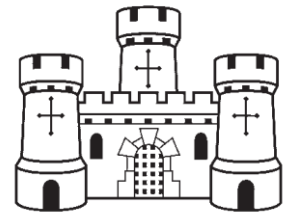


Date of meeting Thursday, 16th December, 2021

Time 7.00 pm

Venue Astley Room - Castle

Contact Geoff Durham 742222



**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 A PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 8)

To consider the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 29 September 2021.

4 UPDATE FROM CABINET

**5 FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND AND TOWN INVESTMENT
PLANS FOR KIDSGROVE AND NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME -
UPDATE**

**6 BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) FOR NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**

Alex Taylor, BID Manager.

7 WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 9 - 16)

8 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.

9 URGENT BUSINESS

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

Members: Councillors Gary White (Chair), Helena Maxfield (Vice-Chair), David Grocott, Dave Jones, Mark Olszewski, Amelia Rout, Jennifer Cooper, Andrew Fear, John Tagg, Barry Panter and Marion Reddish

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.

SUBSTITUTE MEMBER SCHEME (Appendix 9, Section 4 of Constitution)

The Constitution provides for the appointment of Substitute members to attend Committees. The named Substitutes for this meeting are listed below:-

Substitute Members:	Tony Kearon	Gillian Burnett
	Andrew Parker	Simon White
	Ian Wilkes	June Walklate
	Paul Waring	

If you are unable to attend this meeting and wish to appoint a Substitute to attend in your place you need to:

- Identify a Substitute member from the list above who is able to attend on your behalf
- Notify the Chairman of the Committee (at least 24 hours before the meeting is due to take place) NB Only 2 Substitutes per political group are allowed for each meeting and your Chairman will advise you on whether that number has been reached

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.

ON EXITING THE BUILDING, PLEASE ASSEMBLE AT THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING BY THE STATUE OF QUEEN VICTORIA. DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING UNTIL ADVISED TO DO SO.

ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT & PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 29th September, 2021

Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Gary White (Chair)

Councillors:	Helena Maxfield	Mark Olszewski	Andrew Fear
	David Grocott	Amelia Rout	John Tagg
	Dave Jones	Jennifer Cooper	Barry Panter

Officers:	Simon McEneny	Executive Director - Commercial Development & Economic Growth
	Denise French	Democratic Services Team Leader
	Georgina Evans	Head of People and Organisational Development
	Roger Tait	Head of Operations
	Nesta Barker	Head of Environmental Health Services

Also in attendance:

11. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Marion Reddish.

12. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

13. **MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

14. **UPDATE FROM CABINET**

There was nothing to report from Cabinet.

15. **SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report on the Council's Sustainable Environment Strategy. The Strategy had been adopted by Council and included an Action Plan comprising a range of projects and initiatives to develop sustainable approaches to the council's own work as well as work with partners.

There were a number of key achievements so far including solar panels on part of the roof of Knutton Depot which were generating electricity that was used on site; replacement of the Environmental Health van fleet with electric vehicles and

installation of charging stations at the Depot; and a pilot of e-scooters in Newcastle town centre.

There were a number of key projects being planned:

- A feasibility study was looking at a solar renewable energy farm at Keele on land in the council's ownership
- Sites were being sought for the first phase of tree planting over winter and early spring; this would be linked to the Queen's Jubilee project to create a Green Canopy
- There were various transport initiatives including a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan with the County Council; installation of eight rapid electric vehicle charging points on council car parks as part of the Low Emission Taxi Infrastructure Scheme; and promotion of the Council's Green Travel Plan for employees.

Members raised queries and points including:

- Would community groups be involved in tree planting schemes? Reference was also made to schemes to plant trees in memory of those who had died during the pandemic; this was something that some local authorities had participated in but not the borough council. In response, the committee was advised that now the Urban Tree Planting Strategy had been approved this gave a mandate for work to take place to involve communities especially in commemorations of the Queen's Jubilee in 2022 and the 850 celebrations of the Borough in 2023. There would be schemes to adopt a tree.
- Was there any feedback on electric vehicle charging points? No direct feedback had been received but it was a growing area based on increasing sales of electric vehicles and installation of charging points at many supermarkets.
- How long would it take to see a return on the investment in solar panels at the Depot? The committee was advised that this was expected to be 7 years. The project to install panels on other parts of the roof at the central Depot would be subject to any possible relocation plans but no monies would be spent until future plans were confirmed.
- Were there any specific sites or routes that would see developments or improvements as part of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan that could be shared with the committee? This Plan was led by the County Council but any list of sites would be shared with the committee when available.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) the report be received; and
- (b) the priorities set out in the Work Plan for 2021-2022 be supported.

16. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PERFORMANCE AND ENFORCEMENT REPORT

The Committee considered a report on Environmental Health Performance and Enforcement. The report listed the key issues and activities undertaken by the service in 2020 – 21.

The Environmental Health service comprised four teams – Food & Safety; Environmental Protection; Environmental Services; and Licensing Administration.

The report compared key activities over the past two or three years and outlined some of the main projects or investigations:

Food & Safety – key projects had included participation and promotion of the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. A large part of work undertaken by this service was in relation to Covid including investigations; track and trace; promoting Covid safe measures; this had included carrying out investigations into 305 outbreaks.

Environmental Protection – the main projects carried out by this service had included air quality work but the majority of the focus had been on Walley's Quarry landfill odour investigations.

Licensing Administration Team – main projects had included a review of Licensing Act Policy and review of Taxi Licensing Policy as well as ensuring vehicles licensed during Covid had been inspected for safety.

Environmental Services – some of the main projects included using Anti-Social Behaviour powers to resolve dog-related nuisance, through the issue of Community Protection Notices and Fixed Penalties; and taking enforcement action where residents were not taking appropriate action to control infestations.

The priorities for the current year included Walley's Quarry, Air Quality to deliver compliance with the Ministerial Direction and Covid work. The department would also continue with planned work, undertake reactive work as well as manage the backlog of work.

Members raised queries and issues including:

- What were 'pavement licences'? This was explained as an initiative to support businesses by enabling the serving of food and beverages on the pavement and had now been extended to September 2022
- What were high risk food premises? These were where vulnerable people were being served or were high risk such as meat production. There were not a high number of premises affected and this workload had been reduced during the pandemic as a number of premises had been closed
- Was there a hotspot for flytipping? There were no specific hotspots but it was an issue across the borough
- One priority was noted as taxi enforcement operations with partner agencies. What was the situation with licensed vehicles from outside the borough operating within the borough and what was the partnership working? It was confirmed that the council could only take enforcement action against its own drivers. However, one piece of enforcement work would involve linking with other councils or police to do vehicle safety checks or work looking at 'plying for hire'. Any issues not related to borough licences could be referred to the relevant council if necessary. The number of vehicles licensed from other councils that were operating within the borough was not known. If trends were identified then the possibility of joint initiatives with other local authorities could be explored.
- The number of RIDDOR accident notifications appeared high. The committee was advised that this category covered accidents that resulted in 7+ day's absence from work and often was a result of slips, trips or falls.
- Was there additional support from Government to address the additional work arising due to Covid? There had been additional funding which was being

coordinated by the County Council and this had been used to obtain additional support including recruiting environmental health officers.

- Did the service have enough resource particularly with the pressures of additional workload arising from Covid and Walley's Quarry? There had been an ongoing need to prioritise and as shown in the report, there had been some backlog in various workloads. There had been issues with resource and also difficulties in recruitment of qualified staff, this was a national issue. Some agency staff had been appointed to help with some workstreams. Management Team were aware of the pressures on the environmental services section and supportive.

RESOLVED: that:

- (a) The report be received; and
- (b) The priorities in the Work Plan 2021 – 2022 be supported.

17. STREETSCENE - POSITION STATEMENT

The Committee considered a report on Streetscene. The report provided an update on staffing, fleet, customer satisfaction and benchmarking.

Staff attendance had been very good during the pandemic. Resources had been redirected to support Recycling and Waste services with some core streetscene work such as litter collection and street sweeping being reprioritised. There remained a backlog in this area of work which had also been impacted by the suspension of key partner support including Community Payback and resident volunteering.

The report outlined that the team had an ageing profile but succession planning measures were in place that saw job roles reviewed when posts became vacant. There was also training in place and investment in equipment, technology and machinery. A number of apprentices had progressed to seasonal or permanent roles at the council.

There was a Fleet Replacement Programme in place that was regularly reviewed and expenditure staggered across the years.

Customer satisfaction surveys were carried out most years and results were presented. In 2020/21 86% thought their street was litter free or had low level litter and 73% thought their neighbourhood was litter free or had low level litter. The streetscene team also engaged with the community at various meetings including LAPs and Town/Parish Councils and through discussion with ward members.

The service was benchmarked in a number of ways including as a member of the Association of Public Sector Excellence Performance Networks. The service compared well with similar size councils and had reached the top 8 nationally in best performing or most improved categories on a number of recent occasions.

The future of the service would see a focus on a demand led performance approach rather than one based on frequency.

Members raised issues and queries as follows:

- What was the programme for grass cutting in rural areas? This would depend on the type including formal and informal open space; in urban areas town centre roundabouts were cut more frequently. It was noted that the council

no longer cut Highways land. Amenity grass was cut when it reached around 75mm. Grass cutting was also based on seasonal and weather factors; supervisors would ensure the situation was kept under review.

- What was the road sweeping schedule? This was based on a demand led approach so areas of higher need would be swept more often. In general, urban roads were swept more frequently than rural roads.
- It was noted that core passageways and subways were often filled with litter and debris. Members were informed that these areas were cleansed daily but it was a constant challenge. There had also previously been additional support in high use areas from partners such as Community Payback but it was unclear whether support would be available in the future.
- Members commended the work of the service on public gardens.
- Members queried how the service could continue to meet the needs of the borough as it grew in terms of residential and other growth. In response, this was a decision for the council in terms of service growth and prioritisation. Officers undertook service planning to identify demand; town centres tended to be the focus. There would be opportunities as part of the One Council programme such as use of technology as outlined previously to facilitate job requests while out in the area rather than returning to the depot to pick up a task. The committee was reminded that housing and growth did bring income into the borough through council tax and business rates alongside also bringing additional demand for services.

RESOLVED: that the Cabinet be requested to review the strategic direction of operational services based on the next 5-10 years growth and consider how the service can be protected and grown, proportionate to predicted growth.

18. **FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND UPDATE**

The Committee considered a presentation from Simon McEneny, Executive Director – Commercial Development and Economic Growth on Future High Streets Fund and Town Investment Plans for Newcastle under Lyme and Kidsgrove.

The update for the Future High Streets Fund noted:

- Funding had been confirmed and deposited
- The demolition of the former Civic Centre had commenced and was due for completion in summer 2022
- A procurement exercise was underway for the car park relocation on the Rycroft site, which was a design and build project
- A masterplanning exercise was to begin for Rycroft
- The possible purchase of York Place was still subject to negotiation. If the purchase was successful, the council would ensure careful stewardship of tenants.
- Designs were being developed to redesign the public space outside the market to make a dwell space; the market pitches were also being redesigned to be more attractive.

Kidsgrove Town Deal

- The Sports Centre development was underway and progressing well.
- The business case for Chatterley Valley had been submitted to the Government and works were due to commence in spring 2022. The development was expected to see up to 2000 new jobs.
- The works to upgrade the station were progressing and a consultant consortium had been appointed to prepare a business case; the mixed use

development in the area in front of the station would also be subject to a business case in the near future.

Newcastle Town Deal

- A programme of schemes had been submitted to MHCLG in August 2021 and business cases would be developed for each scheme
- Funding would be released by Government on a scheme by scheme basis
- The council was procuring a consultant to develop each business case alongside the council's own staff; the council had recently appointed two project officers to also support the Town Deals schemes.

RESOLVED: that the updates be received.

19. TOWN INVESTMENT PLANS FOR KIDSGROVE AND NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME

This was covered under the previous agenda item.

20. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme. The Chair suggested inviting the BID Manager to the next meeting to update on their plans for Newcastle town centre. He also suggested the Committee have an update on the Local Plan as well as the regular update on Future High Streets Fund and Town Deals. If anyone had any suggestions they were invited to raise them with the Chair.

RESOLVED: that the Work Programme be updated for the meeting in December to include:

- an update from the BID Manager;
- update on the Borough Local Plan following the consultation period;
- the regular updates on the Future High Streets Fund and Town Deals for Kidsgrove and Newcastle.

21. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

22. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

Chair

Meeting concluded at 8.45 pm

ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Work Programme 2019/21

Chair: Councillor Gary White

Vice-Chair: Councillor Maxfield

Members: Jenny Cooper, Fear, Grocott, Jones, Olszewski, Panter, Reddish, J. Tagg and Rout

Portfolio Holders covering the Committee's remit:

Councillor S Tagg, Leader – One Council, People and Partnerships (for Economic Development Strategy)

Councillor Sweeney, Deputy Leader – Finance, Town Centres and Growth

Councillor Heesom – Cabinet Member – Community Safety and Wellbeing

Councillor Johnson - Cabinet Member – Environment and Recycling

Councillor Northcott - Cabinet Member – Strategic Planning



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	Streetscene 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

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

Taxi ranks	Parks and Gardens Maintenance
Bus Station	Flooding and Drainage
Markets	

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 Denise French on 01782 742211 or at denise.french@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	
	Recycling Service – Update	Report deferred from last Committee
	Borough Market Update	Committee to receive an interim update on the management of the Borough Market – report requested by Member of the Committee

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

	SMART Motorway (use of the hard shoulder as 4 th land)	Report to include action taken to lobby for the scheme to include Junction 15 – requested by Member of the Committee
	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
	Representatives from appropriate bodies invited to attend the meeting to enable Members to consider the issues surrounding development of the SMART Motorway and HS2	To encourage economic prosperity and development of our area
	Scrutiny of the charging policy at the Borough Town Centre car parks	Request from Members of the Committee to encourage footfall in the town centre
	Clarification of the Business Rates Support Scheme	Request from the BID
	Update on the planning and modelling of the new recycling service including the communication plan, what contingencies were put in place to deal with inclement weather and high staff absences in the department	
	Update on the Borough Market	
Thursday 14 March 2019	Work Programme	To evaluate and review the work undertaken during 2018/19
	Update on Tree Management Operations Budget Allocation	

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

	Economic Development Year 1 Action Plan	
	Homelessness Policy (deferred to June meeting)	
	Allocations Policy	
	Future Recycling Strategy	
	Single Use Plastics – following motion at Council	
	Management of the Borough Market	
Thursday 20 June 2019	Update of Planning and Enforcement Recruitment	Request from the Chair
	Allocations and Homelessness Policy	Deferred from last meeting
	Recycling Service Update	Committee decision
	Work Programme	To discuss the work programme and potential topics that Committee members would like to scrutinise over the forthcoming year
Wednesday 25 September 2019	Update from Cabinet including car parking strategy	
	Recycling Service Update	
	Review of Single Use Plastics Reduction Strategy	Request from Cabinet – 5 June 2019
	Climate Change Mitigation	Request from Council – 3 April 2019 – deferred for special meeting
	Update on the development of the Ryecroft Area	Consideration deferred to December Committee
Monday 25 November 2019	Climate Change Mitigation	
Tuesday 17 December 2019	Update on the development of the Ryecroft Area	
	Joint Allocations Policy	

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

	Benchmarking Exercise	Cabinet Report on benchmarking visits to town centres and markets.
	Bradwell Crematorium	Report on Bradwell Crematorium to include expenditure and maintenance programme and the feasibility of setting up a Friends of Bradwell Crematorium Group. Request from Member of the Committee.
Wednesday 5 February 2020	Recycling Service Update	
	Air Quality update Draft Joint Local Plan	
Thursday 26 March 2020 (meeting cancelled)	Air Quality – presentation of Outline Business Case Recycling Service Update	Deferred
Thursday 18 June 2020	Coronavirus Pandemic Update	To provide the Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise actions undertaken to date and the proposals for the next phases of recovery
Thursday 30 September 2020	Recycling Service Update	Report on the implementation of the new Recycling and Waste service detailing any issues encountered and anything learned in moving forward.
	Development of the Ryecroft area	To provide the Committee with an update on how the two Town Centre Bids for Newcastle and Kidsgrove are progressing, the current position including anything conducive to the two bids.
	Environmental Enforcement	A review of the Environmental Health Department's additional workload as a result of the Covid outbreak and Government Requirements. To further review the resourcing levels in place to achieve these requirements and risk to any current services as a result. Are any further support mechanisms required either in the short or long term from Council.
Thursday 12 November 2020	Air Quality project	To give the Committee the opportunity to consider the Air Quality Report prior to consideration by Cabinet
Thursday 17 December, 2020	Town Deals Update	To provide the Committee with an update on how the two Town Centre Bids for Newcastle and Kidsgrove are progressing, the current position and which schemes were being worked up to.

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

	Review of Planning Enforcement	To provide the Committee with an overview of the processes undertaken by the team. The effect that Covid has had on the number of reported enforcements and the potential to lobby MPs to discuss enforcement in Parliament.
	Review of litter bins in the Borough	To give the Committee the opportunity to consider what to include in the review of litter bins across the Borough
11 March, 2021	Sustainable Environment Strategy Future High Streets Fund update Town Investment Plans for Newcastle and Kidsgrove – update on progress Borough Local Plan	Request from the Chair
17 June, 2021	Aboriculture update Future High Streets Fund update Town Investment Plans for Newcastle and Kidsgrove – update on progress	
29 September, 2021	Environmental Enforcement Sustainable Environment Strategy, Action Plan Streetscene	Request from the Chair 6 monthly review requested by Committee
16 December 2021	Future High Streets Fund update & Town Investment Plans for Newcastle and Kidsgrove – update on progress Update on the Newcastle Business Improvement District (BID)	Regular update Requested by the Committee

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

17 March 2022	<p>Sustainable Environment Strategy, Action Plan</p> <p>Update on progress with the Borough Local Plan following the consultation period</p>	<p>6 monthly review requested by Committee</p> <p>Requested by the Committee</p>
<p>To keep under review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling Service Update • Development of the Ryecroft area • Update report following review of the tree management contract in February 2020 • Bradwell Crematorium • Local Plan – proposals to undertake a Borough Plan 		

December 2021

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