



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, 23rd July, 2025** 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 - 8)

To consider the Minutes of the previous meeting(s)

4 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5 PROJECT APPROVAL FOR THE DECARBONISATION OF THE J2 LEISURE CENTRE FOLLOWING GRANTING OF PHASE 4 PSDS FUNDING (Pages 9 - 16)

6 STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (Pages 17 - 20)

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

7 REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (Pages 21 - 22)

8 REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES (Pages 23 - 26)

9 MOTIONS OF MEMBERS (Pages 27 - 30)

A Motion has been received regarding Walleys Quarry. An amendment to the Motion is also attached.

10 QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS (Pages 31 - 32)

11 RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

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

12 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.

13 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gulman', with a horizontal line underneath.

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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COUNCIL

Wednesday, 14th May, 2025
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

[View the agenda here](#)

[Watch the meeting here](#)

Present: Mayor - Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	Adcock	Grocott	Stubbs
	Allport	Heesom	Sweeney
	Barker MBE	Holland	J Tagg
	Beeston	Fox-Hewitt	S Tagg (Leader)
	Berrisford	Hutchison	Turnock
	Brown	Johnson	J Waring
	Bryan	S Jones	P Waring
	Casey-Hulme	D Jones	Whieldon
	Crisp	Lawley	Whitmore
	Dean	Lewis	Wilkes
	Dymond	Northcott	G Williams
	Edginton-Plunkett	Parker	J Williams
	Fear	Reece	Wright
	Gorton	Richards	

Apologies: Councillor(s) Burnett-Faulkner and Skelding

Officers:	Roger Tait	Service Director - Neighbourhood Delivery
	Gordon Mole	Chief Executive
	Simon McEneny	Deputy Chief Executive
	Anthony Harold	Service Director - Legal & Governance / Monitoring Officer
	Sarah Wilkes	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer
	Geoff Durham	Civic & Member Support Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th April 2025 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

3. ELECTION OF MAYOR 2025/26

One nomination was received, for Councillor Bettley-Smith.

This was proposed by Cllr Simon Tagg and seconded by Cllr Sweeney.

The Leader praised Cllr Bettley-Smith's distinguished career over many years spanning agriculture, civil service and government agencies, along with commitment to serving the community in the borough and long-standing involvement as member of Betley Parish Council since 2003 and Chair since 2007. Cllr Bettley-Smith had also been ward councillor for Thistleberry ward and Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the past year and stood up to be Mayor in April, following the tragic passing of Cllr Barry Panter in February. His wife Judy would be supporting his role as mayoress.

The Chief Executive moved the nomination to a vote. All were in favour.

Resolved: That Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith be appointed as Mayor for the 2025-26 Municipal Year.

After being robed and re-invested with the chain of office, the Mayor Elect returned to the meeting room preceded by the Mace Bearers and accompanied by the Chief Executive. He then took the chair and made the declaration of acceptance of office.

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

4. **APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2025/26**

Two nominations were received:

- Cllr Joan Whieldon, who was proposed by Cllr Tagg and seconded by Cllr Sweeney. Reference was made to her election in 2022 following a successful career that took her around the world and provided her with expertise in mediation and dispute resolution, among other skills.
- Cllr Fox-Hewitt, who was proposed by Cllr Stubbs and seconded by Cllr Lewis. A dedicated public servant and steadfast advocate for the community since he was first elected in 2017 whose commitment was rooted in a professional background as a firefighter which provided him with a profound sense of duty and resilience.

A vote was taken which resulted as follows:

- 25 (twenty-five) votes in favour of Cllr Whieldon
- 17 (seventeen) votes in favour of Cllr Fox-Hewitt
- 1 (one) abstention

Resolved: That Councillor Joan Whieldon be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the 2025-26 Municipal Year.

The Deputy Mayor made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and expressed her commitment to serve to the best of her ability.

The Deputy Mayor congratulated the Mayor on his appointment and thanked members for their vote as well as for their support throughout her tenure. She announced that Cllr Susan Beeston would be her Deputy Consort.

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

5. **MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS**

The following appointments were made:

- Mayoress: Judy Bettley-Smith
- High Constable: Samuel Bettley-Smith
- Mayor's Cadet: Cdt Warrant Officer Elliott Durham
- Chaplain: Rev. Tim Watson
- Mace Bearers: Jenny Otter and Mr Glenn Martin-James

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

6. MAYORAL ADDRESS

The Mayor thanked members for electing him and expressed feeling honoured to have been considered for this office. He paid tribute to his predecessor Cllr Barry Panter who tragically passed away in February and referred to the vital role of mayor for a borough heritage. In addition to his two chosen charities he would endeavour to support and promote the Brampton Museum, the Apedale Heritage Centre and the Apedale Railway, including being involved in their events. The book known as The Role of Mayors had been restored to its rightful place in the Mayor's parlour with the script of 1766 when a mayor died in office against Cllr Barry Panter's entree.

The Mayor's two chosen charities were announced as follows:

- Belong Newcastle-under-Lyme, which provided sheltered accommodations and car home facilities along with care services, respite opportunities and day care which were all essential for those affected with dementia and those who cared for them.
- Papyrus UK, which focused on the prevention of suicides among the young and for which there would notably a walk around the 85 miles boundary of the borough.

The charity ball would be held on Saturday 21st March 2026 in Keele and another aim would be to visit each of the fourteen scout groups and four explorer groups during the year.

Accounts of all engagements and adventures would be available on the Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme's Facebook page. Official mayoral events would also be posted on the Mayor's civic Facebook page.

Mrs Beatrice Panter was invited to receive her ex mayoress badge and accept the badge on behalf of her late husband, former Mayor of the Borough.

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

7. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS FOR 2025/26

The Leader welcomed the two new members of the Council and introduced the report on the appointments to Committees, Chairs and Vice Chairs including a new nomination for the Community Armed Forces Champion. Cllr Tagg proposed to move the recommendation which were seconded by Cllr Sweeney.

Resolved: That the committee appointments set out in the Appendix of the report be agreed.

Council - 14/05/25

The Mayor proposed that a vote on committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs be taken en bloc as set out in the appendix. There were 26 (twenty-six) votes in favour of Conservative members and 17 (seventeen) against.

Resolved: That Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs be appointed as follows:

COMMITTEE	CHAIR	VICE-CHAIR
Audit and Standards	Cllr Paul Waring	Cllr Gill Burnett-Faulkner
Conservation Advisory	Cllr Trevor Johnson	Cllr Lilian Barker
Licensing and Public Protection	Cllr Joan Whieldon	Cllr Trevor Johnson
Planning	Cllr Paul Northcott	Cllr Nick Crisp
Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny	Cllr Rupert Adcock	Cllr Ian Wilkes
Economy and Place Scrutiny	Cllr Andrew Parker	Cllr Amanda Berrisford
Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny	Cllr Mark Holland	Cllr Amy Bryan

An appointment was made for the Community Armed Forces Champion role, previously held by Cllr Panter. Cllr Ian Wilkes was appointed to the position.

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

8. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Leader introduced the report on appointments to outside bodies and proposed to move the recommendation. This was seconded by Cllr Sweeney.

The Mayor proposed to take the appointments en bloc to the vote. There were 28 (twenty-eight) votes in favour and 15 (fifteen) against.

Resolved: That the appointment of Council's representatives to Outside Bodies for 2025-26 be agreed as set out in Appendix 1 and that officers be asked to advise the relevant organisation(s).

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

9. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

10. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

There were no confidential items.

**Mayor - Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 7.45 pm

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

23rd July 2025

Report Title: **Project Approval for the Decarbonisation of the J2 Leisure Centre Following Granting of PHASE 4 PSDS Funding**

Submitted by: **Service Director Sustainable Environment**

Portfolios: **Sustainable Environment / Leisure Culture and Heritage**

Ward(s) affected: **N/A**

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
To set out the success following an application, in being awarded a grant as part of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero PSDA phase 4 funding for the decarbonisation of the Councils Jubilee 2 leisure Centre.			
<u>Recommendation</u> That Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepts the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero granting of funding available to enable Salix Finance to provide the Council with a grant of up to £2,790,173 to assist in carrying out a low carbon energy reduction heating project at its Jubilee 2 Leisure Centre. 			
<u>Reasons</u> Development of the Council's fully costed 'RoadMap' to net zero identified the Jubilee 2 (J2) Leisure Centre as one the Council's buildings which emits the highest volume of Co2 emissions due to its high energy use. J2 was identified as requiring the largest financial capital sum to decarbonise, and therefore the need to apply for any external funding which could help reduce pressure on the Council's Capital works programme.			

1. Background

- 1.1** The Council's Cabinet adopted its current refreshed Sustainable Environment Strategy (SES) in June 2024. The Strategy is a landmark document setting out the Council's commitment to the sustainable environmental future of the Borough and is an over-arching strategy, under which a range of other linked and related delivery plans and initiatives sit.
- 1.2** As part of the original SES, in early 2023 the Council commissioned expertise in development of a costed Road Map to Net Zero for the Council's own operations and estate to reach net zero by 2030. Operational buildings had in-depth surveys and analysis undertaken over the summer, looking at the fabric of the buildings, heating and lighting infrastructure, current insulation, and energy consumption.

- 1.3** Following a procurement exercise, Faithful and Gould (F&G) were commissioned to undertake detailed energy surveys and audits to recommend fully costed site heat decarbonisation and present a Roadmap to net zero for the Council. The audits focused on the cost, energy usage, carbon savings and intervention type for the combined built estate that was surveyed by F&G.
- 1.4** Of the seven sites surveyed the J2 Leisure Centre was identified as the largest consumer of gas and electricity making it the largest emitter of greenhouse gas in the Council's operational estate. See table 1 below of this report F&G which shows that energy, heat and power decarbonisation technology and implementation of that technology will achieve a halving of energy consumption, and achievement of Net Zero for this building.
- 1.5** The survey and audit findings undertaken by F&G stated *"Jubilee 2 is a multipurpose leisure complex which incorporates a main pool, learner pool, fitness centre, dance studios and café. It was constructed in 2011 and includes ground, first and second floor levels with a combination of single and double height spaces. Jubilee 2 (J2) will cost £3,846,078 to retrofit for net zero but would reduce its energy use by around 1,588,192 kWh which saves a total amount of 279.92 tCO₂e per year based on the interventions implemented. J2 is the largest emitter of all sites and should be a priority when it is retrofitting NuLBC's built estate due to the vast paybacks those would provide."*
- 1.6** Table 1. Leisure Centre (Jubilee 2) site heat decarbonisation, energy and cost breakdown. Items highlighted in green are not covered in the PSDS Salix funding.

Heat Decarbonisation Recommendations	Relevant Actions (Y/N) Y = YES N = NO	Cost of Relevant Actions (£)	Total Cost (£)	Energy Consumption Before (kWh)	Energy Consumption After (kWh)	Carbon Saving (tCO ₂ e)
Behaviour Change	Y	£1,786	£1,786	Gas 2,510,080 Electric 318,422	Gas 0 Electric 1,240,310	25.99
Fabric Up-grades	Wall N Roof N Glazing N					
LED Install	Y	£119,392	£119,392			5.35
Heating & DHW Install	Heating ASHP Y VRV RE DX DHW POU ASHP N	£3,438,300	£3,438,300			418.05 -197.45 =220.6
PV Install	Y	£280,000	£280,000			
BMS/Controls Upgrade	Y	£106,600	£106,600			21.94
Cooling Upgrade	Y	£170,000	£170,000			3.94
Vent Upgrade	Y	£10,000	£10,000			2.09
Total		£3,846,078	£3,846,078	2,828,502 kWh	1,240,310 kWh	279.92 tCO₂e

2. **Issues and Proposals**

- 2.1 The Jubilee 2 (J2) leisure centre by its very nature uses a tremendous amount of energy, in terms of gas and electricity.
- 2.2 As part of the revised SES and associated delivery plan, the Council is pursuing external funding opportunities to help in its decarbonisation journey.
- 2.3 Table 1 shows Heat Decarbonisation Plan Options identified opportunities to significantly reduce carbon emissions and upgrade the existing infrastructure.
- 2.4 Proposed measures include decommissioning the site's 2 x 750 kW gas boilers and CHP and installing a new high temperature ASHP system. 196 kWpth of Solar thermal is also planned to be installed. The project aligns with the Council's net zero roadmap and its commitment to become a net zero Council by 2030 and a net zero Borough by 2050. This initiative will bring about the biggest reduction in direct carbon emissions from the Council's own internal buildings and services and help achieve the ambitious target of achieving this by 2030.
- 2.5 In November 2024 the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) announced their latest round of funding through the PSDS phase 4 Salix fund. As J2 is the highest carbon emitting building, it was decided to apply for the decarbonisation of the centre based on the Road Map recommendations for the building as detailed in table 1 above.
- 2.6 An outline project timetable is detailed in table 2 below –

Delivery Milestone Reached	Date Milestone to be Completed
Project approval	01/06/2025
Pre-Design	01/06/2025
Detailed designs complete	23/07/2026
Out to Tender	01/08/2026
Tenders Complete	01/11/2026
Orders Placed	15/01/2027
Works commence on site	12/03/2027
Completion on site	09/07/2027
Final commissioning	16/07/2027

3. **Recommendation**

- 3.1 To Accept the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero granting of funding available to enable Salix Finance to provide the Council with a grant of up to £2,790,173 to assist in carrying out a low carbon heating project.

4. Reasons

- 4.1 The Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has worked tirelessly to decarbonise its operations since. Granting of this funding from DESNZ will contribute significantly to decarbonise the Councils operational building infrastructure.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1 N/A

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 has the following provisions:
- Carbon targets and carbon budgeting - The Act places the government under a legal duty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.
 - The Committee on Climate Change - The Act also establishes the Committee on Climate Change, an independent, expert body to advise government on the appropriate level for the targets, budgets, and on matters relating to mitigation and adaptation. The Committee will submit annual reports to parliament on progress towards the targets and the government must respond to this report.
- 6.2 Councils' Duty to reduce carbon emissions - There are currently no statutory requirements for local authorities to set or negotiate targets to reduce their own or area wide emissions. However, the Borough declared a Climate Emergency in April 2019 and committed to reach net zero for its own operations by 2030.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 There are no equality impacts resulting from the recommendations of this report.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 There are financial and resource implications associated with this report.
- 8.2 Financially the Council is required to part fund the works to which this successful grant relates to the value of £417,093.67 as part of the application criteria. This sum already forms part of the Council's capital programme for decarbonisation as approved in the updated SES and associated delivery plan.
- 8.3 Salix funding will be released in tranches aligned to the project timeline as follows –
- Year 1 (2025/26) - £233,333.
 - Year 2 (2026/27) - £1,599,998.

- Year 3 (2027/28) - £956,842
- Total project value - £3,207,266.67
- Minimum Council Contribution – 13% = £417,093.67
- Expected Practical Completion Date – 31/03/2028.

8.4 Regarding resource implications, a project of this magnitude requires resource input from officers within the Council along with the proposed external support, where necessary.

8.5 An officer team has been set up to manage the process for the project through planning and implementation.

9. **Major Risks & Mitigation**

9.1 The major risks and mitigation measures are shown in table 3 below

Number	Risk category	Risk Description	Control Measures	Final risk Rating
1	Social	Wellbeing & safeguarding	Ensure awareness by contractors of Council safeguarding policies and take full responsibility including use of subcontractors on site. To include DBS checks where necessary	High
2	Permissions/ Approvals	Planning permissions delays to programme	The planning department has confirmed its support for granting planning permissions for the installation of an air source heat pump and solar thermal array at J2. Engagement with the planning department early in the process regarding permitted Development aspects, to ensure familiarisation with the decarbonisation scheme proposals, allowing feedback and anticipated requirements through pre-application meetings.	High
3	Schedule	Programme & practical completion	Project Manager (PM) to monitor and have at least weekly reviews of the programme through installation to manage the programme according to key installation windows and the progress towards practical completion. Contingency plans to be agreed at an early stage	High
4	Health & Safety	Health & Safety	Contractors and subcontractors are aware of the Councils H&S policies and take full responsibility. Will assume Principal	High

			Contractor and principal Designer roles as required.	
5	Building Structure	Existing roof may not be structurally capable of supporting the additional load of proposed solar thermal array.	A review will be necessary as part of the detailed design stage. A structural survey will be required to ascertain whether the roof can handle the additional load. This will be completed during the design phase of the project.	High
6	Schedule	Adverse weather – some of the work considered is outdoors (civils ASHP, solar thermal, pipework etc, and could be compromised by adverse weather	Float to programme to account for risk of construction delay due to severe weather	Moderate
7	Permissions/approvals	Noise Pollution – from the operation of the ASHP	Consideration of the installation area for the ASHP adjacent to the plant room. Acoustic fencing to be designed and installed around the plant equipment to reduce noise pollution for nearby residents	Low
8	Electrical supply	Increase to site import capacity	Initial investigation determined the local substation supplying the site has an additional 10MVA of headroom, indicating sufficient capacity to provide the site with the electrical supply needed. An application will need to be made to the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) to increase the import capacity.	Low
9	Resource	Local trade labour & professional resources	Through existing contacts / suppliers look to source local labour and local expertise	Low
10	Resource	Equipment installation	Checks to be conducted on installation	Low

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council ☒

- The Jubilee 2 leisure centre is one of the Council's key commercial assets. This project future proofs the facility in an age of rising energy costs, preserving it as a key strategic facility providing health and wellbeing facilities for residents and visitors.

One Digital Council ☒

- Decarbonisation of the leisure centre utilising renewable energy will come with digital infrastructure in terms of an energy management system to effectively and efficiently manage energy consumption within the building.

One Sustainable Council ☒

- This decarbonisation project contributes positively towards the goals set out in the Council's SES and associated delivery plan to achieve net zero for the Council's operational buildings and fleet. The J2 leisure centre is a high user of energy due to its function and is a priority site for decarbonisation by 2030.

12. Key Decision Information

12.1 This is a key decision due to the value of funding being granted to the Council.

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 Adoption of the revised SES and associated delivery plan approved by Cabinet in June 2024.

14. List of Appendices

14.1 None

15. Background Papers

15.1 None

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STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL TO FULL COUNCIL – 23rd JULY 2025

Submitted by: Councillor Simon Tagg

Portfolio: All

Wards affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To provide an update to Members on the activities and decisions of Cabinet, together with the Forward Plan.

Recommendation

That the statement of the Leader of the Council be received and noted.

Reasons

To update Council Members on the activities and decisions of the Leader and Cabinet and to allow questions and comments to be made on the Statement.

1. Cabinet Meetings

Cabinet met on 6th May, 3rd June and 8th July, detailed below is a selection of decisions and other actions of the Leader and Cabinet since the last Leader's Statement.

2. Walleys Quarry Odour Issues

Works continue to be undertaken on site by the Environment Agency's (EA) appointed contractors. Odour complaints received from residents continue to remain low, with at time of writing, five in July. Officers continue to monitor the site and investigate issues raised by residents.

Levels of hydrogen sulphide around the site have continued to be below the World Health Organisation (WHO) odour annoyance guideline value at all three MMFs in the last monitoring period.

In June I chaired a briefing meeting with partners on recent activity at Walleys Quarry and have also undertaken a site visit to see firsthand the works being carried out. Following the announcement by the EA that the MMF hydrogen sulphide monitoring facility at Silverdale Pumping Station is being removed to enable schedule works to take place by Severn Trent, I have sought assurance from EA officers that, if any issues arise, they will bring additional resources back to monitor the site.

New multi-agency groups have been established to move on from the initial incident to restoration tasks for key agencies to help support the ultimate goal of restoration. Council officers are playing their full part in the recovery groups.

The gas odours from Walleys Quarry Landfill remain the longest-running incident in Staffordshire's recent history, and I would like to thank Council officers, the response services

and particularly the Chair of the multi-agency co-ordinating group, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, for his dedication and commitment over a long period of time.

Regular reporting will continue through the standing Walleys Quarry item on every Cabinet agenda.

3. **Fields In Trust**

Cabinet has taken a significant step towards safeguarding green spaces in the Borough by approving applications to the Fields in Trust legal protection programme. This initiative will see 88 much-loved parks and open space legally protected from future development through a Deed of Dedication spaces.

This legal safeguard ensures that the green spaces will remain permanently accessible for public use, supporting recreation, wellbeing, and biodiversity for generations to come. The decision reflects our recognition of the vital role green spaces play in promoting physical and mental health, strengthening community use, and enhancing the local environment.

It reflects the Council's commitment to listening to residents, many of whom have told us how important these areas are to their daily lives. Newcastle Borough is proud to be among the first councils in Staffordshire to pursue this level of protection, and we will continue to champion the value of our many much-loved green spaces.

4. **Devolution & Forced Local Government Reorganisation (FLGR) Update**

Following delays in receiving feedback from the Government on the interim plans submitted by councils across Staffordshire, the Council continues to take a firm stance against forced local government reorganisation (FLGR). The Council remains committed to preserving the existing two-tier system but, if reorganisation is imposed, advocates for a Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Unitary Authority as the preferred option. Crucially, the Council has emphasised that any changes to local governance should be decided by residents through a borough-wide referendum, and it continues to oppose proposals for a whole North Staffordshire Unitary Council.

The Government has now requested detailed proposals for unitary models to be submitted by November 2025, and stated that, under the 'most ambitious timelines', elections to 'shadow' unitary councils may take place in May 2027, with existing councils scrapped and new councils 'going live' on 1 April 2028.

It is deeply regrettable that the delivery of Devolution is facing significant delays due to the Government's preoccupation with FLGR. The Council supports the creation of a Strategic Authority to address region-wide priorities such as transport, infrastructure, skills, and jobs, an approach consistent with the submission made by the Staffordshire Leaders Board in September 2024. It is important to note that a Strategic Authority layer would not be responsible for delivering day-to-day local services to residents.

Any delay represents a missed opportunity. Other areas with Strategic Authorities are already receiving targeted funding for regeneration, which our Borough and the rest of Staffordshire are currently missing out on.

5. **Kidsgrove Town Deal Update**

Cabinet has endorsed the next phase of the Kidsgrove Town Deal, which continues to deliver real and lasting benefits for the area. Building on the success of completed projects such as the refurbished Kidsgrove Sports Centre, the preparation of Chatterley Valley for job creation, and community enhancements like the Newchapel Pump Track, an additional £1.9 million has now been allocated to support a new package of initiatives. These include the development of three enterprise units at The Meadows, offering affordable space for small businesses and start-ups, and the creation of a community learning centre at The King's Church of England Academy, which will provide skills training and educational opportunities for residents of all ages. The

programme also includes towpath improvements along the Trent & Mersey Canal, enhancing links between the canal, the town centre, and the Academy, alongside public realm and highway upgrades in key areas such as Meadows Road, Station Road, Market Street, The Avenue, and Heathcote Street. These projects reflect the Town Deal Board's commitment to creating a more vibrant, accessible, and connected town centre for everyone in Kidsgrove.

Following confirmation from Government that no funding will be made available for remediation works on the station car park, the Town Deal Board has asked East Midlands Railway (EMR) to bring forward alternative plans for the refurbishment of the existing station building, which can proceed without the need for remediation. This ensures that there are further improvements to the station environment for local residents and commuters.

6. Financial & Performance Review Report – 4th Quarter 2024/25

Cabinet received a report detailing council performance to the end of March 2025. At the end of Quarter 4 the Council had met 65% of its more ambitious targets for 2024-25 and maintained or improved its performance in over half of all measures.

Planning performance remains strong with major and non-major applications processed well ahead of government standards. The Council is making good progress on enforcement activity responding to residents' concerns. Street cleanliness levels remain at a high standard, and this has been bolstered through the new Civic Pride action days to make our borough cleaner, safer and friendlier.

Residual waste collection rates remain low. Membership at Jubilee 2 continues to grow and the health referral programmes are achieving real wellbeing improvements for users. Staff sickness absence continues its year-on-year downward trend through proactive management and a range of employee wellbeing initiatives. Our town centre remains busy with market stall occupancy rates high.

The Council continues to monitor performance and uses this data to stretch targets to ensure continuous improvement to service delivery over the next year.

7. Civic Pride update

Cabinet has endorsed the draft Civic Pride Empowerment Strategy for public consultation, marking an important step in the Council's efforts to strengthen community spirit and pride across the Borough. The strategy builds on the Civic Pride campaign which has focused on clean streets and well-maintained parks and green spaces and asks how people feel about where they live, and how we can work together to build a stronger, more connected community. The draft sets out a series of priorities, including enhancing the appearance of public spaces, celebrating local heritage and culture, and encouraging volunteering and community-led initiatives that bring people together.

A key part of this work is the launch of the Civic Pride Investment Fund, which offers small grants to support local projects that help make our neighbourhoods cleaner, safer, and more welcoming. I encourage community groups and residents to apply - whether it's for a litter-picking scheme, a community garden, or a local event that brings neighbours together. Applications can be submitted online at [Civic Pride Application Form | Data Processing Statement – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council](#)

8. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan can be found at: -

[Browse plans - Cabinet, 2025 – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council](#)

Councillor Simon Tagg
Leader of the Council

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Scrutiny Committee's Chairs' reports

Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee

The Committee met on Thursday 19th June and received updates on the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Local Plan 2040 and the Town Deal and Future High Street Funds Update.

Members discussed and raised questions on both reports and the officers responded accordingly. The Committee will receive further updates when we meet at the September meeting and all recommendations were agreed as set out in the reports.

The committee also received the upcoming Work Programme and Members did not wish to add anything to it.

The Committee will meet again on Thursday 11th September.

Cllr Andrew Parker

Chair

Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee

The Health, Wellbeing and Environment Committee met on 12th June.

The Committee received an update on the activities of the County Health Scrutiny Committee.

Following a request by the Committee, the Deputy Police Commander and a fellow Sgt. attended and gave a presentation detailing the actions being taken against illegal use of off-road vehicles on borough parks.

Councillors asked a range of questions about reporting, monitoring, and the police responses. The report was circulated to members of the committee.

The Committee heard an update on Walleys Quarry. Members discussed concerns raised around the next steps including the restoration of the site and the recovery of money owed to the council. A request was made of officers to ask for a public meeting with the EA to offer answers to resident's questions.

The future work programme was discussed including the report of the Parks Task and Finish Group.

Cllr Rupert Adcock

Chair

Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee

The Committee met on 26 June to consider the financial and performance review report for the fourth quarter of 2024/25 and to receive an update on the Town Deals and Future High Streets funding. The Committee will meet again on 4 September.

Cllr Mark Holland
Chair

Regulatory Committee's Chairs' reports

Planning Committee

The Planning Committee has met five times since the last full Council meeting:- 22 and 29 of April, 20 May, 17 June and 15 July.

The following items were considered:

22 April:

- Land and Garages at Brieryhurst Road, Kidsgrove. 24/00915/FUL.
- Land rear of 3 Morningside and 16 Laverock Grove, Madeley. 24/00421/OUT
- Rose Cottage, Woodside, Hill Chorlton. 25/00080/OUT
- 39-41 Merrial Street, Newcastle. 25/00180/DEEM3
- 21 Merrial Street, Newcastle. 25/00184/DEEM3
- Land at High Street, Knutton. 25/00149/DEEM3
- 5 Boggs Cottage, Keele 14/00036/207C3.

29 April:

- Former Midway Car Park, The Midway, Newcastle. 24/00678/FUL.
- Land at Merrial Street, Newcastle. 24/00792/FUL
- 5-7 York Place, Newcastle. 24/00795/FUL
- Former Civic Offices, Merrial Street, Newcastle. 24/00840/FUL

20 May:

- Land to East of Woodside, Baldwins Gate. 22/01105/FUL.
- Land and Garages, Brieryhurst Road, Kidsgrove. 24/00915/FUL
- Land at Doddlespool, Betley. 17/00186/207C2
- Planning Committee Site Visit Dates for 2025/26

17 June:

- Land off Lamphouse Way, Wolstanton. 25/00131/FUL.
- Land rear of 5 Morningside and 16 Laverock Grove, Madeley. 24/00421/OUT
- International House, Stubbs Gate, Newcastle. 25/00333/DEEM3
- Forge Cottage, Brampton Road, Newcastle. 25/00272/FUL
- 5 Boggs Cottage, Keele 14/00036/207C3.

15 July:

- Land North of Muckleston Wood Lane and East of Rock Lane, Loggerheads. 25/00352/REM.
- Plots D2 and D3 Chatterley Park, Peacock Hay Road, Talke. 25/00316/REM
- Plot C Chatterley Park, Peacock Hay Road, Talke. 25/00317/REM
- Building 3 Coaldale Road, Newcastle. 25/00265/FUL
- The Bush Inn, High Street, Silverdale. 25/00387/FUL
- Land at Doddlespool, Betley. 17/00186/207C2

Cllr Paul Northcott
Chair

Audit and Standards Committee

The Committee has met on two occasions.

16 June:

Three reports were considered:

- Proposed Accounting Policies, Critical Accounting Judgements and Sources of Estimation Uncertainty for the 2024/25 Statement of Accounts.
- Annual Governance Statement 2024/25
- Draft Statement of Accounts 2024/25

The Work Programme was also considered.

14 July:

Three reports were considered:

- Annual Internal Audit Outturn Report 2024/25.
- Treasury Management Annual Report 2024/25
- Quarter Four Corporate Risk Management Report 2024/25

The Work Programme was also considered.

The next meeting will be on 29 September

Paul Waring

Chair

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This motion is put forward by the Labour Group, and aims to secure cross party support for a long term solution to the environmental and health issues created by Walleys Quarry Landfill Site.

Council notes:

The issuing of a much needed and long overdue Closure Notice in November 2024 and welcomes the cessation of Walleys Quarry Limited's management of the site.

With regret, and anger, the operator's decision to liquidate and run away from the terms of their licence, their obligation to the people of Newcastle-under-Lyme and their years of failures.

The initial works that the Environment Agency have carried out since the issuing of the above-mentioned Closure Notice to ensure the site is made safe and secure.

Two recommendations from the Walleys Quarry Committee of Inquiry (Sept 2024) note that:

"2. to investigate the costs for restoration of the site against the value of the restoration bond, is still an issue.

6. to look at restoration plans to ensure that the site is capped and restored effectively and to the correct standards"

In April 2025, it has been reported that the Environment Agency provided evidence in Judicial Review proceedings 'which indicates that they do not intend to permanently cap the site, install a surface management scheme or manage groundwater levels.....'

Council believes:

That work must go on with the Environment Agency to take all the necessary action to make Walleys Quarry Landfill site safe and, protect local residents from the risk of pollution, in the longer term and we are sure these concerns are shared by all stakeholders.

The Environment Agency's plan to remove the MMF's (which permanently monitor pollution levels) and intend to use mobile handheld monitors on an ad hoc basis which means that pollution levels from the Landfill will not be properly monitored.

The Environment Agency should carry out the safety work that it required the operator to do as part of the Closure Notice to ensure that the site was safely closed down.

Council resolves:

- To work with the Environment Agency, Adam Jogee MP and all relevant authorities to deliver all actions required to ensure that Walleys Quarry Landfill

Site is safe, the residents of Newcastle-under-Lyme are protected, and it does not present a present or future risk of pollution for local residents.

- To ask the Chief Executive on behalf of all members to write to Adam Jogee MP, Member of Parliament for Newcastle-under-Lyme, to seek his specific assistance in getting the relevant Government departments and agencies, to engage with partners through the established coordinating groups and to play an active role in the safe restoration and remediation of the site.
- To ask the Chief Executive on behalf of all members to write to the leadership of Staffordshire County Council,(who granted planning permission for the site) and the Environment Agency (who issued the permit) to ask for their commitment to ensure real and meaningful financial support for the on-going restoration costs associated with the safe restoration and remediation of the site.
- To continue to use all its efforts to pursue the Directors of WQ personally, via the Liquidators of the Company (the Monitoring Officer having already written to the Liquidators in this respect) in relation to their many failures to properly manage the affairs of WQ and the resulting blight which they have left upon the local community in N-u-L

Proposer: Councillor Dave Jones

Seconder: Councillor Jacqueline Brown

Amended Motion by the Conservative Group to Full Council 23rd July 2025

Council resolves:

1. To call again on the Secretary of State to grant a Public Inquiry into the role of the Environment Agency as a regulator and its failings in respect of the Walleys Quarry Landfill Site.

2. To call on the Environment Agency, Adam Jogee MP and all relevant authorities to deliver all actions required to ensure that Walleys Quarry Landfill Site is safe, the residents of Newcastle-under-Lyme are protected, and it does not present a present or future risk of pollution **or harm to public health** for local residents.

3. To ask the Leader and Chief Executive on behalf of all members to write to Adam Jogee MP, Member of Parliament for Newcastle-under-Lyme, to seek his specific assistance:

(a) in getting the relevant Government departments and agencies to engage with partners through the established coordinating group;

(b) in calling on the Government to play an active role in the safe restoration and remediation of the site;

(c) in supporting this Council's call for a Public Inquiry into the site and failures in its regulation.

4. To ask the Leader and Chief Executive on behalf of all members to write to ~~the leadership of Staffordshire County Council, (who granted planning permission for the site) and~~ the Environment Agency (EA): ~~(who issued the permit)~~

(a) to ask for their commitment to ensure real and meaningful financial support for the on-going restoration costs associated with the safe restoration and remediation of the site;

(b) to ask that continuous monitoring of the site using the MMFs remaining in place.

(c) To ask them to hold a public Stakeholders Meeting to outline their position by the end of September.

5. To ask the Leader and Chief Executive on behalf of all members to write to the Secretary of State, to grant a Public Inquiry and provide a guarantee that remediation costs will be met in full by the Government, if not by the Environment Agency, so that the expense of putting things right will not fall on local taxpayers under any circumstances.

Ask the Leader and Chief Executive to also write to the new leadership of Staffordshire County Council asking them to join with the Council in lobbying for the above outcomes.

6. To continue to use all its efforts to pursue the Directors of WQ personally, via the Liquidators of the Company (the Monitoring Officer having already written to the Liquidators in this respect) in relation to their many failures to properly manage the affairs of WQ and the resulting blight which they have left upon the local community in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Proposed: Simon Tagg

Seconded: Mark Holland

QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

To the Leader of the Council:

1. There has been considerable coverage in the media about so-called "DOGE savings" since the local elections in May. Could the Leader of the Council outline how the Conservative Administration at Newcastle Borough Council, working with Council Officers, has delivered millions of pounds in efficiency savings since 2018?

Cllr. Mark Holland

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To the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Heritage:

2. A decade after his death, Ian 'Lemmy' Kilmister remains a giant of rock music. Lemmy may have been born in Burslem, but the greater part of his childhood was spent in Madeley. In view of Lemmy's international status as a musician, song writer and leader of the band Motorhead, does the Portfolio Holder agree that it is time Lemmy's association with the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme was formally recognised and celebrated?

Councillor Richard Gorton

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To the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment:

3. Following a number of members raising concerns with regards the councils new grass management strategy, Council was informed last year that a review would be undertaken including a public consultation. Can the Portfolio Holder please inform Council when and how this review and consultation will take place?

Councillor Andrew Fox-Hewitt

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To the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth:

4. Council will note the fantastic work the Tri Services and Veterans support Centre do for veterans in our borough and the wider County and beyond, whilst operating as a charity in a challenging environment. Can the Portfolio Holder advise if the Council is going review and waive the discretionary 20% business rate on the Tri Services building.

Councillor Andrew Fox-Hewitt

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