

COUNTY COUNCIL

24 MARCH 2021

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Public Question from Dr Lawrence Welch, writing on behalf of "Keep Our NHS Public North East.

This question relates to the privatisation of our NHS. Durham County Council who, alongside the Durham CCGs, are jointly responsible for the local arm of the Integrated Care System. As CCGs are under instruction from NHS England, County Durham Councillors sitting on the "Health and Wellbeing Board" and the "Adults, Wellbeing and Health Scrutiny Committee" provide the only democratic accountability within the local ICS. We are aware of the ongoing support of individual Councillors for a publicly funded and publicly provided NHS, and we ask that you are on your guard against inadvertently colluding with the political decision to dismantle our NHS. What is Durham County Council doing to prevent the steady and insidious NHS privatisation process as described above?

Response) (provided by Cllr Lucy Hovvels, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Adult and Health Services).

Firstly can I thank Dr Welch for his question.

The Council through our Scrutiny Committees, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the LA7 is working with the NHS to influence the development of the Integrated Care System.

We have an excellent track record in County Durham of joint working with NHS partners. The Community Services Contract which brings together the Council and the Trust to care for some of our most vulnerable residents and our joint commissioning are practical examples of public services co-operating.

Cabinet on 16 March 2021 agreed to strengthen our local partnerships with the NHS to keep as much decision making as possible at a local place level so that we can promote the founding values of the NHS in any future commissioning

Question from Mr E Simpson

In the last 6 years, what percentage of new build, public, industrial, commercial, and domestic, have had renewable systems of electricity supply and /or heating systems been approved at the planning stages? These renewable systems being solar (PV or Thermal) panels, wind, air or ground source heat pumps and geothermal, as part of the new build, or within the curtilage of the site.

Response (provided by Cllr Carl Marshall, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development)

Firstly, I would like to thank Mr Simpson for the question.

A number of excellent examples of sustainable developments have been secured over recent years including Air Source Heat Pump heating at Wharton Park visitor centre, integrated Photo Voltaic Solar Panels at Citizens House, Consett and Photo Voltaic Solar Panels and Air Source Heat Pump heating at the Crimdon Dene Visitor Centre currently being built. Both of these systems provide renewable energy, reduce carbon footprint and provide lower energy costs.

Unfortunately, however as the legacy district local plans previously used in determining planning applications did not have policies relating to the use of renewable systems for electricity supply and /or heating systems, this is not something we have historically monitored.

However, the County Durham Plan recently adopted in October 2020 does include policies, which seek to achieve zero carbon buildings, including renewable and low carbon energy generation. This requires all major new non-residential development to achieve a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) minimum rating of 'very good'.

We are therefore seeking to ensure that all current and future planning applications comply with these policies to ensure that such developments comply with the Council's climate emergency policies.