

Public Document Pack



PLEASE NOTE THAT PRAYERS WILL BE HELD AT 6.50PM BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE MAYOR REQUESTS THAT ANY MEMBER WISHING TO PARTICIPATE IN PRAYERS BE IN ATTENDANCE BY NO LATER THAN 6.45PM.

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the Borough Council of Newcastle-under-Lyme to be held in the **Jubilee 2 - Dance Studio - (Second Floor) - Brunswick street, Newcastle, Staffs** on **Wednesday, 24th July, 2019** at **7.00 pm**.

BUSINESS

- | | | |
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Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin T. Handley'.

Chief Executive

NOTICE FOR COUNCILLORS

1. Fire/Bomb Alerts

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, leave the building immediately, following the fire exit signs..

Fire exits are to be found at the side of the room leading into Queens Gardens.

On exiting the building Members, Officers and the Public must assemble at the statue of Queen Victoria. DO NOT re-enter the building until advised to by the Controlling Officer.

2. Attendance Record

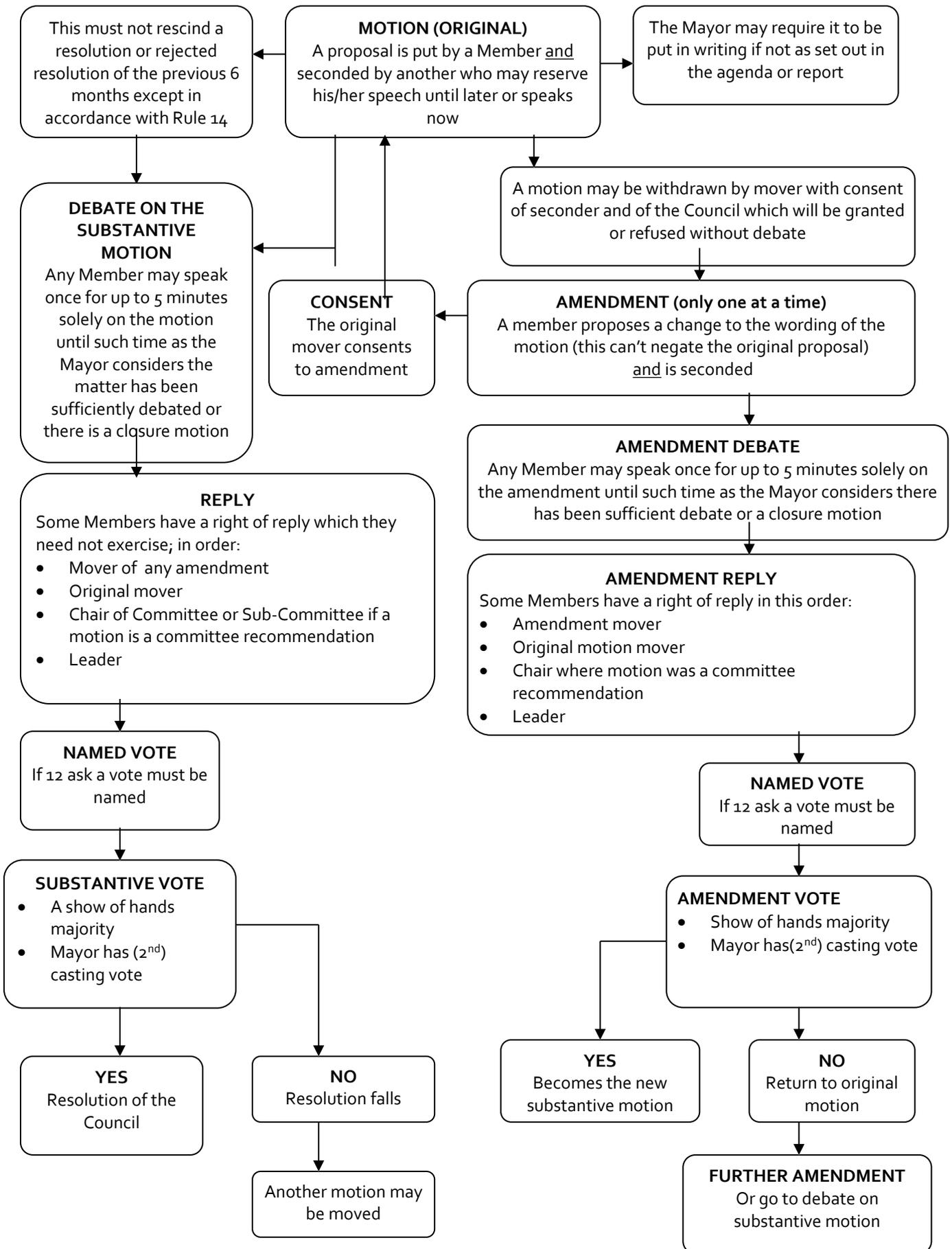
Please sign the Attendance Record sheet on entering the building. This will be located at the reception desk.

3. Mobile Phones

Please switch off all mobile phones before entering the Council Chamber.

4. Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion other than those listed in Standing Order 19 must reach the Chief Executive ten clear days before the relevant Meeting of the Council. Further information on Notices of Motion can be found in Section 5, Standing Order 20 of the Constitution of the Council.



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STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL TO FULL COUNCIL – 24th JULY 2019

Submitted by: Councillor Simon Tagg

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 Leader and Cabinet and to allow questions and comments to be made on the Statement.

1. Cabinet Meetings

Cabinet has met three times since the last Full Council of 3rd April (24th April, 5th June and 10th July). A summary of the Decisions taken is detailed below.

2. Newcastle-under-Lyme Town Centre Growth

The Cabinet has approved a report setting out an extensive programme of regeneration and economic growth for Newcastle Town Centre including invigorating the market, a car parking strategy, improved CCTV, footfall generators and business support for on-line trading, promotion.

Governance and delivery structure were also agreed which includes a town centre taskforce group and a leadership group & stakeholders forum.

In June Cabinet endorsed a report about the future of the Market and an action plan with milestones has been established. Further detailed reports on each of the workstreams will be submitted to Cabinet over the next few months.

3. Improved union relations

The Council has now signed a Recognition Agreement with the trade unions; this follows a breakdown in relations between the Council and the unions dating back to 2016. I am pleased to say that relations with the unions have now improved significantly.

The Recognition Agreement has allowed both parties to agree a new Attendance Management Policy and a Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS). These will help the Council to address longstanding problems with sickness absence and enable organisational change to the benefit of both the Council and the employee, whilst driving service improvement for the benefit of the borough's residents.

Further HR related policies are currently being discussed with the unions and will be submitted to Cabinet in due course.

4. **Air Quality Local Development Plan**

Cabinet has received a number of reports relating to the Air Quality Ministerial Direction which has been served on the Borough and City Councils by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and Department for Transport (DfT) respectively. An Air Quality Local Development Plan has been compiled jointly by both Councils with proposed options for reducing pollution levels ranging from a city centre/A53 traffic management scheme and Council boundary low emission strategy, Etruria Valley Link Road and A500 improvements to workplace levy schemes or a chargeable Clean Air Zone.

Cabinet has put forward a clear view that there should be a highways and transport solution to the air quality problems and not workplace levy schemes or a chargeable Clean Air Zone. Council officers are working closely with the City Council, County Council and Central Government to ensure that a suitable solution is found.

5. **Single Use Plastics**

Following the recent motion to Full Council, Cabinet endorsed a strategy to reduce plastic waste including eliminating single use plastics completely from its premises and facilities by 2023.

The Council is encouraging partners at Castle House to adopt a similar goal and will also work with suppliers to reduce single use plastics, with the ambition of eliminating them from goods and services provided to the Council by 2025.

6. **Financial and Performance Management Report to End of Quarter Four (2018-19)**

Cabinet reviewed the performance data for Quarter Four and noted that a number of key indicators were above target.

Cabinet Members outlined measures that were in place where indicators were below target and actions taken to address those.

7. **Jubilee2 update**

Cabinet agreed an action plan for Jubilee2 (J2). This included three key proposals aimed to tackle the budget deficit, improve income through more effective marketing and dealing with outstanding building defects.

Serious and unresolved defects with the building came to light from 2014 onwards; these have affected the operation of J2 and the user experience.

The current administration has made it a priority to resolve these issues and to ensure that J2 becomes the flagship facility it was always intended to be.

8. **20 Sidmouth Avenue, Newcastle**

Cabinet has agreed plans to redevelop the former Registry Office in Sidmouth Avenue; this includes the demolition of the post 1950s building extensions and the preservation of the 1870s dwelling as a family home or as two apartments. Planning permission will be sought to build three substantial four or five bedroomed detached houses on the site.

This will not only protect the character of the area but also provide extra income for the Council; than would otherwise have been the case if the whole building had been disposed of at auction as was proposed by the previous administration.

9. **Newcastle Housing Advice Service Contract**

The Cabinet has agreed to go out to tender for the provision of the Council's statutory homelessness, housing advice and housing register services from April 2020 when the current contract expires.

The tender will be advertised between August and October and applications will be evaluated through the autumn to enable a contract to be awarded in December.

10. **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan (11/7/2019 to 15/1/2020) can be found at:

<https://moderngov.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=96&RP=118>

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Audit and Standards Committee

The committee has met twice since my last report, meeting, on 15th April and 24th June 2019.

During the course of the two meetings the business dealt with was as follows:

Members reviewed the Corporate Risk Management Report for the period January – March 2019 noting that there were no overdue risk reviews. Questions were asked in relation to an accident that had occurred, but Members were advised that all safety systems were in place and operational.

Phil Jones of Grant Thornton gave a brief explanation of the 2019 Audit progress report and noted that there were some accounting issues to be dealt with, mainly relating to property valuations.

Clare Potts from Stoke on Trent City Council presented the Internal Audit plan for 2019-20, as prepared by her department, and this was approved by Members together with the Internal Audit Charter.

Members reviewed counter fraud arrangements and a Member asked what limit the council had in relation to cash transactions. When informed that it was £2000, Officers were asked to provide details of cash limits at other nearby authorities. At the following meeting the committee was informed that several other councils used the same limit, however, Stoke on Trent City Council has a limit of £8000.

The Health and Safety Annual Report 2018/19 was presented to Members and there were no issues of note. Members also reviewed the Treasury Management Annual Report 2018/19 and agreed that this be presented to Full Council on 24th July 2019.

Members were advised that the Draft Statement of Accounts showed a positive outturn of £8155, and details were provided in relation to the major variances. Members were assured that the budget for the current year incorporated any necessary revisions to align it actual figures for the previous years, subject to any relevant amendments.

Approval was given to the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 for inclusion into the Financial Statements for the same period. Members were informed that the Council would soon be entering into an arrangement with Stoke on Trent City Council to enhance its anti-fraud capabilities.

Next Meeting 29th July 2019.

Paul Waring (Chair)

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QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

To the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency:

1. I welcome that the Council has received planning permission for temporary events to be held on the Ryecroft. Can the Deputy Leader give the Council an update on the redevelopment of the site?

Cllr Andrew Parker
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To the Leader of the Council:

2. Can the Leader give an update on the introduction of the Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) - particularly in relation to aggressive begging in the town centre?

Cllr Andy Fear
.....

To the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Recycling:

3. Could the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Recycling tell the Council the cost of the artwork in the Grosvenor Roundabout subway that was recently highlighted in the national press?

Cllr Paul Waring
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To the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing:

4. Following continued reports of crime and anti-social behaviour in Clough Hall Park, will the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Wellbeing immediately look to consult on implementing a Public Space Protection Order for this park?

Cllr Kyle Robinson
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To the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing:

5. More residents across the Borough are reporting problems with regards to the illegal use of mini motorbikes. Dangerous incidents include use of these bikes in Borough Council owned parks and along public footpaths. The Councillors for Butt Lane and Talke have reported these incidents to the Police and to Newcastle Borough Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team. What action has the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Wellbeing taken to put further pressure on Staffordshire Police to seize and confiscate these vehicles?

Cllr Kyle Robinson
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