

Public Document Pack



PLEASE NOTE THAT PRAYERS WILL BE HELD AT 6.50PM BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE MAYOR REQUESTS THAT ANY MEMBER WISHING TO PARTICIPATE IN PRAYERS BE IN ATTENDANCE BY NO LATER THAN 6.45PM.

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the Borough Council of Newcastle-under-Lyme to be held in the **Queen Elizabeth II & Astley Rooms - Castle House, Barracks Road, Newcastle, Staffs. ST5 1BL** on **Wednesday, 25th September, 2024** at **7.00 pm**.

B U S I N E S S

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest from Members on items contained within this agenda.

3 MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 16)

To consider the Minutes of the previous meeting(s)

4 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5 ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 (Pages 17 - 20)

6 WALLEYS QUARRY COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY REPORT (To Follow)

7 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 (Pages 21 - 32)

8 STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (To Follow)

To receive a statement by the Leader of the Council on the activities and decisions of Cabinet and items included on the Forward Plan.

9 REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (To Follow)

Written reports are attached for the following:

- a) Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee
- b) Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee
- c) Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee

10 REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES (To Follow)

Written reports are attached for the following:

- a) Planning Committee
- b) Licensing and Public Protection Committee

11 MOTIONS OF MEMBERS (Pages 33 - 34)

A motion has been received regarding winter fuel payments.

12 QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS (To Follow)

13 RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

To receive from Members any petitions which they wish to present to the Council.

14 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any communications which pursuant to Section B4, Rule 9 of the constitution are, in the opinion of the Mayor, of an urgent nature and to pass thereon such resolutions as may be deemed necessary.

15 DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following report(s) as it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs contained within Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Yours faithfully



Chief Executive

NOTICE FOR COUNCILLORS

1. Fire/Bomb Alerts

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, leave the building immediately, following the fire exit signs.

Fire exits are to be found at the side of the room leading into Queens Gardens.

On exiting the building Members, Officers and the Public must assemble at the statue of Queen Victoria. DO NOT re-enter the building until advised to by the Controlling Officer.

2. Mobile Phones

Please switch off all mobile phones before entering the Council Chamber.

3. Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion other than those listed in Procedure Rule 14 must reach the Chief Executive ten clear days before the relevant Meeting of the Council. Further information on Notices of Motion can be found in Section B5, Rule 4 of the Constitution of the Council.

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

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The Mayor made no formal announcements.

4. NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 2040

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning - Councillor Fear introduced a report seeking approval for the Final Draft Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Local Plan 2040 and to carry out consultation. Should no matters be raised during the consultation, it was recommended that the Plan be submitted to the Secretary of State for formal examination.

Councillor Fear advised that without a Local Plan in place the Borough would be vulnerable to predatory development and also would run the risk of having a plan written by the Government.

The report was to approve the Draft Local Plan to be sent out for an 8 week consultation with a suite of supporting documents and, following the consultation if a material impact arose, the plan would be brought back to Council for further debate. If no impacts arose then the draft plan, along with the verbatim and unredacted comments made upon it, would be sent to an independent planning inspector who would have the final say on the soundness of the plan or make changes to it.

Councillor Fear stated that if the Council did not have a plan in place by June, 2025 the process would have to start all over again.

The draft plan required developers to build up to 30% of affordable homes, to respect local heritage, consider health impacts of development and increase bio-diversity. It defended public green spaces and would create a third country park.

The Leader seconded the motion and welcomed the reaching of this stage of the draft plan for the Borough. Planning Officers were thanked for the work that they had undertaken to pull the plan together.

Councillor Dave Jones introduced an amendment to the report outlining issues that the Labour Group had identified with the recommendations.

Following a debate on the amendment, a named vote was taken.

ADCOCK	N	GORTON	Y	RICHARDS	Y
ALLPORT	Y	GROCOTT	Y	SKELDING	N
BARKER	N	HEESOM	N	STUBBS	Y
BEESTON	ABSENT	HOLLAND	N	SWEENEY	N
BERRISFORD	N	HUTCHISON	N	J TAGG	N
BETTLEY-SMITH	N	JOHNSON	N	S TAGG	N
BROCKIE	ABSENT	D JONES	Y	J WARING	N
BROWN	Y	S JONES	N	P WARING	N
BRYAN	N	LAWLEY	Y	WHIELDON	N
BURNETT-FAULKNER	N	LEWIS	Y	WHITMORE	N
CRISP	N	MOSS	Y	WILKES	N

DYMOND	Y	NORTHCOTT	N	G WILLIAMS	Y
EDGINGTON-PLUNKETT	Y	PANTER	N	J WILLIAMS	Y
FEAR	N	PARKER	N	WRIGHT	ABSENT
FOX-HEWITT	Y	REECE	Y		

In Favour (Y) – 16

Against (N) –25

Abstain – 0

The motion to amend the recommendations fell and a debate then took place on the original motion.

Councillor Holland, at the recent Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee, had asked what was thought to be of concern with the plan and the response was that the new Government would want to see more development and growth than the Council had planned for. Councillor Holland referred to Policies included in the plan which benefited the Borough and its residents.

Councillor Skelding stated that he wanted to see economic growth in the Borough and the draft plan delivered that.

Councillor Stubbs expressed concerns stating that there were several critical issues with the plan at this stage including the lack of consultation and community engagement which, he stated, the UK Planning Inspectorate often cite as a significant reason for refusal at the Regulation 19 stage. Councillor Stubbs added that the proposed plan raised environmental concerns and that the proposed developments would place pressure on existing infrastructure.

Councillor Bettley-Smith referred to a point raised earlier in the meeting regarding the green belt being lost. The plan promoted opportunities for walking , cycling and horse riding. There was also the tree planting schemes taking place across the Borough.

Councillor Adcock referred to gains within the draft plan, including allowing the Council to designate areas that it wanted to protect.

Councillor Edgington-Plunkett queried whether any major risks had been identified during the consultation process to date.

Councillor Dave Jones stated that the draft plan aimed to take land out of the green belt for development.

Councillor Northcott referred to a number of large estates in Loggerheads that had been built in the absence of a local plan and therefore the Council had been unable to resist development of those sites.

*The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8.22pm
The meeting reconvened at 8.30pm.*

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Councillor Northcott stated that there had been frustration from members at the Planning Committee when deliberating on applications without reference to a local plan. He was pleased that there was now a policy (PSP 6) in the draft plan that referred to the health and wellbeing of residents of the Borough.

In summing up, Councillor Fear first called for a named vote on this item. He stated that the current Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced that there would be mandatory housing targets imposed across the country. The calculations for housing contained within the draft plan had been run with the standard methodology as recommended by the National Planning Framework. No plan did not mean no development – it meant that the Council lost control over development.

Reference was made to paragraph 3.18, which Councillor Fear felt was really sad. It read ‘employees that live in the Borough tend to earn less than across the region or country’ and Councillor Fear was proud that the draft plan was promoting employment opportunities.

The Leader endorsed all of the comments made by his Group. There had not been an up to date Local Plan in the Borough since 2003. The Council withdrew from the Joint Local Plan in 2021 as it was being tied into city size housing growth figures. The two Authorities were also moving in different directions.

The draft plan would allow the Council to protect the green spaces under its ownership, some of which had already been improved with tree and wildflower planting. Brownfield sites were being prioritised for housing development including the Ryecroft and Midway car park sites. Third party landowners would be able to put land into the plan, which would be assessed on its merits.

A named vote was taken:

ADCOCK	Y	GORTON	N	RICHARDS	N
ALLPORT	N	GROCOTT	N	SKELDING	Y
BARKER	Y	HEESOM	Y	STUBBS	N
BEESTON	ABSENT	HOLLAND	Y	SWEENEY	Y
BERRISFORD	Y	HUTCHISON	Y	J TAGG	Y
BETTLEY-SMITH	Y	JOHNSON	Y	S TAGG	Y
BROCKIE	ABSENT	D JONES	N	J WARING	Y
BROWN	N	S JONES	Y	P WARING	Y
BRYAN	Y	LAWLEY	N	WHIELDON	Y
BURNETT-FAULKNER	Y	LEWIS	N	WHITMORE	Y
CRISP	Y	MOSS	N	WILKES	Y
DYMOND	N	NORTHCOTT	Y	G WILLIAMS	N

EDGINGTON-PLUNKETT	N	PANTER	Y	J WILLIAMS	N
FEAR	Y	PARKER	Y	WRIGHT	ABSENT
FOX-HEWITT	N	REECE	N		

In Favour (Y) – 25

Against (N) –16

Abstain – 0

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the Final Draft Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Local Plan 2040 (at Regulation 19 stage), the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment and supporting documentation be approved for public consultation in line with the approved Local Development Scheme;
 - (ii) That the Service Director (Planning), in consultation with the Strategic Planning Portfolio Holder, be authorised to make any necessary minor typographical changes and modifications to the Final Draft Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Local Plan 2040, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment prior to consultation;
 - (iii) Subject to the outcome of consultation, and if no matters are raised that materially impact upon the Plan strategy, the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Strategic Planning Portfolio Holder, be authorised to submit the Final Draft Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Local Plan 2040 and supporting documents to the Secretary of State for formal examination by the end of 2024;
 - (iv) That the Service Director (Planning) be authorised to write to the appointed Inspector(s) at the start of the examination of the Final Draft Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Local Plan 2040 requesting them, under section 20(7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to recommend any main modifications necessary to ensure the Plan sound and legally compliant.

At 8.52pm the Mayor allowed a few minutes for the public gallery to clear. At this point, Councillors' Bettley-Smith and Wilkes also left the meeting.

[Watch the debate here](#)

5. URGENT DECISION NOTIFICATIONS - COMMITTEE SEAT ALLOCATIONS

The Leader introduced a report notifying Members of decisions taken by the Interim Chief Executive and Chief Executive respectively, under urgency powers, on 28 May and 16 July, 2024.

Following changes to political proportionality there was a need to review committee seat allocations.

Councillor Dave Jones advised of changes to the Labour group membership on the Planning Committee as follows:

Committee Members would be Councillors' Brown, Gorton, G Williams and J Williams. Councillors' Brockie and D Jones would become substitutes and Councillor Lewis would replace Councillor Stubbs as a substitute.

Resolved: That the decisions taken be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

6. **STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The Leader, Councillor Simon Tagg presented the statement that had been circulated about the activities and decisions made by Cabinet to allow questions and comments. Reference was made to the Council's Annual Report and the Leader stated that this Council 'made things happen' and this Statement reflected that.

Questions were raised and responses were provided as follows.

On paragraph 2 – Walleys Quarry Update

Councillor Adcock welcomed the activity taking place in respect of Walleys Quarry, including a letter being sent out to the new minister and it was hoped that legal action would finally be approved. It was welcomed that Newcastle's new MP, Adam Jogee had already raised the issue in parliament. The Inquiry held on 23rd July at Castle House had been both productive and useful and was a good opportunity to hear from those most affected. The Leader was asked if he agreed that local campaigners, doctors and the Council were, at significant cost, having to pick up the pieces after the failings of other agencies designed to protect them.

The Leader thanked all members of the Committee of Inquiry and stated that the testimonies of residents had been heartfelt. The Leader agreed that the operator and Environment Agency needed to be held to account for their failings. There was enough evidence to show that there had been failings which would be captured in the final report and then see how that could be used, with Government and to look at ways of trying to get a Public Inquiry.

Councillor Fear asked the Leader if he agreed that yesterday's Inquiry was very informative but also very concerning and if it would be possible for a link to the recording to be sent to the relevant secretary of state so that he may be brought up to date with what had been happening.

The Leader stated that this was a good suggestion and was sure that it could be done.

On paragraph 3 – Town Deal and Future High Street Fund Update

Councillor John Williams asked the Leader for clarification regarding the Ryecroft site – whether it would be houses or apartments.

The Leader stated that houses would be delivered by Aspire Housing and that the social element of those was key.

Councillor Stubbs asked the Leader if the newly elected MP's for Newcastle and Stoke on Trent North had been written to, invited to the Town Boards, if not when it would take place.

The Leader stated that Adam Jogee MP was coming to see him on Friday next and would be invited to the Town Board meetings. The Leader was yet to have a meeting with Mr Williams MP and once that took place he would ensure that he too would have his place on the Board.

Councillor Stubbs, referring to the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 27 June where he challenged the Interim Chief Executive with the lack of physical progress achieved with regard to the Kidsgrove Town Deal over the last six months. He had been assured that all activity had been carried out behind the scenes with a resolution being reached and assurances now in place. The latest update was that a progress report had been received. The Leader was asked if he believed that this was ample progress and was there any news of planning permissions, procurement exercises, contractors or any intended works.

Councillor Paul Waring stated that significant progress had been made regarding the shared services hub. It had been granted planning permission and tender documents were in the process of being prepared. The delay had solely been down to an insurance issue in relation to the mining works that had taken place historically. The railway station was progressing and were also at a stage to prepare the tender documents.

There was an open day on 27 July at Kidsgrove Town Hall with various representatives and plans of proposed buildings. A number of changes of the road network were being considered for the centre of Kidsgrove to enable a more efficient passage of traffic.

The Leader welcomed Kidsgrove Town Council being the leading body on the hub and wished them success.

Councillor Lewis asked about progress with the new market stalls. Initially there had been a lot of progress but seemed to have slowed down.

The Leader advised that the Council was awaiting the delivery of planters for the central part. In the long term, there would be pitches marked out for temporary market stalls as and when required. When stalls were not pitched there, it would be a potential entertainment space. There would also be nipper parking spaces for people making quick visits into town.

Councillor Parker asked The Leader if he agreed that it was important for the new Labour Government to honour the previous Government's commitment to provide further funding to enable levelling up to continue.

The Leader agreed, stating that at the election the new Government had announced 100 towns, of which Newcastle was included, that would receive more levelling up funding and the Government was expected to honour that.

Councillor Whieldon was delighted to see the development of the new Keele University hub in the town centre which would draw younger people into the town.

The Leader welcomed the hub which would hopefully be open by the autumn.
On paragraph 4 – Sustainable Environment Update

Councillor Fox-Hewitt referred to the new piloted Grassland Management Strategy and stated that there had been a number of issues where grass was no longer being cut at some locations in Bradwell, notably Bradwell Crematorium field. The Leader was asked if he would consider placing the Strategy in abeyance and cut the grass as it had been previously. Then to undertake resident and member consultations prior to any decision to recommence with the Policy in Bradwell Ward.

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment stated that the Grassland Management Strategy, at a recent meeting of the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE), was discussed in a presentation by officers, to over 300 councils and were congratulated on the Plan. The Plan was currently in phase 1 where, after two years there would be a consultation where a review would be conducted to review the social and environmental impacts.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed that he had met with Councillor Fox-Hewitt and had since been corresponding by email to some residents who wanted some grass to be cut. This had now been organised whereby a section had been cleared at the top, centre and bottom of the land to facilitate ball games.

Councillor Parker made reference to the Lyme Valley Parkway and asked the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment pass on thanks to the staff for their hard work in maintaining the Council's wonderful green spaces.

The Portfolio Holder stated that there were 6 green spaces in the Borough that were Green Flag award winners for 2024.

Councillor Edgington-Plunkett asked the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment if it was correct that a number of mowers had been purchased at a lower price than what was recommended and also, if several mowers were currently unusable due to damage.

The Portfolio Holder stated that due to the short notice of awarding the urban grass cutting contract, a rapid recruitment process was undertaken to recruit seasonal and permanent staff. In addition, additional plant and equipment was identified to deliver the contract efficiently and to the required standard. Anticipated ride on mowers were not delivered or available for road use until 18 June. Up to that date the contract had been delivered with older, less reliable machinery which resulted in increased unavailability and no supplier was able to provide short term rentals. Higher than average rainfall also impacted the grass cutting programme.

Councillor Reece referred to grass cutting at Porthill Church where grass cuttings had been left on the pavement and road.

Councillor Stubbs had received correspondence from the Kidsgrove and Staffordshire Lads & Dads organisations noting that the latter had approached the Council to request a meeting regarding grass cutting at Birchenwood. The lease required them to cut the pitches but part of the grant which they got from the Football Foundation required that the pitches had to be of a certain quality. Due to grass being cut around the bowl it was felt that there was a genuine risk that Kidsgrove Lads and Dads could potentially lose their grant or have to stop using Birchenwood. Assurance was sought that this would be dealt with in a speedy manner.

The Leader agreed that this needed to be taken up urgently and asked the Portfolio Holder to speak with officers and report back to Councillor Stubbs.

Councillor John Williams invited the Portfolio Holder to meet him in the Cross Heath ward to view grassland that was two foot high in the Douglas Road area and also at Rogers Avenue where workmen had been but left it untidy.

The Leader stated that there needed to be some balance where long grass was good for wildlife but at the same time there needed to be tidy edges and pathways.

Councillor Lewis asked about concerns raised regarding St James' Church in Audley where the war graves required the grass to be cut to access them. The grounds had now been noted as unsafe and unsteady for the Council to do the grass cutting.

The Leader stated that information would be sought on this and passed to Councillor Lewis. In the past, Councillor Wilkes had arranged for sheep to be put into the churchyard to graze and bring the grass down naturally.

The Portfolio Holder stated that he was aware of this and had asked officers to investigate.

Councillor Dave Jones referred to two areas at the bottom of Church Bank in Keele where grass had been cut and the cuttings deposited in the highway and at one point blocked the grids. He asked for assurance that future grass cuttings would be cleared away.

The Leader stated that due to the spring weather it had been a national problem where the grass had grown longer and had created a backlog. The Council had now caught up and the Council's Service Director for Sustainable Environment would ensure that grass cuttings were blown back onto the grass.

On paragraph 5 – Borough Tree Planting Strategy – Phase 6

Councillor Moss stated that a lot of trees were lost near to Acacia Avenue in Knutton due to the extreme weather earlier in the year. He asked if there were any plans to replace the felled trees.

Councillor Gill Williams asked the Leader if trees that were being damaged by the tractor mowers being used in Cross Heath would be replaced.

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment stated that if they were highway trees, they would be covered by the County Council. He would be happy to meet with Councillor Moss to establish the ownership of the trees. Any trees owned by the Borough would be replaced where appropriate.

Councillor Stubbs referred to trees planted in Talke and asked the Leader if he would be as frustrated as himself that two thirds of the trees could be lost in a sea of dock leaves that had taken hold on Coalpit Hill. A guarantee was sought that the invasive spread of dock leaf plants would be removed.

The Portfolio Holder was not aware of the overgrown dock leaf plants but he would be speaking with the officers and would look into getting the dock leaves removed and the area restored.

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Councillor Holland asked the Leader for assurance that, with the backing of an adopted Local Plan, the designation of a carbon capture zone and the planting of trees would be an effective protection for green spaces from a government that may wish to see the compulsory sale of assets by local authorities in the future.

The Leader agreed and stated that part of the policy within the local plan was to protect the carbon capture areas in the future. The Council would protect those areas as much as they could.

On paragraph 7 – Staffordshire Leaders Board

Councillor Holland stated that Stoke on Trent City Council was joining the Leaders Board and asked the Leader for assurance that, if Stoke on Trent would be represented, the Leaders Board would work constructively as a partnership of equals to secure greater devolution and more influence/investments for the districts of the County and would emphatically reject and resist any imposition of a directly elected Mayor or similar devolution type.

The Leader confirmed that that would be the case. He welcomed Stoke City Council being involved in the Leaders Board. It was a board of equals though with different powers, from across the authorities and geography of the county. The Leaders Board had discussed devolution of powers and money which would be a partnership of the County, City and Districts to enable authorities to be where they wanted to be with areas such as education skills or transport.

On paragraph 8 – Delivery of Electric Vehicle Charging through the County Council's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Funding

Councillor Crisp asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth how many electric charging points there would be in the new Castle Car Park.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed that there were 22 spaces.

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment advised Members that a further seven charging points had been installed at the Knutton Lane depot.

[Watch the debate here](#)

7. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The reports for the Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee, Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee and Finance Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee had been circulated with the agenda.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

[Watch the debate here](#)

8. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Reports for the Audit and Standards Committee, Licensing and Public Protection Committee and the Planning Committee were attached to the agenda.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

[Watch the debate here](#)

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

Question from Councillor Jacqueline Brown to the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning

“Having attended a meeting on Wed 17th July at Silverdale WMC organised by Acre Allotments Association, could the borough council explain the reasoning behind the selection of Traveller and Gypsy Site 8 (T&G 8) in the amendment to Draft Borough Local Plan 2024 as submitted to the Special Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee on 11 July as apparently, suitable for a Traveller and Gypsy site for 5 pitches?”

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning stated that he would supply a written answer to Councillor Brown.

Councillor Brown asked a supplementary question:

“On Monday afternoon (22 July) a site specific selection report was downloaded onto the Council website which mentioned some of the reasons why the site was selected but there were issues with transport, accessibility, natural resources, waste, health and wellbeing. In view of that, Councillor Brown and her residents were surprised that the site had been selected so a full answer to the question would be appreciated”.

The Portfolio Holder assured that Councillor Brown would receive such an answer. He stated that the site had been the product of a long and rigorous look at a large number of sites across the Borough. It was pointed out that the Council was required to look at projected future need for the travelling community. It was a projected form of need so it was quite possible that it would not be required. That would mean that the site would not be developed in the immediate future and if problems presented themselves there would be time for a useful resolution.

Question from Councillor Richard Gorton to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment

“Will the Portfolio Holder confirm when the abandoned waste bins and other miscellaneous discarded items currently littering part of Orchard Street, Wolstanton will be removed? Despite requests from Wolstanton councillors last month and assurances by Street Scene that the bins and rubbish would be removed, as at 11.00 am yesterday (23rd July), no action appears to have been taken”.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the neighbourhood delivery team were aware of the ongoing issues with discarded rubbish and bins being left out at Orchard Street. It was believed that the area in question was privately owned which would mean that the landlords were responsible for removing the waste. However, as a gesture of goodwill the neighbourhood ranger had been periodically visiting the site and clearing away what he could. Also, engagement had begun with residents to raise awareness of their individual responsibilities in relation to presenting their domestic bins and returning them to their properties after collection. If the problem persisted, the neighbourhood delivery team would consider enforcement action if appropriate but it

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was hoped that the majority of residents would want to do their bit in keeping the area clean and tidy.

Councillor Gorton asked a supplementary question:

“Reassured by the Portfolio Holders answer but it was not just the bins. There was also a lot of miscellaneous rubbish up there. Would that be cleared?”.

The Portfolio Holder stated that he would pass the comments on to the officers tomorrow and arrange for the neighbourhood delivery team and neighbourhood ranger to visit. It was a privately owned area so there may be difficulty and may even need to look at the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act and do a community protection order against the landlord.

[Watch the debate here](#)

10. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

No petitions were handed in.

11. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

12. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

There were no confidential items.

**Mayor - Councillor Barry Panter
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 9.55 pm



NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

Corporate Leadership Team's Report to Council

25 September 2024


Report Title: Annual Report 2023-2024

Submitted by: Cabinet

Portfolios: One Council, People & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision NO</u>
<p>To provide Council with the opportunity to consider the Council's Annual Report for 2023-2024, which provides a high-level summary of the progress made during the second year of the Council's 2022-2026 Council Plan. The Annual Report also provides contextual information on the financial challenges and operating environment, which have informed the Council's priorities.</p>	
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive and consider the Council's Annual Report for 2023-2024 	
<p><u>Reasons</u></p> <p>The publication of an Annual Report is accepted good practice and a key element in the Council's governance and assurance framework providing transparency to stakeholders on progress made, the handling of key risks, the financial outlook of the authority and evidence-based strategy development.</p>	
<p>1.</p>	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>1.1 As part of the Council's focus on performance management this Annual Report provides an opportunity to review the progress and achievements made against the Council's stated objectives and to use this intelligence to understand what still needs to be done and what new challenges lie ahead. The Annual Report does this by including the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding our Communities - presenting a place profile for the Borough to inform decision-making ➤ Listening to our Communities – detailing the consultation and engagement programme for the previous year and how this feedback has been used to inform service improvements ➤ The Financial Context - outlining the financial challenges facing the authority over the course of its Medium Term Financial Strategy and how we manage risks ➤ Our Vision for the Borough – as set out in the 2022-2026 Council Plan ➤ Our Achievements - looking at performance against our own targets and trend data ➤ Value for Money Services - analysing our performance and costs against national and regional comparisons

	<p>➤ External Assessments - providing objectivity and assurance through the reporting of external assessments of the Council's work and any awards received in recognition of our achievements on behalf of our communities</p> <p>1.2 In summary, the Annual Report provides assurance as to the progress made during the second year of the 2022-2026 Council Plan with 72% of all targets met in 2023-2024 and sound progress on our priority projects. The Report acknowledges the funding gap outlined within the 5-year Medium Term Financial Strategy and the plans to address this and the hugely positive findings of the Corporate Peer Challenge progress visit from the LGA (Local Government Association) in January 2024, which recognised the 'energy' and 'ambition' of the Council and the progress being made.</p> <p>1.3 The Annual Report will be published on the Council's website as an important stakeholder document written for councillors, partners and employees and will remain a central element in the Council's annual performance management framework.</p>
2.	<p><u>Proposal</u></p>
	<p>That Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and consider the Council's new Annual report for 2023-2024
3.	<p><u>Legal and Statutory Implications</u></p>
	<p>3.1 None from this report.</p>
4.	<p><u>Equality Impact Assessment</u></p>
	<p>4.1 Local authorities have a responsibility to meet the Public Sector Duty of the Equality Act 2010. The Act gives people the right not to be treated less favourably due to protected characteristics. There are no differential equality issues arising directly from this report.</p>
5.	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
	<p>5.1 None from this report.</p>
6.	<p><u>Major Risks</u></p>
	<p>6.1 No new major risks have been identified through the process of developing the Annual Report.</p>
7.	<p><u>UN Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Change Implications</u></p>
	
8.	<p><u>Key Decision Information</u></p>

	8.1 This is not a key decision.
9.	<u>Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions</u>
	9.1 The Annual Report was considered by Cabinet on September 10, 2024.
10.	<u>List of Appendices</u>
	10.1 Annual Report 2023-2024 https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/downloads/download/858/annual-report-2023---2024
11.	<u>Background Papers</u>
	11.1 Working papers held by the Strategic Hub Team.

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NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO

Council
25 September 2024

Report Title: Treasury Management Annual Report 2023/24

Submitted by: Service Director for Finance (Section 151 Officer)

Portfolios: Finance, Town Centres and Growth

Ward(s) affected: All Indirectly

Purpose of the Report

To receive the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2023/24 and to review the Treasury Management activity for this period.

Recommendation

That the Treasury Management Report for 2023/24 be noted.

Reasons

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management recommends that Members should be informed on Treasury Management activities at least twice a year. Council resolved that the Audit and Standards Committee would monitor and oversee the delivery of the Treasury Management Strategy through the receipt of half yearly and year end Treasury Management Reports. Following submission to the Audit and Standards Committee the Treasury Management Annual Report will be reported to Full Council.

1. Background

- 1.1 The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management recommends that Members should be informed on Treasury Management activities at least twice a year. It was resolved that the Audit and Standards Committee would monitor and oversee the delivery of the Treasury Management Strategy through the receipt of half yearly and year end Treasury Management Reports.
- 1.2 This report therefore ensures that this Council is embracing Best Practice in accordance with CIPFA's recommendations in the CIPFA Code of Practice.
- 1.3 Treasury Management operations are carried out in accordance with policies laid down in the currently approved Treasury Management Policy Statement, backed up by approved Treasury Management Practices and Schedules thereto, and the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2023/24 approved by Council on 15 February 2023.
- 1.4 The Council has been provided with Treasury Management Advisory services for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 by Arlingclose Ltd.

2. **Issues**

2.1 The Treasury Management Annual Report for 2023/24 is attached at Appendix 1. The economic background and economic forecast included in the report has been provided by the Council's Treasury Management Advisors, Arlingclose Ltd.

3. **Proposal**

3.1 That the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2023/24 be noted.

4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 In line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

5. **Options Considered**

5.1 There are no specific options to consider.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management recommends that Members should be informed on Treasury Management activities at least twice a year. It was resolved that the Audit and Standards Committee would monitor and oversee the delivery of the Treasury Management Strategy through the receipt of half yearly and year end Treasury Management Reports.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 Not applicable.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the report.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 Treasury Management is a major area of risk for the Council in that large amounts of money are dealt with on a daily basis and there are a number of limits and indicators, which must be complied with.

9.2 The overriding consideration in determining where to place the Council's surplus funds is to safeguard the Council's capital. Within this constraint the aim is to maximise the return on capital.

9.3 Operational procedures, coupled with monitoring arrangements, are in place to minimise the risk of departures from the approved strategy.

10. **UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

10.1 The Treasury Management Annual Report for 2023/24 supports UNSG and Climate Change objectives through supporting sustainable cities and communities through the correct use of public monies.



11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 Not applicable.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 Council 24 February 2010 – Adoption of CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 Appendix 1, Treasury Management Annual Report 2023/24.

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice,

14.2 Council's Treasury Management Policy Statement,

14.3 Council's Treasury Management Strategy,

14.4 Local Government Act 2003,

14.5 Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003,

14.6 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's revised Guidance on Local Government and Investments and Statutory Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision

14.7 Arlingclose Ltd. Treasury Management Outturn Report template

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TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This Council is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual Treasury Management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for the financial year 2023/24. This report meets the requirements of both the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 was approved at a meeting on 15 February 2023. The Council has invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remains central to the Council's treasury management strategy.

The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management was adopted by this Council on 24 February 2010; this was updated in November 2011 and updated further in December 2017 and December 2021.

The primary requirements of the Code are as follows:

1. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Council's treasury management activities.
2. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
3. Receipt by the Council of an annual treasury management strategy report (including the annual investment strategy) for the year ahead and an annual review report of the previous year.
4. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions.
5. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of the treasury management strategy to a specific named body which in this Council is the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee.
6. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of treasury management performance to a specific named body which in this Council is the Audit and Standards Committee, a midyear and year-end review report is received by this Committee.

Treasury Management in this context is defined as:

"The management of the local authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

The purpose of this report is to meet one of the above requirements of the CIPFA Code, namely the annual review report of Treasury Management activities, for the financial year 2023/24.

The regulatory environment places responsibility on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is therefore important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by members.

This Council has complied with the requirement under the Code to give prior scrutiny to the annual review report by reporting this to the Audit and Standards Committee prior to it being reported to Council.

2. THIS ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT COVERS

- The Council's treasury position as at 31 March 2024;
- The strategy for 2023/24;
- The economy in 2023/24;
- Investment rates in 2023/24;
- Compliance with treasury limits and Prudential Indicators;
- Investment outturn for 2023/24;
- Involvement of Elected Members;
- Other issues.

3. TREASURY POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

The Council's investment position at the beginning and the end of the year was as follows:

	At 31/03/24	Average Return	Average Life (Days)	At 31/03/23	Average Return	Average Life (Days)
Total Debt	£0m	0.00%	0	£0m	0.00%	0
Total Investments	£17.5m	5.19%	16	£17m	4.05%	14

It should be noted that the above table is only a snapshot of the total Investments as at 31 March 2024. Large fluctuations in cash inflows and outflows that occur throughout the month can have an impact on the figure reported.

4. THE STRATEGY FOR 2023/24

The strategy agreed by Council on 15 February 2023 was that:

- The Council may be required to borrow during 2023/24;
- All borrowing would be kept absolutely within the Authorised Limit of £85m and would not normally exceed the Operational Boundary of £75m (although it could for short periods of time be permitted to rise to a figure between £75m and £85m due to variations in cash flow);
- Temporary surpluses which might arise would be invested, either in short term deposits with the Council's various deposit accounts or in money market investments (cash deposits) if the size warranted this and for an appropriate period in order that these sums would be available for use when required;
- The proportions of loans and investments to be at fixed or variable rates were: fixed rate loans to be between 0% and 100% of the total and variable rate to be between 0% and 100% of the total, thus enabling maximum flexibility to take advantage of interest rate trends;
- Long term investments to be permitted as follows: maturing beyond 31/03/24 - £25m, maturing beyond 31/03/25 - £25m, maturing beyond 31/03/26 - £25m;
- The overriding consideration is safeguarding the Council's capital. At all times the risk to the Council will be minimised. Within these constraints, the aim will be to maximise the return on investments; and,
- Forward commitment of funds for investment is permitted in respect of in-house investments, in instances where market conditions warrant it.

5. THE ECONOMY AND INTEREST RATES - narrative supplied by the Council's Treasury Management Advisors – Arlingclose Limited

UK inflation continued to decline from the 8.7% rate seen at the start of 2023/24. By the last quarter of the financial year headline consumer price inflation (CPI) had fallen to 3.4% in February, but was still above the Bank of England's 2% target at the end of the period. The core measure of CPI, i.e. excluding food and energy, also slowed in February to 4.5% from 5.1% in January, a rate that had stubbornly persisted for three consecutive months.

The UK economy entered a technical recession in the second half of 2023, as growth rates of -0.1% and -0.3% respectively were recorded for Q3 and Q4. Over the 2023 calendar year GDP growth only expanded by 0.1% compared to 2022. Of the recent monthly data, the Office for National Statistics reported a rebound in activity with economy expanding 0.2% in January 2024. While the economy may somewhat recover in Q1 2024, the data suggests that prior increases in interest rates and higher price levels are depressing growth, which will continue to bear down on inflation throughout 2024.

Labour market data provided a mixed message for policymakers. Employment and vacancies declined, and unemployment rose to 4.3% (3mth/year) in July 2023. The same month saw the highest annual growth rate of 8.5% for total pay (i.e. including bonuses) and 7.8% for regular pay growth (i.e. excluding bonuses). Thereafter, unemployment began to decline, falling to 3.9% (3mth/year) in January and pay growth also edged lower to 5.6% for total pay and 6.1% for regular pay, but remained above the Bank of England's forecast.

Having begun the financial year at 4.25%, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) increased Bank Rate to 5.25% in August 2023 with a 3-way split in the Committee's voting as the UK economy appeared resilient in the face of the dual headwinds of higher inflation and interest rates. Bank Rate was maintained at 5.25% through to March 2024. The vote at the March was 8-1 in favour of maintaining rates at this level, with the single dissenter preferring to cut rates immediately by 0.25%. Although financial markets shifted their interest rate expectations downwards with expectations of a cut in June, the MPC's focus remained on assessing how long interest rates would need to be restrictive in order to control inflation over the medium term.

In the Bank's quarterly Monetary Policy Report (MPR) released in August 2023 the near-term projection for services price inflation was revised upwards, goods price inflation widespread across products, indicating stronger domestic inflationary pressure with second-round effects in domestic prices and wages likely taking longer to unwind than they did to emerge. In the February 2024 MPR the Bank's expectations for the UK economy were positive for the first half of 2024, with a recovery from the mild recession in the second half of 2023 being gradual. Headline CPI was forecast to dip below the 2% target quicker than previously thought due to declining energy prices, these effects would hold inflation slightly above target for much of the forecast horizon.

Following this MPC meeting, Arlingclose, the Council's treasury adviser, maintained its central view that 5.25% remains the peak in Bank Rate and that interest rates will most likely start to be cut later in the second half of 2024. The risks in the short-term are deemed to be to the downside as a rate cut may come sooner than expected, but then more broadly balanced over the medium term.

The US Federal Reserve also pushed up rates over the period, reaching a peak range of between 5.25-5.50% in August 2023, where it has stayed since. US policymakers have maintained the relatively dovish

stance from the December FOMC meeting and at the meeting in March, economic projections pointed to interest rates being cut by a total of 0.75% in 2024.

Following a similarly sharp upward trajectory, the European Central Bank hiked rates to historically high levels over period, pushing its main refinancing rate to 4.5% in September 2023, where it has remained. Economic growth in the region remains weak, with a potential recession on the cards, but inflation remains sticky and above the ECB's target, putting pressure on policymakers on how to balance these factors.

6. FINANCIAL MARKETS IN 2023/24 – narrative supplied by the Council's Treasury Management Advisors – Arlingclose Limited

Sentiment in financial markets remained uncertain and bond yields continued to be volatile over the year. During the first half of the year, yields rose as interest rates continued to be pushed up in response to rising inflation. From October they started declining again before falling sharply in December as falling inflation and dovish central bank attitudes caused financial markets to expect cuts in interest rates in 2024. When it emerged in January that inflation was stickier than expected and the BoE and the Federal Reserve were data dependent and not inclined to cut rates soon, yields rose once again, ending the period some 50+ bps higher than when it started.

Over the financial year, the 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield rose from 3.44% to peak at 4.75% in August, before then dropping to 3.44% in late December 2023 and rising again to 3.92% (28th March 2024). The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.96% over the period to 31st March.

7. COMPLIANCE WITH TREASURY LIMITS

During the financial year the Council operated within the treasury limits and Prudential Indicators set out in the Council's annual Treasury Strategy Statement. The outturn for the Prudential Indicators is shown in Annex 1.

8. INVESTMENT OUTTURN FOR 2023/24

Internally Managed Investments

The Council manages its investments in-house and during 2023/24 invested with institutions in compliance with the credit worthiness service of the Council's treasury management advisors, Arlingclose Limited.

The Council invested for a range of periods from overnight to up to 81 days during 2023/24, dependent on the Council's cash flows, its interest rate view and the interest rates on offer. 5 of 67 investments made in 2023/24 were for a period of 2 weeks or less. 1 investment was made with the Public Sector Deposit Fund. The remaining 66 investments were deposited in the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility.

In addition, funds were held in the general fund account that the Council has with Lloyds Bank.

Investment Outturn for 2023/24

During 2023/24 an average rate of return of 4.87% was achieved on an average individual investment of £2.147m due to the receipt in advance of Government grants and the interest rate rises referred to in section 5. No target was set for 2023/24 as it was assumed that a net interest payable amount would be required to meet the Council's capital programme. Actual interest income from interest activity amounted to £1.381m.

9. INVOLVEMENT OF ELECTED MEMBERS

Elected members have been involved in the treasury management process during 2023/24 including:

- Scrutiny of the treasury management strategy by the Finance, Assets & Performance Scrutiny Committee prior to being submitted for approval by the Council.
- Scrutiny of treasury management performance by the Audit and Standards Committee through the receipt of a half yearly treasury management report.
- A quarterly budget monitoring and performance report is reported to Cabinet, this contains details of Treasury Management activity undertaken during the quarter.

ANNEX 1: PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

Position/Prudential Indicator		2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Indicator	2023/24 Actual
1	Capital Expenditure	£7.545m	£30.360m	£11.630m
2	Capital Financing Requirement at 31 March *	£10.682m	£26.600m	£10.262m
3	Treasury Position at 31 March:			
	Borrowing	£0	N/A	£0
	Other long term liabilities	£0	N/A	£0
	Total Debt	£0	N/A	£0
	Investments	(£17.0m)	N/A	(£17.5m)
	Net Borrowing	(£17.0m)	N/A	(£17.5m)
4	Authorised Limit (against maximum position)	£0	£85.0m	£0
5	Operational Boundary (against maximum position)	£0	£75.0m	£0
6	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	(3.97%)	3.27%	(5.31%)
7	Upper Limits on Variable Interest Rates (against maximum position)			
	Loans	0%	100%	0%
	Investments	0%	100%	0%
8	Actual External Debt	£0	N/A	£0
9	Principal Funds Invested for Periods Longer than 365 days (against maximum position)	£0	£25.0m	£0

GLOSSARY

CFR – Capital Financing Requirement

The Capital Financing Requirement is the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources.

CIPFA – The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy is the professional body for accountants working in Local Government and other public sector organisations.

CPI – Consumer Price Index

A measure that examines the weighted average of prices of a basket of consumer goods and services. The Consumer Price Index is calculated by taking price changes for each item in the predetermined basket of goods/services and averaging them; the goods are weighted according to their importance. Changes in CPI are used to assess price changes associated with the cost of living.

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

Gross Domestic Product is the market value of all officially recognised final goods and services produced within a country in a given period of time.

BPS – Basis Points

Basis points are a unit of measure used in finance to describe the percentage change in value of a financial instrument. One basis point is equal to 0.01%.

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Conservative Group Motion to Full Council, 25 September 2024

Changes to Winter Fuel Payments and protecting pensioners from fuel poverty

This Council Notes:

- The Government's recent decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment to only pensioners in receipt of means-tested benefits like Pension Credit, as announced by Chancellor Rachel Reeves. This change will cut support from an estimated 26,688 pensioners in the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme.¹
- The outcome of the vote held in the House of Commons on 10 September, in which none of the Borough's three MPs voted to stop this cut.
- The estimated impact of this decision, which Age UK says will mean 2 million pensioners across the UK who badly need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it.
- The significant role that Winter Fuel Payments play in helping older residents of our Loyal and Ancient Borough and across the UK afford heating during the coldest months, preventing 'heat or eat' dilemmas and safeguarding health.
- The compelling criticism from charities, including Age UK and the Countryside Alliance, highlighting the social injustice and potential health risks posed by this sudden policy change.
- The additional strain this decision will place on vulnerable pensioners, many of whom do not claim Pension Credit despite being eligible, further exacerbating their financial hardship.

This Council Believes:

- That the Winter Fuel Payment has been a lifeline for many older people across the UK and that suddenly restricting its availability solely to those on Pension Credit risks leaving many pensioners in financial hardship.
- That thousands of pensioners across our Borough sit just above the cut-off for Pension Credit and will now lose their allowance.
- The decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments, especially with such short notice and without adequate compensatory measures, is deeply unfair and will disproportionately affect the health and well-being of some of our poorest older residents.
- The government's approach fails to consider the administrative barriers and stigma that prevent eligible pensioners from claiming Pension Credit, leaving many without the support they desperately need.
-

^[1] Source: DWP StatXplore -<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/ONSdataset> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/populationofstatepensionageandworkingageandoldagedependencyratiosforlocalauthoritiesandregionsinengland>

This Council Resolves:

- To lead local efforts to promote awareness of Pension Credit uptake through council services and partnerships with local charities and community organisations to ensure that all eligible pensioners in the Borough are supported in claiming their entitlement.
- To ask the Leader and Chief Executive to write jointly to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging a review of the decision to means-test the Winter Fuel Payment and asking the Government to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who do not claim Pension Credit, are protected from fuel poverty.
- To ask the Leader and Chief Executive to jointly write to Adam Jogee MP and the other MPs representing the Borough, calling on them to support campaigns to reverse the Government's decision.
- To commit the Council to signing up to the 'Save the Winter Fuel Payment for Struggling Pensioners' petition being run by Age UK, and circulate details to all Members, offering them the opportunity to sign the petition themselves.

PROPOSER: Cllr Mark Holland

SECONDER: Cllr Simon Tagg