

Date of meeting Tuesday, 23rd April, 2024
Time 2.00 pm
Venue Astley Room - Castle
Contact Geoff Durham 742222



**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Castle House
Barracks Road
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire
ST5 1BL

Cabinet

AGENDA

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

- 1 APOLOGIES**
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive declarations of interest from Members on items included in the agenda.
- 3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS** (Pages 5 - 10)
To consider the Minutes of the previous meeting.
- 4 WALLEYS QUARRY - ODOUR ISSUES** (Pages 11 - 28)
- 5 CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE PROGRESS REVIEW VISIT** (Pages 29 - 44)
- 6 GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PLAN** (Pages 45 - 66)
- 7 ASSET DISPOSAL - APEDALE BUSINESS PARK** (Pages 67 - 70)
- 8 IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS 2023/24** (Pages 71 - 74)
- 9 FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 75 - 80)
- 10 URGENT BUSINESS**
To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

11 DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

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

12 IRRECOVERABLE ITEMS - CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX (Pages 81 - 82)

ATTENDANCE AT CABINET MEETINGS

Councillor attendance at Cabinet meetings:

- (1) The Chair or spokesperson of the Council's scrutiny committees and the mover of any motion referred to Cabinet shall be entitled to attend any formal public meeting of Cabinet to speak.
- (2) Other persons including non-executive members of the Council may speak at such meetings with the permission of the Chair of the Cabinet.

Public attendance at Cabinet meetings:

- (1) If a member of the public wishes to ask a question(s) at a meeting of Cabinet, they should serve two clear days' notice in writing of any such question(s) to the appropriate committee officer.
- (2) The Council Leader as Chair of Cabinet is given the discretion to waive the above deadline and assess the permissibility of the question(s). The Chair's decision will be final.
- (3) The maximum limit is three public questions at any one Cabinet meeting.
- (4) A maximum limit of three minutes is provided for each person to ask an initial question or make an initial statement to the Cabinet.
- (5) Any questions deemed to be repetitious or vexatious will be disallowed at the discretion of the Chair.

Members: Councillors S Tagg (Leader) (Chair), Sweeney (Vice-Chair), Heesom, Fear, Skelding and Hutchison

Members of the Council: If you identify any personal training/development requirements from any of the items included in this agenda or through issues raised during the meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Democratic Services Officer at the close of the meeting.

Meeting Quorums :- 16+= 5 Members; 10-15=4 Members; 5-9=3 Members; 5 or less = 2 Members.

NOTE: IF THE FIRE ALARM SOUNDS, PLEASE LEAVE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY THROUGH THE FIRE EXIT DOORS.

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CABINET

Tuesday, 19th March, 2024
Time of Commencement: 2.00 pm

[View the agenda here](#)

[Watch the meeting here](#)

Present: Councillor Simon Tagg (Chair)

Councillors: Sweeney Fear Hutchison
Heesom Skelding

Officers: Martin Hamilton Chief Executive
Geoff Durham Civic & Member Support Officer
Nesta Barker Service Director - Regulatory
Services
Paul Dutton Senior Media Officer
Georgina Evans-Stadward Service Director - Strategy,
People and Performance

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 6 February, 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

3. **WALLEYS QUARRY ODOUR ISSUES**

The Leader introduced the report on Walleys Quarry problematic odours and the recent suspension notice.

The Chief Executive provided an update on the situation, stating that February had been a bad month, with over 1000 complaints being received and the Environment Agency's (EA) complaints had also been significantly higher.

Throughout February, it had been MMF1 consistently showing that hydrogen sulphide levels for one third of the time each week, had been above the annoyance threshold. MMF9 had shown more variety, still with high figures but not reaching the levels and consistency of MMF1.

At the beginning of March the EA issued a suspension notice on the site whilst works were carried out. Walleys Quarry did the required work in just over one week and the site was reopened for the receipt of waste products.

A special meeting of the Council was held on 14 February, 2024 to discuss the issues at Walleys Quarry and the actions from that meeting were outlined at paragraph 2.11 of the report. There was discussion at the meeting regarding two

potential Judicial Reviews; firstly, the EA's decision not to bring forward a Suspension Notice. However, this had now been done, with work ceasing for just over one week whilst remediation works were undertaken. The second potential Judicial Review was around the Secretary of state's decision to not grant a public inquiry into the performance of the EA. The Council's Monitoring Officer had outlined the complexities of this and the information was appended to the report.

Paragraph 2.26 outlined the process that would need to be undertaken in terms of the Abatement Notice.

Councillor Fear expressed his disappointment at the increase in complaints during February and asked, if that were to happen again, was that evidence that Best Practical Means were not being used.

The Chief Executive advised that there were two aspects of a challenge of Best Practical Means, one being that they only applied to 'normal' operations. The other issue, by the nature of Best Practical Means, it meant that there was the prospect of the operator using the best techniques available at the time but there still being an odour off-site. There was also the issue of affordability.

Councillor Fear stated that an adverse event would be presumptive evidence that Best Practical Means was not happening. Councillor Fear commented on the notion that if the operator claimed that it was too expensive to put it right then they did not have to and asked if there was any documentation that would give a sense of proportionality, giving the limit of expenditure that was deemed to be excessive.

The Council's Service Director – Regulatory Services advised that in terms of the cost element there were industry standards guides in relation to what constituted Best Practical Means. The economics of it also had to be taken into account; the available technology available and the practicality of delivery.

The Leader stated that the EA had not listened and had not dealt with Walleys Quarry and the Council had been let down by them. The Leader referred to paragraph 2.26 – the Council's enforcement policy stating that people had a right to know at what position the Council was on the chart and asked for an update.

Referring to the report, the Chief Executive stated that the odours off-site at the current stage could be consistent with a breach in the abatement notice and the question was whether that was an actionable situation, if it was a one off event, where it fitted with Best Practical Means and whether it had been resolved.

The Leader stated that the Council would have to make a decision at some point to enforce its enforcement policy on the operator and would continue to press for a public inquiry on the EA and DEFRA.

Resolved: That the contents of the update report be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

4. **NEWCASTLE TOWN DEAL DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT UPDATE**

The Leader introduced a report giving update on progress made with the Newcastle Town Deal Digital Infrastructure Project. The rollout was going at pace and the report outlined the process for bringing it about. There would be a series of digital hubs around the Borough, hopefully based around community centres.

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Heritage stated that having the discussions with community centres was currently being looked at and the capacity to facilitate the project.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the progress on the Digital Infrastructure project as part of the Newcastle Town Deal, be noted;
 - (ii) That the Deputy Chief Executive in conjunction with the Portfolio Holders for Finance, Town Centres & Growth and One Council, People & Partnerships, be authorised to progress the Digital Infrastructure project to the next steps of procuring a partner to deliver a fibre network within the Newcastle Town Deal area;
 - (iii) That the Deputy Chief Executive in conjunction with the Portfolio Holders for Finance, Town Centres & Growth and One Council, People & Partnerships, be authorised to examine the invest to save potential of connecting key Borough Council sites to the fibre network to release the full benefit from this investment;
 - (iv) That a further report on the digital inclusion element of the project be considered by a future meeting of Cabinet.

[Watch the debate here](#)

5. **ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS FOR CASTLE CAR PARK**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centre's and Growth introduced a report awarding the contract for the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points at Castle Car Park to Zest Eco Ltd.

Zest Eco would be liable for the provision, management, maintenance and replacement of the EV chargers with no cost to the Council.

The Leader stated that the existing car park at the Midway did not facilitate EV charging or 'pay on exit' and that had been a key driver for the building of the new car park.

- Resolved:** That the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth, be authorised to enter into a contract with Zest Eco Ltd for the installation, management and maintenance of electric vehicle charging points at Castle Car Park.

[Watch the debate here](#)

6. **TREE AND BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment introduced a report seeking approval for the adoption of the tree and biodiversity management plan, setting out the Council's approach to managing its tree stock.

Members' were advised of the six main objectives of the plan which were outlined at paragraph 2.6 of the report and the current progress was outlined at paragraph 2.9.

The Leader stated that the plan set out how the trees and wildflower meadows in the Borough would be maintained. The Leader also stated that it was worth noting that a percentage of newly planted trees would not take or could be damaged within their first year and would need to be replaced.

Resolved: That the Tree and Biodiversity Management Plan be approved.

[Watch the debate here](#)

7. CONTRACT AWARD FOR WAMMY FOOTBALL CHANGING ROOM DEVELOPMENT

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centre's and Growth introduced a report giving an update on the new changing facilities and, to recommend the awarding of a construction contract to the successful bidder as outlined in the confidential appendix which would be considered in closed session at the end of this meeting.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the progress on the project to deliver Football Changing facilities at the Wammy, be noted.
 - (ii) That the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Finance, Town Centres & Growth and One Council, People & Partnerships, be authorised to complete post tender negotiations and to progress all legal agreements to enable appointment of a contractor to construct the Football Changing Facilities at the Wammy.
 - (iii) That the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Finance, Town Centres & Growth and One Council, People & Partnerships, be authorised to construct the Football Changing Facilities at the Wammy.

[Watch the debate here](#)

8. SPORT ENGLAND SWIMMING POOL SUPPORT GRANT TO KIDSGROVE CIO

The Leader introduced a report outlining the awarding of grant funding for Kidsgrove Sports Centre from the Sport England Swimming Pool Fund.

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Heritage welcomed the funding and stated that the fitting of solar panels at the Sports Centre would go a long way to working towards net zero carbon emissions in the Borough and would also provide energy savings and reduce running costs.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the Sport England capital grant from the Swimming Pool Fund is in principle accepted by the Council to support the eligible projects at Kidsgrove Sports Centre, be noted.

- (ii) That the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People & Partnerships be authorised to sign all necessary agreements to enable the grant to be passported to Kidsgrove Sports Centre.

[Watch the debate here](#)

9. FORWARD PLAN

The Leader went through the Cabinet Forward Plan.

Resolved: That the Forward Plan be received and noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

10. URGENT BUSINESS

Members were advised that this was the last meeting of the outgoing Chief Executive, Martin Hamilton. The Leader thanked him for everything he had done and wished him well for the future.

Cabinet Members added their thanks and best wishes to Martin.

[Watch the debate here](#)

11. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

Resolved:- That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration if the following matter because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs contained within Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

12. CONTRACT AWARD FOR WAMMY FOOTBALL CHANGING ROOM DEVELOPMENT PART TWO - CONFIDENTIAL

Consideration was given to the confidential appendix relating to the Contract Award for Wammy Football Changing Room Development item.

Resolved: That the confidential appendix be received.

**Councillor Simon Tagg
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 3.02 pm

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NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S

REPORT TO CABINET

23 April 2024

Report Title: **Walleys Quarry – Odour Issues**

Submitted by: **Interim Chief Executive**

Portfolios: **Sustainable Environment; One Council, People & Partnerships**

Ward(s) affected: **All**

<p><u>Purpose of the Report</u></p> <p>To update Cabinet on the latest position regarding the problematic odours in the Borough associated with Walleys Quarry.</p>	<p><u>Key Decision Yes</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>No</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <p>1. Note the contents of this update report.</p>	
<p><u>Reasons</u></p> <p>To ensure Cabinet is kept updated on the ongoing work regarding the problem odours associated with Walleys Quarry landfill.</p>	

1. Background

- 1.1 For a number of years, parts of the borough have suffered from foul odours from the Walleys Quarry Landfill Site in Silverdale operated by Walleys Quarry Ltd, part of the RED Industries group of companies. The Environment Agency (EA) is the lead regulator for such sites, testing and enforcing compliance with the permit under which the site operates. The Council also has a role in influencing the operation and performance of such sites, where an operator fails to comply with actions required under an abatement notice issued by the Council in relation to any statutory nuisance caused by the site.
- 1.2 In March 2021, Council held an extraordinary meeting to receive the report of the Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee review into the Walleys Quarry issues, and to debate a motion demanding the immediate suspension of operations and acceptance of waste at the Walleys Quarry Landfill site.
- 1.3 Following extensive work, officers determined that the odours from the Walleys Quarry site amounted to a Statutory Nuisance and, on 13 August 2021, served an Abatement Notice on Walleys Quarry Ltd. (WQL). Following an appeal by Walleys Quarry Ltd, and a successful mediation process, His Honour District Judge Grego approved the

settlement that the parties had reached and issued a court order upholding the Abatement Notice and dismissing WQL's appeal on 6 October 2022.

- 1.4 The Council continues to assess the prevalence of odours off site. If there are further instances of statutory nuisance identified which amount to a breach of the Abatement Notice, the Council's Enforcement Policy will guide the process to be followed [Reference: [Environmental Health enforcement policy – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council \(newcastle-staffs.gov.uk\)](https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk)]. This would determine what action the Council would take, and whether that would be formal or informal. Enforcement is usually considered sequentially but should the circumstances or nature of the breach be such, escalation direct to prosecution is possible. The Council would need to obtain the consent of the Secretary of State before it is able to prosecute an offence of breaching an abatement notice, as the site is permitted by the Environment Agency.
- 1.5 Officers maintain an ongoing dialogue with Walleys Quarry Ltd, and with other agencies involved with the issue. Cabinet has received monthly updates on the issues relating to the odours, and Council has also been regularly updated.

2. Complaint Data

- 2.1 Below is a schedule of complaints received by the Council and by the Environment Agency over the last 3 months, on a weekly basis. Historical complaint data is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

	Complaints to NuLBC	Complaints to Environment Agency
January 2024		
01/01/24 - 07/01/24	236	627
08/01/24 - 14/01/24	76	268
15/01/24 - 21/01/24	270	824
22/01/24 - 28/01/24	86	261
February 2024	133	416
29/01/24 - 04/02/24		
05/02/24 - 11/02/24	382	905
12/02/24 - 18/02/24	186	527
19/02/24 - 25/02/24	397	1264
26/02/24 - 03/03/24	333	990
March 2024	217	694
04/03/24 - 10/03/24		
11/03/24 – 17/03/24	102	374
18/03/24- 24/03/24	118	330
25/03/24-31/03/24	81	254
April 2024		
01/04/24-07/04/24	56	220
08/04/24- 14/04/24	17	75

- 2.2 Officers highlight any odour events where 10 or more odour complaints have been recorded. There have been 20 odour events in the month of March:

- 01 March – 07 March 2024 (7 consecutive days)
- 11 March 2024
- 13 March 2024
- 15 March -16 March 2024 (2 consecutive days)
- 18 March - 21 March 2024 (4 consecutive days)
- 24 March - 27 March 2024 (4 consecutive days)
- 30 March

The highest number of complaints reported to NULBC was on Tuesday 5 March 2024 at 79 complaints.

- 2.3** The overall trend is for “spikes” in complaints when odours are prevalent.

NULBC Odour Assessments

- 2.4** Officers have undertaken odour assessments. The monitoring has been reactive to odour complaints and proactive where low odour dispersion is predicted.

The type of monitoring includes spot assessments (instantaneous assessments) and assessments made over a 5-minute period where the odour intensity is recorded every 10 seconds.

3 odour assessments were undertaken on Wednesday 20 March 2024. All 3 assessments detected landfill related odour. 2 detected distinct odour (intensity rating 3) and 1 detected strong odour (intensity rating 4).

In addition, 15 spot assessments were undertaken of which 6 detected landfill related odour. 4 detected distinct odour (intensity rating 3) and 1 detected strong odour (intensity rating 4).

NULBC Mobile Air Quality Monitoring (using Jerome monitor)

- 2.5** Officers have monitored the levels of hydrogen sulphide within the community using the mobile Jerome monitor. The highest level of hydrogen sulphide recorded in the community was 9.77ppb at Cemetery Road at 22:13 on 20 March 2024.

NULBC Actions

- 2.6** It is disappointing to report that over this winter period there has been a continued deterioration in the odour conditions from Walleys Quarry as shown in the data reported. However, it can be seen that the data for April to date, is showing an improvement in complaint numbers and also air quality levels.

- 2.7** Officer monitoring and assessments will continue to be undertaken in April.

- 2.8** At this stage, now the rectified air quality data had been published alongside other data sources, the officer assessment is that the recent odours amount to a breach of the Abatement Notice.

- 2.9** On 8 April 2024 WQL were notified in writing that a breach of the Abatement Notice had occurred.

- 2.10** The report to Council on 10 April 2024 explains the legal options and challenges in terms of actioning a breach of the Abatement Notice. Council agreed the following:

1. Note the contents of this update report.
2. Note the breach of the Council's Abatement Notice.
3. Note that the Council has issued a letter to Walleys Quarry Ltd notifying them of the breach of the Abatement Notice.
4. Note that the Council will continue dialogue with Partners via the Strategic Coordinating Group regarding any further enforcement activities to seek to alleviate the suffering of the community.
5. Note that the Council's legal team have been instructed to prepare appropriate legal proceedings in line with the above.
6. Note the £300k Walleys Quarry Reserve to undertake the above and if additional funds are required, a separate report will be brought to Council in due course.

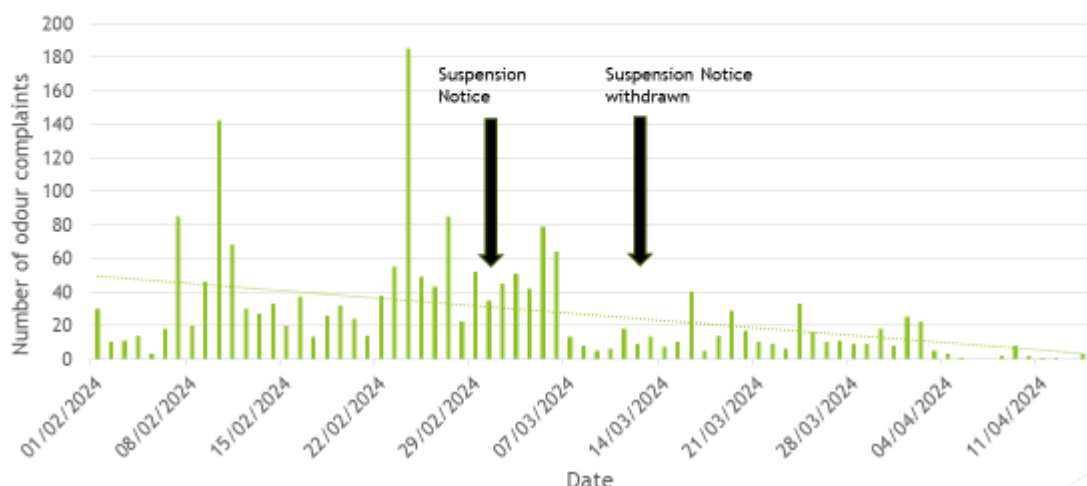
2.11 Critically, under the law, whilst odours may exist off site at levels which could be considered a breach of the notice, that breach would be unenforceable (or a defence against creating a statutory nuisance) if the operator can show that Best Practical Means (BPM) are routinely deployed in the management of the site. Whilst the existence or not of BPM can be debated, it would be a court which would determine whether BPM was in place at the time of the breach. That said, prior to entering into any formal legal action it is necessary for the Council to formulate a view with regard to this matter, this is ongoing.

2.12 At the core of next steps are two issues – whether the action taken by the Environment Agency as the primary enforcement agency for this site have been successful in remedying the issues; and whether a defence of BPM exists. Where either of these are assessed to be in place it would not be in the public interest for the Council to pursue this matter further.

2.13 It should be noted that during the same period as the breach works have been completed on site to comply with the Suspension Notice. Data since the works have been completed does show an improvement, however it is too early to say whether this is coincidental, due to the works or weather.

2.14 The graph below of NULBC Complaints shows the detailed complaint numbers in relation to the EA suspension notice.

Odour Complaints reported to NULBC February, March & April



- 2.15** In terms of the salient points identified in the correspondence from WQL, they confirm they are operating and managing the landfill to BPM, in fact they go slightly further in saying
“The measures deployed, representative of BPM and delivered willingly by WQL ahead of any published guidance or best practice will ensure that the capping, containment and extraction systems, methodologies and practices employed at the facility remain exemplary.”

WQL also confirm that through their investigations “Thus far, no one area has been identified as having impacted odour at the WQ boundary and its immediate environs. We will be continuing our investigations, including but not limited to, GUP performance and expert analysis.”

- 2.16** Walleys Quarry Ltd have responded to the media enquiries and a spokesperson from WQL has said:

“Walleys Quarry Ltd would urge Newcastle Borough Council to reconsider any proposed legal action. We instead ask them to discuss their concerns with us as part of our ongoing collaborative efforts to see the best outcomes for the community. We refute these allegations and should the council proceed, we will of course consider our response under the advice of our legal team”.

“WQL has made demonstrable, substantial and sustained progress in our capping programme as well as with efforts to minimise emissions from the site as we continue to use Best Practicable Means with the eventual objective of ceasing landfill operations and completing restoration onsite”.

Scrutiny

- 2.17** With regard to Scrutiny, a report outlining a proposed approach to convening a ‘Committee of Inquiry’ was presented at Health, Wellbeing & Environment Scrutiny Committee on 26th February 2024, this can be found at [WQ Scrutiny post Council.pdf \(newcastle-staffs.gov.uk\)](#) the recommendations were endorsed. The Committee of Inquiry members have been selected and the scoping meeting has been held. A further meeting is planned for 1st May 2024.

Air Quality & Health

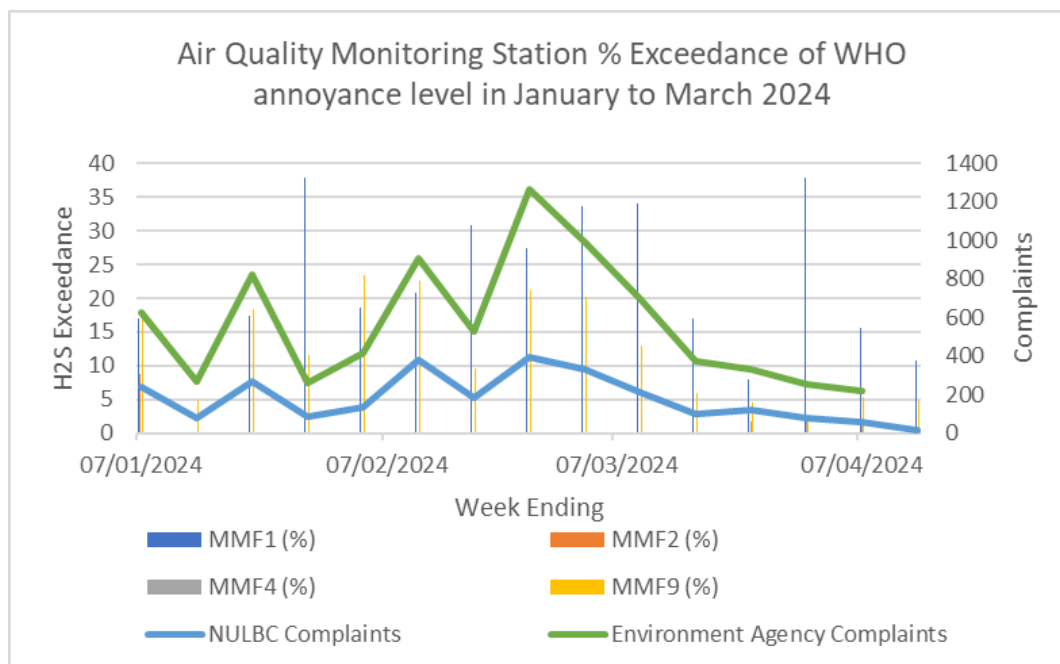
- 2.18** The Council, Staffordshire County Council, and the Environment Agency have jointly funded a campaign of air quality monitoring utilising three static air monitoring stations. The Environment Agency manage and operate these air quality monitoring stations. Data from these stations has been routinely published weekly by the Environment Agency.
- 2.19** Hydrogen sulphide levels have previously been reported and reviewed as part of this report and a full data set provided in Appendices. On 5 October, the Environment Agency provided an update, alerting the community to a problem with the reliability of the Hydrogen Sulphide (H₂S) monitoring data collected at the monitoring stations. This update is available at the following link [Latest News | Engage Environment Agency \(engagementhq.com\)](#)
- 2.20** On 19 October 2023, the EA calibrated the H₂S analysers in MMF1 and MMF2. The EA have sufficient confidence in the raw data recorded for the week commencing 16 October 2023 to allow the EA to restart publishing data from MMF1 and MMF2.

2.21 The latest H2S data is set out in the table below, defining the proportion of the time periods where H2S levels were above the WHO Odour Annoyance guideline of 7ug/m³.

Time Period	MMF1 (%)	MMF 2 (%)	MMF(4) (%)	MMF 9 (%)
02 October – 08 October 2023				0
09 October – 15 October 2023				9.4
16 October – 22 October 2023	0.9	0		7.8
23 October – 29 October 2023	13.7	3.0		10.4
30 October – 5 November 2023	7.8	0.6		NR
6 November – 12 November 2023	8.9	1.5		5.6
13 November – 19 November 2023	6.9	0.6		3
20 November – 26 November 2023	3.3	2.9		14.33
27 November – 3 December 2023	14.9	7.4		26.2
4 December – 10 December 2023	21.4	3.0		10.2
11 December – 17 December 2023	13.4	2.68		8.33
18 December – 24 December 2023	0	0		0.6
25 December- 31 December 2023	23.21	0.3		1.9
01 January – 07 January 2024	16.9	8.7		17.7
08 January – 14 January 2024	0			5.0
15 January – 21 January 2024	17.4			18.4
22 January – 28 January 2024	37.8			11.6
29 January – 04 February 2024	18.6			23.4
05 February – 11 February 2024	20.8			22.6
12 February – 18 February 2024	30.8			9.6
19 February – 25 February 2024	27.4			21.1
26 February – 03 March 2024	33.7			20.1
04 March – 10 March 2024	34			13
11 March – 17 March 2024	17.0			6.0
18 March – 24 March 2024	8		1.8	4.5
25 March – 31 March 2024	37.8		1.8	2.1
01 April - 07 April 2024	15.6		1.2	5.4
08 April – 14 April 2024	10.7		0	4.8

NR= not reported

2.22 The complaint data and weekly % exceedance of the WHO annoyance level have been combined and is shown on the graph below.



2.23 On 22 March 2024 the EA updated:
 ‘There has been an improvement in the raw monitoring data for the week commencing 11 March 2024. This follows completion of the steps specified in the Suspension Notice we issued on 01 March 2024. Exceedance of the World Health Organisation (WHO) odour annoyance guideline level decreased to 17 % (from 34% the previous week) at MMF 1, and 6 % at MMF 9 (from 13.0% the previous week). The levels of hydrogen sulphide detected also fell’.

MMF2 update

2.24 The EA were required to remove Mobile Monitoring Facility (MMF) 2 from Silverdale Pumping Station as the landowner planned to carry out construction works at the site. MMF 2 was removed on 8 January 2024, along with the electrical connection. The EA have recently updated ‘as the construction works have now been delayed until 2024, the landowner has agreed to allow us to use the site again’.

‘To make progress as quickly as possible we have put MMF 4 on the site. MMF 4 will carry out the same air quality monitoring using the same parameters as MMF 2’.

The EA confirmed MMF 4 is now operational and will begin publishing data for MMF 4 with effect from 25 March 2025.

H2S Data Adjustment Method

2.25 On 10 April 2024 the EA provided the following an update in ‘Latest News’:

‘In November 2023 we explained that we had developed a data adjustment method that could allow us to adjust historic hydrogen sulphide (H₂S) data, and that an independent peer review group, led by Defra’s Chief Scientific Adviser was assessing this method’.

‘In February 2024 we informed you that we expected the group’s findings to be published shortly. We understand that the report has been undergoing quality assurance. Unfortunately, no firm date has been given for its publication’.

‘We recognise that members of the community may be feeling frustrated by the delay. Once the report is formally approved and published, we expect to outline next steps’.

including the possibility of adjusting historic data, and anticipate offering another virtual public meeting’.

Environment Agency Regulatory and Enforcement Action

- 2.26** The Environment Agency has continued to provide updates on their regulatory activity on the Walleys Quarry Landfill and can be accessed here: <https://engageenvironmentagency.uk.engagementhq.com/hub-page/walleys-quarry-landfill>
- 2.27** These updates reflect regular EA officer presence at the site to review progress with the Contain Capture Destroy strategy. The Compliance Assessment Reports (published on the [EA website](#)) provide further details of the site visits undertaken.
- 2.28** There have been no further Compliance Assessment Reports published by the EA.

Key Performance Data

- 2.29** Through the settlement agreement both Walleys Quarry Ltd and the Council have developed key performance indicators in relation to relevant data from each organisation. These key performance indicators are shown in Appendix 2 and 3.
- 2.30** The data from the Council covers the period from January 2024 to March 2024, and provides complaint numbers and officer assessments.
- 2.31** The data from Walleys Quarry Limited provides data on waste acceptance, odour management, landfill operations, landfill gas management, leachate management and information relating to the EA regulator as the primary regulator of the site. The KPI data and explanatory notes for March will be uploaded as Appendix 3 when available.

3. Proposal

3.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- Note the contents of this update report.

4. Reasons for Proposed Solution

- 4.1** To ensure Cabinet is kept updated of the ongoing work to address the issues associated with the odours from Walleys Quarry landfill and to keep under review opportunities to further action.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1** To provide regular updates to Cabinet.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1** Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 is the legislation concerned with statutory nuisances in law. This is the principal piece of legislation covering the Council’s duties and responsibilities in respect of issues relating to odour nuisance:

- The Environmental Protection Act 1990, section 79 sets out the law in relation to statutory nuisance. This is the principal piece of legislation covering the Council's duties and responsibilities in respect of issues relating to odour nuisance.
- The relevant part of Section 79 defines a statutory nuisance as any smell or other effluvia arising on industrial, trade or business premises which is prejudicial to health or a nuisance. The Council is responsible for undertaking inspections and responding to complaints to determine whether a statutory nuisance exists.
- Where a statutory nuisance is identified or considered likely to arise or recur, section 80 of the Act requires that an abatement notice is served on those responsible for the nuisance. The abatement notice can either prohibit or restrict the nuisance and may require works to be undertaken by a specified date(s).
- It is then a criminal offence to breach the terms of the abatement notice. Because the site is regulated by the Environment Agency under an Environmental Permit, the council would need to obtain the consent of the Secretary of State before it is able to prosecute any offence of breaching the abatement notice.
- The Act provides powers in respect of a breach. If a person on whom an abatement notice is served, without reasonable excuse, contravenes or fails to comply with any requirement or prohibition imposed by the notice, they shall be guilty of an offence. If this is on industrial, trade or business premises shall be liable on conviction to an unlimited fine. It is a defence that the best practicable means were used to prevent, or to counteract the effects of, the nuisance.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1** The work of the Council in this regard recognises that the problematic odours in the area may impact on some groups more than others. The work is focussed on minimising this impact as soon as possible.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1** Dedicated officer resource has been allocated to continue the Council's work regarding Walleys Quarry Landfill.
- 8.2** From April 2024 there is a £300k reserve for works associated with Walleys Quarry Landfill site. Should further funding be required, up to £300k can be made available through the transfer of useable reserves (£100k from the Borough Growth Fund and £200k from the Budget and Borrowing Support Fund). These funds can be transferred without Council approval
- 8.3** Should proceedings regarding the breach of the Council's Abatement Notice exceed £600k, a further report will be presented to Council in order to seek approval to utilise funds from the General Fund Reserve.

9. Major Risks

9.1 A GRACE risk assessment has been completed including the following main risks:

- Failure to achieve a reduction in odour levels;
- Community dissatisfaction at odour levels;
- The ability to take enforcement action against abatement notice;
- Failure to evidence a breach of the abatement notice;
- Secretary of State refuses permission to undertake prosecution proceedings.

9.2 Controls have been identified and implemented in order to control these risks; the main controls include:

- Provisions in settlement agreement ensures greater transparency for public;
- Provisions in settlement agreement ensures regular meetings with Walleys Quarry which enable issues to be discussed;
- Dedicated officer resource for Walleys Quarry work has been secured;
- Continued air quality monitoring provision;
- Robust procedure for investigating complaints with experienced officers;
- Specialist expert advice maintained;
- Multi-Agency partnership working continues.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. Key Decision Information

11.1 As an update report, this is not a Key Decision.

12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

12.1 This matter has been variously considered previously by Economy, Environment & Place Scrutiny Committee, Council and Cabinet on 21 April 2021, 9th June 2021, 7th July 2021, 21st July 2021, 8th September 2021, 13th October 2021, 3rd November 2021, 17th November, 1st December 2021, 12th January 2022, 2nd February 2022, 23rd February 2022, 23rd March 2022, 20th April 2022, 7th June 2022, 19th July 2022, 6th September 2022, 18th October 2022, 8th November 2022, 6th December 2022, 10th January 2023, 7th February 2023, 13th March 2023, 5th April 2023, 6th June 2023, 18th July 2023, 19th September 2023, 17th October 2023, 7th November 2023, 5th December 2023, 16th January 2024, 6th February 2024, 14th February 2024, 19th March 2024, 10th April 2024.

13. List of Appendices

- 13.1** Appendix 1. Historical Complaint data
- 13.2** Appendix 2. NUL Key Performance Data
- 13.3** Appendix 3. WQL Key Performance Data

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Appendix 1 – Historic Complaint Numbers

Week Ending	Complaints to NuLBC	Complaints to Environment Agency	Week Ending	Complaints to NuLBC	Complaints to Environment Agency
2022			25-Sep	14	79
09-Jan	73	352	02-Oct	13	58
16-Jan	258	1045	09-Oct	42	102
23-Jan	134	651	16-Oct	52	165
30-Jan	25	139	23-Oct	73	186
06-Feb	16	64	30-Oct	30	82
13-Feb	31	120	06-Nov	27	116
20-Feb	49	166	13-Nov	23	86
27-Feb	40	264	20-Nov	60	113
06-Mar	118	571	27-Nov	2	70
13-Mar	72	285	04-Dec	19	47
20-Mar	224	1126	11-Dec	43	163
27-Mar	412	1848	18-Dec	22	114
03-Apr	243	1072	25-Dec	12	45
10-Apr	132	895	2023		
17-Apr	156	752	01-Jan	11	39
24-Apr	65	310	08-Jan	12	32
01-May	49	213	15-Jan	13	25
08-May	39	193	22-Jan	47	118
15-May	35	160	29-Jan	51	149
21-May	43	134	05-Feb	13	66
29-May	20	81	12-Feb	26	115
05-Jun	27	169	19-Feb	7	39
12-Jun	42	234	26-Feb	3	15
19-Jun	25	263	05-Mar	7	13
26-Jun	28	208	12-Mar	12	74
02-Jul	9	54	19-Mar	23	63
09-Jul	4	34	26-Mar	19	56
16-Jul	14	72	02-Apr	51	103
23-Jul	21	52	09-Apr	45	152
30-Jul	12	93	16-Apr	11	64
06-Aug	22	124	23-Apr	48	101
13-Aug	32	133	30-Apr	148	278
21-Aug	11	79	07-May	50	150
28-Aug	12	89	14-May	53	164
04-Sep	10	30	21-May	147	320
11-Sep	9	64	28-May	90	210
18-Sep	13	83	04-Jun	24	43

Week Ending	Complaints to NuLBC	Complaints to Environment Agency
11-Jun	19	75
18-Jun	76	154
25-Jun	80	170
02-Jul	40	99
09-Jul	18	46
16-Jul	20	54
23-Jul	15	73
30-Jul	28	97
06-Aug	21	67
13-Aug	7	30
20-Aug	10	44
27-Aug	8	38
03-Sep	11	59
10-Sept	26	71
17-Sept	12	72
24-Sept	8	31
01-Oct	8	26
08-Oct	8	37
15-Oct	29	64
22-Oct	22	81
29-Oct	26	115
05-Nov	5	15
12-Nov	40	123
19-Nov	35	119
26-Nov	36	135
3-Dec	115	265
10-Dec	83	151
17-Dec	48	180
24-Dec	28	79
31-Dec	44	129
2024		
07-Jan	236	627
14-Jan	76	268
21-Jan	270	824
28-Jan	86	261
04-Feb	133	416
11-Feb	382	905
18-Feb	186	527
25-Feb	397	1264
03-Mar	333	990
10-Mar	218	694
17-Mar	103	374

24-Mar	120	330
31-Mar	81	254
7-Apr	56	220

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Appendix 2 – NUL Key Performance Indicators

NULBC		Information	Measurement	MMF	January 2024	February 2024	March 2024
KPI 1	COMPLAINTS	Complaints reported to NULBC	Number		736 Number of unique properties reporting complaints = 319 Rating 0 = 1 complaints Rating 1 = 1 complaints Rating 2 = 8 complaints Rating 3 = 72 complaints Rating 4 = 111 complaints (15.1%) Rating 5 = 208 complaints (28.3%) Rating 6 = 335 complaints (45.5%) % of complaints reporting odour entering the property = 574 (78%) % of complaints reporting health effects = 516 (70.1%)	1232 Number of unique properties reporting complaints = 484 Rating 0 = 0 complaints Rating 1 = 1 complaints Rating 2 = 25 complaints Rating 3 = 99 complaints Rating 4 = 169 complaints (13.7%) Rating 5 = 335 complaints (27.2%) Rating 6 = 603 complaints (48.9%) % of complaints reporting odour entering the property = 1004 (81.5%) % of complaints reporting health effects = 908 (73.7%)	653 Number of unique properties reporting complaints = 230 Rating 0 = 3 complaints Rating 1 = 0 complaints Rating 2 = 4 complaints Rating 3 = 80 complaints Rating 4 = 102 complaints (15.6%) Rating 5 = 177 complaints (27.1%) Rating 6 = 287 complaints (44%) % of complaints reporting odour entering the property = 520 (79.6%) % of complaints reporting health effects = 516 (79.0%)
KPI 2		Complaints reported (daytime 07:00-23:00)	Number		625	989	546
KPI 3		Complaints reported (night-time 23:00-07:00)	Number		111	243	107
KPI 4		Highest number of complaints during the period	Date (number of complaints)		18/01/24 (142 complaints)	24/02/24 (185 complaints)	05/03/24 (79 complaints)

KPI 5	AIR QUALITY	Percentage exceedance Odour Annoyance Guideline (Hydrogen Sulphide 30-minute average)	%	MMF1	21	24	27
				MMF2	9*	NR	NR
				MMF 4	NR	NR	2**
				MMF9	14	19.3	6.5
KPI 6		Monthly Average H ₂ S	ug/m3 over the month	MMF1	5.2	6.3	7.4
				MMF2	3.1*	NR	NR
				MMF 4	NR	NR	1.4
				MMF9	8.2	15	8.1
KPI 7	H ₂ S PEAK LEVEL	Level measured over a 5-minute period Date & Time	ug/m3	MMF1	156.12 ug/m3 (02/01/24 @06:30)	500.26 ug/m3 (27/02/24 @05:55)	293.10 ug/m3 (05/03/24 04:25)
				MMF2	142.43 ug/m3 (07/01/24 @07:55)	NR	NR
				MMF 4	NR	NR	37.31 ug/m3 (18/03/24 05:35)
				MMF9	456.34 ug/m3 (04/01/24 @20:10)	796.02 ug/m3 (24/02/24 @22:05)	576.20 ug/m3 (06/03/24 02:50)
KPI 8	OFFICER ASSESSMENTS	Odour Rating - Officer odour assessment (5 minute)	Max Odour Rating		35 assessments 29 assessments detected landfill related odour of which 17 assessments had a maximum rating of 4 (03/01/24, 05/01/24, 06/01/24, 07/01/24, 12/01/24, 18/01/24)	9 assessments 9 assessments detected landfill related odour of which 8 assessments had a maximum rating of 4 and above (07/02/24, 24/02/24)	3 assessments 3 assessments detected landfill related odour of which 1 assessment had a maximum rating of 4 (20/03/24)

*Data from 01 January to 08 January 2024

** Data 16 March to 31 March 2024

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

Corporate Leadership Team's Report to Cabinet

23 April 2024

<u>Report Title:</u>	Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review Visit
<u>Submitted by:</u>	Corporate Leadership Team
<u>Portfolios:</u>	One Council, People & Partnerships, Finance, Town Centres & Growth
<u>Ward(s) affected:</u>	All

Purpose of the Report

To provide Cabinet with the final report from the Local Government Association's Corporate Peer Challenge progress review visit, which took place in January 2024.

Recommendation

That Cabinet:

1. Receive the Local Government Association's Corporate Peer Challenge progress review report; and
2. Approve its publication on the Council's website in line with LGA requirements.

Reasons

The progress review report marks the final stage of the Corporate Peer Challenge process following the Council's full review visit in March 2023. It assesses the progress made against the Council's Action Plan and the report is required to be published on the Council's website as the final element of the review.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Borough Council agreed to receive a Corporate Peer Challenge in March 2023 as part of the LGA's sector improvement offer. The visit was hugely successful, both in its smooth running and array of partners and stakeholders involved, but also in the positive outcomes reported at the end of the week.
- 1.2 The Peer Team's final report was published on the Council's website, alongside an Action Plan, which responded to the eight key recommendations made and covered the following themes:
 - One Council Programme
 - Capacity
 - Regeneration
 - Finance and Budgets
 - Governance
 - Partnerships
- 1.3 Since then the Council has made good progress in delivering against the Action Plan, as acknowledged by the Peers in their progress review – "The peer team felt the ambition and energy of the Council and that some of the things which were being talked about during the CPC are now moving to fruition". Many actions are now completed, with the rest underway and will continue to be monitored internally until fully implemented.
- 1.4 The Council can again feel proud of its achievements, as externally evidenced through the Corporate Peer Challenge, with many positive aspects highlighted in the progress review:

- ✓ Increased levels of employee satisfaction and engagement which is a real testament to how the organisation is run
- ✓ Staff the peer team met with again underlined their commitment to the Council and its aims and continue to be a tremendous asset to the organisation and the Borough
- ✓ The peer team were impressed with the Council's ambitions where it is aiming to be 'industry leading' in its approach to delivering regeneration
- ✓ The peer team continue to be impressed with how the Council manages its finances
- ✓ The peer team were impressed with the strength and depth of the partnership working and the active role which the Council plays

1.5 Appendix 1 of this report is the LGA Corporate Peer Review final progress visit report.

2. Proposal

That Cabinet:

- Receive the Local Government Association's Corporate Peer Challenge progress review report; and
- Approve its publication on the Council's website in line with LGA requirements.

3. Legal and Statutory Implications

3.1 None from this report.

4. Equality Impact Assessment

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.

5. Financial and Resource Implications

5.1 The review process has recognised and helped build on the Council's already strong financial management.

6. Major Risks

6.1 No new major risks have been identified through the CPC process.

7. UN Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Change Implications



8. **Key Decision Information**

8.1 This is not a key decision.

9. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

9.1 The original review report was considered by Full Council.

10. **List of Appendices**

10.1 Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review Report (Appendix 1).

11. **Background Papers**

11.1 Working papers held by officers responsible for managing the Peer Challenge.

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LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough
Council

30th January 2024

Feedback





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1. Introduction

The Council undertook a LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) during March 2023 and promptly published the [full report with an action plan](#).

The Progress Review is an integral part of the Corporate Peer Challenge process. Taking place approximately ten months after the CPC, it is designed to provide space for the Council's senior leadership to:

- Update peers on the early progress made and to receive feedback on this including how the action plan aligns to the CPC's recommendations
- Consider peers' reflections on any new opportunities or challenges that may have arisen since the peer team were 'on-site' including any further support needs
- Discuss any early impact or learning from the progress made to date

The LGA would like to thank Newcastle-under-Lyme BC (NULBC) for their commitment to sector led improvement. This Progress Review was the next step in an ongoing, open and close relationship that the Council has with LGA sector support.

2. Summary of the approach

The Progress Review took place on 30th January 2024. The progress review focussed on each of the recommendations from the CPC.

For this Progress Review, the following members of the original CPC team were involved:

- Larissa Reed, CEX Swale Borough Council
- Peter Fleming, LGA Peer
- Natalie Wigman, Assistant Director – Regeneration and Growth, Hampshire County Council
- Sue Cuerden, Executive Director of Corporate Services & Assets (Section 151 Officer), Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
- James Millington, Peer Challenge Manager, Local Government Association



The peer team met face to face at the Council over the course of 1 day with the following representatives:


- Cllr Simon Tagg - Leader
- Martin Hamilton – Chief Executive
- Cllr Stephen Sweeney – Deputy Leader
- Simon McEneny – Deputy Chief Executive
- Service Directors
- Cllr David Jones – Leader of the Opposition
- Chairs of Scrutiny
- The staff ‘Thrive’ group
- External partners

3. Progress Review - Feedback

The peer team heard about the good progress made against the recommendations following the CPC in March 2023. The peer team felt the ambition and energy of the Council and that some of the things which were being talked about during the CPC are now moving to fruition. Some new opportunities have also presented themselves, particularly around regeneration, and how following the 850 year charter celebrations last year, 2024 is the ‘year of delivery’ for the Council and its ambitions for the Borough.

Regeneration remains an important focus for NULBC, and the means by which some of the projects are being taken forward with partners are innovative approaches to financing and delivery. The peer team recognise that this presents an opportunity to deliver for the Borough and the Council will need to ensure that it continues to maintain a tight grip on the oversight and planning of these to generate the outcomes it desires.

In revisiting, the peer team were reminded about the important work which NULBC



was delivering through its internal One Council Programme and 'Service Director Cluster Model'. The peer team were really pleased to see how this has been further embedded and is working well for the organisation. The Council is also maintaining its strong and impressive approach to partnership working.

There are some imminent changes at the top of the organisation with the CEX stepping down at the end of March 2024. The peer team know that the Council is considering how it will maintain the momentum of delivering on its ambitions and how to avoid the pace of change being impacted. NULBC will want to ensure that there is provision in place through this transition period for the organisation through adequate support for the Leadership Team and interim CEX, but also have support in place for the new CEX.


Below are reflections and feedback from the peer team against the recommendations from the CPC, which builds on the discussions held at the end the peers' time onsite.

Recommendation 1: Everyone is signed up to the One Council programme. Regularly review the alignment of resources to the programme and ensure staff are kept updated on its achievements.

The peer team heard how the One Council programme and changes in the way the Council has organised itself has continued to embed and is working well for the organisation. The programme has been clearly articulated through a timetable of activity and communications, including through Castle News, to maintain its profile.

The programme continues to be a priority for the Council and the peer team heard the focus was now on ensuring new performance management systems and changes to the organisational culture become business as usual.

As part of the principles of the One Council programme the new Technology Strategy




supports a 'digital first' approach. The Strategy outlines the vision for technology and how through investment the Council can utilise tools to deliver services, whilst at the same time rationalising existing systems and expenditure, and equip staff with the necessary skills needed.

The peer team heard how the Executive Director Model has developed into a Service Director Cluster Model - where Directors are rotated into leadership positions for a defined amount of time to work on projects and take on additional responsibilities. This is a new and innovative approach and colleagues the peer team met with appreciated this, valuing the opportunities for their personal development, exposure to issues and problem solving, and the connections which could be made with colleagues across the organisation to enhance cross-Council working. Directors spoke positively about this and some pointed to this model and the opportunities as being a key reason for them joining NULBC. The peer team would encourage the Council to continue to keep the model under review and ensure that it is producing the outcomes it is anticipating.

Recommendation 2: Continue to consider the capacity needs of the organisation and the ability to flex resources to deliver council services and ambitions.

The peer team heard how NULBC's new People Strategy was developed across the organisation and with the Trade Unions. The Strategy outlines "*how NULBC will create an environment and culture through which our people can flourish and proudly deliver our Council Plan for the benefit of the Borough.*" This is a positive approach in aligning resources with the political ambitions.

Staff the peer team met with again underlined their commitment to the Council and its aims and continue to be a tremendous asset to the organisation and the Borough it serves. In supporting this, the results from the recent staff survey in November 2023 demonstrated increased levels of employee satisfaction and engagement which is a




real testament to how the organisation is run. The peer team spoke to staff who agree that the Council has responded well to the ideas of how to communicate and engage staff – which includes the depot and the use of the staff Thrive Group, which remains a great model. The staff survey results are very impressive and show that 95% of respondents understand what is needed to reach targets and 90% of respondents understand how their role impacts and benefits residents. Officers the team spoke to were confident about the future, and also reflected on the positive staff survey results and the overall feedback but asked that the areas which still needed some attention – including around ensuring their remain opportunities to learn and develop (although this has increased from 40% in 2022 to 74%) - were not forgotten.

Recommendation 3: The council has a ‘once in a lifetime’ opportunity and ambition for high quality regeneration - consider how you schedule delivery to maximise impact.

Recommendation 4: Consider how to keep partners better informed on the progress of regeneration projects.

The Council articulates lots of really exciting regeneration activity and projects for the Borough and the peer team were impressed with the Council’s ambitions where it is aiming to be ‘industry leading’ in its approach to delivering regeneration. As part of this NULBC has appointed Capital and Centric to masterplan three important projects - York Place, Midway Car Park and the Ryecroft. The proposed approach includes: developing costed proposals for agreement by the Council; NULBC funding the build stage; Capital & Centric purchasing the asset at practical completion at either cost or value; and Capital and Centric retaining and operating the assets, and curating the spaces. This approach is innovative and also financially significant to NULBC as it reprofiles the Council’s borrowing for development over 2-3 years per development, rather than for asset life.

The Council has already committed a lot of time to ensuring this process is clearly understood and the peer team would encourage it maintains its a grip on the detail




and that regeneration is seen as corporately owned - where everyone plays their part in its delivery. This will include ensuring that the governance and legal aspects remain tight, and that the project management detail is monitored closely. This is a new approach for the Council and maintaining a good working relationship, and challenging where appropriate as a client, will be important. The Council already has excellent experience in developing other productive partner relationships and can apply this learning to progress this partnership on delivering on its regeneration ambitions. This may also include NULBC considering buying-in skills at various points to support it in its approach.

The Council has reviewed the approach to communications regarding regeneration with programme newsletters provided to partners through the Town Deal Boards, on projects within the regeneration programmes for Kidsgrove and Newcastle. More widely, the Council has reviewed its approach and capacity for communications across the organisation and has a proposal to deliver these through Staffordshire County Council. The Council will want to keep this under review to ensure that this approach is delivering the outcomes it desires.

Recommendation 5: Recognising strong financial management, it is important to continue to promote joint responsibility and accountability for the financial health of the organisation and to put in place robust plans and governance to meet future financial challenges.

The peer team continue to be impressed with how the Council manages its finances. This is testament to the collective approach of the s151 and finance colleagues working with elected Members and officers to find efficiencies and to close the budget gap in 2024/25 without having to call on reserves. It will be important to continue to closely monitor the delivery of the budget and savings throughout the year and ensure Members are able to confidently scrutinise the financial position of the Council. NULBC will want to maintain the discussions around the future years' budget gap and consider any implications of not achieving the budget savings requirements in 2024/25.




Following the CPC the peer team had discussed the need to ensure that everyone was accountable for the financial position of the Council. The peer team heard about the approach the Council had adopted for the development of the 2024/25 budget and the ongoing important role of the Efficiency Boards. During the Progress Review this felt embedded in Member and officer activity, with increased accountability through regular finance reporting and specific monitoring of the externally funded projects including the Future High Street Fund and Town Deal Funds. There are always further opportunities for doing more and to ensure everyone understands the impact of activity on the Council's financial position, and it was good to hear that the Council is planning Budget Holder Training sessions and maintaining its Member training on finance to strengthen corporate responsibility.

There is so much regeneration activity and Council aspiration around ideas for generating income – the Council has refreshed its Commercial Strategy - with considerations around charging and borrowing. As the approach of borrowing for the regeneration activity is new to NULBC it may want to further satisfy itself that its borrowing strategy is viable, adequately assessing and reviewing risks and understanding the wider economic position. It will also need to consider the timing of this to ensure that the level of short term borrowing required is possible for regeneration purposes.

Recommendation 6: Build on the recent successes in Scrutiny regarding Budget Scrutiny and Walleys Quarry and consider how this approach can be incorporated to ensure Scrutiny works effectively across the organisation.

The peer team heard that Scrutiny needed further attention and the new Service Director for Legal and Governance is reviewing the current practice and model. NULBC recognises that work remains and there is an opportunity to look at pre-decision scrutiny once further officer capacity has been established. However, the peer team heard about some good examples of Council scrutiny on HS2, on health



matters and the use of task and finish groups, which looked at Social Housing. The peer team also heard that there is a productive approach to working cross-party in Scrutiny which provides a good platform on which to build.

However, the peer team felt that Scrutiny can feel transactional, with some items being provided for updates and for information only rather than Scrutiny being used effectively to positively hold the Executive to account or to inform policy development. Reviewing how the scrutiny programme is developed and the process by which items are added to the agenda could support this improvement. Currently this is not consistent for all committees and subsequently means that the agendas can be quite lengthy and this impacts on the ability of the committees to focus its available time on scrutinising strategically important topics.

Additionally, Scrutiny may benefit from support and advice to the committee not only on the areas of questioning but also around critiquing the answers which they are receiving – as this is particularly important when considering the commercial relationships where the Council will have a client role. The Council will want to assure itself that it has the skills to be able to undertake this role – both for officers and Members - and embed this. This will ensure scrutiny positively shapes the ways in which the projects come forward and are delivered.

A new member development programme is being developed for roll-out from May 2024 to ensure all councillors can effectively develop the skills they need. The peer team think that this is an opportunity to include training for Members around commercial development. The peer team heard that Member support opportunities which are arranged do not consistently attract good levels of attendance. Group Leaders may want to consider how they can encourage wider attendance and how the Constitution and Member Development Working Group designs the development plan in consultation with Members, which includes a range of activities, including internal and external offers.

Recommendation 7: Consideration should be given for how the council can

remain fully involved in discussions to develop and shape post-LEP arrangements and further collaboration with other Councils across the County.


The Council plays an important and active role in the Staffordshire Leaders' Board, which is providing the means to progress economic development activity post-LEP. The peer team heard about the contributions the Council is making to the development of a pipeline of economic development opportunities and a business engagement mechanism.

The role the Council has on the Staffordshire Leaders' Board is important, championing the north of Staffordshire and the Leader is critical in building positive relationships with Stoke-on-Trent. This puts the Council in a good position and is to the benefit of all partners.

Recommendation 8: The council can build on the fantastic relationships it has with partners and work together to deliver its strategic ambitions.

During the CPC in March 2023 the peer team were impressed with the strength and depth of the partnership working and the active role which the Council plays. The Council are keen to maintain and build on this. Partners the peer team spoke with as part of the Progress Review were clear that NULBC remains a key and important partner and the Council continues to be spoken about in really positive terms for the role it plays.

The peer team were made aware of a range of recent activity with partners in delivering against its strategic ambitions including: with the Business Improvement District (BID) to agree shared objectives; the 'Week of Action' with the Police which focused on town centre PSPO enforcement; the Homelessness Hub; and the hugely impactful Vulnerability Hub where partners continue to make a real difference to the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in the Borough. These partner



relationships will continue to be important for NULBC in meeting challenges and delivering its ambitions for the Borough, and it is well placed to continue to build on this.

4. Final thoughts and next steps

The LGA would like to thank Newcastle-under-Lyme BC for undertaking an LGA CPC progress review.

We appreciate that senior managerial and political leadership will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions in order to determine how the organisation wishes to take things forward.

Under the umbrella of LGA sector-led improvement, there is an on-going offer of support to councils. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on a number of the areas identified for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this.

Helen Murray (Principal Adviser) is the main point of contact between the authority and the Local Government Association (LGA) and their e-mail address is helen.murray@local.gov.uk.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S
REPORT TO CABINET**

23 April 2024

Report Title: Grassland Management Strategy and Plan

Submitted by: Service Director – Sustainable Environment

Portfolios: Sustainable Environment

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To seek approval for the Grassland Management Strategy and Plan			
<u>Recommendation</u>			
<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the Grassland Management Strategy and Plan 2. Approves the selected sites for the national ‘No Mow May’ campaign in consultation with local Borough Council Members. 			
<u>Reasons</u>			
<p>Creation of a Grassland Management Strategy and Plan aims to deliver a sustainable grassland management policy that empowers Council services to increase local biodiversity and societal mental health and wellbeing through the recovery of natural habitats, whilst also reducing the need for extensive resources for different sites.</p> <p>To outline the Councils approach to the national ‘No Mow May’ campaign on a selection of sites where some set aside areas can be achieved.</p>			

1. Background

1.1 The Council adopted its Sustainable Environment Strategy (SES) in December 2020. The Strategy is a landmark document that sets 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 plans and initiatives sit.

1.2 There are 4 Priority Outcomes associated with the Strategy as follows:

- Reduce the reliance on the use of fossil fuels.
- Reduce carbon and other damaging emissions.
- Minimise waste and increase recycling.
- Offset residual carbon emissions.

1.3 The Council has now developed a Grassland Management Strategy and Plan to further aid increasing biodiversity within the borough. Development of effective grassland management provides habitats for wildlife, increases seedbanks, and can provide buffers to noise air and water pollution.

1.4 Biodiversity is a necessity in the Borough as it encompasses the variety and quantity of flora and fauna in the area and the more biodiverse an area is, the more healthy, resilient and more fertile the environment is. A biodiverse Borough therefore increases food security, climate change resilience, clean water, sanitation and many more other societal and environmental needs that are described by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. (UN SDG's)

2. Issues.

2.1 The Council currently has a vast amount of open space grassland that has the opportunity to benefit the Borough socially and environmentally. Grasslands are incredibly important and will help the Council achieve its goals towards net zero and nature recovery. Through relaxed management on grasslands, the Council can encourage the increase in biodiversity, societal health and wellbeing, sequester carbon, inform residents and use Council resources more efficiently.

2.2 Leaving areas uncut and campaigns such as 'No Mow May' (see appendix 3) can be viewed negatively by residents and businesses, as merely a cost saving operation, which makes an area look untidy and unkempt. It is important, therefore to have a balance in creating areas where grass can be allowed to grow, and therefore helping increase biodiversity, and maintaining high quality public realm, which demonstrates care and investment in ensuring the borough is a visually pleasing and well-maintained place to live and do business.

3. Proposal

3.1 A Grassland Management Strategy and Plan will be the beginning towards a new outlook on how the Council manages its land and perceives the natural environment in the Borough. Experts within the Council and others such as The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust have informed the development of the strategy. This Strategy will make the Council a leader in the sector.

3.2 The Grassland Management Strategy aims to deliver a sustainable grassland management policy that empowers Council services to increase local biodiversity and societal mental health and wellbeing through the recovery of

natural habitats, whilst also reducing the need for extensive resource use and resources for different sites.

3.3 The Strategy seeks to –

- To increase biodiversity and nature recovery networks in the Borough, more particularly more invertebrates, wildflowers and small fauna.
- To increase efficiency in Council resource use by enabling resources for priority jobs and works in the Borough, which uses fewer resources on grasslands that don't, need to be managed.
- To contribute towards the Councils Net Zero goals by 2030 and 2050 by reducing the amount of fuel the Council uses and sequestering and storing more carbon with increased grasslands.
- To educate residents, businesses and visitors about the change in grassland management and why biodiversity is important for the Borough.

3.4 The Strategy itself is set out into three phases as set out in the Grassland Management Strategy and Plan Policy Document (Appendix 2)

- **Phase 1.** – Pocket Ward Grasslands – this will incorporate new grassland management regimes at different pocket sites in different wards.
- **Phase 2.** – Review and Consult – Following phase 1 a review will be undertaken including a consultation exercise to identify and report on the social and environmental impacts of pockets ward grasslands programme. If proved to benefit biodiversity and improve resident views on wildlife in public spaces then Phase 3 in parks and Grassland Spaces may begin.
- **Phase 3.** – Parks and Grassland Space – Following completion of phase 2, phase 3 will see the Council will begin to roll out the new management regimes throughout the its parks and other grassland spaces such as road verges and low amenity spaces.

3.5 The strategy has six distinct policy areas, which are detailed in the Policy Document, appendix 2, as follows –

- **Policy 1.** – public open spaces and informal sport amenity
- **Policy 2.** – designated pathways and additional amenities
- **Policy 3.** – meadow edges and verges
- **Policy 4.** – Grassland Management
- **Policy 5.** – Low activity and tree canopy amenity
- **Policy 6.** – Wildflower meadows

3.6 As part of the national 'No Mow May' campaign the following sites have been identified as part of Phase 1 (Pocket ward Grasslands) these are sites in the Borough Councils ownership, and are separate from the County highways land which the Council now manages on their behalf. Highway grass will receive eight scheduled cuts over the year.

- Bradwell – Arnold Grove
- Clayton – Kingsbridge medical centre
- Brampton Vale (Donkey Field)
- Bradwell - Chatterley Close (already a meadow location)
- Crackley – Crackley Field
- Chesterton – Douglas Road
- Westlands – Fields behind Guernsey Drive
- Keele – Keele Cemetery (already a meadow location)
- Westlands – Land behind Leys Drive
- Chesterton – Loomer Road
- Clayton – Norwich Place – Stafford Ave
- Poolfields – Rotterdam Field
- Chesterton – Sheldon Grove
- Kidsgrove – Coalpit Hill
- Cross Heath – The Wammy
- Thistleberry – Thistleberry Parkway
- Clayton – Wye Road

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That Cabinet approves the Grassland Management Strategy and Plan
- 4.2 That cabinet approves the selected sites (outlined in section 3) for the national ‘No Mow May’ campaign in consultation with local Borough Council Members.

5. Reasons

- 5.1 The Council currently has a vast amount of grassland that has the opportunity to benefit the Borough socially and environmentally. Grasslands are incredibly important and will help the Council achieve its goals towards net zero and nature recovery. Through relaxed management on grasslands, the Council can encourage the increase in biodiversity, societal health and wellbeing, sequester carbon, inform residents and use Council resources more efficiently.
- 5.2 A Grassland Management Strategy and Plan will be the beginning towards a new outlook on how the Council manages its land and perceives the natural environment in the Borough. Experts within the Council and others such as The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust have informed the strategy and plan.
- 5.3 This Strategy will make the Council a leader in the sector.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal or statutory implications arising from this report.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 There are no equality impact issues arising from this report.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 Management of the Councils open spaces and parks is covered as part of the Councils medium term financial system (MTFS), and is fully budgeted for.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1 Not having effective and appropriately resourced strategies and management plans for the land the Council owns and manages, could put the Council at risk from challenge, particularly in terms of how it will meet the challenge of Net zero, and the need to increase biodiversity. This Grassland management strategy and Plan, together with the previously approved Tree and Biodiversity management Pan mitigates those risks.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

- 10.1 The Grassland Management Strategy and Plan supports a number of the UNSD Goals, and supports the Councils plan in becoming net zero for its own operations by 2030, and the wider Borough by 2050.



11. Key Decision Information

- 11.1 The report is not a key decision.

12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

- 12.1 None

13. List of Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1. – NBC Grassland Management Strategy and Plan (PDF)

<https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/downloads/file/2200/grassland-management-strategy-and-plan>

13.2 Appendix 2. – Grassland Management Strategy and Plan Policy document

13.3 Appendix 3. – Grassland – ‘No Mow May’ Statement

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 None

Grassland Management Strategy & Plan

AIM & OBJECTIVES

This strategy and plan aims to deliver a sustainable grassland management policy that empowers Council services to increase local biodiversity and societal mental health and wellbeing through the recovery of natural habitats, whilst also reducing the need for extensive resource use and resources for different sites.

1. To increase biodiversity and nature recovery networks in the Borough, more particularly more invertebrates, wildflowers and small fauna.
2. To increase efficiency in Council resource use by enabling resources for priority jobs and works in the Borough which uses less resources on grasslands that don't need to be managed.
3. To contribute towards the Councils Net Zero goals by 2030 and 2050 by reducing the amount of fuel the Council uses and sequestering and storing more carbon with increased grasslands.
4. To educate residents, businesses and visitors about the change in grassland management and why biodiversity is important for the Borough.

STRATEGY PHASES

Phase 1: <u>Pocket Ward Grasslands</u>	Phase 2: <u>Review & Consult</u>	Phase 3: <u>Parks & Grassland Space</u>
<p>Phase 1 will incorporate new grassland management regimes at different pocket sites in different wards. These are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bradwell – Arnold Grove • Clayton – Kingsbridge medical centre • Brampton Vale (Donkey Field) • Bradwell - Chatterley Close (already meadow location) • Crackley – Crackley Field • Chesterton – Douglas Road • Westlands – Guernsey Drive • Keele – Keele Cemetery (already meadow location) • Westlands – Leys Drive • Chesterton – Loomer Road 	<p>After Phase 1 (which may be conducted over 2 years), the Council will conduct a review and consultation to identify and report on the social and environmental impacts of pockets ward grasslands programme. If proved to benefit biodiversity and improve resident</p>	<p>Once Phase 2 is completed then the Council may move to Phase 3. The Council will begin to roll out the new management regimes throughout the parks listed below and other grassland spaces such as road verges and low amenity spaces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bathpool Park

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clayton – Norwich Place – Stafford Ave • Poolfields – Rotterdam Field • Chesterton – Sheldon Grove • Kidsgrove – Coalpit Hill • Cross Heath – The Wammy • Thistleberry – Thistleberry Parkway • Westbury – Westbury Park • Clayton – Wye Road 	views on wildlife in public spaces then Phase 3 in parks and Grassland Spaces may begin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyme Valley parkway • Brampton Museum & Park • Wolstanton Marsh & Park
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P1. PUBLIC OPEN SPACES & INFORMAL SPORT AMENITY

Grassland Management Strategy & Plan

ANNUAL CUTTING TIMELINE

Mid-March to Mid-October

Cutting Period	Not Cutting Period
----------------	--------------------

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		

MAINTENANCE TABLE

Target Cut Height (Height grass to be cut)	50mm
Cutting Frequency	Every four weeks throughout the growing season
Cutting Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand mower - Ride-on mower - Flail mower - Strimmer - Tractor
Arising Management	Dropped locally in-situ

MANAGEMENT METHOD & DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Public open spaces and Informal sport areas (not spaces used by formal sports clubs) will be cut every four weeks to a target of 50mm during the growing seasons where appropriate. This document has been created to ensure grassland areas are well managed for use for sport and by the community for recreation. Mowing equipment will be:

- A ride on mower or flail mower to cut the larger areas.
- Hand mower or strimmer to cut localised smaller or undulating areas.

ADDITIONAL REGIMES

Additional regimes for public open spaces and informal sports amenities include:

- Creating long meadows surrounding public open spaces and informal sport amenities such as on road or path verges, canopied areas and where not used.
- Mowing desire lines through long meadow verges that surround the open spaces and informal pitches.
- Mowing viewing areas where informal pitches are located for members of the public attending sports games.

IMPLICATIONS (POSITIVE & NEGATIVE)

- Encouraging wildlife corridors and biodiversity to develop on Borough land.
- Creating safer areas for the public to use with verges that act as a barrier in between paths and roads.
- Leaving long meadows that border amenities increase job efficiency for the Council where some mowing regimes can take days when barriers like trees and bollards are in the way.
- Activities/jobs litter picking long meadow areas will be more difficult however the time saved by mowing will make up for this.
- The degradation of natural resources like trees from equipment use and over maintenance will reduce with the creation of more meadows and the decrease in maintenance.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY DESIGN

Public Open Space & Informal Sports Amenity Example

Cut every four weeks or when appropriate to a target height of 50mm

Mid March to Mid October

Highlighted areas indicate the potential for long meadows.

From mid-March to mid-October public and informal sports spaces will be cut to a target height of 50mm every four weeks. Cuttings will be chopped and left on fresh cut areas.

Areas near informal sports areas and path/road verges will be left for viewing and sightliness.

Areas surrounding these amenities such as verges and banks may be left uncut to promote long meadows. They will have desire lines, cut edges and viewing areas as seen by the highlighted areas.

Google

P2. DESIGNATED PATHWAYS & ADDITIONAL AMENITIES

Grassland Management Strategy & Plan

ANNUAL CUTTING TIMELINE

Mid-March to Mid-October

Cutting Period	Not Cutting Period
----------------	--------------------

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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MAINTENANCE TABLE

Target Cut Height (Height grass to be cut)	50mm
Cutting Frequency	Every four weeks throughout the growing season
Cutting Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand mower - Ride-on mower - Flail mower - Strimmer - Tractor
Arising Management	Dropped locally in-situ

MANAGEMENT METHOD & DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Designated pathways like desire lines and additional amenities like viewing areas will be cut every four weeks to a target of 50mm during the growing seasons where appropriate. This document has been created to ensure grassland areas are well managed for use for accessibility to public open spaces and for use as a natural corridor and biodiversity promotion. Designated paths will be 2m wide to ensure adequate space is allocated for public use, unless the path is popular which may influence a wider cut.

- A ride on mower or flail mower to cut the larger areas.
- Hand mower or strimmer to cut localised smaller or undulating areas.

ADDITIONAL REGIMES

Additional regimes for designated pathways and additional amenities include:

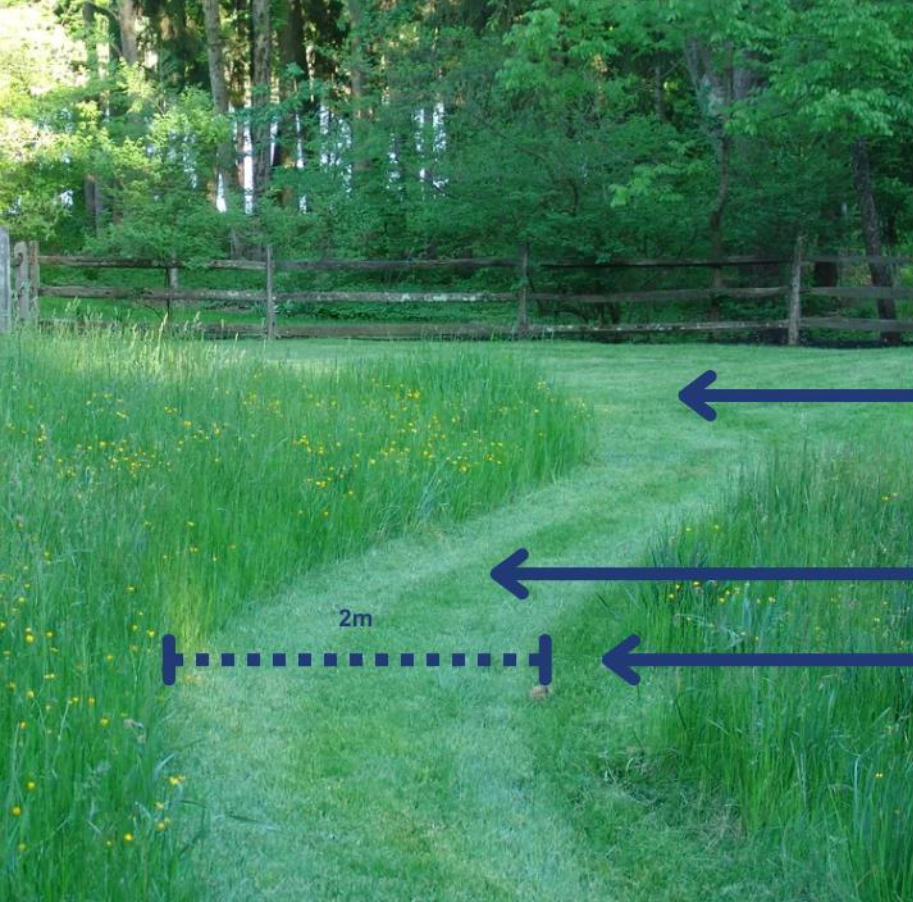
- The creation of desire lines where roads meet near a long meadow that leads into a public open space.
- Mowing desire lines through long meadow verges that surround open spaces and informal pitches.
- Mowing viewing areas where informal pitches are located for members of the public attending sports games.
- Mowing around additional amenities such as seating areas for public use.

IMPLICATIONS (POSITIVE & NEGATIVE)


- Encouraging wildlife corridors and biodiversity to develop on Borough land.
- Creating safer areas for the public to use with long meadows that act as a barrier in between paths and roads.
- Leaving long meadows that border amenities increase job efficiency for the Council where some mowing regimes can take days when barriers like trees and bollards are in the way.
- Activities/jobs litter picking long meadow areas will be more difficult however the time saved by mowing will make up for this.
- The degradation of natural resources like trees from equipment use and over maintenance will reduce with the creation of more meadows and the decrease in maintenance.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY DESIGN

Designated Pathways & Additional Amenities Example



Cut every four weeks or when appropriate to a target height of 50mm



Mid March to Mid October

Highlighted areas indicate the potential for long meadows.

From mid-March to mid-October designated paths and additional amenities will be cut to a target height of 50mm every four weeks.

Cuttings will be chopped and left on fresh cut areas.

Desire lines and paths cut through long meadows will be cut 2m wide or variable for popular paths. Additional Amenities will be cut based on the attached public open space or sports pitch.

P3. MEADOW EDGES & VERGES

Grassland Management Strategy & Plan

ANNUAL CUTTING TIMELINE

Mid-March to Mid-October

Cutting Period	Not Cutting Period
----------------	--------------------

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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MAINTENANCE TABLE

Target Cut Height (Height grass to be cut)	50mm
Cutting Frequency	Every four weeks throughout the growing season or when appropriate according to Staffordshire County Council's verge management policy.
Cutting Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand mower - Ride-on mower - Flail mower - Strimmer - Tractor
Arising Management	Dropped locally in-situ

MANAGEMENT METHOD & DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Meadow edges and verges will be cut 1m wide every four weeks to a target of 50mm during the growing seasons where appropriate. The Council must ensure that all verges under County jurisdiction must be cut by County Specifications. This document has been created to ensure grassland areas are well managed for sightlines and safety.

- A ride on mower or flail mower to cut the larger areas.
- Hand mower or strimmer to cut localised smaller or undulating areas.

ADDITIONAL REGIMES

Additional regimes for meadow edges and verges include:

- The creation of meadow edges wherever a meadow is located on Borough land.
- When appropriate to create long strips of meadows between roads and paths.

IMPLICATIONS (POSITIVE & NEGATIVE)

- Encouraging wildlife corridors and biodiversity to develop on Borough land.
- Creating safer areas for the public to use with long meadows that act as a barrier in between paths and roads and cut meadow edges for visibility.
- Leaving long meadows that border amenities increase job efficiency for the Council where some mowing regimes can take days when barriers like trees and bollards are in the way.
- Activities/jobs litter picking long meadow areas will be more difficult however the time saved by mowing will make up for this.

- The degradation of natural resources like trees from equipment use and over maintenance will reduce with the creation of more meadows and the decrease in maintenance.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY DESIGN

Meadow Edges & Verges Example

Cut every four weeks or when appropriate to a target height of 50mm

Mid March to Mid October

Highlighted areas indicate the potential for long meadows.

From mid-March to mid-October meadow edges and verges will be cut to a target height of 50mm every four weeks and be at least 1m wide or according to the County's specifications.

Cuttings will be chopped and left on fresh cut areas.

Meadow edges and verges located around meadows, near paths or roads will have a long meadow attached to it, if there is enough space and it is over 3m in width.

P4. AMENITY PRESTIGE

Grassland Management Strategy & Plan

ANNUAL CUTTING TIMELINE

Mid-March to Mid-October

Cutting Period	Not Cutting Period
----------------	--------------------

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	------	------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

MAINTENANCE TABLE

Target Cut Height (Height grass to be cut)	50mm
Cutting Frequency	Every two weeks throughout the growing season
Cutting Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand mower - Ride-on mower - Strimmer - Tractor
Arising Management	Collected after each cut

MANAGEMENT METHOD & DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Amenity prestige areas will be cut every two weeks to a target of 50mm during the growing seasons where appropriate. This document has been created to ensure grassland areas in prestigious areas are well managed for the value of the area. This includes the mowing of roundabouts in the Borough according to the civic pride enhanced standard and when appropriate introducing perennial plant species to reduce resource use and increase biodiversity. Additionally this includes the mowing of formal sports pitches in Council parks, used by sports clubs.

- A ride on mower or flail mower to cut the larger areas.
- Hand mower or strimmer to cut localised smaller or undulating areas.

ADDITIONAL REGIMES

Additional regimes for amenity prestige include:

- The creation of meadows where possible in prestigious areas, such as below tree canopied areas.
- Council managed sports pitches that are in ownership of the Council but used by sports club will be managed according to Policy 4 Amenity Prestige.
- Council owned sports pitches which are self-managed by sports clubs will aim to adhere to the standards set out in Policy 4 Amenity Prestige.

IMPLICATIONS (POSITIVE & NEGATIVE)

- By mowing every 2 weeks in prestigious areas, this adds no benefit to biodiversity or society other than the perceived cleanliness of the site.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY DESIGN

Amenity Prestige Example



Cut every two weeks or when appropriate to a target height of 50mm



Mid March to Mid October

Highlighted areas indicate the potential for long meadows.

Amenity prestige areas like the Brampton Museum and Park will have well cut lawns due to the prestige of the site. This means no long meadows will be created unless justified like under tree canopy.

From mid-March to mid-October amenity prestige areas will be cut to a target height of 50mm every two weeks and be at least 1m wide or according to the County's standards. Cuttings will be collected after each cut.

P5. LOW ACTIVITY & TREE CANOPY AMENITY

Grassland Management Strategy & Plan

ANNUAL CUTTING TIMELINE

Mid-March to Mid-October

Cutting Period	Not Cutting Period
----------------	--------------------

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		

MAINTENANCE TABLE

Target Cut Height (Height grass to be cut)	50mm
Cutting Frequency	Cut the grass length to 50mm whenever the height of the meadow reaches up to 200mm. Cuttings must be left for nutrient generation and seed bank creation. 0 to 1 cuts a year are advised.
Cutting Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand mower - Ride-on mower - Flail mower - Strimmer - Tractor
Arising Management	Dropped locally in-situ

MANAGEMENT METHOD & DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Long meadows will be left to grow until the grow season where it will be cut to a grass length of 50mm whenever the height of the meadow reaches up to 200mm.

- A ride on mower or flail mower to cut the larger areas.
- Hand mower or strimmer to cut localised smaller or undulating areas.

ADDITIONAL REGIMES

Additional regimes for idle low and canopy amenity include:

- The creation of meadow edges wherever a meadow is located on Borough land.
- If there is a meadow/verge between a path and road that is less than 3m wide the entire area will be cut according to this regime.
- The creation of any desire lines that are used by the public with adequate mowing regimes according to the meadow edges and verges and the designated pathways policy.
- In areas that are considered to be wetlands, the Council will not cut due to difficulty and the opportunity for biodiverse habitats. This will then be allowed to develop into scrub areas.


IMPLICATIONS (POSITIVE & NEGATIVE)

- Encouraging wildlife corridors and biodiversity to develop on Borough land.
- Creating safer areas for the public to use with long meadows that act as a barrier in between paths and roads and cut meadow edges for visibility.


- Leaving long meadows increase job efficiency for the Council where some mowing regimes can take days when barriers like trees and bollards are in the way.
- Activities/jobs litter picking long meadow areas will be more difficult however the time saved by mowing will make up for this.
- The degradation of natural resources like trees from equipment use and over maintenance will reduce with the creation of more meadows and the decrease in maintenance.
- Reducing the risk that falling branches have on the public as long meadow areas under canopy will be inaccessible except for designated pathways.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY DESIGN

Low Activity Amenity Example



Cut to a height of 50mm every time it grows up to 200mm (once a year at the beginning of season).



Mid March to Mid October

Highlighted areas indicate the potential for long meadows.

Low activity amenity areas can be identified for the generation of long meadows such as this area in Kidsgrove, Coalpit Hill. This area will be paired with other policies like meadow edges which makes it look clean. Trees have been planted here which pairs well with meadow generation.

From mid-March to mid-October low activity areas will be cut to a target height of 50mm once a year if able to. Cuttings will be left after each cut.

Tree Canopy Amenity Example



Cut to a height of 50mm every time it grows up to 200mm (0-1 a year at the beginning of season).



Mid March to Mid October

Highlighted areas indicate the potential for long meadows.

Canopy areas that aren't used or that may cause safety issues by many can be identified for the generation of long meadows such as this area at Lyme Valley. This area will be paired with other policies like meadow edges/verges which makes it look clean.

From mid-March to mid-October canopy areas will not be cut unless justified. if cut, cuttings will be left after each cut.

P6. WILDFLOWER MEADOWS

Grassland Management Strategy & Plan

MANAGEMENT METHOD & DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Wherever possible the Council will identify areas of long meadows that can be sown to create perennial wildflower sites for the benefit of the environment and people. They will be managed similarly to P5 however will need specialised care to secure the welfare of the wildflowers.

IMPLICATIONS (POSITIVE & NEGATIVE)

- Encouraging wildlife corridors and biodiversity to develop on Borough land.
 - Leaving long meadows with wildflowers increases job efficiency for the Council where some mowing regimes can take days when barriers like trees and bollards are in the way.
 - Activities/jobs litter picking long meadow areas will be more difficult however the time saved by mowing will make up for this.
 - The degradation of natural resources like trees from equipment use and over maintenance will reduce with the creation of more meadows and the decrease in maintenance.
 - Reducing the risk that falling branches have on the public as long meadow areas under canopy will be inaccessible except for designated pathways.
-

CONCLUSION

Grassland Management Strategy & Plan

The Council currently has a vast amount of grassland that has the opportunity to benefit the Borough socially and environmentally. Grasslands are incredibly important and will help the Council achieve its goals towards net zero and nature recovery. Through relaxed management on grasslands, the Council can encourage the increase in biodiversity, societal health and wellbeing, sequester carbon, inform residents and use Council resources more efficiently.

A Grassland Management Strategy and Plan will be the beginning towards a new outlook on how the Council manages its land and perceives the natural environment in the Borough. However must be informed by experts within the Council and others such as The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. This Strategy will make the Council a leader in the sector.

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Grassland No Mow May Statement

No Mow May was started by Plantlife ([Plantlife's No Mow May Movement](#)) with the aim to encourage people and organisations in the UK to let grass grow on their land during the Month of May to promote flower and pollinator rich meadows. Due to the degradation and decline of the UK's natural environment and wildlife, the implementation of No Mow May would help combat this issue by benefitting wildlife, tackling pollution and store carbon!

The campaign itself only encourages people and organisations to take part during May however the aim is to raise awareness about the issue, enable people to make the change and then enable those people or organisations to make that change during the entire growing season every year to promote the natural environment for a longer period of time, which has more of a positive footprint. Ideally every resident and land owning organisation would take part in longer periods of no to little grassland maintenance periods however this is difficult for some due to different barriers such as their knowledge on the subject, which is why Plantlife solely focus on May to get more people and organisations to embrace the campaign and take part.

Through taking part in No Mow May, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is able to transform its landscapes for a month to help promote the local natural environment, however to ensure the Council does everything it can for nature recovery the period of not mowing and the capacity of land can be increased to the entire growing season and low amenity land for example. The transition from a monthly programme to an annual programme will allow for a larger more positive impact on the natural environment and the local community, making Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council a leader in the sector with the Grassland Management Strategy & Plan.



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NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM
REPORT TO CABINET

23 April 2024

Report Title: Asset Disposal – Apedale Business Park, Watermills Road, Chesterton, Newcastle

Submitted by: Interim Chief Executive

Portfolios: Finance, Town Centres and Growth

Ward(s) affected: Chesterton

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
To seek approval to dispose of land at Apedale Business Park, Watermills Road, Chesterton for industrial development purposes	
<u>Recommendation</u>	
That Cabinet:	
<p>1.1 Approve the disposal of the land at Apedale Business Park, Watermills Road, Chesterton for Industrial development purposes.</p> <p>1.2 Authorise the Interim Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth, to complete the disposal of the land at Watermills Road, Chesterton.</p>	
<u>Reasons</u>	
To bring forward an unused area of land for industrial development.	
To bring in a capital receipt which will be used to part finance the Council’s future capital programme.	

1. Background

1.1 This land is the only remaining undeveloped part of Plot B Apedale Business Park, Chesterton. It is an industrial plot of land which measures 3.335 acres (1.350 hectares). The site was acquired by the Council in 1984 from G.H. Downing Limited (subsequently part of Ibstock Brick Limited). This was subsequently reclaimed by the Council and is considered suitable for a

variety of industrial uses, including B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution).

1.2 The site has not previously been listed in the Asset Management Strategy for disposal even though it is within the industrial development envelope as it was considered it was needed for a drainage scheme. There is a spring and discharge point on the site which is thought to be due to historic mine workings. The water when it hits the atmosphere turns an ochre colour. It was originally proposed that the Council use the land for reed beds to manage the water flow. The drainage issues will become the responsibility of the purchaser.

2. Issues

2.1 A local business, who is looking expand their business, has expressed an interest in acquiring this land and is prepared to deal with the drainage issues associated with this site.

2.2 To ensure the Council is complying with the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) – Section 123, the land is marketed to ensure best consideration is achieved.

2.3 In accordance with the Asset Management Strategy the general public do not need to be consulted on this disposal as it is land designated for industrial purposes.

2.4 There is a shortage of industrial development land in the Borough.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Approve the disposal of the land at Apedale Business Park, Watermills Road, Chesterton for Industrial development purposes.

3.2 Authorise the Interim Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth, to complete the disposal of the land at Watermills Road, Chesterton

4. Reasons

4.1 To bring forward an unused area of land for industrial development.

4.2 To bring in a capital receipt which will be used to part finance the Council's future capital programme.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1 Retain the land within the Council's portfolio - If the Council retains the land there will need to resolve the drainage issues. In addition, a capital receipt will not be realised.
- 5.2 Dispose of the land - A capital receipt will be realised, no expenditure will be required to maintain and resolve the drainage issues and the release of this land will contribute to the supply of industrial development land which there is a shortage of in the Borough

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 The Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) – Section 123 - the Council has a duty to achieve best consideration when disposing of its assets.
- 6.2 Section 2(1) of the Local Government Act 2000 permits local authorities to do anything they consider likely to promote or improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of their area.
- 6.3 The Council has a duty, both fiduciary and operationally, to utilise its Assets for the benefits of the Community.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 No differential impact arises from the proposals contained in this report.
- 7.2 The proposals open may open up new employment opportunities in a less affluent area of the Borough

8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 The disposal of this site will realise a capital receipt, no expenditure will be required to maintain and resolve the drainage issues. The receipt will be used to part finance the Council's future capital programme.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1 Potential loss of a capital receipt to the Council

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

- 10.1 The proposal, by achieving new industrial development in a less affluent area of the Borough, which is in existing urban setting contributes towards UNSDG 8 and 9.



11. Key Decision Information

11.1 N/A

12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

12.1 N/A

13. List of Appendices

13.1 Plan of the site.

14. Background Papers

14.1 N/A

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S
REPORT TO**

**Cabinet
23 April 2024**

Report Title: Irrecoverable Items 2023/24

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

Portfolios: Finance, Town Centres and Growth

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
To consider items deemed irrecoverable.			
<u>Recommendation</u>			
1. That the items details at Appendix 1 be considered irrecoverable for the reasons stated and be written off.			
<u>Reasons</u>			
For a variety of reasons, from time to time, it is considered that certain items are unable to be recovered from debtors. When this occurs, it is necessary to write off these balances from the appropriate Council account records.			

1. **Background**
 - 1.1 For a variety of reasons, following the issue of accounts for amounts due to the Council, it is considered the debt is no longer able to be collected. Normally, these reasons follow from the debtor having been subjected to insolvency proceedings or other legal processes in respect of their debts or even the death of a debtor. There is then no further redress to recover the outstanding amounts and it is necessary to write off the outstanding balances from the Council's records.
 - 1.2 The financial implications of debtors (including housing benefit overpayments) accounts proposed for write off amount to £42,420. In addition the amount of National Non Domestic Rates accounts proposed for write off amounts to £133,194. It should be noted that the Council's share of the National Non Domestic Rates amounts to £53,278 as detailed in paragraph 8.3.

- 1.3 Financial Regulations require that any irrecoverable items in excess of £10,000 require Cabinet approval, balances below this amount are approved by the Section 151 Officer (below £5,000) and the Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer (£5,000 to £10,000).

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 Collection procedures in respect of business rates and council tax are operated in accordance with legislative guidelines. Other debts are collected by a variety of schemes, suitable to the type of account involved. Items are only ever considered for write-off following robust adherence to the appropriate collection policy.
- 2.2 Irrecoverable amounts are considered to be of a confidential nature and in order to comply with data protection regulations the details of the irrecoverable items that are the subject of this report are set out in the confidential appendix. It would also obviously be inappropriate to disclose information for instance about deceased debtors, with the potential for causing further distress to bereaved family members.
- 2.3 Where debts are in respect of commercial organisations, there is the potential in cases such as administration that disclosure could jeopardise the potential recovery of the business in the long term.

3. **Proposal**

- 3.1 That the items listed at appendix 1 be considered irrecoverable for the reasons stated and that these balances be approved by Cabinet for written off.

4. **Reason for Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 The debts itemised in the confidential appendix are no longer considered recoverable. Accounting regulations require that such items be periodically reviewed and written off.

5. **Options Considered**

- 5.1 None.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 Ultimately, sums of money owed to the Council can only be recovered through court proceedings. That requires bringing an action to prove the debt, so as to secure a judgement that the sum is owed. There are costs (court & legal fees and officer time) associated with that process which usually increase in tiers depending on the amount claimed.
- 6.2 Once judgement is secured, further court proceedings (incurring further associated costs) will be required if the sum secured in the judgement is not paid by the debtor. There are various enforcement methodologies that may be ordered in successful enforcement proceedings, all of which will incur additional costs to execute. However, none of those methods will bear fruit unless the debtor can be traced and owns assets that can be easily liquidated for a sum in excess of the amount of the judgement debt and the associated costs.

- 6.3 Thus a primary consideration is one of proportionality in terms of an evaluation of the level of debt against the likely cost of recovery, and the likelihood of identifying a traceable debtor who owns assets of the requisite value and liquidity. That analysis has been undertaken in respect of the debts proposed to be written off here.
- 6.4 It is essential that the council has in place systems that enable it to spot and log any trends in the way in which bad debts are arising, and which identify repeat bad debtors, so that it can take any prudent steps that may be available to it to avoid further bad debts arising.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

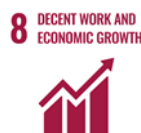
- 8.2 The financial implications of debtors (including housing benefit overpayments) accounts proposed for write off fall on the Council only. The debtors with a balance in excess of £10,000 proposed for write off during the financial year 2023/24 total £42,420. The bad debt provision provides for a percentage of debtors becoming irrecoverable, the older the debt becomes the greater the provision made. The bad debt provision and the budgeted contribution to the provision can be used for this.
- 8.3 The financial impact of National Non Domestic Rates accounts proposed for write off is shared between the Council (40%), Central Government (50%), Staffordshire County Council (9%) and the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (1%) under the Business Rates Retention scheme. The National Non Domestic Rates accounts with a balance in excess of £10,000 proposed for write off during the financial year 2023/24 total £133,194, of this the Council's share amounts to £53,278. This amount is within the estimated balance declared to preceptors regarding the National Non Domestic Rates Collection Fund for 2023/24.
- 8.4 There are no Council Tax accounts with a balance in excess of £10,000 proposed for write off.

9. **Major Risks**

- 9.1 Failure to write off irrecoverable debts in a timely manner could potentially lead to the Council overstating its income, leading to qualification of its annual accounts and associated reputational damage.

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

- 10.1 In shaping detailed budget proposals consideration will be given to the need for investment in order to deliver the Council's Sustainable Environment Action Plan.



11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This is not a key decision.

12. **Earlier Cabinet / Committee Resolutions**

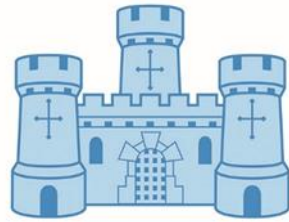
12.1 Not applicable.

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 Appendix 1 – Irrecoverable Items 2023/24.

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 None.



NEWCASTLE·UNDER·LYME
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet Forward Plan: Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council

Notice of Key Decisions to be taken under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings & Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 between 1 April 2024 and 31 July 2024

This plan gives notice of decisions that [Cabinet](#) is expecting to take over the next few months. It also gives, except in cases of urgency, at least 28 days notice of all “Key Decisions” that will be taken “Key Decisions” are decisions about “executive” functions that will:-

- A) result in the Council incurring expenditure or making savings of an amount which is significant having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or the function to which the decision relates. (NB: The financial threshold above which expenditure or savings become significant has been set by the Council at £100,000 Revenue and £250,000 Capital Expenditure); and/or
- B) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough.

We have to take some Cabinet decisions in private because they deal with confidential or “exempt” information. That is information described in one or more of the following categories set out in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals an authority proposes;

- a. to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - b. to make an order or direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of a crime

If we intend to take a decision in private, we will tell you why in the plan below. If you disagree with our reasons, you can tell us why using the contact details below. We will respond to you directly and will publish our response in the meeting agenda. If we have published the meeting agenda before we can respond, we will respond verbally at the meeting and record the response in the minutes.

You can find more information about Cabinet, Cabinet Members and their portfolios, agendas, reports and minutes [here](#).

More information on Cabinet procedures, executive functions, Key Decisions, urgent decisions and access to information is available in our [Constitution](#).

For all enquiries, please contact Democratic Services, Castle House, Barracks Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 1BL.
Telephone – 01782 742222 / Email – DemocraticServices@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	Key Decision
Grassland Management Strategy	To consider a report on the Grassland Management Strategy	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Environment	Cabinet 23 April 2024	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Walleys Quarry Odour Update	To consider a report on odour issues at Walleys Quarry	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 23 April 2024	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Sale of Land at Apedale	To consider a report on the sale of Land at apedale	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and	Cabinet 23 April 2024	Finance, Assets and Performance	Holditch & Chesterton	3 Information relating to the financial or	Yes

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
		Growth				business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	
Irrecoverable Items 2023/2024	To consider a report on Irrecoverable Items 2023/24	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	Cabinet 23 April 2024	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	Yes
Walleys Quarry Odour Update	To receive an update on odour issues at Walleys Quarry	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 4 June 2024	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Refreshed Sustainable Environment Strategy and Action Plan	To consider a report on the Refreshed Sustainable Environment Strategy and Action Plan	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Environment	Cabinet 4 June 2024	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Staffordshire Leaders Board - Terms of Reference	To consider a report on the amended Terms of Reference for the Staffordshire	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 4 June 2024	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	Yes

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
	Leaders Board						
Kidsgrove Town Deal Contract Award - Shared Services and Garage Replacement	To consider a report on the Kidsgrove Town Deal Contract Award - Shared Services and Garage Replacement	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth, Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 4 June 2024	Economy and Place	Kidsgrove & Ravenscliffe	3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	Yes
Award of Contract for Castle Car Park Payment System	To consider a report on the awarding of a contract for the Castle Car Park Payment system	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 4 June 2024	Economy and Place	Town	N/A	Yes
Crematorium and Cemeteries Rules and Regulations Update	To consider a report on the Crematorium and Cemeteries Rules and Regulations Update	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Environment	Cabinet 4 June 2024	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Taxi Metered Fares	To consider a report on Taxi Metered Fares	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	Cabinet 4 June 2024	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Walleys Quarry Odour Update	To consider a report on odour issues at	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One	Cabinet 16 July 2024	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
	Walleys Quarry	Council, People and Partnerships					
Animal Welfare Charter	To consider a report on the Animal Welfare Charter	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Environment	Cabinet 16 July 2024	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Keele Sustainable Solar Energy Business Case	To consider a report on the Keele Sustainable Solar Energy Business Case	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 16 July 2024	Economy and Place	Keele	3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	Yes

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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