

QUESTION 1:

Cllr Sweeney

The Leader used his recent column in The Sentinel (17 Feb 2015) to make the claim that "when Labour took control of the council in 2012, we found it in a terrible state, financially on the brink of bankruptcy with no clear plan to correct its path".

How does he explain the 2011/2012 Audit Commission report that praised the Council's arrangements to secure financial resilience, and will he confirm that the council was not at risk of bankruptcy?

Quote from Audit Commissions Report 2011/2012

Under Findings

"You are prioritising resources within tighter budgets and set out the vision, approach and detailed plans to reduce costs in line with corporate objectives. You have identified potential efficiencies by undertaking service reviews and have a clear and effective approach to reviewing services."

Under Financial resilience

"The Organisation has proper arrangements in place to secure financial resilience"

"The Organisation has robust systems and processes to manage effectively financial risks and opportunities and to secure a stable financial position that enables it to continue to operate for the future"

QUESTION 2:

Cllr Sweeney

The Leader has stated that the "people of Newcastle will be faced with increases on their council tax from both the Conservative-led county council and Conservative Police and Crime Commissioner, both at a 'referendum avoiding' 1.9 per cent." (The Sentinel, 17 Feb 2015)

Will the Leader withdraw his untrue claim that the Police Commissioner intends to raise the precept, and issue a public apology and correction, confirming that the police precept is frozen this year?

Cllr Loades

Question 3

Can the Portfolio holder inform Council of what action he is currently taking to resolve the current lack of a 5 year housing supply and when we can see a speedy resolution to this unacceptable situation ?