

ECONOMY AND PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 19th March, 2026
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

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Present:	Councillor Andrew Parker (Chair)		
Councillors:	Bryan Casey-Hulme	Gorton Grocott	J Tagg
Apologies:	Councillor(s) Bettley-Smith, Burnett-Faulkner, Edgington-Plunkett and J Waring		
Substitutes:	Councillor Nicholas Crisp (In place of Mayor - Councillor Robert Bettley-Smith) Councillor Mark Holland (In place of Councillor Gillian Burnett - Faulkner) Councillor Simon Jones (In place of Councillor Jill Waring)		
Officers:	Allan Clarke Craig Jordan Simon McEneny	Planning Policy Manager Service Director - Planning Deputy Chief Executive	
Also in attendance:	Councillor Stephen Sweeney	Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received as listed above.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2025 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. **NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 2040**

The Planning Policy Manager presented the update on the progress made in relation to the emerging Local Plan.

The Chair asked for clarification about the date the inspector's report would be brought to Full Council.

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The Deputy Chief Executive responded that it had be put on the Cabinet Forward Plan for June. The necessary decisions would be made by the new administration in place further to the elections.

Resolved: That the update on the progress of developing a new Local Plan for the Borough be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

5. TOWN DEAL AND FUTURE HIGH STREET FUNDS UPDATE

The Deputy Leader introduced the report on the projects enabled by the Town Deal and Future High Street Funds.

The Deputy Chief Executive updated members on pending works. The designs for Kidsgrove Train Station were notably being finalised ahead of their approval by the board.

Cllr Gorton commented on the evident work put into Astley Place and the progress made at the Midway car park – an ambitious project which he hoped would be successful being mindful of the risks associated with it.

The Deputy Chief Executive said that the crane had just arrived at Astley Place and the building would be watertight by June allowing for internal works to be carried out in view of an opening in January 2027. About the car park, scaffolding was now in place and a tower crane was expected to arrive on site in May. The completion would be due in May 2027.

The Deputy Leader reiterated his enthusiasm and confidence that the two projects would come off nicely.

Resolved: That the report on the delivery of the Town Deal and Future High Street Funds projects be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

6. WORK PROGRAMME

Resolved: That the work programme be noted.

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7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions received from members of the public.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The Chair informed members that the Service Director for Planning would be leaving the Council and thanked him for his hard work over the years.

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The Service Director for Planning expressed his gratitude and said that he would be taking an early retirement after 36 years in local government. He had enjoyed both his experience and working with members.

**Councillor Andrew Parker
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 7.15 pm