



**COUNCIL MEETING**

**13 October 2022**

**GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**QUESTION FROM MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC**

Mr Tony Dowling will ask the following question:

I speak on behalf of “Keep Our NHS Public North East”.

Further to the deeply flawed Health and Care Act 2022, you will be aware that “North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System” is now responsible for commissioning all healthcare for Gateshead from 1<sup>st</sup> July this year.

There are potentially a number of problematic areas associated with the new Integrated Care System, and some of these difficulties may be addressed and remedied locally through attention to the wording of the Constitution of the new “North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board”.

Issues that need to be clearly stated within the Constitution include:

- the ICS commitment to maintain a comprehensive health service, free at the point of need, and accessible to all residing in the area
- the need to exclude representatives from private sector organisations on any ICS board or committee; this issue is noted in the Constitution, but there is a “let-out” clause which allows private sector involvement
- a commitment that NHS providers are the default providers of health services
- vigorous scrutiny, transparency and accountability with all new contracts
- a commitment that anyone who needs emergency care while present in Gateshead will receive the necessary treatment, whether or not they are registered with a GP in the county
- a commitment that the Integrated Care Board will include a Councillor from each local authority; the current Constitution identifies one elected member to represent 14 local authorities covering a population of 3 million. Locally, three additional Council officers are identified for the Board, but these are not elected members. There also need to be representatives from the range of health professionals and patient groups. This presence will uphold local democracy and transparency
- a commitment to hold all meetings of Boards and Committees in public, making papers available, and welcoming questions from the public
- the requirement for the full assessment of health and care needs, and availability of social supports, prior to patients discharge from hospital
- the need for all NHS providers within the area to adhere to nationally agreed pay, terms and conditions, as negotiated with NHS staff Unions

I would be grateful if you would please outline what Gateshead Council is doing with regard to each of these issues when in contact with officers of the Integrated Care System, and please confirm the Council’s stance is to support the principle that the

NHS must be comprehensive, universal and free at the point of use and based on the clinical needs of patients – not on the new Integrated Care Boards' financial considerations.