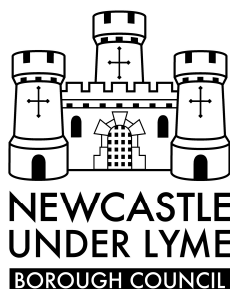


Public Document Pack



12 April 2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the Borough Council of Newcastle-under-Lyme to be held in the **Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Merrial Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 2AG** on **Wednesday, 24th April, 2013** at **7.00 pm**.

THE NEW COMMISSIONING LANDSCAPE

Prior to the meeting there will be a presentation on new health structures by **Marcus Warnes, Chief Operating Officer, NHS North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group**.

The presentation will commence at 6.15 pm.

BUSINESS

1 Apologies

2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

(Pages 1 - 12)

Held on 27 February 2013 to be signed as a correct record.

3 Declaration of Interests

4 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Former Councillor Freda Myatt

The Mayor will formally report the recent sad death of former Councillor Freda Myatt and those present will be asked to stand for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

(b) Presentation to the Council of the Illuminated Address of Richard Bartlett Mellard, Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme 1886/87, 1889/90, 1900/01 and 1904/05

The Mayor was recently contacted by John Mellard, who was born in Trentham in 1923 but now lives in East Sussex. Mr Mellard is the great nephew of Richard Bartlett Mellard, who was Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Mr Mellard is in possession of an illuminated address and its casket, presented to his great uncle on 9 November 1889, during his Mayoralty, in recognition of his

involvement in the construction of the Municipal Hall (which was demolished in 1967). He has kindly taken the decision to return this historic item to the council in order that it may be kept at the museum. By a coincidence, Mr Mellard's wife was born at the museum in 1923.

Mr Mellard, who is approaching 90 years of age, will not be able to be in attendance at the council meeting to present the address to the council himself, so the Mayor will present it to the Chief Executive on his behalf.

Two other members of the Mellard family were Mayors of the borough, both named William – the first in 1855/56 and 1877/78, and the second in 1912/13; the latter was John Mellard's grandfather.

Mr Mellard's letter to the Mayor, which contains more detail, may be viewed in the Mayor's Parlour.

(c) General Announcements

The Mayor will proceed to his general announcements.

5 REPORT OF THE LEADER

Report to follow.

6 REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

- (a) Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee
- (b) Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- (c) Active and Cohesive Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- (d) Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- (e) Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- (f) Health Scrutiny Committee

7 REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE STATUTORY COMMITTEES

- (a) Planning Committee
- (b) Licensing Committee
- (c) Public Protection Committee
- (d) Audit and Risk Committee

8 Outstanding Issues from Previous Questions and Petitions

9 QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

In accordance with Procedure Rule 11, questions must be submitted at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Any questions considered urgent will only be accepted with the agreement of the Mayor prior to the meeting.

10 COUNCIL PLAN

(Pages 13 - 40)

Report attached.

11 REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

Report to follow.

12 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION - MOVING THE DATE OF ENGLISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS TO THE DATE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN 2014 (Pages 41 - 56)

Report attached.

13 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

The council is requested to confirm the following changes to committee memberships:-

- (a) Councillor Trevor Hambleton to replace Councillor Tom Lawton on the Active and Cohesive Communities Scrutiny Committee;
- (b) Councillor George Cairns to replace Councillor Tom Lawton on the Transformation and Resources Scrutiny Committee;
- (c) Councillor Terry Turner to replace Councillor Tom Lawton on the Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee;
- (d) Councillor David Loades to replace Councillor Tracey Peers on the Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee; and
- (e) Councillor Reg Bailey to replace Councillor Tom Lawton on the Licensing Committee.

14 APPOINTMENTS AND NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Local Authority School Governors

Staffordshire County Council has invited this council to submit nominations in respect of a number of school governorships where a current local authority governor is nearing the end of his/her term of office (and, in one case, where a vacancy exists). The county council has also invited the relevant county councillors, parish councils, head teachers and chairs of governing bodies to make nominations. From the nominations received, the governor co-ordinator for the area will make recommendations, and the decision as to the successful nominee will be made by the Cabinet Member for Education, Finance and Transformation.

In each case, the governor currently in post may wish to be reappointed for a further term. Nominations must be received by the county council by 10 May 2013.

Details of the schools and governors nearing the end of their terms of office are set out below:-

School	Governor	Expires
Langdale Primary School	Mr John Heesom	30/04/13
Seabridge Primary School	Mr John Axon	31/08/13
Seabridge Primary School	Mrs Aileen Clark	31/08/13
The Blackfriars and Coppice Federation	Mr Michael Deakin	31/03/13
Oaklands Nursery School	Mrs Paula Pattinson	31/08/13
May Bank Infants School	Councillor Simon Tagg	31/08/13
Maryhill High School – A Media Arts College	Councillor Silvia Burgess	31/10/13
Hempstalls Primary School	Councillor John Williams	31/08/13
Clough Hall Technology School	Cnty Cllr Geoffrey Locke	31/10/13
Churchfields Primary School	Vacancy	N/A
Chesterton Community Sports College	Councillor John Cooper	31/10/13

The council is requested to consider whether it wishes to make nominations in respect of any of the above.

West Midland Reserve Forces and Cadets Association

The West Midland Reserve Forces and Cadets Association has approached the council seeking the appointment of a representative. The council was last represented on the organisation by former Councillor David Clarke, but no representation appears to have been in place in recent years.

In order to assist the council in considering the request, further information has been sought from the organisation and the Chief Executive of the association has provided that set out below.

The West Midland Reserve Forces and Cadets Association has an influential and wide ranging role. It is a regional civilian body comprising voluntary members and a full-time secretariat. It has been established by statute to offer advice and support to the Defence Council on behalf of the Reserve Forces and Cadet Movement. By virtue of our Scheme of Association, endorsed by the Defence Council and enshrined in the Reserve Forces Act of 1996, we are entitled to appoint various Elected Representative Members of Local Government to our Association in order to forge and maintain closer links between the defence and local communities within the counties we represent.

Reservists and Cadets are part of the local community in a way that Regular forces are not. They therefore need the support of an organisation whose people are familiar with and prominent within the community. Moreover we also help to promote the image of all three services, both regular and reserves, within the community through liaison with local authorities, employers, trade unions and other influential groups and individuals.

Thus our members provide this local Defence footprint throughout the West Midlands. The duties of our Representative Members are not too onerous. Apart from the general support implied in the paragraphs above, routinely there are two events each year at which we would expect to see the Council Representative; the Annual General Meeting and the Annual County Briefing.

To conclude, we have enjoyed Representative Membership from Newcastle Borough Council in the past and I would hope that this arrangement will continue.

Accordingly, the council is invited to appoint a representative to the organisation.

15 MOTIONS

Councillor Kyle Robinson has submitted the following motion in accordance with Procedure Rule 12:-

“This council notes that:

The Coalition government’s bedroom tax will bring disastrous consequences to the country and to Newcastle-under-Lyme specifically.

- Two thirds of the households hit are home to someone with a disability
- Weekend mums and dads will have to try and find additional money to enable their children to stay with them

Further, the policy is being introduced at the same time that millionaires are being given a substantial tax break.

This council believes that:

- It is not fair to residents in social housing that they should be financially penalised on the basis of the house in which they have made their home and in

- circumstances with which they are confronted through no fault of their own.
- It is cynical and shameful for the government to deliberately implement a policy that it knows cannot possibly lead to the desired outcomes of that policy – namely that people should be forced to downsize their homes on the basis of financial penalty when there is not sufficient stock of housing to permit such downsizing.

This council resolves that:

- (1) The Mayor should write to the Secretary of State to condemn the bedroom tax (spare room subsidy) and the impact it will have on residents in Newcastle-under-Lyme.
- (2) The Council be informed at a future meeting, with detailed information, of the impact of the policy on residents of the borough once the tax has been implemented.”

Councillor Robin Studd has submitted the following motion on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group in accordance with Procedure Rule 12:-

“This council welcomes the lifting of the tax burden on the working families of North Staffordshire, and notes that 5,360 taxpayers in Newcastle (10,760 in Stoke-on-Trent) are being taken out of taxation altogether, and that nearly 51,000 Newcastle residents (91,900 in Stoke-on-Trent) will see a very substantial reduction in their tax burden. The Council therefore notes that the total value of the tax cuts to the residents of North Staffordshire is well over £100 million each year.”

16 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any business which is urgent in the opinion of the Mayor, in accordance with Procedure Rule 7.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SJA', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

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. Do not stop to collect personal belongings, do not use the lifts.

Fire exits are to be found either side of the rear of the Council Chamber and at the rear of the Public Gallery.

On exiting the building Members, Officers and the Public must assemble at the front of the former Hubanks store opposite to the Civic Offices. DO NOT re-enter the building until advised to by the Controlling Officer.

2. Attendance Record

Please sign the Attendance Record sheet, which will be circulating around the Council Chamber. Please ensure that the sheet is signed before leaving the meeting.

3. Mobile Phones

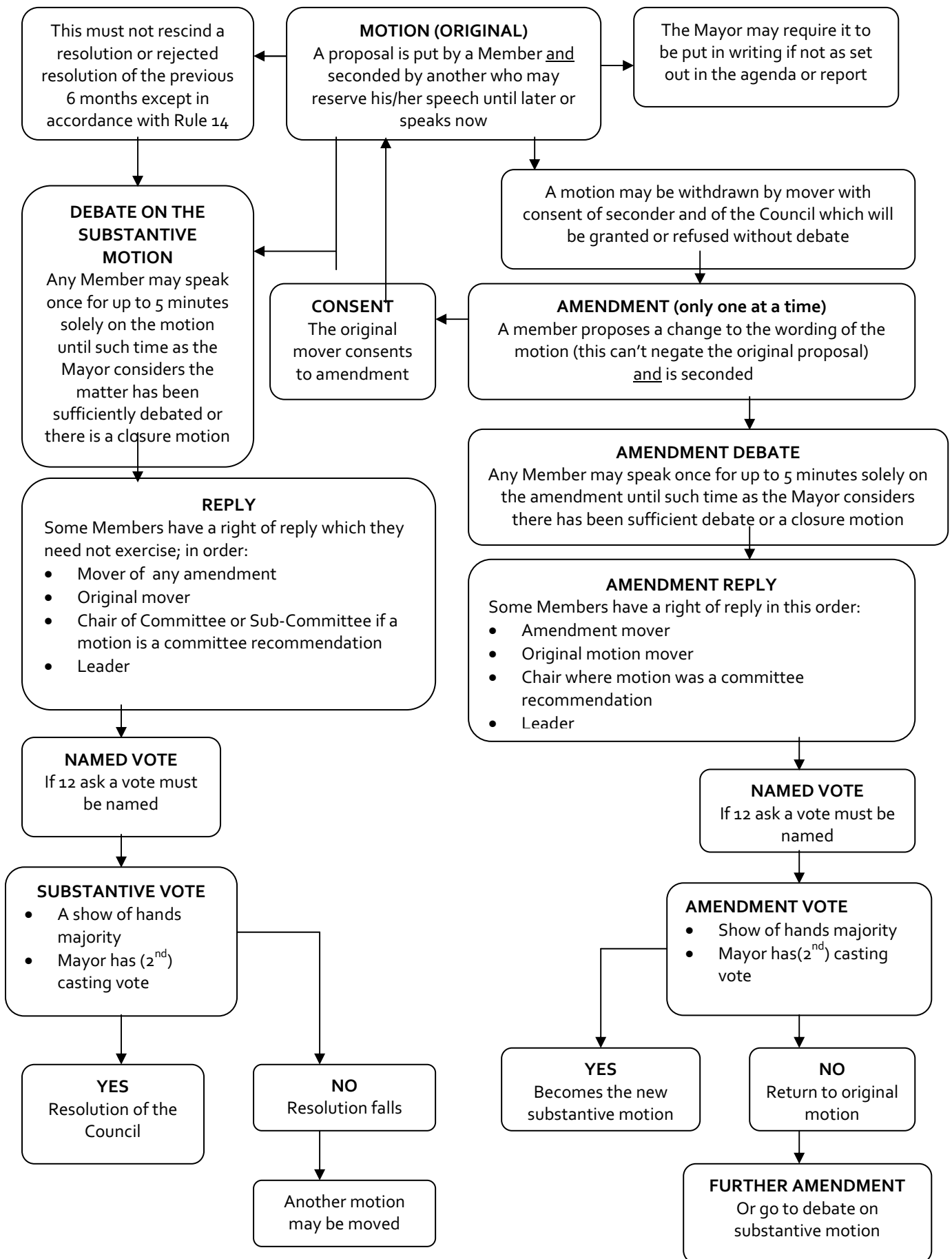
Please switch off all mobile phones before entering the Council Chamber.

4. Tea/Coffee

Refreshments will be available at the conclusion of the meeting, or in the event of a break occurring, during that break.

5. Notice of Motion

Notice of a 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.



This page is intentionally left blank

COUNCIL

7.00 pm, Wednesday, 27 February 2013

Present:- The Mayor David Becket – in the Chair

Councillors Miss Walklate, Mrs Heames, Mrs Johnson, Studd, Mrs Burnett, Clarke, Cooper, Mrs Beech, Hambleton, Howells, Cairns, Boden, Matthews, Olszewski, Mrs Hambleton, Wemyss, Mrs Williams, Williams, Mrs Astle, Fear, Hailstones, Mrs Hailstones, Allport, Eagles, Kearon, Taylor.J, Waring, Miss Olszewski, Lawton, Loades, Holland, Bailey, Miss Cooper, Jones, Miss Reddish, Robinson, Mrs Shenton, Mrs Simpson, Mrs Heesom, Snell, Sweeney, Mrs Bates, Miss Mancey, Mrs Burgess, Eastwood, Miss Baker, Mrs Peers, Plant, Stringer, Stubbs, Turner and Mrs Winfield

In attendance:- John Sellgren (Chief Executive), Kelvin Turner (Executive Director, Resources and Support Services), Neale Clifton (Executive Director, Regeneration and Development), Dave Adams (Executive Director, Operational Services), Paul Clisby (Head of Central Services), Phil Jones (Head of Communications) and Nick Lamper (Senior Member Services Officer)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors James Bannister, Dylis Cornes, Simon Tagg, Matt Taylor, Billy Welsh, Simon White and Ian Wilkes.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings held on 28 November 2012 and 23 January 2013 be approved as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

4. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor thanked those who had supported recent Mayoral events and referred to upcoming functions.

In particular, he reminded members that tickets were on sale for the Mayoral Ball, which would be held at Keele University on Friday 22 March.

5. **LICENSING COMMITTEE - RECOMMENDED FEES 2013/14**

The recommendations of the Licensing Committee (from its meeting held on 13 February 2013) were submitted in relation to licensing fees for 2013/14 in respect of sex establishments and gambling.

Resolved: That the recommended licensing fees be approved.

6. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS AND COUNCIL TAX 2013/14

A report was submitted setting out the recommendations of Cabinet for the revenue and capital budgets for 2013/14 and the setting of the 2013/14 council tax.

The Finance and Budget Management portfolio holder, Councillor Stubbs, undertook a presentation on the proposals.

The recommendations in the report having been moved by Councillor Stubbs and seconded by Councillor Boden, the following amendment was proposed by Councillor Jones:-

That, in Appendix A, recommendation (g), the following be added after the words "be agreed":-

"...and various options be explored to invest in long-term sustainable green energy-saving devices such as solar panels on properties owned by the council."

The amendment was accepted by the mover of the original motion, Councillor Stubbs, and became part of the substantive motion.

The following amendment was then moved by Councillor Sweeney and seconded by Councillor Howells:-

That, after the words "...set out in appendix A", the following be added:-

"To cancel the planned increase in Admission fees and Parking charges for customers of Jubilee 2 (to value of £25,000)

"To support our local Community Centres and their Management Committees by increasing their Repairs and Maintenance Budget (to value of £25,750)

"To decrease the Council Tax by 1% (Newcastle under Lyme levy – to value of £70,000)

"To raise £82,500 by making a nominal £1.50 per day charge per council employee parking on Council work place car parks (over 9 months further to statutory consultation period of 90 days) in 2013/14 which will rise to £110,000 over a full year

"To raise £5,000 by making a nominal £1.50 per day charge per councillor (i.e. who park in Council work place car parks on an occasional basis)

"To raise £13,500 by capping car mileage rates paid to council staff to the HM Revenue and Customs rate of 45p per mile (over 9 months further to statutory consultation period of 90 days) in 2013/14 which will rise to £18,000 over a full year

"To raise £9,750 by the removal of evening meeting allowance payments (over 9 months further to statutory consultation period of 90 days) in 2013/14 which will rise to £13,000 over a full year

"To raise £10,000 by the abolition of the 7th cabinet member and a return to daytime Cabinet meetings"

Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and lost.

As chair of the Transformation and Resources Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Shenton remarked on the success of the process by which the budget proposals had been scrutinised both formally in committee and through the Scrutiny Café initiative. Scrutiny would continue to monitor the budget going forward. She thanked the officers for the clarity of information provided.

The Leader also thanked the Finance team for the work undertaken to make the proposals clear and transparent and noted that the number of respondents through the stakeholder events had been in the region of 650. He believed that the proposals would put the council on a firm footing for a strong future and offered to work with any member in the chamber to achieve this.

As the substantive motion was put to the vote, a recorded vote was requested by the Leader and 12 other members rising in their seats to support the request. The motion was carried.

The following members voted **for** the motion:-

Councillors Allport, Astle, Bailey, Baker, Bates, Beech, Boden, Burgess, Burnett, Cairns, Clarke, Eagles, Eastwood, S Hambleton, T Hambleton, Johnson, Jones, Kearon, Lawton, M Olszewski, S Olszewski, Plant, Reddish, Robinson, Shenton, Simpson, Snell, Stringer, Stubbs, J Taylor, Turner, Walklate, Waring, Wemyss, G Williams, J Williams and Winfield (37)

The following members voted **against** the motion:-

None (0)

The following members **abstained**:-

Councillors Becket, John Cooper, Julie Cooper, Fear, L Hailstones, P Hailstones, Heames, Heesom, Holland, Howells, Loades, Mancey, Matthews, Peers and Sweeney (15)

The following members were **not present** during the vote:-

Councillors Bannister, Cornes, Studd, Tagg, M Taylor, Welsh, White and Wilkes (8)

Resolved:

- (a) That the Revenue Budget for 2013/14 be approved in the sum of £13,169,360 (£14,118,640 net expenditure less £949,280 council tax support grant) as set out in Appendix B.
- (b) That the Council Tax at Band 'D' be £176.93, unchanged from 2012/13.
- (c) That the Capital Programme to 2013/14 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.
- (d) That the revised minimum balances requirement be £1,300,000 and the excess of £200,000 above the current levels be transferred to the Insurance Fund (£150,000) and the Renewals and Repairs Fund (£50,000).

- (e) That £80,000 be transferred from the Standards Fund into the Municipal Mutual Insurance Provision.
- (f) That a Revenue Investment Fund be established with an initial contribution of £100,000 from the General Fund Revenue Budget in 2013/14.
- (g) That the principle of financing “invest to save” projects from the Budget Support Fund, as outlined in paragraph 4.9 of the report, be agreed and various options be explored to invest in long-term sustainable green energy-saving devices such as solar panels on properties owned by the council.
- (h) That it be noted that at its meeting on the 16 January 2013 the Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2013/14:
 - (i) 34,361 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	6,259
Loggerheads	1,839
Audley	2,423
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill	566
Chapel and Hill Chorlton	186
Keele	315
Madeley	1,413
Maer	245
Silverdale	808
Whitmore	1,240
- (i) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2013/14 (excluding Parish precepts) is £6,079,430.
- (j) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2013/14 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (i) £62,375,343 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) £56,003,240 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act.
 - (iii) £6,372,103 being the amount by which the aggregate at (j)(i) above exceeds the aggregate at (j)(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) £185.45 being the amount at j (iii) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (h (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) £292,673 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 (j) (iv) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (j) (v) above by item T (h (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**

Audley Parish Council	£196.10
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	£194.19
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	£192.16
Keele Parish Council	£199.81
Kidsgrove Town Council	£191.70
Loggerheads Parish Council	£198.39
Madeley Parish Council	£221.53
Maer Parish Council	£195.57
Silverdale Parish Council	£184.92
Whitmore Parish Council	£197.97

Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (j) (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 (h) (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	276.90	319.50	383.40
Loggerheads Parish Council	132.26	154.31	176.35	198.39	242.47	286.56	330.65	396.78
Audley Parish Council	130.74	152.52	174.31	196.10	239.68	283.25	326.84	392.20
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	129.46	151.04	172.61	194.19	237.34	280.49	323.65	388.38
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	128.11	149.46	170.81	192.16	234.86	277.56	320.27	384.32
Keele Parish Council	133.21	155.41	177.61	199.81	244.21	288.61	333.02	399.62
Madeley Parish Council	147.69	172.30	196.92	221.53	270.76	319.98	369.22	443.06
Maer Parish Council	130.38	152.11	173.84	195.57	239.03	282.49	325.95	391.14
Whitmore Parish Council	131.98	153.98	175.97	197.97	241.96	285.95	329.95	395.94
Silverdale Parish Council	123.28	143.83	164.37	184.92	226.01	267.10	308.20	369.84
Other Parts of Borough Area	117.96	137.61	157.27	176.93	216.25	255.56	294.89	353.86

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (j)(vi) and (j)(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.

- (k) That it be noted that for the year 2013/14 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	684.83	798.97	913.11	1027.25	1255.53	1483.81	1712.08	2054.50
Staffordshire Fire Authority	45.09	52.61	60.12	67.64	82.67	97.70	112.73	135.28
Staffordshire Police Authority	118.41	138.14	157.88	177.61	217.08	256.55	296.02	355.22

- (l) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (j) (viii) and (k) 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 2013/14 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	976.13	1138.82	1301.51	1464.20	1789.58	2114.96	2440.33	2928.40
Loggerheads Parish Council	980.59	1144.03	1307.46	1470.89	1797.75	2124.62	2451.48	2941.78
Audley Parish Council	979.07	1142.24	1305.42	1468.60	1794.96	2121.31	2447.67	2937.20
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	977.79	1140.76	1303.72	1466.69	1792.62	2118.55	2444.48	2933.38
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	976.44	1139.18	1301.92	1464.66	1790.14	2115.62	2441.10	2929.32
Keele Parish Council	981.54	1145.13	1308.72	1472.31	1799.49	2126.67	2453.85	2944.62
Madeley Parish Council	996.02	1162.02	1328.03	1494.03	1826.04	2158.04	2490.05	2988.06
Maer Parish Council	978.71	1141.83	1304.95	1468.07	1794.31	2120.55	2446.78	2936.14
Whitmore Parish Council	980.31	1143.70	1307.08	1470.47	1797.24	2124.01	2450.78	2940.94
Silverdale Parish Council	971.61	1133.55	1295.48	1457.42	1781.29	2105.16	2429.03	2914.84
Other Parts of Borough Area	966.29	1127.33	1288.38	1449.43	1771.53	2093.62	2415.72	2898.86

7. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013/14**

A report was submitted seeking the council's approval of the Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14, including the Prudential Indicators, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy contained within it.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2013/14 be approved;
- (2) That the Prudential Indicators contained within the report be approved;
- (3) That the Investment Strategy contained within the report be approved;
- (4) That the Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy contained within the report be approved; and
- (5) That the current contract with Sector Treasury Services Limited be extended for a further 12 months.

8. **CAPITAL STRATEGY 2013-16**

A report was submitted to enable the council to consider and approve the Capital Strategy 2013 to 2016.

Resolved: That the Capital Strategy be approved.

9. **LOCALISM ACT 2011 - PUBLICATION OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2013/14**

A report was submitted along with the Pay Policy Statement required to be published each financial year in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.

Resolved: That the Pay Policy Statement as submitted be approved and published on the council's website by 31 March 2013.

10. **REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

The chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees provided a combination of written and verbal reports on the activities of their committees since the last ordinary meeting of the council.

Resolved: That the reports be received and the work undertaken by the committees be noted.

11. **REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE STATUTORY COMMITTEES**

The chairs of the Planning, Licensing, Public Protection and Audit and Risk Committees provided a combination of written and verbal reports on the activities of their committees since the last ordinary meeting of the council.

Resolved: That the reports be received and the work undertaken by the committees be noted.

12. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND PROGRESS ON ANY OUTSTANDING PETITIONS

Written responses were provided in respect of those questions raised at the council meeting held on 28 November 2012, where responses had not been provided at the meeting.

There were no outstanding matters to report in respect of petitions.

Resolved: That the answers provided be noted.

13. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

The following questions were raised by members and the answers indicated provided in response.

1. Question to the Leader from Councillor Nigel Jones

What is the current mechanism for providing home security support for vulnerable residents and, in the light of there currently being no take-up of the scheme, can officers investigate improved ways of implementing this scheme such as through the LAPs and report back to the next council meeting?

The Leader referred the question to the relevant portfolio holder.

Response from Councillor Tony Kearon, portfolio holder for Safer Communities

Councillor Kearon indicated that the service had previously been delivered via the Handyperson Scheme with 50% of the cost of materials having been met. However, since the county council had withdrawn funding for the Handyperson Scheme funds had now been allocated to cover 100% of labour and materials. Uptake had increased over the last few weeks. Further efforts would be made to publicise the scheme and he would be happy to discuss it outside the meeting.

Supplementary Question and Response

Councillor Jones asked whether the portfolio holder would agree that the LAPs could play a useful role in the scheme and whether he would consider channelling funds through them in the spirit of true localism?

Councillor Kearon indicated that, because the scheme used the same criteria as Disabled Facilities Grants, additional training and administration costs were avoided by having the applications processed by the same staff who dealt with the Disabled Facilities Grants. However, he had no objection to LAPs being able to refer residents to the scheme and would encourage their involvement.

2. Question to the Leader from Councillor Nigel Jones

Is the current administration planning to fund an officer post to assist community and voluntary groups in obtaining finance from external sources and will this be a full-time or part-time appointment?

The Leader referred the question to the relevant portfolio holder.

Response from Councillor Mike Stubbs, portfolio holder for Finance and Budget Management

Councillor Stubbs indicated that there was no such plan, but that a request was pending for an Economic Development post to raise funds for internal use, which would provide advantages to the community.

3. Question to the Leader from Councillor John Taylor

In light of the recent revelations that the Government has undertaken pre-consultation with Fire Authorities on a proposal to allow Fire and Rescue Services to contract out 'any or all of their functions', can the leader tell the Council what notification, if any, he has received about the plans?

Response from Councillor Gareth Snell, Leader of the Council

The Leader indicated that the first he had known of the proposal had been when Councillor Taylor had brought it to his attention.

Supplementary Question and Response

Councillor Taylor indicated that officials had broken the news to all 46 Fire and Rescue Authorities on 21 November 2012 and had had 22 responses. He asked whether the Leader knew if Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority had responded and whether that authority supported the proposals, and requested that the Leader contact the authority to ascertain the position in the county.

The Leader indicated that he would write to County Councillors Bloomer and Tagg in their capacities as chairman and vice-chairman of the authority.

14. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions for receipt.

15. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

Resolved: That the following changes to committee memberships and vice-chairmanships be approved:-

- (a) Councillor Dave Stringer to replace Councillor Sophia Baker as a member and vice-chair of the Audit and Risk Committee;
- (b) Councillor Sophia Baker to replace Councillor Matt Taylor as vice-chair of the Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee; and
- (c) Councillor Dave Stringer to replace Councillor Matt Taylor as a member of the Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee.

16. TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2013/14

The draft timetable of meetings for 2013/14 was submitted for the council's consideration.

Resolved:

- (1) That, subject to (2) below, the timetable of meetings be approved.
- (2) That the dates of the meetings of the Scrutiny Committees be finalised by officers in consultation with the Scrutiny Committee chairs.

17. NOTICE OF MOTION

Notice of the following motion had been submitted by Councillor Loades in accordance with Procedure Rule 12:-

"That this council opposes the HS2 proposed high speed rail line route through the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme after the recent plan for the route has been announced and agree to support the 51m action group."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Howells.

Councillor Jones proposed the following amendment to the motion:-

That all words after "announced" be deleted and the following be added:-

"...and will consider making a detailed response including the principle of joining 51m, to be debated at a future council meeting, and will work to ensure the best outcome for the residents of the borough."

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Wemyss and, upon being asked whether he would accept it, Councillor Loades declined. It was therefore put to the vote and lost.

Councillor Snell then proposed the following amendment to the motion:-

That the motion be amended to read:-

"That this council does:

- "1) note the publication of the proposed HS2 route north of Birmingham.*
- "2) commission the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Committee to form a proportionally balanced Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to evaluate the proposals published by the Department for Transport and seek evidence from partners at Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership board, the North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and others before making a report to Cabinet on the environmental and economic impact of the proposals.*
- "3) resolve to formally respond to the consultation launched by the Secretary of State in January 2013 subject to the decision of the Cabinet on the recommendation of the Scrutiny Group mentioned in 2).*
- "4) immediately, via letter, express its disappointment to the Secretary of State for Transport that North Staffordshire has not been included in areas to be serviced by a station for High Speed Rail.*

“5) *continue to engage with local residents, community groups, parish councils and other to ensure that their concerns are also highlighted to the appropriate authorities.*”

Councillor Boden seconded the amendment.

Councillor Jones asked Councillor Snell whether he would be prepared to vary the wording of his amendment and he declined to do so.

Councillor Snell subsequently withdrew his amendment with the consent of the meeting and Councillor Loades' original motion was put to the vote and lost.

18. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The council agreed to send its congratulations to Julia Cleary, Democratic Services Manager, upon the recent birth of her daughter.

THE MAYOR DAVID BECKET
Chair

The meeting concluded at 9.35 pm.

This page is intentionally left blank

Council Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16

Submitted by: Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships

Portfolio: Communications, Transformation & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To consider the proposed new Council Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16

Recommendation

- **That the council approves and adopts the Council Plan for 2013/14 to 2015/16 (found at Appendix A)**

Reasons

The Council Plan underpins the whole planning structure of the Authority and should be the document which clearly informs the organisation and acts as the major driver behind any budget proposals, longer-term strategic plans and also the service planning process. By monitoring of the plan the council is able to evidence its impact over time against the planned outcomes and identify areas of improvement. The Council plan was approved by Cabinet at its meeting in March and recommended that it be adopted by council.

1. **Background and issues**

- 1.1 A new style Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan for the period 2013/14 to 2015/16 was proposed which replaces the Corporate Plan document due to be refreshed at this time. The council took the opportunity to develop the plan to reflect some of the changes in our political and economic environment and the work undertaken in the Performance Management Framework Review. The plan has two sections and is attached in its entirety at appendix *. The second section details the measures and activities in order to monitor progress of the plan.
- 1.2 The plan sets out the new vision for the Council: To create a borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe.
- 1.3 The priorities proposed set out in the plan are proposed as:
 - A clean, safe and sustainable borough,
 - A borough of opportunity,
 - A healthy and active community and
 - Becoming a co-operative council delivering high quality, community-driven services
- 1.4 The adopted approach for the new plan was to be outcome-focused but ensuring strong links to the four priorities
- 1.5 As well as forming the basis for corporate, strategic and service planning, the proposed Council Plan also plays a significant role in the development of the Council's budget over the period covered by the Plan, as it sets out the priority areas and the desired outcomes for the organisation against which budget decisions can be made as part of the process of putting the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) together.

2 Development of the Council Plan and the additional Monitoring Section

- 2.1 Officers have developed the new Council Plan, its content and layout, taking in to consideration the findings and information from the work undertaken earlier this year in the Performance Management Framework Review. To ensure the document reflects the overall ambition of the council over the next three years, the following was necessary:
- a review of the plan structure;
 - involve stakeholders in the process
 - review the vision of the council;
 - review the four key priorities to be relevant and meaningful;
 - review and challenge the outcomes ensuring they are linked to the priorities;
 - ensure the strategies of the council are linked to the plan;
 - acknowledge any drivers for change which impact on the content and reflect the developments;
 - workshops and one-to-one meetings with officers held to determine monitoring activities and measures.
- 2.2 The Plan renews the existing vision for the Council, with the new vision expressed as “to create a Borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe”.
- 2.3 The Plan articulates a change from the previous priority of “transforming our council to achieve excellence” by a new priority “becoming a co-operative council delivering high quality, community driven services”.
- 2.4 The Plan also details a new set of seventeen outcomes and the accompanying measures and activities to measure and monitor the impact upon these desired outcomes.

3 Consultation and other influences

- 3.1 The vision, priorities and outcomes have been considered through various meetings and workshops undertaken in the Performance Management Framework Review and further work to complete the second section, the monitoring of the outcomes, was undertaken in planned workshops in September.
- 3.2 Ongoing consultation administered and analysed by the Borough Council Communications Section in 2011/12 and 2012/13 has been used in the development of the plan. Also services undertake satisfaction surveys in-house on a regular basis to inform the management of service delivery.
- 3.3 Demographic and other “profile” data, and changes observed that suggest trends, are covered in the section of the plan entitled “drivers for change”. These drivers can be summarised as:
- Our area and its people;
 - The Welfare Reform Act;
 - The Localism Act;
 - Our local strategies;
 - Performance Management Review;
 - Making good use of public money.
 - The Way We Work;

4. Options, Proposal and Reasons for Preferred Solution

- 4.1 Effective strategic planning benefits from a single document outlining issues and assumptions and stating the general direction for the organisation in question - the attached

draft Council Plan is designed to achieve this for the future development of Newcastle under Lyme B.C.

4.2 The Council Plan should be the document which clearly informs the council and should act as the major driver behind any budget proposals, longer-term strategic plans and also the service planning process.

4.3 Members are asked to consider the Plan and this covering report which was approved by Cabinet at the meeting 6 March 2013 and recommended that it be adopted by council.

4.4 In considering the Plan/report, Members can: -

- **Option 1: Accept and approve the adoption of the new style Council Plan and its contents as provided**

(This is the recommended option, albeit with further modifications and additions to be made as required by council)

- **Option 2: Request significant further changes to the Plan before the document can be approved and adopted**

(This is also recommended, although Members should be aware that this will delay the process of publishing the Plan and will also have an effect potentially on other related processes such as service planning for 2013/14 onwards)

5. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy Priorities and Corporate Priorities**

5.1 This document identifies the corporate priorities of the Authority aligned to those of the Sustainable Community Strategy, linked to expected outcomes.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

Officers have drafted this plan in line with current codes and legislation.

7. **Equality impact**

There are no differential impacts in this report.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 The plans in this report are to be considered against the overall Budget Strategy of the Council.

9. **Major risks**

9.1 The plans in this report are to be considered against the overall Risk Strategy of the Council. This is done as part of the Service and Financial Planning process.

10. **Key Decision information**

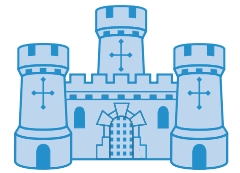
10.1 This report is in the Forward Plan.

11. **List of Appendices**

Draft Council Plan.

12. **Background Papers**

Working papers held by officer in Council Plan 2013/14 files.



**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan

2013 -14 to 2015 -16



Contents

Message from the Leader of the Council	1
Welcome from the Chief Executive	2
Our Vision	3
Priorities, Outcomes and Activities	8
Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough	10
Priority 2: A borough of opportunity	13
Priority 3: A healthy and active community	16
Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services	18

Message

from the Leader of the Council

Councillor Gareth Snell



**Councillor
Gareth Snell**
Leader of the Council

The Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan serves as the basis for everything we do as a council. The services we provide to our residents and the way we go about improving the borough are all determined by this plan and is empowered by the mandate the current administration has from the people of the borough.

With bold and ambitious plans to make the borough the best it can be, the plan sets out what we hope to achieve over the next three years and how we are going to turn a plan into reality.

Councils continue to have their funding cut by Government and legislative changes to the responsibilities of local councils means there will be some tough decisions ahead in the near future. This plan demonstrates our commitment to protecting vital public services and addressing the needs of local people while keeping Council Tax as low as possible during these difficult times.

Overall this plan is everyone's plan. The outcomes and priorities are derived from the mandate the Labour Party received at the ballot box and reflect the promises we made to everyone. However, this plan is a living document and we want to encourage local people to help shape our borough by improving opportunities to get involved and have a real say in the decisions that affect their lives.

To ensure the success of the council and delivery of our Council Plan, we want to make it easier for everyone to find out about their council, talk to their councillors, help develop their local services, and help us tackle the issues that are really important to you.

***. . . using
resources well
to provide good
public services***

***. . . targeting
support for
those who need
it most***

***. . . local people
involved and
having a say***

Welcome

from the Chief Executive

We want to make the borough a better place to live, work and invest.

Our Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan sets out how the council will seek to achieve this over the next three years.

In these challenging economic times it is important that we use resources prudently and effectively. In producing this plan we have reviewed the way we do things and considered what is important for the borough.

Our plan focuses on doing those things which will deliver our priorities and ensure that we continue to deliver high quality services for our customers.



John Sellgren
Chief Executive

This Council Plan takes account of several drivers for change:-

- **Our area and its people**
- **The Welfare Reform Act**
- **Localism Act**
- **Our Local strategies**
- **Performance Management review**
- **The Way We Work**
- **Making good use of public money**



Our Vision

.... is to create a borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe



We want Newcastle-under-Lyme to be a borough in which people are proud to live, work, visit and do business. Moreover, we want the borough council to be an open, honest and transparent organisation which is accountable to local people and which, through co-operation with partners, will work together to improve where we all live. By trying to deliver better services, focused on the needs of local people, we aim to create a council which is responsive and in touch with the people it serves.

A borough of opportunity

We will work with our partners to maximise investment and encourage enterprise and employment - generating activities that will create opportunities for improving the wealth, prosperity and housing choices of our residents.

A healthy and active community

We will work with partners to make sure residents and visitors are able to access a range of facilities and support activities that will enable them to improve their health and quality of life.

“ safer place to live, work and visit with long-term crime rates falling over the last few years ”

Becoming a co-operative council which delivers high quality, community-driven, services.

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is working towards being a co-operative council which means we are working together with our residents, partners and local organisations to collectively deliver the best we can using the resources we have.

Priorities

A clean, safe and sustainable borough

We will improve the environment so that everyone can enjoy our safe, sustainable and healthy borough.



**“ Newcastle
is a
co-operative
council ”**

What is a co-operative council?

We are working to:-

- Bring more public services together so that people get what they need at the right place and the right time.
- Encourage more involvement from local people and our staff in the planning and delivery of services.
- Support our communities better and encourage people to do more to help their own communities.

Whilst we still face budget cuts, the council is making sure local people are more involved in reducing our costs and challenging what we spend.

We are involving the community and business leaders in developing our future plans, drawing on the skills and expertise that exists in the borough.

Working with our communities

The Newcastle Partnership works with 11 Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) across the borough in offering opportunities for residents and communities to get involved in activities, engagement and decision-making in their area.

LAPs represent the Partnership’s established infrastructure for the delivery of locality working and offer communities enhanced and focused access to a range of partners in order to address and deliver against local priorities.



**. . . projects
taking place
in partnership
with the
community**

**. . . LAPs
or 'Friends of'
groups**

**. . . collaborative
working with
our strategic
partners**

**. . . partnerships
and commissioning
arrangements
with the
third sector**



Drivers for change

We have many things to consider when delivering a service to residents.

Our area and its people

Recently released figures from the 2011 Census tell us that Newcastle's population has grown by 1.5 per cent since 2001 and there are now an estimated 123,900 residents in the borough.

Our population is ageing, with about 14 per cent more residents aged over 60 than in 2001. The biggest increase has been amongst people aged over 85 and this is expected to grow further in the coming years. This increasing old-age dependency ratio will have wide ranging implications on the economy of the borough.

Newcastle-under-Lyme continues to become more diverse, estimates suggesting that around five per cent of residents are from BME communities, compared with around two per cent at the time of the 2001 Census.

Our borough is becoming a safer place to live, work and visit, with long-term crime rates falling over the last few years. Reports of anti-social behaviour have also been falling steadily over the past four years.

Residents are happy with Newcastle-under-Lyme as a place to live but in some areas the fear of crime remains a concern despite falling crime rates.

The economic downturn has meant that there has been a seven per cent reduction in the number of jobs in the borough between 2006-2010, meaning that there are now around 3,200 fewer jobs.

Despite this, the rate of unemployment is not particularly high when compared to the national picture. However, long-term worklessness and benefit dependency due to ill-health remains a problem.

Business start up rates in Newcastle are relatively low, but survival rates for those that do get off the ground are relatively good.

“ Residents are happy with Newcastle as a place to live ”

The Welfare Reform Act

The Act provides for the introduction of a Universal Credit to replace a range of existing means-tested benefits and tax credits for people of working age, starting from April 2013.

This is the Government's proposals for reforming welfare to improve work incentives, simplify the benefits system and tackle administrative complexity. Besides introducing Universal Credit and related measures, the Bill makes other significant changes to the benefits system.





Localism Act

The Localism Bill was introduced to Parliament in December 2010 and shifts power from central government into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.

Localism isn't simply about giving power back to local government but to individuals, neighbourhoods, professionals and communities as well as local councils and other local institutions - close to the people who are affected by the decisions.

The Localism Bill includes five key measures that underpin the Government's approach to decentralisation:-

- **Community Rights**

New community rights will ensure that community organisations have the Right to Challenge by expressing an interest in the running of a local authority service. Communities can also bid to take over land and buildings that are important to them through the Right to Bid.

- **Neighbourhood Planning**

New rights will allow local communities to shape new development by coming together to prepare neighbourhood plans.

- **Housing**

This will mean that more decisions are taken locally, allowing councils to decide how best to help their homeless people, improve their housing allocations and give direction to providers on the type of tenancies suitable to better meet local housing needs.

- **General power of competence**

Councils will be able to take action and get on with things they think will benefit their local area. The new power will give councils the freedom to work together to improve services, drive down costs and enhance their local area.

- **Empowering cities and other local areas**

The Act enables the transfer of public functions to local authorities in order to improve local accountability or promote economic growth.





Local Strategies

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council has three main strategies linked to its priorities:-

- Economic Development Strategy
- Stronger and Safer Communities Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy

These strategies show how the council is planning to work with partners and other organisations to improve and develop local communities to deliver our vision for the borough.



The Way We Work (TWWW)

This project was established in January 2011 and stemmed from the council's Transformation Programme. Our aim was to focus resources and energy on four key projects in order to achieve efficiencies:-

- Review the way the council uses its accommodation/offices.
- Home working.
- Flexible working.
- Electronic document and records management system.

Examples of areas of work within these projects included:-

- ❑ Expand home working opportunities for staff to deliver more efficiencies.
- ❑ Improving mobile working by giving officers in the field access to the right technology.
- ❑ Improving our Civic Hub to make public services more accessible and joined up.
- ❑ Reducing paper by scanning documents and using/storing them electronically.
- ❑ Becoming more energy efficient.

Work undertaken beneath the TWWW heading is now being taken forward in relation to a new programme of work focused on how we work with our customers and respond to the government's Welfare Reform agenda.

Making good use of public money

Having to do more with less means we will be looking more creatively at how we provide, and deliver, our services over the next four years - on our own and together with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors. We will undertake a strategic review of our assets - working hard to keep Council Tax low, maximising our resources and seeking efficiencies in everything we do.

Performance Management Review

The council is always looking to improve the way it delivers services and will make the best use of information to target services to groups and individuals in our communities in the most efficient and effective way. To do this effectively we need to ensure that we are clear about what specific outcomes we want to achieve.

We have recently reviewed our approach to performance management to ensure that we focus much more on the outcomes that we want to achieve, and how we measure our progress.

Priorities, Outcomes and Activities

In this section we have set out, under each of our priorities, the outcomes that we are committed to delivering.

For each of the outcomes you will find:-

- An explanation of why improved outcomes are needed.
- Activities we will be undertaking over the next three years to achieve improvements.
- Performance indicators we will use to measure our success.
- A list of targets, linked to each indicator, showing how we propose to deliver the improvements over the next three years.

By 2016 the borough will look and feel like this:-

A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcomes:-

- Levels of safety will have improved, along with standards of public health.
- Newcastle will be safer with vulnerable victims of crime and disorder receiving high quality support.
- The negative impact that the council, residents and local businesses have on the environment will have reduced.
- Our streets and open spaces will be clean, clear and tidy.
- Town centres across the borough will be sustainable and safe.



A borough of opportunity

Outcomes:-

- Levels of worklessness will have reduced.
- Local people will be able to access opportunities for personal development and growth.
- Housing will be available and accessible to meet a range of diverse needs.
- Key parts of the borough will have been regenerated and there will have been overall economic growth.



A healthy and active community

Outcomes:-

- People who live work, visit or study in the borough will have access to high quality facilities.
- Levels of cultural activity and participation in the arts will have increased.
- There will be a range of healthy lifestyle choices, resulting in an increase in participation in sport and physical activity.



A co-operative council delivering high quality, community-driven, services.

Outcomes:-

- The council will have increased the capacity and skills of its workforce.

- Councillors will be community champions and powerful community advocates.
- The council will have delivered further efficiencies.
- Local communities are engaged and able to shape and deliver services which impact on their lives.
- Increasing the resilience in communities by building effective and strong partnerships across the borough and utilising public and community resources.



Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcome 1.1 Levels of safety will have improved, along with standards of public health

Why are the improvements needed?

The council has a duty to protect the public's health and improve the general quality of life where possible.

We know that . . .

- people are injured on the roads
- people suffer food poisoning
- past historic industries may have caused contaminated land

You told us that . . .

- you want safer places to eat
- you are concerned about the danger of unrepaired housing
- you want roads that are safe for the everyone to use

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Respond to outbreaks of food poisoning to try to prevent spread and reoccurrence
- Contaminated land strategy reviewed and published in 2013
- Continue to inspect food businesses in our planned programme to ensure they are safe to eat
- A new Public Health Strategy to be produced

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Number of people killed or seriously injured on the borough's roads (1.1.1)
- Percentage of food premises that have a zero or one national food hygiene rating. (1.1.2)
- The amount of contaminated land that has been remediated and is now in use (1.1.3)
- Percentage of Category 1 housing disrepair hazards concerns brought to the attention of the Council that are investigated and addressed (1.1.4)
- The number of food establishments which are broadly compliant with good hygiene law (1.1.5)

Outcome 1.2 Newcastle will be safer with vulnerable victims of crime and disorder receiving high quality support

Why are the improvements needed?

To offer an optimum service to reassure, support and protect vulnerable people in the borough.

We know that . . .

- too many people suffering from incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour are vulnerable because they are subject to this repeated behaviour
- some victims are more vulnerable than others and need more support
- early intervention is key in tackling and positively resolving incidences

You told us that . . .

- you want to live in a community where you feel safe
- you want to know that services are available to support and help when needed

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Review Anti-Social Behaviour policy 2013
- Work with partner organisations and key groups, together with communities to deal with crime and raise awareness of support services for the public
- Domestic Violence - Early Intervention Worker recruited to support services
- Continuation of funding for Anti-Social Behaviour Victims Worker
- Develop the existing multi-agency conference system to address the problems faced by vulnerable people

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Level of satisfaction with the support provided to vulnerable citizens (1.2.1)
- Number of interventions to support vulnerable citizens and victims of crime (1.2.2)
- Reduction in incidents of violence with injury, anti-social behaviour, serious acquisitive crime and domestic violence (1.2.3-6)

Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcome 1.3

The negative impact that the Council, residents and local businesses have on the environment will have reduced

Why are the improvements needed?

We know that . . .

- too many carbon emissions is harmful to the environment and impacts on the quality of life for residents and visitors alike
- to reduce excess waste the council needs to work with residents and businesses to minimise residual waste year on year

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned about the future of the environment
- you want to maintain the level of the council's national award winning recycling service
- you would want recycling to be reprocessed in the UK
- you would also like to see other types of recycling introduced such as small appliances

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Continue to monitor air quality in the borough, consult with residents on findings and devise plans for monitoring and control of air quality
- Continue to investigate and take action in respect of nuisance identified in the borough
- Investigate and implement the kerbside collection of small electrical appliances and batteries
- Establish a trial recycling service for businesses and community buildings

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The amount of residual waste per household (1.3.1)
- Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (1.3.2)
- The amount of carbon emissions by the Council (1.3.3)
- The number of non-residential collections covered by the trade waste recycling scheme - includes Council properties and schools (1.3.4)
- The level of air quality (1.3.5)
- Number of general nuisance complaints (1.3.6)

Outcome 1.4

Our streets and open spaces will be clean, clear and tidy

Why are the improvements needed?

Research has demonstrated that there are clear cross-cutting links between local environmental quality and other policy agendas;

- Clean, safe, green infrastructure has a vital role in ensuring mental and physical health.
- Good design and high standards of maintenance and cleansing are vital in reducing anti-social behaviour and other environmental crime

We know that . . .

- too much litter and detritus in the area does not attract people to live, work and invest in the area

You told us that . . .

- you are generally satisfied with the cleanliness of our streets and parks and open spaces but there are "hot spots" which need to be improved

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- LEQ surveys (3 per year) and resultant action plan to tackle hot spots
- Environmental Education and Enforcement Action Plan
- Community engagement and participation in caring for local green spaces and neighbourhoods
- Service challenge and review to ensure resources are deployed effectively and efficiently to tackle cleanliness issues

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Levels of street and environment cleanliness (LEQ survey) free / predominantly free of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting) (1.4.1)
- Number of community volunteer groups/hours spent caring for their local green spaces and neighbourhoods (1.4.2)
- Quality standards achieved eg Britain in Bloom, Green Flag Awards (1.4.3)
- Satisfaction with cleanliness of streets and green spaces (1.4.4)

Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcome 1.5

Town centres across the borough will be sustainable and safe

Why are the improvements needed?

The town centres within the borough play a vital role in providing employment, local services and entertainment for residents and visitors. The challenge is to ensure each centre remains sustainable and safe despite any economic downturn. For economic growth there is a need to work with other agencies and partnerships to keep the town centres as safe as possible and that crime is kept at a low level.

We know that . . .

- you value the town centres and want the council to ensure they remain vibrant and attractive - visually and economically
- it is important to develop town centres for the future

You told us that . . .

- regeneration for the borough's town centres is important to you
- you are concerned about levels of crime
- you are also concerned about visiting the town centre at night

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Town centre partnership established in Kidsgrove and Newcastle and town plans developed
- Scoping exercise to be undertaken of footfall within the town centre
- To take forward the retail-led redevelopment of the former Sainsbury/Ryecroft site.
- Completion of public realm improvements in the town centre and introduction of new market stalls
- Complete the gating off of problematic alleyways under the Green Routes scheme
- Attain a purple flag for the safety of night time economy

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Town centre vacancy rate (1.5.1)
- Percentage of investment portfolio (NBC owned) vacant (1.5.2)
- Levels of crimes in our town centres (1.5.3)
- Level of safety of town centres as indicated by residents (1.5.4)
- The level of town centre attractiveness as indicated by residents (1.5.5)



Priority 2: A borough of opportunity

Outcome 2.1 Levels of worklessness will have reduced

Why are the improvements needed?

The level of unemployment in the borough is 2.6% at November 2012 which is lower than the regional and national rates. Amongst people aged 18 to 24 years the level increases to 4% (compared to 8.7% in the West Midlands and 7% in Great Britain).

We know that . . .

- it is key to raise skill levels to help drive enterprise, to create more and better jobs
- training opportunities for people to develop and gain confidence is essential

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned about levels of worklessness in the borough

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Plans to encourage enterprise within the borough to be developed
- Town Centre Partnership action plan
- Work with the "Make it" initiative
- Support given to unemployed by the Newcastle Business Enterprise Coach

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The level of employment in the borough (2.1.1)
- The number of jobs created by Council-backed initiatives in the borough (2.1.2)
- The percentage of people of working age claiming benefits (2.1.3)
- The level of NEETs (2.1.4)

Outcome 2.2 Local people will be able to access opportunities for personal development and growth

Why are the improvements needed?

The council understands the importance of working with partners to ensure there are opportunities available to access to support development.

We know that . . .

- it is important to provide a wide range of activities to support our communities
- volunteering activities need to be encouraged and supported

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned whether opportunities will be limited in the future

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Work with Newcastle Employment and Skills Group (NESG) to identify areas for improvement and further opportunities

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The number (or percentage) of people obtaining NVQ levels (2.2.1)
- The number of people gaining additional educational qualifications as a result of Council-backed initiatives (2.2.2)
- The number of volunteers used by the council/taken on by the council who go on to gain employment (2.2.3)
- Narrative on the impact of the Council's role as employer of volunteers (2.2.4)
- Number of organisations working with the council to take on volunteers (2.2.5)
- Number of hours worked by volunteers in council co-ordinated activities (2.2.6)

Priority 2: A borough of opportunity

Outcome 2.3

Housing will be available and accessible to meet a range of diverse needs

Why are the improvements needed?

Housing is most frequently cited in terms of its appropriateness and affordability.

Appropriate housing meets the needs of residents in terms of size, physical attributes and location. Affordable housing includes affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to specific eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. With many local residents unable to access a home that meets their needs, it is important that the council works with local housing providers to deliver needed accommodation.

We know that . . .

- there is a lack of suitable available housing in the borough
- there are nearly 3,000 households on the housing register wanting affordable housing

You told us that . . .

- you prefer affordable longer term tenancies with greater security
- you are concerned about homelessness
- you are concerned about increasing fuel bills and want to be able to keep your home warm

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Partnership working with Registered Providers and the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver new affordable housing in line with the Local Investment Plan
- Delivery of new homes at Charter Road
- Encouragement and support to private home owners to return their empty properties back into use
- Development of Eco brokerage service

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The number of affordable homes provided as a result of partnership working with Registered Providers and the Homes & Communities Agency (2.3.1)
- The net number of additional homes provided (2.3.2)
- Number of empty properties brought back into use (2.3.3)
- Percentage of referrals for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) approved within six months (2.3.4)
- Percentage of minor adaptations delivered within four months (2.3.5)
- Number of homelessness cases prevented (2.3.6)



Priority 2: A borough of opportunity

Outcome 2.4

Key parts of the borough will have been regenerated and there will have been overall economic growth

Why are the improvements needed?

To enable further growth of the borough, the council needs to attract inward investment from the private sector. To facilitate this the Council will work with the private sector and partners to bring forward suitable and viable development opportunities.

We know that . . .

- to provide more employment opportunities, more suitable development sites to attract investment are needed

You told us that . . .

- regeneration in the borough is important to you

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Work with Make It inward investment service for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire to promote the area for inward investment
- Bring forward attractive development sites
- Marketing of specific development opportunities
- Work with Business Enterprise Support (BES) to help in the delivery of its enterprise support scheme
- Delivery of the Annual Newcastle Business Boost competition
- Consultation to be undertaken by the council with communities on a draft Site Allocation Policies Local Plan
- Develop coordinated enterprise strategy
- Support development of the emergent knowledge intensive sectors
- Support development of professional and business services sectors
- Make the most of the Borough's successful logistics sector
- Promote further development of Keele Science and Business Park

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Level of economic health across the borough (2.4.1)
- Percentage of investment portfolio which is vacant (2.4.2)
- Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) showing employment growth (2.4.3)
- Buildings within the built heritage asset register improved and no longer at risk (2.4.4)
- Number of proposed jobs from successful planning applications (2.4.5)
- Rate of new VAT business registration (2.4.6)
- Average stall occupancy rate for markets (2.4.7)



Priority 3: A healthy and active community

Outcome 3.1 People who live work, visit or study in the borough will have access to high quality facilities

Why are the improvements needed?

The Council is committed to ensuring there are high quality facilities available to residents and visitors to the borough. Significant capital development at J2 has resulted in increased participation and substantial operational revenue savings.

We know that . . .

- it is important to recognise the vital role that being active plays in the lives of everyone
- access to well equipped and safe facilities is important

You told us that . . .

- you want quality and affordable leisure services
- you want open spaces and parks to be safe places to visit

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Full feasibility study developed for the refurbishment/ replacement of Kidsgrove Sports centre
- Complete the review of community centres
- Develop outline business case for future management/ governance of leisure and cultural services

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Number of parks which have green flag status (3.1.1)
- Level of satisfaction with Council-run parks and open spaces (3.1.2)
- Level of satisfaction with Council-run a) leisure and b) cultural services (3.1.3)
- Level of satisfaction with Council-owned car parking facilities (3.1.4)
- Levels of satisfaction with bereavement services (3.1.5)
- Level of service quality of the two main Council information centres – Guildhall and Kidsgrove (3.1.6)
- Percentage of town centres public toilets that meet the Council's minimum standard for quality and cleanliness (3.1.7)

Outcome 3.2 Levels of cultural activity and participation in the arts will have increased

Why are the improvements needed?

Involvement in artistic and cultural activities is beneficial physically, mentally and emotionally for young and older people.

We know that . . .

- the cultural facilities contribute significantly to the economy of the borough
- it is important for the council to encourage cultural activity in the borough to ensure people can enhance their life experiences

You told us that . . .

- the availability of local events and facilities to visit are important in your lives

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Programme of cultural events and exhibitions
- Development programme for volunteers
- Multi-agency Arts Strategy to be developed
- Feasibility study into the development of the museum to meet future aspirations

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Visitor satisfaction (3.2.1)
- Number of people visiting museums (3.2.2)
- Number of people attending local theatres (3.2.3)
- Economic impact of visitors to museums (3.2.4)
- Impact of volunteer development programme (3.2.5)
- Impact of community-run cultural events and people attending (3.2.6)

Priority 3: A healthy and active community

Outcome 3.3

There will be a range of healthy lifestyle choices, resulting in an increase in participation in sport and physical activity

Why are the improvements needed?

The council wants to incentivise people to adopt healthier lifestyles.

We know that . . .

- too many people do not exercise on a regular basis
- well equipped, accessible and affordable facilities are necessary

You told us that . . .

- leisure facilities and play areas are very important to you

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Sportivate programme to encourage younger people to participate in physical activities
- Sportmakers programme to increase adult participation
- Healthy walk programme
- Delivery of programme of healthy initiatives with partners including:
 - GP referral scheme
 - Cardiac rehabilitation scheme
 - Joint/muscle mobility exercise
- Allotment policy review
- Delivery of improvement projects to outdoor sport facilities

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The percentage of primary school children who are categorised as obese (3.3.1)
- The number of referrals from GPs to organised sporting activity (3.3.2)
- Percentage of people referred for exercise by GPs whose health improves (3.3.3)
- The number of teenage pregnancies (3.3.4)
- The number of premature deaths (3.3.5)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.1

The Council will have increased the capacity and skills of its workforce

Why are the improvements needed?

In order to maintain high levels of service and deliver efficiencies, the capacity and skills of our existing workforce need to continue to be developed.

We know that . . .

- our customers expect a high standard of service when they contact the council
- our customers want easy access to multiple agency services at convenient locations. Joint working and engagement with partners in day to day service delivery provides a valuable learning environment that improves the skills of the joint workforce

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned that services may suffer as a result of the economy

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Delivery of the Workforce Development Plan
- Develop a Shared Apprenticeship Scheme with partners
- Development of e-learning facilities
- Increasing the ways in which customers can contact us, by providing greater choice - developing self service, web services, SMS, email and other means of contact - linked to customer need
- Deliver further customer service training to continue to meet Customer Service Excellence standards.
- Programme of skills development for ICT to ensure we maximise the benefits of existing and new technology

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Number of apprenticeships /shared apprenticeship placements offered (4.1.1)
- Percentage of workforce with completed learning and development plans (4.1.2)
- Percentage of staff who have completed accredited training courses (4.1.3)
- Number of e-learning modules completed (4.1.4)
- Percentage of staff who feel they have the necessary skills/competencies to do their job effectively (4.1.5)

Outcome 4.2

Councillors will be community champions and powerful community advocates

Why are the improvements needed?

Communities need representation and support in order to empower their communities.

We know that . . .

- Good communication is necessary to understand the needs of communities of the borough and also to ensure that the council delivers clear, transparent messages of what they have achieved or want to improve upon

You told us that . . .

- you want to know what is planned which will impact upon your community

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Delivery of Scrutiny work plan
- Training programme for members

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Percentage of elected members who have a personal development plan (4.2.1)
- Impact of actions from the work plan (4.2.2)
- Percentage attendance at planned meetings by members (4.2.3)
- Number of issues raised by members (4.2.4)
- Percentage of candidates and agents satisfied/very satisfied with electoral service (4.2.5)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.3

The Council will have delivered further efficiencies

Why are the improvements needed?

We want to ensure services are delivered efficiently and of high quality to its customers. The council strives to deliver effective services within the restraints of its budget.

We know that . . .

- the economic downturn may impact upon the council and add further pressure to its budget with a greater demand for its services.

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned about the council being more efficient and effective

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Medium Term Financial Strategy reviewed annually and reported
- Monthly budget monitoring programme
- Delivery of the Procurement (Strategic) work plan

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Percentage of planned procurement efficiencies achieved (4.3.1)
- Percentage projected variance against full year council budget (4.3.2)
- Average number of days per employee lost to sickness (4.3.3)
- Percentage of residents who feel that the Council is providing VFM (4.3.4)
- Achieving a balanced budget (4.3.5)
- Percentage return on council investments (4.3.6)
- Ratio of planned versus responsive maintenance expenditure on all Council owned buildings (4.3.7)
- Net income collected from Council assets (4.3.8)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.4

Local communities are engaged and able to shape and deliver services which impact on their lives

Why are the improvements needed?

To impact on solving problems of everyday life in local communities, the people need to be able to see how their views can shape the solutions that will make a lasting difference in the way services are delivered. In doing this the Council will be an open, honest and transparent organisation which undertakes regular consultation with its residents and listens to their views.

We know that . . .

- different communities have problems to face unique to their neighbourhood
- support is necessary to encourage engagement
- communication within a community and involvement of stakeholders is key to solving solutions

You told us that . . .

- you do not always feel you have the confidence or skills necessary to be involved or influence decision making in your community

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Support to groups from funded infrastructure project
- Develop communities around the localism agenda
- Focus on dealing with troubled families and enhancing community involvement and self-reliance
- Further Community Pride events to deal with community issues

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Level of satisfaction with the role of the Council in supporting communities to solve local problems, as indicated by local people (4.4.1)
- Level of satisfaction with the Council's support to communities, as indicated by partner organisations (4.4.2)
- The impact of the Council's support in empowering communities to solve specific local problems (4.4.3)
- The overall level of satisfaction with the Council as a provider of services (4.4.4)
- Percentage of people who feel that they can influence Council decisions (4.4.5)
- Level of satisfaction with the support provided to LAPs and other community groups to improve their organisational strength (4.4.6)
- Increase the number of residents, community and voluntary groups engaged with LAPs (4.4.7)
- Percentage of requests resolved at first point of contact (4.4.8)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.5

Increasing the resilience in communities by building effective and strong partnerships across the borough, and utilising public and community resources

Why are the improvements needed?

In order to deliver appropriate and optimum services to the people of the borough it is necessary for the council to continue to work with existing partners and develop strong new partnerships across all sectors. Also, the Borough Council recognises that the priorities set by the council cannot be delivered by the council alone.

We know that . . .

- strong partnerships are necessary to progress our outcomes effectively

You told us that . . .

- you would like to see more partnership working involving the council

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Investigate opportunities to develop a Social Enterprise with key partner agencies
- Build on relationships with the voluntary and community sector in delivering key services to local people
- Deliver the Lets Work Together (LWT) project in partnership with others
- Develop and implement a Co-operative Strategy for the council with other key stakeholders
- Develop health promotion work in areas of greatest need
- Map vulnerability across the Borough and its neighbourhoods to target services more effectively
- Welfare reform - to be delivered with partners

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Community/citizen satisfaction levels increased (4.5.1)
- Communities feel they are able to influence decisions (4.5.2)
- Engagement with LAPs increased (4.5.3)
- Quality of service delivery (4.5.4)
- Knowledge amongst public about co-operative approaches (4.5.5)
- Decrease in anti-social behaviour levels and domestic violence - linked to LWT project (4.5.6)
- People feeling safe in their homes and fear of crime lessened (4.5.7)

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan

2013 -14 to 2015 -16



www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION – MOVING THE DATE OF ENGLISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS TO THE DATE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN 2014

Submitted by: Senior Member Services Officer – Nick Lamper

Portfolio: Communication, Transformation and Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To formulate the council's response to the above consultation paper.

Recommendation

That the council's response to the consultation be based on that set out in the report, subject to any additions/amendments agreed at the meeting.

Reasons

Responding to the consultation will ensure that the council's views are considered when the Secretary of State determines whether to make an order to move the date of the elections and, crucially, in determining any consequential provision amending other legislation in order to deal with the practical consequences of moving the election date.

1. Background

- 1.1 Section 37A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 provides that the Secretary of State may change the date of local elections in any year so that those elections will coincide with a European Parliamentary election being held in that year. This power has been exercised in the years of the last two European elections – 2004 and 2009.
- 1.2 In 2014 such a combination of polls would lead to the local government elections being moved from 1 May to either 22 May or 5 June 2014. The European election is currently scheduled to be held on 5-8 June but the Council of the European Union has proposed moving this to 22-25 May. On this basis it is more likely that the combined poll would be held on 22 May.
- 1.3 Prior to making such an order the Secretary of State is required to carry out consultation, and has therefore published the attached consultation paper which is targeted particularly at those local authorities which have elections in 2014, Newcastle-under-Lyme being one.

2. Issues

- 2.1 There are a number of advantages and disadvantages to combining polls in this way, but it is generally accepted that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. These include cost effectiveness, minimising confusion (in most scenarios) and maximising convenience for voters, increased turnout, and enabling the effective use of available resources over one election period rather than two, which are effectively separate yet overlap.
- 2.2 In particular, where the combination of polls relates to one which is externally funded and another where the cost is borne by the authority itself, as in this case, there are direct

financial savings for the local authority, while democracy is also better served by the increased engagement and turnout.

- 2.3 The disadvantages are mainly practical, and include matters such as the need to hold the annual council meeting later (the legislation would provide extra flexibility for this; the Local Government Act 1972 provides that the annual meeting of a principal council must be held within 21 days of the day of retirement of councillors in an election year) and consequential adjustments to the committee timetable, as well as increased administrative complexity in combining the polls.
- 2.4 Although there is some added complexity in running a combined poll, this is preferable to running two polls very close together with overlapping timetables, as would be the case if the date of the 2014 local elections were not aligned with the European poll. European Parliamentary elections in England have since 2009 been administered on local authority boundaries rather than those of the English Parliamentary constituencies, which has further simplified their combination with local government elections.
- 2.5 Furthermore, electoral administrators and other staff at district councils in two-tier areas are well experienced in running combined polls, having delivered county council elections combined with Parliamentary ones in 1997, 2001 and 2005, a combined county and European poll in 2009, and combined district council elections and Alternative Vote referendum in 2011. Those in districts which go by thirds, such as Newcastle, also ran district elections combined the European ones in 2004 and with the Parliamentary in 2010.
- 2.6 The consultation document makes reference to the potential for confusion amongst the electorate under both scenarios – where the polls are not combined and voters will be exposed to publicity for both elections in the lead up to the first; and where the polls are combined and electors will be expected to cast multiple votes at one time using different voting systems.
- 2.7 In practice, voters tend to cope well when two polls are combined and it is only where three or more are held together that significant confusion may start to creep in. Although the paper makes mention of the possibility of parish council elections and Council Tax and other local referendums, these are unlikely to be an issue in Newcastle, with the next parish elections being scheduled for 2015 and no reason to expect any other type of local poll. In any case, risks of voter confusion can be largely mitigated by robust training of the staff presiding at polling stations and those dealing with queries in relation to postal votes, as well as clarity of design of postal ballot packs.
- 2.8 The consultation document also seeks views on moving the date of any council tax referendums in addition to that of the local government elections. This proposal is not supported for the reasons set out in detail in section 3.4 below.

3. **Proposal**

- 3.1 The consultation seeks views on six specific questions, and suggested responses are set out in relation to each of these in the following sections.
- 3.2 **Do you consider that Government should seek to move the date of elections to principal local authorities in 2014, including elections of directly elected mayors, from 1 May so that they are held on the same day as, and in combination with, the European Parliamentary elections?**
 - Yes. The advantages in terms of cost effectiveness, project and risk management, minimising confusion and maximising convenience for voters, increased turnout, and

making the most effective use of available resources far outweigh any disadvantages of combining the polls.

3.3 If we change the date for those elections should we also move the date of parish council elections where they are scheduled to take place on 1 May 2014?

- Yes, for the reasons set out in response to the previous question.

3.4 If we change the date of elections to principal authorities, should we also move the date of any council tax referendums where they are scheduled to take place on 1 May 2014?

- Although the same administrative advantages would apply to moving any referendum as would apply to moving the local government elections, it would be preferable to hold a Council Tax referendum on a date as early as possible. If it became necessary to hold a Council Tax referendum there would be a degree of uncertainty created to taxpayers, which would have administrative and collection implications. Although preferable to minimise any uncertainty, we should be mindful of the potential administrative savings alignment of the dates would bring. Based on the need for a Council Tax referendum only being a possibility rather than a reality at this time, on balance it would be advantageous to align the dates but this is by no means clear-cut.

3.5 What practical issues do you foresee in combining effectively local elections with the European Parliamentary elections?

- Requirement effectively to run two separate processes simultaneously;
- Increased demand on print capacity in terms of the volumes of ballot papers and increased complexity of postal ballot packs;
- Potential voter confusion over the type of polls being held;
- More complex verification and count procedures;
- Increased staffing levels for some processes – eg postal vote opening, polling staff, verification, count;
- Ensuring the correct franchises are used for each poll.

3.6 What practical issues do you foresee in combining effectively local elections with any referendums?

- See answers to previous two questions.

3.7 What action do you think should be taken to address these practical issues (whether by local authorities, Government or the Electoral Commission)?

- It is essential that all secondary legislation and guidance is put in place sufficiently early to allow full and detailed project planning of the elections and remove any uncertainty over detailed requirements. The effective running of previous elections and referendums has repeatedly been jeopardised by the lateness of the passing of legislation and provision of information from central government and this must not be allowed to happen again.
- It is paramount that the legislation ensures that the timetables for the elections are completely integrated;
- A comprehensive and timely publicity campaign should be run by the Electoral Commission to engage and inform the electorate and minimise confusion over the type of polls being conducted;

- With adequate notice and lead-in time, local authorities will be well placed to project plan the elections thoroughly, identifying required resources at an early stage, managing risk and contingency planning.
- The government should not seek to move the date of any council tax referendums, for the reasons set out in response to the related question above.

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 4.1 The moving of the local government elections to coincide with the European Parliamentary elections would require the making of an order by the Secretary of State, pursuant to powers under section 37A of the Representation of the People Act 1983. This would place a duty upon the Returning Officer to conduct the election in accordance with the timetable specified by the legislation.

5. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 5.1 The government will have regard to equality and diversity issues in reaching its decision on whether to bring forward the secondary legislation and its content.

6. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 6.1 The combining of the polls would result in cost savings in their delivery, including a direct saving for the council in relation to the borough elections.

7. **Major Risks**

- 7.1 The conduct of all elections is subject to rigorous project planning, risk management and contingency planning.

8. **List of Appendices**

The consultation document is appended.

9. **Background Papers**

None.



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Moving the date of English Local Government elections to the date of the European Parliamentary elections in 2014

Consultation

© Crown copyright, 2013

Copyright in the typographical arrangement rests with the Crown.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/ or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This document/publication is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/dclg

If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, email contactus@communities.gov.uk or write to us at:

Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

March 2013

ISBN: 978-1-4098-3819-7

Contents

Consultation	4
Local Elections in 2014	4
The legislation	4
Holding elections on the same day	5
Views sought	7
Timetable	7
Confidentiality and data protection	7
Responding to the consultation	8
Annex A – Consultees	9
Annex B – Election to principal councils in 2014	10

Consultation

1. This consultation seeks views about moving the date of the local elections from 1 May 2014, so that they take place on the same day as the European Parliamentary elections in that year. It invites the views of the public and other interested parties, including local authorities, on whether or not to move the local government elections. Subject to the responses to this consultation, we will consider whether to use the power in section 37A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 to make an order to move the date of the local elections so that they and the European Parliamentary elections take place at the same time and are combined.
2. Elections to the European Parliament will be held in the spring of 2014; under existing legal provisions on 5 – 8 June, unless the Council of the European Union (in effect the Governments of the 27 member states of the European Union acting together) decides otherwise. The Council has proposed moving the date of the 2014 European Parliament elections to 22 – 25 May. The European Parliament will be consulted on this amendment before the Council formally adopts a decision to change the date but in an indicative vote in November 2012, the European Parliament was supportive of such a change. For the United Kingdom all of this would mean European Parliamentary elections on either Thursday 22 May or Thursday 5 June.
3. While we are specifically inviting the views of the consultees listed at Annex A, we welcome comments from any interested groups or individuals. We will have regard to all representations before finally deciding whether to exercise the order-making power changing the local election date in 2014.

Local elections in 2014

4. In 2014 elections are scheduled for 1 May for the 160 principal local authorities in England listed at Annex B and for 5 directly elected mayors (in Hackney, Lewisham, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Watford). There are also a number of elections to parish councils in England scheduled for that date. The Government is minded, subject to this consultation and the approval of Parliament, to move the date of all these elections so that they will be held at the same time as the elections to the European Parliament and combined with those European Parliamentary elections.

The legislation

5. Section 37A of The Representation of the People Act 1983 provides that the Secretary of State, by Order, may change the date of local elections in any year so

that those elections will coincide with a European Parliamentary general election being held in that year. Before making such an Order the Act requires the Secretary of State to consult the Electoral Commission and such other persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate. The 1983 Act also provides that any such Order may include consequential provision amending other legislation in order to deal with certain practical consequences of moving the election date such as amending the dates for the holding of annual meetings (we are minded to provide that annual meetings should be held in the period beginning four days after the date of the elections and ending on 31 August 2014).

6. For these purposes local elections include elections to principal local authorities, elections of directly elected mayors and elections to parish councils. When these elections are held on the same day as European Parliamentary elections, the polls are combined. In addition provisions included in the Political Parties and Elections Act 2009 provide that the European Parliamentary elections will be held in Great Britain on local government boundaries, administered by the Returning Officers for elections of councillors to local authorities.

Holding elections on the same day

7. It is a fundamental principle that elections must be free and fair, ensuring the free expression of the opinion of the people. Part of complying with this principle is to ensure that elections are accessible and convenient for the voter. It is less convenient for voters to be asked to turn out and vote twice within a period of weeks and hence having elections on the same day supports the fairness of elections.
8. Previous combination of these two sets of polls (in 2004 and 2009) shows that it is more cost effective to run them as a combined poll than two stand-alone elections on different days. By combining the polls we estimate savings on electoral administration of some £10 million. There may also be savings for the political parties in election campaigns being held in combination rather than separately for the local and European Parliamentary elections. And turnout has been seen to increase where this particular combination of polls has taken place in the past.
9. Moreover, if the date of the local elections is not changed to the date of the European elections, then as the timetable for the European Parliamentary elections runs for 25 working days prior to polling day, there would be an overlap in the timetable for that election with the closing stages of the local elections on 1 May. This is all the more so if the European Parliamentary elections are moved to the 22nd of May 2014.

10. There is a risk that this may cause confusion for electors who could receive poll cards and see publicity for the European elections prior to voting in the local elections, and create complexities for administrators who will be required to publish the notice of the election and deal with nominations from candidates for the European elections in the weeks leading up to polling day for the local elections.

11. In summary the benefits of holding the local and European Parliamentary elections in combination on the same day are:

- it will be more convenient for voters to have to visit the polling station once only, meaning that more voters are likely to participate in the election;
- it will result in the election periods for the local and European elections running together and avoid the start of the European election period overlapping with the end of the local election period;
- it will reduce costs incurred by local authorities and central Government in funding the conduct of the polls and for political parties in distributing election material and canvassing voters; and
- those responsible for voter awareness campaigns, particularly the Electoral Commission and local authorities, will be able to concentrate their efforts in increasing awareness of one single election day.

12. However, at times concerns have been raised about combining polls. It has been suggested that holding two or more elections on the same day, particularly where different voting systems are in use for the different elections, has the potential for increased confusion among electors. The risk of confusion is greater, the greater the number of polls being held on the day concerned. It is recognised that if there is a single day for local and European Parliamentary elections there could be in some areas at least 3 polls (to the European Parliament, principal local authorities and to parish councils) to which might be added a poll for a Council Tax referendum¹ and a poll for a local referendum of another type.

13. Practical issues relating to the administration of the elections can arise when they take place on the same day. Administration may be more complex; Returning Officers will still have to conduct more than one ballot and undertake more than one count. We also need to consider the practicalities such as counting arrangements, Returning Officers' responsibilities, funding arrangements and information for voters. However, in previous years such combination has been sought by interested groups including those running the polls and the conduct of combined elections has been successfully undertaken.

¹ Under powers granted in the Localism Act the Secretary of State may move Council tax referendums from May to another date by Order.

Views sought

14. We would welcome your views on the following questions:

- **Do you consider that Government should seek to move the date of elections to principal local authorities in 2014, including elections of directly elected mayors, from 1 May so that they are held on the same day as, and in combination with, the European Parliamentary elections?**
- **If we change the date for those elections should we also move the date of parish council elections where they are scheduled to take place on 1 May 2014?**
- **If we change the date of elections to principal authorities, should we also move the date of any council tax referendums where they are scheduled to take place on 1 May 2014?**
- **What practical issues do you foresee in combining effectively local elections with the European Parliamentary elections?**
- **What practical issues do you foresee in combining effectively local elections with any referendums?**
- **What action do you think should be taken to address these practical issues (whether by local authorities, Government or the Electoral Commission)?**

Timetable

15. The timetable to make the necessary changes to achieve the date change is dependent on securing Parliament's approval to the necessary secondary legislation.

16. If we are to make an order moving the date of the local elections in 2014, such an order must be made by the end of October 2013. If following the consideration of the results of this consultation we were to change the date of the local elections, we would lay an order moving the date of the elections before Parliament not later than June 2013.

Confidentiality and data protection

17. Any responses to this consultation may be made public. If you do not want all or part of your response or name made public, please state this clearly in the response. Any confidentiality disclaimer that may be generated by your

organisation's IT system or included as a general statement in your fax cover sheet will be taken to apply only to information in your response for which confidentiality has been specifically requested.

18. Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). If you want other information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.
19. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties

Responding to this consultation

20. All responses to this consultation should be sent to arrive no later than 13 May 2013 to:

E-mail: maggie.crosby@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Mrs Maggie Crosby
Communities and Local Government
3/J1 Eland House
Bressenden Place
LONDON
SW1E 5DU

Annex A

Consultees

The consultation is specifically addressed to those listed below; in addition the consultation paper is available on the web, and comments from all are welcomed.

The Electoral Commission

Local authorities in England
The Local Government Association
The National Association of Local Councils

National political parties with representatives in the European Parliament and Local Government

Confederation of British Industry
Institute of Directors

Association of Electoral Administrators
Society of Local Authority Chief Executives
Society of Local Council Clerks
Association of Chief Police Officers
Chief Fire Officers Association

Annex B

Elections to principal councils in 2014

Councils shown in bold are likely to hold whole council elections in 2014 to introduce revised electoral arrangements (changes to the number of councillors and the names and boundaries of wards)

Shire (two-tier) district councils electing by thirds

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Amber Valley | 35. Newcastle-under-Lyme |
| 2. Basildon | 36. North Hertfordshire |
| 3. Basingstoke and Deane | 37. Norwich |
| 4. Bassetlaw | 38. Pendle |
| 5. Brentwood | 39. Preston |
| 6. Broxbourne | 40. Purbeck |
| 7. Burnley | 41. Redditch |
| 8. Cambridge | 42. Reigate and Banstead |
| 9. Cannock Chase | 43. Rochford |
| 10. Carlisle | 44. Rossendale |
| 11. Castle Point | 45. Rugby |
| 12. Cherwell | 46. Runnymede |
| 13. Chorley | 47. Rushmoor |
| 14. Colchester | 48. St Albans |
| 15. Craven | 49. South Cambridgeshire |
| 16. Crawley | 50. South Lakeland |
| 17. Daventry | 51. Stevenage |
| 18. Eastleigh | 52. Stratford-on-Avon |
| 19. Elmbridge | 53. Stroud |
| 20. Epping Forest | 54. Tamworth |
| 21. Exeter | 55. Tandridge |
| 22. Gloucester | 56. Three Rivers |
| 23. Great Yarmouth | 57. Tunbridge Wells |
| 24. Harlow | 58. Watford |
| 25. Harrogate | 59. Welwyn Hatfield |
| 26. Hart | 60. West Lancashire |
| 27. Havant | 61. West Oxfordshire |
| 28. Hertsmere | 62. Weymouth and Portland |
| 29. Huntingdonshire | 63. Winchester |
| 30. Hyndburn | 64. Woking |
| 31. Ipswich | 65. Worcester |
| 32. Lincoln | 66. Worthing |
| 33. Maidstone | 67. Wyre Forest |
| 34. Mole Valley | |

Unitary (single-tier) district councils electing by thirds

1. Blackburn with Darwen
2. Derby
3. Halton
4. Hartlepool
5. Hull
6. **Milton Keynes**
7. North East Lincolnshire
8. Peterborough
9. Plymouth
10. Portsmouth
11. Reading
12. **Slough**
13. Southampton
14. Southend on Sea
15. Swindon
16. Thurrock
17. Warrington
18. Wokingham

Shire (two-tier) district councils electing by halves

1. Adur
2. Cheltenham
3. Fareham
4. Gosport
5. Hastings
6. Nuneaton and Bedworth
7. Oxford

Metropolitan district councils electing by thirds

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Barnsley | 19. Rochdale |
| 2. Birmingham | 20. Rotherham |
| 3. Bolton | 21. Salford |
| 4. Bradford | 22. Sandwell |
| 5. Bury | 23. Sefton |
| 6. Calderdale | 24. Sheffield |
| 7. Coventry | 25. Solihull |
| 8. Doncaster | 26. South Tyneside |
| 9. Dudley | 27. St Helens |
| 10. Gateshead | 28. Stockport |
| 11. Kirklees | 29. Sunderland |
| 12. Knowsley | 30. Tameside |
| 13. Leeds | 31. Trafford |
| 14. Liverpool | 32. Wakefield |
| 15. Manchester | 33. Walsall |
| 16. Newcastle Upon Tyne | 34. Wigan |
| 17. North Tyneside | 35. Wirral |
| 18. Oldham | 36. Wolverhampton |

London Boroughs electing by whole council

1. Barking & Dagenham
2. Barnet
3. Bexley
4. Brent
5. Bromley
6. Camden
7. Croydon
8. Ealing
9. Enfield
10. Greenwich
- 11. Hackney**
12. Hammersmith & Fulham
13. Haringey
14. Harrow
15. Havering
16. Hillingdon
17. Hounslow
18. Islington
- 19. Kensington & Chelsea**
20. Kingston Upon Thames
21. Lambeth
22. Lewisham
23. Merton
24. Newham
25. Redbridge
26. Richmond Upon Thames
27. Southwark
28. Sutton
- 29. Tower Hamlets**
30. Waltham Forest
31. Wandsworth
32. Westminster

London boroughs holding elections for the directly elected mayor

1. Hackney
2. Lewisham
3. Newham
4. Tower Hamlets

Shire (two-tier) district councils holding elections for the directly elected mayor

1. Watford