Mary Glindon MP of the refurbished Rudyerd and Bewick Courts; work by apprentices to regenerate empty shops (for example in Seymour Street) and turn them into homes; and a meeting with developers to discuss exciting plans for North Shields town centre.

Cllr John Stirling spoke about carbon saving from street lights; energy bill savings for residents joining the 'I chooser' initiative; biodiversity in the borough; support for wildlife corridors; and the installation of solar panels on council houses.

Cllr John Harrison then explained about: the introduction of environmental hit squads; staff from housing and environment working together, wardens being able to issue fixed penalty fines for dog fouling, plans to build more homes (including council and other affordable homes) in the borough; flood alleviation schemes, the re-opening of Tynemouth Crematorium, and consultation on the Local Plan.

Cllr Lesley Spillard explained about her social care portfolio, in particular: changes due to the Care Act, the challenge of managing budget reductions while maintaining service quality, and ensuring care homes provide good quality care.

Cllr Ray Glindon highlighted his role to ensure the local authority kept to its budget.

Cllr Carole Burdis spoke about her engagement portfolio, the success of the engagement summer programme, work to ensure safer communities, provision of information on engagement opportunities via the council's website, and engagement with young people.

The Elected Mayor stressed her commitment to working with residents as partners in making North Tyneside a better place.

A resident said that sports and leisure facilities are being used by more people, for example the number of people using the track at Churchill Playing Fields had increased fifteen fold.

A resident asked whether only housing would be built at Smiths Dock. Cllr Lott explained there would also be some local shops, but that they would not impact on shops in North Shields Town Centre.

The Elected Mayor said there would be a public exhibition on plans for North Shields town centre in the autumn. She then thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.