

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 28th September, 2022

Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

[View the agenda here](#)

[Watch the meeting here](#)

Present: Mayor - Councillor Gillian Burnett (Chair)

Councillors:	Adcock	Holland	Sweeney
	Allport	Fox-Hewitt	J Tagg
	Barker	Hutchison	S Tagg
	Beeston	Johnson	J Waring
	Brockie	S Jones	P Waring
	Brown	D Jones	Whieldon
	Bryan	Lawley	G White
	Crisp	Northcott	S White
	Dymond	Panter	Wilkes
	Edginton-Plunkett	Parker	G Williams
	Fear	Reece	J Williams
	Gorton	Richards	Wright
	Grocott	Skelding	
	Heesom	Stubbs	

Apologies: Councillor(s) Bettley-Smith, Moffat and Talbot

Officers:	David Adams	Executive Director - Sustainable Environment
	Geoff Durham	Mayor's Secretary / Member Support Officer
	Martin Hamilton	Chief Executive
	Simon McEneny	Executive Director - Growth and Development
	Daniel Dickinson	Head of Legal & Governance /Monitoring Officer
	Sarah Wilkes	Head of Finance / S151 Officer

Also in attendance:

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. **HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

A minute's silence was held for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II who passed away on 8th September.

[Watch the tributes here](#)

3. **MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July, 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made two announcements:

The Mayor's Cadet Sergeant Katie Shaw had stood down due to other commitments. Katie was thanked for her dedication during her time as Mayor's Cadet. Cadet Nathan Byron had now taken on the role and was introduced and welcomed at the meeting.

Members were reminded about the 1940's Dance on 12 November at Kidsgrove Town Hall. The event would be in aid of the Mayor's Charity Fund.

5. COUNCIL PLAN - 2022 TO 2026

The Leader introduced a report asking Members to receive the Council Plan for 2022-2026.

The Plan set out the Council's key priorities and vision for the next four years and demonstrated achievements over the previous four years. A copy of the Plan was appended to the report.

Resolved: That the Council Plan 2022-2026 be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

6. STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A report was submitted which provided an update to Members on the activities and decisions of the Cabinet, together with the Forward Plan.

In respect of paragraph 2, Councillor Sweeney congratulated the Council on the success of the events that were put in place to honour the late Queen. The Leader agreed and thanked St Giles' Church for their involvement in the events and noted that the Garden Room at Castle House had been renamed the Queen Elizabeth II room.

On paragraph 3 regarding Walleys Quarry, there were questions as to the reasons behind reduced odours and the resourcing available to deal with the legal case. The Leader said that time would tell if the reduced odours were purely as a result of weather conditions and assured members that the legal case was adequately resourced.

On paragraph 4, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth confirmed that there was every intention to retain a the cost of living reserve in next year's budget. The Leader also confirmed that saving proposals would be brought to a future meeting, following the Efficiency Board process which had already begun. On this paragraph, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth also confirmed that the Council would be involved eligible for funding under the Government's Energy Relief scheme.

On paragraph 5, alternative fuels, the Leader confirmed that the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) was a trial and ultimately the Council would look to investigating hydrogen once the technology existed.

On paragraph 6, the First Quarter Finance and Performance Review report, the Leader stated that 80% of targets being met was excellent but the Council could do even better.

With regard to the Heart of England in Bloom Success, the Leader was asked about community gardening projects. The Leader advised of an event being held at the New Vic Theatre celebrating community involvement in Britain in Bloom. Councillor Gorton was invited to speak with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Heritage or the Executive Director for Sustainable Environment with ideas they could be tied in with the Borough's 850th anniversary celebrations next year.

The Leader was also asked about the award for the Grosvenor Roundabout and agreed that retiling the walls, improved lighting, CCTV and returning of the seating had much improved this area.

Resolved: That the Statement of the Leader of the Council be received and noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

7. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Reports were submitted for the Committees that had met since the last Council meeting.

A verbal update was given by the Chair of the Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee. There had been two sittings of the Committee since the last Council meeting. The first was a Call-In on the Local Plan and there were no changes to the previous recommendations.

The next meeting saw a full review of the Council's recycling service and all Members present congratulated the service and the employees within it for their outstanding work.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

8. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Written reports were submitted for the Committees that had met since the last Council meeting.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

9. MOTIONS OF MEMBERS

Three Motions were received.

The first Motion concerned Standing up for Responsible Tax Conduct, proposed by Councillor Stubbs and seconded by Councillor Brown.

Following a debate on the substantive motion, a named vote was taken.

Council - 28/09/22

ADCOCK	N	GROCOTT	Y	STUBBS	Y
ALLPORT	Y	HEESOM	N	SWEENEY	N
BARKER	N	HOLLAND	N	J TAGG	N
BEESTON	Y	HUTCHISON	N	S TAGG	N
BETTLEY-SMITH	ABSENT	JOHNSON	N	TALBOT	ABSENT
BROCKIE	Y	D JONES	Y	J WARING	N
BROWN	Y	S JONES	N	P WARING	N
BRYAN	N	LAWLEY	Y	WHIELDON	N
BURNETT	N	MOFFATT	ABSENT	G WHITE	N
CRISP	N	NORTHCOTT	N	S WHITE	N
DYMOND	Y	PANTER	N	WILKES	N
EDGINGTON-PLUNKETT	Y	PARKER	N	G WILLIAMS	Y
FEAR	N	REECE	Y	J WILLIAMS	Y
FOX-HEWITT	Y	RICHARDS	Y	WRIGHT	Y
GORTON	Y	SKELDING	N		

In Favour (Y)- 17

Against (N)- 24

Abstain – 0

The Motion fell.

[Watch the debate here](#)

The second Motion concerned Fire and Rehire proposed by Councillor Dave Jones and seconded by Councillor Fox-Hewitt.

Following a debate on the substantive motion, a named vote was taken:

ADCOCK	N	GROCOTT	Y	STUBBS	Y
---------------	---	----------------	---	---------------	---

ALLPORT	Y	HEESOM	N	SWEENEY	N
BARKER	N	HOLLAND	N	J TAGG	N
BEESTON	Y	HUTCHISON	N	S TAGG	N
BETTLEY-SMITH	ABSENT	JOHNSON	ABSENT	TALBOT	ABSENT
BROCKIE	Y	D JONES	Y	J WARING	N
BROWN	Y	S JONES	N	P WARING	N
BRYAN	N	LAWLEY	Y	WHIELDON	N
BURNETT	N	MOFFATT	ABSENT	G WHITE	N
CRISP	N	NORTHCOTT	N	S WHITE	N
DYMOND	Y	PANTER	N	WILKES	N
EDGINGTON-PLUNKETT	Y	PARKER	N	G WILLIAMS	Y
FEAR	N	REECE	Y	J WILLIAMS	Y
FOX-HEWITT	Y	RICHARDS	Y	WRIGHT	Y
GORTON	Y	SKELDING	N		

In Favour (Y)- 17

Against (N)- 23

Abstain – 0

The Motion fell.

[Watch the debate here](#)

The Third Motion concerned the Local Electricity Bill, proposed by Councillor Simon Tagg and seconded by Councillor Adcock.

Following a debate on the substantive motion, a vote was taken and carried unanimously.

[Watch the debate here](#)

10. **QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Councillor Wendy Brockie asked:

With particular reference to the problems with anti-social behaviour, drug abuse and related criminality in Newcastle Town Centre, could assurance be given by the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing that full, measurable pressure would be asserted upon the Police and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire to address the shortcomings of the services as they affected Newcastle under Lyme.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing stated that creating a vibrant and inviting town centre had been a priority of this administration for the past four years and would continue to be so. Whilst the town centre did suffer to some extent from rough sitters, addressing the challenges was not purely a matter for the police. The Council had employed two street marshalls who had been in post for over a year. There was also a new Town Centre Ranger who was visible around town.

Consultations had been carried out on Public Space Protection Orders for the Town Centre and a report would be taken to the Licensing and Public Protection Committee on 18 October.

The new policing model had seen a significant increase in officers on the ground with a clear priority on town centre issues. The Portfolio Holder was confident that the new policing model and the continuation of the strong partnership working with the Council, tangible improvement would be delivered.

Councillor Brockie then asked:

Could the Portfolio Holder agree that significant monitoring of the local situation regarding offender management, on which the recent inspection of the service had rendered offender management inadequate. Could the Portfolio Holder assure everyone that the secure monitoring, currently in place would be continued and upscaled in order to ensure that the lives of residents and the future chances to whom better support services would make a difference, was continued.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the majority of the supplementary question had been answered in her previous response but reiterated that she would continue to put pressure on the Police and Crime Commissioner through her involvement with the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

Councillor Brockie asked a further question:

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing was asked if she could provide assurance that the concerns of residents about safe parking in their streets, including the pursuit of infringement where they occurred would be supported with a suitable allocation of resources.

The Leader stated that this was a County Council matter and asked that Councillor Brockie contact him after the meeting to be put in touch with the County Council.

Councillor Brockie asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth to provide assurance that repairs and renovations to the shops in Merrial Street, particularly number 6 and nearby properties on that side would be visibly costed and that the future of the buildings would be clarified in order to reassure proprietors and encourage potential businesses to occupy premises in the area.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed that everything had been costed on that street.

Councillor Mike Stubbs asked:

In light of the recent inspections of both Staffordshire Fire and Rescue and Staffordshire Police, which had found both services inadequate in a number of areas and consequently saw HMI issue improvement notices on both services, could the Leader inform Council what measures had been taken since the publication of the very concerning reports to ensure the communities of Newcastle, Kidsgrove and villages inbetween were kept safe.

The Leader stated that regular meetings had been held with Ben Adams about local policing matters, particularly the new policing model that was rolling out across the Borough. The Leader also held monthly meetings with the local Police Commander, John Owen. The Commander had been very proactive on issues relating to the town centre and issues across the Borough. Since the new model had been introduced, there had been a 30% reduction in reported incidents. The Police had also issued a number of Section 35 dispersal notices, prohibiting certain individuals from entering particular areas for up to 48 hours.

[Watch the debate here](#)

11. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

12. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

13. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

There was no confidential business.

**Mayor - Councillor Gillian Burnett
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 9.06 pm