

**STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL TO FULL COUNCIL – 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015**

**Submitted by:** Councillor Elizabeth Shenton

**Portfolio:** All

**Wards affected:** All

**Purpose of the Report**

To provide an update to Members on the activities and decisions of Cabinet together with the Forward Plan.

**Recommendation**

**That the statement of the Leader of the Council be received and noted.**

**Reasons**

To update Council Members on the activities and decisions of the Cabinet and to allow questions and comments on the Statement to the relevant Portfolio Holders.

1. **Cabinet Meetings**

Cabinet has met once since the last meeting of Full Council, in September 2015. Below is a summary of actions and decisions taken, along with a link to the Forward Plan. (For further background to the Cabinet's decisions please refer to the actual published Cabinet agenda and Minutes on the website).

2. **Medium Term Financial Strategy**

Consideration was given to a report providing background on the financial strategy for the Council over the next 5 years in light of the national and local financial situation. Cabinet approved the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2016/17 to 2020/21.

3. **Financial and Performance Management Report**

Cabinet noted the Financial and Performance Reports for the second quarter 2015/16.

4. **Asset Disposals**

Cabinet approved the disposal of land at Knype Way, Bradwell, subject to securing outline planning permission. Cabinet also considered a report on land at Sheldon Grove, Chesterton. Cabinet agreed to the principle of a partial disposal of this piece of land subject to several conditions including retaining a significant amount of accessible public open space secured for the community in perpetuity by a covenant.

5. **Safeguarding Children & Adults**

A report was submitted to Cabinet reaffirming the Borough Council's role in safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse. Cabinet approved the policy and the accompanying procedure for introduction and delivery in the Borough.

6. **Planning Peer Review**

Cabinet noted the progress made in implementing the proposals previously agreed in July 2015.

7. **Bill Payment Services Contract**

A report was submitted to Cabinet seeking approval to enter into a contract for the Council's bill payment contract. Cabinet agreed to award the 5-year contract to allpay Limited.

8. **Applications for Discretionary Rate Relief**

A report was submitted to Cabinet to consider the granting of Discretionary Rate Relief in accordance with powers contained within the Local Govt. Finance Act 1988. The recommendations contained in the appendix to the report were agreed.

9. **Update on the Future of Kidsgrove Sports Centre**

A report was submitted to Cabinet providing an updated position statement on options available in respect of the future of Kidsgrove Sports Centre. Cabinet agreed that a Cabinet Panel be established to work on the replacement facility scheme. It was also agreed that detailed discussions would be entered into with Penda Partnership to establish a business case for the development of a replacement swimming pool, fitness centre and studio. Cabinet also agreed to extend the current agreement with the school and County Council for the management of the existing Kidsgrove Sports Centre.

10. **Nothern Gateway Development Zone**

A report was submitted to Cabinet detailing the recent concordat between the local Enterprise Partnerships of Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire and Cheshire & Warrington. Cabinet agreed that the Leader, relevant Portfolio Holders and officers engage with the emerging Northern gateway Development Zone initiative and the potential economic partnership that may arise.

11. **Implementation of New Housing Legislation**

Cabinet received a report on the new housing legislation in respect of the Redress Scheme and smoke/carbon monoxide alarms. Cabinet agreed that Housing Enforcement Policy would be revised to include the new legislation.

12. **Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme**

A report was submitted to Cabinet in respect of the proposals to work in partnership with the County Council to deliver the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. Cabinet agreed the proposals within the report and resolved that the Borough Council accept 6 households in the first tranche.

13. **Petition to preserve land at Sandy Lane**

Cabinet received and noted the petition. It was agreed to reaffirm the decision of 12 November 2014.

14. **Selective Licensing**

A progress report was submitted to Cabinet on the proposal for Selective Licensing. Cabinet agreed to take forward in principle a Selective Landlord Licensing Scheme for the former Coal Board Estate in Kidsgrove, taking advice from another local authority which has successfully delivered such a scheme to ensure that the action plan is robust.

15. **Former Maxims Night Club**

Cabinet considered a report on the former Maxims nightclub site and adjacent land.

16. **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan covering the period from November 2015 to February 2016 can be found at: <http://sviam/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=57&RP=118>

17. **European Local Democracy Week**

European Local Democracy was held 12th to 16th October. As part of this Emma, a young student was 'Leader for the Day' and she submitted a report to her own school council detailing her experiences. As she was Leader for a Day it is only fitting for an extract of her report to be included and so this is shown below.

***Leader's Statement***

*European Local Democracy Week took place during 12-18 October 2015, with events taking place across the 23 member States of the Council of Europe. Newcastle Borough Council hosted a number of events some of which were attended by members of Madeley Parliament.*

*On Thursday 15 October I was lucky enough to be the Leader of Newcastle Borough Council for the whole day. I was joined by Edward who was the Chief Executive for the day.*

*Edward and I had the most amazing time; we shadowed the real Leader, Councillor Elizabeth Shenton and the Chief Executive, John Sellgren. Councillor Shenton was appointed as the Leader of Newcastle Borough Council in May 2015 and she is the first female Leader of the Borough.*

*Our day started with a tour of the Civic Offices in Newcastle where we were shown all the meeting rooms and the Leader's office. We then travelled to Stafford where we attended a meeting at the Staffordshire County Council buildings, where we met Councillor Philip Atkins, the Leader of Staffordshire County Council. The meeting took place in the Bremen Room which was very large with a long oak table in the centre and very comfortable oak chairs with red leather padding. I can't say too much more about the meeting because it was confidential, but I felt very privileged to be allowed to take part.*

*When we returned to Newcastle after the meeting, Mr Sellgren and Councillor Shenton took us to Newcastle for lunch, when they told us some more about their roles and me and Edward discussed some of our views on local issues.*

*After lunch, I went to the Leader's office to do some of my Leader's work and Edward went off to do some Chief Executive work. I wrote a letter on the bus service between Madeley and Newcastle and then handed this to Councillor David Loades, because he is my local Councillor. Whilst I was writing my letter, I was given a plaque for the school, which has the Newcastle Borough Coat of Arms on it. This will hopefully be displayed in the school and if you look at it carefully you will notice three fishes at the bottom, this is where the new fish on the Jubilee roundabout comes from.*

*By Emma (aged 12)*

**Councillor Elizabeth Shenton  
Leader of the Council**