

Public Document Pack

Date of meeting **Wednesday, 16th March, 2016**
Time **6.00 pm**
Venue **Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, Merrial Street,
Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 2AG**
Contact **Geoff Durham**

Cabinet

AGENDA

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

- 1** **Apologies**
- 2** **MINUTES** **(Pages 3 - 8)**
To consider the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 3** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive declarations of interest from Members on items included in the agenda.
- 4** **Recycling and Waste Strategy Procurement Update** **(Pages 9 - 14)**
- 5** **Neighbourhood Planning Resource Implications** **(Pages 15 - 32)**
- 6** **The Northern Gateway Development Zone Initiative and HS2** **(Pages 33 - 38)**
- 7** **Newcastle Economic Development Strategy: Year Four Review and Year Five Action Plan.** **(Pages 39 - 46)**
- 8** **Gold Standard for Homelessness** **(Pages 47 - 52)**
- 9** **CCTV Monitoring Provision.** **(Pages 53 - 56)**
- 10** **Irrecoverable Items** **(Pages 57 - 58)**
- 11** **URGENT BUSINESS**
To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 12** **DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION**
To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the attached report, because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 13** **Irrecoverable Items - Appendix** **(Pages 59 - 62)**
- 14** **ATTENDANCE AT CABINET MEETINGS**

Councillor attendance at Cabinet meetings:

- (1) The Chair or spokesperson of the Council's scrutiny committees and the mover of any motion referred to Cabinet shall be entitled to attend any formal public meeting of Cabinet to speak.
- (2) Other persons including non-executive members of the Council may speak at such meetings with the permission of the Chair of the Cabinet.

Public attendance at Cabinet meetings:

- (1) If a member of the public wishes to ask a question(s) at a meeting of Cabinet, they should serve two clear days' notice in writing of any such question(s) to the appropriate committee officer.
- (2) The Council Leader as Chair of Cabinet is given the discretion to waive the above deadline and assess the permissibility if the question(s). The Chair's decision will be final.
- (3) The maximum limit is three public questions at any one Cabinet meeting.
- (4) A maximum limit of three minutes is provided for each person to ask an initial question or make an initial statement to the Cabinet.
- (5) Any questions deemed to be repetitious or vexatious will be disallowed at the discretion of the Chair.

Members: Councillors Beech, Kearon, Turner (Vice-Chair), Williams, Shenton (Chair) and Rout

PLEASE NOTE: The Council Chamber and Committee Room 1 are fitted with a loop system. In addition, there is a volume button on the base of the microphones. A portable loop system is available for all other rooms. Should you require this service, please contact Member Services during the afternoon prior to the meeting.

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

Meeting Quorums :- 16+= 5 Members; 10-15=4 Members; 5-9=3 Members; 5 or less = 2 Members.

FIELD_TITLE

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

CABINET

Wednesday, 10th February, 2016

Present:- Councillor Elizabeth Shenton – in the Chair

Councillors Beech, Kearon, Turner, Williams and Rout

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

3. **MINUTES**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 January, 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

In relation to item 9 of the Minutes, Members were advised that a group of residents were keen to operate as a Management Committee for the Holly Road, Chesterton, Community Centre.

A petition had been received last week asking that the Community Centre be kept open.

The Chair explained that there were currently no plans to close the centre, the existing management committee had asked the Council to take back the keys at the end of 2015.

The Cabinet requested that the group of residents be sought so that discussions could be entered into.

5. **CERAMICS VALLEY ENTERPRISE ZONE**

A report was submitted to Cabinet advising Members of the designation of an Enterprise Zone covering a number of sites along the A500 – referred to as the Ceramics Valley Enterprise Zone.

Resolved: (i) That the Portfolio Holder for Town Centres, Business and Assets be invited to represent the Borough Council on the Enterprise Zone Board.

(ii) That officers continue to work with those of the City and County Councils to promote the Zone for investment and with landowners and developers to help bring forward its development.

6. **CAPITAL STRATEGY**

A report was submitted to Cabinet to consider the recommendations of the Special Council meeting held on 27 January, 2016 in respect of the report of the Assets Policy Committee.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance IT and Customer requested that officers prepare a future report to Cabinet to address any issues, taking into account the notion of future borrowing with more details of what could be done. The report should be brought back to Cabinet before provision is made in future revenue budgets.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That Cabinet reaffirms its decision taken in October 2014 that the Council, as a first resort, will seek to fund its future known capital programme needs through the annual asset management process by the identification of land or property in its ownership that is capable of, and appropriate for, disposal.
 - (ii) That, before recommendation (iii) below is implemented, there be a future report to Cabinet addressing any issues and providing more details.
 - (iii) That provision is made in future revenue budgets for prudential borrowing.

7. ASSET STRATEGY

A report was submitted to Cabinet to consider the recommendations of full Council following its consideration of the report of the Assets Policy Committee.

The Chair thanked the Assets Policy Committee for their work on this project.

A number of resolutions had been passed at the meeting of the Council. The resolutions were attached to this report.

Members were advised that, in recommendations c and e, the land at Pennyfields Road/ Newchapel Road would not be promoted as a suitable site for disposal.

Recommendation f suggested a comprehensive area review. There was no need to complete a review at this time.

Recommendation g referred to Keele Golf Course being regarded as surplus and therefore suitable for disposal. The site is contained within the Green Belt and if parts of the site were considered for disposal they would need to be taken out.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That it be noted that the Council is not proposing any substantive changes to the Asset Management Strategy.
 - (ii) That it be agreed to make two minor amendments to the existing Asset Management Strategy to:
 - (a) Extend the consultation period with local members to three weeks.
 - (b) Establish the general principle that no more

than three large sites should be marketed by the Council at any one time.

- (iii) That the recommendations of the Council, in relation to the prioritisation of sites for disposal over the next two financial years be noted and that it be agreed to take these into account where such recommended sites are listed in the approved Asset Management Strategy.
- (iv) That, further to recommendation (ii)(a) above, officers be asked to ensure that appropriate briefing and publicity material is made available to support elected Members in their consultation with local residents in accordance with the process set out in the approved Asset Management Strategy.
- (v) That it be agreed that further work be undertaken on developing an Asset Disposal Policy within the context provided by the approved Asset Management Strategy.

8. LAND AT SHELDON GROVE, CHESTERTON

A report was submitted to Cabinet regarding the parcel of land at Sheldon Grove (The Grumbles).

Councillor Mrs Snell addressed the Committee stating that the land was the last green space in the area and was a vital community space. The site has a known fault and therefore, it was suggested, not suitable for any development.

Cushman Wakefield, who had been commissioned to look at each of the sites, had provided feedback stating that a geological fault ran through the site that could affect the financial viability of the site. Furthermore, there was a risk of subsidence.

Resolved: (i) That this site be retained within the Council's operational portfolio and continue to be maintained in the current manner and kept under review as part of the cyclical asset management review process.

9. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

A report was submitted to Cabinet regarding the 2016/17 General Fund Revenue Budget and the 2016/17 Capital Programme for their recommendation to Full Council.

Members attention was drawn to a Supplementary agenda containing a list of amendments to the main agenda report. The significant change being an increase in the Council Tax referendum limit for all district councils to the higher of 2% or £5 (whichever is the greater). For Newcastle Borough Council, the £5 figure would signify a 2.8% increase in Council Tax. Therefore the Cabinet had the option to stick with the 1.99% increase previously agreed or to increase it to 2.8%.

The Cabinet would be recommending to Full Council that the increase remain at 1.99% as previously agreed.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the 2016/17 General Fund Revenue Budget as detailed in the report to Cabinet dated 20 January 2016 be recommended to Full Council for approval.
 - (ii) That the Capital Programme 2016/17 as detailed in the report to Cabinet dated 20 January 2016 be recommended to Full Council for approval.
 - (iii) That an additional contribution of £50,000 be made to the Renewals and Repairs Fund and a contribution of £69,560 be made to the Insurance Provision, to be funded from the estimated Council Tax Surplus of £119,560 which will be transferred to the revenue account in 2016/17.
 - (iv) That, in respect of the decision required on the Supplementary agenda, the Council Tax increase for 2016/17 be kept at 1.99%.

10. BUDGET PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - QUARTER THREE

A report was submitted to Cabinet regarding the Financial and Performance Review report for the third Quarter.

The report provided information on how the Council had performed during the third quarter.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the contents of the attached report be noted and the recommendation that the Council continues to monitor and scrutinise performance alongside the latest financial information for the same period be agreed.
 - (ii) That the comments made through the Scrutiny process and the responses from officers and others to these comments be noted.

11. PETITION OBJECTING TO THE PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF THE FORMER ST GILES AND ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL, BARRACKS ROAD, NEWCASTLE

A report was presented to Cabinet informing Members about the receipt of a petition objecting to the proposed demolition of the former St Giles and St George's school. The petition had been presented to Council on 27 January, 2016.

A new occupant for the building had been sought but there had been no interest.

The Hub was vital to the town centre economy as it would bring £40 million worth of investment into the heart of Newcastle.

Concerns had been raised about the Queens Gardens but assurance was given that the Gardens would be enhanced and would 'flow' into the new Hub.

The design of the new building would include a storey being set back so as to not overshadow the Gardens.

English Heritage had been consulted prior to the application for demolition and they had concluded that the development would result in a medium level of harm to the town centre. Furthermore, removing the school would not harm the Newcastle Town Centre Conservation Area.

Members could understand the concerns of the public but stated that the Council were in a difficult position and that this was the least worst option. In addition, it would create jobs in both the public and private sectors.

There had been concerns that the public had not been addressed during the debate. However, they would be able to be more involved with the Planning application for the new Hub.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the petitioners concerns and objections be received and noted.
 - (ii) That having reviewed and carefully considered the issues raised by the petitioners, the decision to dispose of this property to Staffordshire County Council (by way of grant of long leasehold) in order for it to implement proposals for a new Public Sector Hub be reaffirmed.

12. CORPORATE COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLIMENTS POLICY

A report was submitted to Cabinet, seeking approval to incorporate the amendments, as listed in the agenda report, to specific sections of the existing Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy.

- Resolved:** That the amendments to the Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy (3Cs Policy), as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be approved.

13. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Business.

14. ATTENDANCE AT CABINET MEETINGS

COUNCILLOR ELIZABETH SHENTON
Chair

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NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO THE
CABINET

Date: 16th March 2016

Report Title: **Recycling and Waste Strategy – Procurement Report.**

Submitted by: **Dave Adams - Executive Director (Operational Services)**

Portfolio: **Environment and Recycling**

Ward(s) affected: **All**

Purpose of the Report

To report on the outcome of a number of procurement projects required in preparation for the commencement of the new Recycling and Waste Service in July 2016.

Recommendations

Cabinet are recommended to:

- a) **Note the outcomes of the procurement processes.**
- b) **Request a further report on the progress with the overall Recycling and Waste Service change project at its June 2016 meeting.**

Reasons

To comply with Contract Procedure Rules (13.1) in relation to reporting the outcome of tendering exercises and to note the decisions made by the Recycling and Waste Strategy Cabinet Panel under the delegated authority given to the Panel by Cabinet.

1. Background

- 1.1 On the 23rd July 2014 Cabinet considered a comprehensive report which outlined the proposed structure of a new Recycling and Waste Service designed to improve the current service and coincide with when current contracts were due to expire.
- 1.2 The report highlighted the processes associated with the development of the new Recycling and Waste Service from July 2016 onwards and considered a range of detailed recommendations to ensure that the new service could be commenced on time and successfully delivered. Risks were also highlighted associated with the provision of the proposed service.

- 1.3 Amongst the decisions made by Cabinet, it agreed to the Cabinet Panel being given delegated powers to develop and agree the detail of the service and monitor progress of key tasks to be undertaken in the run up to the new service commencement.

This included the specification and procurement of vehicles, treatment contracts, depot infrastructure, containers, material resale arrangements, collection schedules, working patterns and expansion of the range of materials collected.

Cabinet also noted the outline costs of the new service and agreed that budget provision be made as part of the budget preparation process for 2015/16 and 2016/17.

2 **Issues**

- 2.1 The Recycling and Waste Cabinet Panel has met on many occasions over the last two years and has been directly involved with the development, monitoring and key decision making required to deliver the new service.

- 2.2 A major element of the overall project and the Cabinet Panels work plan is the procurement of a range of services, equipment and infrastructure works.

- 2.3 Tendering processes have taken place for the following major equipment and infrastructure capital works. The final contract values may differ from the initial tendered sum due to finalisation of specifications, options and additional works. For instance, in relation to the collection vehicles, the base vehicle will require additional upgrades and safety items to be included such as reversing radar and surround cameras. These items will be purchased separately to these vehicles to ensure consistency across the recycling and waste fleet.

- a. Kerbside recycling collection vehicles
Successful provider: Romaquip Limited
Contract value: £1,564,784
- b. Recycling containers (boxes)
Successful provider: Straight Limited
Contract value: £361,685
- c. Material sorting and baling equipment.
Successful provider: Bergmann Direct Limited
Contract value: £168,777
- d. Knutton Lane Depot weighbridge
Successful provider: Axtec
Contract value: £17,500
- e. Knutton Lane Depot waste transfer building works
Successful provider: Trenton
Contract value: £210,428
- f. Knutton Lane Depot waste transfer bay walling
Successful provider: JP Concrete
Contract value: £32,424

- 2.4 Tendering processes have taken place for the following revenue items. The contract figures below have been based on the expected annual tonnage per each year of the 4 year contract multiplied by the gate fee, therefore final contract payments will be based on actual tonnages of material collected and processed.
- a. Treatment of Green Waste
Successful provider: Veolia ES Limited
Contract value: £966,000 (£241,500/year)
 - b. Treatment and Transportation of Food Waste
Successful provider: Biffa Waste Services Limited
Contract value: £144,000 (£36,000/year)
- 2.5 The outcomes of the above tendering processes have been reported to the Recycling and Waste Cabinet Panel who have approved the awarding of the work to the successful providers as above.
- 2.6 Further procurement processes are also in progress for the supply of replacement residual, green and trade waste collection vehicles and waste transfer station support equipment and the outcomes of these will be reported at the appropriate point.
- 2.7 It is suggested that Cabinet may wish to receive a further report of progress made towards the commencement of the new service and the June meeting of the Cabinet would appear to be the most appropriate time.

3. **Proposal**

That Cabinet notes the outcomes of the procurement processes and also requests a further report on the progress with the overall Recycling and Waste Service change project at its June 2016 meeting.

4. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 To comply with Contract Procedure Rules (13.1) in relation to reporting the outcome of tendering exercises and to note the decisions made by the Recycling and Waste Strategy Cabinet Panel under the delegated authority given to the Panel by Cabinet.

5. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 5.1 Financial provision has been made in the Council's General Fund Capital Programme to meet the costs of items a. to f. in section 2.3 above. Provisions are made within existing General Fund Revenue Programme budgets for revenue items a. and b. in section 2.4.

It is envisaged that the overall capital expenditure costs of the procurement items already completed and those remaining will be accommodated from within the overall budget allowance made for this work within the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy.

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

- 6.1 The proposals relate to the effective delivery of the improved collection and treatment arrangements for recycling and waste, which would contribute to the following:
- A clean, safe, and sustainable Borough.
 - A Borough of opportunity.
 - A healthy and active community.
 - Becoming a co-operative council, delivering high value, community driven services.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

The Landfill Directive (99/31/EC) requires a reduction in bio-degradable waste to be landfilled by 75% in 2010, when compared against the 1995 level.

The Government's Waste Strategy requires 40% of domestic waste by weight to be recycled by 2010 and 50% by 2020. The waste strategy is designed to increase recycling and therefore meet the legislative requirements without incurring financial penalties from Europe.

The Borough Councils recycling performance is already ahead of the 50% by 2020 target, currently running at around 52%.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 - empowers the Council as a Waste Collection Authority to direct householders how to present waste.

The Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 - transposed from the EU's revised Waste Framework Directive, including TEEP element.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1 The implementation of the Recycling and Waste Strategy 2016 is in accordance with the Council's equal opportunities policy and procedures to enhance community cohesion.

During the development of the new service an equality impact assessment will be undertaken for each aspect of the development. It is anticipated that the comprehensive service design will make a significant positive equalities impact.

9. **Major Risks**

- 9.1 A risk log for the introduction of the new service is maintained and reviewed by the Recycling and Waste Strategy Cabinet Panel on a regular basis.

10. **Key Decision Information**

- 10.1 This proposal affects more than one ward

11. **Previous Cabinet Decisions**

- 11.1 16th December 2015
23rd July 2014

12. **List of Appendices**
None

13. **Background Papers**

13.1 Procurement documentations – available to Members on request.

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CABINET

16th March 2016

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Report Title: Neighbourhood Planning Resourcing
Submitted by: Executive Director: Regeneration and Development
Portfolios: Town Centres, Business and Assets
Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To advise Cabinet on the potential resource implications of supporting neighbourhood planning and to bring forward a proposal for consideration by Cabinet.

Recommendations:

- (a) That a temporary part time post at Grade 9 (Current Senior Planning Officer) level be created and recruited to and that continuation of such arrangements at the end of each financial year be dependent upon the continuation of the current grant or other such external funding arrangements.
- (b) That in the event that Government funding is not continued then officers' report back on the alternative options for supporting neighbourhood planning, as may be required.

Reasons:

To provide appropriate support for "qualifying bodies" in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans, neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders.

1. Background

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Plans were introduced under the Localism Act (2011). These plans form part of the development plan system, however they are prepared by parish councils or organised neighbourhood forums and they cover a smaller area than a district-wide local plan.
- 1.2 Before a neighbourhood plan can be formally prepared, the area that is to be covered by the plan needs to be designated. As the local planning authority, the Borough Council has the responsibility to publicise and then make a decision on applications that it has received to designate neighbourhood areas within the borough.

1.3 In addition to neighbourhood plans it is possible for parish councils and other organised forums, as part of their Neighbourhood planning work to promote Neighbourhood Development Orders. Such Orders can grant planning permission for specific types of development in a specific neighbourhood area. A Neighbourhood Development Order can therefore:

- Apply to a specific site, sites or wider geographical area
- Grant planning permission for a certain type or types of development
- Grant planning permission outright or subject to conditions

A Community Right to Build Order is a form of Neighbourhood Development Order that can be used to grant planning permission for small scale development for community benefit on a specific site or sites in a neighbourhood area. Such Orders can be developed by Community Organisations that meet certain criteria.

(To date no Neighbourhood Development Orders or Community Right to Build Orders have been promoted within the Borough).

1.4 In September 2015 Cabinet considered a report on applications to designate two neighbourhood areas for neighbourhood planning purposes covering Loggerheads Parish and Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer & Aston and Whitmore Parishes.

1.5 In addition to approving these designations Cabinet resolved that officers be authorised to submit a bid for funding support to the DCLG and that a report be brought to a future meeting of Cabinet on the likely resource and staffing implications for the Council in responding to the development of Neighbourhood Plans. This report seeks to meet this objective, although it considers Neighbourhood planning more broadly rather than just the development of Neighbourhood Plans. The grant referred to (£10,000 in total) was subsequently obtained.

2. Issues

2.1 There are legal obligations that have to be met by the Council with respect to Neighbourhood Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders. The attached Table at Appendix A indicate Neighbourhood Plans Roles and Responsibilities and in bold type indicates the statutory/legal requirements.

2.2 In both cases the resource requirements from the Council's perspective can be quite considerable, but the chief feature is that they are unpredictable. It may, by engagement, with the bodies concerned be able to influence when such services are required.

2.3 Whilst the Council has no choice but to meet its statutory requirements, it is able to decide what other forms of support it may wish to give particularly to the development of Neighbourhood Plans.

2.4 For 2015/16 Neighbourhood Planning Grants are available to Local Planning Authorities. Guidance indicates that such grant money is to ensure local planning authorities receive sufficient funding to enable them to meet the legislative duties in relation to neighbourhood planning – specifically it covers the neighbourhood planning duties introduced in the Localism Act 2011 which are to provide advice or assistance; to hold an examination; and to make arrangements for a referendum.

- 2.5 It is the government's wish that local planning authorities receive the appropriate funding to enable the fulfilment of these duties in line with the new burdens principles. Financial support is available for communities doing neighbourhood planning via other channels.
- 2.6 For all areas, the basic level of funding is £30,000 at present and there has been a recent announcement indicating the availability of such grants beyond the end of March 2016. To date the Council has secured £10,000 of Neighbourhood Planning Grant – reflecting the designation of the two neighbourhood plan areas of Loggerheads Parish and Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer & Aston and Whitmore Parishes.
- 2.7 One of the statutory requirements upon Local Planning Authorities is to “provide such advice or assistance to qualifying bodies as, in all the circumstances, they consider appropriate for the purpose of, or in connection with, facilitating the making of proposal for neighbourhood development plans and (sic) orders”.
- 2.8 National Planning Practice Guidance is that a local planning authority should:-
- be proactive in providing information to communities about neighbourhood planning
 - fulfil its duties and take decisions as soon as possible, and within statutory time periods where these apply
 - set out a clear and transparent decision making timetable and share this with those wishing to prepare a neighbourhood plan or an Order
 - constructively engage with the community throughout the process.

Parish or Town Councils or neighbourhood forums preparing a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order are encouraged to discuss with their local planning authority how the funding that a Local Planning Authority may receive can support their work involved in taking forward neighbourhood plans. Members' attention is drawn to a letter received from Loggerheads Parish Council on this subject which is attached as Appendix B.

- 2.9 Estimates of the likely costs of **the holding of a referendum** in the two areas where a neighbourhood plan area has been designated are of the order of £6k to £6.5K. There are a number of variables which could affect these costs such as the number of electors eligible to take part.
- 2.10 The costs of the **holding of the examination** are however much more difficult to predict. In addition to costs associated with the provision of accommodation, the principal cost is likely to be that of the Inspector who would be paid a standard rate. Examples from other authorities are being obtained, but the chief determinant of cost would be the length of the examination.
- 2.11 The key decision facing the Council in deciding what resources it wishes to set aside for neighbourhood planning is how it considers it should fulfil its advice or assistance role. Rather than consider in detail how this might work out, it is suggested that Cabinet should set a broad policy position.

2.12 There is a strong argument that positively engaging with Parish and Town Councils and neighbourhood forums in their preparation of neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development areas would have significant benefits. Such positive engagement requires staff time and the proposal set out below is to provide an additional staff resource which could:

- **Play a major role both in helping the council to fulfil its statutory responsibilities** set out in bold in the attached Table and to **realise some of the expectations** of the Parish /Town Councils and forums for officers to attend consultation events and steering group meetings.
- **Minimise potential delays in the preparation of the Joint Local Plan.** This is because the time spent supporting the preparation of a neighbourhood plan will otherwise inevitably divert officer time and attention away from the JLP.
- **Provide direct day to day contact** with eligible qualifying bodies and lead bodies explaining processes, answering queries, providing advice to help them devise an effective process.
- **Provide a quick response** when a query is raised avoiding criticism that the qualifying body is not receiving enough/appropriate support.
- **To play a key and critical role as a mediator/broker between the Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan**
- **An effective neighbourhood plan** is in everyone's interests - this requires regular engagement/ongoing support and advice, which the Planning Policy team will find it most difficult to provide, because of the demands of the JLP but is in the Borough Council's interests to do so in order to avoid the neighbourhood plan going off course.
- **Help to portray the Council in a positive light** demonstrating a commitment to be proactive in supporting the preparation of neighbourhood plans.

3. Proposal

3.1 That a temporary part time (0.6 FTE) post of Neighbourhood Planning Officer at Grade 9 (Current Senior Planning Officer level) be created and recruited to the Planning Policy Team.

3.2 That continuation of such arrangements at the end of each financial year be dependent upon the continuation of the current grant arrangements or other approved funding.

3.3 That in the event that the Government decides to not provide further funding then officers report back on the alternative options for supporting neighbourhood planning.

4. Reasons for the Preferred Solution

4.1 It is considered that given the benefits of the Council positively engaging with Neighbourhood Planning, and the prospect of funds being available, albeit at the end of the process and not in all situations, the balance of advantage lies in pursuing the preferred solution.

5. Financial and Resource Implications

5.1 Provision will have to be made in advance of the receipt of grant, which even if achieved, will in most cases not be within the same financial year. The cost of a one

year appointment is estimated at between £22,283 (scp 32) and £24,082 (scp 35). Should the Council not receive any further grant (either because by the time the trigger points are reached the NPG scheme has been terminated, or those points are never reached) the cost to the Council in 2016/17 would be up to about £14K plus the recruitment costs (estimated at £1,500). One option would be to fund this from existing resources allocated to the Local Plan (with a view to replenishing that budget as required in the future).

6. Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities

6.1 The proposal should contribute towards a Borough of Opportunity.

7. Legal and Statutory Implications

7.1 Creation of the post would significantly assist the Council in meeting its statutory requirements in terms of the provision of advice or assistance, but it would not assist with the required holding of a referendum or examination.

8. Major Risks

8.1 That for reasons outside its control the Council does not become eligible to make application for NPG. Such reasons could include a termination or reduction in the current grant arrangements or a decision by the qualifying body to abandon progress on their Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix A – Table of Neighbourhood Plans Roles and Responsibilities
Appendix B – Letter from Loggerheads Parish Council to Chief Executive

10. Background Papers

10.1 Table of Neighbourhood Development Order and Community Right to Build Order Responsibilities (available on request).

11. Key Decision Information

11.1 This is a key decision because it affects more than two wards.

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Neighbourhood Plans Roles and Responsibilities

A community's right to prepare a neighbourhood plan was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The associated regulations (the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012) require Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council to undertake certain tasks. In addition the council is required to provide such advice and assistance as, in all the circumstances, they consider appropriate. To date two Neighbourhood Plan Areas have been designated involving four Parish Councils.

The Table below sets out a) the borough council's statutory/legal requirements obligations (bold text); b) tasks considered necessary to facilitate the borough council meeting its statutory obligations; c) the level of discretionary advice and assistance it proposes to offer to qualifying bodies (italic text), hereafter referred to the lead body, d) guidance on the role and responsibilities of lead bodies.

The information below has been compiled in relation to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended 2015) (see first column), The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, the Localism Act 2011, the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Stage:	Lead Body Responsibilities and Council Expectations:	Proposed NULBC Role & Responsibilities –	Comments
Designation Regulation 6/7	<p>Consult the local planning authority and Ward Member(s) before making an application for designation.</p> <p>Work with other members of the community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood planning proposals to allow them to play an active role in preparing a neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>The terms of reference for a steering group or other body should be published and the minutes of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to resources respond positively to requests from eligible lead bodies i.e. parish and town councils or neighbourhood forums, who are interested in preparing a neighbourhood plan including advising on what a neighbourhood plan can or cannot do. • Upon request advise the lead body on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA) boundary or proposed neighbourhood forum. • Subject to staff capacity and at least two weeks' notice the council may be able to provide maps of the 	<p>The council's Executive has delegated decisions on Neighbourhood Plan Area applications to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing.</p>

Stage:	Lead Body Responsibilities and Council Expectations:	Proposed NULBC Role & Responsibilities –	Comments
	<p>meetings made available to the public.</p> <p>Once the Neighbourhood Plan Area has been identified submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A map of the proposed area • A statement explaining a) why the area is appropriate for designation b) that the body making the application is a qualifying body <p>Optional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the type of consultation that has been carried out to date • The objectives driving the decision to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan • Widely publicise proposed designation across NPA and inform people living and working in the NPA of the outcome. 	<p>proposed neighbourhood plan area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide written acknowledgement of receipt of NPA applications and confirm consultation period and notify ward members. • Publicise applications to designate a Neighbourhood Plan area on the council website. • Organise the public consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan Area via the website and displaying notices within the NPA. • The application will be advertised for a minimum of four weeks. • Respond to day to day enquiries relating to neighbourhood area applications via telephone and email. • Compile public consultation comments. • Prepare report to Portfolio Holder with a recommendation on the designation. • Decision made within the prescribed period. Currently 8 weeks following the start of the publicity period for Parish/Town Council area applications or 13 weeks in respect of neighbourhood forums. • Publish designations of 	

Stage:	Lead Body Responsibilities and Council Expectations:	Proposed NULBC Role & Responsibilities –	Comments
		<p>Neighbourhood Plan areas, and decisions to refuse the application to designate, on the council’s website together with consultation comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the lead authority of the decision. 	
<p>Preparation of draft Neighbourhood Plan by the community</p> <p>Regulation 14</p>	<p>Prepare a project plan for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. This would include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An indicative timescale for the completion of the neighbourhood plan.* • The provision of regular updates on progress to the planning policy team via email. <p>*Project plan would cover the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering baseline information and evidence • Identification of issues • Develop a vision and objectives • Generation of Options • Drafting proposals • Determining whether the proposals are likely to have a significant effect i.e. whether the 	<p>The council will be able to provide some assistance and advice but cannot control the Neighbourhood Plan preparation. At this stage the council will provide mainly technical support i.e. checking compliance.</p> <p>At the request of the lead body the council will participate in an initial meeting to provide an overview on the procedure and issues. This advice will cover:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scope of a neighbourhood plan i.e. what it can or cannot do • Relationship with the emerging local plan and adopted development plan • The programme of work including timescales and key stages • The strategic policies that the neighbourhood plan needs to conform to. • Introducing LDF evidence base • Other appropriate data the council 	<p>It is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in the neighbourhood plan and those in the emerging Local Plan</p> <p>The lead body is strongly encouraged to consider the environmental implications of its proposals at an early stage. It is the responsibility of the lead body to determine through</p>

Stage:	Lead Body Responsibilities and Council Expectations:	Proposed NULBC Role & Responsibilities –	Comments
	<p><i>Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 are likely to apply.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering if a viability assessment is required. The sites and the scale of development identified in a plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be developed viably is threatened. • Undertaking community consultation. <p>Draft the Neighbourhood Plan in consultation with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those living and working in the neighbourhood area and those with an interest in or affected by the proposals (e.g. service providers) • Talking to land owners and the development industry. • Involve the Ward Member(s) <p>Ensure all alternative policy options have been considered</p>	<p>holds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signpost to other sources of data. • Requirements of other legislation such as the Habitats Regulations and Environmental Assessments • The need for a sustainability appraisal. • Consultation with the "Consultation Bodies" <p>After the initial meeting the council will provide constructive comments on completed drafts of the emerging neighbourhood plan, including providing an informal opinion on the need for any environmental assessments and discuss the contents of any supporting documents, including evidence & the statement of basic conditions.</p> <p>The council will not offer support/assistance in the following areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing documents. • Developing options but will help to check that there are no major conflicts with the strategy and policies in the Local Plan. • Help in drafting policies but will advise on whether the Draft Neighbourhood Plan conflicts with strategic policies in the 	<p>separate screening exercises whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or Habitats Regulations Assessment are required.</p>

Stage:	Lead Body Responsibilities and Council Expectations:	Proposed NULBC Role & Responsibilities –	Comments
	<p>Undertake Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or Habitat Regulation Assessment, if required.</p> <p>Draft the Proposals Map.</p> <p>Draft basic conditions statement</p> <p>Undertake six week consultation on draft plan. The draft Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement and/or draft Habitat Regulation Assessment should be consulted on at the same time.</p> <p>Prior to submission discuss the contents of any supporting documents, including the statement of basic conditions with the borough council.</p>	<p>development plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary research, or survey work including the analysis of comments but subject to capacity may be able to advise on the consultation process. • Attend every meeting/consultation event organised. • Direct financial support. <p>Prior to submission the council will provide advice and support in relation to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Statements the Neighbourhood Plan needs to be submitted with • Suitability of the plan in meeting the basic conditions • Suitability of any Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulation Assessment undertaken 	<p><u>Consultation period for the draft plan</u></p> <p>All representations on the proposals should have been submitted to the borough council by the close of the publicity period</p> <p>The council's objective will be to seek to resolve any issues to ensure the draft neighbourhood plan has the greatest chance of success at independent examination.</p>
<p>Publication</p> <p>(Submission of the final neighbourhood development plan prior to the</p>	<p>Before submitting the plan to the local planning authority (LPA) the lead body should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publicise the draft plan and invites representations • consult the consultation bodies as appropriate 	<p>At submission the council will check:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conformity with other legislative requirements • If the Plan conforms to the strategic elements of the development plan, as well as national policy (review 	<p><u>Consultation period for the submission version</u></p> <p>Those wishing to make their views known to the independent examiner, or who wish to submit evidence for</p>

Stage:	Lead Body Responsibilities and Council Expectations:	Proposed NULBC Role & Responsibilities –	Comments
<p>examination)</p> <p>Regulation 15/16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • send a copy of the draft plan to the LPA • where ‘European Obligations’ apply, complies with relevant publicity and consultation requirements • consider consultation responses and amends plan if appropriate <p>With the final neighbourhood development plan they will also need to submit:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A map or statement showing the extent of the area covered by the neighbourhood plan • A consultation statement detailing the consultation undertaken and summarising the comments received • Final copies of any Environmental Statements or Assessments undertaken • A statement of basic conditions. 	<p>site allocations and policies).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the suitability of the consultation statement • Publicise the Plan and supporting documents via notices in the neighbourhood area and via the council’s website, with details for how to make representations • Consultation bodies referred to in the submitted consultation statement will be notified of the publication of the Neighbourhood Plan by email or letter. • Representations on the Neighbourhood Plan will be able to be made during a period of at least six weeks. <p>Submit report to Cabinet seeking confirmation of conformity.</p>	<p>the examiner to consider, will do this by submitting written representations to the local planning authority during the statutory publicity period on the submitted draft neighbourhood plan</p> <p>An emerging neighbourhood plan may be a material consideration in determining planning applications</p>

Stage:	Lead Body Responsibilities and Council Expectations:	Proposed NULBC Role & Responsibilities –	Comments
<p>Independent Examination & Referendum</p> <p>Regulation 17/18</p>		<p>Once the council considers that the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared correctly it will arrange for an independent examination, this will involve:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and appointment of an Examiner in agreement with the lead authority • Organising all correspondence relating to the Examination (including public notices, emails and letter printing) • Publicise and submit the submission plan and other relevant documentation including comments received to the Examiner. • Discuss arrangements for the examination with the Examiner • Arrange and pay for a public hearing venue, should one be required by the Examiner • Consider the Examiner’s Report and decide whether the recommendations should be followed (Cabinet decision). • The Examiner’s Report and the council’s decision document (outlining any 	<p>The council is responsible for paying for the costs of the examination so it is in the council’s interests to ensure that the proposed plan meets the requirements.</p>

Stage:	Lead Body Responsibilities and Council Expectations:	Proposed NULBC Role & Responsibilities –	Comments
		<p>modifications to be made to correct factual errors or ensure the plan meets the basic conditions) will be made available to view on the council’s website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council will send the decision statement to the Neighbourhood Plan lead body and any consultees that have made representations or requested to be kept informed of the plan’s progress. • The report and the council’s decision statement will also be publicised within the neighbourhood area. • If the neighbourhood plan passes the examination the council will arrange referendum date and pay for a local referendum. • The council will organise two referendums in a business area (one for residents, the other for businesses). • The borough council will publish a notice of the referendum on their website. 	<p>Electoral services will be responsible for preparing ballot papers for the referendum, identifying all residential and business addresses within the neighbourhood area, sending out the ballot papers to each of those addresses and collating and counting the votes cast and received.</p> <p>The extent of the electorate who will be eligible to vote in the referendum will be determined by the type of Neighbourhood Plan to be prepared</p> <p>It may be appropriate to extend the referendum area beyond the neighbourhood area, for example where the scale or nature of the proposals in the draft neighbourhood plan are such that they will have a substantial, direct and demonstrable impact beyond the neighbourhood area. This is a decision of the Examiner.</p> <p>The Government is proposing the introduction of prescribed time periods for councils to hold a referendum regarding passing a neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>The Examiner’s report is non-binding and it is the borough council’s decision to accept any proposed</p>

Stage:	Lead Body Responsibilities and Council Expectations:	Proposed NULBC Role & Responsibilities –	Comments
			modifications.
<p>‘Making’ of the Neighbourhood Plan and adoption</p> <p>Regulation 19/20</p>	<p>Provide the final Plan in an electronic format to the Planning Policy Team</p> <p>Provide any support documentation in an electronic format to the Planning Policy Team.</p> <p>Provide results of any primary resource data that would be helpful to the borough council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the referendum supports the Neighbourhood Plan then the borough council will adopt the ‘made’ plan as part of the overall development plan (Council decision). • Copies of the decision to adopt will be sent to the lead authority and anyone who asked to be notified. • The ‘made’ plan will be published via the council’s website and made available in the council’s contact centres. 	<p>The Government is proposing to introduce a time limit within which the plan must be “made” by the council once it has passed the referendum.</p> <p>Business areas will require two separate referenda, for residents and businesses, held in parallel. Where the two outcomes conflict the decision about whether to adopt the Neighbourhood Plan will rest with the council.</p> <p>The neighbourhood plan will form part of the approved development plan for the area, to be taken into account in decision making. Officers will need to keep ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans under review and determine when they are likely to become out of date and need to be reviewed.</p>

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LOGGERHEADS PARISH COUNCIL

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Mr J Sellgren
Chief Executive
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Merrial Street,
Newcastle under Lyme,
Staffordshire
ST5 2AG

4th January 2016

Dear Mr Sellgren,

Resource to support Neighbourhood Development Plans

On 30th March 2015 Loggerheads Parish Council applied to the Borough Council for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area with the intention being to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the parish of Loggerheads. This was approved by Cabinet on 29th September 2015.

At the Cabinet meeting an application from Chorlton, Maer & Aston and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan Group was also considered and agreed. I understand that at the meeting the need for additional resource to support neighbourhood plans was raised and it was agreed that a paper would be brought back to a future Cabinet meeting identifying the resource implications for the Borough Council.

In October both Loggerheads and Whitmore Parishes wrote to Helen to ask what support we would be able to access from the Borough Council. Both Parishes being made up entirely of volunteers with limited expertise in neighbourhood planning. Helen forwarded a draft Cabinet paper that sets out the statutory requirements on the Borough Council and the Lead body (neighbourhood plan group) but this is heavily caveated "subject to resource".

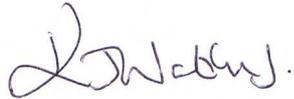
On 17th December representatives from Loggerheads and Chorlton, Maer & Aston and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan Groups met with Helen and Stewart to consider roles and responsibilities. Helen informed us that the paper outlining the resource required by NuLBC to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities would not be presented to Cabinet until February. This Council is concerned that your Planning Department does not have sufficient resource to support us to deliver a Neighbourhood Plan and is supportive of the need for additional resource to provide the relevant expertise to help us to deliver what an inspector would call a "good" plan. Good practice guidance from Locality and several recent Inspectors reports states that the best plans are those where lead bodies work closely with the local authority.

Your officers have now had the best part of a year to respond to the initial request from Loggerheads to start work on a Neighbourhood Plan and are still not in a position to offer more than the most basic support. This has the potential to put the preparation of this

Neighbourhood Plan in jeopardy and will clearly have an impact on the length of time it is likely to take to get to a Plan that is adopted.

The Parish Council would implore you to take every step to support the Neighbourhood Plan process in Loggerheads and Whitmore and to resolve your resource shortfall as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Watkins'.

Karen Watkins, MBE
Clerk, Loggerheads Parish Council

Cc Sir William Cash, Mr G. Benson, Cllr D. Loades, Cllr P Northcott, Mr D Davies, Chair of Chorlton, Maer & Aston and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan Group.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

Date 16th March 2016

1. <u>HEADING</u>	The Northern Gateway Development Zone Initiative and HS2
<u>Submitted by:</u>	Executive Director, Regeneration and Development
<u>Portfolio:</u>	Policy, People and Partnerships
<u>Ward(s) affected:</u>	All

Purpose of the Report

To provide members with up to date information in respect of the following matters in order that members are kept apprised of the strategic and practical implications for the borough:-

- (1) HS2 rail developments announced in the Autumn Statement and;
- (2) Progress with the Northern Gateway Development Zone Initiative.

Recommendations

- (a) That Cabinet note the emerging position with regard to the Northern Gateway Development Zone and agree to continue participating in the initiative.
- (b) That officers be asked to report back to Cabinet with any necessary information with regard to the NGDZ's emerging Growth Strategy.
- (c) To note that officers have taken the necessary steps to observe the practical implications of the Government's Safeguarding Directions for Phase Two of High Speed Two and to ask that they provide necessary information to ward councillors in this regard.

Reasons

To provided elected members with relevant information in respect of these matters which are of strategic importance to the long term economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the borough's communities.

1. Background

- 1.1 Cabinet received a briefing note at its meeting on 11th November 2015 about a concordat which had been agreed between the Cheshire and Staffordshire LEPs and the local authorities representing Cheshire and North Staffordshire about working together for mutual economic benefit prompted by the expected investment in phase two of the HS2 project. The purpose behind this concordat is the wish to optimise the potential economic benefits arising from this investment and (certainly in North Staffordshire's mind, at least) to spread the economic benefits of the investment more widely than just the Crewe area itself. This initiative is known as the 'Northern Gateway Development Zone' (NGDZ) and this aims to complement the adjoining initiatives of the 'Northern Powerhouse', to the north, and the 'Midlands Engine' to the south, both of which form part of the Government's Devolution Agenda.
- 1.2 The following note summarises progress on both the HS2 project and the NGDZ initiative.

2. **HS2 Phase two (update)**

2.1 On the 30th November 2015 the Secretary of State made a Statement to the House of Commons on HS2 and the Northern Powerhouse. He detailed the progress that has been made in confirming the route and station locations for Phase Two of HS2. This follows the Government's announcement in the Autumn Statement of the budget settlement for the whole project. In summary, the main elements of the Statement were:

- Confirmation of the Government's intention to accelerate the route from Fradley in the West Midlands to Crewe ('Phase 2a') so that it opens six years earlier than planned, in 2027. Fradley is the point where HS2 Phase One joins the West Coast Main Line. This will bring more capacity and faster HS2 services to the North West of England, including Crewe, Liverpool, Manchester and Scotland much sooner than originally planned. Powers to build this section of route will be sought through a separate "Hybrid Bill" which the Secretary of State intends to introduce to Parliament in 2017.
- The issuing of what are known as "safeguarding directions" for this section of the route, having considered responses (including that of the Borough Council) to the November 2014 consultation on safeguarding. The Council as the Local Planning Authority is now required to consult with HS2 Ltd on certain applications that fall within the designated safeguarded area before granting consent, and should the Council be minded to approve such applications contrary to the advice of HS2, it is required to notify the Secretary of State for Transport of its intentions, so that he can decide whether or not to "call in" the application. The purposes of such a Direction is to ensure that land which may be needed for major infrastructure is protected from conflicting developments nearby, before construction starts.
- Safeguarding also triggers the Statutory Blight Regime. Qualifying owner occupiers whose property is within the safeguarded zone will have the right to ask the Government to buy their property by serving a Blight Notice. The Secretary of State has launched a consultation on a wider package of assistance measures for owner occupiers, which go "well beyond what the Government is required to do by law, for those living along this section of route, as they have already done for Phase One".
- With respect to the route itself the Secretary of State indicated in his Statement that having set out their initial preferred route for Phase Two of HS2 in January 2013 and having conducted a public consultation exercise (to which the Borough Council also made a submission), his route decision on Phase 2a takes into account the consultation responses regarding that section of the route.
- A commitment to the full "Y" network with the announcement giving each city and region the certainty and confidence they need to take the next step in developing regeneration and connectivity plans, individually and with Transport for the North, while the Government undertakes the technical and economic analysis required for a full route decision on the rest of Phase 2 ('Phase 2b') in autumn 2016.

2.2 The Government's proposals are set out in a Command Paper "HS2 Phase Two: east and west, the next steps to Crewe and beyond", which can be read by clicking on the link [here](#). As part of the Secretary of State's Statement he indicated as follows:

“In 2014, Sir David Higgins (the Chairman of HS2) recommended that HS2 serve a North West hub station at Crewe. Whilst I am not taking decisions on Crewe Hub today, I do support the vision for a Crewe hub. Work is ongoing I intend to make further announcements in 2016, and any Crewe hub scheme will be subject to consultation. To support the work that the Northern Gateway Partnership is going to develop growth and regeneration plans ahead of a decision I am releasing part of this funding this year. I have also asked HS2 Ltd to explore options for how we might best serve Stoke and Macclesfield, including through classic compatible trains via Handsacre Junction. Handsacre Junction is part of Phase One and will allow HS2 trains to serve Stafford”.

2.3 Officers can confirm that the consequences of the above actions have been implemented, including the provision of links on the Council’s website about the safeguarding directions. It is intended that ward councillors representing the affected parts of the borough will receive briefing information in this regard.

3. **The Northern Gateway Development Zone (update)**

3.1 As indicated earlier the NGDZ initiative emerged in the autumn of last year as a consequence of the then anticipated decision on HS2 phase two. It was framed by the joint signing of a concordat by the two Local Enterprise Partnerships (Stoke on Trent & Staffordshire and Cheshire & Warrington) who wished to agree to work together for the achievement of potential mutual economic benefits and growth (prompted by HS2). The informal NGDZ partnership emerged on the back of this and is supported by not only the two LEPs but the following Local Authorities:

- Cheshire East Council;
- Cheshire West and Chester Council;
- Stoke on Trent City Council
- Staffordshire County Council
- Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council
- Stafford Borough Council
- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

3.2 The NGDZ set out a number of high level growth ambitions up to the year 2040 based upon existing and emerging Local Plan forecasts and in the expectation of further growth arising from an HS2 hub serving the area. The hoped-for benefits are not limited to additional jobs and housing and are also expected to result in increased GVA (Gross Value Added) to the sub-regional economy – i.e. greater wealth - and an uplift in land values that will make the area more attractive to investors.

3.3 The potential growth across the NGDZ as a whole could potentially have a significant impact on the housing and employment opportunities for residents of the area. The Government is encouraging the two LEPs and the local authorities which comprise the NGDZ to collaborate and in his Autumn Statement, the Chancellor announced that he would be making available £600,000 to the two LEPs to develop their proposals for the Zone

including the preparation of a Growth Strategy (with a potential further tranche of £600K). A team of senior civil servants and Government policy advisors, under the leadership of Jackie Sadek, have been identified to work with the NGDZ to develop its Growth Strategy.

- 3.4 Currently, this Council is pressing ahead with the preparation of a new Local Plan framing development policy to 2031 and your earlier report in November made a strong case for not distracting from delivering the emerging Local Plan although it was acknowledged that it will probably be necessary to revise the Local Plan earlier than might have been the case to address the implications of HS2. At present it is anticipated that the draft Local Plan will have been prepared by Spring 2017 and adopted by the end of 2018
- 3.5 The NGDZ is now beginning to establish more formal interim governance/delivery arrangements to lead on and manage the initiative. These are looking at:
- i. In terms of governance a Chief Executives Group has been established, supported by three task groups (see below, para 3.6) which are being coordinated by a Director-level officer group. It is intended that a political Leaders group will be formalised shortly;
 - ii. plans for the appointment of a small team of two staff plus some shared administrative support comprising a Northern Gateway Programme Director (initially a Cheshire East Council secondment to capture the present momentum, but to be competitively recruited) and a Northern Gateway Programme Manager, with a dedicated office (probably in Crewe);
 - iii. the funding arrangements to deliver the Growth Strategy (involving dedicated staff and commissioned work packages, as well as in-kind officer support);
 - iv. plans to showcase the initiative at this year's MIPIM event (Europe's leading property show) in March, to introduce and promote the NGDZ for international investment alongside the local LEP's "Make It" exhibition stand (promoting existing commitments such as Keele Science and Innovation Park and the Ceramics Valley Enterprise Zone in our case);
 - v. plans for communications and branding;
 - vi. the need for a confidentiality agreement to enable participants to share information of a commercially sensitive nature in order to protect the interests of both land owners and the wider public interest;
 - vii. the preparation of a brief and cost plan for the commissioning of a Northern Gateway Development Zone Growth Strategy.
- 3.6 In advance of the preparation of the Growth Strategy, the NGDZ has established three sub groups to scope the following key themes:
- Strategic Infrastructure, e.g. exploring the potential need to invest in new roads, by-passes and the scope for rail enhancement;

- Development Sites, e.g. reviewing the potential capacity for new housing and employment development and the constraints to bringing these forward and;
- Value Capture and Delivery, i.e. to explore the opportunity to derive value to facilitate delivery of development on the less viable sites.

3.7 At present the three groups are at the ‘information gathering stage’; it is expected that the evidence and information gathered will provide the basis of the future Growth Strategy.

4. **Proposal and Reasons for Preferred Solution**

4.1 An important feature of this work will entail the issue of political oversight and governance. While local authorities are used to reporting structures within their own organisation, this work will entail new ways of working and a level of inter-authority collaboration which is, potentially, challenging. This will be eased (hopefully) through a system of ‘offers’ and ‘asks’ between the Government and the local authorities within the NGDZ. In Newcastle’s case, these ‘asks’ might include mechanisms for improving the viability of brownfield housing sites, investment in strategic infrastructure and the possibility of forward funding difficult employment land allocations. Given the potential opportunities that this process holds for the borough it is considered that the Council should continue to engage in the initiative subject to reporting back to members as the Growth Strategy begins to emerge.

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

5.1 This initiative has the potential to contribute to the corporate priority of creating a Borough of Opportunity.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The Council has powers under the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area; this assimilates previous provisions in Part III of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 that enabled the promotion of economic development (now repealed).

6.2 As the Local Planning Authority for the area the Council is required to comply with the provisions of the Safeguarding Direction. Were the Council to fail to comply with such provisions, it could face a situation where a planning permission that it has granted is subsequently revoked by the Secretary of State, with the financial implications of that revocation falling upon the Council

7. **Financial and Resource Implications**

7.1 The Borough Council has been asked to make a financial contribution toward the establishment and revenue costs of the programme. At the time of writing a formula for splitting the costs between the partners was still being discussed. It is anticipated that the Borough Council’s contribution can be met from existing budgets at this stage.

8. **Major Risks**

8.1 It is considered that the major risk would lie in not engaging in this potentially strategically significant initiative could be harmful to the long term economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the borough.

9. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

9.1 In November 2015 Cabinet received a report on the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire LEP concordat and potential designation of Northern Gateway Development Zone (NGDZ) and associated partnership.

10. **Background papers**

10.1 HS2 safeguarding directions.

10.2 Letter from DCLG dated 29 January 2016 regarding “HS2 growth and regeneration.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

16 March 2016

Title: Newcastle Economic Development Strategy: Year Four Review and Year Five Action Plan

Submitted by: Neale Clifton

Principal author: Kim Graham

Portfolio: Policy, People and Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To review progress made in taking forward the Borough's Economic Development Strategy, in particular by reviewing the progress in Year Four and considering the actions proposed in the Year Five, the final year of the Action Plan.

Recommendations

That the review of the Economic Development Strategy Year Four Action Plan be noted and that the Year Five Action Plan is considered by the Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

To authorise the Executive Director for Regeneration and Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Policy People and Partnership to make any amendments following the recommendations of the Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Reasons

By reviewing progress against last year's action plan and proposing an up to date prioritised range of actions for the forthcoming year the Council can ensure that the aims of the strategy are converted into realisable actions.

1. Background

- 1.1 Cabinet agreed the Economic Development Strategy for the Borough in 2012 following consultation with partners and the local business community on an earlier draft. Printed copies of the strategy, illustrated with plans and photographs, have since been widely disseminated, including to Cabinet Members. The approved strategy has a five-year timescale (2012-17) and included the preparation of an Action Plan for Year One (2012-13) which identified a number of concrete actions which could be taken in a shorter time scale.
- 1.2 This report provides a review of the Year Four Action Plan (2015-16) and (in part informed by this) sets out a Year Five Action Plan (2016-17) for your consideration and approval. By its nature this Action Plan is fairly detailed and for this reason is contained in appendix form.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 Strategy is inherently about making choices – making the case for why certain actions should be prioritised over others and to what intended effect. The annual action plans on the other hand are more about adding the detail to those priorities, setting out what actions are to be taken, so that the actions proposed can be seen in the context of the broader objectives. The annual review may also take the opportunity to consider new initiatives from Government such as Local Growth Fund (LGF) and from Europe such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) or a key partner or changes in the economic or financial landscape and capitalise on them. It may also suggest changes in emphasis or priority.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 When the preparation of a new Economic Development Strategy was first discussed, it was initially proposed to provide a ‘mid-term report’ half way through the five-year horizon of the strategy to review progress made and consider whether any changes in emphasis (or even direction) were required. Cabinet instead requested an annual review in the form of an annual Action Plan in which progress made in the previous year’s Action Plan was reviewed and a detailed Action Plan for the following year drafted and agreed. This report follows that approach.

4. **Proposal**

- 4.1 The appendix to this report contains a review of the Year Four Action Plan (2015-16) and sets out a proposed Year Five Action Plan (2016-17) for your consideration and approval. The annual Action Plans set out in more detail how the aims and objectives agreed will be carried out. These are based around the four themes of:
- Promoting enterprise and supporting local businesses to grow,
 - Improving the skills of the local workforce
 - Marketing and development, and
 - Strengthening the vitality and appeal of the town centres.

- 4.2 The draft action plan is timetabled to be considered by the Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee on 23rd March. It would be appropriate for Cabinet to agree to the overall Action Plan subject to consideration being given to any recommendations from the Scrutiny meeting. In order to enable Scrutiny recommendations to be taken into account it is recommended that the Executive Director for Regeneration and Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Policy People and Partnership is authorised to make any amendments.

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 5.1 To continue to act as a basis for dialogue with other partners to encourage complementary action and to direct the activity of the Regeneration and Economic Development Team.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities**

- 6.1 The Economic Development Strategy falls within the Borough Council’s corporate priority of ‘Creating a Borough of Opportunity’.

7 **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 7.1 It is not a statutory requirement on the Council to prepare an Economic Development Strategy though it is good practice to do so in line with the relevant powers and duties placed upon Local Authorities in the Local Government Act 2000 relating to promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area and to take decisions against the background of agreed priorities, up to date data and following consultation with partners.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 No differential impact has been identified. Specific actions which are designed to improve the prospects of particular sections of the community (for instance, those without work). Where new projects are proposed these will be subject to subsequent reports, which may themselves require an EIA.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 9.1 Where actions are proposed which require proposals for expenditure these will be the subject of specific reports to Cabinet.

Key actions being supported by the Council's resources include:

- o Work in partnership with Make It to attract new employers to the Borough and support existing businesses to expand
- o Procure consultants to undertake work on the Keele master plan.
- o Support BID to apply for further funding from Arts Council England for an event in 2016
- o Support Go Kids Grove to apply for Heritage Lottery funding to design and create an interactive map to promote Kids Grove heritage and services to canal users
- o Introduce software to modernise payment methods for market traders
- o Use the Enjoy website and promotion for tourism from the Destination Management Partnership

10. **Major Risks**

- 10.1 These will be dealt with project by project.

11. **Key Decision Information**

- 11.1 The strategy will affect more than two wards of the Borough. Approval for specific expenditure will be subject to more detailed later reports.

12. **Earlier Cabinet Resolutions**

- 12.1 At its meeting on 14th March 2012, Cabinet considered the draft strategy; following final modifications the final strategy was adopted by Cabinet in May 2012.

- 12.2 At its meeting in September 2013 Cabinet adopted the Year One Action Plan Review 2012-13 and Year Two 2013-14 Action Plan.

- 12.3 At its meeting 18 June 2014 Cabinet adopted the Year Two Action Plan Review 2013 -14 and Year Three Action Plan 2014 – 15

- 12.4 At its meeting 25 March 2015 Cabinet adopted the Year Three Action Plan Review 2014 -15 and Year Four Action Plan 2015 - 16

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 Year Four Action Plan Review 2015-16 and Draft 2016-17 Action Plan.

14. **Background Documents**

14.1 Newcastle Economic Development Strategy 2012-17

Newcastle Economic Development Strategy 2012-2017 Year Five Action Plan 2016-2017

Promoting Enterprise and supporting Local Business to Grow

Action taken in Year Four 2015-2016.	Action proposed in Year Five 2016-2017 (Bold indicates priority action)
<p>Successfully delivered Business Boost 2015. 13 businesses supported, £12k direct support plus £13k in-kind support leveraged</p> <p>Worked with Stoke City Council and the Town Centre Partnership to deliver Enterprize competition to encourage new business start-ups. Newcastle Offered property and business rates relief. However, no Newcastle businesses took up the offer to apply.</p> <p>Due to capacity issues it wasn't possible to encourage many young market traders. However, market stalls were made available to the college for Paint the Town Pink week.</p> <p>Completed the Business web pages updated in line with council website redesign.</p> <p>Business signposting activities continued in 2015 and further support was given through the 'Enterprise Round Table' group which brings together business support agencies from across the county.</p> <p>Procurement opportunities have been publicised on My Tenders and via a link on the Business pages, so that local businesses can access these. The Staffordshire Procurement Group continues to work towards establishing the requirements to standardised approaches. Action complete</p> <p>"Finest" (Local business organisation which represents business people from professional service sectors) event to meet the CEO held at Chamber November 2015</p> <p>Continued to work with Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to help shape the new European funding programme 2014 – 2020 and sources of Government funding, develop potential projects within the Borough and promote the inclusion of a number of these projects in the programmes. Worked specifically with the Education Trust Programming Group, Staffordshire Economic Development Officers Group (SEDOG), ESIF Officer Working Group</p> <p>Continued to support the Newcastle Enterprise Coach to provide awareness sessions, business coaching, workshops and enterprise clubs to encourage unemployed people into self-employment.</p> <p>Further training and business support was offered to existing market traders to improve their business on Newcastle Market, however there was no take up so this action is closed.</p>	<p>Planning for Business Boost 2016 began in February. As in previous years the amount of sponsorship available will determine if it goes ahead and in what format.</p> <p>Explore with Newcastle Business Improvement District (BID) further opportunities for business development</p> <p>Work with the Markets sub group to explore the potential of the refurbished market to attract new traders, expand the range of commodities and ensure that the market contributes to the economic life of the town.</p> <p>To support purchase and implementation of software to streamline market management processes and create the opportunity for non-cash forms of payment.</p> <p>Ongoing website maintenance and addition of the Fairtrade link</p> <p>Continue to represent the Council at the Enterprise Round Table group meetings / events and share good practice with local businesses.</p> <p>Continue to provide active support for service deliverers such as Finest to include hosting the annual 'meet the CEO'</p> <p>Continue to work with Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Staffordshire Economic Development Officers Group (SEDOG) and ESIF Officer Working Group to secure investment through the Local Growth Fund and European Funding programme 2014-2020 and assist in the assessment of outline and full project applications for the LEADER funding element that targets rural areas of the County.</p> <p>Continue to offer support to Newcastle Enterprise Coach. Scheme is dependent on European funding which will be confirmed later in the year.</p>

Improving the skills of the local workforce

Newcastle Economic Development Strategy 2012-2017 Year Five Action Plan 2016-2017

Action taken in Year Four 2015-2016	Action proposed in Year Five 2016-2017 (Bold indicates priority action)
<p>Continued to work with the LEP Education Trust Locality Project working specifically with four Newcastle schools - St John Fisher, Wolstanton High, Blackfriars and Madeley.</p> <p>Continued to work with partners to further develop the employment and skills offer across the Borough and to explore opportunities for a consortia approach through the Newcastle Employment and Skills group to secure additional funding and resource for the area. This provides the opportunity for local service providers to jointly address specific local issues such as home care support.</p> <p>Helped to develop opportunities for structured work placements at the Council by hosting internship from Keele University and overseas students via Newcastle College. Supported the Council's Shared apprenticeship scheme.</p> <p>Continued to support Talent Match to help 18-24 years (NEETs) into training, volunteering, work placements and apprenticeships in order to help their journey into work. Council representation on Core Partnership Group, provide support for recruitment and with Big Lottery review.</p>	<p>Continue to work with the LEP Locality project to encourage further links between school and business and focus on establishment of North Staffordshire Education Business Partnership.</p> <p>Work with Aspire Employment and Skills Team to coordinate the Newcastle Employment and Skills Group, bi-monthly meetings focusing on enhancing each other's work, securing additional resource for the area such as the Building Better Opportunities funding in order to reduce unemployment and increase people into training and work.</p> <p>Continue to provide opportunities for internships from Keele University and placements from local schools and colleges. Also work with Human Resources to support the Shared Apprenticeship scheme.</p> <p>Continue to offer support to Talent Match to encourage 18-24 years who are not in employment, education or training (NEETS) into training and work. Further funding is dependent on the Big Lottery review results due in April 2016</p>

Marketing and development

Action taken in Year Four 2015-2016	Action proposed in Year Five 2016 - 2017 (Bold indicates priority action)
<p>Continued to work in partnership with Make It to attract new employers to the Borough and support existing business to expand.</p> <p>Considered further response to any future HS2 consultation in conjunction with Planning Policy.</p> <p>Secured agreement with HDD for the development of the Ryecroft site which meets Members' expectations with regard to occupier content, scheme design and financial return.</p> <p>Completed technical studies and detailed physical and market assessments on the potential sites for consideration of designation as new Strategic Employment Site in the north-west of the urban area to recommend for inclusion in the new Draft Local Plan.</p> <p>Further explored options for redevelopment plans for Knutton Recreation Centre following public consultation with the aim to secure a financial return for the Borough Council.</p> <p>Worked with partners to support Keele University to develop IC5 at Keele Science Park and support them through the LEP to attract further investment in the Science Park.</p> <p>Procured expert external advice from Atlas (HCA) to carry out the Keele options appraisal and master planning study for the potential western expansion of the urban area and report this for Cabinet consideration.</p>	<p>Work with the Make It inward investment team to promote the area for inward investment and continue to assist local companies. Ensure that Newcastle sites are included in options for new employers relocating to the area. Represent the Council at all Make It meetings and relevant events</p> <p>Northern Gateway - North Staffs and South Cheshire Local Authorities and the LEPS working together to see how to best maximise the benefits of HS2 and what implications this has on growing the local economy</p> <p>Continue to support Property colleagues to secure the signing of the delivery agreement to ensure the Ryecroft development proceeds as planned.</p> <p>Consideration of data to inform Local Plan issues and options</p> <p>Continue to explore options for the redevelopment of Knutton Recreation Centre subject to the resolution of site specific constraints and plan for public consultation on the contribution that this site can make to the future of Knutton village.</p> <p>Further discussions regarding European Regional Development Funding with pan-County group. Continue with explorative work regarding what role the Council might play in future Keele Science Park investment.</p> <p>Support appropriately qualified consultants to undertake the Masterplan in line with the Local Plan development timetable.</p>

Newcastle Economic Development Strategy 2012-2017 Year Five Action Plan 2016-2017

<p>Due to change of planned use of the old police station and insufficient resources, unable to progress plans for the creation of a co-working space in the town centre to include small scale digital and creative industries with Staffordshire University and private sector partner.</p> <p>Supported colleagues and private owner with the Maxim's project to secure Heritage Lottery Foundation funding.</p> <p>Proposals for the refurbishments of Blackburn house with its new owners on hold as change of owners have taken place again. No further action.</p> <p>Website has been actively promoted to businesses, residents and visitors, including signing up businesses as members of Go Kidsgrove (the KTCP).</p> <p>Funding application to Heritage Lottery Foundation being developed to design and create an interactive map to promote Kidsgrove heritage and services to canal users. Continue to seek sources of funding for other aspects of the Kidsgrove Waterfront Project.</p> <p>'Enjoy' website continued to be used to link into PR opportunities to promote town centre events.</p>	<p>Go Kidsgrove Action Plan for 2016 includes developing website further, particularly 'Offer of the Month' and Events page.</p> <p>If application successful (submission March 2016) assist Go Kidsgrove to procure designers to work on the project in consultation with local people/schools.</p> <p>Continue to make best use of the Enjoy website in order to promote town centre events – working with the BID in line with their events plan.</p> <p>Consider options and plan for Economic Development Strategy 2017 onwards.</p>
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Strengthening the vitality and appeal of the town centres

Action proposed in Year Four (2015-16)	Action proposed in Year Five 2016-17 (Bold indicates priority action)
Supported NTCP on town centre events in 2015-16 Lymelight Music, Homecoming celebration of new circus and Christmas Lights	Continue to support the BID annual events plan.
Explored options to link market traders to existing business support mechanisms in North Staffordshire to encourage successful new start-ups on the market.	Continue to improve the new Markets page on the council web site to attract prospective traders to Newcastle market and increase the functionality of the website for users.

Newcastle Economic Development Strategy 2012-2017 Year Five Action Plan 2016-2017

Continue to provide support for new retail business in the town centre via the BID, Council web site and social media.

Developed 2 projects to encourage greater footfall in Kidsgrove Town centre – HOD walks and Christmas tree switch on (nominations invited for community member).

Supported NTCP to successfully apply for further £15K funding from Arts Council England for another Homecoming successfully in 2015

Continued to work with the TCPs and the County Council to improve wayfinding in the towns, in particular the development of a signage strategy for Kidsgrove.

Worked with the County Council to successfully refurbish two town centre subways – Friar Street and Pool Dam and commissioned local arts organisation to produce designs for the subways.

The Council committed to a 3 year funding of the Newcastle Town Centre Partnership which came to an end in December 2015. A town centre BID has now been successfully established giving a 5 year funding income to deliver against the Business Plan. NTCP will formally close at the end of March 2016.

Work with other departments, e.g. Food Safety Team, to promote relevant council services to businesses, including 'welcome packs' for businesses in the town centres.

Use Brindley 300 celebrations to build on success of heritage walks to involve residents and visitors; involve schools and other groups through Brindley events programme.

Support the BID to apply to ACE for a further £15K homecoming 3 to present the best of new circus and link to the Philip Astley wider project and celebrations planned for 2017-18

Work with County colleagues to ensure linkages to the County Transport Strategy and support delivery of specific projects within the Newcastle under Lyme Borough Integrated Transport Strategy 2015 to 2026 including Newcastle town centre, Kidsgrove rail station and Chatterley Valley.

Ongoing officer support for BID in line with the BID Business Plan objectives and KTCP at Board meetings, events and with funding applications.

Work with Conservation Officer and Heritage Lottery Foundation to explore options and costs for a Townscape Heritage Scheme for the Town Centre

Ceramics Valley Enterprise Zone – work with Stoke and Staffs LEP to promote the Enterprise Zone as an investment opportunity whilst actively pursuing development of the Chatterley Valley site by working with the landowners to overcome site specific issues and attract a potential occupier.

- 1.6 To attain the Gold Standard status, the service needs to meet a number of key commitments, including:
- The adoption of a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness, which has buy in across all local authority services
 - To work with local agencies to provide employment, education and training opportunities
 - To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord
 - To adopt a local No Second Night Out Scheme to help to prevent new rough sleepers from becoming entrenched into a street lifestyle
- 1.7 The Gold Standard assists Councils to deliver the best possible homelessness and housing advice services and ensures that those facing the threat of losing their home get the best support possible.
- 1.8 The Gold Standard programme is free to use and currently participation is entirely voluntary. At present 28 authorities have achieved either a gold, silver or bronze status and a total of 57 authorities had completed the peer assessment element in 2015.
- 1.9 Engagement in the Gold Standard programme will assist local authorities to continue to deliver more efficient and cost-effective homelessness prevention services for all clients, not just families and priority need cases who would be owed a statutory duty.
- 1.10 The cost benefit arguments for developing prevention services, rather than relying on expensive and reactive emergency provision are clear.
- 1.11 Application for the Gold Standard is in two consecutive stages:

a. A Diagnostic Peer Review

Local Authorities form small cluster groups to peer review each other's front line homelessness services against detailed list of criteria that has been compiled by the National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS).

b. Gold Standard Challenges

Once a score of 60% or above has been achieved in the peer review, local authorities are now able to work towards the second phase of achieving the Gold Standard. This will require the submission of evidence in support of the way a service meets the requirements of the ten Gold Standard challenges. These are listed in the background papers and each challenge has a detailed assessment criteria. Completing these challenges will be a joint endeavour by the Council and Newcastle Housing Advice teams.

Submissions are made in stages (usually three challenges per submission) and each will be assessed by an external advisory panel appointed by the NPSS.

2. Issues

- 2.1 A new Homelessness Strategy has been developed for the borough and is currently out for its final phase of public consultation. The strategy will be presented to the June Cabinet for final approval. The strategy identifies the various challenges of the Gold Standard and aligns them to our own strategic priorities. A relevant and current Homelessness Strategy is an essential part of the Gold Standard process.

2.2 The mini review process has identified that it is essential for the Council's new Homelessness Strategy to be adopted prior to any participation. The new Strategy has been developed following a thorough review of the homelessness issues in Newcastle. The Strategy and its priorities focus upon responding to the emerging needs for the Borough.

2.3 The mini review has identified that areas within the current service have both strengths and weaknesses. Where possible, interventions have been made to the service to deliver some 'quick wins' after the mini review exercise.

3. **Options Considered**

3.1 The Council could consider if to take a full and active role in the Gold Standard process with the relevant officers and elected members making themselves available to discuss Newcastle's Housing Advice and Homelessness service in the future with those undertaking the review.

3.2 Alternatively the Council could consider to not actively participate in the process but when appropriate utilises the online resources made available by the NPSS.

4. **Proposal and Reasons for Preferred Solution**

4.1 Officers recommend that the Council should take a full and active role in the Gold Standard Peer Review process and that senior officers of the Council and relevant elected members make themselves available to discuss Newcastle's Housing Advice and Homelessness service in the future with those undertaking the review.

4.2 That Members authorise relevant officers in liaison with the relevant Portfolio Holder to consider the recommendations from the review and to report these back to Cabinet in the context of the Housing and Homelessness Strategies action plans. Where these recommendations have resource issues requiring additional investment these will be subject to Cabinet consideration.

4.3 The review process gives local authorities a very clear and methodical mechanism to establish how their service is performing against a nationally recognised framework.

4.4 Areas of good practice and areas for improvement are clearly identifiable through the process.

4.5 Nationally, the outcomes of the peer reviews are supporting local authorities to develop business cases to ensure that front line provision is adequately resourced.

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

5.1 The provision of a homelessness and housing advice service enables the Council to prevent homelessness which assists in meeting the Corporate Priorities to provide a Clean, Safe and Sustainable Borough, a Borough of Opportunity, a Healthy Active Community and Becoming a Co-operative Council by delivering high quality community driven services.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 Local Authority obligations to homeless people are set out in statute and are the subject of a Code of Guidance.

6.2 The Council has a statutory duty to assist all persons who are homeless or threatened with homelessness under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002) part 7 Homelessness.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 There are no direct equalities issues arising from this report but it is anticipated that the diversity of client service needs will be best achieved by the Council engaging in this peer review process.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 It is anticipated that as is the case with all review and evaluation processes there will be additional resource implications for staff and members; it is anticipated that this will be achieved by the re-prioritisation of existing work programmes.

8.2 Depending upon the outcome of the peer assessment and the recommendations post-review process, there may be the requirement for additional resources to implement service improvements. Where this is the case additional investment will be subject to further Cabinet consideration.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 There are no major risks associated with this report.

10. **Key Decision Information**

10.1 This is not a key decision.

11. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

11.1 None.

12. **Background Papers**

12.1 Further information about the ten Gold Standard Challenges is available from the Housing Strategy team on request.

13. **Appendices**

13.1 Appendix 1 – a summary of the ten Gold Standard Challenges.

Gold Standard Challenges

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. To actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients including written advice
4. To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative
5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support
6. To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness, reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
10. To not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks

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NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

Date: 16th March 2016

1. **HEADING** CCTV monitoring provision
- Submitted by:** Joanne Halliday
- Portfolio:** Safer Communities
- Ward(s) affected:** Primarily the town centre

Purpose of the Report

To outline the current position with regard to the paid (and volunteer) monitoring of the closed-circuit television (CCTV) service that serves the town centre and to seek a decision in respect of the forthcoming award of contract in this regard.

Recommendations

- (a) **To authorise the Executive Director for Regeneration and Development in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities to award the contract for the paid monitoring of the core CCTV service to the company submitting the best tender.**
- (b) **To ask officers to report back, as may be necessary, on the outcome of partner discussions for the volunteer management of the additional CCTV monitoring.**

Reasons

To review progress in tendering for the paid (core) CCTV monitoring service and the process for awarding the contract. To note the ongoing review of the volunteer monitoring services.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Council operates a CCTV system focused on the town centre, the active monitoring takes place through a paid (core) service which is supplemented by a volunteer service. CCTV is recognised as a beneficial service as the recordings can be used by the Police to take action against criminal activity and is acknowledged to be a deterrent to potential crime. The paid (core) service operates on the days and at the times that are considered to be of highest risk from a crime and disorder perspective.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 The paid (core) service is contracted out and in line with financial regulations and standing orders an open competitive tendering process is being undertaken to procure the most appropriate service provider. It is anticipated that the tenders will provide the Council with options to deliver some financial efficiencies. The deadline for tender is the end of February and a verbal update on the outcome can be given at the Cabinet meeting.
- 2.2 Since its inception in 2011 the volunteer CCTV monitoring has been operated and managed by Partnerships Against Business Crime (PABC). This organisation has undergone recent changes to the management structure resulting in the transfer of some responsibilities to Partnership Against Business Crime in Staffordshire (PABCIS). At the time of writing discussions have been taking place with the Business Improvement District and the Police to

consider the future of the volunteer service in the expectation that this service can be taken forward through a collaborative partnership approach.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 Tenders have been requested for the paid monitoring service on the basis of a menu approach which should give the Council a degree of flexibility on what elements of the service to procure within the available budget. Whilst with regard to the supplementary monitoring service provided by the volunteer arrangement the Council and its partners are not in a position to conclude on the future service delivery approach at this time.

4. **Proposal and Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 It is proposed to award the paid monitoring service to the provider who provides the best tender. With regard to the volunteer service it would be most appropriate for the Council to continue to facilitate the current partnership discussions to determine the most efficient service delivery arrangement going forward.

5. **Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 The provision of a monitored CCTV service contributes to the Corporate priority of a clean, safe and sustainable borough.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 The Council has an adopted CCTV Policy and must operate the CCTV service in Surveillance Commissioner code of practice which states:

Surveillance camera system operators should consider any approved operational technical and competency standards relevant to a system and its purpose and work to meet and maintain those standards.

It is important that both the paid and any volunteer monitoring is conducted properly and that operators are appropriately trained.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 The CCTV Policy outlines the purpose of the use of the CCTV and that it cannot be used to target indiscriminately. Reduction in town centre crime will support all visitors, residents and businesses.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 The costs of the paid CCTV monitoring service are provided for within existing revenue budgets at about £38,000 and it is anticipated that savings could be generated through the procurement process. There are no direct financial implications arising from the volunteer-led supplementary monitoring arrangement.

9. **Major Risks**

- 9.1 There is a risk that if the Council does not facilitate the volunteer management service then this will reduce the time that the CCTV is actively monitored.

10. **Key Decision Information**

10.1 The cost of the paid service over the period of the contract is likely to exceed £50,000 therefore this is a key decision.

11. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

11.1 None.

12. **List of Appendices**

12.1 None.

13. **Background Papers**

13.1 Copies of the CCTV tendering documentation are available on request.

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CABINET MARCH 2016

1. IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS

Submitted by: Revenues Manager

Portfolio: Finance IT and Customer

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To consider items deemed irrecoverable.

Recommendations

That the items detailed at Appendix A be considered irrecoverable for the reasons stated and be written off.

Reasons

For a variety of reasons, from time to time, it is considered that certain items are unable to be recovered from debtors. When this occurs, it is necessary to write off these balances from the appropriate Council account records.

1. **Background**

For a variety of reasons, following the issue of accounts for amounts due to the Council, it is considered the debt is no longer able to be collected. Normally, these reasons follow from the debtor having been subjected to insolvency proceedings or other legal processes in respect of their debts or even the death of a debtor. There is then no further redress to recover the outstanding amounts and it is necessary to write off the outstanding balances from the Council's records.

2. **Collection Procedures**

Collection procedures in respect of business rates and council tax are operated in accordance with legislative guidelines. Other debts are collected by a variety of schemes suitable to the type of account involved.

3. **Proposal**

That the items listed at Appendix A be considered irrecoverable for the reasons stated and these balances be written off. Irrecoverable amounts are considered to be of a confidential nature and reports have historically been treated in this manner. Guidance obtained from the Local Government Association in May 2011 endorsed this methodology for reporting on irrecoverable items. It is used to ensure the principles of data protection are maintained. It would also obviously be inappropriate to disclose information for instance about deceased debtors, with the potential for causing further distress to bereaved family members. Where debts are in respect of commercial organisations, there is the potential in cases such as administration that disclosure could jeopardise the potential recovery of the business in the long term. Items are only ever considered for write-off following robust adherence to the appropriate collection policy.

4. **Financial and Resource Implications**

The Council makes provision for unrecoverable sums and the amounts recommended for write-off are within the current budgeted bad debt provision.

5. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

23rd July 2008

6. **Recommendations**

That the items detailed at Appendix A be considered irrecoverable for the reasons stated and be written off.

7. **List of Appendices**

Irrecoverable items

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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