

Public Document Pack

Date of meeting	Tuesday, 30th October, 2012
Time	7.00 pm
Venue	Training Room 1, Civic Offices, Merrial Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs ST5 2AG
Contact	Louise Stevenson ext 2250

Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

AGENDA

PART 1- OPEN AGENDA

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive Declarations of Interest from Members on items included in the agenda.
- 3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (Pages 1 - 6)**
To consider the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 3 September 2012.
- 4 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (Pages 7 - 24)**
To consider the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the report approved by Cabinet on 17 October 2012.
- 5 OUTLINE OF THE BUDGET CONSULTATION PROCESS (Pages 25 - 30)**
To receive a verbal update regarding the budget consultation process from the Head of Communications. Attached is the special budget edition of the Reporter and the accompanying questionnaire. The programme of face-to-face and public meetings will be sent to follow.
- 6 URGENT BUSINESS**
To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members: Councillors Mrs Burgess, Clarke, Fear, Hambleton, Mrs Hambleton, Mrs Heames (Vice-Chair), Howells, Lawton, Mrs Peers, Mrs Shenton (Chair), Stringer, Waring and White

'Members of the Council: If you identify any personal training / development requirements from the items included in this agenda or through issues raised during the meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Committee Clerk at the close of the meeting'

Officers will be in attendance prior to the meeting for informal discussions on agenda items.

TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 3rd September, 2012

Present:- Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Shenton – in the Chair
Councillors Clarke, Hambleton, Mrs Hambleton, Stringer and Waring

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received by Councillors Mrs Burgess, Councillor Fear, Councillor Mrs Heames, Councillor Howells, Councillor Lawton and Councillor Mrs Peers.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

4. KIDSGROVE CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE PARTNERSHIPS

The Committee considered a briefing note regarding Kidsgrove Customer Service Centre Partnerships and the Police move into the Kidsgrove Customer Service Centre. This was in response to questions raised previously. The Council's Head of Customer and ICT Services was unable to attend the meeting; any questions raised by the Committee would receive a written response.

Members were concerned that the Police would not guarantee a period of time at Kidsgrove Town Hall, that there was no long term commitment to Kidsgrove and that if the Police suffered another tranche of cuts then they may move from Kidsgrove Town Hall. Members assumed that there was a breakout clause contained in the lease, but could not get confirmation of this from the Police. Members wanted to know how long the Police were committed to Kidsgrove for.

There was concern from Members that the accommodation was tight at the town hall. The accommodation was compared with Longton Town Hall, which had a big room with lots of partners. Members were concerned that there was no space to conduct integrated work with partners at Kidsgrove and that the Council would not be working any closer with partners than they were now. Members considered that the services being provided at the One Stop Shop were superficial. For example, the CAB had office space at the Town Hall but the service it offered was to make appointments for the public to see advisors in Newcastle. Members were of the opinion that the One Stop Shop needed to offer more substantive services.

Members questioned the unmanned exhibition for the consultation on the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and advised that it consisted of a pile of papers on a table. The Leader would take the comments regarding the unmanned exhibitions back to the appropriate officers.

Members felt that staff at the One Stop Shop required local knowledge and would benefit from training giving them a basic knowledge of Kidsgrove.

Members questioned when the agreement was to be signed for the Police to take up space within the Town Hall. The Leader would question the Local Policing Team Commander when meeting with him the next week.

RESOLVED: (a) That the information be received.

(b) That clarification be sought of how long the Police were committed to Kidsgrove for and whether there is a breakout clause contained in the lease.

(c) That the Head of Customer and ICT Service be advised that staff at the One Stop Shop would benefit from training giving them a basic knowledge of Kidsgrove.

(d) That the time frame for the Police moving into Kidsgrove Town Hall be ascertained.

5. BUDGET PREPARATION, SCRUTINY AND APPROVAL PROCESS 2013/14

The Committee received a report outlining the process by where the 2013/14 budget would be prepared, scrutinised and approved.

The budget setting process would take up the largest part of the workload for the Committee up to February 2013. Budget setting took place over a period of over twelve months and was an all year round process. The process got more challenging as time progressed and it was noted that the country was still firmly in a recession.

The report set out the role of the Committee and other Councillors and stakeholders. There would be a lot of participation from Directors, Heads of Service etc. A consultation exercise would be conducted and would be brought back to the Committee.

A 'scrutiny café' was being introduced as a new element to the budget setting process. This would be open to all elected Members and Cabinet members would be available, giving all Members an opportunity to ask questions. The whole budget setting process was being opened up to create transparency.

The Chair advised that the timetable was not produced by officers, it was driven by backbenchers. It was questioned what the plans were for public consultation. The Leader of the Council confirmed that there would be a public consultation whereby the public could explain how they thought budget options could be best implemented, and that the public could directly question the Cabinet. Parish and town councils would be visited and there was liaison with LAPs. The Communications department were looking at how best to deliver this and it could include use of the website, the Reporter, static displays and Bluetooth messaging. The Chair emphasised the importance of continuing to present the budget in plain English.

Cabinet offered their thanks to the Officers in the Finance department for their work on the budget setting process.

RESOLVED: (a) That the information be received.

(b) That Cabinet be informed the committee endorse the process set out in the report and agreed the scrutiny work programme timetable.

6. FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT PERIOD 2012/13 FIRST QUARTER

The Committee received the Financial and Performance Management Report for the first quarter of 2012/13. The next report would be in the new outcomes based format.

Members noted that it was good to see a lot of targets being met. It was noted that Planning was not achieving its target but there were many reasons for this and the Planning Committee would keep a watching brief on the situation.

Members noted that the number of people accessing leisure and recreational facilities and the number of people visiting the museum were also not achieving their target. With regard to leisure facilities, Members considered that there needed to be a drive to attract schools into using leisure facilities again and there was concern that the schools would not return. An officer was to attend Kidsgrove Town Council in October to discuss this. The Committee considered that they could look at this issue in the New Year.

Members noted that expenditure totals for J2 had gone over budget. This was because there was not enough allowance in the budget for a cleaning contract; however the additional income J2 had achieved had covered the cost. Members questioned whether the cleaning contract accounted for all of the approximately £34,000 overspend. It would be a significant figure; if not all of the figure, then it would be a majority of it.

RESOLVED: That the information be received.

7. FLEXIBLE WORKING FOR BOROUGH COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

The Committee received an update report regarding the current position of flexible working/homeworking at the Council. Flexible working mainly applied to office based staff. It was enhanced in 2009 and there were now standard, enhanced and compressed flexible working schemes. There were different flexible working arrangements for field based staff which enabled resource to be kept where needed. For example, staff at the depot may work longer hours in the summer and shorter hours in the winter.

Homeworking had been introduced on a voluntary basis and was being kept under review by the 'How We Work' transformation board. Homeworking would continue to be promoted on a voluntary basis; looking at it in any other way would constitute a change in contractual terms. With regard to the cost of homeworking, from the original budget of £40,000 there was £10,000 remaining. The benefits of homeworking were that it allowed management of attendance, long term sickness, phased return to work etc.

Questions had been raised by Members regarding the £63,000 cost of implementing homeworking that had been offset by partners moving into the Civic Offices. It had been suggested that there was a saving in carbon emissions from employees working from home. However, Members considered that partners would still be

emitting carbon, and therefore the Council would not benefit from the £63,000 worth of savings. Members were in favour of homeworking/flexible working etc, but felt that the £63,000 figure had not been explained adequately. It was confirmed that the figure of £63,000 was an estimate based upon 40% of staff working from home one day per week. Approximately £30,000 had actually been spent and therefore the Council was not spending as much of the money coming in from partners. The next step was to focus on recycling equipment employees had at home that they were not using, and to make it available to employees wanting to work from home. Officers noted that a lot of employees used their own equipment when working from home.

Employees regularly working from home could claim a supplement for electricity etc and the figure of £3.00 per week complied with HM Revenues and Customs as anything beyond this sum would become a taxable benefit. Members questioned whether this supplement was being claimed by employees working from home. Employees needed to work from home at least 60% of the working week before they could claim the allowance, most employees worked from home on an occasional basis and only one employee worked from home enough to be able to claim the allowance.

Members questioned how it was determined that employees could work from home. There were a whole range of points that managers needed to consider and an element of trust was required; there had only been one performance issue so far. Furthermore, there were no security issues with regard to the transportation of secure information, as employees did not need to physically take information home, they could access it securely online.

Members stated their support of flexible working but considered that the Council should not go down the route of contractual homeworking. Other local authorities had given serious consideration to homeworking when they had moved into new buildings. It was considered that homeworking would be good for business continuity in the event of a major incident and it was also noted that homeworking would be beneficial for people with disabilities who may not be able to attend work in the Civic Offices. It was agreed by the Committee that regular updates were to be received regarding flexible working, and the next update would be expected in six months time.

RESOLVED: (a) That the information be received.

(b) That an update be provided to the Committee regarding flexible working in six months time.

8. PROCUREMENT OF THE REPORTER

The Committee received a report regarding the outcome of a procurement process for the distribution and printing of the Council's newspaper the Reporter. The report was due to be considered by Cabinet on 19 September 2012.

In May 2009, Cabinet received a report which outlined the results of the procurement process for the print and distribution of the Reporter. Contracts were awarded to two separate companies, one to provide print services and the other to provide distribution services. These contracts were for an initial two-year period with the option for negotiations with the contract providers for two separate 12-month extensions. These options were exercised with both providers. Therefore, the same print and distribution companies had been involved with the Council for the last four

years. With distribution providers in particular, bookings needed to be secured significantly in advance of the dates required. To ensure that the Council could secure appropriate bookings both for 2013/14 and also for the following financial year, it was considered appropriate to carry out the procurement process twelve months in advance.

Some elements of the procurement process had been less than satisfactory, particularly with the print side where there had only been one respondee. The decision had been made to press ahead with the distribution element of the procurement, with a separate process for the print procurement.

Members questioned if there would be an impact on staff at the present time. It was confirmed that only four issues of the Reporter a year had been produced for the last two years and there would be no impact on staff. Members also questioned why there was an edition of the Reporter in May and another in July. This was to cover the elections in May and to avoid the August holidays and promote the leisure activities available during the summer holidays.

A number of options to widen the tender for print were being considered. It was questioned how a tender was written. Quotes would be asked for different numbers of pages and then it would be determined what could be afforded from the available budget. Members questioned whether a smaller paper, rather than a broadsheet, would help to reduce costs. Several factors could affect cost and a smaller paper may not necessarily be cheaper.

Members questioned whether the number of advertisements had increased or decreased. Last year had been quite successful in terms of advertisements from partners and advertisers. However, it was noted that there was no longer advertising expertise in the Communications department, and as time went on this might have an effect. The economic climate should also be considered. It was noted that four publications a year adhered to the Recommended Code of Practice on Local Authority Publicity that was revised by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in 2011.

It was questioned by Members whether the Council might consider online delivery of the Reporter and reduce copies in the process, although it was not suggested to move away from the current format completely. There was a suggestion that they could be printed and left in one stop shops or doctor's surgeries. Newspapers in general were selling less copies and online delivery was something that could be looked at in the future. The Council was being followed on Twitter and it was necessary to explore different methods of communicating information.

Members noted that when the Reporter was first introduced it did win awards. However, the Reporter was still in the same format it was in when it was first produced and it was questioned whether it could be revamped.

RESOLVED: (a) That the information be received.

(b) That Cabinet and Officers be informed of the Committee recommendations regarding updating the format/design of The Reporter and to make The Reporter available in other media forms.

9. **WORK PLAN**

Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 03/09/12

The Committee concurred that the items on the work plan were all on course.

RESOLVED: That the information be received.

10. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business considered.

COUNCILLOR MRS ELIZABETH SHENTON
Chair

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2013/14 TO 2017/18

Submitted by: Executive Director – Resources and Support Services

Portfolio: Finance and Budget Management

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To provide the background on the financial strategy for the Council over the next five years in the light of the national and local financial situation and taking account of the Council's priorities.

Recommendations

- (a) To approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2013/14 to 2017/18.**
- (b) That the report be referred to the Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment.**

Reasons

The Medium Term Financial Strategy underpins the whole financial planning structure of the Authority. It is closely aligned to the Council's Council Plan and focuses on targeting its financial resources in line with its stated aims and objectives.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Borough Council is committed to achieving excellence in its service delivery. Integral to this ambition is the need to effectively target its financial resources in line with its stated aims and objectives.
- 1.2 The document attached as Appendix A, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period from 2013 to 2018, demonstrates alignment with the Council Plan (formerly the Corporate Plan) and will be the main vehicle in assessing the Council's financial position, ensuring efficiency in service delivery and targeting resources to agreed priority areas.

2. Issues

- 2.1 Local government in general and district councils in particular continue to face the prospect of operating within a severely challenging financial environment. With further large decreases in general government funding forecast, the Council must review the services that it provides and its approach to value for money to keep council tax increases as low as possible.
- 2.2 Local authorities have not yet been informed of their allocations of central government funding in support of their budgets for 2013/14. This support was formerly in the form of Formula Grant, the amount of which was notified as a provisional amount in December and confirmed the following January/February. Formula Grant for 2012/13 was £7.315m, comprising £0.142m Revenue Support Grant and £7.173m NNDR Grant.
- 2.3 The Government has recently carried out the Local Government Resource Review, which looked at how local authority services should be funded. One of the primary proposals resulting from this, which is contained in the Local Government Finance Bill, currently under

consideration by Parliament, is that local authorities should be allowed to retain a proportion of their locally raised business rates. This will commence in the financial year 2013/14. The retained amount of business rates will replace the NNDR Grant previously included in Formula Grant, whilst Revenue Support Grant will continue to be paid.

- 2.4 The details of how the business rates retention system will work are still being finalised by the government so there remains some uncertainty about how much the retained amount will be for 2013/14 and future years. There is also uncertainty about how much will be paid as Revenue Support Grant. In addition some other grants, chiefly New Homes Bonus will continue to be paid as separate grants but will be financed by the government by reducing the amount of business rates which can be retained. The amount of rates retained will also be modified by a further reduction to reflect the reduction in the national spending control totals required to respond to the current economic recession. In summary, there is uncertainty about the amounts payable as individual elements to the Council for 2013/14 and beyond. However, there have been indications of the overall amounts which local authorities should expect to see as reductions in central government support, implying a reduction of 5 per cent in 2013/14 and a similar reduction in the following year, which is the final year of the current spending review period. These reductions have been used in the MTFS, with further reductions of 2.5 per cent for the three following years.
- 2.5 The purpose of the comprehensive five year MTFS is to predict likely budget totals, if services are maintained at current levels, by projecting forward the different elements of the 2012/13 budget, such as employee pay or supplies and services, based on assumptions as to likely changes or specific pressures, such as pay increases or price increases or any agreed changes which will affect service levels. These assumptions are all set out in the MTFS. It also illustrates how the Council Plan is driving the medium term financial plan over the next five years. Whilst standing on its own as a strategy, it is an integral part of the Council's overall planning process comprising service delivery plans, the Council Plan and the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 2.6 The MTFS identifies significant budgetary shortfalls over the next five years that will need addressing with robust financial and budget strategies. The amounts for each year are set out below:

2013/14 £1.627m
2014/15 £0.810m
2015/16 £0.797m
2016/17 £0.655m
2017/18 £0.657m

The detailed MTFS shows how these amounts arise and what measures are being proposed to address them. Previous budget strategies have sought to produce a balanced budget for the immediately following financial year, whilst noting the position for the following four years. However, the strategy contained in the MTFS is designed to balance both the 2013/14 and 2014/15 budgets and subsequent reports to Cabinet and Council will cover both years' budgets.

- 2.7 A Budget Review Group has been established, chaired by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget Management. The remit of the group is to oversee all aspects of the budget process, including service review and challenge, longer term planning, development of budget options, agreeing consultation arrangements and consideration of feedback and seeking to deliver service models that drive improvement to front-line services whilst offering value for money. Work to prioritise existing services has been carried out and a series of service challenges have taken place, whereby service managers have been requested to put forward options for improved service delivery and efficiency savings together with

suggestions for “invest to save” proposals whereby continuing increased efficiency can be obtained in return for a proportionally modest initial outlay. Performance and benchmarking data, was also considered for each service. Alongside these specific challenges, consideration has been given to savings which may be made in cross-cutting areas, such as procurement.

2.8 The results of the challenge process, together with those of the service prioritisation exercise, will enable a range of budget options, including some options for service improvements, to be developed and incorporated in the budget strategy.

2.9 Consultation to gain the views of stakeholders on the options contained within the MTFS is currently taking place. It will incorporate the Council Plan, to which the budget is closely linked. The results will be available for consideration by December and the MTFS amended, where necessary, to take account of them. Cabinet will consider these proposals, in the form of a draft budget for 2013/14 and 2014/15 at its meeting on 16 January, to enable this to be submitted to the Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 January.

3. **Proposal**

3.1 That Members approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2013/14 - 2017/18.

4. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

4.1 Without an MTFS it would be difficult to demonstrate the alignment of resources with the Council Plan. It is also the main vehicle for assessing the Council’s position, ensuring efficiency in service delivery and targeting resources to agreed priorities.

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

5.1 The MTFS identifies the resources to deliver the corporate priorities of the Authority linked to expected outcomes.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The MTFS is not a statutory document but it is considered best practice.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 Differential equality impact issues will be identified against the key strategies, policies and functions of the Council and will be considered in producing future service improvements, which will then be reflected within the Council’s budgets.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 The MTFS identifies future years’ shortfalls in financial resources which will need to be addressed as part of the Council’s budget strategies.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 places a duty on the Chief Finance Officer to report on the robustness of the budget. The main risks to the budget include:

- Spending in excess of the budget
- Income falling short of the budget

- Unforeseen elements, e.g. changes in interest rates

Such risks require regular and careful monitoring and it is essential that the council has sufficient reserves to call on if required, e.g. the council has a general fund balance of £1.40 million. In previous years the Chief Finance Officer has believed that the assurance required under Section 25 can be given and, with careful budget planning, robust monitoring and adequate level of reserves, there should be no reasons to alter that view.

10. **List of Appendices**

Appendix A - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013/14 to 2017/18.

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013/14 to 2017/18



CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword	3
National context – background	4
Links to other strategies and plans	4
Compilation of the MTFS	7
Council priorities	8
Assessment of what the MTFS means	9
Budget strategy	9
Timetable and procedures	10
Risk statement	11
Collection fund and taxbase	11
Environmental footprint	12
Procurement	12
Equalities	12
Appendix A – MTFS Summary	13

Foreword

The Council is committed to achieving excellence in its service delivery and considerable progress has been made over the last year with significant improvements in performance indicators and positive feedback from external auditors. Integral to this ambition is the need to effectively target its financial resources in line with the priorities of the Council.

It is the Council's ambition to continue to substantially improve its service delivery over the next five years. Sound and effective financial planning has a vital role to play in ensuring that ambition is realised, through providing sufficient resources to enable the services that matter most to our citizens to be delivered and to respond to the increased demands placed upon the Council. A key element will also be the need to improve the value for money that is given to council taxpayers.

The current recession and the reductions in central government support to local authorities, particularly for second tier district councils such as Newcastle-under-Lyme, reinforces the need for sound financial planning, not just for the year immediately ahead (2013/14) but over the medium term as well.

To meet this need, a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has been developed for a period spanning five years, from 2013/14 to 2017/18. The MTFS demonstrates alignment with the Council Plan and will be the main vehicle in assessing the Council's financial position, ensuring efficiency in service delivery and targeting resources via a transparent process to agreed priority areas. It illustrates how the Council Plan is driving the medium term financial plans for each block of services over the next five years.

It is a key document informing the 2013/14 budget process. Indeed the assumptions about future costs and income together with those relating to investment and efficiency savings will be incorporated in the 2013/14 budget and will account for the majority of the change in net spending between the 2013/14 budget and that for 2012/13. The indications given in the MTFS concerning the gap between future years' expenditure levels and available resources will enable the Council to draw up an informed strategy, following a public consultation process, that reflects the priorities of the Council, to bridge those shortfalls.

The MTFS will be used during 2013/14 as the basis for reviewing the Council's financial position. The assumptions contained in it will be regularly reviewed and amendments made to the plan, where necessary. If any consequences in terms of significant adverse budget variations become apparent, this information will be used to formulate an action plan to deal with the budget shortfall. Conversely, if a significant positive variance is indicated, and likely to persist, this knowledge will enable the Council to decide whether to use this to increase reserves or to reallocate some or all of it to additional investments in line with corporate priorities

Whilst the MTFS stands on its own as a strategy, it is an integral part of the Council's overall planning process comprising service delivery plans (Service and Financial Plans), the Council Plan and the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy.

A Budget Review Group has been established to inform and ensure that the budget setting process consults all stakeholders in a transparent manner. The Budget Review Group is chaired by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget Management. The Council Leader and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Town Centres are members of the group, together with the Chief Executive, Executive Director of Resources and Support Services and other appropriate finance and corporate support officers.

The remit of the group is to oversee all aspects of the budget process, including service review and challenge, longer term planning, development of budget options, agreeing consultation arrangements and consideration of feedback and seeking to deliver service models that drive improvement to front line services whilst offering value for money.

National context - background

Central government support for local authorities' revenue budgets is provided in the form of Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and National Non Domestic Rates grant (NNDR). The amounts to be paid to local authorities as a whole and to individual authorities are announced via the annual local government finance settlement, provisional figures being announced usually in December and final ones in January.

Under existing arrangements NNDR (business rates) revenue collected by local authorities is pooled for redistribution to local authorities as the NNDR grant. So while local authorities have a vital role to play in supporting the local economy, there is limited fiscal incentive to do so.

The Local Government Finance Bill introduced business rate retention for local authorities and for the localisation of council tax benefit, i.e. for local authorities to assume responsibility for devising schemes for making payments to claimants, instead of acting as agents for the Department of Work and Pensions. It also contains some technical adjustments to the council tax system.

The revised arrangements take effect from 1 April 2013. The Council will still bill and collect business rates as now. But instead of contributing all business rates into the central pool and receiving formula grant (RSG and NNDR), a percentage of the business rates will be retained by the Council.

The baseline level of funding will be set so that at the start of the system, the budget is equivalent to what it would have been under the current system, less the reductions arising from the Local Government Resources Review. From then on the Council's funding may grow if the business rates base in Newcastle-under-Lyme grows, but could also fall if the business rate base declines.

At the current time the reductions in our funding from Central Government have not been confirmed. For the purposes of the MTFS a 5% reduction in Central Government funding has been assumed for the period of the Local Government Resources Review (2013/14 and 2014/15) and a 2.5% reduction has been assumed for the following 3 years.

Links to other strategies and plans

The MTFS has links to a number of other Council and wider community strategies and plans. Where these have financial consequences for the Council, these are reflected in the MTFS. Those which have a particularly significant input are:

Council plan

The Council Plan describes the key actions that the Council will take over the next three years in order to make the Borough a better place to live, work and invest in. It sets out the Council's priorities and focuses on delivering these and ensuring that we continue to deliver high quality services for the Council's customers and bring real improvements in services for all in the Borough.

In these very challenging economic times it is important that we use resources prudently and effectively and review the way in which we do things and consider what is important for the borough. There is thus a clear and direct link to the MTFS from the Council Plan

The Council's priorities set out in the Council Plan are:

- A clean, safe and sustainable Borough.
- A Borough of opportunity.
- A healthy and active community.
- A Co-Operative Council delivering high quality, community driven, services.

The outcomes identified below reflect the Council's determination to ensure that resources follow priorities:

A clean, safe and sustainable Borough

- Levels of safety will have improved, along with standards of public health.
- Vulnerable citizens and victims of crime will be provided with 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

- 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 growth.

A healthy and active community

- 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.
- Local people will be more able to work together to solve local problems.
- Council services will be influenced by resident engagement, enabling local communities to shape services which directly affect their lives.

Becoming a Co-Operative Council delivering high quality, community-driven, services

- 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.
- High performing services will be provided for all residents and customers.
- The Council will be an open, honest and transparent organisation which undertakes regular consultation with its residents and listens to their views.

Capital strategy and capital programme

The Capital Strategy sets out how the Council proposes to deploy its capital resources in order to assist it to achieve its corporate and service objectives. It also takes into account the resources which are likely to be available to the Council to fund capital investment and the effect of that investment on the Council's revenue budget. The Council's detailed capital investment plan is contained in its Approved Capital Programme. The current programme was approved by Full Council on 22 February 2012. This programme provides for £4,457,000 of investment during 2012/13 in projects across all of the Council's priority areas.

The Capital Strategy has been prepared against a background of unprecedented reductions in funding provided to local authorities by central government and its agencies, arising from the need to restrain public expenditure owing to the ongoing economic recession and to rebalance public finances. At the same time, the Council's own resources available to finance capital projects are running out and will need replenishing before any substantial further capital investments can be made. Whilst the Council has benefited from an ability to recycle income derived from the disposal of land and property over many years, it became evident that a more focused programme of asset

disposals would be required to counteract the effects of reduced external finance.

The Council is presently debt free, having no long term loans outstanding. However, if further capital receipts do not materialise borrowing may be the only option to finance proposed capital expenditure in future years. This will have an effect on the general fund revenue account through financing charges and reduced investment income.

Asset management strategy

The asset management strategy encapsulates the Council's response to national policies and guidelines; it sets out the processes for the strategic management of the Council's property assets in order to ensure the best use of assets to meet corporate objectives in an efficient and effective manner. These processes resonate with the Capital Strategy and in turn may result in projects being included in the capital programme.

Through a planned and ongoing review of the asset register, against current and anticipated usage, disposal of assets will provide investment into the Council's capital programme. In parallel the Council will seek partner contributions (for example through external grants, partner organisation use of Council assets to contribute to revenue streams and joint venture opportunities).

Treasury management strategy

This is approved annually and sets out the Council's strategy for investment of its funds. The investment strategy, together with the prevailing market conditions in relation to interest rates and counterparty security will be the major factor in determining the return which is obtained on investments. Interest on investments is a source of income in the revenue budget.

Human resources strategy and workforce development plan

The Human Resources Strategy provides the strategic linkages in people performance and management to enable the Council to meet the Council Plan objectives. The Workforce Development Plan sets out how the Council will develop the skills and capacity of its staff in line with the Human Resources Strategy. Where there are costs associated with this, these will be included in the MTFS.

Charging policy

The policy sets out what the Council intends to achieve through the charges it makes and the criteria which it will use to determine the level of charge for individual services. The annually approved scale of fees and charges is compiled in line with the principles set out in the policy. Income from fees and charges comprises a significant proportion of the income included in the revenue budget.

Reserves and balances strategy

The Council's Reserves and Balances Strategy indicates that, following a risk assessment, the minimum prudent level of general fund balance to hold is £1.4 million and that there should also be a contingency reserve of £100,000. Current indicators are that this strategy will be delivered.

Departmental service delivery plans

Service Plans are an integral part of the Council's planning process and demonstrate the actions and targets of each directorate in order to achieve the Council's corporate objectives and priorities.

Other strategies which may influence the MTFS

There are a number of other Council strategies whose contents may have implications for the MTFS. These are:

- Procurement Strategy.
- Economic Development Strategy.
- North Staffs Green Spaces Strategy.
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy (emerging).
- Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy.
- Housing Strategy.
- Arts and Cultural Strategy (emerging).
- Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Reduction Plan.
- Stronger and Safer Communities Strategy.
- North Staffs Core Spatial Strategy.
- Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (emerging).

Compilation of the MTFS

Principles

The MTFS considers changes to the 2012/13 base budget by breaking this budget down into its subjective cost and income components; pay, pensions, utilities, fuel, supplies and services, investment income, income from fees and charges, etc. An assessment is then made, in respect of each of these components, of the factors which might affect their cost or the amount of income receivable and whether there is likely to be a change in this cost or income, and if so how much it will amount to, in each year over the five year period. Also taken into consideration are any additional pressures which may apply to services over the five year period, plus any savings which have been identified and agreed or approved investments in services over the five years. The MTFS therefore shows the changes from the initial 2012/13 base budget through to 2017/18, demonstrating the variances between each of the years.

Base budget components assessed for cost variances

These are set out in detail in Appendix A, which shows by how much in monetary terms the estimated budget for each of the five years varies by comparison to the previous year on account of these factors alone. Also shown are the assumptions about price changes that have been made in respect of each component. In summary, the components examined and the factors which were taken into account to assess the changes were:

- Levels of central government funding (estimated) as referred to in the National Context section of the strategy (page 4);
- Pay awards and incremental pay increases;
- National Insurance increases, linked to increased pay;
- Superannuation increases, both to take account of increased pay and changes in contributions to the pension fund;
- Energy costs, based on advice from the Council's Procurement Officer;
- Business rates increases on Council properties;
- Fuel for vehicles, based on advice from the Council's Procurement Officer and allowing for changes to fleet numbers and in vehicle types;
- General inflation in relation to supplies and services and contract increases;
- Levels of grants and contributions paid by the Council to external bodies;
- Changes in amount of non-subsidisable rent allowances;
- Increase in income from customer receipts;
- Changes in specific government grants receivable;

- Changes in amounts of investment income receivable, both as a result of changes in forecasted interest rates and changes in relation to the capital sums available for investment;
- Contributions from reserves and ongoing effects of previous savings exercises or investments associated with them.

The following key assumptions were made:

- Full provision for known pay increases from incremental progression.
- A 1 per cent pay award in 2013/14 and 2014/15 and 2 per cent thereafter.
- Central Government funding will decrease by 5 per cent in 2013/14 with an assumed further 5 per cent reduction in 2014/15 and further reductions of 2.5 per cent thereafter, there is a degree of uncertainty surrounding these as the local government finance settlement will not be known until December.
- A 5 per cent increase in transport fuel in each of the five years, as per the forecast provided by the Freight Trade Association.
- An increase in pension contributions (source - Staffordshire County Council).
- An increase of general inflation on supplies and services, contracted services and ICT.
- Energy costs are based on an assessment by the Council's energy management consultants and Building Surveyor.
- Increases in line with inflation for most income heads.
- Interest rates based on forecasts supplied by the Council's treasury management advisors.
- Investment income takes account of the latest capital programme expenditure forecasts.

Whilst all of these are important and of some significance, a sensitivity analysis has been undertaken on the following four issues for which the main findings are:

- The level of central government funding which is received
These support around 50 per cent of the budget so have a major impact. A variation of 1 per cent in the level of external support via these two sources would amount to £73,000.
- How movements in interest rates will affect the Borough Council
The Council has no external debt at the current time but does generate income from its investment portfolio. The Bank of England base rate is currently 0.50 per cent. It is estimated that a change of 0.50 per cent in the interest levels on the Council's investments would lead to £42,000 (based on anticipated investment levels) more or less interest.
- How changes in nationally agreed pay awards will impact
There is provision for a 1 per cent pay award in 2013/14 and 2014/15 and 2 per cent thereafter. With a pay bill (excluding National Insurance and Superannuation) of £12.3m, a change of 0.50 per cent would save or cost £62,000.
- How actuarial changes in the pension scheme will affect the Council
Pension costs are currently 23.7 per cent of salaries for all of those staff in the pension scheme. Over the next five years forecast increases have been factored in. A variation of 1 per cent would save or cost £111,000.

Council Priorities

A number of Council priorities have been provided for in the formulation of the MTFs, these include:

Town Centre Partnership (£30,000)

The development/improvement of the two main town centres (Newcastle and Kidsgrove) has been identified as a clear priority. In order to demonstrate that the Council is able to support and

develop the town centres as vibrant places where people want to visit, work, invest and shop, the Council will seek to work in partnership with local businesses to develop an action plan for improving the economic prospects of the town centres.

Apprenticeships (£40,000)

In order to improve the opportunities and training prospects of young people in the Borough, the Council will provide further apprenticeship opportunities through the establishment of a 'shared apprenticeship scheme' in partnership with other local organisations within both the public and private sectors.

Home Security Support for Vulnerable Residents (£10,000)

Helping vulnerable people, including the elderly is a key priority of the Council. Community safety and fear of crime also remain an important theme for the council and partner agencies. In relation to home security there are two key issues: firstly the standard/condition of the property and secondly, the likelihood of the resident being targeted by a criminal. The Council seeks to address these issues by responding to resident requests for assistance and proactively targeting areas high crime in partnership with the Police.

Assessment of what the MTFS means

The implications of the MTFS forecast will be taken into consideration in the preparation of detailed budgets for 2013/14 and give guideline figures for the budgets for the following four financial years. Details of the timetable, which is being followed, are shown later.

The summarised MTFS illustrates that the Council would have the following shortfalls over the next five years which need to be addressed by a combination of efficiency measures, better procurement, increased income generation, council tax increases, support from reserves, etc.

- £1.627m in 2013/14
- £810,000 in 2014/15
- £797,000 in 2015/16
- £655,000 in 2016/17
- £657,000 in 2017/18

As a percentage of the net budget, the potential shortfall in 2013/14 represents 11.4 per cent of the current year's net revenue budget.

Budget strategy

The shortfalls identified from the MTFS above need to be managed so that balanced budgets are compiled with spending matched with resources. From the results of the service challenge process a strategy will be developed identifying proposals to bridge the gap. These proposals will be considered in accordance with the process and timetable as specified within the 'Timetable and Procedure' element of this report.

The potential savings, efficiencies and areas of increased income identified for 2013/14 and 2014/15, currently include:

- Procurement savings resulting from the negotiation of contracts and annual uplifts incurred, also from determining the actual need for goods, works or services and through ensuring that the Council commissions and procures quality services and supplies, as cost effectively as possible.
- Additional areas of income generation including areas where services are performing above their targets, a review of current fees and charges in comparison to other authorities and

- competitors and a review of areas where we provide a service for free or have the potential to provide a charged for service.
- Staffing efficiencies including a full and comprehensive review of employees' terms and conditions and a review of vacant posts within the Council and the need to recruit to these posts.
 - Good housekeeping efficiencies including a comprehensive review of services expenditure budgets that are under utilised and reductions in fees that are required to be paid to external bodies.
 - Better use of assets including a review of their usage or potential usage and the costs associated with the continued usage or occupation of these assets.

Timetable and procedure

A Budget Review Group has been established, chaired by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget Management. The Council Leader and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Town Centres are members of the group, together with the Chief Executive, Executive Director of Resources and Support Services and other appropriate finance and corporate support officers.

The remit of the group is to oversee all aspects of the budget process, including service review and challenge, longer term planning, development of budget options, agreeing consultation arrangements and consideration of feedback and seeking to deliver service models that drive improvement to front line services whilst offering value for money.

A service challenge process, to be conducted by the Budget Review Group, has been initiated in which Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Heads of Service will participate. All services are potentially subject to challenge but the process will particularly concentrate on those with the potential to deliver significant improvements in the priority areas. Heads of Service put forward options for improved service delivery and efficiency savings together with suggestions for 'invest to save' proposals whereby continuing increased efficiency can be obtained in return for a proportionally modest initial outlay.

The results of the challenge process are being obtained and analysed. These, together with the results of the service prioritisation exercise will form the basis for a range of budget options, consistent with the draft revised council plan which are subject to consultation.

The consultation process seeks to gain views through a variety of means, both by face to face contact and electronically, from a broad range of stakeholders. The consultation will incorporate the Council Plan, to which the budget is closely linked, as well as the budget options put forward.

To assist members in their review of the budget, training sessions were held for members during September and October covering local authority finance generally, the budget process and an explanation of the contents of the budget.

The Budget Review Group will also consider the capital programme for 2013/14 and beyond and the resources available to finance it. There will be the opportunity for members to review and comment on this during the scrutiny process outlined above.

The budget timetable as regards member involvement and the completion of key stages in the process is set out in the table below:

Event	Body Affected	Date
Budget and local authority finance training	All members	September/October
Service Challenge Process	Budget Review Group	September
Consideration of MTFS plus outline of consultation process	Cabinet	17 October
Consideration of MTFS plus outline of consultation process	TROSC*	30 October
Public Consultation	Stakeholders	October/ November
Review of consultation feedback	TROSC*	10 December
Review of consultation feedback (Chair of TROSC to give verbal feedback at the Cabinet meeting)	Cabinet	12 December
Draft Budget proposals including options approved	Cabinet	16 January
Scrutiny Café	All members	17 January
Scrutiny of draft budget	TROSC*	23 January
Budget proposals recommended for approval by Full Council	Cabinet	6 February
Full Council to approve Budget	Full Council	27 February

* TROSC = Transformation & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Risk statement

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 places a duty on the Chief Finance Officer to report on the robustness of the budget. The main risks to the budget include, spending in excess of the budget, income falling short of the budget and unforeseen elements, e.g. changes in interest rates.

Such risks require regular and careful monitoring and it is essential that the Council has sufficient reserves to call on if required, e.g. the Council has a general fund balance of £1.4 million. In previous years the Chief Finance Officer has believed that the assurances required under Section 25 can be given and, with careful budget planning, robust monitoring and an adequate level of reserves, there should be no reasons to alter that view.

Collection fund and taxbase

The Council's taxbase represents the average "value" of the properties in its area as set against a standard band D property. For example a band D property is expressed as one whilst a lower value band A property is calculated as 6/9 of the band D. On the other hand, the highest value property is band H which is calculated at 18/9 of band D.

The calculation of the taxbase has an important effect on the level of council tax in that an increase in the taxbase (say, from new building) will mean that the amount to be raised is spread over more properties whilst a reduction (say, from demolitions) will mean that it has to be spread over fewer properties. For 2012/13 the taxbase was calculated at 39,136 properties.

The collection fund is the vehicle for which all council tax is collected. The Council makes an assumption as to the percentage of council tax which will be ultimately collected. That decision will be made in January 2013. If that target is not met then there will be a deficit which will have to be accounted for in the next financial year whilst if there is a surplus then this can be used to offset

whatever council tax is levied in the next financial year.

Environmental footprint

One of the four priorities in the Council Plan is “A clean, safe and sustainable Borough” so it is clear that there is a wide understanding of the impact and implications of the Council’s policies on the environment and hence the need to develop and maintain a sustainable approach. In formulating the MTFS as a means of enabling the achievement of its priorities and to improve service delivery, it is essential that all staff, members and stakeholders are aware of the requirement to consider the environmental impact of their actions.

In response to such environmental issues the Council has prepared plans, most notably a Carbon Management Plan, which focus upon saving energy with a view to both saving costs and minimising our environmental footprint. The main three avenues of interest for achieving such efficiencies are around premises related energy saving measures, waste recycling and reducing vehicle fleet fuel consumption.

Procurement

The Council has an approved Procurement Strategy which encompasses every aspect of the purchasing process from determining the need for goods, works or services, to buying and delivery in order to help achieve the Council’s key priorities and outputs.

The procurement role is to ensure the Council commissions and procures quality services and supplies, as cost effectively as possible. The Council must understand the market and seek to influence and develop it for the benefit of delivering low council tax. As part of this role all contracts that the Council currently has are to be reviewed in order to ensure that they are efficient and cost effective.

Equalities

Differential equality impact issues will be identified against the key strategies, policies and functions of the Council and will be considered in producing future service improvements, which will then be reflected within the Council’s budgets.

MTFS Summary

Appendix A

Summary	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Notes
<u>Changes to Base Budget</u>	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Employees:						
▪ Incremental Increases	47	26	8	3	0	As per Payroll
▪ Pay Awards	123	125	253	258	263	1% increase in years 1 & 2 & 2% thereafter
▪ Superannuation Increases	148	142	134	130	126	As per Staffordshire County Council
▪ Vacancy Factor	65	73	74	78	82	3% in year 1 reducing by 0.5% each year
▪ National Insurance	12	11	10	9	9	Per incremental increases & pay awards
Premises (e.g. Business Rates)	19	20	20	20	21	Based on 2% increase
Transport (e.g. Fuel)	19	20	21	22	24	Based on 5% increase
Other Costs (e.g. General Inflation, Grants & Contributions)	43	82	83	87	88	General inflation on supplies & services, contracted services & ICT
One Off Budget Items Removed 2013/14 Budget	(100)	100	0	0	0	Expenditure taken from/income added to 2013/14 budget for 1 year only
Council Priorities	80	0	0	0	0	Apprentices, home security & town centre partnership
Investment Income	59	(29)	(36)	0	0	Based on forecasted interest rates
Use of Budget Support Fund in 2012/13 Base	179	0	0	0	0	
Government Grants	366	348	165	161	157	Settlement decreased by 5% in 2013/14 & 2014/15 & 2.5% thereafter
Council Tax Freeze Grant	172	0	173	0	0	A Council Tax freeze grant was given by Government in 2011/12 which was given until 2014/15 only. A further one off Council Tax freeze grant was given in 2012/13 for that year only
Planning Delivery Grant	100	0	0	0	0	Grant to be removed from funding
Insurance Fund	100	0	0	0	0	Replenishment of balance of insurance fund to required level
Income Shortfall	300	0	0	0	0	To offset income budgets against the impact of the recession
Fees & Charges & other Income	(105)	(108)	(109)	(113)	(113)	Increase based on 2% increase in 2013/14 & thereafter
TOTAL MTFS SHORTFALLS	1,627	810	797	655	657	

This page is intentionally left blank

SPECIAL BUDGET EDITION

This has been produced as part of a consultation exercise which Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is running from 1 October to 11 November.

The purpose of this exercise is to find out what local people think about some really important things linked to their Council Tax bills.

You probably already know from the television and newspapers that the Government has been reducing the amount of money it gives councils for local services.

The huge cut in support from Government means there is less to go round so your borough councillors need to prioritise where money is spent. Reduced cash for councils inevitably means we can't go on doing everything that has been done before.

But before the borough council makes any decisions, we want to hear what you have to say first.

This consultation exercise will enable you to do that and to make your voices heard BEFORE any decisions on where to spend money are made.

And once your borough councillors have heard what you have to say in this consultation exercise, they will then sit down and make some tough decisions on where to prioritise what your cash is spent on locally.



Cllr. Gareth Snell
 Leader of the borough council



Cllr. Mike Stubbs
 Cabinet member for finance and budget management

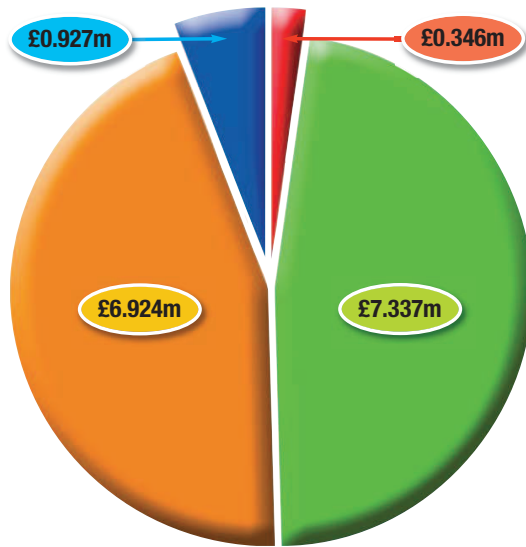
Council Tax - the facts...

An average household in Newcastle-under-Lyme pays **£1,450.99** in Council Tax each year.

The borough council collects all of this money from residents - but we only keep 12 per cent (**£176.93**) to pay for the services we run. The rest goes to:-

- **Staffordshire County Council £1,028.81**
- **Staffordshire Police £177.61**
- **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service £67.64**
- **Plus parish and town council precepts if you live in areas where they are in place.**

Where the money comes from...



- Council Tax paid by you
- Contributions from council reserves
- Non-specific grants such as the one-off Council Tax freeze grants
- Central Government funding

How you can get involved

FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

MONDAY 1 OCTOBER	11AM TO 2PM	KING STREET, KIDSGROVE
FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER	11AM TO 2PM	TESCO, KIDSGROVE
SATURDAY 13 OCTOBER	10AM TO MIDDAY	MUSEUM, BRAMPTON
FRIDAY 19 OCTOBER	10AM TO 3PM	FARMERS' MARKET, NEWCASTLE
FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER	10AM TO 3PM	OUTSIDE GUILDHALL, NEWCASTLE
SATURDAY 3 NOVEMBER	10AM TO MIDDAY	JUBILEE2, NEWCASTLE TOWN CENTRE
FIRST WEEK OF NOVEMBER	TBC	KEELE UNIVERSITY CANTEEN AND STUDENTS' UNION

PUBLIC MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY 3 OCTOBER	6.30PM TO 7.30PM	KIDSGROVE TOWN HALL
MONDAY 8 OCTOBER	6.30PM TO 7.30PM	WYE ROAD COMMUNITY CENTRE, CLAYTON
THURSDAY 11 OCTOBER	6.30PM TO 7.30PM	RAMSEY RD COMM. CENTRE, CROSS HEATH
WEDNESDAY 24 OCTOBER	5.30PM TO 6.30PM	WHITFIELD COMM. CENTRE, THISTLEBERRY
FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER	6.30PM TO 7.30PM	CHESTERTON COMM. CENTRE, LONDON RD
WEDNESDAY 31 OCTOBER	6.30PM TO 7.30PM	MADELEY CENTRE
TUESDAY 6 NOVEMBER	6.30PM TO 7.30PM	AUDLEY METHODIST CHAPEL

OR have your say on our website www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/budget
 OR collect a budget consultation form from the Guildhall, Kidsgrove Customer Service Centre, the Madeley Centre, Jubilee2, Kidsgrove Leisure Centre and the Civic Offices.
 Fill it in and send it back to us FREE.

This page is intentionally left blank

✧ Shown as a negative amount due to income exceeding the costs associated with these activities

Corporate Expenditure ✧

Interest and Investment Income
Investment Properties
Pension Liabilities Account



Housing Services

Housing Strategy
Housing Advice
Housing Advances
Homelessness

Private Sector Housing Renewal
Housing Benefit Payments
Housing Benefit Administration
Enabling
Licensing of Private Sector Landlords

Planning Services

Building Control
Development Control Enforcement
Development Control Applications and Appeals
Planning Policy
Environmental Initiatives
Economic Development Commercial Portfolio
Economic Development - Other
Economic Development Government Initiatives
Community Development

Highways, Roads and Transport ✧

Highways/Roads (Structural)
Highways/Roads (Routine)
Street Lighting
Parking Services
Public Transport
Traffic Management and Road Safety
Transport Planning, Policy and Strategy

THIS IS HOW WE SPEND THE MONEY

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council currently spends £15.5 million providing our services to you.

From this £15.5 million we need to save approximately £2.5 million - a reduction of 16%, in the budget setting process for 2013/14 and 2014/15. (£2.5 million in total).



Central Services

Council Tax Collection
NNDR (Business Rates) Collection
Non Distributed Costs
Members Services and Committee Administration
Mayoralty
Registration of Electors
Conducting Elections
Corporate Management
Local Land Charges
General Grants, Bequests and Donations
Emergency Planning



Cultural Services

Museum and Art Gallery
Theatres and Public Entertainment
Parks and Open Spaces
Allotments
Golf Course
Community Recreation Service
Community Centres
Sports and Leisure Centres
Tourism
Cultural Management and Support Services

Environmental Services

Cemetery and Cremation Services
Environmental Protection
Pollution Control
Environmental Crime
Food and Safety
Public Conveniences
Licensing
Dog Warden Services

Infectious Diseases
Pest Control
Public Health
Water Safety
Community Safety - Crime Reduction
Community Safety - CCTV
Community Safety - Safety Devices
Footpath Lighting
Flood Defence and Land drainage
Street Cleansing

Waste Collection
Recycling
Waste Disposal
Waste Strategy
Trade Waste
Waste Minimization
Climate Change Costs
Environmental Management and Support Services
Streetscene



This page is intentionally left blank

How important are the following services to you?

Please tick a box in each line and then add further comments below.
When the form is completed return it to be borough council free of charge by putting it in the post.

	Of no importance			Extremely important
	←—————→			
Improving public health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keeping streets and open spaces clean and clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting victims of crime and vulnerable citizens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving housing standards and choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reducing worklessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoting economic growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural activity and participation in the arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoting healthy lifestyles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vibrant, active and safe town centres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving the way the borough council communicates with you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tell us of any other services, not mentioned above, which are provided by the borough council and which are important to you.

How do you think the council could save money?

Name

Address

..... **Postcode**

Age Under 18 18-35 35-55 55-70 70+

This page is intentionally left blank