

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM TO COUNCIL

25 FEBRUARY 2015

1. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS AND COUNCIL TAX 2015/16

Submitted by: Executive Director (Resources and Support Services)

Portfolio: Finance and Resources

Wards(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

This report sets out the recommendations of Cabinet for the Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2015/16 and sets out the recommendations for setting the 2015/16 Council Tax.

Recommendations

That the Council approve the recommendations set out in Appendix 'A'.

1. Background

1.1 This report is the culmination of the 2015/16 budget process, which started before the current 2014/15 budget was set. The Cabinet and two meetings of the Finance, Resources and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee (FRAPS) plus a Scrutiny Café event have already considered the content of the 2015/16 Budget and the resultant Council Tax which is recommended. At its meeting on 4 February 2015 the Cabinet considered the comments from these meetings. After considering the various comments made the Cabinet recommend an unchanged Council Tax for this Council in 2015/16 of £176.93 (based on Band D), as set out in Appendix B.

2. General Fund Budget 2014/15 – Projected Out-turn

2.1 Monthly reports monitoring actual spending against budget have shown overall relatively small variances throughout the first ten months of the year.

2.2 Within the overall position there are a number of significant variances, as referred to in the Budget and Performance Monitoring report considered by Cabinet on 4 February. These are:

- a) The overtime budget is overspent as the changes required to deliver the 2014/15 savings target of £100,000 have only recently been agreed.
- b) Jubilee 2 is operating at a net overspend primarily due to income shortfall. This has got slightly worse due to the small pool closure for the repair to the floor lift mechanism.
- c) Kidsgrove Sports Centre is also operating at a net overspend due to income shortfall.

In addition to the above, costs incurred in relation to two planning appeals are likely to exceed the amount reported to Council on 16 July 2014 when virement of £112,000 was approved in order to deal with the resulting budget overspend.

There are also a number of favourable variances, the main ones being:

- a) Additional planning fee income in respect of major planning applications.
- b) Saving on Elections due to the European Elections being held and costs shared with Central Government.
- c) Employee costs in respect of a number of vacant posts and flexible retirements that have taken place across the Council.

- 2.3 Taking account of the above factors it appears likely that the outturn for 2014/15 will not differ significantly from the budget.
- 2.4 Resources provided within the revenue and capital budgets enabled a number of notable achievements to be accomplished so far in 2014/15. These are set out at Appendix G.

3. **Revenue Budget 2015/16**

- 3.1 Excluding levies for Town and Parish Councils the recommended Borough Council Tax for a 'Band D property' remains at £176.93, the same level as in 2014/15, based on a Borough council tax requirement of £6,235,370, as set out below.

	Estimated Expenditure
	£
Borough Council requirements –	
Total Net Expenditure	11,717,870
Less: External Support	<u>(6,143,220)</u>
	5,574,650
Less:	
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit 2014/15	
- Council Tax	(139,280)
- Business Rates	800,000
Borough Council Tax Requirement	<u>£6,235,370</u>

External Support comprises Formula Funding (£6,072,720); Council Tax Freeze Grant in respect of 2015/16 (£70,500)

Appendix 'B' sets out the budget summarised over services. Copies of detailed budgets are available on request.

In addition to the basic Council Tax the Council is required to levy additional charges in the following parishes. These are shown below:

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Rate of Council Tax (Band D)</u>
	£ p
Audley	17.50
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill	17.26
Chapel and Hill Chorlton	15.48
Keele	23.34
Kidsgrove	14.77
Loggerheads	21.30
Madeley	44.60
Maer	18.64
Silverdale	11.98
Whitmore	29.64

4. **Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budgets for 2015/16**

- 4.1 The Council's updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), as reported to Cabinet, indicated a forecast budget shortfall of £2.098m for 2015/16, with additional shortfalls of £1.160m for 2016/17, £0.558m for 2017/18, £0.692m for 2018/19 and £0.399m for 2019/20. The current anticipated shortfalls need to be addressed by a combination of measures such as efficiency savings, reductions in expenditure or income increases and consideration of the need for Council Tax increases. Work is ongoing by officers, working in conjunction with the Budget Review Group, to identify solutions as part of the Newcastle 2020 project. The Budget Review Group will continue to develop a strategy for bridging the 2016/17 gap and for eliminating the shortfalls in respect of the

remaining years up to 2019/20. The outcome of this work will be reported to Cabinet upon completion.

- 4.2 The 'gap' between expenditure and resources for 2015/16 of £2.098m arises from the factors set out in the table below:-

<u>CHANGES TO BASE BUDGET</u>	
<u>ADDITIONAL INCOME</u>	
	£'000
Fees and Charges	86
Additional New homes Bonus	152
TOTAL ADDITIONAL INCOME (A)	238
<u>ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE & LOSS OF INCOME</u>	
Reduction in Government Funding	1,104
Reduction in Revenue Support Grant re Business Rates Multiplier	16
Provision for Pay Awards	122
Incremental Pay Rises for Staff	29
Superannuation increase in employers contribution	190
Additional National Insurance re increases in Pay	10
Reduced Vacancy Factor allowance	77
Price Increases e.g. energy, fuel, rates, insurances, supplies & services	122
Loss of Investment Interest due to fewer capital receipts and investment rates	17
Adjustments re One-Off items in 2014/15, e.g. Council Tax Surplus	179
Reduction in Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support Admin Subsidy	80
Reduction in rental income re Asset Disposals	175
TOTAL ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE AND LOSS OF INCOME (B)	2,121
<u>OTHER ITEMS</u>	
<u>NEW PRESSURES</u>	
Bad Debts Provision	30
Insurance costs previously funded from insurance fund	165
New Legislation re Waste Income	20
TOTAL NEW PRESSURES (C)	215
NET INCREASE IN BASE BUDGET (B + C- A)	2,098

- 4.3 In addition the Council also has a medium term capital programme. Details of this can be found in Section 8 of this report and Appendix F.
- 4.4 Savings and funding strategies have been identified and agreed with managers as being feasible and sustainable in order to bridge the £2.098m "Gap". Some consist of savings in expenditure whilst others involve increasing income. These proposals total £2.098m and are summarised in the table below and set out in detail at Appendix C.

Category	Amount £'000	Comments
Procurement	106	Smarter procurement and reductions in the amount of supplies procured
Additional Income	141	Includes new sources of income and additional income arising from increased activity. This amount is additional to the amount included in the MTFS in respect of a general increase in fees and charges
Staffing Efficiencies	544	No redundancies are anticipated to arise from these proposals
Good Housekeeping Efficiencies Service Reductions, Changes in Base Budgets	302	Various savings arising from more efficient use of budgets
Alternative Sources of Finance / Other	1,005	Additional contribution to the revenue budget from New Homes Bonus funding. Additional Business Rates retained, savings from advanced payments of superannuation contributions, effect of forecast Council Tax Base increase, council tax freeze grant.
Total	2,098	

- 4.5 It is not proposed to increase the council tax for 2015/16. The Council would be permitted to increase tax by up to 2.0 per cent, above which it is required to conduct a referendum to determine the views of taxpayers. The government wish to see no increase in council tax for 2015/16 and are once more offering to pay a non-specific grant to those councils which do not increase their council tax for 2015/16. The grant is payable at a rate equivalent to a 1.0 per cent increase in the authority's 2014/15 basic amount of council tax multiplied by its council tax base. For Newcastle, this would result in a grant of around £70,000 being payable, which is included in the table of proposals to close the budget gap at paragraph 4.4 above. The grant will be payable separately for one year, 2015/16, and after that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) advise that it will be consolidated within the overall financial settlement. Two of the freeze grants (2011/12 and 2013/14) have already been consolidated within the overall financial settlement which means, in theory at least, that they will continue to be receivable indefinitely. Both of these grants relating to previous years' freezes are included in the base budget, so do not represent additional income. The 2012/13 grant was only payable for that one year and the 2014/15 grant is payable for two years. The table below summarises the position in relation to these freeze grants over the years they will be received.

Grant	Years in which grant is receivable					
	2011/12 £'000s	2012/13 £'000s	2013/14 £'000s	2014/15 £'000s	2015/16 £'000s	2016/17 £'000s
Re 2011/12 Freeze	173	173	173	173	173*	173*
Re 2012/13 Freeze	0	173	0	0	0	0
Re 2013/14 Freeze	0	0	70	70*	70*	70*
Re 2014/15 Freeze	0	0	0	70	70	0
Re 2015/16 Freeze	0	0	0	0	70	70**
Total Receivable in Year	173	346	243	313	383	313

* Receivable as part of overall financial settlement rather than as a separate grant

** DCLG have advised that this will continue to be receivable as part of the overall financial settlement

- 4.6 Noteworthy activities which are planned to achieve Council Plan outcomes in 2015/16 to be met from provision within the revenue or capital budgets are shown at Appendix H.
- 4.7 Bringing together all the above, the result is a balanced budget, as shown in the table below:

	£'000	Report Reference
Changes to Base Budget	2,098	4.2
Savings/Increased Income	(2,098)	4.4
BUDGET SHORTFALL ('GAP')	0	

4.8 The government have now notified the Council of the final amount of its formula grant for 2015/16. This is in line with the provisional settlement figure, which represents a 15.6% reduction. The government has given limited information about the amounts of funding for subsequent years. Indications are that there are likely to be further substantial reductions. The MTFS has assumed a 10 per cent reduction each year from 2016/17 onwards.

5 **Balances and Reserves**

5.1 The Council's Balances and Reserves Strategy for 2014/15 is that there should be a minimum General Fund balance of £1.2m and a minimum balance on the Contingency Reserve of £100,000. The Council currently holds these reserves.

5.2 A review of all the Council's Balances and Reserves together with a risk assessment has been carried out. Details of these are included in Appendices D and E.

5.3 The review and risk assessment indicate the following:

- Reserves are still adequate to meet normal levels of expenditure..
- The level of minimum balances required after considering the risk assessment remains at £1.3m.

5.4 Cabinet considered two reports concerning options in respect of the former Keele Golf Course site on 5 March 2014 and 23 July 2014. Both of these reports referred to the need for the Council, as the land owner, to carry out a master planning exercise in order to determine the most appropriate long term strategic solution for the land, working with other strategic landowners in the locality and taking into account the current local plan process. The July report resulted in the following resolution "(d) that the financial resources required as the Council's contribution to the master-planning exercise be sought in accordance with financial regulations". The cost was estimated at a figure in excess of £100,000, which will require the approval of Full Council. Subsequently, Cabinet, on 12 November, considered a report in relation to the Council's response to the "Call for Sites" made as part of the Joint Local Plan preparation process and approved the inclusion of the Keele site in a wider masterplanning exercise around that site and western/southern fringes of urban Newcastle. The cost was estimated as being at least £100,000, with other stakeholders being asked to contribute.

As is usual and required by council tax legislation, an estimate has been made of the current year outturn position in relation to the Council Tax Collection Fund. It is estimated that there will be a surplus of some £1,140,970 for 2014/15. The legislation requires an estimated surplus on the Collection Fund to be transferred to the major precepting authorities in the following year and included in their revenue budgets for that year, in proportion to their respective council tax levies. This council's share of the estimated surplus is £139,280. Presently, the Medium Term Financial Strategy does not include an amount in respect of a Collection Fund transfer in 2015/16. The transfer of £139,280 will, therefore, be additional income to the revenue account and will be available to fund Keele master-planning costs up to this amount.

It is proposed, therefore, that a budget of £139,280 be approved in respect of Keele master-planning costs to be funded from an earmarked reserve established by transferring an equivalent amount into it from the General Fund revenue account, being the estimated council tax surplus of £139,280 which will be credited to the revenue account in 2015/16.

5.5 Previous reports have drawn attention to the situation with regard to Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI), whereby the Council may be subject to clawback in respect of claims settled by the company

after they went into administration. Potentially the liability could amount to around £721,000. Current advice remains that authorities should set aside around 25% of their potential liability as a provision to meet this eventuality. Originally, an amount of £180,000 was set aside in such a provision (the MMI Provision). The Municipal Mutual Scheme Administrator made a levy of 15 per cent of the liability in excess of £50,000 in January 2014, which meant that a payment of £101,000 was payable. The payment was duly made and met from the MMI Provision, leaving a balance of £79,000 in the Provision, which is sufficient to meet an additional levy of just over 10%. This remains within the recommended set-aside parameter, i.e. 25 minus 15 (used) leaving 10 per cent.

- 5.5 Based on these minimum levels of reserves being sustained the Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) is of the opinion that the Revenue Budget is robust and that the Council's Revenue Reserves are adequate to support it based on the assumptions set out in this report.

6 **Consultation**

- 6.1 Extensive consultation was carried out with interested parties in respect of the 2013/14 and 2014/15 budgets, including a special edition of the "Reporter" magazine containing a questionnaire, which was also available on the council website, public meetings and use of the e-Panel. The results of these exercises were available to inform the 2015/16 budget process.

- 6.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the budget proposals have also been considered by the FRAPS at their meetings on 5 November 2014, 16 December 2014 and 21 January 2015. In addition members had the opportunity to raise issues and receive explanations concerning the proposed budget for 2015/16 at a Scrutiny Café event held on 13 January. Following the January FRAPS meeting, the Chair fed back the Committee's comments to the Cabinet at their meeting on 4 February 2015.

7. **Risks**

- 7.1 Appendix 'E' shows the risk assessment in relation to the 2015/16 General Fund Revenue Budget.

8. **Capital Programme 2014/15 - 2015/16**

- 8.1 The Newcastle Capital Investment Programme Report considered by Cabinet on 5 February 2014 (see 8.5 below) set out the essential capital investment needed over the four years 2015/16 to 2018/19. The capital expenditure proposed for 2015/16 reflects the needs identified in the report updated to take account of current priorities and resources expected to be available for funding purposes.

- 8.2 Attached at Appendix F is the updated capital programme 2014/15 to 2015/16 based on current commitments and agreed schemes plus a number of new schemes which are vital to ensure continued service delivery. New schemes total £5.227m. The remainder of items included in the Programme relate to continuing expenditure on current schemes, funding for which has already been approved. Particular points to note are:

- a) Consideration has been given to requirements for essential plant and equipment replacements, buildings repairs and maintenance and other work which will be needed over the next few years to enable services to be continued at acceptable levels or to safeguard income from commercial properties. The most urgently required items have been included in the proposed capital programme.
- b) The capital investment required to implement the new waste recycling service approved by Cabinet on 23 July 2014 has been included as follows:

	2015/16
	£m
New Vehicle Fleet	1.540

Sorting Equipment	0.275
Weighbridge and Bulking Shed Works	0.185
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Total	2.000
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In addition new recycling boxes will also be required at a cost of £0.495m which will need to be included in the 2016/17 capital programme.

- (c) The Housing Programme provides for the continuation of a number of existing activities, including disabled facilities grants which have provisionally been allocated a contribution of £654,000 from the Staffordshire Better Care Fund, together with a new item in respect of Loans to Vulnerable Households, i.e. small loans made available to households on low incomes to enable them to maintain their homes.
- (d) A sum of £0.015m has been included to progress some of the actions identified in the Council's Carbon Management plan.
- (e) A £0.015m provision has been made for the costs of dealing with problems arising from traveller encroachment on Council owned land.
- (f) Cabinet approved a second tranche of site disposals on 12 November 2014. Various fees associated with the disposal, amounting to £0.432m, were approved to be added to the capital programme and funded from capital receipts. This sum has been included in the programme at Appendix F, to be spent in 2015/16.
- (g) Cabinet on 14 January 2015 approved expenditure of £0.060m on safety works to the Midway Car Park. £0.045m is to be met from external funding with £0.015m required from the Council. This scheme has been included in the proposed programme.
- (h) One new scheme has been included in the proposed programme which is wholly funded from external contributions, i.e. Subway Improvement Programme funded from Section 106 Contributions.
- (i) In summary, expenditure of £5.564m shown in the proposed programme for 2015/16 at Appendix F comprises:

	£m
(a) New Schemes funded by the Council from Capital Receipts	3.305
(b) New Schemes funded from New Homes Bonus	0.545
(c) New Schemes wholly funded from external contributions	0.091
(d) New Schemes partly funded from external sources	0.699
(e) Fees re land sales approved by Cabinet 12 November 2014	0.432
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New Schemes shown in table below	5.072
(f) ICT Projects funded via the ICT Development Programme	0.155
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Total New Schemes	5.227
(g) Schemes brought forward from the original 2014/15 Programme	0.337
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Grand Total	5.564
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- Items (a) and (e) totalling £3.737m and part of (g) (£0.090m) are to be funded by capital receipts
- Funding for Item (g) has already been approved in February 2014 when the 2014/15 Capital programme was approved
- Item (f) will be funded from the ICT Development Fund

A summary of all of the new items included in the Programme and how they are proposed to be funded is set out in the table below:

	Funding
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Scheme	Cost	New Homes Bonus	Other External Funding	Capital Receipts
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Housing Programme				
Disabled Facilities Grants	894	240	654	
PSH/Emergency HHSRS Grants/Vulnerable Households	100	100		
Empty Homes	30	30		
Loans to Vulnerable Households	75	75		
Landlord Accreditation Scheme	40	40		
Replacement Vehicles and Equipment				
Vehicles Replacement	687	45		642
Waste Bins	100			100
Stock Condition Works				
Museum	15			15
Commercial Portfolio	117			117
Offices	23			23
Car Parks	70			70
Parks Pavilions	33			33
Knutton Lane Depot	20			20
Silverdale Community Centre	20			20
Public Railings Painting	50			50
Engineering Structures	100			100
Parks and Open Spaces				
Play Area Refurbishment	60			60
Railings/Structures Repairs	15			15
Other Projects				
New Waste Recycling Service	2,000			2,000
Cemetery Memorial Survey Works	10			10
Traveller Encroachment	15			15
Site Disposal Tranche 2 Fees	432			432
Midway Car Park Safety Works	60		45	15
Carbon Management Plan	15	15		
Subway Improvement Programme	91		91	
TOTAL	5,072	545	790	3,737

- 8.3 Continuation of the capital programme beyond 2015/16 is dependent upon the achievement of a programme of receipts from the disposal of assets. It is essential that sufficient capital receipts are generated from these asset sales to enable essential capital investment to take place.
- 8.4 The Council's overall capital strategy was most recently updated in February 2014. A further updated strategy, covering the period 2015 to 2019 is included elsewhere on your agenda for your consideration and approval.
- 8.5 Two key reports have been considered by Cabinet in relation to future capital investment needs. These are the Newcastle Capital Investment Programme (Cabinet 5 February 2014) and Funding the Council's Capital Investment Programme (Cabinet 15 October 2014). The first report set out the amount of capital investment required over the four year period 2015/16 to 2018/19 in order to maintain service continuity and to safeguard income from the commercial property portfolio. The second report set out options for funding the capital investment identified in the preceding report. It concluded that the only realistic option to meet investment needs is a systematic programme of surplus land disposal, which will also enable the Council to deliver its policy objective of bringing forward more affordable and social housing by the release of some of its land holdings. The alternative of borrowing to part fund the programme is seen to be a more expensive option owing to the cost of servicing the debt. Accordingly it was resolved: ***"That Cabinet agrees with the principle that the Council, as a first resort, will seek to fund its future known capital programme needs through the annual asset management planning process by the identification of land or property in its ownership that is capable of, and appropriate***

for disposal". It is important to note that the Cabinet has approved a revised Asset Management Strategy which demonstrates the Council's ability to fund its Capital Programme requirements for the next three financial years.

8.6 The Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance, which the Council has adopted, requires the calculation of a Prudential Indicator in relation to the capital programme. This is to demonstrate the incremental impact of capital investment decisions upon the council tax, in other words what the additional cost to the General Fund Revenue Account will be as a result of carrying out the projects contained in the proposed capital programme, compared to the situation which existed based on the programme approved at last year's council tax setting Council meeting. The Indicator shows that the incremental impact is estimated to be £3,685 (in a full year once the projects are complete and operational), which equates to a council tax levy of £0.10, using the 2015/16 council tax base for calculation purposes. This is based on £0.737m additional capital expenditure funded from existing Council resources (part is to be funded from additional asset sales of around £3m) and an assumed interest rate of 0.5 per cent. Provision has been made in the 2015/16 budget for the cost of funding the capital programme in terms of reduced interest as a result of using capital receipts and reserves arising from the profiled capital spend.

9. **Empty Home Discount Reduction**

9.1 Item I8 in Appendix C refers to a saving of £15k in respect of Empty Home Discount. In January 2013 Members resolved to exercise their discretion in relation to the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and accept recommendations to introduce a 100 per cent discount for 56 days and thereafter reducing to 0 per cent in place of the Class C exemption previously available on empty and unfurnished properties. To reduce this period to 28 days would generate a small increase in income whilst impacting on a relatively small number of Council Tax payers. The initial charge free period avoids a large number of small difficult to recover amounts being created in respect of small gaps of occupation when properties change owners/occupiers whilst the Council would look to exercise its discretion to maximise the potential additional income generation allowed by this legislation. Approval of recommendation (f) in Appendix A will give effect to this change.

10. **List of Appendices**

- A Recommendations
- B Revenue Budget 2015/16
- C Savings and Funding Strategies
- D Actual and Estimated Reserves at 31 March 2013 to 31 March 2015
- E Risk Assessment
- F Capital Programme 2014/15 to 2015/16, including financing of expenditure
- G Notable Achievements in 2014/15
- H Activities planned to achieve Council Plan outcomes in 2015/16

Schedule of detailed recommendations

The following recommendations set out the decisions needed for the Council to set its own budgets and Council Tax for 2015/16.

Recommendations

- (a) That the Revenue Budget for 2015/16 be approved, as set out in Appendix B.
- (b) That the Council Tax at Band 'D' be £176.93, unchanged from 2014/15.
- (c) That the Capital Programme to 2015/16 be approved as set out in Appendix F, together with the Prudential Indicator relating to the Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions on the Council Tax, as set out in paragraph 8.6.
- (d) That the minimum balances requirement be confirmed as £1,300,000, unchanged from a year ago.
- (e) That a budget of £139,280 be approved in respect of Keele master-planning costs to be funded from an earmarked reserve established by transferring an equivalent amount into it from the General Fund revenue account, being the estimated council tax surplus of £139,280 which will be credited to the revenue account in 2015/16.
- (f) That with respect to the discretion allowed by reforms to Council Tax legislation detailed within The Local Government Finance Act 2012 for charges in respect of Class C exemptions, that the current 100 per cent discount for 56 days be reduced to 28 days and thereafter this be reduced to 0 per cent, with an occupation period of at least 42 days required before a further 100% exemption can be applied.
- (g) That it be noted that at its meeting on the 15 January 2014 the Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2015/16:
- (i) 35,242 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, as its council tax base for the whole Council area for the year (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act"))
 - (ii) For dwellings in those parts of the Council's area to which a Parish precept relates as in the table below:
- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Kidsgrove | 6,387 |
| Loggerheads | 1,859 |
| Audley | 2,450 |
| Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill | 564 |
| Chapel and Hill Chorlton | 194 |
| Keele | 331 |
| Madeley | 1,413 |
| Maer | 253 |
| Silverdale | 1,410 |
| Whitmore | 803 |
- (h) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2015/16 (excluding Parish precepts) is £6,235,370.
- (i) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2015/16 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

- (i) £72,486,159 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
- (ii) £65,945,083 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act.
- (iii) £6,541,076 being the amount by which the aggregate at (i)(i) above exceeds the aggregate at (i)(ii) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
- (iv) £185.60 being the amount at i (iii) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (g (i) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- (v) £305,709 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act.
- (vi) £176.93 being the amount at (i) (iv) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (i) (v) above by item T (g (i) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item (Parish precept) relates.
- (vii) **Part of the Council's Area**

	£ p
Audley Parish Council	194.43
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	194.19
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	192.41
Keele Parish Council	200.27
Kidsgrove Town Council	191.70
Loggerheads Parish Council	198.23
Madeley Parish Council	221.53
Maer Parish Council	195.57
Silverdale Parish Council	188.91
Whitmore Parish Council	206.57

Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (i) (vi) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above, divided in each case by the amount at (g) (ii) above calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(viii)

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<u>Part of the Council's Area</u>	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Kidsgrove Town Council	127.80	149.10	170.40	191.70	234.30	276.89	319.50	383.40
Loggerheads Parish Council	132.15	154.18	176.20	198.23	242.28	286.33	330.38	396.46
Audley Parish Council	129.62	151.22	172.83	194.43	237.64	280.84	324.05	388.86
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	129.46	151.03	172.61	194.19	237.35	280.49	323.65	388.38
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	128.27	149.65	171.03	192.41	235.17	277.92	320.68	384.82
Keele Parish Council	133.51	155.76	178.02	200.27	244.78	289.27	333.78	400.54
Madeley Parish Council	147.68	172.30	196.91	221.53	270.76	319.98	369.21	443.06

Maer Parish Council	130.38	152.11	173.84	195.57	239.03	282.48	325.95	391.14
Whitmore Parish Council	137.71	160.66	183.62	206.57	252.48	298.37	344.28	413.14
Silverdale Parish Council	125.94	146.93	167.92	188.91	230.89	272.86	314.85	377.82
Other Parts of Borough Area	117.95	137.61	157.27	176.93	216.25	255.56	294.88	353.86

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (i)(vi) and (i)(vii) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (j) That it be noted that for the year 2015/16 the major precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:-

<u>Precepting Authority</u>	<u>Valuation Bands</u>							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Staffordshire County Council	698.19	814.55	930.91	1047.28	1280.01	1512.74	1745.47	2094.56
Staffordshire Fire Authority Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Staffordshire	45.97	53.64	61.30	68.96	84.28	99.61	114.93	137.92
	118.41	138.14	157.88	177.61	217.08	256.55	296.02	355.22

- (k) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (i) (viii) and (j) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2015/16 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

<u>Part of the Council's Area</u>	<u>Valuation Bands</u>							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Kidsgrove Town Council Loggerheads Parish Council	990.37	1155.43	1320.49	1485.55	1815.67	2145.79	2475.92	2971.10
Audley Parish Council	994.72	1160.51	1326.29	1492.08	1823.65	2155.23	2486.80	2984.16
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	992.19	1157.55	1322.92	1488.28	1819.01	2149.74	2480.47	2976.56
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	992.03	1157.36	1322.70	1488.04	1818.72	2149.39	2480.07	2976.08
Keele Parish Council	990.84	1155.98	1321.12	1486.26	1816.54	2146.82	2477.10	2972.52
Madeley Parish Council	996.08	1162.09	1328.11	1494.12	1826.15	2158.17	2490.20	2988.24
Maer Parish Council	1010.25	1178.63	1347.00	1515.38	1852.13	2188.88	2525.63	3030.76
Whitmore Parish Council	992.95	1158.44	1323.93	1489.42	1820.40	2151.38	2482.37	2978.84
Silverdale Parish Council	1000.28	1166.99	1333.71	1500.42	1833.85	2167.27	2500.70	3000.84
Other Parts of Borough Area	988.51	1153.26	1318.01	1482.76	1812.26	2141.76	2471.27	2965.52
	980.52	1143.94	1307.36	1470.78	1797.62	2124.46	2451.30	2941.56

Revenue Budget 2015/16**REVENUE ESTIMATES 2015/16****STATEMENT OF NET EXPENDITURE AND COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENTS**

Topic Area	2014/15 General Fund		2015/16 General Fund	
	Estimate 2014/15	Basic Band D Council Tax	Estimate 2015/16	Basic Band D Council Tax
	£	£ p	£	£ p
Administration Before Recharges to Services	7,105,850	203.66	7,357,290	208.76
Less Recharges to Services	(7,105,850)	(203.66)	(7,357,290)	(208.76)
Total Administration Net of Recharges	-	-	-	-
Holding Accs Before Recharges to Services	2,422,960	69.45	2,461,980	69.86
Less Recharges to Services	(2,422,960)	(69.45)	(2,461,980)	(69.86)
Total Holding Accs Net of Recharges	-	-	-	-
Central Services	4,301,860	123.30	3,440,410	97.62
Cultural Services	4,421,430	126.72	4,408,180	125.08
Environmental Services	6,307,890	180.79	6,664,780	189.11
Planning	1,719,520	49.28	1,729,380	49.07
Transport	(254,550)	(7.29)	(10,710)	(0.30)
Housing	2,087,190	59.82	1,217,070	34.53
Net Cost of Services	18,583,340	532.62	17,449,110	495.11
Pensions Liabilities Account - Interest Costs	(89,330)	(2.56)	(61,700)	(1.75)
Less Return on Assets	(553,070)	(15.85)	(315,030)	(8.94)
Interest and Investment Income	(193,000)	(5.53)	(43,450)	(1.23)
Net Operating Expenditure	17,747,940	508.68	17,028,930	483.19
Contribution to/(from) Revenue Reserves	99,300	2.85	(589,530)	(16.73)
Contribution to/(from) Capital Reserves	(3,104,470)	(88.98)	(2,759,950)	(78.31)
Minimum Revenue Provision	151,000	4.33	151,000	4.28
Amount to be met from Government Grant	14,893,770	426.88	13,830,450	392.43
Revenue Support Grant	(3,552,000)	(101.81)	(2,370,960)	(67.27)
Other Non-Specific Grants	(1,747,400)	(50.08)	(1,834,700)	(52.06)
Business Rates Retention Funding	(3,655,500)	(104.77)	(4,050,140)	(114.92)
Collection Fund Deficit/(Surplus)	234,270	6.71	660,720	18.75
Borough Council Tax Requirement	6,173,140	176.93	6,235,370	176.93
Staffs C.C. Precept		1,027.25		1,047.28
Fire Authority Precept		67.64		68.96
Police Authority Precept		177.61		177.61
Total Council Tax Requirement		1,449.43		1,470.78

The Council Tax Base used in the above table was fixed by the Cabinet at its meeting on 14 January 2015 at 35,242

Further Notes and a Glossary of Terms are shown on the following page.

NOTES

1. Central Services expenditure has decreased because the pension lump sum payment (as reported to Audit and Risk Committee on 17 November 2014) has been allocated over services in 2014/15.
2. Transport expenditure has increased because of additional impairment charges in respect of capital expenditure not enhancing asset values.
3. Housing expenditure has decreased because New Homes Bonus funding of REFCUS (Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute) schemes is now shown against the Housing service.
4. Investment Properties expenditure/income has increased/decreased because of impairment charges, increased staff time recharges in respect of disposals of surplus land and the loss of rental income in respect of Lancaster Buildings/Brunswick Street sales.
5. Investment income has decreased because of a reduction in finance lease interest resulting from the sale of "The Square".
6. Collection Fund Deficit/(Surplus) comprises a council tax fund surplus of £139k and an NNDR fund deficit of £800k. The NNDR deficit arises because the original estimated income for previous years was not achieved, mainly due to backdated appeals.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Impairment. A reduction in the value of a fixed asset below its carrying amount on the balance sheet. In this case, certain assets will have works of repair or improvement or other work to assets is planned to take place in 2015/16, which might be expected to result in an addition to the balance sheet carrying amount of the same amount as the expenditure incurred. However, it is likely that in fact the value will not be increased because the valuation principles employed do not recognize any increase in the real value of the assets. In such cases, the amount of non-value adding expenditure is classed as impairment and is written off as an impairment charge. These impairment charges are offset by a transfer from the Capital Adjustment Account in order to ensure that they do not count against the council tax.

REFCUS (Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute). Expenditure which does not result in the creation of a fixed asset and which is classified as capital for funding purposes but is chargeable to the Revenue Budget as revenue expenditure. Any grants or contributions towards such expenditure are also chargeable to the Revenue Budget. An appropriation is made to the Revenue Budget from the Capital Adjustment Account of the amount of net expenditure financed from capital resources in order to ensure that it does not count against the council tax.

Finance lease Under this type of lease, the organisation paying the lease is treated as if it owns the goods. It gains the profits that would come with ownership but it also suffers the losses. In this case, the leases concerned are of Council properties leased out and because, according to accounting rules, the lease is categorised as a finance lease the part of the lease payments received which represents interest payable is classed as interest income, rather than rental income.

APPENDIX 'C'

Ref.	Service Area	Description	£000's	% of Budget Line(s)	Detail
Procurement					
P1	Business Improvement and Partnerships	Grants and Third Sector Commissioning	23	9.7%	Reduction in budgetary requirement from collaboration with Staffordshire County Council regarding debt, benefit, and consumer information advice services
P2	Central Services	Land Charges Third Party Costs	8	16.7%	Reduction in fees payable to Staffordshire County Council for Highways searches
P3	Communications	Multi-Functional Devices	17	28.3%	Savings from negotiation of extension to existing contract (November to March) - further savings of £33,000 in 2016/17
P4	Communications	Printing and Publicity	10	10.0%	Savings generated from the centralisation of the Council's print and publicity budgets and the resulting challenges to purchasing
P5	Finance	Bank Contract	38	69.1%	Procurement savings resulting from tendering exercise for a new banking contract
P6	Leisure and Cultural	Jubilee 2 Maintenance	5	10.4%	Procurement savings resulting from tendering exercise for a new contract
P7	Recycling and Fleet	Tyres	5	11.9%	Procurement savings resulting from tendering exercise for a new contract
			106		
Income					
I1	Assets	Public Transport Departure Fees	8	25.0%	Re-alignment of budget to match actual income received
I2	Assets	Additional Rental Income from Civic Offices	25	7.1%	Additional rental income from Civic Offices re. SSOTP NHS
I3	Central Services	Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences	20	10.1%	To reflect actual income expected from cyclical payments of three year licence fees
I4	Operational Services	Bereavement Services Income	28	2.4%	Increase of fees above inflation
I5	Operational Services	Streetscene Income	10	66.7%	Additional income generated from new customers
I6	Planning	Planning Fees and Building Control Costs	10	3.4%	A net saving from increased planning applications offset by increased costs required to be budgeted for regarding Building Control
I7	Recycling and Fleet	Trade Waste	10	2.1%	Net increase in income receivable
I8	Revenues and Benefits	Empty Home Discount	15	**	Empty homes discount reduced to 28 days
I9	Revenues Benefits	Discretionary Rate Relief	15	**	Reduction in the additional discretionary rate relief granted by the Council
			141		

Ref.	Service Area	Description	£000's	% of Budget Line(s)	Detail
Staffing Related Efficiencies					
S1	Assets	Restructure of Service	20	4.4%	Additional savings from finalisation of restructure of the Assets Service
S2	Business Improvement and Partnerships	Reduced Hours	8	5.2%	Reduction in hours of Business Improvement Officer (Risk and Insurance)
S3	Central Services	Flexible Retirement	32	11.5%	Flexible retirement of Senior Administration Assistant/Mayor's Secretary and Licensing Officer
S4	Communications	Flexible Retirement	12	10.9%	Flexible retirement of Design and Print Team Leader
S5	Customer and ICT Services	Flexible Retirement	38	8.0%	Flexible retirement of Head of Service
S6	Customer and ICT Services	Reduced Hours	6	9.4%	Reduction in hours of Clerical Assistant post in the Creditors Section
S7	Environmental Health	Temporary Contract	12	16.0%	Replacement of full time Environmental Warden (Pest Control) post with seasonal post for 6 months per annum
S8	Finance	Flexible Retirement and Reduced Hours	46	13.3%	Flexible retirement of Principal Accountant/Clerical Assistant, and reduction in hours of Principal Accountant
S9	Finance	Car Leasing Scheme	7	5.5%	Car leases not renewed following expiry
S10	Housing and Regeneration	Flexible Retirement	28	18.3%	Flexible retirement of Economic Development Officer
S11	Human Resources	Recruitment Adverts and Other Items	7	17.5%	Reduction in budgetary requirement to advertise vacancies and for other items
S12	Human Resources	Staff Related Savings	50	*	Areas being considered are: Long Service Awards, Evening Meeting Allowances, Reduction in the Car Mileage Rates and the introduction of Staff Car Parking Charges
S13	Leisure and Cultural	Employee Hours at Kidsgrove Sports Centre	20	6.8%	Reduction in total employee hours at Kidsgrove Sports Centre
S14	Leisure and Cultural	Vacant Post	18	9.3%	Part replacement of General Manager post with marketing expertise
S15	Leisure and Cultural	Sports and Active Lifestyles Review	50	*	Total savings of £100,000 over 2015/16 and 2016/17 from review of staffing of the service
S16	Operational Services	Retirement	8	4.4%	Full retirement of Assistant Environmental Officer
S17	Operational Services	Temporary Contract	19	13.2%	Temporary contract of Landscape Technical Assistant to not be renewed (25% of full £26k cost re. Capital)
S18	Operational Services	Reduced Hours	5	9.3%	Reduction in hours of Community Warden
S19	Operational Services	Park Attendant Service	70	*	Total savings of £138,000 over 2015/16 and 2016/17 from review of service, management of the service and controllable supplies and services budgets
S20	Operational Services	Retirement	10	33.3%	Retirement of Public Convenience Attendant

Ref.	Service Area	Description	£000's	% of Budget Line(s)	Detail
S21	Operational Services	Bereavement Services Restructure	22	10.7%	Restructure within Bereavement Services including retirement and flexible retirement
S22	Operational Services	Flexible Retirement	17	9.4%	Flexible retirement of Projects Officer
S23	Planning	Planning Officer posts	15	2.7%	Saving from replacement of Senior Planning Officer post with Planning Officer post and employment of new starters on lower spinal column points than leavers
S24	Planning	Reduced Hours	5	3.0%	Reduction in hours of Secretary
S25	Resources and Support Services	Reduced Hours	3	2.3%	Reduction in hours of Secretary
S26	Revenues and Benefits	Reduced Hours	5	1.0%	Reduction in hours of Clerical Assistant (Revenues Billing)
S27	Revenues and Benefits	Flexible Retirement	11	0.2%	Flexible retirement of Revenues Assistant
			544		
Good Housekeeping/General Other Savings/Changes in Base Budgets					
G1	Assets	Engineers - Other Fees for Services	2	50.0%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for other fees for services
G2	Assets	Keele Golf Course	32	53.3%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for holding costs
G3	Business Improvement and Partnerships	Grants and Third Sector Commissioning	7	21.2%	Reduction in small and community chest grants
G4	Business Improvement and Partnerships	Other Fees for Services, Equipment, Seminars, Allowances	6	42.9%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for other fees for services, equipment, seminars and allowances
G5	Central Services	Elections	36	26.5%	Saving from Running Borough Elections Alongside Parliamentary Election in 2015/16 (one off saving).
G6	Communications	Jazz and Blues Festival	2	40.0%	Reduction in contribution to the Town Centre Partnership re. Jazz and Blues Festival, remainder of contribution to be removed in 2016/17
G7	Communications	Computer Hardware, Other Fees for Services, Overtime	3	50.0%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for computer hardware, other fees for services and overtime
G8	Communications	Print Room Joint Venture with Stoke-on-Trent City Council	8	100.0%	Removal of requirement to contribute to the equipment replacement fund following the introduction of a Print Room joint venture with Stoke-on-Trent City Council
G9	Customer and ICT Services	Review of the Customer Service Centres	10	2.1%	Review of the Guildhall and Kidsgrove Customer Service Centres (further £20,000 saving to be achieved in 2016/17)
G10	Customer and ICT Services	Reduction in Computer Support Services and Software Costs	13	2.6%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for computer support services and computer software costs
G11	Customer and ICT Services	Reduction in Staffordshire County Council Network Contract	4	30.8%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for Staffordshire County Council network charges
G12	Environmental Health	Pest Control Vehicle Lease, Fuel, Equipment	3	12.0%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for vehicle lease, fuel and equipment purchases

Ref.	Service Area	Description	£000's	% of Budget Line(s)	Detail
G13	Environmental Health	Travelling Allowances, Other Fees for Services, Equipment	10	18.2%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for travelling allowances, other fees for services and equipment
G14	Finance	Business Rates on Council Properties	42	4.7%	Reduction in business rates for which the Council is liable (Museum and Art Gallery, Crematorium and Central Depot)
G15	Housing and Regeneration	Christmas Lights	12	39.5%	Reduction in budget provision for Town Centre Christmas lights
G16	Housing and Regeneration	Town Centre Partnership Contribution	7	25.0%	Phased removal of contribution to the Town Centre Partnership (£7,500 in 2015/16 and £22,500 in 2016/17)
G17	Housing and Regeneration	Homelessness Projects	19	29.2%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for Homelessness projects
G18	Internal Audit	Other Fees for Services, Training, Equipment	2	25.0%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for other fees for services, training and equipment
G19	Leisure and Cultural	Community Centres	14	20.0%	Payment of business rates, electricity, water and trade waste collection by all occupied Community Centres and reduction in grant given by the Council
G20	Leisure and Cultural	Community Recreation Service Transport	10	100.0%	Non-renewal of lease agreement for transport in the service
G21	Leisure and Cultural	New Victoria Theatre Grant	10	10.2%	Phased reduction of grant given over a 5 year period
G22	Operational Services	Merrial Street Toilets	10	55.6%	Planned closure and subsequent reduction in controllable costs - utilities, overtime, maintenance, statutory inspections
G23	Operational Services	Landscape General Efficiencies	2	40.0%	Reductions in budgetary requirement for other fees for services, legal fees, travelling allowances and overtime
G24	Operational Services (Admin)	Employee Allowances, Equipment Purchase	5	13.5%	Reduction in budgetary requirement re. employee allowances and equipment purchase
G25	Recycling and Fleet	Waste Transfer Station	15	15.0%	Change in disposal legislation (Staffordshire County Council)
G26	Recycling and Fleet	Waste Strategy	5	6.7%	Equipment purchase (containers), one off saving for 2015/16
G27	Revenues and Benefits	Cash Collections and Training	8	14.3%	Reduction in budgetary requirement for cash collections and training
G28	Operational Services	Audley Public Toilet Cleaning	5	100.0%	Removal of Contribution
			302		

Ref.	Service Area	Description	£000's	% of Budget Line(s)	Detail
Alternative Sources of Finance/Other					
A1	Corporate	Business Rates Retention Scheme	300	7.9%	Increase in business rates retainable by the Council as per NNDR1 calculations
A2	Corporate	Invest to Save Savings	23	**	Savings following financing of invest to save schemes (e.g. Mayoral vehicle and weed control mechanical equipment)
A3	Corporate	Superannuation Lump Sum	61	6.1%	Discount for payment in advance of superannuation lump sums of £76k, less lost interest of £15k
A4	Corporate	Council Tax	70	1%	Council Tax Freeze Grant for 2015/16
A5	Corporate	Council Tax Base	65	1.1%	Increase in Council Tax Base (increase in residential properties from 34,890 to 35,255 at £176.93 per property)
A6	Corporate	New Homes Bonus contribution	421	60.6%	Further additional funding to be received in 2014/15 (split with capital) and change of split with capital
A7	Corporate	Grants to Parishes	15	16.1%	Reduction in the contribution given to Parish Councils per head for concurrent functions
A8	Corporate	Revenue Investment Fund	50	50.0%	Reduction of contribution to the Revenue Investment Fund to £50k per annum
			1,005		
Grand Total			2,098		
<p><i>* Unable to determine % at current time</i></p> <p><i>** Not applicable</i></p>					

Actual and Estimated Reserves at 31 March 2013 to 2015 (Before recommendations included in the report are actioned)

Reserve	Actual Balance at 31 March 2014	Estimated Net movement in 2014/15	Estimated Balance at 31 March 2015	Estimated Net movement in 2015/16	Estimated Balance at 31 March 2016	Purpose	Notes
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s		
General Fund Balance	1,200	-	1,200	-	1,200	Working balance to cover unforeseen adverse events affecting the budget	Approved minimum balance to be £1,200,000, as confirmed by risk assessment
Contingency Reserve	291	(108)	183	-	183	To meet cost of unforeseen contingencies or for any other purpose approved by the Council	Approved minimum balance is £100,000
Equipment Replacement Fund	349	31	380	73	453	To pay for the replacement of certain items of plant and equipment, eg cremators	
Renewals and Repairs Fund	55	(20)	35	(20)	15	To meet the cost of repairs and maintenance of Council owned buildings and structures	
ICT Development Fund	321	(119)	202	(114)	88	To meet the cost of new IT requirements	balance committed to finance capital expenditure
New Initiatives Fund	75	(22)	53	(22)	31	To fund new initiatives, both capital and revenue	Also earmarked to cover costs arising from loss of exempt VAT status (c£100,000 per annum, should this occur)
Budget Support Fund	333	(112)	221	(76)	145	To support the General Fund revenue budget or to meet the cost of specific items approved by the Council, including "Invest to Save" projects, funding to be repaid as savings occur.	
Revenue Investment Fund	89	(89)	-	-	-	To fund projects in accordance with corporate priorities	
Conservation and Heritage Fund	62	(14)	48	-	48	To provide grants to owners of historic buildings to maintain their repair	
Museum Purchases Fund	66	(5)	61	(5)	56	To purchase exhibits and to conserve and enhance the display of exhibits	
Maintenance Contributions	78	(15)	63	(15)	48		Sums are received from developers to pay for a period of maintenance costs following transfer of land to the Council
Standards Fund	15	(9)	6	-	6	To ensure the Council meets its responsibilities under the ethical and other standards frameworks	
Deposit Guarantee Reserve	32	2	34	2	36	To hold balances relating to rent guarantees	
New Homes Bonus Reserve	18	(65)	(47)	47	-	To hold New Homes Bonus grant payments pending use	
NNDR Reserve	1,353	146	1,499	(800)	699		Commitments: £500k re 2013/14 deficit; £300k re 2014/15 deficit

Risk Register**Project – Budget Forecast 2015/16 – Required Balances/Contingency Reserve**

Impact (I)	Likelihood (L)	Score	Risk rating
5 - catastrophic >£1m	5 - Frequent / very likely	16 - 25	Extreme Risk
4 - critical <£1m	4 - Probable	9 -15	High Risk
3 - serious <£250,000	3 - Possible	3 - 8	Moderate Risk
2 - Marginal <£50,000	2 - Remote Chance	1 - 2	Low Risk
1 - Negligible <£25,000	1 - Extremely Unlikely		

Note: All these risks relate to the following Business Objective: To set a balanced, affordable and achievable budget.

All of the risks fall into the “Finance” Category

Item No.	Risk	Potential Consequences	Risk Score I * L	Risk Rating	Specify Existing Control Measures	Final Score I * L	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Owner	Target Date
1	Increase in fees and charges does not result in higher income levels	Shortfall in income leading to overspends	3 x 4	High	Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances.	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
2	Income cannot be collected because of non-availability of service (e.g. through closure of facilities for repairs)	Shortfall in income leading to overspends	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances.	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
3	Income falls short of Budget because of general reduction in activity, eg because of economic recession	Shortfall in income leading to overspends	3 x 5	High	Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances.	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
4	Bad debts reduce the Council's income	Shortfall in income leading to overspends Need to top up Bad Debts Provision	3 x 4	High	The Council has a bad debts provision (£315k balance at 31/03/14). £30k contribution to provision included in 2015/16 budget.	3x 3	High	Increase monitoring of collection performance	Exec Dir Resources	N/a
5	Employee budgets – The	Vacancies do not occur	3 x 3	High	The budget assumes a vacancy	3 x 3	High	None	Exec	N/a

Item No.	Risk	Potential Consequences	Risk Score I * L	Risk Rating	Specify Existing Control Measures	Final Score I * L	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Owner	Target Date
	budget is discounted on the assumption there will be vacancies. The impact of 1% vacancy is about £100,000	leading to additional costs			factor of 2.0% with a view to reducing this in steps of 0.5% in each of the next 3 years. This is realistic compared with experience in previous years.				Mgt Team	
6	Employee Budgets - The 2015/16 employee pay settlement results in an increase higher than included in the budget.	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 1	Moderate	Balances sufficient to deal with any additional costs, plus reduced job security in economy. Pay offer accepted up to 31 March 2016.	3 x 1	Moderate	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
7	Problems with staff recruitment/retention result in significant use of agency/interim staff at extra cost or the payment of market supplements	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Situation subject to ongoing review.	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
8	Council becomes liable to pay compensation or legal fees or other unforeseen commitment arises.	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
9	Inflation relating to supplies and services exceeds the allowance in the budget.	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
10	Existing commitment(s) missed out of budget	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 2	Moderate	Budgets subject to checking at several levels. Preparation of standstill budget for comparison.	3 x 2	Moderate	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
11	Fall in interest rates reduces income to the Council.	Investment income targets not met	4 x 4	Extreme	Rates are very low now. A decrease would make only a relatively small difference. Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
12	Profile of capital spend differs adversely from that assumed in the investment interest calculation	Investment income targets not met	3 x 3	High	Capital Budgets have been realistically set. Due to low interest rates investment income is no longer significant.	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
13	Fuel costs increase by more than allowed for in budget.	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Realistic increases included in base budget.	2 x 3	Moderate	None	Exec Dir Op	N/a

Item No.	Risk	Potential Consequences	Risk Score I * L	Risk Rating	Specify Existing Control Measures	Final Score I * L	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Owner	Target Date
									Serv	
14	Energy costs increase by more than allowed for in budget.	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Realistic increases included in base budget.	2 x 3	Moderate	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
15	Unforeseen major repairs needed to Council properties.	Additional unbudgeted costs	4 x 3	High	Planned maintenance programme in place and stock condition survey.	3 x 2	Moderate	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
16	Insurances – unexpected increases in premiums.	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances	3 x 3	High	None	Chief Exec	N/a
17	Insurances - high level of excesses to be met by Council or uninsured losses	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances. Insurance Provision established.	3 x 3	High	Monitor level of Insurance Provision	Chief Exec	N/a
18	Government increase NI rates during 2015/16. An increase of 1% adds about £100,000 to the Council's costs	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Dir Resources	N/a
19	Loss of VAT Exempt Status	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	None	3 x 2	Moderate	Continue to monitor position regularly	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
20	Savings built into Budget are not realised	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Regular Budget Monitoring	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
21	New Legislation imposes extra costs but provides insufficient resources	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Contingency Reserve available. Included in calculation of prudent minimum balances.	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
22	Partnerships - expenses falling on Council as accountable body	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Monitor partnership activities and ensure carried out according to agreements.	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
23	Civil Emergency	Additional unbudgeted costs	5 x 2	High	Bellwin Scheme should meet 85% of cost	4 x 2	Moderate	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
24	Investment Counterparty (including own bank re current account, etc) fails to meet its financial commitments	Loss of interest due Ongoing loss of interest owing to loss of capital	4 x 3	High	Use of credit rating agencies Counterparty list based on minimum ratings with CDS overlay. Limits to investments with one	3 x 3	High	Frequent reviews of investment strategy	Exec Dir Resources	N/a

Item No.	Risk	Potential Consequences	Risk Score I * L	Risk Rating	Specify Existing Control Measures	Final Score I * L	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Owner	Target Date
					counterparty (£7m)					
25	Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) Clawback	Additional unbudgeted costs	4 x 4	Extreme	MMI Provision	4 x 3	High	Consider increasing amount of provision if reports from administrator indicate it to be necessary	Exec Dir Resources	N/a
26	Localised Council Tax Support Scheme is oversubscribed	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Local scheme	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Dir Resources	N/a
27	Data Protection breach resulting in fine	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Data Protection Policy Reminders to staff	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a
28	Failure of Banking Services provider	Frozen Funds Additional unbudgeted costs	5 x 3	High	Contingency Account Business Continuity Plan	2 x 3	Moderate	None	Exec Dir Resources	N/a
29	Members act against officer advice resulting in cost to the Council	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Agenda pre-meetings. Liaison with members	3 x 3	High	None	Exec Mgt Team	N/a

NEWCASTLE-U-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15 TO 2015/16

Scheme	Corporate Priorities				2014/15	2015/16	Total Exp	External Cont	Council Financing
					Est Exp	Est Exp			
Safer Communities					£	£	£	£	£
Parkhouse/Lymedale CCTV	a	b		d	15,000	0	15,000	0	15,000
CCTV Replacement Equipment	a	b			25,000	0	25,000	0	25,000
Midway Car Park Safety Works	a				0	60,000	60,000	45,000	15,000
Stock Condition Works - Engineering Structures	a				0	100,000	100,000	0	100,000
Totals	a	b	c	d	40,000	160,000	200,000	45,000	155,000

Scheme	Corporate Priorities				2014/15	2015/16	Total Exp	External Cont	Council Financing
					Est Exp	Est Exp			
Environment & Recycling					£	£	£	£	£
Pool Dam Valley Marshes Nature Reserve	a	b			0	47,000	47,000	47,000	0
Cemetery Memorial Safety Programme	a				23,000	0	23,000	0	23,000
Cemetery Memorial Survey Works	a				9,000	10,000	19,000	0	19,000
Carbon Management Plan	a				0	15,000	15,000	15,000	0
Traveller Encroachment	a				0	15,000	15,000	0	15,000
New Waste Recycling Service	a				0	2,000,000	2,000,000	0	2,000,000
Waste Bins	a				50,000	100,000	150,000	0	150,000
General Projects									
Asset Disposal Programme		b			16,000	432,000	448,000	0	448,000
General Contingency					85,300	0	85,300	0	85,300
Final Accounts & Retentions Various					5,800	0	5,800	0	5,800
Totals	a	b	c	d	189,100	2,619,000	2,808,100	62,000	2,746,100

Scheme	Corporate Priorities				2014/15	2015/16	Total Exp	External Cont	Council Financing
					Est Exp	Est Exp			
Culture & Leisure					£	£	£	£	£
Play Area Refurbishment	a		c		61,700	75,000	136,700	0	136,700
Wolstanton Marsh Improvements	a		c		53,100	0	53,100	53,100	0
Silverdale Community Facilities	a		c		13,400	0	13,400	13,400	0
Footpath Repairs	a		c		17,800	50,000	67,800	0	67,800
Railings/Structures Repairs	a		c		27,200	25,000	52,200	0	52,200
Brampton Park	a		c		0	100,000	100,000	85,000	15,000
Castle Motte Heritage Works	a				6,400	0	6,400	6,400	0
Neighbourhood Park The Wammy	a		c		9,300	0	9,300	9,300	0
Clayton Sports Centre - Match Funding	a		c		207,000	0	207,000	207,000	0
Thisleberry Parkway Phase 1	a		c		85,700	0	85,700	85,700	0
Stock Condition Works -								0	
Museum			c		30,000	15,000	45,000	0	45,000
Clayton Community Centre			c		15,000	0	15,000	0	15,000
Knutton Community Centre			c		30,000	0	30,000	0	30,000
Red Street Community Centre			c		75,000	0	75,000	0	75,000
Parks Pavilions	a		c		0	33,000	33,000	0	33,000
Silverdale Community Centre			c		0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000
Public Railings Painting	a				0	50,000	50,000	0	50,000
Totals	a	b	c	d	631,600	368,000	999,600	459,900	539,700

Scheme	Corporate Priorities				2014/15 Est Exp	2015/16 Est Exp	Total Exp	External Cont	Council Financing
					£	£	£	£	£
Operational Equipment/Buildings/ICT Development Fund									
ICT PC Replacements	a		d		30,200	10,000	40,200	0	40,200
ICT Replacement Servers	a		d		5,500	0	5,500	0	5,500
Customer Relationship Management			d		55,100	0	55,100	0	55,100
ICT Projects			d		125,000	145,000	270,000	0	270,000
Vehicles	a		d		577,000	687,000	1,264,000	45,000	1,219,000
Stock Condition Works -									
Civic Offices			d		102,300	3,000	105,300	0	105,300
Guildhall			d		0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000
Knutton Lane Depot			d		0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000
Totals	a	b	c	d	895,100	885,000	1,780,100	45,000	1,735,100

Scheme	Corporate Priorities				2014/15 Est Exp	2015/16 Est Exp	Total Exp	External Cont	Council Financing
					£	£	£	£	£
Regeneration, Planning & Town Centres Development									
Empty Homes	a		c		20,000	30,000	50,000	50,000	0
PSH/Emergency HHSRS Grants/Vulnerable H	a		c		80,000	100,000	180,000	180,000	0
Energy Advice Service	a		c		80,000	0	80,000	80,000	0
Home Improvement Agency	a		c		13,000	0	13,000	13,000	0
Landlord Accreditation Scheme	a		c		32,000	40,000	72,000	72,000	0
Loans to Vulnerable Households	a		c		0	75,000	75,000	75,000	0
Disabled Facilities Grants	a		c		1,073,000	894,000	1,967,000	1,967,000	0
Newcastle Town Centre Partnership	a	b		d	6,100	0	6,100	3,100	3,000
Newcastle Town Centre Works	a	b		d	324,700	0	324,700	0	324,700
Choice Based Lettings			c		27,900	0	27,900	27,900	0
Madeley Extracare Contribution		b	c		0	115,000	115,000	115,000	0
Midway MSCP Repair Works	a				24,800	0	24,800	0	24,800
Ryecroft Development		b			90,000	0	90,000	67,500	22,500
Ryecroft Site Clearance Costs (net)		b			45,000	0	45,000	0	45,000
S106 Expenses Lowlands Road		b			181,200	0	181,200	181,200	0
Strategic Investment Framework		b			12,800	0	12,800	0	12,800
Stock Condition Works -									
Car Parks	a				20,000	70,000	90,000	0	90,000
Commercial Portfolio		b			40,000	117,000	157,000	0	157,000
Subway Improvement Programme	a				0	91,000	91,000	91,000	0
Totals	a	b	c	d	2,070,500	1,532,000	3,602,500	2,922,700	679,800
GRAND TOTAL	a	b	c	d	3,826,300	5,564,000	9,390,300	3,534,600	5,855,700

Notes -

Corporate & Sustainable Communities Priorities -

a Clean, Safe & Sustainable Borough,

b Borough of Opportunity

c A Healthy & Active Community

d A Co-operative Council delivering High-Quality Community Driven Services

Sources of Funding	2014/15 Est Exp	2015/16 Est Exp	Total Exp
	£	£	£
Other Revenue Funds	160,700	155,000	315,700
Capital Receipts	1,713,000	3,827,000	5,540,000
External Grants/Contributions	1,952,600	1,582,000	3,534,600
Capital Programme	3,826,300	5,564,000	9,390,300

Notable Achievements in 2014/15

A Co-operative Council which delivers high-quality, community driven services

- a) The Council's new Customer Relationship Management system has improved the delivery of more than a hundred Council services.
- b) Work is underway to increase the number of services available from the Council's website – allowing customers to request services where ever and whenever they need them.
- c) The new financial management system has allowed services to review their financial management processes and take advantage of many new facilities not available from the old system.
- d) Implementation of the Newcastle Housing Advice contract with Midland Heart including the establishment of a new office and on-line housing register.
- e) Contract for cleaning services awarded delivering 'Living Wage' rate.
- f) The innovative Shared Apprenticeship scheme looked at new ways of working with partners and seeking government funding to increase the number of employment opportunities for young people. This has been very successful and to date there has been eleven apprentices with a 100% retention rate last year and a further six started in the autumn. The scheme enables the young people to gain valuable work experience and a meaningful qualification.
- g) Collaborative procurement opportunities identified with neighbouring authorities.
- h) Recent switch to the way the Council procures its energy to try and deliver further ongoing savings.
- i) Restructure of the Recycling and Waste Service as the first stage of the new service.
- j) The Operations Service gained the Gold Standard award in Britain in Bloom for 13th year running and also Green Flag Awards for eleven of its parks and green spaces.
- k) Bereavement Services gained the Gold standard in the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved for the 11th year running, and continue to progress with the Memorial Safety Inspections in the borough's cemeteries. Also a new, more efficient grounds maintenance contract for cemeteries and crematorium was let.
- l) Public Toilets in the town achieved platinum, gold and silver standard awards.
- m) Reviewed overtime working in Streetscene and implemented new 5 over 7 weekend working arrangements to save money.
- n) Progress with consolidation of ICT software and hardware has continued and this year resulted in longer term savings of over £80,000 with no detriment to services.
- o) A successful trial of new tablet technology was undertaken by Members which if agreed, could be rolled out as early as Spring 2015.
- p) The Council's continued compliance with the Public Service Network (PSN) code of connection was confirmed in August for a further year whilst many neighbouring authorities struggled to meet the more stringent requirements.
- q) The roll out of Windows 7 and Office 2010 was completed on time and has introduced many new benefits for users.
- r) A new ICT strategy is set to be approved by Cabinet in December which focuses on supporting the needs of the Council in delivering its Council Plan and a wider transformation of services.
- s) Customer Services has received the Customer Service Excellence award for the fourth consecutive year.
- t) Two major customer services policies have been reviewed and revised to include best practice and latest legal guidelines. These are the Customer Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy and the Customer Case Management Policy. A new Case Management Policy for Councillors has been introduced which provides guidance for councillors in dealing with unreasonable behaviour or actions by members of the public when undertaking Council work.
- u) Achievement of the Payment Card Industry standards for all Council owned financial devices - avoiding monetary penalties.
- v) Full relicensing of the Council's Microsoft software base within existing budget

A Clean, Safe and Sustainable Borough

- a) Inspected 225 homes with major health and safety hazards and achieved remediation of the hazards making the homes safe to occupy.
- b) Residents have recycled 500 tonnages more of garden waste than at the same time last year.
- c) Local Environment Quality (litter, detritus, graffiti and flyposting) scores continue to be good and are ahead of target at present.
- d) Confirmation of Locality Deal Funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) of £110,635 for 2014/15. The Newcastle Partnership has used some of the funding to 'top up' existing Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) services, create Early Intervention domestic abuse services and undertake Domestic Violence (DV) campaigning.
- e) Successful Partnership approach to ASB enforcement – using the hub and case conferencing model with an overall reduction of reported ASB year to date of 21%. The 'Community Trigger' is also in place in response to the new legislation with training co-ordinated and cascaded to partners.
- f) Range of innovative Partnership projects delivered via external funding opportunities to prevent ASB in the communities.
- g) A Child to Parent violence project has been launched as a pilot and also a project with partners in North Staffordshire using external funding.
- h) Continued Partnership working with Dependent Drinkers case conferencing to ensure appropriate support and enforcement activity is co-ordinated and the Responsible Bodies Group and Town Centre Action Group contributing to the delivery of alcohol harm reduction actions.
- i) Delivery of a range of alcohol awareness campaigns e.g. World Cup and preparation for Alcohol Awareness week, seeking to reduce incidents of alcohol related violent crime.
- j) Launch of Street Chaplains and First Aid Triage in Newcastle Town Centre.
- k) The Newcastle Partnership has achieved the Purple Flag award –officially launched in November.

A Borough of Opportunity

- a) Undertook a Peer Review of the Planning Service and established an Action Plan to address all of the Review team's recommendations.
- b) Begun preparation of a new joint Local Plan (with the City Council) including the consultation on a draft Statement of Community involvement and the commissioning of key elements of the evidence base for the Plan.
- c) Worked with partners on the preparation and implementation of a Year 3 Action Plan arising from the approved Economic Development Strategy for the Borough.
- d) Prepared a revised Asset Management Strategy to reflect, amongst other things, the Council's agreed objective of funding the Capital Programme from the disposal of land or property for which there is no overriding strategic, operational or financial reason for retention.
- e) Newcastle Town Centre Partnership has delivered a wide range of activities in line with their business plan; this has included the Jazz and Blues Festival, Lymelight Musical Festival, Global Groove, The Homecoming new circus event which was supported by a successful Arts Council bid and a weekend of activities around the Christmas Lights switch on. Working in partnership, support has been given with parking free for major events, and after 3pm for the Christmas period. A new customer loyalty scheme has been launched with the Lymecard.
- f) Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership has established a membership scheme and is launching a website. They have developed the GO Kidsgrove brand and delivered Christmas, Easter and Halloween events linking to local businesses.
- g) Another successful Business Boost competition and awards event was held at the Keele Sustainability Hub, expanded this year to include a town centre customer excellence award.
- h) In the first six months of the year a total of 29 affordable housing units were provided. Partnership working continues with registered providers and the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver new affordable housing.
- i) Ryecroft subway refurbishment completed with modern colourful artwork and completion of Bridge Street subway with heritage murals.
- j) Completion of the Town Centre Public Realm project with the successful pedestrianisation of Hassell Street and the delivery of new market stalls.

- k) Successful letting of the offices on the upper floor of Lancaster Building which has created new jobs and an additional revenue stream for the Council.
- l) In view of the current economic climate, maintaining the vacancy rates in respect of the commercial portfolio at 8.5%.
- m) Securing of purchasers in respect of the Square, High Street and premises in Hassell Street and Brunswick Street, Newcastle.
- n) Demolition of the former Sainsbury's store and multi storey car park completed within timescale and budget with no health and safety issues and few neighbour complaints.
- o) Facilitation of the provision of the Winter Wonderland on the former Sainsbury's supermarket site.
- p) Worked with Staffordshire County Council to identify a preferred development partner to bring forward a commercially viable retail-led redevelopment of the Ryecroft site and continued working with the County Council to build the business case for the potential reprovision of the Council offices in order to facilitate the scheme.
- q) Support provided for Arch North staffs to operate a shared housing scheme to help single homeless people affected by the welfare reform.
- r) Financial assistance provided to 90 disabled residents to assist with adaptations to their home.
- s) Developed a private landlord accreditation scheme to recognise good quality private sector accommodation.
- t) Worked with Staffordshire County Council and the district councils in Staffordshire to launch a County-wide Home Improvement Agency which assists vulnerable householders to continue to live independently at home.
- u) Carried out pro-active inspections of – private sector shared housing (HMO's) to ensure good quality housing standards are achieved and maintained.

A Healthy and Active Community

- a) A total of 2691 volunteer hours were given from volunteer groups and individuals in the first six months of the year to care for the local green spaces and neighbourhoods through the delivery of the Community Engagement Framework.
- b) Held the second annual "Communities Day" in June where 33 groups participated in a range of community events.
- c) Expanded the "Planting Pledge" and "Litter Pledge" initiatives where 24 schools and businesses signed up to improve their local environment.
- d) Received approximately £38,000 for funding from the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) for support with developing the Council's new Recycling and Waste Collection Service.
- e) The new Allotments Strategy for the Borough was developed in consultation with stakeholders.
- f) Park Road Allotments was successfully transferred into community management in partnership with Silverdale Parish Council.
- g) Playing Pitch Strategy and Kidsgrove Sports Centre Feasibility Study completed and significant progress of the community centre review.
- h) National Indoor Climbing Award Scheme (NICAS) accreditation gained at Jubilee2.
- i) Investment of £75,000 in Red Street Community Centre to provide modern community centre facilities and redecoration of Ramsey Road Community Centre to facilitate the leasing to a third party.
- j) The museum has worked in partnership with Aspire Housing on a £22,000 project to create a First World War memorial sculpture on Brampton Park and was unveiled on Nov 11. Also a £9,200 grant was received to develop an exhibition entitled Newcastle Remembers which has been on show at the museum and elements of which will tour the borough over the next five years.
- k) Developed the museum volunteer programme and now have 14 volunteers with distinct roles to add value to the service's work.
- l) Grant received from the West Midlands Museum Development Officers for a rebranding project for the museum and park to assist with marketing and raising awareness of the Brampton.

Activities planned to achieve Council Plan outcomes in 2015/16**A Co-operative Council which delivers high-quality, community driven services**

- a) Reviews and implementation of new strategies and policies over a wide range of services.
- b) Replacement of the Council's website to focus on less content that is more accessible and of greater importance.
- c) Make a significant drive towards online delivery of services through the Customer Journey programme.
- d) Implement the ICT Strategy and look at how technology can equip staff with the tools they need to become more efficient, delivering services in more flexible, innovative ways.
- e) Continue to run the ICT Consolidation programme and identify opportunities to remove or reduce expensive applications.
- f) Redesign services to remove manual intervention wherever possible and improve public participation in the business of the Council.
- g) Implement the new Customer Standards and Access Strategy across all front line services alongside the ICT Strategy to underpin the 'digital by default' agenda and drive channel shift.
- h) Continue to develop the Community Engagement and Participation Framework to encourage volunteer groups to care for their green spaces and neighbourhoods and the Pledge initiatives with schools and businesses.
- i) Further roll out of actions linked to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with PM Training.
- j) Embedding of Social Value in future procurements.
- k) Introduction of new contract procedural rules to replace Council Standing Orders.
- l) Increased reporting of contract spend and opportunities linked to the LA Transparency Code 2014.
- m) Launch and implementation of the Bravo e-tendering platform.
- n) Greater collaboration between partnership members around commissioning.
- o) Rolling out of Workforce Development plans for all service areas.
- p) Further development of locality working.

A Clean, Safe and Sustainable Borough

- a) Support the operation of the Energy Advice Service to enable residents to access funding and support to implement energy efficiency measures in their homes.
- b) Participate in Britain in Bloom and the Green Flag Award scheme and retain the gold standard for the Charter for the Bereaved.
- c) Seek to continue good performance in Local Environmental Quality.
- d) Commence delivery of the new Allotments Strategy action plan and review of the Green Space Strategy.
- e) Moving forward with developing the revised Recycling and Waste Service, and will be based on providing residents with a weekly recycling service provided directly by Council collection staff.
- f) Launch of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure.
- g) Delivery of Local Police and Crime Plan 2014-17.
- h) Safety Works carried out to the Midway Multi-Storey Car Park.
- i) To implement further measures to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's assets and operational estate.

A Borough of Opportunity

- a) To proceed with the implementation of the planned next stages of the Local Plan.
- b) To jointly commission a Master Plan in relation to the land to the south and west of urban Newcastle including the former Keele Golf Course.
- c) Continued promotion of the Accredited Landlord Scheme to support good landlords and active enforcement to ensure landlords comply with minimum standards.
- d) Launch a loan scheme to enable low income owner occupiers to repair their homes to a decent standard.

- e) Work with the identified preferred development partner to prepare a commercially viable redevelopment scheme of the Ryecroft site for major new retail-led, mixed-use development, including car parking and to complete the business case in respect of the re-provision of the Council's offices in order to enable members to consider the desirability and affordability of proceeding with these interdependent projects.
- f) Continue to work with the Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to secure European and other external funding for the Borough to improve the economic prospects of the Borough.
- g) Implement the Asset Management Strategy to bring forward surplus sites for disposal.
- h) Undertake remedial work and decoration of the exterior of the museum and refurbishment and re-roofing of Clayton Sports Centre and Croft Road industrial units.

A Healthy and Active Community

- a) Support Newcastle Town Centre Partnership with the development of a Business Improvement District and continued support for the implementation of the Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership.
- b) Work with partner agencies to ensure that the needs of vulnerable disabled residents continue to be recognised with the Better Care Fund, to ensure that adaptations can be delivered effectively
- c) Continue to seek the improvement of private sector homes removing hazards to health as necessary and appropriate.
- d) Deliver improvement schemes at Wolstanton Marsh and Cotswold Avenue children's playgrounds and an externally funded improvement scheme at Thistleberry Parkway.
- e) The museum and other partners, for example the Town Centre Partnership, Newcastle Library, Newcastle Civic Society will develop a project around commemorating and celebrating Philip Astley, inventor of the modern circus who was born in Newcastle.
- f) A new gallery will be developed at the museum in partnership with St. Giles Church, working title 'Newcastle People' as part of a grant awarded to the church for heritage projects. A new Newcastle History App will be developed as part of the project.
- g) A First World War exhibition, 'Resonance' by artist Steve Dixon, based on museum collections around the county will be showing at the museum in September to November 2015. This exhibition is funded through a joint bid to Arts Council England by the Staffordshire Museums Consortium.
- h) Working towards accreditation for quality, safety and management for Jubilee2.
- i) Progress the development of the preferred option for Kidsgrove Sports Centre.