

Public Document Pack

Date of meeting Wednesday, 26th September, 2018
Time 7.00 pm
Venue Astley Room - Castle House
Contact Jayne Briscoe 2250



**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Castle House
Barracks Road
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire
ST5 1BL

Economy, Environment & Place Scrutiny Committee

AGENDA

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - 4 JULY 2018** (Pages 3 - 6)
To agree as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting (s)
- 4 **RECYCLING SERVICE - UPDATE** (Pages 7 - 36)
- 5 **UNIVERSITY GROWTH CORRIDOR** (Pages 37 - 50)
- 6 **REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BID - INVITED TO ATTEND THE MEETING**
- 7 **EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIONS - TREE MANAGEMENT - CHAIR TO REPORT**
- 8 **SMART MOTORWAY** (Pages 51 - 54)
- 9 **WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 55 - 58)
- 10 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**
Any member of the public wishing to submit a question must serve two clear days' notice in writing, of any such question to the Borough Council.
- 11 **URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 13 December 2018

Members: Councillors Burgess, John Cooper, Driver, Gardner, Harrison, Olszewski, Panter, Reddish (Vice-Chair), J Tagg, G White (Chair) and J Williams

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.

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

NOTE: THERE ARE NO FIRE DRILLS PLANNED FOR THIS EVENING SO IF THE FIRE ALARM DOES SOUND, PLEASE LEAVE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY THROUGH THE FIRE EXIT DOORS.

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Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

Economy, Environment & Place Scrutiny Committee - 04/07/18

ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT & PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 4th July, 2018
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

Present:-	Councillor Gary White – in the Chair
Councillors	Burgess, John Cooper, Driver, Gardner, Maxfield, Olszewski, Panter and J Williams
Officers	Head of Planning and Development - Guy Benson, Executive Director (Regeneration and Development) - Neale Clifton, Regeneration and Economic Development Manager - Kim Graham, Partnerships Manager - Sarah Moore and Head of Operations - Roger Taitt

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from the Vice Chair, Councillor Reddish, Councillor Harrison and Cabinet Members T Johnson and P Northcott.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest submitted on this occasion.

3. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Acting Chief Executive submitted Draft Terms of Reference for the newly constituted Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee explaining that they followed a standard format being recommended for adoption by all three newly created Scrutiny Committees. The Terms of Reference reflected the main aims and responsibilities of Scrutiny Committees under the Local Government Act 2000 and included reference to existing procedural rules in the Council's Constitution, The Terms were intended to provide an early basis for the Committee's work and could be reviewed in the light of experience.

The Chair stressed his wish for members to participate in determining the Committee's workload and highlighted the provision for relationship management meetings between himself and the Vice Chair with the three Cabinet Members' whose portfolios came under this Committee's remit.

RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference be approved.

4. **WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

The Acting Chief Executive reported on the need to draw up a Work Programme for the Committee for 2018/19 and sought to assist by setting out guidance on issues to consider when identifying areas for scrutiny. The Chair reported his intention to seek members' submissions for inclusion in the Programme. Items listed for this meeting had been at the Chair's request and he explained the absence of the report on Recycling as listed on the agenda which would now be submitted in September 2018.. Members added issues which they wished to see addressed in the report on Recycling.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Work Programme report and template be circulated to Committee members and submissions invited for consideration for inclusion in the Work Programme.
- (ii) That the report on Recycling be submitted to the 26 September 2018 meeting of the Committee and address the items raised by members.

5. **GRASS CUTTING OPERATIONS**

Members received and questioned a report by The Head of Operations on the causes of a backlog in grass cutting operations during Spring 2018, actions taken to address that backlog and the methods adopted in the management of the resources available for the peaks and troughs of demand for this service area. Responding to an enquiry from the Chair on any supporting actions which the Committee might offer, the reporting officer referred to the need to manage public expectations of the service given the budget restraints now in effect.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. **TREE MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS**

The Head of Operations reported and was questioned on the systems adopted and resources available for the management and maintenance of some 70,000 trees in the Borough. He made particular reference to improvements which technology was providing for the longer term, the use of a flexible pool of support staff and the introduction of a scheme whereby residents could fund works directly if they so wished. He reported on the allocation of an additional £30,000 in the 2018/19 Revenue Budget and, responding to the Chairs enquiry on any support which the Committee could give to the service, suggested that the on-going commitment of that additional funding would be of considerably benefit.

RESOLVED—That the report be noted and representations be made to the Cabinet on the importance of continuing the allocation of the additional £30,000 funding on a year on year basis

7. **PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SERVICE - REVIEW OF WORKLOAD AND RESOURCING**

The Committee received a report on the workload and staffing of both ‘arms’ of the Planning Service: Planning Policy and Development Management. The demand led nature of the service presented difficulties in workload planning and staffing in addition to which national pressures were increasingly influencing prioritisation. Staffing vacancies and the options available for securing personnel in a competitive marketplace were discussed. If the current vacancy rate could not be resolved support would be welcome from the Committee for any measures to enhance the Council’s offer.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

8. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from members of the public.

9. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent business.

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

COUNCILLOR GARY WHITE
Chair

Meeting concluded at 8.00 pm

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Report to the Economy Environment & Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26th September 2018.

Recycling service



Report Author: Andrew Bird
Job Title: Head of Recycling & Fleet Services
Email: Andrew.bird@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk
Telephone: 2510.

Introduction

The Council has a legal duty under the Waste Framework Directive 2012, to provide collection services for non-recyclable waste, and to collect separately four streams of recycling, namely, paper/card (fibre), metal, plastic, and glass all free of charge.

The Council has no statutory responsibility to provide garden waste collection services, and can make a charge for doing so if it so wishes.

The council currently provides a weekly dry recycling collection service, incorporating a separate collection for food waste, and fortnightly collections for residual and garden waste.

Background

The Council has been operating its current recycling collection service since July 2016, and although dry recycling rates have increased, the service is under pressure from the demand on the collection service and the resources available. This is largely a result of volumes of material, vehicles having to tip more than once during a working day and, over time, increased numbers of houses built, which was not adequately reflected in the original service modelling.

A budget saving of £500,000 was envisaged at the commencement of the new service in 2016, however although savings have been achieved in comparison to the previous service, they have not achieved the level of savings expected. A major factor in this has been the inability to achieve income levels for the high quality materials produced through the service, following global crashes in prices.

Markets for collected recycled material have suffered major volatility over the last couple of years and in particular the last nine months or so, following China's stringent restrictions on imports of materials which do not meet their high quality criteria. Much of the material going to China came from commingled collection operations, and they have encountered large amounts of contamination. This has

resulted in oversupply into other markets which has had an impact on prices for materials, particularly plastics. The situation is unlikely to improve greatly moving forward, until investment within the UK can deliver higher quality materials for recycling and reprocessing.

As a result of these challenges, at its meeting on 4th January 2018, in response to a request from the Portfolio Holder, authority was given by Cabinet for the establishment of a politically balanced Cabinet Panel Task and Finish Group (the Group) to examine the problems arising from the operation of the waste and recycling service and for the group to bring recommendations to a future Cabinet meeting. The group have looked at a number of collection options, and undertaken visits to look at alternative collection systems, and have reviewed alternative collection systems which have been modelled and costed to inform their recommendations to Cabinet.

In considering the recycling collection service, the Group has considered two options, with the existing system used for cost comparison purposes.

- Twin Stream – where either paper or paper and card are kept separate and everything else is comingled in a single wheelie bin and collected fortnightly (with food collected separately).
- Fully Comingled – where all materials are mixed together in a single wheelie bin and collected fortnightly (with food collected separately)

The Group were asked to consider and express a preference for how to integrate continuing the provision of a separate food waste collection service, as this has a significant impact on the design and provision of a new service moving forward as well as the option to collect recycling on a fortnightly or weekly basis in the future.

Following consideration of all the options, at the last meeting of the Group it was resolved to recommend a twin stream collection system, on a fortnightly basis, with separate paper and card, along with continued collection of separate food waste as the preferred service model for the kerbside collection of dry recycling material and food waste.

Questions to be Addressed

Recycling rates.

Overall the Councils Recycling rate at Quarter 1 (2018/19) is 50.03% this figure includes dry recycling, garden waste and food. This continues to place the Council in the top quartile of performance. Dry waste recycling rate on its own is 16%

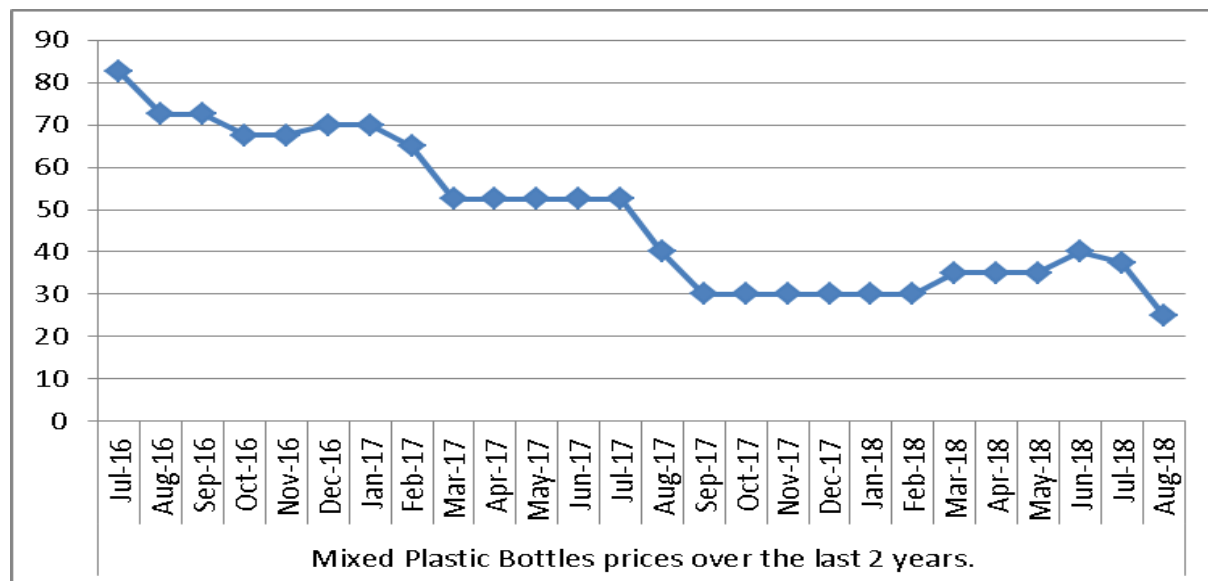
Although the Council has no statutory recycling targets currently, the government will be publishing its 'Resource and Waste Strategy' in the next couple of months, which could include mandatory targets being reintroduced, as recycling rates nationally have stalled over the last few years.

It is recommended that scrutiny continue to look at the performance of the service in terms of recycling rates being achieved.

Markets – values of materials

The global market for recyclable materials is volatile, particularly with plastics, and this has a knock on affect for the value of the materials the Council sells on for recycling.

The graph below illustrates how over the last couple of years the value of mixed plastic bottles, which the Council collects as part of its recycling collection service, has fallen. The Council is often criticised for not collecting pots, tubs, and trays (PTT) as part of its collection service. If PTT were included the Council would now have to pay to get the material recycled.



Some materials which the Council collects and sells are stable, glass and newspaper being the predominant ones with significant tonnage being collected. Steel and Aluminium cans are also of high value, aluminium in particular being currently worth £950 per tonne. Unfortunately the quantity of cans collected is not great when compared to other materials, but provides an opportunity through targeted communications with householders to increase tonnage of certain materials.

Recommendation for change of service to a Twin stream recycling collection service.

The Councils Cabinet Task and Finish group have recommended that the Cabinet consider adopting and undertake further planning and modelling work in order to move to a twin stream collection system with paper and card separate, along with continued collection of separate food waste.

A twin stream kerbside collection system will incorporate use of a wheelie bin with a blue lid, denoting its use for recycling only, together with a suitable receptacle (or use of existing box) to contain paper and card, while the other materials, namely, glass, cans and plastics bottles would be placed in the body of the bin.

A split body refuse collection vehicle would be used to make the collections from householders. Paper and card will be loaded in one side of the vehicle utilising a

wheelie bin, and the other materials would be loaded into the other side of the vehicle in the same way as emptying a normal wheelie bin.

Twin stream collections allows the Council to separate at source the higher value material, paper and card (known as fibre), which can then be sold directly to re-processors. Keeping fibre out of the other materials means the cost of sorting through a material recovery facility (MRF) are also lower in terms of a cost per tonne as fibre is difficult to separate from other materials, particularly if it becomes wet, and therefore increasing processing costs. Further the paper and card industry are reluctant to purchase paper and card from MRF's due to the poor quality of the material as it gone through the collection and sorting process, leading to this material largely going to export markets.

Further detailed planning and modelling will inform the potential timescales and costs for introducing a major service change. This will be dependent on a number of key factors such as service design, procurement and financing to implement the change.

Outcomes

As further planning work takes place, there will be a number of issues which need to be considered and would potentially benefit from the scrutiny committees input.

As an example the Council will need to consider policy decisions for various aspects of the service, for example additional wheelie bins being presented on streets, therefore clarification on how and when bins should be presented for collection, and when we expect them to be taken back into the curtilage of the property. The Council then needs to agree a process for bins being permanently left out, and how these issues can be resolved with residents.

Supporting Information

There is no supporting information for this report.

Invited Partners/Stakeholders/Residents

None invited as part of this report.

Constraints

N/A.

Conclusions

The proposed new recycling service will be easier for residents to use, and will be more efficient in terms of operation due to it being a variation of a standard bin collection system. Emphasis will still need to be placed on providing high quality materials for re-processing in order to minimise the risks of the global market. Members of the Scrutiny Committee are asked to receive the report and agree to have a part in the development of the nw recycling collection service as it develops towards full implementation.

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)

Portfolio Holder for Environment & Recycling – Councillor Trevor Johnson.

Local Ward Member (if applicable)

All Wards are affected by this service.

Background Materials

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

None

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NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

Date 19th September 2018.

1. **REPORT TITLE** **A Future Recycling Strategy**
- Submitted by:** **Head of Recycling & Fleet - Andrew Bird**
- Portfolio:** **Environment and Recycling**
- Ward(s) affected:** **All**

Purpose of the Report

To inform Cabinet of the preferred options put forward by the Cross Party Cabinet Panel Task & Finish Group for the introduction of a new kerbside recycling service and an affordable garden waste collection service.

Recommendations

- (i) That the Cabinet considers the recommendations of the Cabinet Panel Task and Finish Group and agrees a preferred option for the introduction of a new kerbside recycling service which makes it easier for residents to recycle, and is simpler to operate.**
- (ii) That the Cabinet considers the recommendations of the Cabinet Panel Task and Finish Group and agrees a preferred option for the future provision of garden waste collections following the withdrawal of recycling credits paid by Staffordshire County Council.**
- (iii) That Officers are authorised to undertake further detailed planning and modelling work to develop the Cabinets preferred options and report back to Cabinet on detailed project costs and timescales.**
- (iv) That Cabinet thanks the Task and Finish Group for their work in putting forward their preferred options.**

Reasons

The Council needs to obtain the best financial value, with the least risk in terms of reliable and efficient collection services that makes it easier for residents to recycle.

The current Recycling service has had a number of operational challenges, which has affected public satisfaction since its introduction, additional operational costs and pressure from global material markets has meant the projected saving has not all been achieved, putting significant pressure on budgets.

The County Council has now confirmed its intention to reduce recycling credits for garden waste. This will mean that they will only pay for treatment costs over the next four years. This decision will create an additional budget pressure for the Council.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Council has been operating its new recycling collection service since July 2016, and although dry recycling rates have increased, the service is under pressure from the demand on the collection service and the resources available. This is largely a result of volumes of material, vehicles having to tip more than once during a working day and, over time, increased numbers of houses built, which was not adequately reflected in the original service modelling. To rectify this, the service requires further significant investment if it is to be reliable to the end of its projected term in 2022.
- 1.2 A consultation with residents was launched on 20th February 2018. The report attached at Appendix 1, was prepared on 13th June 2018, having run for 16 weeks. Within that period the survey received comments from almost 1,300 people which is the highest number of respondents to any of the Council's online consultations. Assuming that responses were one per household who responded this represents around 2.5% of households in the Borough.
- 1.3 Questions were posed in respect of a range of aspects of the current service including, the frequency of service, how containers are left after emptying, the type and number of containers provided, reliability of collections, dealing with enquiries and overall satisfaction.
- 1.4 The detailed results for each question are set out in the attached survey report for Members to review including comments made by residents whilst completing the survey.
- 1.5 In respect of overall satisfaction, whilst there were significant differences in satisfaction between some wards, responses were largely negative where almost three-fifths of overall respondents (58 per cent) said that they were dissatisfied, with fewer than one in four (24 per cent) saying they were satisfied. The remaining 18 per cent said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.
- 1.6 The highest level of overall satisfaction was expressed with the frequency of the service and the lowest level of satisfaction was expressed with the type and range of containers provided with a number of comments being made which expressed a preference for wheelie bins for recycling collection.
- 1.7 A budget saving of £500,000 was envisaged at the commencement of the new service in 2016, however although savings have been achieved in comparison to the previous service, they have not achieved the level of savings expected. A major factor in this has been the inability to achieve income levels for the high quality materials produced through the service, following global crashes in prices, particularly those of card and plastic, as well as high volumes of material, vehicles having to tip more than once a working day and, over time, increased numbers of houses built.
- 1.8 As a result of these challenges, at its meeting on 4th January 2018, in response to a request from the Portfolio Holder, authority was given by Cabinet for the establishment of a politically balanced Cabinet Panel Task and Finish Group (the Group) to examine the problems arising from the operation of the waste and recycling service and for the group to bring recommendations to a future Cabinet meeting. The group have looked at a number of collection options, and undertaken visits to look at alternative collection systems, and have reviewed alternative collection systems which have been modelled and costed to inform their recommendations to Cabinet.
- 1.9 Cabinet reconvened the Group to look at options for future recycling collection services, looking at twin stream and fully comingled collection operations incorporating the use of a wheelie bin. Modelling of these options has been undertaken and presented to the Group.

- 1.10 As part of its current recycling and waste strategy, the Council also operates a separate garden waste service to the majority of residents within the Borough. This service was introduced in the mid 2000's in response to government introduced weight based recycling targets. A paid for subscription service for residents who wish to have additional garden waste bins was introduced in 2011.
- 1.11 Garden waste is composted at a site within the Borough boundary, under a contract with Veolia which will run up to July 2022, with a break clause at 2020. The Council has no statutory responsibility to provide garden waste collection services.
- 1.12 As with dry recycling, recycling credits are paid to the Council by the County Council for all garden waste collected. The rate however is a little less per tonne, than that which we receive for other materials.
- 1.13 In late 2017, the County Council, as Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) initiated discussion with the eight district waste collection authorities (WCA's) as they wished to stop paying recycling credits for garden waste collections, and merely reimburse WCA's for the cost of treatment for the material. This was in order for the WDA to contribute towards significant savings the County Council has to make as part of its Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), and follows a similar policy approach adopted by many WDA's, operating in two tier authority systems.
- 1.14 The Council has subsequently been informed of the County councils intention to bring in phased reductions in the payments of recycling credits for garden waste, over a four year period, down to reimbursement of treatment costs only.
- 1.15 This change will bring an additional and significant budget pressure with the loss of £275,600 in recycling credit income by 2022, when the County Council will only reimburse for the cost of treatment which currently costs £23.84p per tonne to process.
- 1.16 Cabinet asked the Group to reconvene and look at two options for introducing a chargeable service that will avoid a significant additional financial burden being placed on the Councils finances

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 It is vitally important that the Council looks to obtain the best financial value from the services it operates.

Recycling Collection

- 2.3 The current recycling collection service has suffered some significant operational issues since its commencement in 2016, with unreliable collections, and poor customer satisfaction. However, recycling rates have increased over the previous service, and are higher than many of our partner authorities in Staffordshire, and collection costs overall are the second lowest for a WCA in Staffordshire.
- 2.4 Markets for collected recycled material have suffered major volatility over the last couple of years and in particular the last nine months or so, following China's stringent restrictions on imports of materials which do not meet their high quality criteria. Much of the material going to China came from comingled collection operations, and they have encountered large amounts of contamination. This has resulted in oversupply into other markets which has had an impact on prices for materials, particularly plastics. The situation is unlikely to improve

greatly moving forward, until investment within the UK can deliver higher quality materials for recycling and reprocessing.

- 2.5 Cabinet has indicated it wishes to continue to provide separate food waste collection, therefore, in looking at alternative recycling systems the Group are asked to consider how this will be achieved. Currently food waste is collected on the same vehicle as recycling on a weekly basis, however if it is decided to change to a new recycling service operating with wheelie bins on a fortnightly basis, this would potentially needing additional resources to collect food on the week when recycling was not collected.
- 2.6 Whichever recycling collection system is provided to residents, the Council will have to maintain the operation of its transfer and bulking station as there are no facilities close enough to reprocess material which could facilitate direct delivery of collected materials. (Other than garden waste)

Garden Waste Collection

- 2.7 The Council collects on average around 10,500 tonnes of garden waste each year, which is processed into compost mainly for use in the agricultural market.
- 2.8 Chargeable garden waste systems are now operated by around 60% of WCA's in England. Loss or a reduction in the amount of garden waste collected will result in lower overall recycling performance for the Council due to the significance (in weight) of this stream of the Councils recycling service to the overall recycling rate of the Borough.

3. **Proposal**

Recycling Collection

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Council considers recommendations made by the Cabinet Task and Finish Group for the future kerbside recycling service, and future provision of garden waste collections at the same time, effectively refreshing the Councils Recycling and Waste Management Strategy.
- 3.2 In considering the recycling collection service, the Group has considered two options, with the existing system used for cost comparison purposes.
 - Twin Stream – where either paper or paper and card are kept separate and everything else is comingled in a single wheelie bin and collected fortnightly (with food collected separately).
 - Fully Comingled – where all materials are mixed together in a single wheelie bin and collected fortnightly (with food collected separately)
- 3.3 A wheelie bin is usually provided for fully comingled services and many two stream operations, although a number of authorities do operate a twin stream system using kerbside boxes such as we operate in the Borough, the closest being our neighbouring authority of Shropshire. The Councils other neighbouring WCA, Stafford Borough operates a two stream system using a wheelie bin with an internal caddie (box) to contain paper.

- 3.4 Each system has its advantages and disadvantages. A summary of these was considered by the Group and is attached as Appendix 2. Whilst the advantages and disadvantages of the current system are well known, a twin stream or fully comingled system will be easier for the householder to use, together with simplified collection operations utilising standard compaction vehicles with or without food pods. The biggest risk will be dealing with increased levels of contamination, which the Council will need to ensure it manages effectively and robustly in order to avoid costly rejection payments.
- 3.5 Modelling work undertaken to date and presented to the Group, shows that a twin stream service can be delivered cost effectively and it will be less expensive than the actual cost of the current service.
- 3.6 The Group were asked to consider and express a preference for how to integrate continuing the provision of a separate food waste collection service, as this has a significant impact on the design and provision of a new service moving forward as well as the option to collect recycling on a fortnightly or weekly basis in the future.
- 3.7 The modelling work undertaken has shown it is possible for the Council to continue to collect separate food waste cost effectively; however the type and combination of vehicles to be used for recycling and food waste collections will require further detailed consideration before a recommendation on the types of vehicles can be made.
- 3.8 Following consideration of all the options, at the last meeting of the Group it was unanimously resolved to recommend a twin stream collection system, on a fortnightly basis, with separate paper and card, along with continued collection of separate food waste as the preferred service model for the kerbside collection of dry recycling material and food waste.
- 3.9 It is proposed therefore that the Cabinet consider adopting this recommendation and undertake further planning and modelling work in order to move to a twin stream collection system with paper and card separate, along with continued collection of separate food waste.
- 3.10 A twin stream kerbside collection system will incorporate use of a wheelie bin with a blue lid, denoting its use for recycling only, together with a suitable receptacle (or use of existing box) to contain paper and card, while the other materials, namely, glass, cans and plastics bottles would be placed in the body of the bin. It may be possible to re-use wheelie bins that are not required for collecting garden waste and further work will be carried to determine the best option in this respect.
- 3.11 A split body refuse collection vehicle would be used to make the collections from householders. Paper and card will be loaded in one side of the vehicle and the other materials would be loaded into the other side of the vehicle.
- 3.12 Twin stream collections allows the Council to separate at source the higher value material, paper and card (known as fibre), which can then be sold directly to re-processors. Keeping fibre out of the other materials means the cost of sorting through a material recovery facility (MRF) are also lower in terms of a cost per tonne as fibre is difficult to separate from other materials, particularly if it becomes wet, and therefore increasing processing costs. Further the paper and card industry are reluctant to purchase paper and card from MRF's due to the poor quality of the material as it goes through the collection and sorting process, leading to this material largely going to export markets.
- 3.13 Further detailed planning and modelling will inform the potential timescales and costs for introducing a major service change. This will be dependent on a number of key factors such as service design, procurement and financing to implement the change with it being

envisaged that this will take a phased approach to the service change starting in 18 – 24 months' time.

Garden Waste Collection

- 3.14 The Group were asked to look at two options for the continuing provision of this service as a chargeable service, incorporated within the proposed redesign of the recycling collection service, not least to identify ways of dealing with the increased budget pressures.
- 3.15 Two options were considered by the cross party Group for the future provision of a garden waste collection service.
- Introduce a chargeable garden waste collection service, whereby residents wishing to receive a garden waste collection service pay an annual subscription fee.
 - Outsource the provision of a garden waste collection service to a private sector waste management company, a number of who operate services in this way to a number of authorities. This option would require a full EU procurement process to be undertaken, which would take a minimum of six months. There may also be implications to the Councils existing incumbent service provider for treatment of garden waste.
- 3.16 Following consideration of the options, at the last meeting of the Group it was unanimously resolved to recommend a chargeable service for the collection of garden waste to be introduced, and that the service is provided to residents be extended to a full twelve months, unlike the current service which has an eight week shutdown during the winter.
- 3.17 The Group also noted that this would be an 'opt in' service for residents who wished to sign up for collections. Residents also have the option to dispose of garden waste into their residual bin if there is space, home compost, utilise the County Councils Household Waste and Recycling Centre or share a bin with neighbours through the 'opt in' service.
- 3.18 For the introduction of the service, there is considerable preparation work required to be undertaken over the coming months. The key aspects of this are to ensure operational round planning, customer services support, electronic payment systems and communications plans with residents are all put in place and it is envisaged that it will start from the mid-February restart of collections after the traditional Christmas service suspension period.

4. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 Members and the public are unhappy with the current recycling collection service, and it has been recognised that it requires further significant resource investment to make it more reliable. The service has been unable to generate the levels of savings in the MTFs during its first two years of operation, mainly due to the lack of resilience in the service to meet the demands placed on the service to complete collections as well as a result of poor and worsening global markets for recycled materials.
- 4.2 Additionally the County Councils decision to withdraw recycling credits for the collection of garden waste will have a significant additional pressure on the Councils budget.
- 4.3 The advantages and disadvantages of alternative collection strategies are as set out in this report.

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

5.1 The proposal is key to having in place an up-to-date efficient and customer focused Integrated Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council, and will contribute to the following corporate priorities:

- creating a cleaner, safer and sustainable Borough
- creating a Borough of opportunity
- transforming our Council to achieve excellence

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The Council has a legal duty under the Waste Framework Directive 2012, to provide collection services for non-recyclable waste, and to collect separately four streams of recycling, namely, paper/card (fibre), metal, plastic, and glass all free of charge.

6.2 The Council has no statutory responsibility to provide garden waste collection services, and can make a charge for doing so if it so wishes.

6.3 Outsourcing the garden waste collection service would require a full EU procurement process being conducted to meet the requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015. It would also need to satisfy the Council's requirements to secure Best Value.

6.4 Currently the Council does not have any statutory recycling targets imposed by Central Government; however there is a service level agreement with the County Council to deliver recycling levels above 55% as part of their PFI arrangements for their Energy from Waste Plant in the South of the County.

6.5 Government will be publishing its Resource and Waste Strategy in late 2018; this may incorporate new targets for local authorities, and may mandate separate food waste collections, to bring England's Local Authorities in line with the devolved governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Council will need to be mindful of this emerging work and any implications it may have on its future recycling and waste strategy moving forward.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 The proposal supports the Equality Impact Assessment undertaken for the effective delivery of the Integrated Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council.

The Council's Assisted Collection Service will continue to be available to residents who meet the required eligibility criteria for this support.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 The proposal has significant financial and resource implications for the Council.

8.2 A full high level cost analysis by the various options modelled and considered by the Group is detailed in Appendix 3.

8.3 A full high level cost analysis for chargeable garden waste considered by the Group is detailed in Appendix 4.

- 8.4 The table below details the estimated operational costs for the preferred option of a twin stream recycling collection service, as recommended by the Cabinet Task & Finish Group. The table includes options for collecting separate paper and card (A). Separate paper only (B), and a cost comparison to the current service cost estimate of the Councils existing kerbside recycling collection service (C).
- 8.5 It should be noted that these figures are subject to refinement as further detailed planning and modelling is required on the preferred option and that these are operational costs only, and do not include any overheads or capital charges which would also be incurred by the Council.

Cost	Column A Twin Stream with separate paper / card and separate food waste	Column B Twin Stream with separate paper only and separate food waste	Column C Comparison with current service cost estimate
Operation of NBC Transfer Station	£365,000	£365,000	£405,000
Gate Fee for Food Waste processing based on 2017/18 cost	£29,623	£29,623	£29,623
Gate Fee for MRF processing – including transport & rebate for sale of materials (no fibre)	£279,000	£516,000	N/A
Collection Costs – vehicles and staff, including managements & supervision	£1,300,000	£1,300,000	£1,813,600
Income			
Paper / Paper & Card	£189,000 (paper/card)	£164,680 (paper)	£164,680 (paper)
Other Income – plastic card, metal, glass	N/A	N/A	£145,000
Recycling Credits – based on current tonnage	£580,162	£580,162	£580,162
Net Cost of service	£1,204,461	£1,465,781	£1,358,381

- 8.6 As stated in paragraph 3.3, it is a proven fact that collecting recycling materials in a wheelie bin will incur levels of contamination, which can equate to 12% of the total quantity of material collected for recycling. Contract arrangements with the MRF will take account in dealing with a level of contamination, typically around 5%, but anything additional would incur additional cost and rejected loads. A rejected load equating to around 12 tonnes of material could incur costs of around £3,000, and therefore it is imperative the Council manages collections appropriately through effective communication with residents, and

monitoring collections closely to ensure contamination rates remain within excepted thresholds of the MRF contract conditions.

- 8.7 Significant capital costs will be incurred for provision of the new service, including procurement of wheelie bins, vehicles, and alterations to the Councils Transfer Station. Indicative figures are detailed in the table below.

Capital requirement	Cost
Procurement of Wheelie Bins and distribution (in some cases existing wheelie bins may be suitable for re-use)	£913,000
Procurement of suitable receptacle for paper and card (if an existing box is not utilised)	£154,000
Procurement of vehicles	Between £1,445,000 (Comingled + Food) or 1,785,000 (Twin Stream + Food)
Modifications to Knutton Lane Depot Transfer Station (to be confirmed from further modelling of preferred service model)	£500,000

- 8.8 With regard to garden waste collections, the do nothing approach and continue to operate the service with reduced payments of Recycling Credits would have the following financial burden on the Council

- 2019/20 - £68,900.
- 2020/21 - £137,800.
- 2021/22 - £206,700.
- 2022/23 - £275,600.

- 8.9 Charging for the collection of garden waste, introduced at a £36 charge per bin, per year would offset the loss in recycling credit payments, and provide revenue saving at the following levels.

- 2019/20 - £84,984 (based on 20% take up)
- 2020/21 - £162,517 (based on 25% take up)
- 2021/22 - £248,159 (based on 30% take up)
- 2022/23 - £314,411 (based on 35% take up)

- 8.10 Outsourcing the service to the private sector, for them to provide the whole service, including revenue generation would result in a saving to the Council of £545,184. This would be subject to procurement and any TUPE negotiations.

- 8.11 With exception of the last option, it is assumed that the same level of resources employed to carry out the garden waste collection service currently in terms of vehicles and staff are maintained until a clear picture of take-up is known.

- 8.12 In terms of other resources, a Project Steering Group will to be formed to include the relevant Portfolio Holders, officers from Finance, ICT, Revenues and Benefits, Customer Services, Communications and Recycling, Waste and Fleet Services. Further expertise will be required as the project moves forward from Human Resources, Procurement and Planning.

- 8.13 As the project develops, and once a Cabinet decision is made further resources may need to be employed to ensure the project is delivered efficiently and within agreed timescales.

9. **Major Risks**

- 9.1 The international market for sale of recycled materials is very volatile and carries major financial and legal risks, particularly in export markets. China, has been the main destination for European recycled materials, and has through its customs process clamped down on quality, particularly mixed paper and plastics, where they have experienced high levels of contamination.
- 9.2 Factors such as this put pressure on other markets with additional quantities of materials chasing other markets, with the potential that values for materials can fall due to oversupply.
- 9.3 Obtaining and sustaining UK markets provide better security for the sale of materials so long as they remain of suitably high quality. This has now become a real issue for comingled collections, which can have high levels of contamination, or 'non-target' materials. The result is that the gate fee for processing material in this way has risen significantly over the last few years. Additionally the Council will need to undertake a rigorous TEEP (Technically, Environmentally, economically and Practical) assessment to prove that the twin stream collection and sorting system produces materials to the same quality to those collected separately.
- 9.4 In considering the garden waste collection service, charging for a service which was previously provided free of charge for one garden waste bin per household will need to be managed effectively in respect of information available to residents.
- 9.5 Poor take up of service with resources maintained at their current level could result in overall savings/income not being achieved.

10. **Background Papers**

- 10.1 Appendix 1 - NBC Recycling Satisfaction Survey report
- 10.2 Appendix 2 - Advantages/disadvantages of service model options
- 10.3 Cabinet Task and Finish meeting minutes
- 10.4 Appendix 3 – detailed cost analysis for kerbside recycling collection models.
- 10.5 Appendix 4 – detailed cost modelling for chargeable garden waste collections.

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Appendix 2.

Advantages & Disadvantages of Twin Stream Recycling Collections

Advantages	Disadvantages
Easier for the householder to use	Householder will still need to separate paper / card
Provides more consistency with some Staffordshire and other neighbouring authorities collection systems	Difficult to integrate separate food waste collection
Maintains the 'high' value high quantity materials separately. This takes some of the volatility risk out of the operation	Contamination levels will increase, which will lead to increased costs if not effectively managed.
Increased productivity in collections.	Glass in the comingled element remains a problem. Difficult from a TEEP issue.
Easier to recover following bad weather / other incidents	Twin pack vehicles not as reliable as standard RCV's

Advantages & Disadvantages of Comingled Recycling Collections

Advantages	Disadvantages
Very easy for the householder to use	System will generate high levels of contamination, which could lead to increased costs, and will need to be managed effectively.
Requires a standard RCV for collections, therefore more flexibility in the fleet	Volatile markets for materials will increase gate fees
Provides more consistency with some Staffordshire and other neighbouring authorities collection systems	Materials likely to be exported following sorting process
Fast collection process similar to collecting residual waste	Will require rigorous TEEP assessment
Very easy to recover from bad weather / other incidents	Industry does not like materials from comingled collections. As they will be paying for collections under EPR, they will want more say in how it is collected / processed.
	Difficult to integrate separate food waste collection

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Appendix 3.

Detail costs for service options of twin stream and comingled collections

Capital Costs

Vehicles

Type	Number required	Vehicle purchase cost	Total
Twin stream with food separate			
Twin Pack 26t RCV	7	£190,000	£1,330,000
Twin stream with food			
Twin Pack 26t RCV with Food Pod	9	£200,000	£1,800,000
Comingled with food separate			
Standard 26t RCV	6	£165,000	£990,000
Separate Food waste Vehicles			
7.5 tonne food waste collection vehicle	7	£65,000	£455,000

Revenue Costs

Operational Costs

Number of staff required for collection operation per vehicle	cost of staff, vehicle + supervision and support services	120,000 note - no recharges included	driver grade 6 - operatives grade 5.
3			

vehicles

RCV with or without food

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Appendix 4 - Detailed cost modelling for Chargeable Garden Waste Collections.

Total cost
2017/18
£545,184

**Charging Option - 20% uptake in first Year
5% increase thereafter**

Year	Tonnage - based on 2017/18 actual	Number of HH (bins)	Processing Gate Fee per tonne - Figure Commercially sensitive	Operational Cost per h/h - excluding recharges 2017/18	Administration Cost per h/h	Total Cost	Recycling Credit per Tonne per SCC letter	Total Recycling credit Income	Charging cost per H/H	Total income from H/H charging	Total income	Net Cost/(Income)	% uptake	Revenue Saving/ (cost)
1	10,600.00	50,000.00		10.90	0	797,888.00	£51.58	546,748.00	0	-	546,748.00	251,140.00	N/a	0.00
2	2,120.00	10,000.00		54.52	2.6	621,724.80	£45.08	95,569.60	36	360,000.00	455,569.60	166,155.20	20%	84,984.80
3	2,650.00	12,500.00		43.61	2.6	640,860.00	£38.58	102,237.00	36	450,000.00	552,237.00	88,623.00	25%	162,517.00
4	3,180.00	15,000.00		35.35	2.6	644,995.20	£32.08	102,014.40	36	540,000.00	642,014.40	2,980.80	30%	248,159.20
5	3,710.00	17,500.00		30.15	2.6	661,630.40	£25.58	94,901.80	36	630,000.00	724,901.80	(63,271.40)	35%	314,411.40

Do nothing option

Year	Tonnage - based on 2017/18 actual	Number of HH (bins)	Processing Gate Fee per tonne - Figure Commercially sensitive	Operational Cost per h/h - excluding recharges 2017/18	Administration Cost per h/h	Total Cost	Recycling Credit per Tonne per SCC letter	Total Recycling credit Income	Charging cost per H/H	Total income from H/H charging	Total income	Net Cost/(Income)	% uptake	Revenue Saving/ (cost)
1	10,600.00	50,000.00		10.90	0	797,888.00	£51.58	546,748.00	0	-	546,748.00	251,140.00	N/a	0.00
2	10,600.00	50,000.00		10.90	0	797,888.00	£45.08	477,848.00	0	-	477,848.00	320,040.00	N/a	(68,900.00)
3	10,600.00	50,000.00		10.90	0	797,888.00	£38.58	408,948.00	0	-	408,948.00	388,940.00	N/a	(137,800.00)
4	10,600.00	50,000.00		10.90	0	797,888.00	£32.08	340,048.00	0	-	340,048.00	457,840.00	N/a	(206,700.00)
5	10,600.00	50,000.00		10.90	0	797,888.00	£25.58	271,148.00	0	-	271,148.00	526,740.00	N/a	(275,600.00)

Notes:

- 5.5 vehicles based on 50,000 households
- 4.5 vehicles = 1 driver plus 2 loaders
- 1 vehicle = 1 driver plus 1 loader

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Classification: NULBC PROTECT Organisational

Code	Description	Budget £	Actual £	Variance £
1101	Salaries - General	327,524	274,734	52,790
1102	Salaries - Overtime	0	15,621	-15,621
1110	Salaries - Scheduled Work	5,000	5,067	-67
1220	Employee Allowances	500	0	500
1298	Accum Abs Acct - Employee Benefits Accru	0	-271	271
1301	National Insurance	23,980	27,404	-3,424
1302	NI on Car Lease/Loan	350	490	-140
1401	Superannuation	50,380	47,406	2,974
1493	Supn Lump Sum Apportionment	36,670	36,670	0
1499	Notional Superannuation Costs	2,500	-6,019	8,519
1532	In Service Training CPD	1,000	0	1,000
1630	Insurance Premiums - Employers Liability	2,810	1,266	1,544
1631	Insurance Premiums - Fidelity Guarantee	270	270	-0
1638	Insurance Premiums - Employees Personal	180	178	2
1660	Childcare Vouchers Administration Fees	50	8	43
1670	Drivers Licences	100	0	100
2851	Accommodation Recharges - Central Depot	43,570	47,724	-4,154
3110	Repairs to Vehicles and Plant	10,000	143	9,857
3140	Fuel	55,000	55,154	-154
3145	Tyres - Damaged	0	812	-812
3146	Tyres	4,500	324	4,176
3147	Vehicle Licences	1,500	213	1,288
3149	M.O.T. Tests	500	0	500
3210	Vehicle Recharges	52,270	837	51,433
3211	Vehicle Recharges - Non-Scheduled Labour	0	360	-360
3212	Vehicle Recharges - Scheduled Labour	0	3,296	-3,296
3213	Vehicle Recharges - Non-Scheduled Parts	0	109	-109
3214	Vehicle Recharges - Scheduled Parts	0	974	-974
3315	Short Term Hire of Vehicles/Plant	0	680	-680
3430	Recharge Leased Cars Hldg A/c	2,200	2,200	0
4350	Clothing, Uniforms & Laundry	4,000	4,320	-320

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Classification: NULBC PROTECT Organisational

4517 Telephones - Direct Costs	2,000	148	1,852
4561 Computer Software - Licences/Purchase	400	0	400
4581 Recharges - MFD Prints and Copies	610	342	268
4841 Insurance Premiums - Public Liability	60	1,522	-1,462
5203 Contractor Recycling (External)	240,000	236,377	3,623
6401 Recharges from Accountancy	3,740	4,124	-384
6402 Recharges from Audit	910	1,019	-109
6403 Recharges from Resources & Supp Serv Mgm	40	44	-4
6411 Recharges from ICT Services	250	331	-81
6422 Recharges from Operational Services Admi	15,170	14,989	181
6430 Recharges from Development Control	4,410	0	4,410
6437 Recharges from Performance Section	550	662	-112
6441 Recharges from Customer Services	42,090	47,774	-5,684
6442 Recharges from Waste Strategy Staff Cost	108,550	96,398	12,152
6443 Recharges from Human Resources	7,550	8,271	-721
6444 Recharges from Communications	4,830	5,765	-935
6453 Recharges from General Admin Exp (HR)	4,630	2,578	2,052
6455 Recharges from Corporate Health & Safety	4,820	4,040	780
6456 Recharges from Corporate Equalities	460	550	-90
6457 Recharges from Corporate Information Sec	1,610	1,811	-201
6458 Recharges from Insurance Services Account	4,090	3,952	138
6459 Recharges from Union Duties	1,100	574	526
6912 Depreciation	81,220	0	81,220
9260 Sales General - Non Vatable	-25,000	-37,847	12,847
9342 Recycling Credits	-515,000	-546,753	31,753
Totals	613,944	366,639	247,305

Costs excluding recharges 545,184 443,874

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TASK AND FINISH GROUP CABINET PANEL

Thursday, 30th August, 2018
Time of Commencement: 2.00 pm

Present:- Councillor Trevor Johnson – in the Chair

Councillors Burgess, Miss J Cooper, Harrison, Proctor, Reddish, Robinson and P Waring

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Wright.

2. INTRODUCTION FROM CHAIR

The Chair advised members that the purpose of today's meeting was to consider the options and agree upon a recommendation to Cabinet.

Councillor Proctor addressed the Chair stating that he had had to send apologies to the previous meeting. He raised concerns that the Group's position had been compromised in that the discussions and conclusions had been made public on social media. Councillor Proctor felt that the principal of speaking to press / going public on social media was unacceptable until the Group had completed the task that was being considered.

Councillor Robinson left the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July, 2018 be agreed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Councillor Reddish had asked at the previous meeting if comparisons from other authorities could be obtained regarding charges that had made for collection of garden waste. The Council's Head of Recycling, Waste and Fleet Services, Andrew Bird confirmed that these had been received.

5. A FUTURE RECYCLING STRATEGY

Mr Bird handed round two appendices to accompany the agenda report.

Members were advised that if the collection service was to remain unchanged, significant investment would be required.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 3.1 of the report which outlined two possible options for the future delivery of the service.

Task and Finish Group Cabinet Panel - 30/08/18

Councillor Waring stated that there needed to be as little contamination of the materials as possible. It was agreed that a robust approach to contaminated bins would be necessary with either of the two options.

Councillor Burgess stated that a resident had contacted her regarding all materials being put into the one vehicle after being sorted. Mr Bird stated that there was a trial currently underway in various streets where recyclables were being collected using the twin stream collection system. Residents in those streets should have received a leaflet advising them of this and, in addition, there were signs on the vehicles in question saying 'Contents are being recycled'.

Councillor Burgess also stated that she had been advised that a bin in the centre of Kidsgrove would not now be emptied because the gentleman who had previously paid for it to be emptied had left. The Executive Director for Operational Services, Mr Dave Adams asked Councillor Burgess to provide him with the details.

Members were advised that feasibility studies had been undertaken into various options. In addition, the Cabinet had stated that they wished to continue with the separate food waste collection service. The collection of food waste was not mandatory at the present time in England but DEFRA may introduce it later in the year when they publish their resources and waste strategy.

The costings indicated that the Council could achieve the continuation of the food waste collection along with collection of the 'other' recyclables.

Members felt that the better option would be the twin stream and that fully comingled was not the way forward.

Councillor Reddish enquired as to the timescale for the new arrangements and Members were advised that the new arrangements could be in place by 2020/21, but as stated in the report, this was dependent on detailed planning and finances being available.

Councillor Cooper enquired as to who received the Borough's food waste and was advised that a contract with Biffa to take it for processing was in place, and the food waste is processed through anaerobic digestion, where it was turned into gas and produces power, as well as a high quality fertiliser for use in agriculture. Councillor Cooper asked if it could be sold directly to the electricity board.

Mr Bird explained that, for that, an anaerobic digester would be required by ourselves which would cost millions to build.

Councillor Proctor had seen one of the anaerobic digesters in Ireland and told Members that they were impressive – not only for power production but the end product of compost was also good. However, for such a system to be feasible, a number of authorities would need to come on board and have shared ownership.

Mr Bird stated that the Council's current contract runs until 2022 at which point we may be in a position to consider partnerships with other authorities, especially if food collection were to become mandatory.

Councillor Proctor asked for consideration to be given to people living in terraced properties whilst looking at a new system, in respect of the size and quantity of containers.

Members then looked at garden waste collection and were advised that there was no alternative than to look at a chargeable service in order to absorb the financial implications of the cessation of payment of recycling credits by the County Council.

There were two options available – to outsource the collection to a private company – with a charge to residents or to continue to operate in house with a charge to residents. The charge would be introduced at £36 per year for the main garden waste bin and Members felt that, for properties requiring a second bin, discussions should take place as to a reduced charge.

The current system ran for ten months of the year but the new system would operate for the full twelve months.

Members agreed that, whilst they did not like the idea of charging for garden waste collections, there was no other alternative.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the fortnightly twin stream option (with separate paper and card) and separate food waste collection be recommended as the best option.
 - (ii) That, subject to the cost of acquiring an additional bin being considered, a chargeable garden waste collection service be introduced.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

This was the last meeting of the Task and Finish Cabinet Panel. Members were thanked for their support and comments during the process.

COUNCILLOR TREVOR JOHNSON
Chair

Meeting concluded at 3.10 pm

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NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

19th September 2018

UNIVERSITY GROWTH CORRIDOR

Submitted by: Executive Director, Regeneration and Development

Principal author: Economic Regeneration Officer

Portfolio: Planning and Growth

Ward(s) affected: Keele and Silverdale directly; and other adjacent wards

Purpose of the Report

To report on the vision and proposals which has been prepared for the 'University Growth Corridor', an area of land to the west of Newcastle substantially comprising the Keele University campus and the site of the former Keele Municipal Golf Course.

Recommendations

1. That the vision and proposals be approved and that the proposals be submitted for consideration for inclusion in the emerging Joint Local Plan.
2. That the views of the Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee, due to meet on 26th September 2018, be sought and reported to the next meeting of Cabinet.

Reasons

To help enable the continued growth and development of Keele University and the Science and Innovation Park and to provide for much needed development land for more high quality housing in the Borough.

To respond to both the needs and opportunities presented by the emerging Joint Local Plan and to demonstrate the potential appropriateness of the development in the context of the said Local Plan.

To assist the Council in its medium to long term asset management planning and capital programme funding.

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 This report relates to plans for a 'University Growth Corridor', potentially accommodating around 1000 – 1200 new homes, 150 postgraduate student apartments and between 2000 and 3000 new high quality jobs, based around the expansion of Keele University (and its Science and Innovation Park) and the redevelopment of the former Keele Municipal Golf Course.

- 1.2 The Borough Council and its sub-regional partners (principally, the LEP and the County Council) are keen to support the further growth of Keele University and its Science and Innovation Park for a host of potential economic benefits – job growth, the quality of jobs, expenditure in the local area, the multiplier effect of contracts let and work carried out on behalf of the University or by science park businesses by local suppliers etc. The ‘Keele Deal’, an agreement made between the University, local partners and The Government (made in 2017), set out the case for major public investment in the University to help realise its further development. Furthermore, the local planning authority needs to meet projected housing needs for the next local plan period (2013-33). Taken together, there is therefore a strong logic in developing a coherent planned urban extension in the subject area to make provision for both the growth of the university and for new residential development, together with the necessary infrastructure investment which will serve the two. This is the basis for the proposals in the ‘University Growth Corridor’.
- 1.3 The former Keele Municipal Golf Course was, for a number of years, leased to and run by Keele Golf Centre Ltd., a private company with a background in running a number of golf courses around the country. However, the company went into voluntary liquidation and the course was unable to keep going as a commercial venture in spite of the Council’s attempts to interest other companies in taking over the business. Consequently, the Council made a decision in 2014 to explore the potential for development of this area through a comprehensive masterplanning process. In 2016, the Council’s Assets Policy Committee endorsed the principle of site disposal.
- 1.4 Following discussions with Keele University and Staffordshire County Council, it was decided to jointly commission expert consultants to prepare a long term vision for the development of this area, essentially covering the two main landholdings – i.e. the University’s campus and the former golf course (together with some smaller areas of adjoining land). This piece of work has now been completed.
- 1.5 The brief for the masterplan was set by the two principal landowners, Keele University and the Borough Council (in its role as landowner, rather than as local planning authority) together with Staffordshire County Council, and representatives of these three commissioning parties have made up the client team which has overseen the consultants’ work. It is important to note that the Borough Council’s Planning Policy team, on the other hand, has been kept apart from the process during the period of the commission in order to create a transparent separation between the Council’s roles of landowner and planning authority.

2. The Purpose of the Masterplan

2.1 The purpose of this masterplanning exercise was to:

- assess future options for the use or development of land within the area of study, which would be able to meet the Borough’s medium term development needs (potentially as a planned western urban extension);
- provide for the future expansion of Keele University and its Science and Innovation Park;
- identify the preferred future use of the former municipal golf course;
- provide an objective evidence base to justify the removal of land proposed for development from the Green Belt and;
- to put together a clear and comprehensive development proposal which could be considered as part of the preparation of the emerging joint local plan.

3. The Site

- 3.1** The area of land subject of the University Growth Corridor masterplan largely comprises the Keele University campus and the site of the former Keele Municipal Golf Course, together with adjoining land off Park Road, Silverdale, and is shown on the attached plan.
- 3.2** Most of the site lies in green belt and it will be necessary to remove the area of land from the green belt, through the Local Plan process, in order to allow the site to be developed. Helping to make the case for green belt release was one of the main aims of the masterplanning commission; see further commentary below.
- 3.3** There is also the matter of landscape and ecology. Valued landscape features within the masterplan area include important habitats, providing ecological diversity and the masterplan calls for the retention and protection of the water bodies and the woodland cover across the site. The setting of the Historic Park and Garden, based around Keele Hall and its Grounds, together with several listed buildings contained within the masterplan area also require to be treated carefully in the scheme design. Further sensitive factors affecting the way in which scheme design has been approached include the topography of the site and the views of the site in the wider landscape. Additionally the client group were keen to explore the potential for some form of Transport Hub as part of the transport infrastructure assessment in order to promote the use of public transport and minimise reliance on private motor cars.

4. Summary of the Proposals Contained in the Masterplan

- 4.1** The masterplan has been arranged under the following main headings: Site context; Economic context; Planning context; Masterplan vision; the case for Green Belt release and; Market attractiveness / Viability.
- 4.2** Site Context
The site context explains the key constraints and influencing considerations which have guided the thinking in terms of the overall developability of the site.
- 4.3** Economic Context
The economic context is hugely significant because this is one of the main drivers for seeking to exploit the development potential of this unique location. A specialist consultancy was commissioned to assess the current and forecast economic impact of the University (including the Science and Innovation Park) on the North Staffordshire area the key conclusions of which are as follows:
- The total quantified economic contribution of Keele University to Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent is £160 million in Gross Value Added (GVA) and 3,420 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs. To put this into context, these contributions alone are equivalent to 1 in every 40 FTE jobs within the areas.
 - Keele University is a major employer with over 2,000 staff, equivalent to 1,750 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. This makes the University one of the largest employers in the area, alongside the NHS and local government. Further, the University's direct employment has been growing significantly in recent years.
 - Importantly, a large number of these direct jobs at the University are high value, high skilled positions for the local economy: around 40% of University employees are academics, with the remaining a mix of managerial, professional and support staff. The average annual salary for a full-time employee at the University is 60% higher than the average pay for residents in Newcastle-under-Lyme borough.

- Keele University is also a significant income generator through its teaching and research, as well as wider activities. In 2014/15 it reported over £134m in annual income. The associated direct Gross Value Added created by Keele University amounted to over £81m.

Members should be aware that the potential economic benefits are expected to be realised over a longer time horizon than the housing outcomes; realistically, over 25 years. The key objective at this time is to demonstrate the vision for economic growth for the purposes and to lay the foundations to enable it through the Local Plan process.

4.4 Planning Context

The Planning context section of this piece of work focussed upon the needs and opportunities for economic growth (including housing) in this location as a contribution towards the Borough-wide Local Plan targets. It refers to key extracts from the Preferred Options consultation document. In particular it identifies the subject land having the potential to:

“not only contribute to the most sustainable pattern of development but will also strive to strengthen key knowledge based employment sectors creating a more diverse economy and improving the rate of graduate retention. This is essential if we are to succeed in transforming the low-skill nature of the sub-regional economy and regenerating the local housing market. It also provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a unique synergy between housing and employment.”

It goes on to say that it is necessary to:

“investigate in more detail the potential of this location to support the development of approximately 2,500 houses, identify specific infrastructure requirements and how this could successfully be integrated with a 12.5 ha expansion of the Science and Innovation park as well as highly sensitive landscapes, such as the Grade II Registered Historic Park and Garden at Keele and ancient woodland.

In addition it considers that it would be possible to:

“create co-located working and living environments to create a unique community of housing, open space, social infrastructure, education and employment as a sustainable form of development. The new community would also have excellent access to high-quality sports and recreation facilities at the University campus thereby promoting healthy lifestyles and would easily be able to access a wide range of services and facilities within Newcastle Town Centre, which is extremely well connected by public transport.

Such a development also presents an opportunity to consider providing high quality employment and high quality housing on ‘garden settlement’ principles where land value capture provides an income stream to meet the costs of the necessary infrastructure investment and for the long-term stewardship of shared assets.”

4.5 Vision

The next section sets out a vision for the subject area taking account of the above context; it identifies the potential to establish a new sustainable urban settlement comprising a mix of land uses including education, business and residential, also making provision for the expansion of the University and its Science and Innovation Park.

A schematic layout showing the broad content of the masterplan is appended to this report. The principal elements of this are:

- An eastern expansion of Keele Science and Innovation Park by a further 17.7 hectares of additional development land for business and science park uses, sufficient to provide space for up a million square feet (90,000 sq. m.) of additional academic and employment space, potentially leading to a further 2600 jobs in high value sectors of employment such as ICT, health and medical technologies, energy technologies and applied research.
- A “densification” of the central core of the University campus. This would entail some selective intensification generally where car parks or ageing buildings already exist rather than designations of new sites at the core of the campus. 8 hectares of land potentially providing space for up to 24,000 sq. m. (260,000 sq. ft.) of additional university academic buildings are proposed. (While additional job numbers are not specified, a 30% expansion of the university could lead to up to 500 additional jobs). This is aimed at creating a denser, more ‘urban’, feel to the campus in which some of the ageing post-war buildings are replaced by modern and better designed buildings for teaching, administrative and research purposes.
- Two areas of land are proposed for renewable energy generation on land to the south of the Science Park and on land to the south-west of cemetery Road. The indicative proposals reflect the University’s stated objectives regarding carbon reduction and to support the implementation of the university’s leading edge SMART Energy programme.
- The provision of about 1,000 houses at low density (in the context of the overall site area) on the site of the former municipal golf course, aimed at attracting more high value housing to the Borough, retaining key landscape features, where possible, such as copses, hedgerows and areas of woodland and taking account of the site’s topography and wider landscape setting. A further 200 houses would also be provided on adjacent land off Park Road, Silverdale.
- Undergrounding of the line of electricity pylons (at least where they pass through the university campus) which would have the effect of both enhancing the landscape and would also provide more unencumbered land for development.
- The provision of a new two-form entry primary school within the site of the former municipal golf course to accommodate the educational requirements of the growing (and almost certainly younger) residential population.
- The provision of 150 postgraduate apartments on land to the south of the Science and Innovation Park.
- The provision of a small convenience store to the north of the A525 (Keele Road) to serve the day to day needs of the new residents.
- An important feature of the masterplan is the provision of a network of ‘green infrastructure’, creating walking routes within both the University campus and the proposed residential parts of the scheme, linking and making use of existing copses, water bodies and other natural features to create an attractive walking environment.

- While the land to the north of Keele Road is unquestionably well located and would be attractive for higher income housing, the intention will be to create a mixed community of high quality housing. It should be borne in mind that 'executive housing' only forms a relatively small portion of the overall North Staffordshire housing market and over 50% of new builds in the area are three bedroom 'mid-market' houses. Furthermore, Borough Council planning policy requires 25% of the overall housing provision to be made in the form of tenure blind 'affordable housing'. Of this 15% is likely to comprise socially rented housing and 10% in the form of shared equity.
- The other key aspect of the vision for this area is to explore the potential for some form of transport hub as part of the transport infrastructure arrangements in order to reduce commuters' dependency on car-borne movement. It should be noted that the overall site's impact on the local transport network will be modelled as part of the Local Plan process in order to determine any specific requirements for junction improvements, etc.).

4.6 Green Belt

Most of the land subject of the masterplan lies within the green belt and in planning for development in the University Growth Corridor it will be necessary to make the case for the removal of this land from the green belt to allow its development. With this in mind, a detailed case will need to be made to justify the inclusion of the University Growth Corridor as a proposal in the emerging Local Plan. This case forms part of the consultant's report and will be an essential part of the presentation to the Planning Inspector when the Joint Local Plan is discussed at the local Plan Examination in Public.

4.7 In summary, the case for removing the land from the green belt is based on:

- The need to respond to forecast requirements for employment and housing in the emerging Local Plan;
- The critical need to raise the performance of the North Staffordshire economy and the role which an expanded Keele University and Science Park can play in achieving this;
- Demonstrating the deliverability of the proposal given the weight the Government places on viability and deliverability when assessing the soundness of local plans;
- Addressing and mitigating concerns about any harm which might result from the development of the Newcastle Western Extension, and;
- Creating a demonstrably sustainable and accessible form of development, such that should the Local Plan Inspector be persuaded that there is a need to look beyond the existing built up area to meet part of the future growth needs of the Stoke / Newcastle area, then this site would form the most sustainable and accessible development option.

4.8 Viability and Deliverability

A key requirement of the masterplan brief was to demonstrate that the development proposed would be both viable and deliverable. This is order to help persuade the two local planning authorities to include the scheme in the Joint Local plan. The point being that it would be in no-one's best interest to include proposals in the local plan which are not going to come forward, for instance, due to abnormally high site preparation costs, lack of market interest or the unwillingness of a landowner to bring land forward for development.

- 4.9** BDP have tackled this by undertaking a high-level viability assessment which has reviewed the additional costs, over and above normal site preparation costs and the cost of internal infrastructure in bringing the land forward for development and assessing the values of the development proposed. Important amongst these costs are the likely off-site drainage and highway improvements which will be necessary, such as road widening, the provision of new pedestrian crossings, remodelling of existing junctions and making financial provision for subsidising bus services, all of which could be required as part of a Section 106 Agreement on which a planning application(s) might depend. As part of the joint Local Plan process all potential development sites will be subjected to transport modelling assessment but as part of the masterplanning process some preliminary assumptions have been made. Another important 'abnormal' development cost particular to this development site is the placing underground of the electricity pylons as they pass through the eastern side of the university campus. As well as removing a blight on the landscape, this would also result in the creation of more viable and attractive development land.
- 4.10** At this stage the consultants concluded that the overall development is both viable and deliverable.

5. Implementation and Timescales

- 5.1** This masterplan is intended to influence the content of the Joint Local Plan, the next stage of which is the preparation of a draft Local Plan. It will probably be 2020/21 before the said plan will be placed before 'Examination in Public' where it may be challenged by both local interests, e.g. neighbouring local authorities, rival developers or concerned local residents and by Government (to consider alignment with Government Planning Policy). The Plan may then be modified by the Government Inspector before it is adopted by the two local planning authorities. Assuming that the adopted Local Plan makes provision for the removal of land from the green belt, planning applications can then be drawn up for both the extension of the Science and Innovation Park and for the development of the proposed new housing. Only then can site preparation work begin. Development itself may therefore be five years away. As the one exception to this, Keele University will be submitting plans for its renewable energy proposals ahead of the local plan and will therefore need to make the case for development within the green belt unaided by an adopted local plan.

6. Consultation on the Masterplan

- 6.1** Substantial public consultation has already been carried out on the broad content and location of the proposals in the masterplan as this comprised a significant feature of the 'Preferred Option' draft of the Joint local Plan. As a result of that consultation the proposals in the masterplan area have been revised and the number of houses proposed for development on the site of the former Keele Municipal Golf Course has been reduced significantly from around 1800 to an estimate of between 1000 and 1200 units. This has been carried out through a reduction in the proposed density of development and also through a more thorough evaluation of the site's landscape and topography. It is in the nature of local plan proposals to apply indicative densities when approximating site capacity, but a more detailed masterplanning process provides the opportunity for a more fine grained assessment of a site. The effect of this is that a substantial part of the former golf course site is proposed to be retained as woodland and other areas of publicly accessible open space. Unavoidably this will also result in a lower financial receipt for the landowner (Newcastle Borough Council) but will unquestionably result in a more appropriate and better quality scheme overall.

6.2 As a supplement to the consultation on the Local Plan Preferred Option, the new administration was keen to engage local members and the Parish Councils in this matter so the portfolio holder for Planning and Growth and officers have held two engagement meetings with representatives of Silverdale and Keele Parish Councils and local ward councillors. The first, in mid-July, was in the form of a briefing and at that it was agreed to then hold a more thorough 'workshop' with the consultants and representatives of the steering group. This took place on 21st August and the issues raised have been taken into account in the masterplan now before you.

7. Scrutiny Review

7.1 The Portfolio Holder and Leader have proposed that the masterplan be reported to Scrutiny Committee in order to enable wider political engagement and input; this will take place on 26th September. A representative of the Planning consultants, BDP, will be in attendance to answer technical questions.

8. Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities

8.1 This initiative falls within the Council's priority of Creating a Borough of Opportunity, primarily helping to enable new high quality jobs at the University and at the Science and Innovation Park and by providing new land for high quality housing.

9. Financial and Resource Implications

9.1 The Borough Council's financial contribution toward the cost of preparing this masterplan will be funded from within the budgetary provision previously made.

9.2 The possible sale and development of land in Borough Council ownership, made more likely by the approval of this masterplan, would also have financial implications for the Borough Council, but it is difficult to place a value to this at this stage. For reasons cited earlier the development of the land in the Council's interests is likely to be at least five years away.

9.3 The critical milestone will be the successful removal of the land from the Green Belt designation through the Local Plan process. As the Council moves closer to that time it will be necessary to begin more detailed analysis and negotiations with the University of Keele about delivery timescales along with the apportionment of both contributions to abnormal costs and net capital receipts.

10. Major Risks

10.1 Three major risks could stand in the way of agreeing or delivering this masterplan:

- 1.** In the event that the Borough Council's feels unable to support it, in its role as local planning authority
 - Likelihood – low to medium in the context of the widely recognised need for growth in terms of both employment and housing.
 - Impact – high
 - Mitigation – seek to ensure that a robust set of arguments is put forward to justify the necessary land to be taken out of the Green Belt and by making modifications to the proposals contained in the draft masterplan which might be considered unacceptable.

2. In the event that the Borough Council is unable to convince a Planning Inspector, at the Local Plan Examination in Public, of the need or justification for taking the land out of the green belt to allow its development.
 - Likelihood – medium (see above)
 - Impact – high
 - Mitigation – aside from those above, none within this local plan timeframe. A fresh attempt to take the land out of the green belt would need to be made on the basis of a planning application or in the a future local plan.
3. In the event that there is insufficient market interest in taking forward the development set out.
 - Likelihood – low in the case of the housing element, low to medium in the case of the employment elements (this being more an issue of pace of development than lack of market interest per se)
 - Impact – high
 - Mitigation – an effective marketing strategy; working with appropriate niche development companies; the roll out of the 'Keele Deal', effective collaboration between the University and local partners; successful bids to funding sources such as the Local Growth Fund and the Government's future 'Shared Prosperity Fund'.

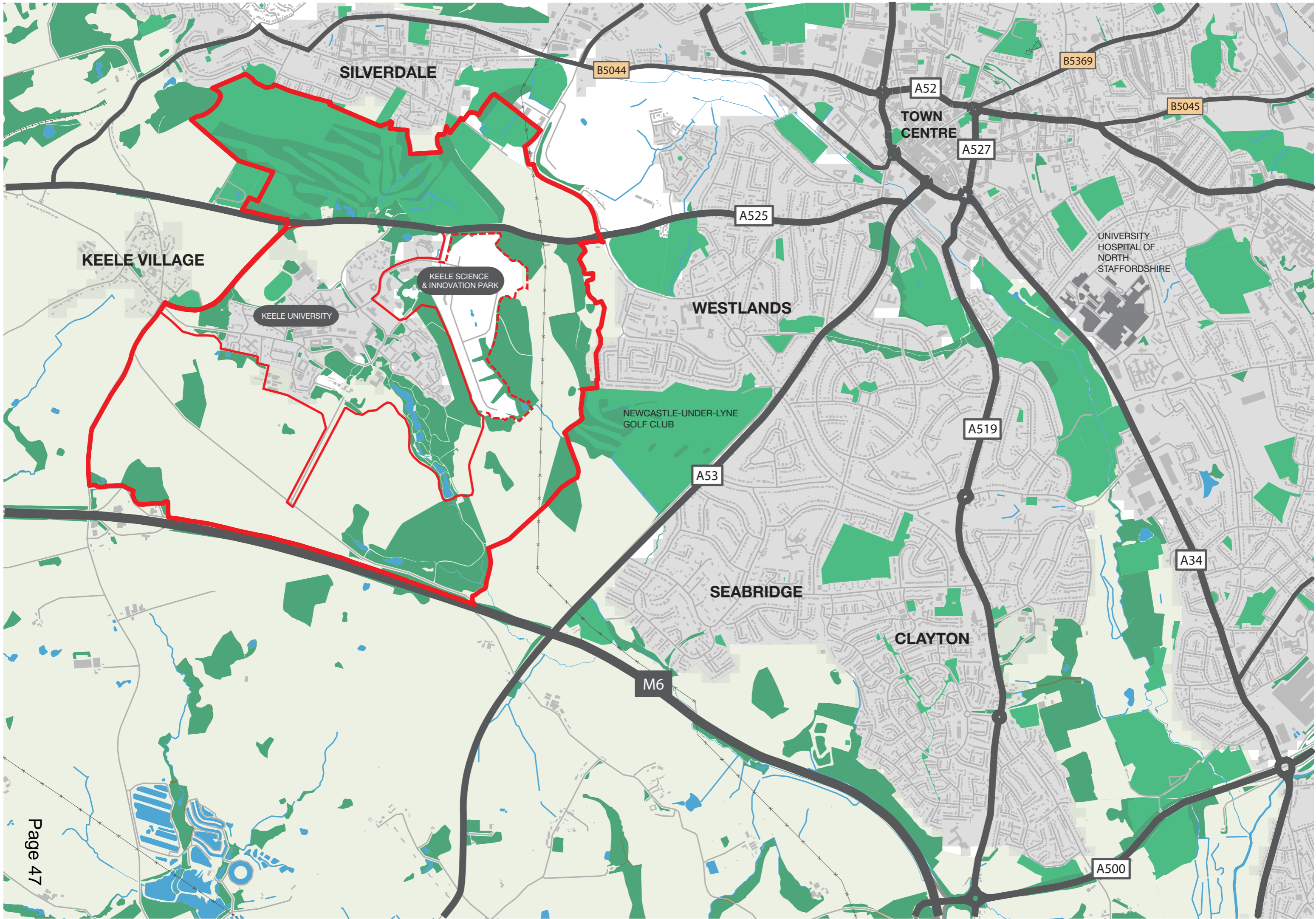
11. Key Decision Information

- a. This proposal will impact on two or more wards. The report has been included in the Forward Plan.

12. Appendices

- a. Plan of the study area
- b. Indicative masterplan

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Report to the Economy, Environment & Place Scrutiny Committee

26 September 2018

SMART Motorway M6 J13-15



Report Author: Neale Clifton
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Introduction

Members will be aware that Highways England undertook a local publicity and consultation process earlier this year with regard to the above project which impacts upon the borough. Some Members remain concerned and/or uncertain about the intentions with regard to both the planned minor improvements to J15 and the extent of any works between J15 and J16. Some of the concern relates to the potential economic and environmental impacts upon the borough.

Background

An extract from the Highways England website with regard to the above programme states the following:

“Why we need this scheme

This route experiences heavy congestion at peak time.

The scheme in detail

We are upgrading the busy 28km stretch of the M6 between junction 13 at Stafford and Junction 15 near Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent to make it a smart motorway. We are expecting to start the main construction work in March 2018 and plan to complete the scheme by March 2022. The scheme will involve:

- *permanent conversion of the hard shoulder to create a fourth lane and changing the junctions to accommodate this*
- *new CCTV cameras and electronic information signs and signals on gantries - these will show variable mandatory speed limits and manage traffic flow and incidents*
- *emergency refuge areas throughout the length of the scheme*

- *the hardening of the central reserve and installation of a reinforced barrier to improve safety*
- *nearly 2km of new noise barriers in built up areas*
- *a replacement footbridge at Burton Bank*
- *upgrades to Dunston and Norton railway bridges*
- *widening of Creswell Viaduct*
- *demolition of the redundant Creswell Home Farm bridge*
- *minor improvements to Junction 15*

We're improving a number of stretches along the M6 motorway by upgrading them to a smart motorway:

- *View information about the [M6 junctions 2-4 smart motorway scheme](#)*
- *View information about the [M6 junctions 16-19 smart motorway scheme](#)*

Aims

The smart motorways technology will:

- *reduce congestion and smooth the flow of traffic*
- *improve journey time reliability*
- *support economic development in the region*
- *minimise environmental impacts*
- *continue to deliver a high level of safety performance on the network"*

Questions to be Addressed

To be confirmed at the next stage.

It is recommended that this item be considered at the next meeting when the representatives of the relevant organisations can be invited to come along to explain the proposals and receive questions from Members.

Outcomes

The Scrutiny Committee will need to clarify the desired outcomes at the next stage.

Supporting Information

Please refer to the following web link: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/m6-junction-13-to-junction-15-smart-motorway/>.

Invited Partners/Stakeholders/Residents

Representatives of Highways England and / or Staffordshire County Council.

Constraints

None known.

Conclusions

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

Not known at this stage.

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)

Planning and Growth

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ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Work Programme 2018/19

Chair: Councillor Gary White

Vice-Chair: Councillor Marion Reddish

Members: Burgess, John Cooper, Driver, Gardner, Harrison, Olszewski, Panter, J. Tagg and Williams.

Portfolio Holders covering the Committee's remit:

Councillor S Tagg, Leader – Corporate and Service Improvement, People and Partnerships (for Economic Development Strategy)

Councillor Trevor Johnson - Cabinet Member – Environment and Recycling

Councillor Paul Northcott - Cabinet Member – Planning and Growth



The following services fall within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee:

Planning Policy and Development Control	Facilities Management
Building Control	Recycling and Waste Management
Land Charges	Sreeetscene and Litter Control
Housing Strategy (incl) Housing Advice and Homelessness) and Development	Crematorium and Cemeteries
Private Sector Housing	Climate Change, Sustainability and Energy Efficiency
Operational and Commercial Property Management	Environmental Enforcement
Strategic Transport	Environmental Health
Economic Development	Grounds Maintenance
Tourism	Community Open space
Taxi ranks	Parks and Gardens Maintenance
Bus Station	Flooding and Drainage
Markets	

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

The core Work Programme is determined at the beginning of the municipal year. Issues can be added throughout the year with the Chair's approval or where a new priority area comes to the Committee's attention.

For more information on the Committee or its work Programme please contact Jayne Briscoe on 01782 742250 or at Jayne.briscoe@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	BACKGROUND/OBJECTIVES
Wednesday 4 July 2018	Work Programme	To discuss the work programme and potential topics that Committee members would like to scrutinise over the forthcoming year
	Recycling Service - Update	Items listed at Chair's request. Relevant Officers and Cabinet members requested to attend.
	Grass Cutting Team – Performance	
	Arboriculture Department- Workload and Resource	
	Planning/Development Control – Performance and Staffing	
Wednesday 26 September 2018	Work Programme	To discuss the work programme and progress of scrutiny activity and to consider any amendment/additions to the Programme
	Chair to report on Executive response to Tree Management representations	Report deferred from last Committee
	Recycling Service – Update	
	Borough Market Update	Committee to receive an interim update on the management of the Borough Market – report requested by member of the Committee
	SMART Motorway (use of the (hard shoulder as a 4 th lane)	Report to include action taken to lobby for the scheme to include Junction 15 – requested by member of the Committee

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

	Representatives from the BID invited to attend the meeting	Request from member of the Committee to look at how the Borough can support and help build a strategy to enhance the reputation of the Borough
Thursday 13 December 2018	Work Programme	To discuss the work programme and progress of scrutiny activity and to consider any amendment/additions to the Programme
Thursday 14 March 2019	Work Programme	To evaluate and review the work undertaken during 2018/19
Thursday 12 June 2019	Work Programme	To discuss the work programme and potential topics that Committee members would like to scrutinise over the forthcoming year
<p>Suggestions for potential future items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Items carried forward from Cleaner, Greener and Safer Communities Scrutiny Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Council's Waste and Recycling Service (Currently being considered by Cross Party Members' Panel) 2. Introduction of Fixed Penalty Notices for Fly Tipping and Litter from vehicles 3. Food Standards Agency Review of Food Safety Regulations (expected to take place in late 2018) 4. SMART Motorway (M6) (Use of hard shoulder as 4th lane) – lobbying for amendment of the Scheme to include Junction 15) 		

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