

**Date of meeting** Thursday, 9th January, 2025  
**Time** 2.00 pm  
**Venue** Queen Elizabeth II & Astley Rooms - Castle House, Barracks Road, Newcastle, Staffs. ST5 1BL  
**Contact** Geoff Durham 742222



**NEWCASTLE  
UNDER LYME**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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

# Cabinet

## AGENDA

### 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 - 12)  
To consider the Minutes of the previous meeting.
- 4 **WALLEYS QUARRY ODOUR UPDATE** (Pages 13 - 36)
- 5 **DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET AND STRATEGIES 2025/26** (Pages 37 - 144)
- 6 **SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26** (Pages 145 - 190)
- 7 **NAVIGATION HOUSE REFURBISHMENT CONTRACTOR AWARD** (Pages 191 - 196)
- 8 **UPDATE ON DECARBONISATION OF THE COUNCIL'S OPERATIONAL BUILDINGS AND FLEET** (Pages 197 - 210)
- 9 **MEMORIAL HEADSTONE POLICY** (Pages 211 - 220)
- 10 **FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 221 - 224)
- 11 **URGENT BUSINESS** (Pages 225 - 242)  
To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972:  
**DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION: WHITE PAPER**
- 12 **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.

**13 SCHEDULE OF FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26 - CONFIDENTIAL (Pages 243 - 244) APPENDIX**

**14 NAVIGATION HOUSE REFURBISHMENT CONTRACTOR AWARD - CONFIDENTIAL REPORT (Pages 245 - 248)**

#### **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, 3rd December, 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: Gordon Mole Chief Executive  
Simon McEneny Deputy Chief Executive  
Anthony Harold Service Director - Legal &  
Governance / Monitoring Officer  
Sarah Wilkes Service Director - Finance /  
S151 Officer  
Geoff Durham Civic & Member Support Officer  
Paul Dutton Senior Media Officer  
Sam Clark Service Director - IT & Digital

### 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 5 November, 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

### 3. WALLEYS QUARRY ODOUR ISSUE

The Leader introduced a report updating Cabinet on the latest position with the odours associated with Walleys Quarry, stating that this was a landmark meeting as last week, the Environment Agency (EA) issued Walleys Quarry Ltd with a Closure Notice.

The Leader paid tribute to the community for their hard work over the last few years in fighting this. It was early days; there was an appeals process which, it was believed, the operator would be undertaking. Council officers were thanked for their diligence and commitment in this issue and it would still be ongoing until the very end. Both former and current Council Members and MP's were also thanked for their standing together to fight the problem.

At the last meeting a rise in complaints had been reported and the monitoring equipment was showing spikes. November had been one of the worst months with 842 complaints at the time of publication of the report. The Leader stated that it was still important for residents to continue reporting odours to the Council and EA.

The Council's Chief Executive advised Cabinet that the actions of the Council would now take account of the EA's issuing of a Closure Notice which prohibited Walleys

## **Cabinet - 03/12/24**

Quarry from receiving waste and requiring works on the site over the next few months to bring about the closure of the landfill site.

The Closure Notice, attached to the report at appendix 3, set out the processes. The Council was aware that Walleys Quarry had issued a release stating that they would challenge the Notice.

The Council would continue to take the necessary actions to seek to address matters within its powers.

The Leader stressed that the Council could not provide ongoing commentary on legal actions but would update when it was appropriate to do so.

Cabinet Members agreed that this was a pleasing outcome. Councillor Fear stated that this was not the end but hopefully the beginning of the end of the process and the pressure needed to be kept up. Councillor Sweeney thanked the Leader for the work that he had done and for keeping the issue at the top of the agenda. Councillor Hutchison echoed previous comments and stated that September had brought 105 complaints to the Council, October brought in 269 complaints and November was currently 1057 complaints. Councillor Heesom stated that it was important going forward to manage the closure and any other required actions. Councillor Skelding hoped that, as residents had at times been losing heart, this news would be very welcome.

The Leader stated that the Council needed to ensure that the Closure Notice was permanent and that the site was capped and restored properly and would fight any appeal put forward.

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

[Watch the debate here](#)

### **4. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2025/26 - FIRST DRAFT SAVINGS PLANS**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth introduced a report presenting the refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which included the first draft savings being considered to balance the 2025/26 revenue budget and the proposed capital programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28.

The proposed savings and funding strategies were outlined at paragraph 2.4 of the report. The Portfolio Holder announced a below inflation increase in Council Tax of 1.99% which amounted to ten pence per week or less for 95% of households in the Borough.

The identified savings would enable a continued contribution of £250,000 to the Borough Growth Fund which would continue to enable investment in the Council's priorities including significant investment in boosting the sustainability of the environment within the Borough by supporting town centre development.

The draft proposals would assist in formulating a financially robust budget for the council which would continue to ensure financial sustainability whilst also protecting the Council's services.

The Leader stated that it was the makings of a good budget to take to Council next February. Referring to the low percentage increase in Council Tax, the

Administration had made that commitment in 2022 and this would be the third budget where that pledge had been kept.

Councillor Hutchison welcomed the MTFS and stated that Streetscene and recycling continued to be protected. Solar panels had been installed at Bradwell Crematorium Chapel and also at Keele Cemetery offices and Kidsgrove Town Hall which would bring in savings. The Council was now looking at collecting trade waste in the town centre and Fixed Penalty Notices would be issued for fly tipping with a zero tolerance. In total, within the Sustainable Environment Portfolio, savings would be between £150,000 to £200,000.

Councillor Heesom was pleased that there would be no reduction in the services at the Vulnerability Hub which was an essential service provided by the Council.

Councillor Skelding referred to the J2 leisure centre where footfall was always buoyant and there were plans to work towards carbon net zero at the site which would help future budgets. The Museum was also working well with many people continuing to visit. Both of the sites were self funding and it helped to have a strong strategic Capital Strategy.

The Leader stated that the Museum was going from strength to strength being enhanced from outside funding on the back of the 850 celebration events. In addition, membership at J2 continued to increase following the reduction during the Covid outbreak. The Borough now had two vibrant sports centres – Newcastle and Kidsgrove.

Councillor Fear, referring in particular to the low increase in Council Tax, stated that the MTFS showed that this Council kept its promises. The Council had not cut services but had improved them.

The Leader stated that not much had been mentioned regarding the One Council programme – which had made significant savings, but that was the next item on this agenda.

Referring to recommendation three, the Leader stated that this was important as the Walleys Quarry reserve which Council transferred more money to at the last meeting may still need to be tapped into as legal proceedings progressed.

The next stage for the revised MTFS would be to present it to the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee in January.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the first draft savings proposals as set out in Appendix A and Appendix B to the report, be noted.
  - (ii) That the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) funding gap (Appendix C), be noted.
  - (iii) That any surplus funds identified when setting the budget to be transferred to Reserves in order to achieve future financial resilience, be approved.
  - (iv) That the commencement date of the Budget Consultation period as mid-November to mid-December 2024, be noted.

- (v) That the first draft savings proposals be referred to the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee for their views (Appendix A and Appendix B).
- (vi) That the refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (Appendix D) be referred to the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee for their views.
- (vii) That the Mid-Year Capital Estimates for 2024/25, be approved.
- (viii) That the proposed setting of Council Tax at 1.99 per cent for 2025/2026, be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

## 5. ONE COUNCIL REVIEW AND NEXT STEPS

The Leader introduced a report providing a review of the One Council Programme and the next steps. The programme had arisen from how the Council had changed its operations during the Covid pandemic, working in different ways. The One Council Programme was then set up to make savings across the Council without affecting, but improving front line services.

In its present form, the One Council Programme would come to an end this year and through the life of the programme £1.17m in overall savings had been made each year. This had been achieved by looking at the processes of the Council including a revamped website with all services available on it. New technology had also helped out on the streets with streetscene, the dog wardens and town wardens all working together.

One Council would continue in other forms under three work streams – One Green Council, Digital One Council and Commercial One Council.

Councillor Sweeney stated that the One Council Programme had been the finest achievement of this administration where an initial spend of £1.2m had created savings of £1.17m each year.

Councillor Hutchison stated that Streetscene were first to review their processes. These included fly tipping removal and investigations, graffiti removal and litter bin emptying. Referring to the litter bin emptying, Councillor Hutchison stated that route planning/emptying had saved approximately 499 hours; £1,500 in fuel costs and approximately 3.14 tonnes of carbon. The One Council Programme allowed the Council to know where each litter bin was located digitally and when it required emptying.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That this report and the successes evidenced, be acknowledged.
  - (ii) That the lessons learned and the need to continuously



improve as the One Council programme closes, be acknowledged.

- (iii) That service level change and delivery of improvement moves into business as usual as teams use the skills they have learned through this process to challenge themselves and others to continue to make positive change, be noted.
- (iv) That the significant efforts of Council teams involved in the transformation, be celebrated and endorsed.
- (v) That it be agreed that Agile becomes the espoused project methodology across NULBC, along with knowledge of the tools used to deliver the One Council Programme – Refresher training be offered to Business Managers to ensure the required adoption.
- (vi) That it be approved that the Benefits Tracker continues to be used to capture opportunities organisation wide to ensure their delivery and inclusion into succession programmes and Efficiency Boards.
- (vii) That the Programme governance, approach and dashboard model is emulated in the One Council Green, Digital and Commercial follow-on Programmes, be agreed.
- (viii) That the report be referred to the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee.

[Watch the debate here](#)

## 6. **PROCUREMENT OF CORPORATE CRM AND CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The Leader introduced a report seeking approval to procure a corporate CRM and Case Management System alongside a suitable partner to support the Council to deliver the programme.

A confidential report was attached that went into more detail about the partner and funding.

The Leader stated that he welcomed this as a means of continuing to improve Customer Services in the Council and to make savings which would hopefully be reflected in next year's budget setting process.

**Resolved:** (i) That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People and Partnerships be authorised to enter into a contract by direct award to procure a suitable, modern CRM system.

- (ii) That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People and Partnerships, be authorised to enter into a contract by direct award with a suitably qualified CRM partner to design, deliver and support the CRM programme.
- (iii) That the implementation of a single CRM and case management solution across all Council services, be approved.

[Watch the debate here](#)

## 7. **CAR PARKING STRATEGY 2019-29 UPDATE**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth introduced a report giving an update on the Council's Car Parking Strategy which set out the Council's plans and ambitions for its owned car parks, in particular the new Castle Car Park.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the Strategy should have been reviewed next in 2029 but, with the development of the new Castle Car Park and the closing of the Midway, it was being reviewed this year.

The Strategy highlighted free parking on 5 event days throughout the year, in conjunction with the BID; dates for this years' free parking on the run up to Christmas were noted as 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> December and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> January.

The Leader welcomed this stating that service level car parks would be just as important as the new Castle Car Park.

The new car park was due to open early in the new year and was a signature development on the edge of town. It was a secure and well lit car park.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the updates to the Council's Car Parking Strategy 2019-29, be approved.
  - (ii) That consultation on a Traffic Regulation Order amendment be commenced and the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth be authorised to make any necessary recommendations and adopt the Traffic Regulation Order.
  - (iii) That the Christmas Period Free Parking times, as set out in the report, be noted and endorsed.
  - (iv) That it be approved that the Portfolio Member for Finance, Town Centres and Growth has flexibility in setting the Castle Car Park parking charges once open, as noted in the report.

[Watch the debate here](#)

## 8. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Leader went through the Forward Plan.

**Resolved:** That the Forward Plan be received and noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

9. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Business.

10. **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.

11. **PROCUREMENT OF CORPORATE CRM AND CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM-  
CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX**

Consideration was given to the confidential appendix.

**Resolved:** That the confidential appendix be received and noted.

**Councillor Simon Tagg  
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 2.38 pm

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**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**09 January 2025**

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

**Submitted by:**            **Chief Executive**

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

**Ward(s) affected:**        **All**

<p><b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b></p> <p>To update Cabinet on the latest position regarding the problematic odours in the Borough associated with Walleys Quarry.</p>	<p><b><u>Key Decision Yes</u></b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b><u>No</u></b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p><b>Cabinet is recommended to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Note the contents of this update report.</b></li> <li><b>2. Note the request for the Council to be a principal party in the appeal process as set out in section 2 of this report.</b></li> <li><b>3. If participation on the terms set out in recommendation 2 is agreed by the Planning Inspectorate, to endorse the participation of the Council in that process.</b></li> </ol>	
<p><b><u>Reasons</u></b></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. 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 needs 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. Such consent has been obtained.
- 1.5** Members and Officers have attended Liaison Meetings to maintain contact 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 from September 2024, reported on a weekly basis. Historical complaint data is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

	<b>Complaints to NuLBC</b>	<b>Complaints to Environment Agency</b>
<b>October 2024</b>		
30/09/24 -06/10/24	52	147
07/10/24 -13/10/24	80	187
14/10/24 - 20/10/24	37	136
21/10/24 - 27/10/24	100	311
<b>November 2024</b>		
28/10/24 -03/11/24	46	163
04/11/24 – 10/11/24	41	153
11/11/24 – 17/11/24	251	793
18/11/24 – 24/11/24	252	842
25/11/24 – 01/12/24	518	1478
<b>December 2024</b>		
02/12/24 - 08/12/24	261	760
09/12/24 - 15/12/24	182	518
16/12/24 - 22/12/24	220	797
23/12/24 - 29/12/24	417*	1644

\*Figure may alter due to backdated complaints received

- 2.2** The number of odour events (where 10 or more complaints have been reported) has increased to 26 in the month of December compared to 21 odour events reported in the month of November:

- Sunday 1 December
- Monday 2 December
- Tuesday 3 December
- Wednesday 4 December
- Thursday 5 December
- Friday 06 December
- Monday 09 December
- Thursday 12 December
- Friday 13 December
- Saturday 14 December
- Sunday 15 December
- Monday 16 December
- Tuesday 17 December
- Wednesday 18 December
- Thursday 19 December
- Friday 20 December
- Saturday 21 December
- Sunday 22 December
- Monday 23 December
- Tuesday 24 December
- Wednesday 25 December
- Thursday 26 December
- Friday 27 December
- Saturday 28 December
- Sunday 29 December
- Monday 30 December

- 2.3** There were 19 consecutive days where the community reported 10 or more odour complaints from 12 December to 30 December.
- 2.4** The highest number of odour complaints was reported on 3 December with 103 complaints and a monthly total of 1128 complaints. The second highest number of complaints was reported on 27 December at 98 complaints.
- 2.5** It is expected that the odour complaints will reduce as WQL undertakes the steps specified in the Schedule to the Closure Notice.

‘The EA has stated that it is ‘satisfied that stopping further waste entering the site will help reduce the odour potential. Capping the site will also help contain fugitive emissions of odorous landfill gas and increase the volume / rate of landfill gas extraction, preventing escape. These are steps required by the Closure Notice. We expect odorous emissions from the landfill to reduce over time’.

### **NULBC Odour Assessments**

- 2.6** 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.

In December 22 spot assessments were undertaken of which 13 detected landfill related odour ranging from an intensity rating of 3 (distinct) to 4 (strong).

## **NULBC Mobile Air Quality Monitoring (using Jerome monitor)**

- 2.7** Officers have monitored the levels of hydrogen sulphide within the community using the mobile Jerome monitor. The highest level of hydrogen sulphide [H<sub>2</sub>S] recorded in the community was 15.63 ppb on 23 December 2024 at 08:48.

## **NULBC Actions**

- 2.8** 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 any formal legal action it is necessary for the Council to formulate a view with regard to this matter, this is ongoing.
- 2.9** 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.
- 2.10** On 29 July 2024 the Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP, Secretary of State Environment, Food and Rural Affairs responded to the Leader's request for permission to prosecute Walleys Quarry Ltd. under statutory nuisance legislation, confirming that he would grant consent for the prosecution to proceed.
- 2.11** As reported in the previous Cabinet report the EA served a closure notice on Walleys Quarry Ltd on 28 November 2024. Walleys Quarry Limited subsequently submitted an appeal against the closure notice on 6 December [further details are contained in section 2.22 - 2.25]
- 2.12** The Council has sought urgent legal advice regarding the appeal process and how best to support the community in terms of challenging the appeal submitted by Walleys Quarry Ltd.
- 2.13** The Council is currently drafting a written representation as an 'interested party' to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 13 January 2025.
- 2.14** The Council intends to request that the Planning Inspectorate considers the Council as a 'principal party' in the inquiry. If the Planning Inspectorate agrees to the request this potentially enables the Council to be a main party in the inquiry in the same way as the EA and WQL.
- 2.15** Cabinet will be informed of the decision by the Planning Inspectorate in due course.

## **Air Quality**

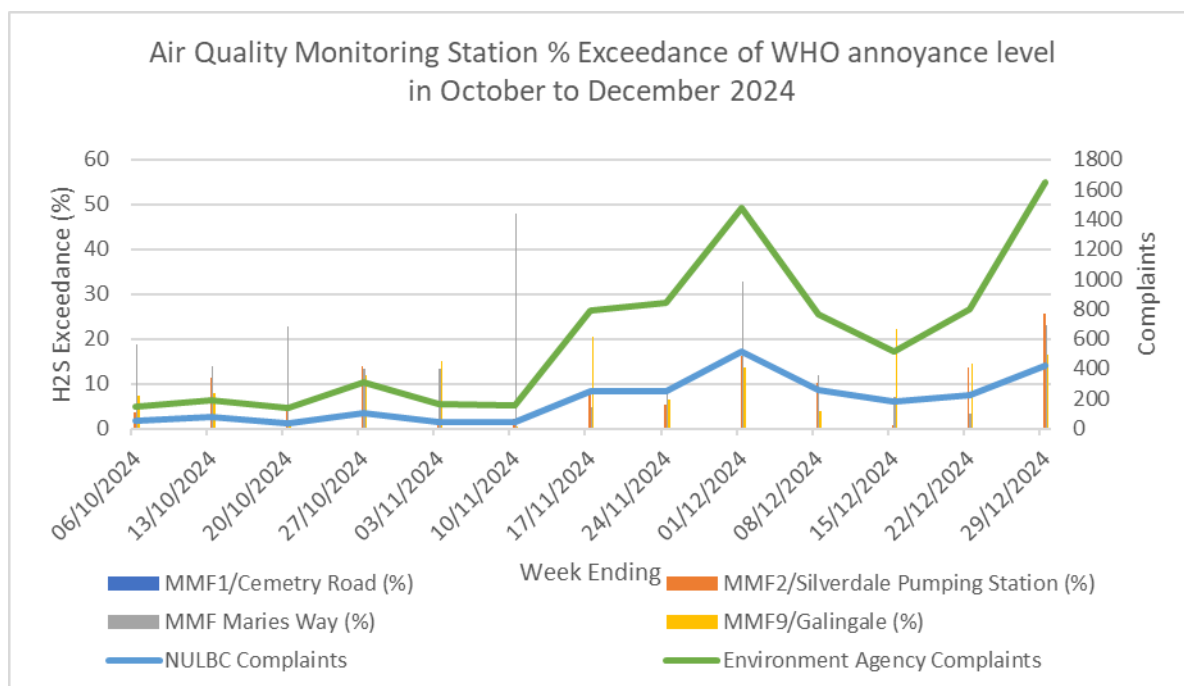
- 2.16** The Council, Staffordshire County Council, and the Environment Agency have jointly funded a campaign of air quality monitoring utilising three static air monitoring stations. The Environment Agency manage and operate these air quality monitoring stations. Data from these stations has been routinely published weekly by the Environment Agency (EA).



**2.17** 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/m<sup>3</sup>. Historic data is available in Appendix 2.

Time Period	MMF Maries Way (%)	MMF Silverdale Pumping Station (%)	MMF Galinagle View (%)
07 October - 13 October 2024	14.0	11.3	8.0
14 October - 20 October 2024	22.8	5.09	1.8
21 October - 27 October 2024	13.4	14.0	12.0
28 October - 03 November 2024	13.2	1.5	15.0
04 November - 10 November 2024	47.9	2.1	0.3
11 November - 17 November 2024	4.8	7.49	20.4
18 November - 24 November 2024	8.0	5.4	6.5
25 November - 1 December 2024	32.7	16.1	13.7
2 December - 8 December 2024	11.9	10.3	3.9
9 December - 15 December 2024	7.1	0.6	22.3
16 December - 22 December 2024	3.3	13.6	14.5
23 December - 29 December 2024	22.9	25.6	16.4

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



### Environment Agency Regulatory and Enforcement Action

**2.19** The Environment Agency has continued to provide updates on its regulatory activity on the Walleys Quarry Landfill and can be accessed here: <https://engageenvironmentagency.uk.engagementhq.com/hub-page/walleys-quarry-landfill>

**2.20** There have been no further Compliance and Assessment Reports published on the EA website since the previous Cabinet report(s).

**2.21** On 03 January 2025 the EA acknowledged the increase in complaints week commencing 23 December:

'Recent Odour

We are aware that there was substantial odour around Walleys Quarry in the week commencing 23 December 2024. We have every sympathy with members of the local community who were affected. Dispersal conditions were particularly poor during this period of cold, still weather.

On 20 December 2024 officers identified an area of the site with high levels of landfill gas. We are discussing appropriate remedial action with Walleys Quarry Ltd (WQL).

We expect odour outside the site to reduce as the additional gas infrastructure and capping required by the Closure Notice are completed. WQL is making progress with this work. WQL published a further website update on 02 January 2025, which you can read [here](#)

Reporting an Odour

It is really important that you continue to report any odour you experience around Walleys Quarry. Please call our hotline number on 0800 80 70 60 or click the link below to report through our online form.

<https://report-walleys-quarry-smell.service.gov.uk/>

Sources of Health Advice

We recommend that you speak to your general practitioner if you have any health concerns.

You may also wish to consult: [Frequently asked questions about the health effects of odours and emissions from Walleys Quarry - Staffordshire County Council](#)

## Closure Notice

**2.22** On 28 November 2024 the Environment Agency issued a Closure Notice to Walleys Quarry Ltd (WQL).

**2.23** The Schedule to the Closure Notice requires WQL to comply with steps to initiate closure. The steps specified in the Schedule are summarised in the table below:

Schedule 2	Timescale	Steps
Stage 1 Step 1	<b>From 00:01 on 29 November 2024</b>	Cease accepting waste and do not recommence the acceptance of waste for disposal or recovery at the landfill
Stage 1 Step 2	<b>By 13 December 2024</b>	Construct bench-like horizontal platforms within the waste flanks on the uncapped former active tipping (operational) areas to facilitate access, maintenance and monitoring for the installation of gas control infrastructure (gas wells and connecting pipelines).
Stage 1 Step 3		Any waste left exposed following construction of bench like horizontal platforms in the former active area tipping (operational) areas shall be covered with non-waste material by the end of each working day.

Stage 1 Step 4	<b>By 24 December 2024</b>	Install permanent gas extraction wells as set out in Walleys Next Phase Gas Infrastructure Design 18.11.2024 reference CLP3573 and in those former active tipping (operational) areas without gas extraction, in accordance with the design and specification set out in the LGMP
Stage 1 Step 5		Connect all installed gas extraction infrastructure to the operational gas control system and place it under extraction. This shall occur no later than the end of the day of installation of the specific infrastructure
Stage 1 Step 6	<b>By 31 January 2025</b>	Install temporary geomembrane capping to any uncapped part of the former active tipping area of the landfill. Once installed, the capping shall alleviate gas emissions so that they do not exceed 50 parts per million (ppm) methane.
Stage 1 Step 7		Collect and remove surface water run-off from capped areas in accordance with Temporary Surface Water Management Layout, drawing ECL. 9311.D05.001 Rec C dated 10.07.2024. Any contaminated surface water shall either be removed from site or treated via leachate treatment plant.
Stage 1 Step 8	<b>By 7 February 2025</b>	A surface gas emissions survey shall be undertaken in accordance with LFTGN07 v2 2010 Guidance on monitoring landfill gas surface emissions
Stage 1 Step 9	<b>By 14 February 2025</b>	Submit a report to the EA demonstrating that emissions of methane do not exceed 50 parts per million (ppm) methane.
Stage 1 Step 10	<b>From 14 February 2025</b>	Conduct surface gas emission surveys every four weeks until the permanent cap is installed to ensure that the temporary cap is alleviating methane emissions to below 50ppm.
Stage 1 Step 11	<b>No later than 7 days after each survey carried out in accordance with Step 10 above</b>	Submit a report to the EA demonstrating that emissions of methane do not exceed 50ppm methane
Stage 1 Step 12	<b>Within 24 hours from detection</b>	Repair any defects or leaks in the cap giving rise to methane emissions greater than 50ppm methane
Stage 1 Step 13	<b>By 28 February 2025</b>	Provide the EA with a Landfill Closure and Aftercare Plan [Refer to the Closure Notice for the relevant sector guidance]
Stage 2 Step 1	<b>By 30 May 2025 or such date agreed in writing by the EA</b>	Provide the EA with a closure report which specifies how closure has been achieved and how the activities at the site will be managed, monitored and maintained during the aftercare phase. [Refer to Closure Notice for the relevant sector guidance]

- 2.24** On 9 December the EA updated on their Latest News webpage that on Friday 6 December 2024, the EA were notified that WQL had submitted an appeal form in respect of the Closure Notice.

“For this reason, it is no longer appropriate to answer questions about the Notice as we had planned. It is therefore necessary to cancel the public meeting due to be held Monday 9 December 2024 at 7.00pm.

The appeal will be determined by an Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). Walleys Quarry Ltd has asked that its appeal is heard by an Inspector at an inquiry.

The statutory appeals procedure affords interested parties an opportunity to make representations to the Inspector at the appropriate time. You can read more about the procedure on the PINS website here: [environmental permit guidance on the appeal procedure\(External link\)](#).

We will continue to update our website when we can. Information about the Notice, including a frequently asked question section, can be found on our [closure notice Engagement HQ page](#).”

- 2.25** Interested parties have an opportunity to make representations to the Planning Inspectorate. Please note that any representations on this appeal, must be submitted in writing by 13 January 2025. Any representations made to the Inspectorate will be copied to WQL and the EA. Further detail is set out in the EA’s letter to ‘Interested Parties’ set out in Appendix 4 to this report.

- 2.26** The letter states that WQL “disputes the decision to, and grounds for serving the notice”.

“WQL has indicated that:

- It believes the Closure Notice is an unlawful exercise of the Environment Agency’s powers, and permit variation or revocation would have been more appropriate to secure the immediate cessation of waste acceptance.
- The steps in the Closure Notice are not sufficiently clear or detailed.
- The Environment Agency has failed to have regard to the Landfill Directive.
- WQL was not provided an opportunity to make representations about the steps in the Closure Notice.
- The reasons for decision to issue the Closure Notice are flawed.
- The Environment Agency has acted unreasonably, and substantial unfairness has resulted”

- 2.27** Where an appeal is brought against a closure notice or to initiate a closure procedure, the appeal will not suspend the notice.

### **Walleys Quarry update**

- 2.28** On 5 December WQL issued the following press information of their website:

“The acceptance of waste material at Walleys Quarry is currently prohibited following receipt of the closure notice by the Environment Agency.

Over the coming weeks Walleys Quarry will undertake engineering work to create “benches”, (platforms that enable the installation of gas collection infrastructure).

These works are unlikely to be seen from off-site because of their location, however given Walleys Quarry is not able to import wastes including waste soil to form these benches or use waste soil that is already stockpiled on site to form them the Agency has compelled us to take the unusual step of cutting into already emplaced waste to create them.

This is not standard practice in the UK and carries increased risk of odour evolution and operational safety for those working to create them. Walleys Quarry will monitor the activity and attempt to complete the works as quickly as practicable”.

**2.29** WQL released further press information the same day:

“The acceptance of waste material at Walleys Quarry is currently prohibited following receipt of the closure notice by the Environment Agency.

Walleys Quarry will continue to undertake engineering work at the site. This includes the importation of product clay as an engineering material.

Over the coming weeks Walleys Quarry will have heavy goods vehicles delivering clay to the site to support the engineering requirements onsite.

This activity is not covered by the closure notice.”

**2.30** On 11 December 2024 the following press information was published:

“The acceptance of waste for Landfilling at Walleys Quarry (WQ) is currently prohibited following receipt of the closure notice by the Environment Agency.

Over the coming weeks WQ will undertake drilling of additional gas collection wells, and associated infrastructure. This work was planned to occur before the closure notice was issued and WQL will continue to lead on it.

WQ has a specialist landfill gas contractor to undertake the work, and a drilling rig may be visible offsite.

Given the nature of the works (drilling into landfilled waste), the specialist drilling contractor will continue to use equipment that incorporates extraction to minimize the risk of off-site odour.

These landfill gas collection wells will form part of the infrastructure to capture, and process landfill gas on the site.”

**2.31** The Liaison meeting planned for 17 December 2024 was postponed following the receipt of a closure notice. WQL will provide updates to the Liaison Committee via email regarding the site and provide a new date for the Committee to convene.

**2.32** On 2 January 2025 the following update was published by WQL:

**“Temporary Capping Works Scheduled for January 2025**

Starting on 6th January 2025, Walleys Quarry will begin the process of temporarily capping in the southwest area of the site, located adjacent to the leachate treatment plant.

**What to Expect**

•**Visibility of Works:** Due to the location of the work there will be minimal visible activity for the surrounding community. However, there may be some additional vehicle movements as the specialist lining crew accesses and exits the site.

•**Work Details:** The process involves laying plastic geomembrane sheeting over the current active area of the landfill.

### **Timeline**

The works are expected to be completed by 31st January 2025, although progress may be impacted by weather conditions.

### **Who Is Carrying Out the Work?**

The capping works will be undertaken by specialist contractor

We appreciate your understanding during this time”.

## **Scrutiny- Committee of Inquiry**

- 2.33** A member-led committee of inquiry has been set up to look at the impact on local communities from the Walleys Quarry Landfill operation.
- 2.34** The specific lines of inquiry have been determined by Full Council and are as follows:
- What is the impact of the ongoing odour issue?
  - What needs to be done next, and by whom, to bring about resolution?
  - What, if any, opportunities have been missed to resolve this issue sooner?
- 2.35** The summary was presented to Full Council on 25 September 2024.
- 2.36** There have been no major changes to the completed or active recommendations since the last Cabinet report.

## **Impact Study**

- 2.37** An Impact study, commissioned jointly by a group of public bodies, including Staffordshire County Council, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, the Environment Agency and UK Health Security Agency, will be carried out by the independent Arcadis Consulting.
- 2.38** The Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Staffordshire County Council considered the report at its meeting on 2 December 2024.

## **Key Performance Data**

- 2.39** Through the settlement agreement both Walleys Quarry Ltd and the Council have developed key performance indicators in relation to relevant data from each organisation. The key performance indicator for NuLBC are shown in Appendix 3.
- 2.40** The data from the Council covers the period from October 2024 to December 2024 and provides complaint numbers and officer assessments.
- 2.41** 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 from September onwards has not been submitted by the operator.

### 3. **Recommendation**

#### 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 On 20 November 2024 Council approved the sum of £400k (£250k from the General Fund Reserve, £150k from the Budget and Borrowing Support Fund) for costs associated with action to prosecute, and delegate to the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for One Council, People and Performance and Town Centres and Finance, to draw down and remit such funds as are necessary for this action.

## **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;

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. One Council

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

One Commercial Council

One Digital Council

The Council will use all available monitoring data and digital tools in making strategic and operational decisions in relation to Walleys Quarry.

One Green Council

The Council is not a user of Walleys Quarry. Within its restricted powers, the Council is committed to ensuring that waste does not cause a nuisance for residents and ultimately wishes to see the end of landfill, with a site that is successful closed, capped off and restored.

## 12. Key Decision Information

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

## 13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 This matter has been variously considered previously by Economy, Environment & Place Scrutiny Committee, Council and Cabinet on 21 April 2021, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024, 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024. 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024

## 14. List of Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1. Historical Complaint data

14.2 Appendix 2. Percentage exceedance above WHO odour annoyance guideline

14.3 Appendix 3. NULBC Key Performance Data

14.4 Appendix 4. EA Letter to Interested Parties

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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
<b>2022</b>			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	<b>2023</b>		
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	Week Ending	Complaints to NuLBC	Complaints to Environment Agency
11-Jun	19	75	24-Mar	120	330
18-Jun	76	154	31-Mar	81	254
25-Jun	80	170	07-Apr	56	220
02-Jul	40	99	14-Apr	17	75
09-Jul	18	46	21-Apr	32	145
16-Jul	20	54	28-Apr	55	196
23-Jul	15	73	05-May	41	167
30-Jul	28	97	12-May	75	311
06-Aug	21	67	19-May	76	192
13-Aug	7	30	26-May	89	240
20-Aug	10	44	02-Jun	75	207
27-Aug	8	38	09-Jun	38	114
03-Sep	11	59	16-Jun	50	147
10-Sept	26	71	23-Jun	67	189
17-Sept	12	72	30-Jun	117	298
24-Sept	8	31	07-Jul	45	103
01-Oct	8	26	14-Jul	52	155
08-Oct	8	37	21-Juy	118	277
15-Oct	29	64	28-Jul	93	189
22-Oct	22	81	04-Aug	61	162
29-Oct	26	115	11-Aug	53	143
05-Nov	5	15	18-Aug	50	160
12 Nov	40	123	25-Aug	35	185
19-Nov	35	119	01-Sept	7	46
26-Nov	36	135	08-Sept	14	42
3-Dec	115	265	15-Sept	25	95
10-Dec	83	151	22-Sept	43	118
17-Dec	48	180	29-Sept	16	53
24-Dec	28	79	06-Oct	52	147
31-Dec	44	129	13-Oct	80	187
<b>2024</b>			20-Oct	37	136
07-Jan	236	627	27-Oct	100	311
14-Jan	76	268	03-Nov	46	163
21-Jan	270	824	10-Nov	41	153
28-Jan	86	261	17-Nov	251	793
04-Feb	133	416	24-Nov	252	842
11-Feb	382	905			
18-Feb	186	527			
25-Feb	397	1264			
03-Mar	333	990			

10-Mar	218	694			
17-Mar	103	374			

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Time Period			
	<b>MMF1 (%)</b>	<b>MMF 2 (%)</b>	<b>MMF 9 (%)</b>
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
15 April – 21 April 2024	0.9	1.2	7.9
22 April – 28 April 2024	1.8	0	6.7
29 April – 05 May 2024	2.4	0.6	9.0
06 May – 12 May 2024	6.85	0.3	14.3
13 May – 19 May 2024	3.3	0	12.2
20 May – 26 May 2024	1.8	0.6	8.6
27 May – 02 June 2024	5.7	1.2	6.0
03 June – 09 June 2024	0	0	8.1
10 June – 16 June 2024	0.6	0	4.2
17 June – 23 June 2024	0.9	0.6	8.7
24 June – 30 June 2024	0.0	0.3	6.9

01 July - 7 July 2024	0.6	0.0	4.2
08 July - 14 July 2024	0.3	0.0	8.9
15 July - 21 July 2024	7.2	7.5	16.5
22 July - 28 July 2024	2.7	0	15.2
05 August - 11 August 2024	1.2	2.1	5.4
12 August - 18 August 2024	1.2	0.3	1.8
19 August - 25 August 2024	0	0	0
26 August - 01 September 2024	0	0	0.6
02 September - 08 September 2024	0.6	0	1.1
09 September - 15 September 2024	1.8	3.3	5.7
16 September - 22 September 2024	0.3	0.0	10.8
23 September - 29 September 2024	4.8	0.6	0.6
30 September - 06 October 2024	18.7	3.6	7.2
07 October -13 October 2024	14.0	11.3	8.0
14 October - 20 October 2024	22.8	5.09	1.8
21 October - 27 October 2024	13.4	14.0	12.0
28 October - 03 November 2024	13.2	1.5	15.0
04 November -10 November 2024	47.9	2.1	0.3
11 November -17 November 2024	4.80	7.49	20.40
18 November - 24 November 2024	8.0	5.4	6.5



**Appendix 3 – NULBC Key Performance Indicators**

NULBC		Information	Measurement	October 2024	November 2024	December 2024
KPI 1	COMPLAINTS	Complaints reported to NULBC	Number	292* *Revised to include back dated complaints Number of unique properties reporting complaints = 106  Rating 0 = 0 complaints Rating 1 = 1 complaints Rating 2 = 2 complaints Rating 3 = 12 complaints Rating 4 = 60 complaints (20.5%) Rating 5 = 76 complaints (26.0%) Rating 6 = 141 complaints (48.3%)  % of complaints reporting odour entering the property = 227 (77.7%)  % of complaints reporting health effects =241 (82.5%)	1064 * revised to include back dated complaints Number of unique properties reporting complaints= 453  Rating 0 = 3 Rating 1 = 1 Rating 2 = 1 Rating 3 = 57 Rating 4 = 128 complaints (12.03%) Rating 5 = 262 complaints (24.6%) Rating 6 = 612 complaints (57.5%)  % of complaints reporting odour entering the property = 879 (82.6%)  % of complaints reporting health effects =783 (73.6%)	1128  Number of unique properties reporting complaints= 478  Rating 0 = 1 Rating 1 = 0 Rating 2 = 5 Rating 3 = 90 Rating 4 = 164 complaints (14.5%) Rating 5 = 287 complaints (25.5%) Rating 6 = 581 complaints (51.5%)  % of complaints reporting odour entering the property = 916 (81.2%)  % of complaints reporting health effects = 785 (69.6%)
KPI 2		Complaints reported (daytime 07:00-23:00)	Number	255	881	982
KPI 3		Complaints reported (night-time 23:00-07:00)	Number	37	183	146
KPI 4		Highest number of complaints during the period	Date (number of complaints)	26/10/24 (33 complaints)	28/11/24 (193 complaints)	03/12/24 (103)

NULBC		Information	Measurement	MMF Location Name	October 2024	November 2024	December 2024
KPI 5	AIR QUALITY	Percentage exceedance Odour Annoyance Guideline (Hydrogen Sulphide 30-minute average)	%	MMF Maries Way	21.8%	28.4%	Awaited
				MMF Silverdale Pumping Station	8.4%	6.5%	Awaited
				MMF Galingale View	7.4%	11.3%	Awaited
KPI 6		Monthly Average H <sub>2</sub> S	ug/m3 over the month	MMF Maries Way	4.2ug/m3	7.2ug.m3	Awaited
				MMF Silverdale Pumping Station	3.3ug/m3	2.7ug/m3	Awaited
				MMF Galingale View	2.8ug/m3	7.8ug/m3	Awaited
KPI 7	H <sub>2</sub> S PEAK LEVEL	Level measured over a 5-minute period Date & Time	ug/m3	MMF Maries Way 05/10/24 00:20	68.95ug/m3	309.34ug/m3 28/11/24 06:55	Awaited
				MMF Silverdale Pumping Station 11/10/24 18:05	287.54ug/m3	207.21ug/m3 28/11/24 07:25	Awaited
				MMF Galingale View 27/10/24 06:15	114.63ug/m3	293.38ug/m3 26/11/24 22:50	Awaited
KPI 8	OFFICER ASSESSMENTS	Odour Rating - Officer odour assessment (5 minute)	Max Intensity Rating		12 assessments - of which 10 recorded a max rating of 4 and 2 recorded a max rating of 5 on 22/10/24	32 assessments of which 30 recorded a max rating of 4 or above on 11/11/24, 20/11/24, 21/11/24, 27/11/24, 28/11/24	N/A

Walleys Quarry Project Update Mailing List  
Subscriber

**Our ref:** EPR/DP3734DC

**Date:** 18 December 2024

Dear Subscriber

**NOTICE OF APPEAL MADE UNDER REGULATION 31 OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2016**

I am giving you notice that Walleys Quarry Ltd (WQL), the Appellant, has made an appeal to the Secretary of State against a Closure Notice served on Walleys Quarry Ltd, by the Environment Agency on 28 November 2024.

The Closure Notice requires WQL to take steps to initiate Closure of Walleys Quarry Landfill site. You can find full details of the steps required and the specified deadlines, in Appendix 2 of the [Closure Notice](#), a copy of which is available on our Engagement HQ website.

WQL disputes the decision to, and grounds for serving the notice.

WQL has indicated that:

- It believes the Closure Notice is an unlawful exercise of the Environment Agency's powers, and permit variation or revocation would have been more appropriate to secure the immediate cessation of waste acceptance.
- The steps in the Closure Notice are not sufficiently clear or detailed.
- The Environment Agency has failed to have regard to the Landfill Directive.
- WQL was not provided an opportunity to make representations about the steps in the Closure Notice.
- The reasons for decision to issue the Closure Notice are flawed.
- The Environment Agency has acted unreasonably, and substantial unfairness has resulted.

If you wish to make representations on this appeal, you must do so by writing to the Secretary of State at the address overleaf within 15 working days of the date of this letter.

The Planning Inspectorate has indicated that the appeal reference is **APP/EPR/24/688**.

The Planning Inspectorate  
Environmental Appeals Team  
Room 3A Eagle Wing  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
Bristol  
BS1 6EA

Email: [etc@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:etc@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0303 444 5584

Any representations that you make will be disclosed to WQL and the Environment Agency. Representations may be read out at any subsequent appeal hearing. We will enter representations in the public register unless you write to us to ask us not to.

If you ask us not to, we will enter a statement in the register saying that representations have been made but we have been asked not to put them in the register.

If you make representations on the appeal and the Planning Inspectorate decides to hold a hearing wholly or partly in public, we will advise you of the date and venue of the hearing. We will also advise you if the appeal is withdrawn.

Yours sincerely

**Clive Wall**

**Appeal Case Officer & EPR Installations Officer  
Environment Agency – West Midlands**

Contact Details: [Walleysquarryengagement@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Walleysquarryengagement@environment-agency.gov.uk)

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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

**07 January 2025**

**Report Title:** Draft Revenue and Capital Budgets and Strategies 2025/26

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

**Portfolios:** Finance, Town Centres and Growth

**Ward(s) affected:** All

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>To review progress on the completion of the revenue and capital budgets for 2025/26 and approve the 5 year Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2025/26 to 2029/30.</p> <p>To consider drafts of the Capital Strategy for 2025/35, the Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26, the Investment Strategy for 2025/26 and the Commercial Strategy for 2025/26 prior to their submission to Full Council for final approval.</p>	
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	
<p><b>That Cabinet:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the progress on the completion of the Revenue (Appendix 1) and Capital Budgets (Appendix 4).</li> <li>2. Note the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30 (Appendix 2).</li> <li>3. Note the strategy for ensuring a balanced revenue outturn position for 2024/25.</li> <li>4. Note the calculation of the Council Tax base and the Council Tax increase to be proposed for 2025/26 of 1.99% per Band D equivalent property.</li> <li>5. Note the risk assessment at Appendix 3 and the Section 151 Officer's recommendation on the level of reserves and contingencies provisionally required to be maintained in 2025/26.</li> <li>6. Note the draft Capital Strategy (Appendix 5) for 2025/35 be noted.</li> <li>7. Note the draft Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix 6) for 2025/26.</li> <li>8. Note the draft Investment Strategy (Appendix 7) for 2025/26.</li> <li>9. Note the draft Commercial Strategy (Appendix 8) for 2025/26.</li> </ol>	

**10. Note the Asset Management Strategy (Appendix 9) for 2023/28.**

**11. Refer the draft Budget and Council Tax proposals to Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee for comment before the final proposals are considered at Cabinet on 4 February 2025.**

### **Reasons**

To inform the Cabinet in recommending a robust and affordable budget for 2025/26 to the Council meeting on 12 February 2025.

The Council needs to have an approved Capital Strategy for 2025/26, an approved Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26 and an approved Investment Strategy for 2025/26 in place before the start of the 2025/26 financial year.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1** The Council is committed to the delivery of high quality services. Integral to this ambition is effective targeting of financial resources in line with the vision of “good local services, a prosperous borough and safe and welcoming places for all” and the Council’s stated aims and objectives, as set out in the Council Plan 2022-2026, which was approved by Cabinet on 6 September 2022.
- 1.2** The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the Council’s financial position over the next 5 years. This is aligned to the Council Plan 2022-2026 and is the key vehicle for ensuring efficiency in service delivery and targeting resources to priority areas.
- 1.3** There has been good progress against Council Plan objectives in the current year, with high standards of service delivery being achieved overall. Key Council Achievements, linked to the Council Plan objectives, are reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. (Details of the Council Plan 2022-2026 can be seen here <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/policies-1/council-plan-2022-2026>)
- 1.4** The draft 2025/26 budget is based on the assumptions set out in the MTFS which was approved as a basis for consultation by the Cabinet at its meeting on 3 December 2024 and scrutinised by the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 5 December 2024.
- 1.5** The draft and provisional proposals included in this report will inform the Revenue and Capital Budgets and Council Tax 2025/26 reports to Cabinet on 4 February 2025 and to Full Council on 12 February 2025.
- 1.6** The Capital Strategy 2025/35 sets out how the Council proposes to deploy its capital resources in order to achieve its corporate and service objectives. It takes into account other relevant Council strategies, policies and plans and the views of partners and interested parties with whom the Council is involved. It also takes account of the resources which are likely to be available to the Council to fund capital investment and the effect of that investment on the Council’s revenue budget. It will serve as a useful point of reference when determining or reviewing the Council’s Capital Programme.

- 1.7 The Council has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code of Practice. This requires approval by Full Council concerning the Treasury Management Strategy to be followed in carrying out its treasury management activities in the forthcoming financial year, 2025/26.
- 1.8 The Investment Strategy 2025/26 is compiled according to Central Government's Guidance on Local Government Investments ('the Guidance') and the 2017 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ('the CIPFA TM Code'). It sets out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.
- 1.9 The Commercial Strategy 2025/26 is aligned with the Council's vision for Newcastle-under-Lyme to be a sustainable and business-oriented Council that maximises commercial opportunities in order to deliver long-term benefits for residents of the borough and support the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

## 2. Issues

### **Budget 2024/25 – Provisional Outturn Forecast**

#### **Revenue**

- 2.1 The Council approved a General Fund Revenue Budget of £17.046m on 14 February 2024 for 2024/25. The actual and forecast position compared to this budget is continuously monitored by Budget Holders, the Corporate Leadership Team and Portfolio Holders in order to detect any significant variances of expenditure or income from the approved amounts contained in the budget.
- 2.2 At the close of period 8 a positive variance of £0.005m has been achieved. The projected outturn on the General Fund Revenue Account for the year is £17.040m. This represents a positive outturn of £0.006m for the year.
- 2.3 The adverse variances that have occurred at the close of period 8 of 2024/25 include:
  - a. Income shortfalls from sales, fees and charges which amount to £0.115m (forecast to be £0.240m for the financial year).
  - b. Holding costs for York Place (e.g. utilities and business rates) are expected to amount to £0.109m for the financial year, £0.095m had been incurred at the close of period 8.
  - c. A pay award of £1,290 per employee has been awarded that is in excess of the amount provided for in the budget (3.5%), it amounts to a pressure of £0.120m (£0.080m at the close of period 8).
  - d. Expenditure on repairs and renewals is expected to amount to £0.109m greater than the amount budgeted for the financial year (£0.083m at the close of period 8).
  - e. Temporary accommodation for the homeless is expected to amount to

£0.112m greater than the amount budgeted for the financial year after the application of grant monies (£0.075m at the close of period 8).

- f. Contribution to reserves of £0.425m have been assumed as a result of the favourable variance shown below in respect of interest receivable of cash that the Council holds in terms of Town Deal and Future High Street funding. £0.200m of this will be set aside to fund the inspection stage of the Local Plan. The remainder will be contributed to the Walley's Quarry Reserve and the Budget Support Fund.

**2.4** These adverse variances have been offset in full by the following favourable variances:

- a. Interest receivable on cash that the Council holds in terms of Town Deal and Future High Street funding totals £0.630m at the close of period 8 (it is forecast that this will grow to £0.700m of income by the close of the financial year).
- b. Interest payable on borrowing has yet to be incurred due to the cash that the Council holds in terms of Town Deal and Future High Street funding. It is forecast that borrowing may be required in the final quarter of the financial year dependent upon cash flow and that interest payable will be £0.438m lower than budgeted for (£0.351m at the close of period 8).

**2.4** Careful monitoring of the financial position will be required over coming weeks and months leading to prompt corrective action where necessary to ensure the Council remains in a position of being able to deliver a balanced budget position in the current financial year and beyond.

### **Capital**

**2.5** A mid-year review of the Capital Programme for 2024/25 has been undertaken as part of the Efficiency Board and budget setting process in order to identify any projects that may need to be re-profiled from 2024/25 into future years. The revised Capital Programme for 2024/25 totalling £51.295m was approved by Cabinet on 3 December 2024.

**2.6** The table below shows a high level (service) summary of the Capital Programme position at the close of period 8:

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Budget at Period 8 £'000</b>	<b>Actual at Period 8 £'000</b>	<b>Variance at Period 8 £'000</b>
One Council Delivering for Local People	621	620	(1)
A Successful and Sustainable Growing Borough	9,808	9,806	(2)
Healthy, Active and Safe Communities	4,309	4,323	14
Town Centres for All	5,289	5,289	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,027</b>	<b>20,038</b>	<b>11</b>



## Medium Term Financial Strategy

2.7 The draft MTFS was approved as a basis for consultation by Cabinet on 3 December 2024 and has since been updated to reflect the impact of the Local Government Finance Settlement.

2.8 A number of savings and funding strategies have been identified as being both feasible and sustainable, via a vigorous Financial Efficiency Board process including challenge sessions for each of the Cabinet Portfolios involving Cabinet Members, the Corporate Leadership Team, Service Directors and the Finance Manager. The proposed savings identified to date for the period of the MTFS, and the remaining funding gaps have enabled a balanced financial position to be proposed for 2025/26.

Detail	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000
<i>Income</i>	235	-	-	-	-
<i>Staffing Related</i>	156	-	-	-	-
<i>Good Housekeeping</i>	179	-	-	-	-
<i>Tax Base</i>	425	306	345	430	401
<i>Council Tax Increase</i>	175	177	180	184	188
<i>Government Grants</i>	732	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>589</b>
<b>UPDATED MTFS GAPS</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>1,588</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>529</b>
<b>REMAINING GAP</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,105</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>(343)</b>	<b>(60)</b>

2.9 The table below shows the amendments to items included in the saving strategy reported to Cabinet on 3 December 2024 reflecting the impact of the Local Government Finance Settlement on them:

Detail	£'000
<b>Total Savings as at 3 December 2024</b>	<b>(1,503)</b>
Additional Extended Produced Responsibility levy (net of estimated reduction in recycling credits)	(432)
Facilities/Property restructure	33
<b>Total Revised Savings</b>	<b>(1,902)</b>

### Draft Revenue Budget 2025/26

2.10 The MTFS has been updated to reflect the Local Government Finance Settlement received on 18 December 2024. It provides for a revised gap in 2025/26 of £1.902m and a gap over the 5 year period of the MTFS of £5.054m.

2.11 The table below shows the factors which give rise to the £1.902m gap for 2025/26:

	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Additional Income</b>	
Fees and Charges	(408)
Business Rates Retention	(109)
National Insurance Reimbursement	(403)
<b>Total Additional Income</b>	<b>(920)</b>
<b>Loss of Income</b>	
Settlement Funding Assessment – impact of Minimum Funding Guarantee reduction	380
Business Rates Retention Reset	500
Reduction in income from under achieved budgets	100
<b>Total Loss of Income</b>	<b>980</b>
<b>Additional Expenditure</b>	
Employees (pay awards, increments, national insurance, pension)	1,340
Premises (business rates and utilities)	153
Transport (fuel)	19
Borrowing	45
Other (inc. software licences, commercialisation, restructuring)	285
<b>Total Additional Expenditure</b>	<b>1,842</b>
<b>Net Increase in Base Budget</b>	<b>1,902</b>

2.12 The table below shows the amendments to items included in the MTFs ‘gap’ reported to Cabinet on 3 December 2024 reflecting the impact of the Local Government Finance Settlement on them (further details are included at 2.29 to 2.35):

<b>Detail</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Total Pressures at 3 December 2024</b>	<b>1,453</b>
Restructuring (Legal, Environmental Health)	105
Inflation on NNDR compensation for under indexation	(36)
Settlement Funding Assessment – impact of Minimum Funding Guarantee reduction	380
<b>Total Revised Pressures</b>	<b>1,902</b>

2.13 The proposed savings identified for 2025/26 are summarised at 2.8, with further detail in Appendix 1.

2.14 As in previous years, the first draft of the savings plan set out at Appendix 1 was made available to the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny at its meeting on 5 December 2024. The Committee will also scrutinise this Cabinet report at its meeting on 16 January 2025.

### **Civic Growth Fund**

2.15 The Civic Growth Fund (formally the Borough Growth Fund) was established in 2020 for the purpose of enabling investment in corporate priorities. The Civic Growth Fund is required to be used to invest in initiatives that are forecast to generate on-going revenue savings through reducing the costs of service delivery or through the generation of additional income.

**2.16** Since the establishment of the Civic Growth Fund, investments have been made and committed to in the following areas:

<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>Details</b>
Council Modernisation	605	Embedding digitalisation across services and developing the skills of staff.
One Council Programme	100	Contribution to drive the digital programme which will transform public access to council services and drive efficiency savings.
Environmental Sustainability	139	Tree planting/carbon reduction
Walley's Quarry	175	Addressing community concerns regarding the quarry's unpleasant odour omissions.
Town Centre Support	177	Used to support the Town Deal bids for Newcastle and Kidsgrove and the rejuvenation of the Markets.
Car Parking Machines	30	Purchase of car parking machines with cashless payment options.
Commercial Property Review	20	Review to develop income generation ideas as part of the Commercial Strategy.

**2.17** The savings and funding strategies identified in the table in paragraph 2.8 and in Appendix 1 will enable continued investment of £0.250m in the Council's priorities as per the Council Plan 2022-2026 via the Civic Growth Fund. The Civic Growth Fund will continue to be used to provide investment in initiatives, including Digital Delivery, that are forecast to generate on-going revenue savings through reducing the costs of service delivery or through the generation of additional income. The Council's Section 151 Officer will determine whether any proposed use of the fund complies with this guidance on a case by case basis.

**2.18** The 2025/26 Civic Growth Fund investment will be used in the following areas:

<b>Investment Area</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Environmental Sustainability	100
Digital Delivery	100
Place Development	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>

**2.19** In order to boost environmental sustainability within the Borough, £0.100m per annum over the life of the MTFs continues to be ring-fenced from the Civic Growth Fund to enable such projects to be fully funded.

**2.20** £0.100m of the 2025/26 Civic Growth Fund will continue to be allocated to the digital programme which will transform public access to Council services and drive efficiency savings.

**2.21** The remaining £0.050m will be used within place development on initiatives and events for boosting footfall within the town centre.

## **Council Tax and Collection Fund**

**2.22** The savings and funding strategy assumes a 1.99% per Band D equivalent property Council Tax increase, producing £0.175m of additional income. This increase in Council Tax would equate to the following monetary increases for residents:

<b>Property Band</b>	<b>Annual Increase £ p</b>	<b>Weekly Increase £ p</b>
A	2.90	0.06
B	3.39	0.07
C	3.86	0.07
D	4.35	0.08
E	5.31	0.10
F	6.29	0.12
G	7.25	0.14
H	8.70	0.17

**2.23** Taking into account changes to the Council Tax base (i.e. new properties, empty homes premium, second home premium, single persons discount review), the Council Tax base has increased by 1,069 band D equivalent properties from 38,738 in 2024/25 to 39,807 in 2025/26.

**2.24** The Council is required to declare its estimated surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund (for both Business Rates and Council Tax) to preceptors ahead of the financial year end for 2024/25. This surplus or deficit is then shared between the relevant preceptors in 2025/26 (a surplus if paid out to preceptors, including the Council, and a deficit is repaid to the collection fund from preceptors, including the Council).

**2.25** The Business Rates Collection Fund is estimated to be in a surplus position at the close of 2024/25. The surplus is estimated to amount to £4.114m, of which the Council's share is £1.645m.

**2.26** The surplus primarily relates to the appeals provision which had a balance of £4.920m at 31 March 2024. As the final year of the 2023 business rates revaluation cycle, it is anticipated that a much lesser balance (£1.678m) will be required to be held during 2025/26.

**2.27** The Council's share of the surplus will be contributed to the Business Rates Reserve to increase the Council's resilience against Business Rates volatility in future periods.

**2.28** The Council Tax Collection Fund is estimated to be in a small surplus position as the close of 2024/25. This surplus is estimated to amount to £0.004m, of which the Council's share is £0.001m.

## **Local Government Finance Settlement**

**2.29** The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2025/26 was received on 18 December 2024. Overall, the MTFs provides for an increase in funding of

£0.073m when compared to 2024/25. The amount receivable is provisionally £0.344m less than assumed in the MTFS (detail provided in 2.30 to 2.35).

- 2.30** Taking account of the above, Baseline Settlement Funding (via Business Rates Retention scheme and Revenue Support Grant) and compensation for the under indexing of the business rates multiplier has increased by £0.109m when compared to 2024/25, this varies from the MTFS assumption of an increase of £0.073m by £0.036m. The compensation for under indexation reflects the freezes in the business rates multiplier which would otherwise have generated additional business rates income.
- 2.31** The Services Grant was proposed for the local government finance settlement 2022 to 2023 to provide funding to all tiers of local government in recognition of the vital services delivered at every level of local government. The MTFS assumed that the Services Grant would be continued at the same level as 2024/25. Services Grant will not be continued resulting in a £0.024m shortfall.
- 2.32** The Local Government Settlement for 2025/26 announced that the New Homes Bonus (NHB) Scheme will continue for a further year, the allocation amount for the Council is £0.165m due to the increase in properties within the borough in the last year. This varies from the MTFS assumption of £0.144m by £0.021m.
- 2.33** A recovery grant has been introduced with the aim of targeting money towards areas with greater need and demand for services, using deprivation as a proxy. This has resulted in a grant of £0.398m which was not expected in the MTFS, it is likely that this is a one off grant.
- 2.34** A domestic abuse grant has been rolled into the Council's core spending power, this amounts to £0.035m and was not expected in the MTFS.
- 2.35** The minimum funding guarantee has continued for 2025/26. This previously ensured that all authorities received an increase in core spending power of at least 3%. This guaranteed increase has reduced to 0%. This will result in a grant to the Council of £0.086m for 2025/26. This varies from the MTFS assumption of £0.896m (from the continuation of a 3% guarantee) by £0.810m, the reduction reflects the receipt of the newly introduced recovery grant, the reduction in the guaranteed increase (from 3% to 0%) and the Government's assumption regarding increases to Council Tax.

### ***Budget Consultation***

- 2.36** Public consultation has been undertaken on the budget, the consultation ran between 18 November 2024 and 16 December 2024. The results of which will be reported to Cabinet on 6 February 2024.

### **Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2027/28 and Capital Strategy 2025/35**

- 2.37** The Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28 (Appendix 4) is based on new schemes which are vital to ensure continued service delivery and in assisting the Council to achieve its corporate and service objectives as set out in the Council Plan 2022-26. These schemes total £94.604m including major investment into the Borough via external funding in terms of the Future High Streets Fund and the Town Deals Fund for both Newcastle and Kidsgrove.

- 2.38** The Capital Programme will require to be financed by borrowing, primarily for cash flow purposes, whilst assets are procured and constructed, after which time significant capital receipts are expected. The associated borrowing costs have been factored into the MTFs. The Capital Financing Requirement is set to increase to £23.585m by 2027/28 based on the 3 year Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28, the Capital Financing Requirement at 31 March 2024 (£10.262m) and the Capital Financing Requirement for capital expenditure during the current financial year and the financial years 2025/26 to 2027/28 (£13.323m).
- 2.39** The Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28 includes an estimate for the development of York Place, this assumes spend of £16.8m over the period 2025/26 to 2026/27 and a subsequent capital receipt of the same value during 2026/27. This is subject to the business case that is currently being developed.
- 2.40** The Capital Programme for this period also includes an estimate for the redevelopment of the Midway Carpark and assumes spend of £28.6m over the period 2025/26 to 2026/27 and a subsequent capital receipt of the same value during 2027/28. This is subject to the business case that is currently being developed.
- 2.41** In addition, the Capital Programme also includes an estimate for the Aparthotel on the Ryecroft site of £30.0m over the period 2026/27 to 2027/28 together with a subsequent capital receipt of the same value in 2027/28. Again, this is subject to the business case that is currently being developed.
- 2.42** The Capital Strategy for 2025/35 (Appendix 5) meets the requirements of statutory guidance issued by the Government in January 2018. The Council's capital investment is carried out within the statutory framework laid down by the Local Government Act 2003 and regulations under that Act. Accordingly, only expenditure which fits the definition of capital expenditure contained in the Act or Regulations pursuant to it will be capitalised.
- 2.43** The Capital Programme is produced in line with the Capital Strategy for 2025/35. In addition to the Council's corporate and service objectives, as set out in the Council Plan 2022-26, the Capital Programme is also influenced by a number of external parties and factors.
- 2.44** Delivering the capital programme for 2025/26 will require prudential borrowing to be undertaken. The impact of borrowing is included in the MTFs pressures for 2025/26 and future years.
- 2.45** Advice will be sought from the Council's Treasury Management advisors, Arlingclose, as to the most beneficial timing of prudential borrowing. Their current advice to reduce interest rate risk is to borrow on a short term basis (up to 4 years) from other local authorities where possible alongside longer term Public Works Loan Board borrowing where suitable.

***Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26, Investment Strategy 2025/26 and Commercial Strategy 2025/26***

- 2.46** The Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26 is attached at Appendix 6. The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2025/26 is contained in Annex C to the strategy.

**2.47** The Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26 allows for borrowing. Although not utilised in recent years, the Council has previously considered the option of long-term borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). After the utilisation of capital receipts and internal borrowing, the Council will also look to borrow short term from other local authorities and will also review any other sources of funding if required.

**2.48** The Investment Strategy for 2025/26 is attached at Appendix 7. This investment strategy meets the requirements of statutory guidance issued by the government in January 2018 and is based on guidance provided by Arlingclose, the Council's treasury management advisors. Quantitative investment indicators are included within the Strategy to allow elected members and the public to assess the Council's total risk exposure as a result of its investment decisions.

**2.49** The Commercial Strategy for 2025/26 is attached at Appendix 8. This strategy is aligned with the Council's vision for Newcastle-under-Lyme to be a sustainable and business-oriented Council that maximises commercial opportunities in order to deliver long-term benefits for residents of the borough and support the Council's medium-term financial strategy.

### ***Balances and Reserves***

**2.50** A review of the Council's Balances and Reserves together with a financial resilience risk assessment informing the levels of these has been undertaken by the Council's Section 151 Officer. Details of the risk factors considered and the weightings applied to each are set out at Appendix 3.

**2.51** It is recommended that a minimum level of unallocated reserves and contingencies (i.e. the Council's Balance and Reserve Strategy for 2025/26) of £2.010m be held in 2025/26 to reflect the levels of revenue risk shown in the draft budget for 2025/26. The remainder of the current balance is to be allocated to the Walley's Quarry Reserve during 2024/25.

### ***Timetable***

<b>Event</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>
Scrutiny of draft budget proposals	FAPSC	16 January 2025
Final budget proposals recommended for approval by Full Council	Cabinet	4 February 2025
Full Council to approve budget	Full Council	12 February 2025

## **3. Recommendation**

**3.1** That the progress on the completion of the Revenue (Appendix 1) and Capital Budgets (Appendix 4) be noted.

**3.2** That the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30 (Appendix 2) be noted.

**3.3** That the strategy for ensuring a balanced revenue outturn position for 2024/25 be noted.

- 3.4 That the calculation of the Council Tax base and the Council Tax increase to be proposed for 2025/26 of 1.99% per Band D equivalent property be noted.
- 3.5 That the risk assessment at Appendix 3 and Section 151 Officer's recommendation on the level of reserves and contingencies provisionally required to be maintained in 2025/26 be noted.
- 3.6 That the draft Capital Strategy (Appendix 5) for 2025/35 be noted.
- 3.7 That the draft Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix 6) for 2025/26 be noted.
- 3.8 That the draft Investment Strategy (Appendix 7) for 2025/26 be noted.
- 3.9 That the draft Commercial Strategy (Appendix 8) for 2025/26 be noted.
- 3.10 That the Asset Management Strategy (Appendix 9) for 2023/28 be noted.
- 3.11 That the draft Budget and Council Tax proposals be referred to Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee for comment before the final proposals are considered at Cabinet on 4 February 2025.

#### 4. **Reasons**

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget before 11 March in the financial year preceding the one in respect of which the budget is set, per Section 30(6) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Best practice is for financial planning to take place over a 5 year period in the form of a MTFS that sets out how the Council plans to allocate resources to meet its objectives.

#### 5. **Options Considered**

- 5.1 None.

#### 6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 The Council is required to set its Council Tax for 2025/26 by 11 March 2025, per Section 30(6) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. It is planned to approve the final budget and Council Tax rates on 12 February 2025.

#### 7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 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. It is important to consider the potential impact on such groups and individuals when designing or delivering services and budgets. Budget proposals requiring changes or new services and policies will be subject to Equality Impact Assessments including consultation with affected people and organisations.

#### 8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 These are addressed in the body of the report.



## 9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1** Section 25 of the Local Government Acts 2003 places a duty on the Section 151 Officer to report on the robustness of the budget. The main risks to the budget include spending in excess of budget; income falling short of the budget (including capital receipts from disposal of assets); and unforeseen elements such as changes to Government funding. In the context of uncertainty regarding Government funding reforms there are significant budget risks that will need to be managed. It will be essential the Council has sufficient reserves to call on if required.
- 9.2** Such risks require regular and robust monitoring and it is essential that the Council has sufficient useable reserves to call on if required. The review and risk assessment indicates that overall unallocated reserves and contingencies are required to be held at a minimum level of £2.010m to reflect the levels of revenue risk shown in the draft budget for 2025/26. In addition a contingency of £1m is required to provide flexibility to manage risks relating to delivery of the capital programme.
- 9.3** The assessment of the Section 151 Officer is that the draft proposals included in this report are robust and will ensure an adequate level of reserves. However, it should be noted that a number of assumptions and proposals are provisional or draft, and as such this opinion will be confirmed in the Revenue and Capital Budgets and Council Tax 2025/26 reports to Cabinet on 4 February 2025 and to Council on 12 February 2025.
- 9.4** Treasury management is a major area of risk for the Council in that large amounts of money are dealt with on a daily basis and there are a number of limits and indicators, which must be complied with.
- 9.5** The overriding consideration in determining where to place the Council's surplus funds is to safeguard the Council's capital. Within this constraint the aim is to maximise the return on capital. Operational procedures, coupled with monitoring arrangements, are in place to minimise the risk of departures from the approved strategy.

## 10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

- 10.1** 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. One Council

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

One Commercial Council

*We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.*

One Digital Council

*We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.*

One Green Council

*We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle.*

## **12. Key Decision Information**

12.1 Final approval of the budget setting process will be a key decision.

## **13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

13.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30 (Cabinet 10 September 2024).

13.2 Revenue and Capital Budgets 2025/26 – First Draft Savings Plans (Cabinet 3 December 2024).

## **14. List of Appendices**

14.1 Appendix 1 – 2025/26 MTFS Funding Strategy

14.2 Appendix 2 – 2025/26 to 2028/29 MTFS ‘Gaps’

14.3 Appendix 3 – Risk Assessment on Required Balances/Contingency Reserve

14.4 Appendix 4 – 2025/26 to 2027/28 Capital Programme and 2024/25 Mid-Year Estimate

14.5 Appendix 5 – Capital Strategy 2025 to 2035

14.6 Appendix 6 – Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26

14.7 Appendix 7 – Investment Strategy 2025/26

14.8 Appendix 8 – Commercial Strategy 2025/26

14.9 Appendix 9 – Asset Management Strategy 2023/2028

## **15. Background Papers**

CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice (revised December 2017)

Council’s Treasury Management Policy Statement

Local Government Act

Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations

## Appendix 1 – 2025/26 MTFS Funding Strategy

Ref	Service Area	Description	£000's	Detail
<b>Income</b>				
I1	Sustainable Environment	Trade waste	70	Introduction of recycling in respect of Trade Waste
I2	Commercial Delivery	Car Parking	91	Increased demand, pricing and permits for new car park
I3	Commercial Delivery	Leisure Memberships	28	Promotion of memberships and Skillscourt offer at Jubilee 2
I4	Commercial Delivery	Museum Donations	3	Split of donations between improvements and contribution to running costs
I5	Commercial Delivery	Direct Cremations	30	Net income following the introduction of a new fee for direct cremations
I6	Neighbourhood Delivery	Fixed Penalty Notices	5	Additional income generated from fixed penalty notices (fly tipping)
I7	Finance	Purchase Card Rebates	8	Rebates generated on credit card purchases from existing suppliers
			<b>235</b>	
<b>Staffing Related Efficiencies</b>				
S1	Commercial Delivery	Facilities/Property restructure	70	An amalgamation of the Facilities and Property functions
S2	Corporate	Vacancy factor	71	An increase in the assumed vacancy factor of posts from 3.5% to 4%
S3	Corporate	Annual leave purchase scheme	15	Scheme to enable staff to purchase additional leave
			<b>156</b>	
<b>Good Housekeeping/More Efficient Processes</b>				
G1	Commercial Delivery	Reduction in subsidy	50	An ongoing allowance in respect of subsidy to Kidsgrove Sports Centre is no longer required, suitable provision is held in reserves
G2	Commercial Delivery	Solar Panels	20	Reduction in electricity costs following installation of solar panels on Council property
G3	Information & Technology	Internet Fibre Connections	60	Installation of internet fibre connections and associated rental
G4	Information & Technology	Printing	10	Reduction in member and staff printing volumes
G5	Corporate	Parish Councils	20	Replacement of Council Tax Support Grant with demand led contributions
			<b>160</b>	
<b>Alternative Sources of Finance/Other</b>				
A1	Corporate	Tax base – Council Tax	100	Increase in tax base based on market housing supply requirement and current year tax base forecasts
A2	Corporate	Tax base – Business Rates	190	Assumed increase in tax base of 2.5%
A3	Corporate	Single Persons Discount review	30	Assumed increase in Council Tax from a Borough wide review of claimants of discounts
A4	Corporate	Empty Homes Premium	94	The impact of the change in eligibility of a premium Council Tax charge for empty homes, this was effective from 1 April 2024 (approved in February 2024)



P25	Corporate	Second Homes Premium	11	The impact of the change in eligibility of a premium Council Tax charge for second homes, this was effective from 1 April 2025 (approved in February 2024)
A6	Corporate	Council Tax increase	175	Assumed increase of 1.99% per Band D property
A5	Corporate	Equipment Replacement Fund	9	Contributions will not be made until fund requires replenishment
A8	Corporate	Heritage Grants Fund	10	Contributions will not be made until fund requires replenishment
A9	Sustainable Environment	Extended Producer Responsibility funding	732	Levy paid by producers of materials collected and disposed of by Local Authorities (£932k), net of loss in recycling credits (£200k)
			<b>1351</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>1,902</b>	

## Appendix 2 – 2025/26 to 2029/30 MTFS ‘Gaps’



Detail	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000	Description
<b>Employees:</b>						
Increments	60	60	60	60	60	Employees due an increment
Pay awards	594	446	461	477	493	3.5% pay award assumed for 2025/26 plus £1,290 per FTE re. 2024/25, 3% thereafter
Members pay awards	8	7	8	8	8	3.5% pay award assumed for 2025/26, 3% thereafter
Superannuation increases	144	111	115	118	122	22% of increase in salaries
Superannuation lump sum	41	43	45	45	45	Net increase of lump sum pension payment
National insurance rate	120	-	-	-	-	Increase of employer rate from 13.8% to 15%
National insurance threshold	283	-	-	-	-	Change in employer threshold from £9,100 to £5,000
National Insurance	90	76	78	80	83	National insurance on increase in salaries
<b>Premises:</b>						
Business Rates	26	27	28	29	30	Inflationary increase in business rates (per CPI)
Utilities	127	31	33	34	35	Inflationary increase in gas and electric (per CPI), additional pressure in 2025/26 to reflect current costs
<b>Transport:</b>						
Fuel	11	12	12	12	13	Inflationary increase in fuel (per CPI)
Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil	8	8	8	9	9	Inflationary increase in HVO (per CPI)
<b>Financing:</b>						
Borrowing costs	45	136	(48)	(47)	206	Borrowing costs regarding the financing of capital
<b>New Pressures:</b>						
ICT software	16	10	10	10	10	ICT costs re. systems maintenance and licences
Restructuring	205	-	-	-	-	Potential additional resource requirements
Commercialisation	64	-	-	-	-	Introduction of Commercialisation post
<b>Income:</b>						
Fees and charges	(408)	(399)	(415)	(431)	(449)	4% increase to enable continued cost recovery
National insurance	(403)	-	-	-	-	Re. National Insurance contribution changes
Local Government Finance Settlement	380	649	-	-	-	Impact of minimum funding guarantee reduction (3% to 0%) and one off grants
Business Rates Retention reset	500	500	500	-	-	To allow for a reset of the scheme in 2027/28
Business Rates baseline funding	(109)	(129)	(131)	(133)	(136)	Inflationary increase in baseline funding level (per CPI)
Income Pressures	100	-	-	-	-	To correct income shortfalls from budget
<b>TOTAL GAPS</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>1,588</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>529</b>	

### Appendix 3 – Risk Assessment on Required Balances/Contingency Reserve (£2.010m)

Item	Risk	Potential Consequences	Risk Score I * L	Risk Rating	Specify Existing Control Measures	Final Score I * L	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Balance Needed £
1	Increase in fees and charges does not result in higher income levels	Shortfall in income leading to overspends	3 x 4	High	Included in calculation of minimum balances	2 x 3	Moderate	Regular monitoring of income levels	205,000
2	Reduced Income due to non-availability of service (e.g. COVID-19 related or similar)	Shortfall in income leading to overspends	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of minimum balances	3 x 3	Moderate	Regular monitoring of income levels	140,000
3	Bad debts reduce the Council's income	Shortfall in income leading to overspends and need to top up provision	3 x 4	High	A contribution to the bad debts provision is budgeted for	3 x 3	High	Increase monitoring of collection rates	275,000
4	Employee budgets – the budget is discounted on the assumption there will be vacancies	Vacancies do not occur leading to additional costs	3 x 3	High	The budget assumes a vacancy factor of 3.5%, this is realistic compared with previous years	3 x 3	High	Regular monitoring of vacancy levels	70,000
5	Employee budgets - the 2024/25 employee pay settlement results in an increase higher than included in the budget	Additional unbudgeted costs	2 x 3	Moderate	Balances sufficient to deal with any additional costs, plus reduced job security in economy	2 x 3	Moderate	None	95,000
6	Problems with staff recruitment/retention resulting in the payment of market supplements at extra cost	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Subject to ongoing review	3 x 3	High	None	75,000
7	Problems with staff sickness/suspensions resulting in the needs to	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Absence management procedures in place	3 x 3	High	Monitoring of sickness levels	150,000



Item	Risk	Potential Consequences	Risk Score I * L	Risk Rating	Specify Existing Control Measures	Final Score I * L	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Balance Needed £
	use agency/interim staff at extra cost								
8	Council becomes liable to pay compensation or legal fees or another unforeseen commitment arises	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of minimum balances	3 x 2	Moderate	None	125,000
9	Inflation relating to supplies and services exceeds the allowance in the budget	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of minimum balances. Regular review of inflation levels	3 x 3	High	None	70,000
10	Existing commitment(s) missed out of budget	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Budgets subject to checking at several levels. Preparation of standstill budget for comparison	3 x 3	High	None	75,000
11	Additional interest costs incurred resulting from loss of income and additional expenditure	Additional unbudgeted borrowing costs	3 x 3	High	Capital Budgets and receipt expectations have been realistically set. Allowance provided for in calculation of minimum balances	3 x 3	High	None	160,000
12	Fuel costs increase by more than allowed for in budget	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Realistic increases included in base budget	3 x 3	High	None	45,000
13	Energy costs increase by more than allowed for in budget	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Realistic increases included in base budget	3 x 3	High	None	70,000
14	Unforeseen major repairs needed to Council properties	Additional unbudgeted costs	2 x 3	Moderate	Planned maintenance programme in place and stock condition survey.	2 x 3	Moderate	None	50,000
	Insurances – unexpected increases in premiums	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of minimum balances	2 x 3	Moderate	None	15,000



Item	Risk	Potential Consequences	Risk Score I * L	Risk Rating	Specify Existing Control Measures	Final Score I * L	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Balance Needed £
	Insurances - high level of excesses to be met by Council or uninsured losses	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Included in calculation of minimum balances. Insurance Provision established	2 x 3	Moderate	Monitor level of Insurance Provision	40,000
17	Government further increase NI rates during 2024/25	Additional unbudgeted costs	2 x 3	Moderate	Included in calculation of minimum balances. Increased rate built into budget	1 x 2	Low	None	25,000
18	Savings built into Budget are not realised	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Regular Budget Monitoring	3 x 2	Moderate	None	65,000
19	New Legislation imposes extra costs but provides insufficient resources	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Contingency Reserve available. Included in calculation of minimum balances	3 x 2	Moderate	None	25,000
20	Partnerships - expenses falling on Council as accountable body	Additional unbudgeted costs	2 x 3	Moderate	Monitor partnership activities and ensure carried out according to agreements	2 x 1	Low	None	5,000
21	Civil Emergency	Additional unbudgeted costs	5 x 2	High	Bellwin Scheme will meet 100% of eligible expenditure within 1 month of an emergency	4 x 2	Moderate	None	55,000
22	Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) Clawback	Additional unbudgeted costs	4 x 4	Extreme	MMI Provision	3 x 2	Moderate	Consider increasing amount of provision if necessary	25,000
23	Data Protection breach resulting in fine	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Data Protection Policy Reminders to staff. All staff complete mandatory Data Protection e-learning module	3 x 3	High	None	75,000

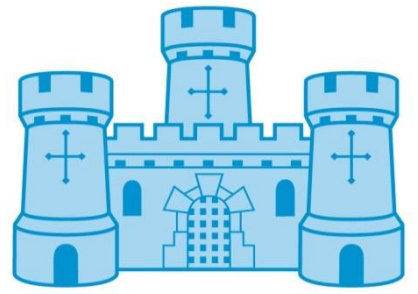




Item	Risk	Potential Consequences	Risk Score I * L	Risk Rating	Specify Existing Control Measures	Final Score I * L	Final Risk Rating	Further Action Required	Balance Needed £
24	Members act against officer advice resulting in cost to the Council	Additional unbudgeted costs	3 x 3	High	Agenda pre-meetings. Liaison with members. Monitoring Officer	3 x 3	High	None	75,000

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Appendix 4 2025/26 to 2027/28 Capital Programme and 2024/25 Mid-Year Estimate

CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2024/25 MID YEAR	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	TOTAL 2025/26 to 2027/28
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>PRIORITY – One Council Delivering for Local People</b>					
Service Area - Council Modernisation	1,967,318	434,000	336,000	80,000	850,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,967,318</b>	<b>434,000</b>	<b>336,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>850,000</b>
<b>PRIORITY – A Successful and Sustainable Growing Borough</b>					
Service Area - Housing Improvements	1,984,832	1,670,000	1,670,000	1,595,000	4,935,000
Service Area - Managing Property & Assets	12,168,633	15,843,846	39,125,982	20,495,475	75,465,303
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,153,465</b>	<b>17,513,846</b>	<b>40,795,982</b>	<b>22,090,475</b>	<b>80,400,303</b>
<b>PRIORITY – Healthy, Active and Safe Communities</b>					
Service Area - Environmental Health	72,000	-	-	-	-
Service Area - Streetscene and Bereavement Services	844,705	250,000	160,000	135,000	545,000
Service Area - Recycling and Fleet	2,046,150	3,169,500	6,003,100	1,222,514	10,395,114
Service Area – Leisure and Cultural	192,000	150,000	-	-	150,000
Service Area - Engineering	385,000	120,000	50,000	-	170,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,539,855</b>	<b>3,689,500</b>	<b>6,213,100</b>	<b>1,357,514</b>	<b>11,260,114</b>
<b>PRIORITY – Town Centres for All</b>					
Future High Streets Fund	2,441,925	-	-	-	-
Town Deals – Newcastle	19,828,498	807,000	-	-	807,000
Town Deals - Kidsgrove	8,415,328	1,236,000	-	-	1,236,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,685,751</b>	<b>2,043,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,043,000</b>
<b>CONTINGENCY (will be carried forward to 2025/26)</b>	<b>948,980</b>	<b>51,020</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>51,020</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51,295,369</b>	<b>23,731,366</b>	<b>47,345,082</b>	<b>23,527,989</b>	<b>94,604,437</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>					
Capital Receipts	3,786,000	4,150,000	50,787,087	34,350,000	<b>89,287,087</b>
External Contributions	32,960,583	3,543,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	<b>6,543,000</b>
Borrowing	14,548,786	16,038,366	(4,942,005)	(12,322,011)	<b>(1,225,650)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51,295,369</b>	<b>15,641,888</b>	<b>8,907,995</b>	<b>8,907,995</b>	<b>94,604,437</b>



**NEWCASTLE  
UNDER LYME**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Capital Strategy 2025 to 2035



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## Introduction

The purpose of the Capital Strategy is to set out how the Council proposes to deploy its capital resources to assist it to achieve its corporate and service objectives. It considers other relevant Council strategies, policies and plans and the views of partners and interested parties with whom the Council is involved. It also takes account of the resources which are likely to be available to the Council to fund capital investment and the effect of that investment on the Council's revenue budget. It will serve as a useful point of reference when determining or reviewing the Council's Capital Programme.

Capital expenditure is where the Council spends money on assets, such as property or vehicles that will be used for more than one year. In local government this includes spending on assets owned by other bodies, and loans and grants to other bodies enabling them to buy assets.

A mid-year review of the Capital Programme for 2024/25 has been undertaken as part of the Efficiency Board and budget setting process to identify any projects that may need to be re-profiled from 2024/25 into future years. This was approved by Cabinet on 3 December 2024.

The revised 2024/25 Capital Programme totals £51.295m which includes £32.551m for schemes funded by external sources (£28.244m Town Deals, £2.442m Future High Streets and £1.865m Disabled Facilities Grants) and is summarised below, showing the constituent categories by the priorities identified in the Council Plan:

Council Priorities	Planned Expenditure £m
One Council Delivering for Local People	1.967
A Successful and Sustainable Growing Borough	14.153
Healthy, Active and Safe Communities	3.540
Capital Contingency	0.949
Town Centres for all	30.686
<b>Total</b>	<b>51.295</b>

Full Council will consider a capital programme to continue investment beyond 2024/25 on 12 February 2025.

The Strategy has been prepared against a background of continuing reductions in funding provided to local authorities by central government and its agencies, arising from the need to restrain public expenditure owing to the ongoing economic conditions and to rebalance public finances. The Council has also produced a Commercial Strategy with the aim to generate income through commercial activities which can then be reinvested in local priorities.

# Key Objectives and Priorities

The Council's Priorities contained in the Council Plan are:

One Council Delivering for Local People
A Successful and Sustainable Growing Borough
Healthy, Active and Safe Communities
Town Centres for All

Capital investment projects will be included in the Council's Capital Programme on the basis that they address issues arising from one or more of these Priority Areas. An indication is shown against each project in the Programme of the area or areas it addresses.

New proposals for capital investment will be assessed against the corporate priorities to ensure that they will contribute towards achieving the aims expressed. This assessment will be carried out as part of the appraisal process for new projects.

The Council will also endeavour, through its programme of capital investment, to maintain its assets to a standard such that they remain fit for purpose, enabling continuity of service delivery. In particular, it will carry out regular surveys of its stock of buildings and structures to ascertain their state of repair and any remedial works which may be necessary. Repair or improvement works arising from such surveys will be carried out subject to the availability of resources and consideration of the role the building plays in service delivery and the need to continue the relevant service in order to contribute to meeting corporate priorities. If a building is no longer required for service delivery, it will either be considered for alternative use by the Council or its partners or disposed of and the proceeds made available for future capital investment in priority areas. All property assets are held to either (i) provide Council services, (ii) provide an investment return or (iii) to further regeneration projects.

The Capital Assets and Commercial Investment Review Group is in place and chaired by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth. This Group keeps the Council's capital investment strategy under continuous review, including the prioritisation of projects for inclusion in future capital investment programmes over the medium term. Regular reviews of the property portfolio will be carried out by the group to identify properties or land which could potentially be disposed of, following a consultation process in the case of significant proposals, and a capital receipt obtained from the sale.

Where suitable "Invest to Save" projects can be identified the Council will actively pursue such projects as it recognises the benefits, in the form of reduced costs falling on the General Fund Revenue Account, that can result from such investment.

The Council will seek, where practicable and economically justifiable, to develop its investment projects having regard to principles of sustainability, for example in relation to materials used and environmentally friendly modes of operation once in use, following construction or purchase.

## Factors Influencing the Capital Programme

Projects for inclusion in the capital programme arise from a variety of sources, some of them internally generated and some arising from external factors. The more significant of these can be summarised diagrammatically as follows:

Internal	External
Corporate Priorities, as set out in the Council Plan	Government sponsored programmes, e.g. Disabled Facilities Grants
Investment identified in Strategies, Policies and Plans	Unforeseen Emergency Works
Work needed to maintain Property Assets	Works required to comply with legislation, e.g. re disabled access, health and safety
Vehicles, Plant and Equipment replacement needs	Projects resulting from Partnership Activity
ICT Investment and Replacement	Availability of External Funding
Invest to Save Projects	Public expectation that works should be carried out

These are discussed in greater detail in sections below:

## Links with Other Strategies, Policies and Plans

As well as the Council's Plan and the Capital Programme the Capital Strategy has clear links to many other strategies, policies and plans, the most significant of which are shown in the following table:

Key Strategies	
Asset Management Strategy	Service and Financial Plans
Economic Development Strategy	Procurement Strategy
Investment Strategy	Housing Strategy
Medium Term Financial Strategy	Customer Service and Access Strategy
Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy	Treasury Management Strategy

An important link is to the Asset Management Strategy in that many capital investment projects are related to the Council's fixed assets, such as its stock of buildings. Needs and priorities identified in the Asset Management Strategy will require consideration for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme and have wider financial consequences. Equally important is the opportunity to generate

capital receipts from the disposal of land/property where there is no current or likely future operational need.

The Investment Strategy sets out the Council's policies and practices in relation to commercial investments, for example investments in property and will include information about any such proposals, including funding the expenditure and the effect upon the revenue budget. Expenditure relating to commercial investments will be capital and will be included in the capital programme.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy will take account of the revenue effect of capital investment.

Appraisal, procurement and management of capital projects needs to be carried out with regard to the objectives, methodologies the principles and practices set out in the Procurement Strategy.

The various service based strategies will inform the Council's capital investment process through their identification of areas for action and of priorities within individual service areas.

The Treasury Management Strategy needs to reflect planned capital spend, particularly with regard to setting limits for tying up money over the longer term and the limits relating to the amount of permitted borrowing.

In addition, the Capital Strategy will be influenced by the results of any Service Reviews which have been carried out by the Council, either as part of the budget preparation process or as one-off exercises. Where these reviews identify areas of service which are to be discontinued, this may give rise to assets which will be available for disposal and possibly generate a capital receipt which will be available for funding further capital investment. Alternatively, reviews may identify areas for investment, including potential "invest to save" projects, some of which may be capital investment.

## External Influences, Partners and Consultation with Other Interested Parties

The Council's capital investment plans are influenced by several external parties and factors: central government and its agencies, legislation requiring capital works, partner organisations, businesses, developers and by the needs and views of other interested parties, particularly those of Borough residents.

Government sponsored initiatives and programmes will influence the projects which the Council will include in its capital investment plans. In particular, its Housing Investment Programme in which the Council participates with regard to Disabled Facilities Grants, this is a major area of investment where funding is provided by Government to meet a proportion of the costs of some of these activities. This funding currently consists mainly of grant payments to partially meet the cost of disabled facilities grants payable to eligible applicants.

Where required by legislation to carry out works of a capital nature, such as to comply with the Disability Act or Health and Safety requirements, or anti-pollution regulations, the Council will consider the most effective way to discharge its obligations and appropriate provision will be made in its Capital Programme once it has determined that it shall carry out the necessary work and that this should be capitalised.

The Council works with a wide range of partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, all of which have an influence over its spending priorities. Relationships with partners, including those concerning capital matters, will be governed by the Council's Partnerships Code of Practice. Wherever possible the Council will seek to work in partnership with others to deliver its capital investment programme in order to provide facilities which meet its own and partners' needs. When working with the private sector, the objective will be to maximise the benefits to the Council



and the community from any projects, both in terms of outputs and in relation to obtaining funding for the project.

The Council has established a Town Centre Partnership, together with relevant parties such as representatives of retailers and businesses in the town centres of Newcastle and Kidsgrove. The partnership may identify proposals for town centre improvements which could place demands upon future capital programmes where such works align with the Council's economic development objectives. It may also present an opportunity for costs to be shared between the parties likely to benefit from their implementation.

The availability of external funding (particularly in relation to the successful Town Deals and Future High Street Fund bids) will also influence the projects which the Council will include in its capital investment plans. This is referred to in the following section of the Strategy.

Regard will be given to the Council's obligations under disabled access requirements in putting forward proposals for capital investment and in the design of any facilities which are proposed.

Wherever possible the principles of financial and environmental sustainability will be incorporated into any capital projects.

## Resources Available to Finance Capital Investment

The following table shows the main sources of funding which are available to the Council to finance its capital investment. Individual projects may be financed solely by one of these or by a combination of several of them.

Internal	External
Capital Receipts in Hand	Government Grants
Reserves	Borrowing
New Capital Receipts from Asset Sales	Contributions from Partners
Revenue Contributions	Other Contributions

More details of these funding sources are given in the following paragraphs:

Capital receipts have been the major source of funding for the Capital Programme in recent years. Capital receipts, alongside borrowing and external contributions, are committed to finance the currently approved Capital Programme. Additional capital projects may be financed from capital receipts obtained by asset sales or other new capital streams.

A previously significant source of capital receipts has been the Council's continuing right to a share of receipts arising from tenants of Aspire Housing under the Right to Buy legislation. However, Right to Buy sales have diminished from historically high levels, both because of the present depressed property market and there being fewer potential purchasers as time goes by. Future sales income is projected to be in the range of £0.5m per annum.

Capital receipts from sales of land and property (including covenant release payments) have been relatively modest in recent times.

The Asset Management Strategy sets out expected sales over the next ten years. The Capital, Assets and Commercial Investment Review Group meets on a bi-monthly basis and is responsible for the formulation of strategies in respect of income generation relating to asset disposals.

The use of capital receipts and reserves to finance new capital projects influences investment income receipts and hence the General Fund Revenue Account. At an investment interest rate of around 4.7%, every £100,000 of such capital receipts or reserve balances used will cost £4,700 to the revenue account on an ongoing basis. The use of capital receipts and reserves to finance the Capital Programme is taken account of in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Any receipts generated from the sale of assets will be invested until they are required to finance capital expenditure.

Wherever Government grants are available to meet all or part of the cost of capital projects the Council will ensure that these are applied for and used to maximise the amount of investment which can be made and the benefit which will result from that investment.

Funding will be sought towards the cost of capital projects from external parties wherever possible and appropriate. The prime examples of these being the Town Deals, Future High Streets Fund and Disabled Facilities Grants. These may include property developers, central government and government agencies, funding bodies such as the National Lottery, the Football Foundation, the Lawn Tennis Association and partner organisations that may join with the Council to bring forward projects of mutual benefit.

The capital investment programme set out in Annex B will require a significant amount of borrowing if it is to be carried out in its entirety. The use of borrowing influences the General Fund Revenue account in terms of interest payable and the requirement to allocate a Minimum Revenue Provision, for a typical asset with a useful life of 20 years borrowing costs currently amount to around £10,000/year for every £100,000 borrowed.

There is no intention to charge any capital investment directly to the General Fund Revenue Account.

The Council does not presently intend to consider the use of Private Finance Initiative type arrangements or tax increment financing to meet the cost of capital investment.

The Service Director for Finance (S151 Officer) will prepare estimates of the resources which are presently in hand plus those likely to be available in future to finance capital investment. They will keep these estimates up to date and periodically report upon them to Cabinet and Council, particularly when the Capital Programme is being considered. The Council will decide on the appropriate form of financing for projects included in the Capital Programme based on advice from the Service Director for Finance (S151 Officer) as to availability and the consequences and costs of use of the various options.

The need to have available liquid funds to be used to pay for capital projects will be considered when drawing up the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. An appropriate limit will be placed on long term investments based on predictions of the capital spending profile over the period covered by the Strategy so that there are likely to be enough readily available easily cashable investments to meet requirements.

## Revenue Implications

The impact upon the General Fund Revenue Account arising from capital investment proposals will be calculated and considered at the time projects are placed before Cabinet or Full Council for inclusion in the approved Capital Programme or for specific approval. Such impact may be in the form of reduced interest receipts, where projects are to be financed from capital receipts or reserves, borrowing costs, if loan finance is to be employed, or additional running costs arising from the

provision of a new or altered facility. Offset against these costs will be any savings which might accrue, for example from “invest to save” projects.

The Council will always have regard to the affordability of its proposed capital investments, in terms of the revenue implications arising.

The revenue implications of the capital programme will be taken account of in the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy.

## **Appraisal and Prioritisation of Investment Proposals**

In accordance with the Council’s Financial Regulations proposals for new capital investment estimated to cost more than £250,000 will be subject to an appraisal process, whereby a business case will be made out for the proposal, considering its contribution towards meeting corporate objectives and service priorities, its outputs and milestones, its cost and sources of and its effect, if any, upon the revenue budget in future years. Less significant projects costing below £250,000 will be subject to a simplified process. All new capital investment proposals must be considered by the Capital, Assets and Commercial Investment Review Group prior to specific Cabinet approval being requested. The project will only be included in the approved Capital Programme, after considering its priority relative to other proposed projects and the overall level of resources available to fund the Capital Programme as a whole.

No projects should be considered in isolation. They must be required to be measured against all other competing projects to determine which should go forward. This process should also apply to any projects which are proposed after the approval of the programme, to ensure that only those projects with a high priority are proceeded with and funds are not diverted to projects of a lesser priority.

A Risk Assessment, in the approved corporate format, will be completed for capital projects over £250,000.

## **Monitoring Arrangements and Project Management**

Progress in relation to individual projects will be monitored through the Council’s arrangements for the monitoring of capital projects, which entail quarterly monitoring reports to be received by the Cabinet. The Capital Assets and Commercial Investment Review Group will also review project progress and corrective action will be initiated where projects fall behind schedule, appear likely to overspend or otherwise give cause for concern. Individual Project Forms will be maintained in respect of each project by the Service Director for Finance (S151 Officer) which will track the progress of projects and be available to officers and members with an interest in reviewing progress of those projects.

All projects will be assigned to a named officer who will be responsible for overseeing the project, including project monitoring and control and implementing exception reports and, where appropriate, corrective action if the project deviates from its planned progress or cost. Where complex major projects are to be carried out, consideration will be given to employing the Prince2 project management methodology.

All capital projects will be subject to Internal Audit review to ensure correct procedures have been followed and sums have been paid out in accordance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders as they relate to contracts. Where projects have received funding from government or quasi-governmental sources, the expenditure will also be subject in many cases to external audit. European

Union funded projects may also be subject to audit by auditors on behalf of that body. Where monitoring returns or claims for reimbursement of expenditure are required to be sent to funding bodies, these will be completed and forwarded promptly to the relevant body in compliance with any deadlines laid down by them. All capital investment proposals and project progress and management are subject to the Council's scrutiny arrangements.

## Statutory Framework

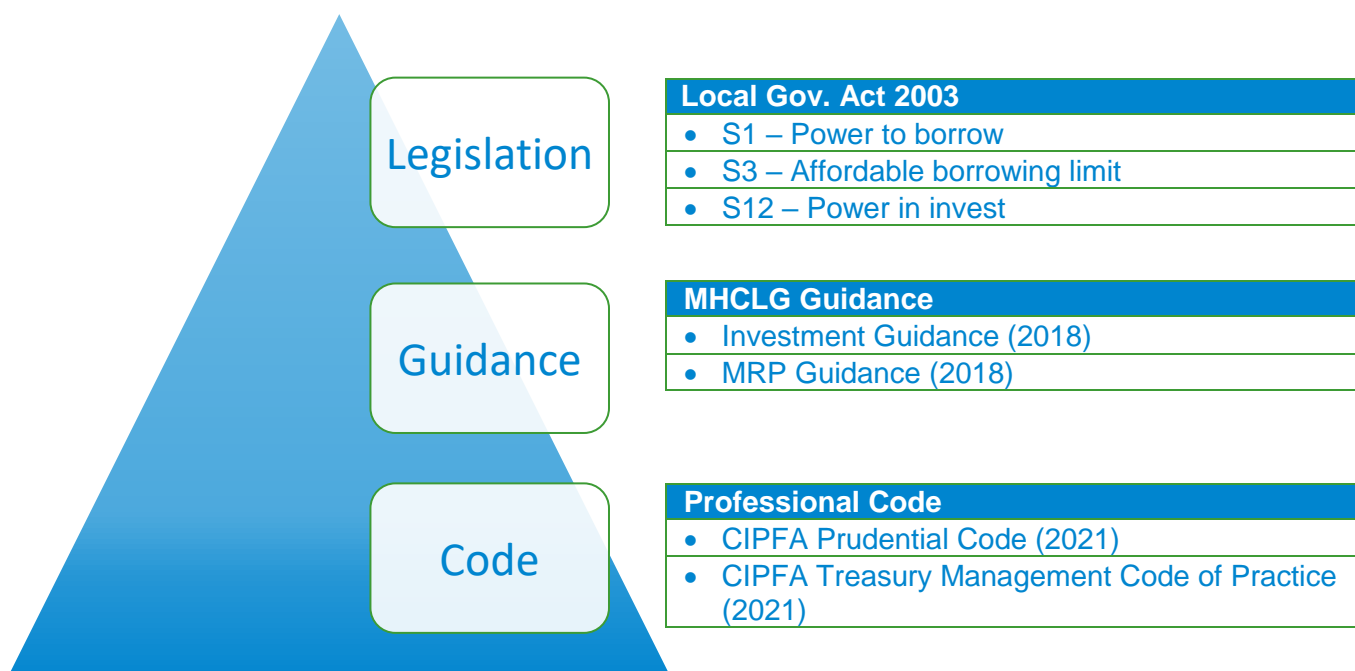
The Council's capital investment is carried out within the statutory framework laid down by the Local Government Act 2003 and regulations under that Act. Accordingly, only expenditure which fits the definition of capital expenditure contained in the Act or Regulations pursuant to it will be capitalised.

Capital expenditure is defined by the 2003 Act as that which falls to be capitalised in accordance with accounting, published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), applicable to all local authorities. Annex A sets out a summarised version of the definition provided by the Code. In addition, there are several other types of expenditure that have been defined by Regulations as being treatable as capital in nature. Generally, these do not apply to this Council.

It should be noted that the Act and Regulations are framed in a permissive way, allowing local authorities to capitalise expenditure which fits the definition but not forcing them to capitalise such expenditure. The Council will decide, therefore, whether to include a project meeting the capital definition in its capital programme or to meet its cost from a revenue account.

The Council does not set a minimum amount for the capitalisation of expenditure (de minimis level). Accordingly, any expenditure complying with the above definition may be capitalised.

## Legal and Regulatory Requirements



# Prudential Indicators

The Council shall ensure that all its capital expenditure, investments and borrowing decisions are prudent and sustainable. In doing so it will consider its arrangements for the repayment of debt and consideration of risk and the impact, and potential impact, on the Council's overall fiscal sustainability. The Council's prudential indicators (shown in Annex C) are as follows:

- **Estimates of capital expenditure**

The Council will make reasonable estimates of the total of capital expenditure that it plans to incur during the forthcoming financial year and at least the following two financial years.

- **Actual capital expenditure**

After the year end, the actual capital expenditure incurred during the financial year will be recorded.

- **Estimates of capital financing requirement**

The Council will make reasonable estimates of the total capital financing requirement at the end of the forthcoming financial year and the following two years.

- **Actual capital financing requirement**

After the year end, the actual capital financing requirement will be calculated directly from the Council's balance sheet.

- **Ratio of financing costs to net revenue streams**

This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet borrowing costs.

- **Authorised limit on external borrowing**

The Authorised Limit sets the maximum level of external borrowing on a gross basis (i.e., excluding investments) for the Council. This Prudential Indicator separately identifies borrowing from other long-term liabilities such as finance leases. It is consistent with the Council's existing commitments, its proposals for capital expenditure and financing and its approved treasury management policy statement and practices.

- **Operational boundary for external debt**

This indicator refers to how the authority manages its external debt to ensure it remains within the statutory authorised limit. It differs from the authorised limit in as far as it is based on the most likely scenario, in terms of capital spend and financing during the year.

- **Gross debt and capital financing requirement**

This is a key indicator of prudence. To ensure that over the medium-term debt will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years.

Where the gross debt is greater than the capital financing requirement the reasons for this should be clearly stated in the annual treasury management strategy.

## Procurement

Regard will be given to the contents of the Council's Procurement Strategy when considering the delivery of capital projects.

Where estimated project contract costs exceed the relevant statutory threshold, the appropriate EU or other tendering procedures will be followed.

Standing Orders relating to contracts will apply to all contracts proposed to be let in relation to capital projects, together with Financial Regulations and the provisions of the Council's scheme of Delegation.

The achievement of Value for Money will be a guiding principle in the procurement of capital works and services and in managing contracts.

## Future Capital Programme

Capital investment needs have been assessed over a ten-year period (2025/26 to 2034/35) and are set out in Annex B.

During this period, there will be a need for some items of capital investment to be made to ensure continued service delivery or to comply with statutory requirements or to ensure health and safety of staff and public. Examples of these include operational building repairs and maintenance, replacement of vehicles, plant and equipment required to deliver services, and disabled facilities grants.

It may be possible to extend the lives of some of the vehicles, if they are in a fit condition when their replacement date is reached. Similarly, some of the maintenance/improvement works to the Council's operational properties may be capable of being deferred; periodic stock condition surveys will inform any decisions in this regard. Additionally, some properties may be deemed surplus to operational requirements and eligible for disposal in their current condition.

In addition to the essential works outlined above, there are significant amounts of expenditure which need to be incurred:

- In respect of the Town Deals and Future High Streets Fund funding successfully bid for, these projects will have a significant impact upon the regeneration and recovery of both Newcastle and Kidsgrove Town centres;
- In respect of the commercial portfolio in order to keep properties in a state of repair such as to continue to obtain a reasonable rental income;
- To maintain various engineering structures such as walls, bridges, drains, and reservoirs to ensure safety to the public; and
- To enable agreed actions in relation to approved policies and strategies to be progressed and to meet other Council commitments.

Over the period 2025/26 to 2034/35 it is estimated that this expenditure will total £131.343m. There will be insufficient capital receipts arising from planned sales to meet all the costs of the investment programme.

The Capital Programme will require to be financed by borrowing, primarily for cash flow purposes, whilst assets are procured and constructed, after which time significant capital receipts are expected. The associated borrowing costs have been factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The Capital Financing Requirement is set to increase to £23.585m by 2027/28 based on the 3-year Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28, the Capital Financing Requirement at 31 March 2024 (£10.262m) and the Capital Financing Requirement for capital expenditure during the current financial year and the financial years 2025/26 to 2027/28 (£13.323m).

There will be a consequent cost to the revenue budget which will have to be included in the MTFS projections. Based on the expenditure shown in Annex B and forecasts of the amount and timing of receipts and current capital financing costs, the additional costs to the revenue budget will be around £10.110M over 10 years, with the costs in each year 2025/26 to 2034/35 being as shown below:

Year	Total £m	Year	Total £m
2025/26	0.616	2030/31	1.190
2026/27	0.735	2031/32	1.303
2027/28	0.631	2032/33	1.417
2028/29	0.563	2033/34	1.442
2029/30	0.747	2034/35	1.467
		<b>Total</b>	<b>10.111</b>

A capital programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28 totalling £94.604M will be recommended to Full Council on 12 February 2025, consistent with the detail shown in Annex B. The prudential indicators that will apply for this 3-year period are set out at Annex C.

Funding for 2024/25 expenditure is likely to be available from the following sources:

- Further capital receipts from asset sales;
- Right to Buy capital receipts;
- Government grants;
- Other external contributions; and
- Borrowing.

All the above funding sources are likely to be limited so the programme only includes affordable projects.

## Annex A – Definition of Capital Expenditure included in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom

All expenditure that can be directly attributed to the acquisition, creation, or enhancement of items of property, plant and equipment or the acquisition of rights over certain longer-term intangible benefits is accounted for on an accruals basis and capitalised as a non-current asset. It must be probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Council - the Council does not have to own the item, but it must be more than likely that it has gained the right to use the item in the provision of services or to generate cash from it. In addition, it must be possible to measure the cost of the item reliably.

Expenditure that should be capitalised will include expenditure on the:

- Acquisition, reclamation or laying out of land;
- Acquisition, construction, preparation, enhancement or replacement of roads, buildings and other structures; and
- Acquisition, installation or replacement of movable or immovable plant, machinery, apparatus, vehicles and vessels.

In this context, the definition of enhancement contained in the previous Code of Practice (SORP) is still applicable and means the carrying out of works which are intended to:

- Lengthen substantially the useful life of the asset; or
- Increase substantially the market value of the asset; or
- Increase substantially the extent to which the asset can or will be used for the purpose or in conjunction with the functions of the local authority concerned.

Under this definition, improvement works and structural repairs should be capitalised, whereas expenditure to ensure that the fixed asset maintains its previously assessed standard of performance should be recognised in the revenue account as it is incurred. Expenditure on existing fixed assets should be capitalised in three circumstances:

- Enhancement - see above;
- Where a component of the fixed asset that has been treated separately for depreciation purposes and depreciated over its individual useful life is replaced or restored; or
- Where the subsequent expenditure relates to a major inspection or overhaul of a fixed asset that restores the benefits of the asset that have been consumed by the authority and have already been reflected in depreciation.

Assets acquired on terms meeting the definition of a finance lease should be capitalised and included together with a liability to pay future rentals.

Where an asset is acquired for other than cash consideration or where payment is deferred the asset should be recognised and included in the balance sheet at fair value.



## Annex B – 2025/26 to 2034/35 Capital Programme

CAPITAL PROGRAMME	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>PRIORITY - One Council Delivering for Local People</b>											
Neighbourhood Delivery	30,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	95,000
ICT	404,000	331,000	75,000	346,000	431,000	121,000	31,000	31,000	31,000	31,000	1,832,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>434,000</b>	<b>336,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>351,000</b>	<b>456,000</b>	<b>126,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>1,927,000</b>
<b>PRIORITY - A Successful and Sustainable Growing Borough</b>											
Housing	1,670,000	1,670,000	1,595,000	1,595,000	1,595,000	1,595,000	1,595,000	1,595,000	1,595,000	1,595,000	16,100,000
Property	149,532	272,791	-	277,510	-	7,280	-	-	-	-	707,113
Facilities Management	694,314	416,104	495,475	188,543	310,000	694,742	172,500	172,500	150,000	150,000	3,444,178
Commercial Strategy	15,000,000	38,437,087	20,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	73,437,087
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,513,846</b>	<b>40,795,982</b>	<b>22,090,475</b>	<b>2,061,053</b>	<b>1,905,000</b>	<b>2,297,022</b>	<b>1,767,500</b>	<b>1,767,500</b>	<b>1,745,000</b>	<b>1,745,000</b>	<b>93,688,378</b>
<b>PRIORITY - Healthy, Active and Safe Communities</b>											
Environmental Health	-	-	-	-	12,000	-	-	-	-	-	12,000
Streetscene	240,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	155,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	1,435,000
Bereavement Services	10,000	30,000	5,000	5,000	10,000	1,530,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	1,610,000
Recycling and Fleet Services	3,169,500	6,003,100	1,222,514	1,798,411	3,630,561	7,691,724	2,623,039	2,623,039	700,000	700,000	30,161,888
Leisure	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,000
Engineering Works	120,000	50,000	-	-	-	95,000	-	-	-	-	265,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,689,500</b>	<b>6,213,100</b>	<b>1,357,514</b>	<b>1,933,411</b>	<b>3,782,561</b>	<b>9,471,724</b>	<b>2,758,039</b>	<b>2,758,039</b>	<b>835,000</b>	<b>835,000</b>	<b>33,633,888</b>
<b>PRIORITY - Town Centres for All</b>											
Town Deal - Newcastle	807,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	807,000
Town Deal - Kidsgrove	1,236,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,236,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,043,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,043,000</b>
<b>CONTINGENCY</b>											
£1m to be carried forward from 2024/25	51,020	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,731,366</b>	<b>47,345,082</b>	<b>23,527,989</b>	<b>4,345,464</b>	<b>6,143,561</b>	<b>11,894,746</b>	<b>4,561,539</b>	<b>4,561,539</b>	<b>2,616,000</b>	<b>2,616,000</b>	<b>131,343,286</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>											
Capital Receipts	4,150,000	50,787,087	34,350,000	4,350,000	550,000	550,000	550,000	550,000	550,000	550,000	96,937,087
External Contributions	3,543,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	17,043,000
Borrowing/Leasing	16,038,366	-4,942,005	-12,322,011	-1,504,536	4,093,561	9,844,746	2,511,539	2,511,539	566,000	566,000	17,363,199
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,731,366</b>	<b>47,345,082</b>	<b>23,527,989</b>	<b>4,345,464</b>	<b>6,143,561</b>	<b>11,894,746</b>	<b>4,561,539</b>	<b>4,561,539</b>	<b>2,616,000</b>	<b>2,616,000</b>	<b>131,343,286</b>

## Annex C – Prudential Indicators

### Capital Prudential Indicators

#### *Actual and Estimate of Capital Expenditure*

31/03/24 Actual (£000's)	31/03/25 Estimate (£000's)	31/03/26 Estimate (£000's)	31/03/27 Estimate (£000's)	31/03/28 Estimate (£000's)
11,630	36,747	7,693	52,287	35,850

#### *The Capital Financing Requirement (The Councils Borrowing Need)*

The second prudential indicator is the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure above, which has not immediately been paid for, will increase the CFR.

The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the borrowing need in line with each asset's life.

The CFR projections are below:

31/03/24 Actual (£000's)	31/03/25 Estimate (£000's)	31/03/26 Estimate (£000's)	31/03/27 Estimate (£000's)	31/03/28 Estimate (£000's)
10,262	22,810	23,849	25,907	23,585

The amounts shown above from 2024/25 onwards allow the Council to borrow during those years to finance capital expenditure which cannot be funded from other revenue or capital resources. However, the likelihood of individual schemes, the timings and the amounts involved cannot be assessed with certainty at this point.

The sale of Council assets for capital receipts will have a significant impact upon the CFR, if sales are made the Council's borrowing requirement will be reduced, if not the Council's borrowing requirement will be greater.

#### *Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement*

The Council's main objectives when borrowing are to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Council therefore seeks to strike a balance between cheaper short-term loans and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but higher.

The Council does not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of financial return and therefore retains full access to the Public Works Loans Board.

Projected levels of the Council's total outstanding debt, are shown below, compared with the capital financing requirement (see above):

	2023/24 Actual (£000's)	2024/25 Budget (£000's)	2025/26 Estimate (£000's)	2026/27 Estimate (£000's)	2027/28 Estimate (£000's)
<b>Debt (incl. PFI &amp; leases)</b>	695	13,243	14,282	16,340	14,018
<b>Capital Financing Requirement</b>	10,262	22,810	23,849	25,907	23,585

Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short-term. As can be seen from the table above, the Council expects to comply with this in the medium term.

## Affordability Prudential Indicators

### *Actual and Estimates of the Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream*

This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term obligation costs net of investment income) against the net revenue stream.

Financing Costs comprise the aggregate of interest payable, interest receivable and investment income, the amount charged as MRP, and depreciation and impairment charges that have not been reversed out of the revenue account.

Net Revenue Stream is defined as the 'amount to be met from government grants and local taxpayers'. This is the Council's 'budgetary requirements' figure shown in the General Fund Revenue Budget, being the net expenditure for the year before deducting government grants (Revenue Support and Business Rates Retention) and adjusting for the Collection Fund surplus/deficit. The relevant figures for this Council are set out in the table below:

	2023/24 Actual (£000's)	2024/25 Budget (£000's)	2025/26 Estimate (£000's)	2026/27 Estimate (£000's)	2027/28 Estimate (£000's)
<b>Net Revenue Stream</b>	16,684	17,046	17,046	17,046	17,046
<b>Financing Costs</b>	(1,103)	680	884	1,021	972
<b>Ratio</b>	(6.54%)	3.99%	5.19%	5.99%	5.70%

## Treasury Indicators

### *Limits to Borrowing Activity*

The Local Government Act 2003 requires each local authority to determine and keep under review how much money it can afford to borrow. This is to be determined by the calculation of an affordable borrowing limit which Regulations to the Act specify should be calculated with regard to the CIPFA Prudential Code.

Previously borrowing has not been used to fund the capital programme because the Council has had sufficient reserves and useable capital receipts to finance capital expenditure from these sources.

### **The Operational Boundary**

This is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed.

<b>Operational boundary</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate (£000's)</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate (£000's)</b>	<b>2026/27 Estimate (£000's)</b>	<b>2027/28 Estimate (£000's)</b>
<b>Borrowing</b>	55,000	80,000	125,000	150,000
<b>Other long term liabilities</b>	0	0	0	0

### **The Authorised Limit for External Borrowing**

A further key prudential indicator represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by the full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term.

This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

The Council is asked to approve the following authorised limit:

<b>Authorised limit</b>	<b>2024/25 Estimate (£000's)</b>	<b>2025/26 Estimate (£000's)</b>	<b>2026/27 Estimate (£000's)</b>	<b>2027/28 Estimate (£000's)</b>
<b>Debt</b>	75,000	100,000	145,000	170,000
<b>Other Long Term Liabilities</b>	0	0	0	0

### **Limits on Interest Rate Exposures (fixed and variable interest rates)**

The following limits will apply in relation to the Council's interest rate exposure. They relate to interest on both borrowings and investments. These limits are intended to reduce the risk of the Council suffering unduly from significant adverse fluctuations in interest rates.

#### **Limit on Fixed Interest Rate Exposures (as a percentage of total borrowings / investments)**

	<b>Borrowing</b>		<b>Investments</b>	
	<b>Upper</b>	<b>Lower</b>	<b>Upper</b>	<b>Lower</b>
<b>2024/25</b>	100%	0%	100%	0%
<b>2024/25</b>	100%	0%	100%	0%
<b>2025/26</b>	100%	0%	100%	0%
<b>2026/27</b>	100%	0%	100%	0%

*Limit on Variable Interest Rate Exposures (as a percentage of total borrowings/ investments)*

	Borrowing		Investments	
	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower
<b>2023/24</b>	100%	0%	100%	0%
<b>2024/25</b>	100%	0%	100%	0%
<b>2025/26</b>	100%	0%	100%	0%
<b>2026/27</b>	100%	0%	100%	0%

In relation to both borrowing and investing fixed rate investments and loans may be anything between 0% and 100% of the total, with the same proportions being permitted for variable rate loans – in effect there is no limit on each type. This enables maximum flexibility to be afforded to take advantage of prevailing interest trends to obtain the best deal for the Council.

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# Treasury Management Strategy

2025/26



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## Introduction

Treasury management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Council may invest or borrow substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Council's prudent financial management.

Treasury risk management at the Council is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act 2003* to have regard to the CIPFA Code.

Investments held for service purposes or for commercial profit are considered in a different report, the Investment Strategy.

## Economic Situation

### Highlights of the report supplied by Arlingclose Ltd.

#### External Context

*Economic background:* The UK's economy will be influenced by several factors in the coming years, including the government's Autumn Budget, slower cuts to interest rates, weaker growth, and uncertainties related to President-elect Trump's policies. In November 2024, the Bank of England (BoE) reduced interest rates to 4.75%, with expectations that they may lower rates further. However, UK growth is expected to slow after a small improvement in 2025. Inflation decreased in 2024 but is expected to rise again to around 2.75% in mid-2025 before stabilizing at the BoE's target of 2%.

The labour market is improving slowly, with unemployment at 4% in August 2024, but it may rise slightly in the future. Pay growth is positive, with regular earnings growing by 4.9%. In the US, the Federal Reserve is also cutting interest rates, but inflation remains high, so further cuts may happen more slowly. The Eurozone has seen inflation drop, allowing for further interest rate cuts there as well.

*Credit outlook:* Regarding credit risk, the financial market has been more stable in 2024, with fewer loan defaults than expected despite higher interest rates. UK banks remain strong, and any changes to US financial regulations under Trump are unlikely to affect UK banks' creditworthiness.

*Interest rate forecast (November 2024):* Looking ahead, the Bank of England is expected to continue lowering interest rates, reaching around 3.75% by the end of 2025/26. Long-term bond yields are expected to stay stable but slightly lower, with some short-term volatility due to global uncertainties.

A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is in Appendix A.

#### Local Context

On 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024, the Council held no borrowing and £19.61 million of treasury investments, largely due to grant monies temporarily held. This is set out in further detail at Annex B. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table below:

<b>Balance Sheet Summary and Forecast</b>	<b>31/03/2024 Actual £m</b>	<b>31/03/2025 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31/03/2026 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31/03/2027 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31/03/2028 Forecast £m</b>
General Fund CFR	10.3	22.8	23.8	25.9	23.6
Less: Existing external borrowing	0.0	0.0	(12.5)	(13.5)	(15.6)
Less: Usable reserves	(5.2)	(5.8)	(5.8)	(5.8)	(5.8)
Less: Working capital	(24.9)	(4.5)	(4.5)	(4.5)	(4.5)
<b>(New Investments or Cash)/ New external borrowing</b>	<b>(19.8)</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>(2.3)</b>

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Council's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing. Where borrowing is required, this will be in line with Arlingclose's current advice of doing so from other local authorities on a short-term basis. This will be undertaken until it becomes advantageous to switch to long term debt, with the lowest cost option being considered.

The Council has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme and may therefore be required to borrow over the forecast period. More details in relation to the Council's CFR are included within the Capital Strategy.

CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities recommends that the Council's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. The table above shows that the Council expects to comply with this recommendation during 2025/26.

*Liability benchmark:* To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes the same forecasts as above, but that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £1m at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity but minimise credit risk.

The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash flow.

<b>Liability Benchmark</b>	<b>31/03/2024 Actual £m</b>	<b>31/03/2025 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31/03/2026 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31/03/2027 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31/03/2028 Forecast £m</b>
General Fund CFR	10.3	22.8	23.8	25.9	23.6
Less: Balance sheet resources	(30.1)	(10.3)	(22.8)	(23.8)	(25.9)
<b>Net loans requirement</b>	<b>(19.8)</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>(2.3)</b>
Plus: Liquidity Allowance	-	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Liquidity benchmark</b>	<b>(19.8)</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>(1.3)</b>

## Borrowing Strategy

The Council does not currently hold any loans, as per the previous year, as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes.

The balance sheet forecast, in the table above, shows that the Council expects to borrow in 2025/26, having undertaken borrowing towards the backend of the current year. The Council may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing.

The Council's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Council's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Council's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. Short-term interest rates are currently higher than in the recent past but are expected to fall in the coming year and it is therefore likely to be more cost effective over the medium-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead. The risks of this approach will be managed by keeping the Council's interest rate exposure within the limit set in the treasury management prudential indicators.

By doing so, the Council is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of internal or short-term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly. Arlingclose will assist the Council with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Council borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2025/26 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.

Although not utilised in recent years, the Council has previously considered the option of long-term borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). However, consideration will now be given to long-term loans from other sources including banks, pensions and local authorities, and the Council will investigate the possibility of issuing bonds and similar instruments, in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield; the Council intends to avoid this activity in order to retain its access to PWLB loans.

Alternatively, the Council may arrange forward starting loans, where the interest rate is fixed in advance, but the cash is received in later years. This would enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period.

In addition, the Council may borrow short-term loans to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.

### Sources of borrowing:

The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- HM Treasury's PWLB lending facility (formerly the Public Works Loan Board);
- National Wealth Fund (Formerly UK Infrastructure Bank Ltd);
- any institution approved for investments (see below);
- any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK;
- any other UK public sector body;
- UK public and private sector pension funds;
- capital market bond investors;
- retail investors via a regulated peer-to-peer platform and
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues.

*Other sources of debt finance:* In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

- leasing;
- hire purchase;
- Private Finance Initiative;
- sale and leaseback; and
- Similar asset-based finance.

*Municipal Bonds Agency:* UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. It issues bonds on the capital markets and lends the proceeds to local authorities. This is a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities will be required to provide bond investors with a guarantee to refund their investment in the event that the agency is unable to for any reason; and there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report to Council.

*Short-term and variable rate loans:* These loans leave the Council exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises.

*Debt rescheduling:* The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Council may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk. The recent rise in interest rates means that more favourable debt rescheduling opportunities should arise than in previous years.

## Treasury Investment Strategy

The Council can hold significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Council's treasury investment balance has ranged between £9.3 million and £36.9 million. The highest figure of £36.9 million was invested in December 2023, when the Council received monies in relation to Town Deal Funding.

The CIPFA Code requires the Council to invest its treasury funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Council will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested. The Council aims to be a responsible investor and will consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues when investing.

The Council expects to be a long-term borrower and new treasury investments will therefore be made primarily to manage day-to-day cash flows using short-term low risk instruments. The existing portfolio of strategic pooled funds will be maintained to diversify risk into different sectors and boost investment income.

Under the IFRS 9 standard, the accounting for certain investments depends on the Council's "business model" for managing them. The Council aims to achieve value from its internally managed treasury investments by a business model of collecting the contractual cash flows and therefore, where other criteria are also met, these investments will continue to be accounted for at amortised cost.

The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in the table below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown.

### Approved investment counterparties and limits

Sector	Time limit	Counterparty limit	Sector limit
The UK Government	3 years	Unlimited	n/a
Local authorities & other government entities	3 years	£7m	unlimited
Secured investments*	3 years	£7m	unlimited
Banks (unsecured)*	13 months	£7m	unlimited
Building societies (unsecured)*	13 months	£7m	£7m
Registered providers (unsecured)*	3 years	£10m	£10m
Money market funds*	n/a	£7m	unlimited
Real estate investment trusts	n/a	£2m	£2m
Other investments	3 years	£7m	£7m

\* Treasury investments in the sectors marked with an asterisk will only be made with entities whose lowest published long-term credit rating is no lower than A-. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

For entities without published credit ratings, investments may be made either where external advice indicates the entity to be of similar credit quality.

**UK Government:** Sterling-denominated investments with or explicitly guaranteed by the UK Government, including the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility, treasury bills and gilts. These are deemed to be zero credit risk due to the government's ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

**Local authorities and other government agencies:** Loans to, and bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by, other national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk.

**Secured investments:** Investments secured on the borrower's assets, which limits the potential losses in the event of insolvency. The amount and quality of the security will be a key factor in the investment decision. Covered bonds, secured deposits and reverse repurchase agreements with banks and building societies are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit

rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used. The combined secured and unsecured investments with any one counterparty will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

*Banks and building societies (unsecured):* Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.

*Registered providers (unsecured):* Loans to, and bonds issued or guaranteed by, registered providers of social housing or registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (in England), the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Welsh Government and the Department for Communities (in Northern Ireland). As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

*Money market funds:* Pooled funds that offer same-day or short notice liquidity and very low or no price volatility by investing in short-term money markets. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee. Although no sector limit applies to money market funds, the Council will take care to diversify its liquid investments over a variety of providers to ensure access to cash at all times.

*Strategic pooled funds:* Bond, equity and property funds, including exchange traded funds that offer enhanced returns over the longer term but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Council to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but can either be withdrawn after a notice period or sold on an exchange, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.

*Real estate investment trusts:* Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties.

*Other investments:* This category covers treasury investments not listed above, for example unsecured corporate bonds and unsecured loans to companies and universities. Non-bank companies cannot be bailed-in but can become insolvent placing the Council's investment at risk.

*Operational bank accounts:* The Council may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in, and balances will therefore be kept below £7,000,000 per bank. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Council maintaining operational continuity.

*Risk assessment and credit ratings:* Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Council's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:

- no new investments will be made,
- any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
- full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.

Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "negative watch") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

The Council understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support, reports in the quality financial press and analysis and advice from the Council's treasury management adviser. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may otherwise meet the above criteria.

**Reputational aspects:** The Council is aware that investment with certain counterparties, while considered secure from a purely financial perspective, may leave it open to criticism, valid or otherwise, that may affect its public reputation, and this risk will therefore be taken into account when making investment decisions.

When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008, 2020 and 2022, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Council will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Council's cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, or with other local authorities. This will cause investment returns to fall but will protect the principal sum invested.

**Investment limits:** In order that the Council will not be put at risk in the case of a single default, the maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government and Registered Providers) will be £7 million. A group of entities under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes.

Limits are also placed on fund managers, investments in brokers' nominee accounts and foreign countries as below. Investments in pooled funds and multilateral development banks do not count against the limit for any single foreign country since the risk is diversified over many countries.

**Additional Investment limits**

	<b>Cash limit</b>
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£7m per manager
Investments held in a broker's nominee account	£7m per broker
Foreign countries	£7m per country

**Liquidity management:** The Council uses cash flow forecasting to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a prudent basis to minimise the risk of the Council being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Council's medium-term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

Non-treasury investments are covered by the Council's Investment Strategy.

## Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

The Council measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

### Security

The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit risk indicator	Target
Portfolio average credit rating	A

### Liquidity

The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three month period, without additional borrowing.

Liquidity risk indicator	Target
Total cash available within 3 months	£1m

### Interest rate exposures

This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates will be:

Interest rate indicator	Limit
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	(£137,000)
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	£137,000

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at new market rates.

### Maturity structure of borrowing

This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

Refinancing rate risk indicator	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	100%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	100%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	100%	0%

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.



## Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year

The purpose of this indicator is to control the Council's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

Price risk indicator	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	No Fixed Date
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£25m	£25m	£25m	£25m

Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds and real estate investment trusts but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term.

The Council's Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit for External Borrowing are detailed in the Council's Capital Strategy.

## Related Matters

The CIPFA Code requires the Council to include the following in its treasury management strategy.

**Financial Derivatives:** Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (e.g. interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk. The general power of competence in Section 1 of the *Localism Act 2011* removes much of the uncertainty over local authorities' use of standalone financial derivatives (i.e. those that are not embedded into a loan or investment).

The Council will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Council is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be taken into account when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds and forward starting transactions, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria, assessed using the appropriate credit rating for derivative exposures. An allowance for credit risk calculated using the methodology in the Treasury Management Practices document will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.

In line with the CIPFA Code, the Council will seek external advice and will consider that advice before entering into financial derivatives to ensure that it fully understands the implications.

**Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID II):** The Council has opted up to professional client status with its providers of financial services, including advisers and banks, allowing it access to a greater range of services but without the greater regulatory protections afforded to individuals and small companies. This is believed to be the most appropriate status given the size and range of the Council's treasury management activities.

## Financial Implications

The budget for investment income in 2025/26 is nil. The revenue budget for debt interest paid in 2025/26 is £615,700. If actual levels of investments and borrowing, or actual interest rates, differ from those forecast, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

Interest in respect of capital expenditure on major projects which the Council is funding ahead of a sale to the developer undertaking the project will be capitalised and recouped as part of the sale price. This interest will not impact upon the revenue account and will be separately identified for each of these projects.

## Other Options Considered

The CIPFA Code does not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. It is believed that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Some alternative strategies, with their financial and risk management implications, are listed below.

Alternative	Impact on income and expenditure	Impact on risk management
Invest in a narrower range of counterparties and/or for shorter times	Interest income will be lower	Lower chance of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be greater
Invest in a wider range of counterparties and/or for longer times	Interest income will be higher	Increased risk of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be smaller
Borrow additional sums at long-term fixed interest rates	Debt interest costs will rise; this is unlikely to be offset by higher investment income	Higher investment balance leading to a higher impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be more certain
Borrow short-term or variable loans instead of long-term fixed rates	Debt interest costs will initially be lower	Increases in debt interest costs will be broadly offset by rising investment income in the medium term, but long-term costs may be less certain
Reduce level of borrowing	Saving on debt interest is likely to exceed lost investment income	Reduced investment balance leading to a lower impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be less certain

# Annex A – Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast November 2024

## *Underlying assumptions:*

- As expected, the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) cut the Bank Rate to 4.75% in November in an 8-1 vote. However, the outlook for monetary policy has changed following the new government's fiscal plans, as delivered in the recent Budget.
- The Budget contained measures that will boost demand, in a constrained supply environment, while pushing up direct costs for employers. The short to medium-term inflationary effects of the Budget require a change to our Interest Rate Forecast.
- UK GDP recovered well in the first half of 2024 from technical recession, but underlying growth appears relatively subdued. However, the Budget will significantly boost government spending over the short-term, with few offsetting measures to subdue household demand, so GDP growth is likely to rise relatively steeply.
- Private sector wage growth has eased to 4.8% yet remains high, while services inflation continues to hold above pre-pandemic levels. The increase in employers' National Insurance Contribution's, minimum and public sector wage levels could have wide ranging impacts on private sector employment demand and costs, but the near-term impact will likely be inflationary as these additional costs get passed to consumers.
- CPI inflation was below the 2% target in September but will rise a little by year-end as energy price declines from the previous year fall out of the annual comparison. The Bank of England (BoE) estimates the Budget impact will see the CPI rate at 2.7% by year end 2025 and remain over target in 2026, as opposed to the prior projection of inflation easing back to and then below target by this point.
- The MPC re-emphasised the gradual move to easing monetary policy, and we now believe the Budget measures have both reduced the pace of Bank Rate cuts and increased the level to which the interest rate will fall (although downside risks remain in the medium term).
- The increase in borrowing, rise in inflation and shallower path for the Bank Rate projected by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) raised gilt yields. The material change in rate expectations means that yields will be generally higher in the post-Budget world.
- US government yields have risen following Donald Trump's and Republican victories in the US elections. Trump has run on a platform of policies that appear inflationary, calling into question the extent of policy loosening required from the Federal Reserve. Higher US yields could also support higher UK yields.

## *Forecast:*

- In line with our forecast, the Bank Rate was cut to 4.75% in November 2024.
- The MPC will continue to lower the Bank Rate to reduce the restrictiveness of monetary policy, but more slowly and to a higher level. We see another rate cut in February 2025, followed by one cut per quarter, in line with Monetary Policy Report publication, to a low of 3.75%.
- Long-term gilt yields have risen to reflect both UK and US economic, monetary and fiscal policy expectations, and increases in bond supply. Volatility is likely to remain elevated as the market digests incoming data for clues around the impact of policy changes.
- This uncertainty may also necessitate more frequent changes to our forecast than has been the case recently.
- Upside risks to inflation over the next 12 months could limit the extent of monetary easing, but we see the risks as broadly balanced over the medium term.

	Current	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27	Sep-27
<b>Official Bank Rate</b>													
<i>Upside risk</i>	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Arlingclose Central Case	4.75	4.75	4.50	4.25	4.00	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
<i>Downside risk</i>	0.00	0.00	-0.25	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75
<b>3-mth money market rate</b>													
<i>Upside risk</i>	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Arlingclose Central Case	4.95	4.80	4.60	4.35	4.10	3.90	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85
<i>Downside risk</i>	0.00	0.00	-0.25	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75
<b>5-yr gilt yield</b>													
<i>Upside risk</i>	0.00	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Arlingclose Central Case	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.05	3.95	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.95	4.00	4.05	4.05	4.05
<i>Downside risk</i>	0.00	-0.40	-0.50	-0.60	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65
<b>10-yr gilt yield</b>													
<i>Upside risk</i>	0.00	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Arlingclose Central Case	4.41	4.40	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35
<i>Downside risk</i>	0.00	-0.40	-0.50	-0.60	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65
<b>20-yr gilt yield</b>													
<i>Upside risk</i>	0.00	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Arlingclose Central Case	4.84	4.80	4.75	4.70	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.65
<i>Downside risk</i>	0.00	-0.40	-0.50	-0.60	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65
<b>50-yr gilt yield</b>													
<i>Upside risk</i>	0.00	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Arlingclose Central Case	4.35	4.50	4.45	4.40	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35
<i>Downside risk</i>	0.00	-0.40	-0.50	-0.60	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65

PWLB Standard Rate = Gilt yield + 1.00%  
PWLB Certainty Rate = Gilt yield + 0.80%  
PWLB HRA Rate = Gilt yield + 0.40%  
National Wealth Fund (NWF) Rate = Gilt yield + 0.40%

## Annex B – Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

	13/12/2024 Actual Portfolio £m	13/12/2024 Average Rate %
<i>Treasury investments:</i>		
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	0.86	3.00
Government (incl. local authorities)	16.75	4.70
Money Market Funds	2.0	4.74
<b>Total treasury investments</b>	<b>19.61</b>	
<b>Total external borrowing</b>	<b>0.0</b>	
<b>Net investments</b>	<b>19.61</b>	

# Annex C – Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

## Background

In instances whereby Local Authorities have a positive Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Guidance requires them to adopt a prudent approach in order to fund the repayment of debt. This may be achieved by setting aside a minimum amount from revenue, known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). This means that the Council would be required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year (the CFR) through a revenue charge (the MRP).

MHCLG Regulations and Guidance have been issued which require the Full Council to approve an **MRP Statement** in advance of each year. Four options for prudent provision of the MRP are provided to councils, these being:

### Option 1 – Regulatory Method

For debt which is supported by the Government through the Revenue Support Grant system, authorities may continue to use the formulae in the current regulations, since the Revenue Support Grant is calculated on that basis. Although the existing regulation 28 is revoked by regulation 4(1) of the 2008 Regulations, authorities will be able to calculate MRP as if it were still in force. Solely as a transitional measure, this option will also be available for all capital expenditure incurred prior to 1 April 2008.

### Option 2 – Capital Financing Requirement Method

This is a technically much simpler alternative to Option 1 which may be used in relation to supported debt. While still based on the concept of the CFR, which is easily derived from the balance sheet, it avoids the complexities of the formulae in the old regulation 28 (though for most authorities it will probably result in a higher level of provision than Option 1).

### Option 3 – Asset Life Method

For new borrowing under the Prudential system for which no Government support is being given and is therefore self-financed, there are two options included in the guidance.

Option 3 is to make provision over the estimated life of the asset for which the borrowing is undertaken. This is a possibly simpler alternative to the use of depreciation accounting (Option 4), though it has some similarities to that approach.

Within option 3, two methods are identified. The first of these, the equal instalment method, will normally generate a series of equal annual amounts over the estimated life of the asset. The original amount of expenditure (“A” in the formula) remains constant.

The cumulative total of the MRP made to date (“B” in the formula) will increase each year. The outstanding period of the estimated life of the asset (“C” in the formula) reduces by 1 each year.

For example, if the life of the asset is originally estimated at 25 years, then in the initial year when MRP is made, C will be equal to 25. In the second year, C will be equal to 24, and so on. The original estimate of the life is determined at the outset and should not be varied thereafter, even if in reality the condition of the asset has changed significantly.

The formula allows a council to make voluntary extra provision in any year. This will be reflected by an increase in amount B and will automatically ensure that in future years the amount of provision determined by the formula is reduced.

The alternative is the annuity method, which has the advantage of linking MRP to the flow of benefits from an asset where the benefits are expected to increase in later years. It may be particularly attractive in connection with projects promoting regeneration or administrative efficiencies or schemes where revenues will increase over time.

## Option 4 – Depreciation Method

Alternatively, for new borrowing under the Prudential system for which no Government support is being given, Option 4 may be used.

This means making the MRP in accordance with the standard rules for depreciation accounting. A step in this direction was made in the last set of amendments to the MRP rules [SI 2007/573]. However, the move to reliance on guidance rather than regulations will make this approach more viable in future.

Authorities will normally need to follow the standard procedures for calculating depreciation provision. But the guidance identifies some necessary exceptions:

The MRP continues until the total provision made is equal to the original amount of the debt and may then cease.

If only part of the expenditure on the asset was financed by debt, the depreciation provision is proportionately reduced.

## MRP Policy in respect of Finance Leases

The introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards in 2011/12 resulted in some leases being reclassified as finance leases instead of operating leases. This resulted in a positive CFR and as such the need to set aside a MRP.

In accordance with the revised MHCLG Guidance this Council will set aside an annual MRP equal to the amount of the lease that has been taken to the Balance Sheet to reduce the finance lease liability i.e. the principal amount of the finance lease. This approach will produce an MRP charge which is the same as Option 3 in the guidance (Asset Life Method – annuity method). The revised guidance aims to ensure that authorities are in the same position as if the change in accounting standards had not occurred.

## MRP Policy – Other Capital Expenditure

### Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The Council's CFR is currently positive. This means that there is a requirement to set aside a MRP for the redemption of debt. The Prudential Indicator for the CFR, shown at Table 1 in the Treasury Management Strategy, indicates that the CFR will become positive within the period covered by the Strategy. This is based on the assumption that there will be a general overall increase in expected capital expenditure, which cannot be funded from revenue or capital resources. Accordingly, the Council needs to determine the option it will employ to make the necessary MRP in respect of the amount borrowed, when this occurs.

### Option for making MRP

The most appropriate of the four options permitted by the Regulations is Option 3, the Asset Life Method, within which there are two further options, an equal instalment method and an annuity method (as detailed in 1.1 – option 3). The Council is permitted to apply either of these two further options to projects on a scheme by scheme basis. However, preference will be the annuity method.

It should be noted that MRP does not commence until the year following that in which the asset concerned became operational; however, voluntary MRP can be made at any given time if considered prudent.

## Annex D – Treasury Management Glossary of Terms

- *Credit Default Swap* – an additional assessment of credit worthiness by providing a risk analysis of changes in credit quality as perceived by the market.
- *CFR* – the Capital Financing Requirement is the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources.
- *CIPFA* – the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, is the professional body for accountants working in Local Government and other public sector organisations.
- *Counterparty* – an institution with whom a borrowing or investment transaction is made.
- *CPI* – a measure that examines the weighted average of prices of a basket of consumer goods and services. The Consumer Price Index is calculated by taking price changes for each item in the predetermined basket of goods/services and averaging them; the goods are weighted according to their importance. Changes in CPI are used to assess price changes associated with the cost of living.
- *Credit Rating* – is an opinion on the credit-worthiness of an institution, based on judgements about the future status of that institution. The main rating agencies are Fitch, Standard and Poor's and Moody's.
- *Depreciation* – the measure of the cost or revalued amount of the benefits of the fixed asset that have been consumed during the period. Consumption includes wearing out, using up or other reduction in the useful life of a fixed asset whether arising from use, time or obsolescence through either changes in technology or demand for the goods and services produced by the asset.
- *GDP* – Gross Domestic Product is the market value of all officially recognised final goods and services produced within a country in a given period of time.
- *IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards)* – International accounting standards that govern the treatment and reporting of income and expenditure in an organisation's accounts, which came fully into effect from 1 April 2010.
- *Leasing* - a lease is a contractual arrangement calling for the lessee (user) to pay the lessor (owner) for use of an asset.
- *Liquidity* – relates to the amount of readily available or short term investment money which can be used for either day to day or unforeseen expenses. For example, Call Accounts allow instant daily access to invested funds.
- *MHCLG* – Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (formerly the Department for Communities and Local Government).
- *Money Market Funds (MMF)* – Money Market Funds are investment funds that are invested by a Fund Manager in a wide range of money market instruments. MMF's are monitored by the official ratings agencies and due to many requirements that need to be fulfilled; the funds usually receive the highest quality rating (AAA) so provide minimal risk. They are very flexible and can be withdrawn in the same way as any other call deposit.
- *MPC* – interest rates are set by the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee. The MPC sets an interest rate it judges will enable the inflation target to be met
- *MRP* – the Minimum Revenue Provision represents the revenue charge for the repayment of debt.
- *PWLB* – the Public Works Loan Board is a statutory board that is run within the UK Debt Management Office (DMO), its function is to lend money to Local Authorities and other prescribed bodies.



# Investment Strategy

2025/26



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## Introduction

This strategy is compiled according to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance") and the 2021 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code") It sets out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

The Guidance distinguishes between Treasury Management Investments and Other Investments. Treasury Management Investments are those which arise from the Council's cash flows and debt management activity and ultimately represent balances which need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business. Other Investments are all those falling outside of normal treasury management activity, as defined above. They may be made with the express purpose of making a financial surplus for the Council, usually as a means towards balancing the revenue budget. They may be funded from borrowing where appropriate. The prime example referred to in the Guidance is direct investment in property assets. Loans, for example to voluntary organisations, local enterprises or joint ventures are also classified as Other Investments.

The Council invests its money for three broad purposes:

- because it has surplus cash as a result of its day-to-day activities, for example when income is received in advance of expenditure (known as **treasury management investments**),
- to support local public services by lending to or buying shares in other organisations (**service investments**), and
- to earn investment income (known as **commercial investments** where this is the main purpose).

This investment strategy meets the requirements of statutory guidance issued by the government in January 2018, and focuses on the second and third of these categories.

### *Possible Revisions to the Strategy*

The initial strategy may be replaced with a revised strategy at any time during the year in cases where any treasury management issues (including investment issues) need to be brought to the attention of Full Council.

## Treasury Management Investments

The Council typically receives its income in cash (e.g. from taxes and grants) before it pays for its expenditure in cash (e.g. through payroll and invoices). It also holds reserves for future expenditure and collects local taxes on behalf of other local authorities and central government. These activities, plus the timing of borrowing decisions, lead to a cash surplus which is invested in accordance with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. The balance of treasury management investments is expected to fluctuate between £0m and £10m during the 2025/26 financial year.

**Contribution:** The contribution that these investments make to the objectives of the Council is to support effective treasury management activities.

**Further details:** Full details of the Council's policies and its plan for 2025/26 for treasury management investments are covered in a separate document, the Treasury Management Strategy.

## Service Investments: Loans

**Contribution:** During 2023/24 and 2024/25 to date the Council has not lent money to local charities, housing associations or any other bodies. However, the Council would consider applications from such bodies individually, in order to support local public services and stimulate local economic growth.

**Security:** The main risk when making service loans is that the borrower will be unable to repay the principal lent and/or the interest due. In order to limit this risk, and ensure that total exposure to service loans remains proportionate to the size of the Council, upper limits on the outstanding loans to each category of borrower have been set as follows:

### *Loans for service purposes in £ thousands*

Category of borrower	31/03/2024 Actual			2025/26
	Balance owing	Loss allowance	Net figure in accounts	Approved Limit
Local charities	0	0	0	500
Housing associations	0	0	0	10,000
Other bodies	0	0	0	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11,000</b>

Accounting standards require the Council to set aside loss allowance for loans, reflecting the likelihood of non-payment. The figures for loans in the Council's statement of accounts are shown net of this loss allowance. However, the Council makes every reasonable effort to collect the full sum lent and has appropriate credit control arrangements in place to recover overdue repayments.

**Risk assessment:** The Council assesses the risk of loss before entering into and whilst holding service loans on an individual basis for each proposal. The risks inherent in the proposal will be reported to members when it is placed before them for consideration together with an assessment of the likelihood of any of them materialising, their impact on the revenue budget and the mitigating controls that will be put in place. Risk factors to be assessed include:

- barriers to entry into and exit out of the market concerned;
- the nature and level of competition;
- how the market and customer needs will evolve over time;
- ongoing need for further investment to be made; and
- whether there is sufficient internal capacity to assess the business case and risks relating to the proposal.

An initial review of each proposal will be carried out by Council officers, intended to determine whether there are any risks apparent at that stage which indicate that the proposal should not be proceeded with. Provided this is not the case and it has also been determined that there is a worthwhile business case for further consideration, a more detailed risk assessment will be carried out. Where necessary, owing to lack of internal expertise, external advisors may be used to assist with the assessment of appropriate risks. Any other appropriate sources of information may be used to assess and monitor risk, including credit ratings, if these are relevant. Data used to monitor ongoing risk will be reviewed regularly and appropriate action will be taken if there are any indications of increasing risk or risks materialising.

The Council will consider the following points:

- the degree to which the loan complies with corporate policies and furthers corporate objectives;
- the overall desirability of the activity which the loan is intended to fund;
- affordability in terms of the use of capital or other resources and impact on the revenue budget;
- the likelihood that the loan will be repaid in accordance with agreed terms; and
- the total amount of loans already made to ensure that as a whole the Council is not over-exposed to the risk of default.

All proposed loans will be subject to approval by members, normally via Full Council, following consideration of a report setting out all relevant matters, including compliance with the above criteria.

All loans will be subject to credit control arrangements to recover overdue repayments. Credit risk will be determined by reference to the “expected credit loss” model for loans and receivables as set out in International Reporting Standard (IFRS) 9 Financial Instruments.

## Service Investments: Shares

*Contribution:* The Council currently does not invest in the shares of suppliers and local businesses in order to support local public services and stimulate local economic growth. This is due to the nature of the risks associated with investing in shares i.e. they are volatile and may fall in value meaning that the initial outlay may not be recovered. If the Council was to consider investing in shares, then in order to limit the risk, upper limits on the sum invested in each category of shares would need to be set.

*Shares held for service purposes in £ thousands*

Category of company	31/03/2024 actual			2025/26
	Amounts invested	Gains or losses	Value in accounts	Approved Limit
Suppliers	0	0	0	250
Local businesses	0	0	0	250
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500</b>

*Non-specified Investments:* Shares are the only investment type that the Council has identified that meets the definition of a non-specified investment in the government guidance. The limits above on share investments are therefore also the Council’s upper limits on non-specified investments. The Council has not adopted any procedures for determining further categories of non-specified investment since none are likely to meet the definition.

If the Council were to consider placing funds in any other type of investment which would be categorised as Non-Specified, the security of the capital sum would be the paramount concern. The same requirements as to credit ratings relating to Specified Investments will apply, and in appropriate cases the advice of the Council’s treasury management advisors will be sought.

## Commercial Investments: Property

**Contribution:** The Council invests in local commercial property with the intention of making a profit that will be spent on local public services. These are held primarily to earn income to be used to support the revenue budget although in some cases there may also be a contribution towards the economic wellbeing of the Borough.

**Security:** In accordance with government guidance, the Council considers a property investment to be secure if its accounting valuation is at or higher than its purchase cost including taxes and transaction costs.

A fair value assessment of the Council's investment property portfolio has been made within the past twelve months, and the underlying assets provide security for capital investment.

The majority of the investment property portfolio was acquired some time ago and there is no debt associated with any of the properties and the initial investment costs have been recouped many years ago. Investment properties are valued at fair value. The values of the properties will fluctuate according to market conditions prevailing from time to time, however these fluctuations do not constitute losses of capital invested. The value of investment properties included in the Council's balance sheet at 31 March 2024 is £13.505m.

If there are any new commercial investments funded from borrowing, their value will be monitored to determine whether it is sufficient to act as security for the capital invested and outstanding borrowing. If there is a significant fall in value then this will be reported to members.

**Risk assessment:** There are risks associated with making and holding commercial investments which require assessment and management.

With regard to the Council's current portfolio of commercial investments, comprising investment properties, the main risk is of not achieving the budgeted amount of income or of expenditure exceeding budgeted amounts. These risks are assessed and provided for via the assessment of the appropriate amount to hold in reserve in General Fund Balances. If the result of the assessment shows that current levels are inadequate, the necessary additional contribution will be made via inclusion in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

With regard to consideration of proposed new commercial investment there will be additional risks to be assessed and taken account of. The degree of control which the Council has over the materialisation of these risks and its ability to mitigate them should they arise will be important considerations. In most, if not all, cases the Council will be operating in a competitive environment and possibly one which it is not experienced in operating within, all of which increases the level of risk.

A comprehensive risk assessment, taking account of all appropriate factors, will be carried out on an individual basis for each investment proposal. The risks inherent in the proposal will be reported to members when it is placed before them for consideration together with an assessment of the likelihood of any of them materialising, their impact on the revenue budget and otherwise and available mitigation measures. Risk factors to be assessed include:

- barriers to entry into and exit out of the market concerned;
- the nature and level of competition;
- how the market and customer needs will evolve over time;
- ongoing need for further investment to be made, for example to adapt investment property or repair defects or carry out cyclical maintenance; and
- whether there is sufficient internal capacity to assess the business case and risks relating to the proposal.

An initial review of each proposed investment will be carried out by Council officers, intended to determine whether there are any risks apparent at that stage which indicate that the proposal should not be proceeded with. Provided this is not the case and it has also been determined that there is a worthwhile business case for further consideration of the investment, a more detailed risk assessment will be carried out. Where necessary, owing to lack of internal expertise, external advisors may be used to assist with the assessment of appropriate risks. Any other appropriate sources of information may be used to assess and monitor risk, including credit ratings, if these are relevant. Data used to monitor ongoing risk will be reviewed regularly and appropriate action will be taken if there are any indications of increasing risk or risks materialising.

*Liquidity:* Compared with other investment types, property is relatively difficult to sell and convert to cash at short notice, and can take a considerable period to sell in certain market conditions. There is no outstanding borrowing in relation to the current portfolio so any sales proceeds would be available in full to support capital investment.

In the case of any future commercial property investments, the likely degree of liquidity will be a consideration in deciding whether to make the investment.

## Loan Commitments and Financial Guarantees

Although not strictly counted as investments, since no money has exchanged hands yet, loan commitments and financial guarantees carry similar risks to the Council and are included here for completeness. To date, the Council is not contractually committed to make any loans.

## Proportionality

The Council is dependent on profit generating investment activity to achieve a balanced revenue budget.

Net investment property income is subject to fluctuation according to market conditions and other factors such as bad debts and unforeseen expenditure. Accordingly the possibility of shortfalls in contribution towards the revenue budget from this source is one of the factors specifically taken into consideration in calculating the level of General Fund balance to be held as a contingency against adverse budget variances. A total of £1.910m is currently held in balances to cover this and other risks and can be drawn upon in the event of risks materialising.

It is not planned to vary the amount of investment property held in the short term. However, in accordance with the Asset Management Strategy, all such property will be kept under review to determine whether the return obtained justifies retention and there may be instances where it is decided to dispose of property to obtain a capital receipt. The net contribution made towards balancing the revenue budget and the options for replacing any significant loss of income will be one of the factors taken into account when determining whether or not to dispose of a property.

## Borrowing in Advance of Need

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (2021) issued by CIPFA states that local authorities should not borrow more than or in advance of their needs purely to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. This is repeated in the Statutory Investment Guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The reasons for making an investment are unlikely to be purely in order to make a profit since investments may also be made with the intention of furthering corporate aims or service objectives, such as economic regeneration.

Accordingly, borrowing will be permitted in respect of Other Investments. The Council will consider each proposal to borrow on its merits. As well as the corporate or service benefits due regard will be given to the financial impact upon the revenue budget in terms of capital financing costs.

All borrowing will be subject to approval by members, normally via Full Council, following consideration of a report setting out all relevant matters, including those referred to above.

## Capacity, Skills and Culture

Council members and staff involved in dealing with Other Investments will have regard to the provisions of the CIPFA Prudential Code and the regulatory regime within which local authorities operate when carrying out these functions.

Investment in commercial property is a specialist area and the Council will therefore commission external advice in order to effectively appraise investment proposals, negotiate with third parties or manage certain types of investment on an ongoing basis. The external advice will be commissioned on a case by case basis and where asset management is required external managers may need to be employed, particularly if investment is made in residential property.

Decisions to make Other Investments and the means of financing them will be subject to member approval. This will normally be by Full Council (but may be by Cabinet where permitted by the Council's Constitution). Members will consider a report setting out all matters relevant to the making of an investment before making a decision. The normal scrutiny and call-in arrangements will apply.



## Investment Indicators

The Council has set the following quantitative indicators to allow elected members and the public to assess the Council's total risk exposure as a result of its investment decisions.

### Gross and Net Income - Historic and Current Year

	2021/22 Actual (£000's)	2022/23 Actual (£000's)	2023/24 Actual (£000's)	2024/25 Estimate (£000's)
<b>Commercial Properties</b>				
Gross Income	864	1,053	1,040	982
Gross Expenditure - Excluding Capital Charges	(837)	(1,027)	(1,119)	(1,028)
<b>Net Income / (Expenditure)</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>(79)</b>	<b>(46)</b>
Net Service Expenditure (Whole Council)	(7,641)	(7,911)	(8,162)	(8,465)
<b>Ratio of Net Income to Net Service Expenditure</b>	<b>0.35%</b>	<b>0.33%</b>	<b>(0.97%)</b>	<b>(0.54%)</b>

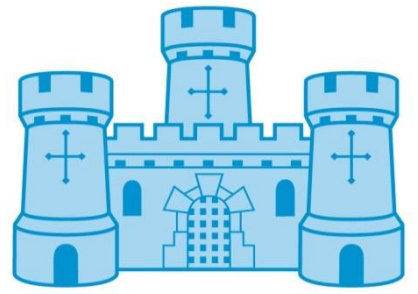
### Gross and Net Income - Over Period of Approved Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30 (Based on 2% increase on 2024/25 less agency costs)

	2025/26 Estimate (£000's)	2026/27 Estimate (£000's)	2027/28 Estimate (£000's)	2028/29 Estimate (£000's)	2029/30 Estimate (£000's)
Gross Income	1,002	1,022	1,042	1,063	1,084
Gross Expenditure	(963)	(982)	(1,002)	(1,022)	(1,042)
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>

### Vacancy Levels

2021/22 Actual (%)	2022/23 Actual (%)	2023/24 Actual (%)	2024/25 Actual at Q2 (%)
10.2	9.4	8.8	7.5

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**NEWCASTLE  
UNDER LYME**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Commercial Strategy

## 2025 to 2026



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## Introduction

Our Corporate Plan sets out an ambitious agenda for Newcastle-under-Lyme. We want to help our communities to become stronger and more vibrant and we want to continue to deliver excellent services to our residents. We are focussing on our place-shaping role to create high quality neighbourhoods, facilities, town centres and jobs. We aspire to create new and better homes for our residents and we need to respond to the climate and ecological emergency. At the same time, our funding remains under pressure. Funding from Central Government continues to fall and, as a result, both our Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy recognise the need for the Council to be a more commercial organisation.

This means that we need to improve service delivery and organisational efficiency and find ways to generate more income as a critical component of our financial strategy. Successful delivery of the Commercial Strategy should enable members and officers to make positive choices about what they want to invest in, and where, rather than being forced to make decisions about how, and where, to reduce expenditure.

Therefore, in order to deliver the priorities of the Corporate Plan, the Council needs a new, more agile, innovative, and commercially aware operating model to ensure that, in an environment of continued reductions in central funding, our limited resources are used to leverage maximum value and create a financially sustainable organisation that meets the changing needs and expectations of residents.

## Key objectives and priorities

The Council's Priorities contained in the Council Plan are:

One Council Delivering for Local People
A Successful and Sustainable Growing Borough
Healthy, Active and Safe Communities
Town Centres for All

## Vision

Our vision is for Newcastle-under-Lyme to be a sustainable and business-oriented Council that maximises commercial opportunities in order to deliver long-term benefits for residents of the borough and support the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. As a Council which adopts a commercial mind-set across the organisation. We expect staff to think innovatively and deliver services differently. We will use commercial principles to maximise the impact of our assets (whether physical or intangible) to benefit our communities and deliver financial sustainability.

This will be achieved through:

- Generation of service efficiencies and new income streams

- We will continually identify and develop opportunities to commercialise existing and new services
- When we need to charge for our services, we will price commercially, ensuring that this covers the full cost of the service unless we have made a conscious and evidenced decision to subsidise
- We will be commercially astute – we will understand the market for our services, and know how to make it work for us
- Effective procurement and contract management
- Prudent investment in income generating assets
- We will all understand and recognise where we have a role to play in maximising the impact of the Council’s assets for the benefit of residents and communities.
- Strategic asset development
- Commercial One Council co-ordinates the delivery of services to maximise income generation and achieve best value.

## Strategy outcomes

1. To generate income through commercial activity that can be reinvested in local priorities, services and improvements for our residents.
2. To build strong working relationships with public, private and third sector partners in order to maximise collaboration and generate efficiencies.
3. To embed a commercial culture within the council and ensure that our staff are equipped with the skills they need to operate in a more commercial environment.
4. To support the council in delivering the council plan and growth agenda as a key pillar of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and our goal of financial self-sufficiency.
5. To optimise the council’s use of technology and support our digital agenda in order to enable new, more efficient and flexible ways of working and interacting with customers and residents.

## What ‘commercial’ means to us

Commercial approaches are being adopted by many local authorities. However, the focus and definition of what that means is different from one council to the next.

It is important therefore, to define what we, at Newcastle-under-Lyme, mean by being commercial.

Working commercially is about using our assets and capabilities in the most efficient and effective way to create a net benefit to the Council’s finances. It is about identifying and implementing opportunities, which expand the ways the Council, can secure income.

Being commercial is also about being creative and exploring new ideas and activities, which will increase income to the Council. It means that we will need to work in different ways and Council employees will need to develop new skills and behaviours to help make the delivery of the Strategy a success.

Every commercial opportunity will be robustly assessed before it is put forward for formal approval and the Council will develop a range of commercial projects within the programme to balance risks. There will always be a clear link between any commercial endeavour and the Council delivering better services for residents.

Commercialisation is NOT just about making money. It is as much about avoiding costs, through early intervention and prevention, as it is about developing new projects.

This strategy impacts on all services across the Council. 'Being commercial' is a mindset that must underpin the way we all do our jobs.

This means 'commercialisation' at Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and includes all of the following:

- Preventing costs arising in the first place
- Creating social value to enable delivery of excellence in services to our communities
- Early intervention to prevent a cost escalating
- Redesigning our staff structures and internal processes to be most efficient and effective
- Reviewing service delivery models (e.g. outsourced, shared service, company) to be most efficient and effective
- Effectively procuring and managing our contracts
- Identifying new sources of income
- Commissioning the right outputs/outcomes
- Enhanced financial ownership by service managers
- Maximising existing sources of income
- Eliminating unnecessary demand and work
- Insight and Intelligence to make good choices

## Benefits

The successful delivery of the strategy will achieve multiple benefits including:

- Ensuring our resources are stewarded wisely to deliver outcomes for our residents and businesses.
- Enhancing our ability to provide social, economic and environmental outcomes that can help to deliver against all four of our priorities: One Council Delivering for Local People; A Successful and Sustainable Growing Borough; Healthy, Active and Safe Communities; Town Centres for All.
- Developing new income streams to support services and the Council's budget.
- Creating a culture where staff think and act differently to deliver new ways of service delivery to serve our residents and businesses.

- Inspiring staff by embedding a forward thinking, opportunity focused mind-set that can drive wider culture shift.
- Increasing the robustness of the organisation through the creation of a diverse commercial portfolio to ensure long term organisational sustainability.

## Objectives

### Primary Objective

The primary objective is to use the Council's resources as effectively and efficiently as possible when delivering the Council Plan.

### Secondary Objectives

Achievement of the primary objective will come in part through the following secondary objectives:

- Developing a **commercial culture**
- Putting **sound governance** in place – being clear about responsibilities, authorities, processes, templates and funding
- Ensuring there is appropriate **performance management** in place for commercial initiatives

The overarching aim of this strategy is to deliver a financial return, which contributes to the Council's efficiencies and additional income targets. This will help to safeguard, and develop, frontline services that the Council currently provides and enhance the Council's ability to invest in its place shaping agenda.

Funding and investment will be required for the successful implementation of this strategy. It is important to note that the benefits of pursuing the Commercial Strategy are not purely financial. Becoming a commercially focused organisation means putting the customer at the heart of everything we do. We will actively encourage creative thinking to develop more effective and customer-centric ways to deliver our services.

## Culture

Developing a commercial culture is an important part of this strategy. To achieve the ambitious objectives outlined in this strategy, all participants need to fulfil their roles. Whilst large commercial projects will be important, we are looking to develop a commercial culture across all service areas where, thinking in a business-like way and making business-like decisions, along with being creative and innovative is the normal way of working at the Council.

An embedded commercial culture will enable all our services to reach their potential and it will unlock new and innovative ways of delivering services to residents and businesses in Newcastle-under-Lyme. A commercial culture will encourage us to be creative and entrepreneurial, finding ways to add value to the way we serve residents. This will include behaviours such as challenging current approaches to look for improvements, seeking ways to maximise value for customers and the Council from contracts and looking for growth opportunities.

A culture can be defined as 'the way we do things round here' and the way we operate across our service areas will be ambitious and bold, working in new ways to steward the resources we have in the most effective way to deliver the priorities highlighted in the Council Plan.



## Developing the programme and our priorities

A portfolio of opportunities has then been selected for further development. This approach should ensure that the Council pursues a diverse range of opportunities - different in their potential scale, complexity and nature – to balance the risks of the overall programme.

In selecting the opportunities, consideration has been given to:

- The need to generate a net financial return to support the pressures identified in the MTFS.
- The creation of large-scale commercial projects that have the potential to create long-term income for the Council.
- Development of a commercial culture across service areas, so that thinking and acting in a commercial manner becomes central to the Council’s thinking and decision-making.

The following table shows the highest commercial priorities to investigate within the commercial programme.

Priority Area	Description	Impact
Commercial Waste	Developing the Commercial Waste income streams, building on the existing assumptions that form part of the Waste Transformation Programme	Increase the number of businesses using the council service and improve the level of income generated
Light Industrial	Develop and regenerate sites into light industrial units	Increased revenue generation, servicing demand in the local area and supporting economic development
Fees and Charges	Increasing fees and charges that benchmarking has shown to be currently charged at low rates in Staffordshire	Increase in income generated
Investment Opportunities for commercial return	Continue to investigate investment opportunities that will deliver a commercial return and build up our commercial portfolio	Increased revenue generation, servicing demand in the local area and supporting economic development
One Commercial Council	Delivery of digital screen including a small proportion of time dedicated to advertising	Advertising to pay for the running costs of the screen and therefore supporting cultural events and community messaging in Newcastle town centre

## How will we realise our strategic outcomes?

- Act with intelligence and agility
- Embrace transformation and innovation
- Understand that resources are required for growth and change
- Act with integrity and high ethical standards
- Embrace commercialism and maximise income
- Create and nurture commercial and development opportunities
- Act strategically for the long-term benefit of the borough and its residents
- Greater focus on procurement and contract management
- Create a sustainable commercial programme
- Know the market place and act competitively
- Establish a strong commercial culture and invest in staff and member skills
- Drive our digital agenda forward
- Demand more from service providers and contracts
- Ensure we get value for money for residents
- Listen to our staff and customers
- Actively seek and work with partners commercially
- Engage with specialist commercial advisers and professional partners
- Pursue opportunities to generate efficiencies and financial savings
- Dispose of assets when the market is no longer viable
- Extract maximum value from our property and land assets and income streams
- Stop activities that add no value or benefit to customers
- Challenge where services can be commissioned

## How will we make this happen?

- Endorsement from members of the council
- Sponsorship from the Corporate Leadership Team
- Facilitated by a highly skilled commercial team
- Collaboration across all council services and teams

- External specialist advice and support
- Initiatives owned by services

## How does the strategy support our organisational goals?

- Robust financial and commercial service programmes aligned to the council plan.
- Supports the MTFS and closure of funding gap.
- Uses commercial activities to leverage funding opportunities to support the regeneration of the borough.

## What is the governance structure?

- Investment decisions will be taken by full Cabinet.
- Some changes may be required to the Council's Constitution to enable timely decision making as commercial opportunities present themselves.

## How will risks be managed?

- Partner with industry experts and specialists
- Ensure transparency and effective communication
- Rigorous approval processes and project scrutiny
- Following corporate risk management and mitigation procedures
- Effective contract management
- Meticulous due diligence

## What are the tools and structures we will use?

- Exercise statutory powers
- Shared service agreements
- Crown Commercial Service, g-cloud and local framework agreements
- Joint venture partnerships
- Arms-length management organisations and/or council owned companies

## How will we fund and resource the journey?

- Generate a return on investment to fund services
- Make every penny count
- Explore opportunities to share services with other councils
- Maximise existing revenue streams, including advertising

- Effective and proportionate risk management
- Robust strategic and operational planning
- Access to government grants and other funding
- Invest to save

# ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2023 - 2028



NEWCASTLE  
UNDER LYME  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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## **1. Foreword**

The Council's Capital Strategy and Asset Management Strategy are key strategies that establish the Council's approach to its use of resources. The Asset Management Strategy provides a clear framework for understanding the value and condition of property owned by the Council so that, in turn, investment decisions can be taken to optimise the Council's asset portfolio to meet the needs of the Borough's residents, businesses and visitors. As we move into the future with a new set of challenges and priorities, we have had to tailor the Asset Strategy in such a way as to meet those challenges head on, whilst taking other Council-wide strategies into consideration. This Strategy builds on the previous Asset Management Strategy.

By having an Asset Management Plan as part of this Asset Management Strategy for 2023 to 2028 the Council is well placed to ensure we are able to adapt to the changing market and deliver our corporate priorities.

### **Cllr Stephen Sweeney**

Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth

## MISSION STATEMENT

*“Our mission is to establish an Asset Management Strategy that reduces ongoing expenditure, increases investment income and renews and grows the Council’s asset portfolio so that we can provide the highest attainable standard of buildings and facilities for the people of Newcastle-under-Lyme.”*

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme is part of the conurbation of North Staffordshire. It is the most populated district in Staffordshire with a population of around 125,000 and has an area of 81 square miles. The two main towns within the Borough are Newcastle-under-Lyme and Kidsgrove, and there is an extensive rural area to the west/south-west of the urban area.
- 2.2 The industrial base of the Borough has changed significantly in the last century, with the closure of local coal mines and the development of the distribution sector. Service industries are the largest employers in the area, with the number of people employed in water, energy and construction industries being higher than average. The presence of Keele University with the growing number of hi-tech, research and medical technology businesses in its Science and Innovation Park, along with the medical school demonstrates the potential for added value growth of the area.
- 2.3 Newcastle town centre is recognised as being one of two strategically important centres in the North Staffordshire conurbation, with further growth predicated upon its good connections to major transport routes.
- 2.4 There continues to be ongoing reductions in funding provided to local authorities, government, and its agencies, arising from the need to restrain public expenditure to rebalance public finances following the global economic recession that began with the banking crisis in 2008 and more recent increase in inflation. Services remain under pressure to reduce costs and to keep fixed outgoings such as property related costs under review. Some specific funds have however been made available recently including the 'Town Deal', 'Future High Street Fund and the Shared Prosperity Fund and it is key that those funding sources are spent on the right projects.



- 2.5 At the same time, the Council's own resources available to finance capital projects are limited and income is key to further delivery of the capital programme. The Council continues to require receipts from land and property disposals to fund future capital programmes.
- 2.6 In 2020, Cushman and Wakefield Surveyors were commissioned to carry out an independent Investment Property Portfolio Review. A detailed statement of the Council's current property portfolio is detailed within this and some of the key findings and recommendations from that review has assisted in developing the Asset Vision and will drive much of the Asset Management Strategy between 2023 and 2028. The Cushman and Wakefield Report as referred to at Section 18 below is available upon request.

### **3. Core Strategic Objectives**

- 3.1 The core strategic objectives for asset management are designed to support the Council's vision and priorities. They are:
- To ensure that the Council's asset portfolio supports the delivery of its services and objectives.
  - To maximise income through the asset portfolio in line with the One Council Commercial Strategy.
  - To maximise the Council's assets to deliver corporate objectives such as major regeneration programmes.
  - To ensure that all assets are demonstrably managed in the most economic, efficient, and effective manner.
- 3.2 In achieving these objectives the principles to be followed are that all operational assets must be:
- In the right location to allow customers to access the service and any other related services of partners, in suitable condition to enable staff to deliver services in a comfortable environment for both staff and customers without interruption.
  - Suitable and sufficient for the purpose for which they are being used in terms of size, type, and layout of accommodation – including accessible to people with disabilities.
  - Flexible to the extent that they can be adapted economically to adjust to changing services' needs, including sharing with partners in service delivery.

- Able to demonstrate 'Best Value' in terms of a balance between efficiency in operational running costs and long-term sustainability.
- Able to convey a positive image of the Council and the service being provided and able to contribute positively to the immediate environment, particularly where there is a need for physical regeneration of the locality.
- Good examples of sustainable development if new or extensively refurbished.
- Maintained in such a way so as to minimise reactive maintenance by improving planned maintenance arrangements; and managed to mitigate their impact on and the effect of climate change.

3.3 All non-operational assets must be:

- Able to make the maximum contribution to service revenue budgets in terms of rental income; or
- Able to make a positive contribution to the social wellbeing of the community either through its presence as a heritage asset or through use by others such as voluntary groups, charity organisations or small businesses; or
- Retained for reasons of strategic importance, such as to influence the physical economic regeneration of the Borough.
- Please note that some non-operational assets are subsidised to assist new start-ups.

3.4 In order to deliver a sound, well planned asset management strategy, the Council must first analyse the current position against our vision, then set key priorities for the overall assets portfolio and for individual assets. Where there are key priorities for specific assets the Council needs to evaluate funding opportunities and timescales. When proceeding with asset purchases, sales or long term leases there needs to be clear policies, procedures and processes that will ensure the successful delivery of the overall Strategy.

3.5 The Council has ambitious plans over the forthcoming years and this strategy seeks to support these. Whenever possible the Council will seek to maximise outcomes with external funding stream and working with the best partners. Timescales for individual asset management decisions will be made taking a whole range of issues into account. This Asset Strategy has been drafted in accordance with and supportive of the one Council Commercial Strategy.

## 4. Approach

4.1 As the wider landscape within the Council's asset portfolio is constantly changing and evolving and as many factors are outside of the Council's control, the general approach that has been adopted, is to:

- Establish the asset portfolio in two groups [operational and non-operational estates]
- Carry out an updated assessment of the two groups /estates (following the Cushman and Wakefield Report's headings [see Annex A])
- Establish what funding streams and capital reserves are available / allocable
- Review already planned capital works and other projects
- Establish what can and should be done to the assets in each asset class (operational and non-operational) to find savings and improve efficiency.

4.2 It is important to note that the Asset Management Strategy will be ever evolving as new challenges and objectives are revealed and as new funding sources become available.

4.3 It is paramount that any strategic objectives are fulfilled and delivered within governance rules and guidelines set out by central government, the constitution, property law and are reflective of the various other strategies across the Council.

This Strategy along with the Council's Capital Strategy seeks to demonstrate alignment with, and delivery of, the Council's ambitions as set out in the Council Plan 2022-26 and is also aligned with:

- The Financial Strategy
- The Digital Agenda
- The Carbon Management Plan
- The Council's Constitution
- Local Plan including Open Space and Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Playing Pitch Strategy

### The Carbon Net Zero Roadmap

4.3b The Council is leading Newcastle-Under-Lyme to a sustainable and carbon net zero future. The Council is working with partners in the private, public and educational sectors to create an energy efficient environment in Newcastle-under-Lyme. This should ensure that the Borough remains a preferred place in which to live, work and invest.

The Council's Carbon Net Zero Roadmap represents a further step in the journey to become a carbon net zero council. The Council has made a good start in their contribution to the Council's reduction in energy use over the past year.

The Council are working with the Carbon Net Zero Roadmap to reduce its carbon footprint as well as the carbon footprint of the Borough (by 2050) as whole, which includes our homes, businesses and public spaces. The Council are introducing energy saving measures in properties, for example the council now collect food waste to be converted into energy through anaerobic digestion. The Carbon Net Zero Roadmap is still being finalised however we are beginning to take action now to reduce and cut the emissions we produce directly and indirectly. The Roadmap alongside other strategies and information about sustainability and climate can be found on our Sustainability and the Environment webpages which will be published soon on our website.

#### 4.3c Our approach to more efficient and carbon net zero buildings:

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is currently consulting and reviewing the energy use and consumption of its built estate. The buildings the Council owns contribute to a vast amount of emissions that we release into the atmosphere, contributing to climate change. In our soon to be released Carbon Net Zero Roadmap we will be initiating multiple projects to decarbonise our owned facilities such as J2, Knutton Lane Depot and Kidsgrove Town Hall. Our goal is to become fully carbon net zero by 2030 within the Council's built estate by developing renewable energy projects for electricity and heating, upgrading the fabric specifications (insulation) of our buildings, embedding biodiversity net gain in all our developments, facilitating sustainable behaviour campaigns and upgrading our buildings ventilation, lighting and the controls that regulate it sustainably. Our goal for 2030 within the built estate is also accompanied by our wider goal to become a net zero Borough by 2050, aligning ourselves with the UK Governments initiatives.

## 5. Governance

### 5.1 Legal and Constitutional Context

- a. The Council has a duty, both fiduciary and operationally, to utilise its Assets for the benefit of the community.
- b. The Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) – Section 123 - the Council has a duty to achieve best consideration when disposing of its assets.

- c. The Local Government Act 2000 - powers to promote the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of the Borough.

## 5.2 The National Context – Government Policy

Many Government initiatives, policy statements and/or guidance influence the Authority's asset policies, including:

- The Quirk review of ownership of public assets
- The Gershon Review, and the drive to improve efficiency
- The Prudential Code for the management of capital finance
- Leamer and Greener Report – Delivering effective estate management
- Leamer and Greener II – Putting Building to Work
- Penfold Review
- Laying the foundations of a Housing Strategy for England
- The Localism Act - Community Right to Bid
- The National Planning Policy Framework
- Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015

## Statutory Responsibilities

5.3 The Authority as an employer, a landowner, a landlord and a provider of services, has a wide range of responsibilities with an implication for accommodation including:

- The legislative framework in respect of buildings
- A range of health and safety legislation, EEC requirements. HSE best practice and guidance notes, Industry standards and Insurance requirements.
- Carbon reduction and energy efficiency legislation and requirements.
- Equality Act 2010. This does not simply encompass accessibility considerations and should be taken into account in virtually all development and maintenance work which is carried out to ensure that every possible aspect of disability has been considered when implementing work.
- Management of the risks associated with property assets including regular maintenance and servicing to address matters such as:
  - i) Legionella – A managed programme of water testing and preventative measures are carried out including weekly flushing

regimes, monthly temperature tests, bi-annual bacteria testing and, as required, physical system cleansing. A robust legionella policy is in place for the council as required by law.

- ii) Asbestos – An on-going programme of surveys and management together with the use of asbestos registers and regular monitoring to prevent the release of dangerous fibres and warn of the presence of asbestos across the portfolio. A robust asbestos policy is in place for the council as required by law.
- iii) Fire Safety – The Authority undertakes Fire Risk Assessments in respect of its properties and tests fire safety equipment e.g. alarms on an annual basis. Weekly, monthly and annual testing of fire monitoring and backup systems also take place as required by the legislation to ensure that fire systems are maintained.
- iv) Gas Safety – Inspections and services are carried out on an annual basis to ensure that all gas appliances are safe to use. The correct pre-planned maintenance approach has also ensured that gas appliance failures are now very rare which has delivered a considerable saving in respect of reactive maintenance costs.
- v) Electrical Safety - An ongoing program of periodic tests is carried out to fixed wiring as required by both legislation and our insurers together with Portable Appliance Testing and emergency lighting testing.
- vi) Lifts, pressure vessels, safety line, chimney maintenance - checks are carried in accordance with best practice.
- vii) Lightning Conductors – checked in accordance with best practice.
- viii) Routine inspection and repair/maintenance of assets including tree stock, playground stock, railings and structures, footpaths and roads etc.
- ix) Testing and maintenance of generators, air conditioning and mechanical services equipment.
- x) Glass and glazing assessment.

NB: The above summary is not an exhaustive list of statutory inspections/maintenance arrangements.

## 6. The Current Estate

6.1 The Council owns a broad variety of over 186 properties (buildings) ranging from crematoria to sports centres to industrial premises. As previously indicated the Council's property assets are divided into two portfolios – the operational and non-operational portfolio – see below: -

### Operational assets

6.2 In broad terms this is property that is held, occupied, used, or contracted to be used on behalf of the authority in the direct delivery of services for which it has a responsibility, whether statutory or discretionary or for the service of strategic objectives of the authority. This includes 'Community Assets' which are delivering wider benefits of the community and the wider Council objectives.

6.3 This category includes (not exhaustive list):

- Castle House
- Knutton Lane depot
- Jubilee 2 Health & Wellbeing Centre
- The Museum/Art Gallery
- Crematorium and Cemeteries
- Land associated with operational property
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Historic Buildings/Monuments
- Allotments
- Sports facilities and pitches
- Community Centres
- Off-street car parks (non-fee-paying)
- Structures bridges, watercourses etc.
- CCTV infrastructure

### Non-Operational Assets

6.4 These property assets are those held by the Council but not directly occupied, used, or concerned in the delivery of services, although they are likely to align with the authority's strategic objectives. Examples in this category (list not exhaustive) mainly related to

commercial land and property, leased/rented to other parties, and generating income which include:

- Town Centre Retail Premises
- Industrial Units
- Offices
- Ground Leases
- Market
- Town Centre Car Parks (fee paying)

## 7. Key Objectives and Priorities

### a. Asset Management Priorities

- Lease Renewals / Rent Reviews Backlog. As with most local authorities across the country, there is a percentage of the non-operational portfolio where leases are holding over and need to be reviewed and renewed and there are also a number of lease renewals outstanding. Many lease renewals will have been purposely left alone, to avoid tenants requesting re-gears where the rent is inevitably reduced. It is in a landlord's best interest therefore to get the timing right on when to press the tenant on rent reviews (subject to lease terms).
- There is an aspiration (subject to funding) to introduce regular building condition surveys on operational buildings on a rolling basis. The condition, sufficiency and suitability of the estate, and the associated performance measures are essential in enabling strategic decision making. This is a continual assessment process, and will inform budget setting facilitating improved service delivery, energy efficiency, and compliance with statutory requirements.
- Greater emphasis will be placed on rationalisation, refurbishment and re-use of the portfolio to deliver efficiency savings.

### b. Regular Performance Analysis and Management

- The Council should re-assess processes to maximise revenue opportunities, particularly in relation to asset management.
- There is a requirement to review all non-operational assets and the processes involved in managing investment assets and maintaining operational assets.



- Disposal of none or low income generating properties could deliver capital receipts for reinvestment in the Capital programme.
- Consideration must be given to under-utilised and unsuitable operational assets to determine opportunities for re-use, investment, regeneration or disposal. For example, the Council currently owns a number of small and outdated unused buildings such as public conveniences across the borough and consideration needs to be given on what should happen to these assets.

## **8. Consultation & Engagement**

8.1 The Council constantly consults residents and key stakeholders on a wide range of issues. The aim being to become more accountable to our customers and to make our decision making processes more transparent. Communication on the challenges both in terms of policy and service delivery and finance is something that the Council is striving to deliver.

### **Consultation Arrangements on Future Disposals**

8.3 The primary purpose of the consultation on potential freehold land disposals is to identify any physical, technical or other constraints that might affect the scope/opportunity for alternative use or development being pursued. The outcome of such consultation exercises, taken together with desktop technical assessments, allows the Council as a landowner to consider the latter approach. Importantly it is considered that the Town Planning processes (Local Plan and Planning Applications) should consider the appropriateness of land or property being developed or used for alternative purposes rather than the Council as landowner making potentially subjective judgements.

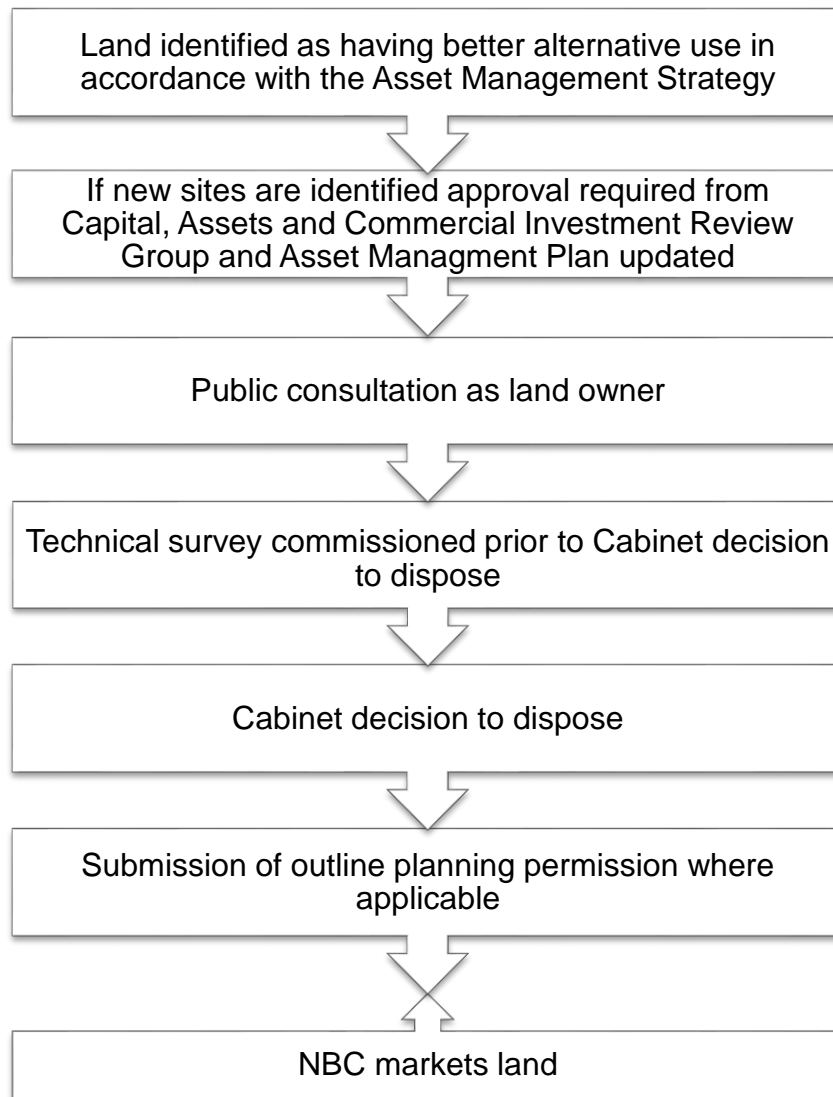
8.4 The consultation process approach involves Ward councillors being notified prior to the start of the process; notices being placed on site and; the adjacent property owners being notified, along with the Parish/Town Council, where relevant. The consultation timetable is set out below. This arrangement is considered to be generally proportionate and appropriate to the majority of sales of both land and property.

8.5 Property Description Consultation Approach

<b>Property Description</b>	<b>Local members (prior to general public)</b>	<b>General public</b>
Publicly accessible open space >0.5 ha.	3 weeks	6 weeks
Publicly accessible open space <0.5 ha.	3 weeks	3 weeks
Grazing / agricultural land >1 ha.	3 weeks	3 weeks
Grazing / agricultural land <1 ha.	2 weeks	2 weeks
Operational estate with active community use	2 weeks	4 weeks
Commercial, retail and industrial premises and land designated for a particular purpose i.e industrial	No consultation required	No consultation required
Incidental areas <0.1 ha of land adjacent to neighbouring property	No consultation required	No consultation required

8.6 There will however be some circumstances in respect of certain disposals, such as the disposal of disused public toilets, where a public consultation process will not be necessary or may be scaled to a more proportionate level. Other examples could include land or property where the future use is consistent with the present use (e.g. a shop premises in a shopping parade) where there is unlikely to be any public interest at stake. The approach to consultation in each case will seek to ensure that any public/stakeholder consultation is proportionate to the particular disposal.

**Typical freehold land disposal process in respect of sites that require consultation above in 8.5**



**NB. Attention is drawn to the council's proposed approach to consultation as both land owner and as local planning authority.**

## 9. Operational and Non-Operational Portfolio Strategy Vision

- 9.1 Our vision is for Newcastle-under-Lyme to be a sustainable and business-oriented Council that maximises commercial opportunities in order to deliver long-term benefits for residents of the borough and support the Council's medium-term financial strategy.
- 9.2 This will be achieved through:
- Generation of service efficiencies [Operational Estate (O)]
  - Generation of new income streams [Non-Operational Estate (N/O)]
  - Maximising existing revenue streams [N/O]
  - Effective procurement and contract management [O&N/O]
  - Prudent investment in income generating assets [N/O]
  - Strategic asset development [O&N/O]
- 9.3 Generating income through commercial activity that can be re-invested in local priorities, services, and improvements for our residents.
- 9.4 Building strong working relationships with public, private and third sector partners to maximise collaboration and generate efficiencies.
- 9.5 Embedding a commercial culture within the council and ensure that our staff are equipped with the skills they need to operate in a more commercial environment.
- 9.6 Supporting the council in delivering the council plan and growth agenda as a key pillar of the medium-term financial strategy and our goal of financial self-sufficiency.
- 9.7 Optimising the council's use of technology and support our digital agenda to enable new, more efficient and flexible ways of working and interacting with customers and residents.

## 10. Arrears / Tenant Debt Policy

- 10.1 As the Covid pandemic has hit small to medium sized businesses hard, this has had a knock-on effect to the Council's tenant debt / arrears levels. Adding the cost-of-living crisis and heightened inflation to this has increased current tenant debt levels above average.
- 10.2 That said, if the Council was to take an aggressive stance on arrears at this stage, that could lead to increased business closures and that will not benefit the Council in the medium to long term.

10.3 Therefore the approach to this increased level of debt must be well balanced, so as to provide an appropriate level of support, whilst remaining reasonably assertive and finding positive solutions for all stakeholders.

10.4 In July 2023, Cabinet approved a new Debt Recovery Policy.

## **11 Acquisition and Disposal Policy**

11.1 The objectives to be achieved from any asset acquisition are that it should provide one or more of the following benefits and that the benefits are more valued than the cost of acquisition:

- a demonstrable contribution towards the delivery of the Council's priorities and the provision of its services;
- a strategic acquisition for redevelopment or tactical purposes;
- to facilitate economic development; or
- to generate revenue income.

11.2 Where surplus capacity in property or land is identified, its future use or disposal will be considered in accordance with the Council's priorities and within the planning framework. The opportunity to share with partner organisations will also be explored as part of the options appraisal process.

11.3 Where property is proposed for disposal, consideration will also be given to the consequences of the piece of land or property not being subject to the Council's control in terms of standard of care, maintenance etc., by the inclusion, where appropriate, of covenants in the contract to maintain the required standards of care.

11.4 Options appraisals for capital investment or disposal will include whole life costings. These are the systematic consideration of all relevant costs, revenues and performance associated with the acquisition and ownership of an asset over its physical, economic, functional, service or design life.

11.5 The strategic approach to asset management planning will assist in the development of a more comprehensive and co-ordinated medium to long term capital budget strategy and is an important aspect in the planning of the Council's resources in delivering its ambitions and priorities.

## 12. Planned Capital Works and Projects

(The current position in respect of following planned capital works and projects, asset disposals and other projects, which build on the previous Strategy, are set out in the Asset Plan Table at Appendix A)

### 12.1 Land Adjacent to Keele Cemetery

There are plans to install a solar energy installation on Council owned land that is adjacent to Keele Cemetery, this project is currently in the planning stage.

### 12.2 Ryecroft

Ryecroft is the site of former Civic Offices and the former Sainsburys supermarket and car park. The Council is to redevelop this site and the proposals are set out below:

12.3.1 A new multi-storey car park (Castle car park) on the western third of the site will be open in early January 2025 as the first element of the wider Ryecroft redevelopment plans. This is being partially funded by the Future High Street's fund

12.3.2 A planning application has been submitted for the development of new residential. Aparthotel and commercial units for the middle section of the wider site, through our development partner Capital&Centric, who will own and operate the development upon completion. The land / structure will be sold to the developer.

12.3.3 McCarthy Stone have purchased the last remaining section of the wider site (at its easter corner) for an over 55 yr old residential development and a planning application has been submitted for this.

### 12.3 York Place Shopping Centre (Astley Place)

The Council acquired the York Place shopping centre in early 2022 to facilitate the delivery of the Future High Street fund regeneration proposals and improvements to the town centre. The centre was emptied of tenants by March 2024 and a partial demolition leaving the main structural elements (columns and floors) exposed for developing upon – saving costs, programme and reducing the carbon footprint of the new development. Our development partner, Capital&Centric, have submitted a planning application for a residential development with a commercial square on the ground floor, and will own and operate the development. The land / structure will be sold to the developer.

### 12.4 Midway Car Park

Upon completion of the Castle car park on the Ryecroft site in early January 2025, our development partners, Capital&Centric, will develop the existing structure into residential

units, again by retaining the structural frame (as with York Place above). A planning application has been submitted for this and the developer will own and operate this development upon completion. The land / structure will be sold to the developer.

### 12.5 Carbon Capture Areas

As part of the Council's Sustainable Environmental Strategy, approved by the Council in December 2020, there is a desire to create Carbon Capture Areas within the Borough. These will consist of 60 Council owned green spaces saved for tree planting which is taking place as part of the wider Urban Tree Planting Strategy. To date four phases have been completed and a further phase is planned for Winter 2023.

## 13. Asset Disposals

### 13.1 Knutton

One of the major Newcastle Town Deal projects is to master plan parts of Knutton, The former clinic was acquired and subsequently demolished along with the adjacent community Centre. It is proposed that this along with the site of the former Knutton Recreation Centre be redeveloped for both residential and industrial purposes. This involves disposing of land to Staffordshire County Council to extend its enterprise centre, the building of a new village hall which will remain in the Borough Council's ownership and the disposal of the remainder of the land for residential development. These land transactions will be completed early January 2025.

As part of this masterplan a new football changing facility is being built at the Wammy. The Council will retain ownership of this asset is leasing the new facility to a community group.

### 13.2 Parkhouse West

This site was approved in the last Asset Management Strategy for disposal for industrial development purposes and has been sold to a local company who have submitted a planning application for a sustainable industrial park. Works are due to commence in mid-2025.

### 13.3 Town Centre Car Parks

Once Castle car park has been completed, the car parks listed below will potentially become surplus to requirements and therefore alternative uses for these brownfield sites may need to be considered. These will be consulted on in accordance with the consultation process as set out in Section 8 above. Additionally these sites have been put

forward to the Planning Authority for consideration as potential bonus/windfall sites within the new local Plan and will be subject to review as to their merits under the planning framework, prior to their reclassification and potential disposal.

Consultation as part of the draft local plan has prompted petitions to be raised particularly regarding the significance of the Hassell Street car park for local businesses. Reflecting this, Officers will be required to bring forward proposals for development which include the provision of some public parking spaces at Hassell Street and others as appropriate.

Blackfriars car park, Newcastle	0.32 acres
Blackfriars car park, Newcastle	0.21 acres
Hassell Street, Newcastle ST5 1AY	0.32 acres
Cherry Orchard Newcastle ST5 2UB	0.30 acres
Goose Street Newcastle ST5 2EA	0.84 acres
King Street Newcastle ST5 1HX	1.39 acres
Bankside/ Well Street Newcastle ST5 1BP	0.10 acres

#### 13.4 **Former Keele Golf Course (Lyme Park)**

As per the previous Asset Management Strategy, the former Keele Golf Course site is again listed for possible disposal. The site is currently classified as Green Belt land. Prior to any Council build out and/or sale to third party developers this classification will need to be changed to allow for any residential development. As noted within the Strategy in previous sections, the Local Plan has been submitted for examination and it is expected to be adopted following an Inquiry towards the end of 2025. The proposal is for 900 homes and a new country park be created, but until the Green Belt classification is amended or not, no such development or sale can be considered.

#### 13.5 **Land at Glenwood Close, Silverdale**

This 0.69 acre site is designated as low quality and low value in the latest Open Space and Green Infrastructure Strategy therefore given it has little value as open space alternative uses need to be considered.



## 14. Other Projects

### 14.1 Kidsgrove

14.1.1 There are plans for the creation of a shared service hub in Kidsgrove. This is on land partly owned by the Council that is currently used as a car park (Meadows Road Car Park) and an adjacent piece of privately owned land which the Council is looking to acquire (with town deal monies). NBC will own the building, but Kidsgrove Town Council will lease it from the Council.

14.1.2 It is proposed that Kidsgrove Town Hall be refurbished to create modern lettable office space. This is to be funded through shared prosperity.

### 14.2 Creation of a Circus Heritage Centre.

A unit on Merial Street in the Council's ownership has been refurbished and the Philip Astley CIC occupy the unit. Plans for a relocation are under review.

## 15. Government Funding

The Council is in receipt of government funds which include Town Deal, Future High Street and the Shared Prosperity Funds. Some of these funding streams directly impact Council assets, the major schemes are set out in section 12-14 of this Strategy. The remainder of these projects are set out below

### 15.1 Kidsgrove Town Deal

15.1A Construction of an access road has been completed at Chatterley Valley, on privately owned land.

15.1B Refurbishment of Kidsgrove Railway Station and creation of a transport hub is also planned. The land areas involved in this project are owned by Network Rail / operated by East Midlands Railway.

15.1C There are a number of planned improvements that will be made to the Canal towpath on land that is owned by Canal & River Trust. (Some shared prosperity fund is also to be used for this).

15.1D There will be a series of interventions for community based facilities – at The Kings School, on the Meadows, one way traffic and associated landscaping on the Meadows, and highway improvements on King Street.

## 15.2 Newcastle Town Deal

- 15.2A **Digital Infrastructure Project** – This project has been tendered and work will commence in early 2025 to provide super-fast broadband and community digital hubs.
- 15.2B **Sustainable Transport Solutions** - A mix of measures are being introduced in regards to public transport. A new bus entrance will be completed in early 2025 at Keele University (on land owned by the University), installation of real time passenger information at Newcastle Bus station have been completed and plans to improve bus service reliability with Keele University.
- 15.2C **Electric Vehicle charging points** are now installed at the new Castle Car Park at Ryecroft .
- 15.2D **Transformation of Key Gateway Sites** – The partial demolition and redevelopment of the Midway multi storey car park is planned as set out above. The former Zanzibar nightclub site (that is in the ownership of Aspire Housing) has been demolished and it is intended to be replaced with residential development, along with approximately 5 small enterprise units which the Council will own and manage. Works on the enterprise units will commence in mid 2025.
- 15.2E **Digital Society** – The Town Deal will fund the conversion of a town centre building for use by Keele University for a learning / enterprise space, and will open in January 2025. The building is owned by Keele University.
- 15.2F **Cross Street Chesterton** – The plan for this project is that the Town Deal will fund the re-development of the current housing land that is owned by Aspire housing in this area.

## 15.3 Future High Street Fund

- 15.3A A public realm and market improvement project has been underway during Autumn 2024 with the completion of the overall scheme with a large digital screen and seating to be installed in March 2025.

## 15.4 Shared Prosperity Fund

- 15.4A Improvements are planned to Clough Hall Park, in line with the existing masterplan
- 15.4B The creation of a Homeless Hub is underway having purchased a suitable property which will be refurbished for the specific use in early 2025.

## 16. Completed Projects

- 16.1 The refurbishment of Kidsgrove Sports Centre was completed using monies provided by Kidsgrove Town Deal. It was opened in Summer 2022 and is managed by Kidsgrove Sports Centre Community Group.

## 17. Completed Significant Land Disposals

Address	Disposal Date
Freehold sale – Eccleshall Road, Loggerheads	Mar-21
Freehold sale- 20 Sidmouth Ave, Newcastle	Nov -21
Freehold sale – Apedale, Chesterton	Nov -21
Covenant release – Midway, Newcastle	Dec-21
Freehold sale – Market Drayton Road Newcastle	Apr-22
Freehold sale – Knype Way, Bradwell	Jan-23
Freehold sale - Park House West	Oct-24
Freehold sale – Ryecroft Site (Western edge)	Oct-24

The total value of the above disposals from March 2021 is circa £7.3m

## 18. The Market

- 18.1 In respect of the objective of being a town centre for all, diversification of the type of market is key. As such we currently host General Markets each week, Antiques Markets each week, Artisan market each month, up to 3 Vegan Festivals, up to 3 Bring your dog to town Markets, 6 vinyl collectors fairs and one-off events such as Young Traders Market and Charity Fairs.
- 18.2 The Council works in partnership with Newcastle-under-Lyme BID to deliver its portfolio of events such as the Castle Classics retro car show, outdoor music and food and drink festivals. As a licensed premises we are able to host licensable events.
- 18.3 The market is cashless for collection of stall rents and pitches will soon be able to be booked and paid for online. This will make resource savings and embraces the digital payment and banking trend.

- 18.4 The market provides a platform for fledgling businesses to test and grow their business model with a view to potentially taking on a Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre “bricks and mortar” business premises.
- 18.5 Our footfall figures and performance indicators show that we have made a significant difference to visitor numbers on our new event and trader-run markets. We have rationalised and improved our fixed stall provision, and created more flexibility by purchasing a stock of temporary stalls. This, alongside improvements to the public realm to create a flexible events space, continues to rejuvenate the general market and market infrastructure to ensure we retain a contemporary market offer.

## **19. Community Centres**

- 19.1 The Council is continuing to explore options for the long-term sustainability and management of the Community Centres in partnership with the community and voluntary sector and to review the management arrangements linked to these options and implement the proposals. The digital infrastructure project through the Town Deal (see above) and the placement of community digital hubs within these buildings should assist in the long term viability of some centres.
- 19.2 To date four community centres have been leased on 25 year leases to community groups, whereby over a 5 year period the maintenance and running costs are transferred to the community organisation thereby reducing the Council’s liabilities. In addition it allows the management committees greater freedoms to pursue external funding. Negotiations are ongoing in relation to two other community centres.

## **20. Further Reading & Associated Publications**

- The Corporate Strategy
- The Commercial Strategy
- The Capital Strategy
- The Financial Strategy
- The Digital Agenda
- The Carbon Plan
- The Council's Constitution
- The Local Plan (including Open Space and Green Infrastructure Strategy)
- The Playing Pitch Strategy
- The Debt Recovery Policy

- The Cushman Report

## Further Information

For further information on the Asset Strategy, please contact:

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### APPENDIX A ASSET PLAN

SITE LOCATION	SITE AREA (Acres)	CURRENT POSITION
Land Adjacent to Keele Cemetery	35.59	Proposal to install a solar array on this land. This project is in the planning stage.
Lowlands Road, Ravensdale	7.70(developable)	Industrial development land, under offer and subject to an option to purchase
Plot E Apedale Road, Chesterton	4.42	Industrial development land approved in the last Asset Management Strategy for approval. This site has been on the market for a number of years. There have been a number of offers but none have progressed through to completion. The site is being marketed
Site of former Recreation Centre, Knutton	5.31	Masterplan approved by Cabinet. It is proposed that this site be developed for residential and industrial purposes
Site of former community centre and clinic, Knutton Lane, Knutton	1.72	Masterplan approved by Cabinet. It is proposed that this site be developed for residential purposes
Former Keele Golf Course	150	Plans are being considered for the potential development of the former Keele Golf Course site that currently sits in the Green Belt, which could involve Council build out and / or sale to third party developers. The Local

		Plan is currently out for consultation of which this site forms part. The proposal is for 900 homes.
Ryecroft	4.18	Planning permission has been approved to develop a new multi-storey car park (Castle car park) on the western third of the site.
York Place Shopping Centre	0.72	Cabinet approved the demolition of York Place in June 2023. A further report in respect of the redevelopment will be considered by Cabinet in Autumn 2023
Midway Car Park	n/a	An option report will be considered by Cabinet in Autumn 2023.
Blackfriar's Car Park	0.53	The site is partially vacant and partially used as a public car park. Once Castle Car Park is completed this brownfield site will potentially become surplus to requirements and alternative uses may need to be considered
Part of King Street carpark	1.39	Once Castle Car Park is completed this brownfield site will potentially become surplus to requirements and alternative uses may need to be considered for part of this car park
Cherry Orchard car park	0.30	Once Castle Car Park is completed this brownfield site will potentially become surplus to requirements and alternative uses may need to be considered for this car park
Part of Goose Street car park	0.84	Once Castle Car Park is completed this brownfield site will potentially become surplus to requirements and alternative uses may need to be considered for part of this car park
Hassell Street car park	0.32	Once Castle Car Park is completed this brownfield site will potentially become surplus to requirements and alternative uses may need to be considered for this car park
Garden Street/ Bankside car park	0.10	Once Castle Car Park is completed this brownfield site will potentially become surplus to requirements and alternative uses may need to be considered for this car park
Land at Glenwood Close, Silverdale	0.69	This site is designated as low quality and low value in the latest Open Space and Green Infrastructure Strategy therefore given it has little value as open space alternative uses need to be considered.
Land site of former mortuary, Newcastle Cemetery	0.23	Mortuary demolished June 2020. Public consultation complete. Options for residential development to be considered
Sites approved in previous Asset Management Strategy (Low value or little or no interest)		
Cotswold Avenue, Knutton	0.44	Grassland area not included in latest Open Space and Green Infrastructure Strategy for review. Site offered to Housing Associations, but no interest.
Kinnersley Street, Kidsgrove	1.60	Site not included in latest Open Space and Green Infrastructure Strategy for review. Grass and tree covered area on very steep slope. Topography to be analyzed to assess which parts maybe developable only likely to be a small part
	0.36	Surplus brownfield land at the rear of Kidsgrove Town Hall. Poor access to the site

Rear of Kidsgrove Town Hall, Liverpool Road. Kidsgrove		
Victoria Street, Chesterton	0.04	Developability of site to be explored
Silverdale Road, Newcastle	1.38	Brownfield site, former plant nursery which is located on the flood plain
Brick Kiln Lane, Chesterton	11.76	Grassland area not included in latest Open Space and Green Infrastructure Strategy for review. Third party access to the site is required
Former Public Conveniences, Merrial Street, Newcastle	n/a	Closed in 2015, alternative uses being considered once development of Ryecroft is underway
Pepper Street Public Conveniences, Newcastle	n/a	Closed alternative uses to be considered

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**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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

**07 January 2025**

**Report Title:**            **Scale of Fees and Charges 2025/26**

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

**Portfolios:**            **Finance, Town Centres and Growth**

**Ward(s) affected:**    **All**

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
To obtain approval for the proposed scale of fees and charges to apply from 1 April 2025.			
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>			
That Cabinet:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Approve the fees and charges proposed to apply from 1 April 2025, as set out in Appendix 1.</b></li> </ol>			
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>			
It is necessary to review the fees and charges which the Council makes in order to keep them in line with the cost of service provision, ensure compliance with the Charging Policy and to establish the amounts to be included in the 2025/26 budget.			

**1.    Background**

- 1.1**    The Cabinet is asked annually to consider proposals for the fees and charges to be applied during the following financial year. It is proposed that the new fees and charges set out at Appendix 1 should take effect from 1 April 2025 and remain in force until 31 March 2026.
  
- 1.2**    The Council has an approved Charging Policy, which is followed when fees and charges are proposed and agreed. This sets out the criteria that should be taken into consideration when establishing the amounts to be charged.

**2.    Issues**

- 2.1**    The Medium Term Financial Strategy, reviewed by Cabinet on 3 December 2024, assumes an overall 4% increase in the amount of income raised from fees and charges in 2025/26.

- 2.2** The proposals made vary between minimal decreases, increase, and freezes to the fees and charges for the year. When these proposals are applied to the appropriate income budgets, they fall broadly in line with the assumed overall 4% increase.
- 2.3** Most of the fees and charges are inclusive of VAT but in some cases no VAT is chargeable, or VAT is added to the fee or charge. The VAT status of individual fees and charges is shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.4** When considering the level of fees and charges the principles contained in the Charging Policy should be followed. In drawing up the proposed fees and charges for 2025/26 these have been considered by Service Directors who were provided with a copy of the Charging Policy and were requested to ensure that their charges were set in accordance with the Policy, considering:
- The cost of providing the service;
  - How much income it is desired to generate and why;
  - Comparison of charges made by other Councils or providers of similar services;
  - Whose use of services it is desired to subsidise and by how much;
  - Whose behaviour it is desired to influence and in what ways;
  - How will charges help to improve value for money, equity and access to services;
  - Will the cost of collecting the income outweigh the income likely to be collected; and
  - Any other relevant factors.
- 2.5** It is acceptable for charges to be set at a level where costs are not fully recovered. There may be reasons for doing so, such as a desire to encourage take up of a service by specified groups, for example the unemployed, benefits recipients, the elderly, disabled persons or children, or to influence particular forms or patterns of behaviour.
- 2.6** The decision to charge less than cost ought to be a conscious one, taken by members and justified by reference to the reasons for setting charges at less than cost as set out in the charging principles contained in the Charging Policy.
- 2.7** For 2025/26 a number of fees compared to previous years have remained frozen due to the ongoing current cost of living challenges and the negative impact this may have on service uptake. This has been factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy assumptions.
- 2.8** Alongside the review of the Council's fees and charges, work is continually undertaken to benchmark fees alongside those of other Authorities nationwide. This work is then used as a basis to challenge officers' first fee proposals.
- 2.9** The Scale of Fees and Charges (Appendix 1) shows the current and proposed fees and charges for 2025/26 and indicates those which have been frozen at current levels. There are several new charges proposed for 2025/26. The table below shows these:

New Charges - Description of Charge	Fee / Charge 2025/26 (£)
<b>CAR PARKS</b>	
<b>Castle Car Park</b>	
Up to 1 hour	1.20
Up to 2 hours	2.30
Up to 3 hours	3.50
Up to 4 hours	4.70
Up to 24 hours	6.60
Season ticket - per quarter	172.00
Monthly ticket	65.00
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	66.00
Bank Holiday & Event Parking	1.20
Evening charge (8pm to 8am the following morning)	1.50
<b>CREMATORIUM</b>	
<b>Plaques</b>	
Granite wall plaque with posey vase 5 year lease	285.00
<b>Additional memorials</b>	
Memorial leaf on tree initial 5-year lease	250.00
Garden / Memorial Plaque ten year lease	425.00
Additional plaques in same location as family member in gardens	110.00
Garden / Memorial Plaque - 5-year renewal	210.00
Copy cremation certificate	10.00
<b>LEISURE</b>	
<b>Tennis Class A (Westlands, Wolstanton)</b>	
Admin fee per court booking	2.00
<b>Community Events</b>	
Commercial Events - under 500 attendees per day	450.00
Commercial Events - between 500- 1000 attendees per day	600.00
Commercial events - between 1000-3000	1200.00
Commercial events - over 3000 attendees per day	1500.00
Commercial Fun Fairs and Circus - per day for events up to up 5 days	1250.00
Commercial Fun Fairs and Circus - per day (if purchased outside of the 5-day package)	360.00
Commercial Fun fair price per day (if purchased as part of the 5-day package)	250.00
Commercial Fun fair set up and take down days if outside the 5 days	84.00
<b>PLANNING SERVICES</b>	
Electronic copies of Planning Decision Notices and Legal Agreements	10.00
<b>Self-Build and Custom Build Register</b>	
Charge for someone wanting to be on the register - first charge then separate annual fee to remain on the register	40.00
Charge to remain on the register	20.00

**2.10** Several fees and charges approved for 2024/25 have been deleted from the proposed fees and charges for 2025/26 relating to services no longer provided or superseded. The table below shows these:

<b>Deleted Charges - Description of Charge</b>	<b>Fee / Charge 2024/25 (£)</b>
<b>BULKY RECYCLING</b>	
Reusable items	Free
<b>CEMETERIES</b>	
Use of Chapel & Community Room Newcastle cemetery chapel	200.00
Keele community room - full day hire	150.00
Keele community room - half day hire	75.00
Keele family room - per hour family history research 3hrs (9.00am to 12.00pm)	25.00
<b>CREMATORIUM</b>	
<b>Cremation Fees</b>	
Cremation environmental charge	85.00
Plaques	
12" x 4" new plaque & 10-year hire	520.00
12"x4" Each succeeding 5-year hire	210.00
12" x 8" new plaque & 10-year hire	780.00
12"x8" Each succeeding 5-year hire	380.00
Additional Memorials	
Memorial leaf on tree renewal for 5-years	250.00
Planters	870.00
Each succeeding 5-year hire	355.00
Trees	745.00
Each succeeding 10-year hire	390.00
Donations Memorial Fish/Bulbs	200.00
<b>LEISURE CHARGES</b>	
<b>Jubilee 2</b>	
DJD Junior Dance - Daniel Jones Dance Junior Membership	20.00
DJ Dance Membership existing customers only	28.00
Legacy Off Peak Memberships annual % increase (rounded to nearest 10p)	8%
1:1 dance lesson with DJD Dance - 30 minutes	24.00
1:1 swim / dance lesson with DJD Dance - 30 minutes, block of four lessons	84.00
DJ Wedding Package	210.00

**2.11** Due to the commercial sensitivity of the proposed charges for the trade waste service, these are not included on part 1 of the agenda and are exempt from publication by reasons of paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972. The proposed charges can be found in part 2 of the agenda.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 That Cabinet approve the fees and charges proposed to apply from 1 April 2025, as set out in Appendix 1.

### **4. Reasons**

- 4.1 Applying selective increases to fees and charges enables economic activity to be promoted within the Borough. It also contributes to the delivery of a sustainable budget for 2025/26 and later years and ensures compliance with the Charging Policy.

### **5. Options Considered**

- 5.1 The decision to charge less than cost recovery ought to be a conscious one, taken by members and justified by reference to the reasons for setting charges at less than cost as set out in the charging principles contained in the Charging Policy.

### **6. Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 Statutory charges are included in the scale of fees and charges and are noted as such. These are set by the government rather than by the Council. Land Charges and Licensing fees are set in accordance with a statutory requirement to balance income with expenditure. All other charges may be set by the Council in accordance with its Charging Policy

### **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 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. It is important to consider the potential impact on such groups and individuals when designing fees and charges.

### **8. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 The approved levels of fees and charges will be incorporated in the General Fund Budget for 2025/26. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) assumes increased income of £408,000 from an average increase of 4% across the existing range of fees and charges and the introduction of a number of new fees and charges.
- 8.2 The proposals made vary between minimal decreases to increases. When these proposals are applied to the appropriate income budgets, they fall broadly in line with the assumed overall 4% increase.

### **9. Major Risks & Mitigation**

- 9.1 A major risk is that a depressed economic situation leads to less demand from users of Council services, resulting in significant loss of income. The level of charges will in some cases influence this demand.

## 10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

10.1 In shaping detailed fees and charges proposals consideration will be given to:



## 11. One Council

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

One Commercial Council

*We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.*

One Digital Council

*We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.*

One Green Council

*We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle.*

## 12. Key Decision Information

12.1 Approval of the fees and charges is a key decision.

## 13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30 (Cabinet 10 September 2024).

13.2 Revenue and Capital Budgets 2025/26 – First Draft Savings Plans (Cabinet 3 December 2024).

## 14. List of Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1 – Proposed charges from 1 April 2025

14.2 Appendix 2 – Charging Policy

14.3 Appendix 3 – Trade waste charges from 1 April 2025 – commercially sensitive

## APPENDIX 1 - SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26

ALLOTMENTS	1
BULKY RECYCLING	1
BUS DEPARTURE CHARGES	1
CAR PARKS	1
CEMETERIES	6
CIRCUSES & FAIRS	8
COVENANT CONSENTS	8
CREMATORIUM	9
DOG WARDEN SERVICE	11
ELECTIONS	11
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	13
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT	16
GARDEN WASTE RECYCLING	16
LAND CHARGES	16
LEISURE CHARGES	17
LICENCES	20
MARKETS	25
MOT	25
MUSEUM & ART GALLERY	26
NAMING/ NUMBERING OF STREETS/ PROPERTIES	27
PEST CONTROL	27
PLANNING SERVICES	28
PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING	30
REMOVAL OF DOMESTIC ANIMAL CARCASSES	30
SALE OF SANDBAGS	30
STREET TRADING	31
TOWN CENTRE DISPLAYS	31
TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS	31
WASTE & RECYCLING BINS/ RECEPTACLES	31

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**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>ALLOTMENTS</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Rent (per annum) per square metre Note: 20% concession for Junior/60+/Unemployed	0.54	0.56	0.02		
<b>BULKY RECYCLING</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
1-3 Items non reusable/waste items	50.00	52.00	2.00		
4-6 Items non reusable/waste items	80.00	84.00	4.00		
7-9 Items non reusable/waste items	100.00	105.00	5.00		
<b>BUS DEPARTURE CHARGES</b>				Plus VAT	Cabinet
Fee per departure	0.35	0.37	0.02		
<b>CAR PARKS</b>					
<b>Charges for Infringements</b>				No VAT	
Civil parking enforcement - higher charge	70.00	70.00	0.00		
Civil parking enforcement - lower charge	50.00	50.00	0.00		
<b>Discount for block purchase of permits</b>					
Discount for purchase of 20 or more permits	20%	20%	0%		
<b>Construction permit (max of 1 week permit)</b>				VAT Incl.	
Initial day rate	16.00	17.00	1.00		
Additional days	7.00	7.50	0.50		
<b>Bankside</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Season ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Each additional permit for the same numbered bay - per quarter	26.00	27.00	1.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 6pm to 7am	62.00	65.00	3.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>Blackfriars (Zone C)</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Up to 1 hour	1.10	1.20	0.10		
Up to 2 hours	1.60	1.70	0.10		
Up to 3 hours	2.10	2.20	0.10		
Up to 4 hours	2.60	2.70	0.10		
Up to 6 hours	3.20	3.40	0.20		
6 hours to 24 hours	3.70	3.80	0.10		
Season ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00	1.00	0.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Bank Holiday	1.00	1.10	0.10		
Event Parking	1.00	1.10	0.10		
<b>Castle Car Park</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Up to 1 hour	N/A	1.20	1.20		New
Up to 2 hours	N/A	2.30	2.30		New
Up to 3 hours	N/A	3.50	3.50		New
Up to 4 hours	N/A	4.70	4.70		New
Up to 24 hours	N/A	6.60	6.60		New
Season ticket - per quarter	N/A	172.00	172.00		New
Monthly ticket	N/A	65.00	65.00		New
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	N/A	66.00	66.00		New
Bank Holiday & Event Parking	N/A	1.20	1.20		New
Evening charge (8pm to 8am the following morning)	N/A	1.50	1.50		New
<b>Cherry Orchard (Zone B)</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Up to 1 hour	1.10	1.20	0.10		
Up to 2 hours	2.00	2.10	0.10		
Up to 3 hours	3.00	3.20	0.20		
Up to 4 hours	4.20	4.40	0.20		
4 hours to 24 hours	5.50	5.80	0.30		
Season ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00	1.00	0.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Bank Holiday	1.00	1.10	0.10		
Event Parking	1.00	1.10	0.10		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	<b>Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £</b>	<b>Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £</b>	<b>Increase/ Decrease £</b>	<b>VAT Status</b>	<b>Committee Approval/ Comments</b>
<b>Corporation Street (Zone A)</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Up to 1/2 hour	0.90	1.00	0.10		
Up to 1 hour	1.60	1.70	0.10		
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00	1.00	0.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Bank Holiday	1.50	1.60	0.10		
Event Parking	1.50	1.60	0.10		
<b>Fogg Street East (Zone A)</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Season ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Each additional permit for the same numbered bay - per quarter	26.00	27.00	1.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 6pm to 7am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
<b>Goose Street (Zone B)</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Up to 1 hour	1.10	1.20	0.10		
Up to 2 hours	2.00	2.10	0.10		
Up to 3 hours	3.00	3.20	0.20		
Up to 4 hours	4.20	4.40	0.20		
4 hours to 24 hours	5.50	5.80	0.30		
Season ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00	1.00	0.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Bank Holiday	1.00	1.10	0.10		
Event Parking	1.00	1.10	0.10		
<b>Hassell Street (Zone B) (Bandings Subject to Review)</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Up to 1 hour	1.10	1.20	0.10		
Up to 2 hours	2.00	2.10	0.10		
Up to 3 hours	3.00	3.20	0.20		
Up to 4 hours	4.20	4.40	0.20		
4 hours to 24 hours	5.50	5.80	0.30		
Season ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Resident permit - per quarter	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00	1.00	0.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Bank Holiday	1.00	1.10	0.10		
Event Parking	1.00	1.10	0.10		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>High Street - New</b>					
20 minute stay	N/A	Free	Free		New
<b>High Street (Rear of)</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Season ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Each additional permit for the same numbered bay - per quarter	26.00	27.00	1.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 6pm to 7am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
<b>King Street (Zone C)</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Up to 1 hour	1.10	1.20	0.10		
Up to 2 hours	1.60	1.70	0.10		
Up to 3 hours	2.10	2.20	0.10		
Up to 4 hours	2.60	2.70	0.10		
Up to 6 hours	3.20	3.40	0.20		
6 hours to 24 hours	3.70	3.90	0.20		
Season Ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00	1.00	0.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Bank Holiday	1.00	1.10	0.10		
Event Parking	1.00	1.10	0.10		
<b>Lyme Valley / Buckmaster Ave</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Up to 3 hours	Free	Free	0.00		
Up to 4 hours	4.50	4.70	0.20		
4 - 24 hours	6.30	6.60	0.30		
Season Ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
<b>Lyme Valley / Lyme Valley Rd</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Up to 2 hours	Free	Free	0.00		
Up to 3 hours	3.40	3.60	0.20		
Up to 4 hours	4.50	4.70	0.20		
4 - 24 hours	6.30	6.60	0.30		
Season Ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>School Street/ Barracks Road (Zone B)</b>					
Up to 1 hour	1.10	1.20	0.10		
Up to 2 hours	2.00	2.10	0.10		
Up to 3 hours	3.00	3.20	0.20		
Season ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00	1.00	0.00	VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Overnight charge 8pm to 8am	N/A	1.00	1.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Bank Holiday	1.00	1.10	0.10		
Event Parking	1.00	1.10	0.10		
<b>Silverdale Road (Zone C)</b>					
Up to 1 hour	1.10	1.20	0.10		
Up to 2 hours	1.60	1.70	0.10		
Up to 3 hours	2.10	2.20	0.10		
Up to 6 hours	3.20	3.40	0.20		
6 hours to 24 hours	3.70	3.90	0.20		
Season ticket - per quarter	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Resident permit - per quarter	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00	1.00	0.00	VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Bank Holiday	1.00	1.10	0.10		
Event Parking	1.00	1.10	0.10		
<b>Windsor Street (Zone B)</b>					
Up to 1 hour	1.10	1.20	0.10		
Up to 2 hours	2.10	2.20	0.10		
Season ticket - after school (30 minutes)	31.00	32.00	1.00		
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00	1.00	0.00		
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	65.00	68.00	3.00		
Bank Holiday	1.00	1.10	0.10		
Event Parking	1.00	1.10	0.10		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>CEMETERIES</b>					
<b>Interment Fees - Resident Fees</b>					
17 years & under 4ft 6	1,085.00	1,140.00	55.00	No VAT	Cabinet
18 years & over over 4ft 6	1,300.00	1,350.00	50.00		
18 years & under 4ft 6	1,085.00	1,140.00	55.00		
Woodland burial - Keele Cemetery (1 full interment only in each grave)	1,085.00	1,135.00	50.00		
Cremated remains at 2 feet	480.00	510.00	30.00		
Woodland burial cremated remains at 2 feet - Keele Cemetery (4 interments only in each grave)	480.00	510.00	30.00		
Additional depth for cremated remains over 2 feet	250.00	265.00	15.00		
Additional depth over 6 feet per foot	270.00	285.00	15.00		
Interment of body part	480.00	510.00	30.00		
Double interment (two interments taking place at the same time)	Fee + 50%	Fee + 50%	0.00		
Exhumation fee - cremated remains	1,500.00	1,600.00	100.00		
Exhumation fee	3,500.00	3,700.00	200.00		
<b>Purchase of Graves - Resident Fees</b>					
(Includes right to erect memorial for single grave)					
Exclusive Right of Burial & Memorialisation for a grave - two internments	1,465.00	1,530.00	65.00	No VAT	Cabinet
Lawn Graves Reservation	2,084.00	2,180.00	96.00		
Exclusive Right of Burial in a Woodland Grave at Keele Cemetery (1 full interment only in each grave plus memorial tree)	1,465.00	1,530.00	65.00		
Reservation of Woodland Grave	2,085.00	2,180.00	95.00		
Exclusive Right of Burial & Memorialisation in Cremated Remains Grave at 2ft	730.00	770.00	40.00		
Reservation of Cremated Remains Grave	1,035.00	1,095.00	60.00		
Exclusive Right of Burial in Woodland Cremated Remains Grave, Keele Cemetery at 2ft Inclusive of a Shrub	730.00	770.00	40.00		
Reservation of Woodland Cremated Remains Grave	1,095.00	1,095.00	0.00		
Renewal of exclusive right of burial & memorialisation (full grave)	450.00	470.00	20.00		
Renewal of exclusive right of burial & memorialisation (cremated remains)	250.00	260.00	10.00		
Transfer of ownership of exclusive rights of burial & memorialisation	115.00	125.00	5.00		
Duplicate deed of exclusive rights of burial & memorialisation	60.00	65.00	5.00		
Memorial fee permit	60.00	65.00	5.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	<b>Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £</b>	<b>Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £</b>	<b>Increase/ Decrease £</b>	<b>VAT Status</b>	<b>Committee Approval/ Comments</b>
<b>Interment Fees - Non-Resident Fees</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
17 years & under 4ft 6	1,645.00	1,710.00	65.00		
18 years & over over 4ft 6	1,865.00	2,025.00	160.00		
18 years & under 4ft 6	1,645.00	1,710.00	65.00		
Woodland burial - Keele Cemetery (1 full interment only in each grave)	1,645.00	1,710.00	65.00		
Cremated remains at 2 feet	730.00	765.00	35.00		
Woodland burial cremated remains at 2 feet - Keele Cemetery (4 interments only in each grave)	730.00	765.00	35.00		
Interment of body part	730.00	765.00	35.00		
Additional depth for cremated remains over 2 feet	260.00	275.00	15.00		
Additional depth over 6 feet per foot	280.00	295.00	15.00		
Double interment (two interments taking place at the same time)	Fee + 50%	Fee + 50%	0.00		
Exhumation fee - cremated remains	1,500.00	1,600.00	100.00		
Exhumation fee	3,500.00	3,700.00	200.00		
<b>Purchase of Graves - Non-Resident Fees</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
(Includes right to erect memorial for single grave)					
Exclusive Right of Burial & Memorialisation for a Single Grave	2,930.00	3,060.00	130.00		
Lawn Graves Reservation	3,530.00	3,710.00	180.00		
Exclusive Right of Burial in a Woodland Grave at Keele Cemetery (1 full interment only in each grave plus memorial tree)	2,930.00	3,060.00	130.00		
Reservation of Woodland Grave	3,530.00	3,710.00	180.00		
Exclusive Right of Burial & Memorialisation in a Cremated Remains Grave at 2ft	1,450.00	1,540.00	90.00		
Reservation of a Cremated Remains Grave	2,050.00	1,865.00	-185.00		
Exclusive Right of Burial in a Woodland Cremated Remains Grave, Keele Cemetery at 2ft inclusive of a Shrub	1,450.00	1,540.00	90.00		
Reservation of Woodland Cremated Remains Grave	2,050.00	1,865.00	-185.00		
Renewal of exclusive right of burial & memorialisation (cremated remains grave)	540.00	565.00	25.00		
Transfer of ownership of exclusive rights of burial & memorialisation	170.00	175.00	5.00		
Duplicate deed of exclusive rights of burial & memorialisation	95.00	100.00	5.00		
<b>Erection of Memorials (no prior right given)</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Memorial not exceeding 3 feet in height	180.00	190.00	10.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>Columbarium</b>					
10-year lease including 1st interment	650.00	680.00	30.00	No VAT	Cabinet
2nd interment	100.00	105.00	5.00		
Renewal of 10-year lease	315.00	330.00	15.00		
Additional 5-year lease	315.00	330.00	15.00		
<b>Use of Chapel &amp; Community Room</b>					
Keele community room - funeral service 90 minutes	200.00	240.00	40.00		
Keele Community Room - hourly rate	25.00	30.00	5.00		
<b>Sundry Items</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Single abstract information from registrar	30.00	35.00	5.00		
Family history research	25.00	25.00	0.00		
Casket - Single	95.00	100.00	5.00		
Casket - Double	120.00	125.00	5.00		
Casket Plaque for Crematorium Boxes	15.00	16.00	1.00		
Wooden cross	55.00	60.00	5.00		
Memorial bench	1,500.00	1,560.00	60.00		
Memorial trees	420.00	440.00	20.00		
Barrier fob replacements	15.00	17.50	2.50		
Late arrival at cemeteries by more than 15 mins, Funeral Director charge	200.00	210.00	10.00		
Late Paperwork	50.00	55.00	5.00		
Incorrect coffin size	50.00	55.00	5.00		
Admin fee	85.00	90.00	5.00		
Late removal of memorial resulting in a delay of grave excavation	150.00	160.00	10.00		
<b>CIRCUSES &amp; FAIRS</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Hire rate per day of site presence (based on an 8-hour day - 1 day to set up & 1 day to dismantle free of charge)	730.00	760.00	30.00		
Returnable deposit - cleaning	1,040.00	1,080.00	40.00		
Returnable deposit - damage	1,040.00	1,080.00	40.00		
<b>COVENANT CONSENTS</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Covenant consents & any written responses to enquiries relating to land & property previously owned by the Council	165.00	172.00	7.00		
Initial purchase enquiry form for land smaller than 0.1ha (deducted from land transaction fee if completed otherwise non-refundable)	100.00	104.00	4.00		



**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>CREMATORIUM</b>					
<b>Cremation Fees</b>					
17 years of age & under	895.00	950.00	55.00	No VAT	Cabinet
Direct cremation no service or family before 9.00am, Monday Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, limited to two per day.	350.00	375.00	25.00		
18 years & over 9.20am service time only	650.00	705.00	55.00		
18 years & over from 10am	895.00	950.00	55.00		
Burial of remains cremated elsewhere	260.00	280.00	20.00		
Chapel hire - additional use to cremation service 30 minutes	220.00	255.00	35.00		
Chapel service 40 mins	490.00	510.00	20.00		
Temporary deposit of ashes (per week after the first 4 weeks)	20.00	22.00	2.00		
Storage of ashes where burial is to be arranged (per week after 12 weeks)	20.00	22.00	2.00		
<b>Obitus Fees</b>					
Webcast Live	40.00	50.00	10.00	VAT Incl.	
Webcast Live + 28 day + downloadable	60.00	70.00	10.00		
Keepsake DVD, USB, Blu-Ray, or Audio CD	65.00	70.00	5.00		
Basic Slideshow	50.00	55.00	5.00		
Music Slideshow (Pro-Tribute)	85.00	95.00	10.00		
Family-supplied tribute checking	30.00	35.00	5.00		
Bespoke tribute	400.00	415.00	15.00		
Themed tribute	105.00	110.00	5.00		
Extra single photo	20.00	22.00	2.00		
Extra photo charge (each extra 25 photos on a visual tribute)	35.00	40.00	5.00		
Extra work charge	30.00	33.00	3.00		
Tribute download	20.00	22.00	2.00		
Video book	100.00	105.00	5.00		
Memory box	135.00	140.00	5.00		
Obitus bundle	180.00	190.00	10.00		
<b>Urns &amp; Containers</b>					
Casket - Single	95.00	100.00	5.00	VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Casket - Double	120.00	125.00	5.00		
Casket plaque for Crematorium Boxes	15.00	16.00	1.00		
Postage & packaging	Cost + £40	Cost + £40	0.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>Memorialisation</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Book of remembrance up to 2 lines	85.00	90.00	5.00		
Book of remembrance for 5 lines	180.00	190.00	10.00		
Book of remembrance for 8 lines	270.00	280.00	10.00		
Simple flower or emblem with five lines or more	120.00	125.00	5.00		
Badges or coat of arms with five lines or more	160.00	170.00	10.00		
Memorial card to match inscription	50.00	52.00	2.00		
<b>Plaques Slate</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Adding to existing plaque per letter or figure	12.00	12.50	0.50		
Regilding of existing letters (per letter)	8.00	8.50	0.50		
Wall plaque purchase at end of lease (12"x4")	100.00	105.00	5.00		
Wall plaque purchase at end of lease (12"x8")	200.00	210.00	10.00		
Sandstone memorial vase - 5 year lease	325.00	335.00	10.00		
Granite wall plaque with posey vase 5 year lease	275.00	285.00	10.00		New
<b>Additional Memorials</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Memorial benches ten year lease	1,500.00	1,560.00	60.00		
Individual memorial bench - 5-year renewal	500.00	520.00	20.00		
Remembrance bench (up to 12 plaques) - initial lease of plaque 5-years	295.00	310.00	15.00		
Remembrance bench (up to 12 plaques) - renewal for 5-years	175.00	185.00	10.00		
Memorial leaf on tree initial 5-year lease	300.00	250.00	-50.00		
Memorial vases ten year lease	520.00	540.00	20.00		
Additional characters for Kerb side vase	5.00	5.00	0.00		
Each succeeding 5-year hire	320.00	335.00	15.00		
Garden / Memorial Plaque ten year lease	415.00	425.00	10.00		New
Additional plaques in same location as family member in gardens	105.00	110.00	5.00		
Garden / Memorial Plaque - 5-year renewal	205.00	210.00	5.00		
Service overrun at Bradwell Crem charge to be made to the Funeral Director	200.00	210.00	10.00		
Late Paperwork	50.00	55.00	5.00		
Incorrect coffin size	50.00	55.00	5.00		
Copy cremation certificate	N/A	10.00	10.00		New
Early/late arrival at cemeteries by more than 15 minutes, charge to be made to the funeral directors	200.00	210.00	10.00		
Admin Fee	85.00	90.00	5.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>DOG WARDEN SERVICE</b>					
<b>Recovery of Stray Dogs</b>					
During normal working hours - reclaim fee	80.00	84.00	4.00	No VAT	Cabinet
Daily kennelling fees	Cost	Cost	0.00		
<b>ELECTIONS</b>					
<b>Rule 9 (1) Parliamentary Election Regulations &amp; Rule/Reg 9 (1) Police Fire &amp; Crime Commissioner Election Regulations - Candidates' Deposits</b>					
Parliamentary election candidate	500.00	500.00	0.00	No VAT	Statutory
Police Fire & Crime Commissioner candidate	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00		
<b>Regulations 48 &amp; 49 Representation of the People Regulations 2001</b>					
<b>Supply of Full Register</b>					
Sale of full register (printed)	10.00	10.00	0.00		
Plus, per 1,000 names or part 1,000 (printed)	5.00	5.00	0.00		
Sale of full register (data)	20.00	20.00	0.00		
Plus, per 1,000 names or part 1,000 (data)	1.50	1.50	0.00	No VAT	Statutory
List of overseas electors (printed)	10.00	10.00	0.00		
Plus, per 100 names or part 100 (printed)	5.00	5.00	0.00		
List of overseas electors (data)	20.00	20.00	0.00		
Plus, per 100 names or part 100 (data)	1.50	1.50	0.00		
<b>Supply of Edited Register</b>					
Sale of edited register (printed)	10.00	10.00	0.00	No VAT	Statutory
Plus, per 1,000 names or part 1,000 (printed)	5.00	5.00	0.00		
Sale of register (data)	20.00	20.00	0.00		
Plus, per 1,000 names or part 1,000 (data)	1.50	1.50	0.00		
<b>Regulations 120 Representation of the People Regulations 2001</b>					
<b>Supply of Marked Register</b>					
Supply of marked registers (printed)	10.00	10.00	0.00	No VAT	Statutory
Plus, per 1,000 entries or part 1,000	2.00	2.00	0.00		
Supply of marked registers (data)	10.00	10.00	0.00		
Plus, per 1,000 entries or part 1,000	1.00	1.00	0.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>Inspection &amp; Copies of Documents</b>				No VAT	Statutory
Regulation 10 representation of the people regulations 2001 - inspection of candidates' expenses	5.00	5.00	0.00		
A4 - copies (black & white)	0.20	0.20	0.00		
<b>Town &amp; Parish Elections</b>				No VAT	
<i>Borough Council Election taking place on the same day:</i>					
Town or Parish specific printing / postage costs	Market rate + 5%	Market rate + 5%	0.00		
- Room hire	admin costs	admin costs	0.00		
	50% of cost	50% of cost			
	50% of staffing rate on the same day, or full costs if the count is taking place on a different day	50% of staffing rate on the same day, or full costs if the count is taking place on a different day	0.00		
- Staffing costs (polling & count)					
<i>Town or Parish Election on different day i.e., by-election</i>					
- printing, postage, stationery, room hire costs & other associated costs	Full costs for each election per ward or parish	Full costs for each election per ward or parish	0.00		
- polling station / count staff cost	Standard NULBC staffing rates	Standard NULBC staffing rates	0.00		
	100.00 per election (if warded the cost is 100.00 for each ward or parish as they are classed as separate elections).	125.00 per election (if warded the cost is 125.00 for each ward or parish as they are classed as separate elections).	25.00		
Uncontested Town or Parish Election Administration Fee					
Room hires	Full Costs	Full Costs	0.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</b>					
<b>Works in default of statutory notice</b>					
Calculated in accordance with the following formula -	Per Formula	Per Formula	0.00	No VAT	Cabinet
a) Contractor costs					
b) Officer costs (per hour at actual rate)					
c) Car mileage & subsistence					
d) On costs (b+c) + 25%					
e) Disbursements (e.g., warrant application, postage, printing, cost of invoice etc.)					
Total = a+d+e+ interest on outstanding balance as determined by council at start of financial year					
<b>Environmental Offences - Fixed Penalty Notices</b>				No VAT	Statutory
Waste receptacles - Section 47ZA(2) (paid in 10 days)	60.00	60.00	0.00		
Waste receptacles - Section 47ZA(2) (paid in 14 days)	80.00	80.00	0.00		
Failure to Produce Waste Carrier Registration Documents – Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989 – section 5B	300.00	300.00	0.00		
Failure to furnish documentation (waste carrier authority - Section 34(2))	300.00	300.00	0.00		
Litter – Section 88 (1) Domestic person (paid within 14 days)	200.00	200.00	0.00		
Litter – Section 88 (1) Commercial business (paid within 14 days)	500.00	500.00	0.00		
Unauthorised distribution of literature on designated land - Schedule 3A (7)2 (paid in 10 days)	75.00	75.00	0.00		
Unauthorised distribution of literature on designated land - Schedule 3A (7)2 (paid in 14 days)	100.00	100.00	0.00		
Failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice or Public Spaces Protection Order (paid in 10 days)	75.00	75.00	0.00		Cabinet
Failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice or Public Spaces Protection Order (paid in 14 days)	100.00	100.00	0.00		Cabinet
Littering from vehicles outside of London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018, Regulation 6 (Paid in 14 days)	75.00	75.00	0.00		
Littering from vehicles outside of London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018, Regulation 6 (Paid in 28 days)	100.00	100.00	0.00		Public Protection Committee
Graffiti & Fly Posting (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 Section 43) (Domestic)	200.00	200.00	0.00		
Graffiti & Fly Posting (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 Section 43) (Commercial)	500.00	500.00	0.00		
Domestic Waste Section 46 (Environmental Protection Act 1990)	60.00	60.00	0.00		
Household waste duty of care fixed penalty notices. Environmental protection Act 1990 Section 34(2)A)	600.00	600.00	0.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
Fly tipping (The Unauthorised Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalties) Regulations 2016 which amends Environmental Protection Act 1990 "33ZA Fixed penalty notices for contravention of section 33(1)(a): England (from domestic property)	500.00	500.00	0.00		
Fly tipping (The Unauthorised Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalties) Regulations 2016 which amends Environmental Protection Act 1990 "33ZA Fixed penalty notices for contravention of section 33(1)(a): England (from motor vehicle)	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00		
Fly tipping (The Unauthorised Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalties) Regulations 2016 which amends Environmental Protection Act 1990 "33ZA Fixed penalty notices for contravention of section 33(1)(a): England (from commercial business)	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00		
Vehicle repair & sale offences (Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005, Sections 3 & 4	100.00	100.00	0.00		
FPN for abandoned vehicles	200.00	200	0.00		
<b>Environmental Protection Act 1990 - Part 1 Pollution Prevention &amp; Control Act 1999</b>					
<b>Register of Permits</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Copy of tape/CD recorded interviews	20.00	21.00	1.00		
Environmental Information Regulations 1992 (requests for information), Charge per Hour (ICO guidance)	26.00	26.00	0.00		ICO Guidance
Noise monitoring service for Registered Social Landlords & Private Landlords for 1 period of up to 7 days & subsequent report & copy of recording	360.00	375.00	15.00		
<b>Environmental Health Licences</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Dangerous wild animals - first licence	676.00	700.00	24.00		
Dangerous wild animals - renewal	336.00	350.00	14.00		
Zoo - first licence	On Application	On Application	0.00		
Zoo - renewal	On Application	On Application	0.00		
Selling animals as Pets – Grant new licence	379.00	395.00	16.00		
Selling animals as Pets – Renew licence	336.00	350.00	14.00		
Selling animals as Pets – Grading review (no visit)	87.00	92.00	5.00		
Selling animals as Pets – Variation	109.00	114.00	5.00		
Animal Boarding – Grant new licence	379.00	395.00	16.00		
Animal Boarding – Renew licence	336.00	350.00	14.00		
Animal Boarding – Grading review (no visit)	87.00	92.00	5.00		
Animal Boarding – Variation	109.00	114.00	5.00		
Hiring out horses – Grant new licence Exc Vet Fee	607.00	632.00	25.00		
Hiring out Horses - new licence Vet Fee	On Application	On Application	0.00		
Hiring out horses – Renew licence exc. Vet Fee	553.00	395.00	-158.00		
Hiring out Horses - renew licence Vet Fee	On Application	On Application	0.00		
Hiring out horses – Grading review (no visit)	87.00	91.00	4.00		
Hiring out horses – Variation	109.00	114.00	5.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	<b>Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £</b>	<b>Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £</b>	<b>Increase/ Decrease £</b>	<b>VAT Status</b>	<b>Committee Approval/ Comments</b>
Hiring out horses – Annual horse check	379.00	On Application	0.00		
Breeding Dogs – Grant new licence	628.00	654.00	26.00		
Breeding Dogs - New licence Vet Fee	On Application	On Application	0.00		
Breeding Dogs – Renew licence	336.00	350.00	14.00		
Breeding Dogs – Grading review (no visit)	87.00	91.00	4.00		
Breeding Dogs – Variation	109.00	114.00	5.00		
Keeping or training animals for exhibition - Grant new licence (3yrs)	260.00	270.00	10.00		
Keeping or training animals for exhibition - Renew licence (3yrs)	260.00	270.00	10.00		
Keeping or training animals for exhibition - Variation	109.00	114.00	5.00		
Re-inspection	109.00	114.00	5.00		
Registration of premises for acupuncture, tattooing, cosmetic piercing, electrolysis & semi-permanent skin colouring	168.00	175.00	7.00		
Registration of each operative	105.00	109.00	4.00		
Additional treatment registration	87.15	91.00	3.85		
Export health certificates	180.60	188.00	7.40		
Charges for Authorised Process - Local Authority Pollution Prevention Control Act					Statutory
The scale of charges is set by DEFRA annually after consultation with Local Authorities, representatives of industry & other stakeholders. The scale of charges is designed to cover the regulatory & administrative costs to the regulator.	Per DEFRA	Per DEFRA	0.00		To be advised by DEFRA
<b>Factual Statements (Food Safety Act, Health &amp; Safety at Work Act, Environmental Protection Act)</b>					Cabinet
Charge for factual statements - additional time	165.00	165.00	0.00		
Charge for factual statements - disclosure of documents	90.00	90.00	0.00		
<b>Private Water Supplies</b>				No VAT	Statutory
Risk assessment (per hour, plus mileage)					
Sampling					
Investigation					
Authorisation			0.00		
Analysis - during Regulation 10					
Analysis - during check monitoring	Laboratory cost	Laboratory cost	0.00		
Analysis - during audit monitoring					

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>Swimming Pools</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Sampling of pool water - per annum	756.00	787.00	31.00		
Sampling of pool water - one sample	78.75	82.00	3.25		
<b>Food Hygiene Rating Scheme</b>				No VAT	Public Protection
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme inspection	231.00	241.00	10.00		
<b>FACILITIES MANAGEMENT</b>					
NULBC delivery of Facilities Management services to Community Centres on leases & Kidsgrove Town Council. Calculated in accordance with the following formula - a) Contractor costs + b) Officer costs for administration & management + c) Car mileage & subsistence + d) On costs + 5%	As per formula	As per formula	0.00	Plus VAT	Cabinet
<b>GARDEN WASTE RECYCLING</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Garden waste service - one bin	39.95	41.99	2.04		
Every additional garden waste bin	39.95	41.99	2.04		
Delivery of each additional garden waste bin	30.00	31.50	1.50		
<b>LAND CHARGES</b>				Plus VAT	
Residential – Con 29 only (conveyancer search)	138.00	137.00	-1.0		
Residential – additional parcel of land - each	90.00	90.00	0.00		
Residential - Con290 optional enquiries - each	36.50	26.00	-10.50		
Commercial – Con 29 only (conveyancer search)	344.00	342.00	-2.00		
Commercial – additional parcel of land - each	210.00	210.00	0.00		
Commercial – Con290 optional enquiries - each	36.50	26.00	-10.50		



**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>LEISURE CHARGES</b>					
<b>Sport Development</b> Sports Development Activities up to 2 hours	Quotation	Quotation	0.00	No VAT	Cabinet
<b>Jubilee 2</b> <i>Equipment Resale</i>					
Saleable items	Market Value	Market Value	0.00	VAT Incl.	Portfolio Holder
Equipment Hire	Market Value	Market Value	0.00	No VAT	
<i>Junior Memberships</i>					
Active2 12-16 years: Swimming, gym*, & appropriate classes (14 years & above with a paying Adult)	18.00	19.00	1.00	No VAT	
*Access between the hours Monday – Friday 6.00 pm to 9.00pm with an appropriate adult. All other times individuals can attend unsupervised					
<i>Premium Membership Charges Adults</i> <i>(Including gym, classes, swim, climbing, discount on retail)</i>				No VAT	Cabinet
Joining fee (includes inductions)	20.00	20.00	0.00		
Single Membership - 12-month minimum contract - payment monthly by direct debit	32.00	33.50	1.50		
Single Membership - no contract - per month	41.50	43.00	1.50		
Single Membership - 12-month membership for price of 11 months - payable in advance	352.00	370.00	18.00		
Corporate membership	34.00	35.50	1.50		
Corporate membership 12 motnh	27.50	29.00	1.50		
Swim & aquatic membership 12-month contract	27.00	28.50	1.50		
Swim & aquatic membership monthly contract	36.00	37.50	1.50		
Gym & group exercise classes 12-month contract	27.00	28.50	1.50		
Gym & group exercise classes monthly contract	36.00	37.50	1.50		
Climbing only membership 12-month contract	19.00	20.00	1.50		
Blue light membership 12-month contract	23.00	24.50	1.50		
Student/Apprenticeship membership month to month (16+) month to month	23.00	24.50	1.50		
<i>Studio Hire</i>					
Studio 1 or Studio 2	42.00	22.00	-20.00	VAT Incl.	Cabinet

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<i>Swim / Climbing Casual Fee</i>					
Adult -	6.30	6.60	0.30	No VAT	
Adult - Concession	4.30	4.60	0.30		
Juniors 4 years and over	4.30	4.50	0.20		
under 4	1.00	1.45	0.45		
<i>Gym / Classes Casual Fee</i>					
Adult - Lite membership	6.30	6.60	0.30	No VAT	
Adult - Concession	4.30	4.60	0.30		
Junior 12 & over - Activities accessed in accordance with Industry guidance	4.30	4.50	0.20		
<i>Swimming Instruction</i>					
<i>Swimming Lessons</i>					
Adult swimming lesson (30 minutes)	9.90	10.50	0.60	No VAT	Cabinet
Junior swimming lesson (30 minutes) price per lesson - block of 12	6.40	6.70	0.30		
Monthly DD swimming	26.67	27.92	1.25		
<i>Private Lessons</i>					
1:1 swim lesson (per 30 minutes)	22.00	23.00	1.00	No VAT	Cabinet
1:1 Lessons 5 consecutive sessions in payable in advance	94.00	98.00	4.00		
<i>Pool Courses</i>					
National lifesaving Academy/Rookies (per 2-hour session) - Lyme Card	12.00	12.80	0.80	No VAT	Cabinet
Rookies	6.40	8.00	1.60		
<i>Swimming Pool Hire</i>					
Teaching Pool Hire	75.00	80.00	5.00	VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Main Pool Hire - (8 lane) (per lane per hour)	20.00	21.00	1.00		
Additional staff for pool hire (per staff member)	35.00	36.50	1.50		
Setup fee - galas	45.00	50.00	5.00		
Time equipment hire - galas	45.00	50.00	5.00		
<i>Parties</i>					
Pool Party inclusive of studio	100.00	105.00	5.00	VAT Incl.	
Climbing Party (six people) inclusive of studio use	100.00	105.00	5.00		
Additional instructor per six children	40.00	45.00	5.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>Bowls</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Adult	5.00	5.25	0.25		
Junior/60+	3.00	3.20	0.20		
Summer season ticket - adult	70.00	73.00	3.00		
Summer season ticket - junior/60+/unemployed	46.00	48.00	2.00		
Winter season ticket	18.00	19.00	1.00		
Summer/winter season ticket - adult	83.00	86.00	3.00		
Summer/winter season ticket - junior/60+/unemployed	58.00	61.00	3.00		
Merit competition per player - per hour	10.00	10.50	0.50		
Greenage fees for pre-booking (plus playing fee per person)	12.00	12.50	0.50		
<b>Tennis Class A (Westlands, Wolstanton)</b>				No VAT	Cabinet New
Admin fee per court booking	Free	2.00	2.00		
Adult (per hour per court)	Free	Free	0.00		
Junior / Concession (per hour per court)	Free	Free	0.00		
Education / Not for Profit Organisations	Free	Free	0.00		
<b>Tennis Class B (Chesterton, Silverdale, Bradwell, Clough Hall)</b>	Free	Free	0.00		
<b>Football (alternate weekly use per season)</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Wolstanton Marsh Pavilion	645.00	670.00	25.00		
All other pitches	450.00	468.00	18.00		
Junior pitch	60% of Fee	60% of Fee	0.00		
Mini soccer pitch (unmarked)	262.00	272.00	10.00		
Mini soccer pitch (marked)	368.00	382.00	14.00		
<b>Rugby (alternate weekly use per season)</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Bathpool	908.00	940.00	32.00		
Lyme Valley	908.00	940.00	32.00		
Clough Hall	908.00	940.00	32.00		
Junior Pitch	60% of fee	60% of fee	0.00		
Rugby (casual use per match)	106.00	110.00	4.00	No VAT	Cabinet
<b>Concessionary Licences</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Brampton Park ice cream sales	879.00	910.00	31.00		
Brampton Park use of bouncy castle	879.00	910.00	31.00		
4 Large Parks Northern part of Borough – ice cream	754.00	785.00	31.00		
4 Large Parks Southern part of Borough – ice cream	754.00	785.00	31.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>Community Events</b>				Plus VAT	Cabinet
Wedding Photos within a park setting	49.00	52.00	3.00		
Advertising within parks	11.00 to 5,330.00	11.00 to 5,330.00	0.00	Plus VAT	
Booking large events - more than 6 months planning	196.00	205.00	9.00	No VAT	
Booking medium events - 6 months+ planning (firework displays, carnivals etc.)	99.00	103.00	4.00	No VAT	
Booking small events - 6 months+ planning (competitions, fun days, picnics etc.)	37.00	38.50	1.50	No VAT	
Commercial Events - under 500 attendees per day	N/A	450.00	450.00		New
Commercial Events - between 500- 1000 attendees per day	N/A	600.00	600.00		New
Commercial events - between 1000-3000	N/A	1,200.00	1,200.00		New
Commercial events - over 3000 attendees per day	N/A	1,500.00	1,500.00		New
Commercial Fun Fairs & Circus - per day for events up to up 5 days	N/A	1,250.00	1,250.00		New
Commercial Fun Fairs & Circus - per day (purchased outside of the 5 day package)	N/A	360.00	360.00		New
Commercial Fun fair price per day (if purchased as part of the 5 day package)	N/A	250.00	250.00		New
Commercial Fun fair set up & take down days if outside the 5 days	N/A	84.00	84.00		New
<b>LICENCES</b>					
<b>General</b>				No VAT	
Sex establishments - application fee	3,665.00	3,665.00	0.00		
Sex establishments - Renewal	3,665.00	3,665.00	0.00		
Sex establishments - variation	1,241.00	1,241.00	0.00		Licensing Committee
Sex establishments - transfer	1,241.00	1,241.00	0.00		
Scrap metal dealer site licence	313.00	313.00	0.00		
Scrap metal dealer collectors' licence	248.00	248.00	0.00		
<b>Gambling Act 2005</b>				No VAT	
Lotteries - application fee	40.00	40.00	0.00		Statutory fees - Licensing Committee
Lotteries - annual fee	20.00	20.00	0.00		
Bingo - application fee	3,500.00	3,500.00	0.00		
Bingo - annual fee	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00		
Bingo - application to vary	1,750.00	1,750.00	0.00		
Bingo – application for transfer	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00		
Bingo – application to reinstate	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00		
Track betting - application fee	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00		
Track betting - annual fee	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00		
Track betting - application to vary	1,250.00	1,250.00	0.00		
Track betting - application to transfer	950.00	950.00	0.00		
Track betting – application to reinstate	950.00	950.00	0.00		
Betting premises - application fee	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00		
Betting premises - annual fee	600.00	600.00	0.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	<b>Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £</b>	<b>Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £</b>	<b>Increase/ Decrease £</b>	<b>VAT Status</b>	<b>Committee Approval/ Comments</b>
Betting premises - application to vary	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00		
Betting premises - application to transfer	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00		
Betting premises – application to reinstate	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00		
Family entertainment centre - application fee	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00		
Family entertainment centre - annual fee	750.00	750.00	0.00		
Family entertainment centre - application to vary	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00		
Family entertainment centre - application to transfer	950.00	950.00	0.00		
Family entertainment centre – application to reinstate	950.00	950.00	0.00		
Adult gaming centre - application fee	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00		
Adult gaming centre - annual fee	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00		
Adult gaming centre - application to vary	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00		
Adult gaming centre - application to transfer	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00		
Adult gaming centre – application to reinstate	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00		
Copy of any of the above licences (lost, stolen, damaged)	25.00	25.00	0.00		
Notice of Intention – 2 or less gaming machines	50.00	50.00	0.00		
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits – more than 2 machines	150.00	150.00	0.00		
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits – more than 2 machines, Variation	100.00	100.00	0.00		
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits – more than 2 machines, Transfer	25.00	25.00	0.00		
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits – more than 2 machines, Annual Fee	50.00	50.00	0.00		
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits – more than 2 machines, Change of Name	25.00	25.00	0.00		
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits – more than 2 machines, Copy (lost, stolen, damaged)	15.00	15.00	0.00		
Club Gaming/Club Machine Permits – New/Renew	200.00	200.00	0.00		
Club Gaming/Club Machine Permits for holders of Club Premises Certificates (under LA03) – New/Renew	100.00	100.00	0.00		
Club Gaming/Club Machine Permit – Annual Fee	50.00	50.00	0.00		
Club Gaming/Club Machine Permit – Variation	100.00	100.00	0.00		
Club Gaming/Club Machine Permit – Copy (lost, stolen, damaged)	15.00	15.00	0.00		
UFEC (Unlicensed family entertainment Centre – 10-year licence)	300.00	300.00	0.00		
Prize Gaming Permit – New/Renewal	300.00	300.00	0.00		
Prize Gaming Permit – Change of Name	25.00	25.00	0.00		
Prize Gaming Permit – Copy (lost, stolen, damaged)	15.00	15.00	0.00		
Temporary Use Notice (TUN)	200.00	200.00	0.00		
Casino Small – New application	7,952.00	7,952.00	0.00		
Casino Small – Annual Fee	3,976.00	3,976.00	0.00		
Casino Small - Variation	2,650.00	2,650.00	0.00		
Casino Small – Application for Transfer	1,705.00	1,705.00	0.00		
Casino Small – application to reinstate	1,705.00	1,705.00	0.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>Private Hire/Hackney Carriage</b>				No VAT	Public Protection
<b>OPERATORS</b>					
PHO Application fee	329.00	330.00	1.00		
Add/Remove Director	45.00	46.00	1.00		
Copy/Replacement Licence	8.00	8.00	0.00		
Basic DBS	18.00	18.00	0.00		
Director/Licence Holder - change of home address	N/A	18.00	18.00		New
Exemption Request	N/A	51.00	51.00		New
<b>DRIVERS</b>				No VAT	
Dual Driver Badge - 3 years	250.00	261.00	11.00		
Change of address	18.00	18.00	0.00		
Replacement badge (vehicle or driver copy)	15.00	16.00	1.00		
Reissue/replacement badge (with amended details)	31.00	33.00	2.00		
DBS (CRB check)	38.00	38.00	0.00		
DBS (CRB check) online	64.34	64.34	0.00		
Exemption certificates	15.00	16.00	1.00		
Knowledge test	20.00	13.00	-7.00		
Fail to attend Knowledge Test	20.00	13.00	-7.00		
Change of Name	21.00	22.00	1.00		
DE Training replacement cert	Free	Free	0.00		
Copy of Paper Licence	8.00	8.00	0.00		
Joint Disability & Safeguarding Training	48.00	48.00	0.00	£40 + VAT	
Exemption Request	N/A	51.00	51.00		New
Application Support appointment	N/A	18.00	18.00		New
<b>VEHICLES</b>				No VAT	
Transfer of vehicle	45.00	46.00	1.00		
Change of vehicle registration	52.00	54.00	2.00		
Failure to attend for vehicle test	73.00	76.00	3.00		
Retest	31.00	32.00	1.00		
Replacement plate carrier – front	11.00	11.00	0.00		
Replacement plate carrier – rear	13.00	14.00	1.00		
Replacement vehicle plate - front	9.00	9.00	0.00		
Replacement vehicle plate - rear	12.00	13.00	1.00		
Replacement vehicle sticker signage	6.00	6.00	0.00		
Copy of paper part of licence	8.00	8.00	0.00		
Change of Vehicle Colour	52.00	54.00	2.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
HCV test	79.00	82.00	3.00		
PHV test	79.00	82.00	3.00		
HCV application fee	186.00	193.00	7.00		
PHV application fee	173.00	182.00	9.00		
Basic DBS	18.00	18.00	0.00		
Change of Name/Address	45.00	46.00	1.00		
Spot check	23.00	23.00	0.00		
Replacement Internal Plate	8.00	8.00	0.00		
Exemption Request	N/A	51.00	51.00		New
PHV change of base	N/A	18.00	18.00		New
Copy of HCV Tariff sheet	N/A	3.00	3.00		New
<b>Licensing Act 2003 - New Application</b>				No VAT	Statutory
Premise licence, band A (rateable value of up to £4,300)	100.00	100.00	0.00		
Premise licence, band B (rateable value of £4,301 to £33,000)	190.00	190.00	0.00		
Premise licence, band C (rateable value of £33,001 to £87,000)	315.00	315.00	0.00		
Premise licence, band D (rateable value of £87,001 to £125,000)	450.00	450.00	0.00		
Premise licence, band E (rateable value of >£125,001)	635.00	635.00	0.00		
Additional fee (5,000 to 9,999 patrons)	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (10,000 to 14,999 patrons)	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (15,000 to 19,999 patrons)	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (20,000 to 29,999 patrons)	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (30,000 to 39,999 patrons)	16,000.00	16,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (40,000 to 49,999 patrons)	24,000.00	24,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (50,000 to 59,999 patrons)	32,000.00	32,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (60,000 to 69,999 patrons)	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (70,000 to 79,999 patrons)	48,000.00	48,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (80,000 to 89,999 patrons)	56,000.00	56,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (90,000 patrons & above)	64,000.00	64,000.00	0.00		
<b>Licensing Act 2003 - Annual Fee</b>				No VAT	Statutory
Premise licence, band A (rateable value of up to £4,300)	70.00	70.00	0.00		
Premise licence, band B (rateable value of £4,301 to £33,000)	180.00	180.00	0.00		
Premise licence, band C (rateable value of £33,001 to £87,000)	295.00	295.00	0.00		
Premise licence, band D (rateable value of £87,001 to £125,000)	320.00	320.00	0.00		
Premise licence, band E (rateable value of £125,001 & above)	350.00	350.00	0.00		
Additional fee (5,000 to 9,999 patrons)	500.00	500.00	0.00		
Additional fee (10,000 to 14,999 patrons)	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (15,000 to 19,999 patrons)	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (20,000 to 29,999 patrons)	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
Additional fee (30,000 to 39,999 patrons)	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (40,000 to 49,999 patrons)	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (50,000 to 59,999 patrons)	16,000.00	16,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (60,000 to 69,999 patrons)	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (70,000 to 79,999 patrons)	24,000.00	24,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (80,000 to 89,999 patrons)	28,000.00	28,000.00	0.00		
Additional fee (90,000 patrons & above)	32,000.00	32,000.00	0.00		
<b>Licensing Act 2003 - Miscellaneous Fees (Application or Notice)</b>				No VAT	Statutory
Section 25 (theft, loss, etc. of premises licence or summary)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 29 (application for a provisional statement)	315.00	315.00	0.00		
Section 33 (notification of change of name or address)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 37 (application to vary licence to specify individual as premises supervisor)	23.00	23.00	0.00		
Section 42 (application for transfer of premises licence)	23.00	23.00	0.00		
Section 47 (interim authority notice following death of licence holder)	23.00	23.00	0.00		
Section 79 (theft, loss etc. of certificate or summary)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 82 (notification of change of name or alteration of rules of club)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
<b>Licensing Act 2003 - Miscellaneous Fees (Application or Notice)</b>				No VAT	Statutory
Section 83 (1) or (2) (change of relevant registered address of club)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 100 (temporary event notice)	21.00	21.00	0.00		
Section 110 (theft, loss of temporary event notice)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 117 (application for, or renewal of personal licence)	37.00	37.00	0.00		
Section 126 (theft, loss of personal licence)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 127 (duty to notify change of name/address)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 110 (theft or loss of temporary event notice)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 126 (theft or loss of personal licence)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 127 (duty to notify change of name/address)	10.50	10.50	0.00		
Section 178 (right of freeholder etc.)	21.00	21.00	0.00		
Minor Variation	89.00	89.00	0.00		
Removal of DPS at community premises	23.00	23.00	0.00		



**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>MARKETS</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
Open market - stall (per day) Monday	Free	Free	0.00		
Open market - second stall (per day) Monday	Free	Free	0.00		
Open market - stall (per day) Wednesday	12.50	13.00	0.50		
Open market - second stall (per day) Wednesday	11.50	12.00	0.50		
Open market - stall (per day) Fri/Sat	23.00	24.00	1.00		
Open market - additional space (per day) Fri/Sat	11.50	12.00	0.50		
Farmers market - stall (per day)	22.00	23.00	1.00		
Other Pitches - minimum charge (per day)	28.00	29.00	1.00		
Catering Pitches - minimum charge (per day) Fri / Sat	27.00	28.00	1.00		
Catering Pitches - minimum charge (per day) Mon / Weds	13.50	14.00	0.50		
Small Stalls (adjacent to Guildhall)	10.50	11.00	0.50		
<b>All stalls / pitches above are charged at 50% during winter period (1st Oct - 31st March)</b>					
New Trader - Introductory Price (16 weeks only / per day)	5.25	5.50	0.25		
Stalls - Secondary offer (16 weeks only / per day)	50% stall rent	50% stall rent	0.00		
Catering Pitches - Secondary offer (16 weeks/weekly charge - up to 4 days trading)	26.00	27.00	1.00		
Antique market - stall (per day)	8.00	8.50	0.50		
Antique Market - second stall (per day)	4.00	4.50	0.50		
Craft fair (bric-a-brac) - stall (per day)	5.50	6.00	0.50		
Craft fair (bric-a-brac) - second stall (per day)	2.50	3.00	0.50		
Service Charge (for licensed markets)	29.00	31.00	2.00		
Events Markets - per stall / pitch (e.g., CAM / Vegan)	5.25	5.50	0.25		
Electricity Charge for pitches on AFG licensed markets	7.50	8.00	0.50		
Record Fair	10.00	11.00	1.00		
<b>MOT</b>				No VAT	Cabinet
MOT - car	48.60	50.50	1.90		
MOT - car (for discounted partner incl. Lyme Card)	42.74	44.50	1.76		
MOT - class 7 (up to 3.5 tonnes)	61.00	64.00	3.00		
Retest	16.80	17.50	0.70		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>MUSEUM &amp; ART GALLERY</b>					Cabinet
<i>Reproduction prints of items in collection</i>				VAT Incl.	
Photocopies	1.20	1.25	0.05	VAT Incl.	
Commission of picture sales from exhibitions	0.30	0.30	0.00	Plus VAT	
Education session per pupil - half day	5.75	6.25	0.50	No VAT	
Education session per pupil - full day	7.80	7.80	0.00	No VAT	
Education sessions - minimum charge half day (20 pupils or fewer)	84.00	88.50	4.50	No VAT	
Education sessions - minimum charge full day (20 pupils or fewer)	130.00	135.00	5.00	No VAT	
Holiday activities per child	12.50	13.00	0.50	No VAT	
Adult object handling/reminiscence sessions per hour	34.00	36.00	2.00		
Outreach fee	62.50	88.50	26.00	No VAT	
Outreach education – schools per session	89.00	6.25	-82.75	No VAT	
Hire of Drawing Room per hour (Function/Corporate)	16.00	17.00	1.00		
Hire of Drawing Room per hour (Not for profit/Charity)	10.50	11.00	0.50		
Hire of Alder Room per hour (Function/Corporate)	27.00	28.00	1.00		
Hire of Alder Room per hour (Not for profit/Charity)	21.00	22.00	1.00		
Hire of Willow Room per hour (Function/Corporate)	36.50	28.00	-8.50		
Hire of Willow Room per hour (Not for profit/Charity)	29.00	22.00	-7.00		
Hire of Event Space per hour (function/corporate/park business)	55.00	57.00	2.00		
Hire of Event Space per hour (Not for Profit/charity/park)	38.00	40.00	2.00		
Early entry or late stay - per hour	25.00	26.00	1.00		
Room set up	25.00	26.00	1.00		
Education item loan	26.00	27.00	1.00	No VAT	
Saleable items	RRP	RRP	0.00		
Open art registration - up to 2 items	5.00	10.00	5.00	VAT Incl.	
<b>Research/archive fees</b>				VAT Incl.	
Complex collections/archive research per hour	25.00	25.00	0.00		
Object loans to Accredited Museums (outside the county) includes condition report	200.00	200.00	0.00		
1:1 session with collections adviser (after 15 minutes)	12.50	12.50	0.00		
Archive/Object scans (paper or digital) A4 colour - First Scan	10.00	10.00	0.00		
Archive/Object scans (paper or digital) A4 colour - Subsequent Scan	5.00	5.00	0.00		
Archive/Object scans (paper or digital) A3 colour - First Scan	15.00	15.00	0.00		
Archive/Object scans (paper or digital) A3 colour - Subsequent Scan	5.00	5.00	0.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	<b>Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £</b>	<b>Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £</b>	<b>Increase/ Decrease £</b>	<b>VAT Status</b>	<b>Committee Approval/ Comments</b>
<b>NAMING/ NUMBERING OF STREETS/ PROPERTIES</b>					
<b>New or Redevelopment</b>					
Charge for naming of a street	225.00	235.00	10.00	No VAT	Cabinet
Charge for naming of a commercial building	115.00	120.00	5.00		
Single residential property on existing street	150.00	160.00	10.00		
Number/name 2-9 properties (includes first)	225.00	235.00	10.00		
Plus - per plot	80.00	85.00	5.00		
Number/name 10 plus properties (includes first property)	225.00	235.00	10.00		
Plus - per plot	80.00	85.00	5.00		
Change to layout after notification	285.00	295.00	10.00		
Plus - per plot	45.00	50.00	5.00		
<b>Existing Properties/Streets</b>					
Adding or alteration of a house/building name	80.00	85.00	5.00	No VAT	Cabinet
Renaming of a street	On request	On request	0.00		
House or building renumbering (including subdivision to flats)	285.00	295.00	10.00		
Confirmation of postal address	45.00	50.00	5.00		
Requests not included in above fees per hour	60.00	65.00	5.00		
Road closure	35.00	40.00	5.00		
<b>PEST CONTROL</b>					
Treatment of rats (domestic) - prepayment (up to 4 visits)	62.40	75.00	12.60	VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Treatment of rats (domestic) - payment by invoice (up to 4 visits)	83.20	90.00	6.80		
Treatment of mice (domestic) – prepayment (up to 3 visits)	62.40	75.00	12.60		
Treatment of mice (domestic) – payment by invoice (up to 3 visits)	83.20	90.00	6.80		
Fleas / Bedbugs / Cockroaches (domestic) - prepayment	124.80	130.00	5.20		
Fleas / Bedbugs / Cockroaches (domestic) - payment by invoice	145.60	151.00	5.40		
Insect control treatments (domestic) including wasps, & ants - prepayment	83.20	90.00	6.80		
Insect control treatments (domestic) including wasps & ants - payment by invoice	104.00	108.00	4.00		
Pest control commercial (other) - first hour	124.80	130.00	5.20		
Pest control commercial (other) - per 1/4 extra hour	31.20	33.00	1.80		
Mole & Rabbit control (per treatment course, max 3 visits) - prepayment	202.80	210.00	7.20		
Mole & Rabbit control (per treatment course, max 3 visits) - payment by invoice	223.60	235.00	11.40		
Squirrel control - prepayment (up to 4 visits)	150.80	157.00	6.20		
Squirrel control - payment by invoice (up to 4 visits)	171.60	178.00	6.40		
Telephone Advice (prepayment only)	15.60	17.00	1.40		
Advice Visit (no treatment) - prepayment	62.40	65.00	2.60		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	<b>Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £</b>	<b>Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £</b>	<b>Increase/ Decrease £</b>	<b>VAT Status</b>	<b>Committee Approval/ Comments</b>
Advice Visit (no treatment) - payment by invoice	83.20	87.00	3.80		
Fixed term pest control treatment agreements (commercial premises)	On request	On request	0.00		
Works in default (Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949) first hour (invoiced)	As per formulae	As per formulae	0.00		
Works in default (Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949) per additional 1/4 hour (invoiced)	for works in default	for works in default			
<b>PLANNING SERVICES</b>					
Postage & packaging	1.47	1.60	0.13	No VAT	
Copies up to £1 are free of charge					
Paper copies of planning/building control decisions & documents - per sheet (A4 black & white)	0.32	0.34	0.02	No VAT	
Paper copies of planning/building control decisions & documents - per sheet (A3 black & white)	0.52	0.54	0.02	No VAT	
Paper copies of plans - planning files - per sheet (A4 black & white)	0.32	0.34	0.02	No VAT	
Paper copies of plans - planning files - per sheet (A3 black & white)	0.63	0.66	0.03	No VAT	
Paper colour copies of an A4 sheet of planning/building control decision, planning documents or plan	0.63	0.66	0.03	No VAT	
Paper colour copies of an A3 sheet of decision, planning documents or plan	0.95	0.99	0.04	No VAT	
Scanned copies of documents - charge per hour of scanning	44.10	45.65	1.55	No VAT	
Paper copies of plans - planning files - each plan (A2)	2.94	3.05	0.11	No VAT	
Paper copies of plans - planning files - each plan (A1)	4.30	4.46	0.16	No VAT	
Paper copies of plans - planning files - each plan (A0)	5.56	5.76	0.20	No VAT	
Weekly lists - statutory consultees	Free	Free	0.00		
Requests for site information – commercial per hour	94.50	97.90	3.40	No VAT	
Requests for site information - individuals	Cost			No VAT	
Electronic copies of Planning Decision Notices & Legal Agreements	N/A	10.00	10.00		New
<b>Pre Planning Application Advice</b>				VAT Incl.	Cabinet
Large Scale Major Developments (residential developments over 200 dwellings or where number not known, a site area of 4 ha or more. Non-residential developments over 10,000m2 of floor space or where floor space not known, a site area of 2ha or more)	972.00	1,215.00	243.00		
Small Scale Major Developments (residential developments of between 10 & 200 dwellings or where number not known, a site area of between 0.5ha & 4ha. Non-residential developments of between 1000m2 & 10,000m2 of floor space or where floor space not known, a site area of between 1ha & 2ha)	492.00	615.00	123.00		
1 dwelling	150.00	187.50	37.50		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	<b>Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £</b>	<b>Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £</b>	<b>Increase/ Decrease £</b>	<b>VAT Status</b>	<b>Committee Approval/ Comments</b>
Minor Developments (residential developments of 2 to 9 dwellings or where number not known, a site area of less than 0.5ha. Non-residential developments of under 1,000m2 of floor space or where floor space not known, a site area of less than 1ha)	222.00	277.50	55.50		
Householder Development.					
Half hour appointment	30.00	37.50	7.50		
Appointment in excess of 30 minutes	44.00	55.00	11.00		
Other Development (excluding householder development but including changes of use, advertisements, prior approval proposals & listed building proposals)	73.00	91.25	18.25		
<b>Planning Application Fees</b>				No VAT	Statutory
Owing to the complexity of the fee structure, it is not shown here. Details of fees payable may be obtained from the Council's Planning Section. Alternatively, the fee calculator available at the Planning Portal website can be used to determine the fees payable in respect of individual applications.	Per Planning Portal	Per Planning Portal	0.00		
Building Control fees (North Staffs Building Control Partnership)	Per Board	Per Board	0.00		Partnership
Planning & development briefs (as & when prepared)	Free	Free	0.00		
Core spatial strategy	44.10	45.65	1.55		
Local development framework proposals map - north or south	10.50	10.87	0.37		
Local development framework proposals map - north & south	16.80	17.39	0.59		
Strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA)	47.25	48.91	1.66		
<b>Section 106</b>					
Section 106 Monitoring for each obligation forming part of an agreement, excluding those elements the responsibility of Staffordshire County Council	300.00	310.50	10.50		
Additional time spent in monitoring over & above the expected 1 working day, per hour	40.25	41.66	1.41		
<b>Self Build &amp; Custom Build Register</b>					
Charge for someone wanting to be on the register - first charge	N/A	40.00	40.00		
Annual charge to remain on the register	N/A	20.00	20.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £	Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £	Increase/ Decrease £	VAT Status	Committee Approval/ Comments
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING</b>					
Houses in multiple occupation licence fee	695.00	723.00	28.00	No VAT	Cabinet
Each additional bedroom	9.50	10.00	0.50		
Renewal of houses in multiple occupation licence	515.00	535.00	20.00		
Each additional bedroom	9.50	10.00	0.50		
Immigration Inspections	146.00	152.00	6.00		
Provision of accommodation for homeless households	Cost	Cost	0.00		
Annual interest to be applied to unpaid debts for enforcement action	0.08	0.08	0.00		
<b>Work in default notices to remedy Housing Health &amp; Safety issues</b>					
Officer time (per hour)	Cost	Cost	0.00	No VAT	Cabinet
Travelling costs (per mile)	Cost	Cost	0.00		
Management costs (per hour)	Cost	Cost	0.00		
Land registry fee	Cost	Cost	0.00		
Inspection by qualified electrician or gas engineers	Cost	Cost	0.00		
Recorded delivery	Cost	Cost	0.00		
Other costs (stated as per individual case)	Cost	Cost	0.00		
Administration fee (to cover service recharges)	12% Cost	12% Cost	0.00		
Annual interest to be applied to unpaid debts for enforcement action	0.08	0.08	0.00		
<b>REMOVAL OF DOMESTIC ANIMAL CARCASSES</b>					
Removal of domestic animal carcasses	43.26	45.00	1.74	VAT Incl.	Cabinet
<b>SALE OF SANDBAGS</b>					
5 sandbags	44.50	46.50	2.00	VAT Incl.	Cabinet
10 sandbags	61.75	64.00	2.25		
15 sandbags	78.00	82.00	4.00		
20 sandbags	95.00	100.00	5.00		

**Fees and Charges 2025/26**

	<b>Fee/ Charge 2024/25 £</b>	<b>Proposed Fee/ Charge 2025/26 £</b>	<b>Increase/ Decrease £</b>	<b>VAT Status</b>	<b>Committee Approval/ Comments</b>
<b>STREET TRADING</b>					
Eastbound or Northbound layby A500 (per annum)	10,500.00	10,900.00	400.00	No VAT	Cabinet
<b>TOWN CENTRE DISPLAYS</b>					
Local promotions (minimum charge)	32.00	33.50	1.50	No VAT	Cabinet
Charity & local community groups	7.00	7.50	0.50		
National promotions (minimum charge)	89.00	93.00	4.00		
<b>TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS</b>					
Single copy of a tree preservation order	35.00	38.00	3.00	No VAT	Cabinet
<b>WASTE &amp; RECYCLING BINS/ RECEPTACLES</b>					
Bins/receptacles per property on new developments (to be paid by the developer)	80.00	85.00	5.00	No VAT	Cabinet
Replacement bin due to loss / theft	30.00	31.50	1.50		
<i>Maximum Delivery Charge:</i>					
New property - resident	30.00	31.50	1.50		
Replacement / additional recycling bag.	30.00	31.50	1.50		

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## **CHARGING POLICY**



**(January 2024)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The annual income, which the Council receives in the form of fees and charges for the services provided to its customers, amounts, in total, to a considerable sum and makes a significant contribution towards reducing the Revenue Budget.
- 1.2 Due to this and the impact that its charges may have on service users, it is important that there is a clear policy with regard to charging.
- 1.3 Not all services provided to customers are charged for. Many are provided free of charge or in some cases a charge is made but this does not recover the full cost of providing the service or facility.
- 1.4 There are various reasons for deciding to make a charge and for determining what that charge will be. The charge to be made will not always be determined purely by cost recovery considerations. In many cases charges can be used to assist in the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities, for example by encouraging people to take part in a socially beneficial activity by charging fees that they can afford, which may not necessarily fully recover costs.
- 1.5 This policy sets out what the Council intends to achieve through the charges it makes and the criteria which it will use to determine the level of charge for individual services.

### **2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all services that can, legally, be provided for a charge, where those services are provided by the Council or by other parties acting on its behalf. It does not apply to services provided via partnership arrangements, for example in respect of building control fees, although this policy will be borne in mind in any discussions the Council may have with partners in relation to setting charges in respect of partnership activities. It does not apply to those services where, by law, it is not permitted to make a charge or where an external party, such as central government, wholly determines the charge that is to be made.
- 2.2 Services as referred to in this policy also includes the supply of goods.
- 2.3 Charges are normally determined by members but may sometimes be determined by officers under delegated powers. This policy applies in both cases.

### **3. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1 The charging policy will be driven by the Council's priorities. These are:
  - One Council delivering for local people.
  - A successful and sustainable growing borough.
  - Town centres for all.
- 3.2 These are high-level objectives, which set the overall policy direction. More detailed criteria will be applied, operating within these parameters, in determining whether to make a charge and in setting that charge. These are set out in Section 5 of this policy.

#### **4. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND PLANS**

- 4.1 Other Council policies, strategies or plans, or those of partnerships which the Council is a party to, may make reference to charging policies or to the levels or amounts of particular charges or types of charge. Where relevant, regard will be had to any such instances.

#### **5. CHARGING PRINCIPLES**

- 5.1 Charges should be made for services whenever the Council has a power or duty to do so.
- 5.2 There will be a presumption that charges to be made for the provision of a service will be set at a level intended to recover the cost of providing the service.
- 5.3 However, this presumption may be modified by the application of the charging principles set out at 5.5 below, which may result in no charge being made or a lesser charge being made or in some cases a charge being made which is greater than that required for cost recovery.
- 5.4 No charge will be made in cases where the Council is not permitted to charge by law. Where charges are set by external bodies, those charges will be applied. Where maximum or minimum charges are specified externally, charges will be set in compliance with those requirements.
- 5.5 The following matters will be considered when deciding whether to set a charge, which is not to be based on cost recovery. The headings in bold indicate general areas for consideration and the bullet points below them are particular factors which should be taken into account where relevant.

##### ***The cost of providing the service***

- All direct costs are to be included.
- All overheads related to the provision of the service, which may be attributed to the cost of the service, are to be included.
- Best estimates may be made of costs where it is not practical to obtain precise data or identify precisely those overheads attributable to the service.
- Unit costs are to be calculated by reference to realistic user numbers based on actual experience, either in relation to this Council or, if appropriate comparable services elsewhere.

##### **How much income is it desired to generate and why?**

- Is the service required to make a surplus or break-even?
- Does income from the service make a significant contribution to reducing the net amount of the Council's revenue budget?
- Have any targets been set for the income or class of income of which it is a component?
- Is income needed to fund future investment?

### **Comparison of charges made by neighbouring or similar councils or other providers of similar services**

- In making this comparison it will be necessary to establish whether the services being provided by these other bodies are comparable to those provided by the Council and to make adjustments where this is not so.
- Is there a logical reason for significant differences between this Council's charges and those of others?
- Will customers be lost to other service providers if charges are set too high?

### **Whose use of services is it desired to subsidise and by how much?**

- Can all potential users afford to pay the full cost of the service or the same charges as other users?
- Is it desirable to subsidise all users of the service, for example because there is likely to be a desirable outcome for the community as a result.
- Are there particular classes of users that should be subsidised, such as the unemployed, benefits recipients, the elderly, disabled persons or children?
- Should subsidies be given by reducing the charges payable or by offering concessions to offset the charge?

### **Whose behaviour is it desired to influence and in what ways?**

- Is it desirable to influence users to use particular facilities, for example where they are under-used, by charging less for their use than for other similar ones?
- Is it desirable to persuade users to behave in a way which is more acceptable to the community in preference to any other or others less acceptable and can this be promoted by setting charges at a level which might achieve this?
- Is it desired to promote a particular pattern of use, for example short stay parking as opposed to another, such as long stay parking or to discourage peak time use of facilities?
- Should some behaviour or activities be discouraged by setting high charges or penalties?
- Can anti-social behaviour be reduced by charging for services which discourage people from behaving irresponsibly at a level which they will find attractive, for example charges for the collection of bulky waste to discourage fly-tipping?
- Are there desirable outcomes which the Council wishes to see realised, in line with its corporate objectives, which could be assisted through the charging regime, for example maintaining the economic vitality of the town centres through the provision of reasonably priced facilities such as car parking?

### **How will charges help to improve value for money, equity and access to services?**

- What are users' perceptions with regard to what constitutes a fair and reasonable charge?
- Are there any issues relating to social inclusion or equalities?

### **Will the cost (including staff time) of collecting the income due outweigh the amount of income likely to be collected?**

- Is it worth making a charge?
- Should a charge be made anyway as a matter of principle?

### **Any other relevant factors**

It will be a matter for the Council to determine what the charge will be, based on its consideration of the above factors.

- 5.6 Where, without prior agreement by the Council, individuals or organisations engage in activities that result in a cost to the Council, the Council will seek to recover this cost, wherever possible.
- 5.7 Consideration may be given to offering a discount or other reduction, in appropriate cases, where it is felt that this may improve take up of the service or to encourage prompt payment, following consultation with the Service Director for Finance (S151 Officer) who must approve all such initiatives.
- 5.8 Penalties, in the form of fines, may also be imposed in order to deter inappropriate or antisocial behaviour, for example littering. The amount of the fine will be set at a level designed to deter such behaviour.
- 5.9 Activities carried out by the Council will be continually reviewed in order to identify any new areas where it would be appropriate to make a charge to persons or organisations benefiting (actually or potentially) from those activities. The level of the charge will be determined in accordance with these charging principles.

## **6. TARGETS**

- 6.1 Wherever possible targets will be set in relation to major areas of charging. These will relate to:
  - The amount of income expected to be generated and which has been included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and detailed budgets.
  - Numbers of users expected to use the service.
  - Types of users expected to use the service.
  - Outcomes to be achieved through the application of the charges.
- 6.2 The achievement of the targets set will be regularly monitored through the collection of data for performance indicators and the budget monitoring process.

## **7. PAYMENT METHODS AND FACILITIES**

- 7.1 Charges may be collected either by requiring users to make payment at the time of service delivery (cash income) or at a later date following receipt of an invoice or notice to pay, or equivalent (credit income). In some circumstances potential users may be required to make payment in advance of receiving the service. Options employed in relation to particular charges will depend upon the circumstances applicable to the service and its users and will have regard to the convenience to users of the method chosen and the safeguarding of the Council's position in relation to the potential for non-payment.
- 7.2 Payment may be made by the following means:
  - Cash.
  - Cheque.
  - Bank transfer.
  - Giro Account Transfer.
  - Credit or Debit Card in person.
  - Credit or Debit Card over the telephone.
  - Via the Council's internet site using credit or debit cards.
  - Direct Debit.

- Via the PayPoint system.
- 7.3 Options permitted in relation to particular charges will depend upon the circumstances applicable to the service and its users.
- 7.4 Facilities for the payment of charges will, wherever possible, be accessible and convenient.
- 7.5 Service users will be strongly encouraged to make payment electronically or using automated means in order to streamline the process, thereby reducing costs and providing added security and effectiveness.
- 7.6 There will be a presumption that all income due to be paid will be collected. Full use will be made of all remedies available to collect income in cases where users do not pay, including court action where necessary. In exceptional cases, if individuals or organisations have difficulty in paying the full amount due immediately, consideration may be given to agreeing arrangements for them to pay over an extended period of time.
- 7.7 Where individuals or organisations consistently fail to pay for services provided, such services will cease to be provided to them until all outstanding charges have been paid and they may, in future, be required to pay in advance of service provision or may be refused service provision where this can be applied.
- 7.8 Refunds of overpaid or wrongly paid charges will be made promptly once it has been established that a refund is appropriate.

## **8. REVIEW OF CHARGES**

- 8.1 The Council's charges will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are fit for purpose, continue to contribute to the furtherance of its objectives and, where set to recover costs, continue to do so.
- 8.2 Reviews will consider the following factors, plus any others relevant to particular charges:
- The income which is being collected at current charging levels and whether this is in line with budget forecasts.
  - The cost of service provision compared to the charges being made.
  - Whether a service being provided on the basis of charges being set to recover costs should continue to be provided in cases where costs appear likely to exceed the income which it can reasonably be expected to generate. This will especially apply where there is at least one alternative service provider, particularly from within the private sector.
  - The use being made of the service, both in absolute terms and by reference to classes of users and whether this shows all classes are using the service to the extent intended or if any are being deterred from using the service.
  - Are concessions being taken up by the people at whom they are targeted?
  - What is the impact, intended or unintended, of charges on local people?
  - In cases where charges are set to either encourage or deter activity, whether this is happening and the extent to which it is happening.
  - Whether any related benefits from the charging policy being deployed are being realised and the extent of realisation.
  - Comparisons with charges being made by neighbouring or similar councils or by other organisations providing similar services both as to the level of charges and the impact which charges have on changing behaviour.
- 8.3 The scale of fees and charges will be considered and approved by Cabinet on an annual basis. This does not preclude reviews of particular charges taking place at any time where it is felt that this is necessary.

## **9. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION**

- 9.1 The council recognises that the charges it makes to users of its services will have an impact on those users.
- 9.2 Information will be obtained in relation to the following areas in order to properly understand how charges affect users of services and their views with regard to charges made or proposed to be made:
- Opinions as to the appropriateness of levying a charge.
  - Opinions as to the correct level of charges to be made.
  - Whether any particular classes of users will have difficulty affording the charges or feel that it is unfair to make a charge to them.
  - How particular levels of charge will affect demand for services, i.e. either encourage the use of services or discourage particular activities.
  - Whether users feel that the service and the charges made for it represent value for money.
  - Whether users would be prepared to pay a higher charge for an improved service.
- 9.3 This information may be obtained as part of general surveys, by using the e-Panel, specific surveys or by any other means which will be likely to provide a representative indication of user views or of the impact of charges upon them.
- 9.4 The Council's scale of fees and charges will be publicised via the relevant Cabinet agenda when it is reviewed annually and made available on its internet site and will be subject to scrutiny by the relevant scrutiny committees. Charges relating to specific services will be displayed or made available at service delivery points and from time to time in promotional material. Some commercially sensitive charges will, however, not be subject to such widespread publicity. At this time this only applies to trade waste charges.
- 9.5 Appropriate measures will be employed to ensure that the Council's charging objectives are clearly communicated to the public.
- 9.6 Where there is a legal requirement to consult service users or to give them a prescribed period of notice before applying a change in charges this will be done in accordance with any statutory provisions and in line with the Council's own procedures and consultation.

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

**7 January 2025**

**Report Title:** Navigation House Refurbishment Contractor Award

**Submitted by:** Deputy Chief Executive

**Portfolios:** Community Safety, and Wellbeing & Finance Town Centres and Growth, and One Council, People and Partnerships

**Ward(s) affected:** Town

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>To provide Cabinet with an update on the procurement of a contractor for the refurbishment of Navigation House as a homeless hub and accommodation and to seek authority to appoint the selected contractor.</p>			
<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p><b>That Cabinet:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Authorise the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder to sign any such agreements as may be necessary to complete the refurbishment of Navigation House for its use as a Homeless Hub and accommodation.</b></li> <li><b>2. Authorise an amendment to the Housing Assistance Policy to include discretionary applications for creating 'accessible' supported housing provision for disabled people in housing need.</b></li> <li><b>3. Authorise the allocation of funding as set out in the report..</b></li> </ol>			
<p><b><u>Reasons</u></b></p> <p>The Shared Prosperity Fund Board have approved capital and revenue funding to develop a homeless hub for Newcastle-under-Lyme.</p> <p>In line with national strategy, the Council aims to end rough sleeping in the borough by 2025 wherever possible, and where it does occur it is rare, brief and non-recurrent and the Council has therefore embarked on an ambitious stepped approach to achieving this.</p> <p>This supports homeless individuals who are often furthest from mainstream services.</p>			

**1. Background**

- 1.1** A business case and bid were developed to fund a multi-agency assessment centre with accommodation and this received approval from the Shared Prosperity Fund Board. This recognised that homeless individuals are some of the most dis-

advantaged in society and the furthest from mainstream services. This centre, purchased under the name International House, is now known as Navigation House.



## 1.2 Navigation House will:

- Provide safe, secure emergency accommodation to ensure “no-second night out” and provide an immediate space off the streets while investigations and referrals are done.
- Provide an environment where agencies can be available to support individuals without the need for an appointment (often a barrier to engagement).
- Provide access to Department for Works and Pension, Citizens Advice Bureau, rough sleeping services, housing providers, probation, adult social care, homeless healthcare, drug and alcohol services, etc.
- Develop relationships / trust for ongoing referrals for support, advice, medical appointments, developing paths to move on into non-emergency accommodation to continue the support.
- Offer showers and a laundry, a place to be clean and warm.
- Offer advice and support to overcome financial problems, secure job opportunities, and sustain tenancies and local affordable homes.
- Offer emergency accommodation during severe weather.
- Be a one stop shop to support all those that are vulnerable; including families to get the right help and support including around the cost of living.

## 1.3 The benefits to the wider community will be:

- Reduce perceived and actual anti-social behaviour in town associated with rough sleeping.
- Potential to increase footfall into town as people see reduced anti-social behaviour,
- Supporting businesses who are impacted by this cohort not being adequately supported and housed.
- Improved health of the rough sleeper cohort and impact on long term health conditions,
- Reduce impact on Police, ambulance, and hospital as rough sleepers are high users.
- Remove current reliance on expensive bed and breakfast for emergency accommodation, which is a barrier to engagement, is isolating and fuels the revolving door of individuals between bed and breakfast and rough sleeping.

1.4 The Council previously authorised the acquisition of the property for this facility. Planning permission for its conversion was granted in September 2024 Committee.

1.5 The Council has a Housing Assistance Policy which sets out how it will offer financial help for improving and adapting homes. The aim is to support residents to improve their health and wellbeing by addressing problems with unsuitable accommodation that does not meet needs. Following consultation, the previous policy approved in 2021 included a provision for applications for creating ‘accessible’ supported housing provision for disabled people in housing need.

1.6 When the policy was updated in March 2023 this provision was not included as it had not previously been used. Adopting the provision would allow Disabled Facility Grant funding to be assigned to the project to support the creation of the two-ground floor wheelchair accessible rooms for disabled residents.



## 2. Issues

- 2.1 Procurement of a contractor was undertaken via the Pagabo Framework using the dynamic purchasing system for small works AVP-HGS-1013 and following an initial expression of interest stage. The opportunity was advertised on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024 with a deadline for response of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024.
- 2.2 8 tenders were returned by the deadline. Tenders were assessed based on 60% cost and 40% quality, the scores are outlined in the attendant confidential report.

## 3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That Cabinet authorises the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder to sign any such agreements as may be necessary to complete the refurbishment of Navigation House for its use as a homeless hub and accommodation.
- 3.2 That Cabinet authorises an amendment to the Housing Assistance Policy to include discretionary applications for creating 'accessible' supported housing provision for disabled people in housing need.
- 3.3 Authorise the allocation of funding as set out in the report.

## 4. Reasons

- 4.1 The Shared Prosperity Fund Board have approved capital and revenue funding to develop a homeless hub for Newcastle-under-Lyme.
- 4.2 In line with cross government strategy, we aim to end rough sleeping in the borough by 2025 and have embarked on ambitious stepped approach to achieving this. Ending rough sleeping is defined as rare, brief and non-recurrent.
- 4.3 This supports homeless individuals who are some of the most dis-advantaged in society and the furthest from mainstream services.

## 5. Options Considered

- 5.1 Cabinet has previously considered options around creation of the Homeless Hub and considered the acquisition of a property, refurbish it and operate it as a Homeless Hub as the preferred option. This appointment is in line with that preferred option.

## 6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 The use of the Pagabo small works AVP-HGS-1013 Dynamic Purchasing Framework offers a compliant route to market in line with both the Council's internal governance procedures and Public Contract Regulations 2015.
- 6.2 The project is in line with the Council's Housing Strategy 2020 - 2024 Priority 3 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping and relevant statutory guidance with regard to homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 6.3 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 gave local housing authorities a wide-ranging power to help acquire, adapt, repair, improve or rebuild living accommodation. The Housing Assistance Policy sets out how Disabled Facilities Grant Funding is spent in accordance with this order.

## 7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 The location of Navigation House is intended to be accessible for all who need the facility.
- 7.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the funding. This identified a positive impact due to the project providing accessibility to services for disadvantaged individuals.

## 8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 The project requires expenditure of the Shared Prosperity Fund for which the Council is the accountable body. The Shared Prosperity Fund Board will receive regular updates on the project.
- 8.2 The refurbishment project will be managed by officers from the Regeneration Team in consultation with Regulatory Services.
- 8.3 The Council has been to competitive tender through the PAGABO Framework and has received 8 tenders. These have been evaluated and the preferred tender is £1,405,012.63. The Council is budgeting for £745,000 to cover the purchase of the property and mobilisation costs to seek planning permission, architecture fees and other preparatory work.
- 8.4 In relation to the ongoing maintenance, management and operation of the hub, this would include resources from Facilities Management and Regulatory Services. Where this cannot be delivered in-house the cost of external support will be covered through the project funding.

<b>Funding Stream</b>	<b>£</b>
Shared Prosperity Fund for the hub	£955,000
Shared Prosperity Fund for the night shelter	£160,000
Shared Prosperity Fund contingency	£120,000
Housing Capital Fund 2024/25	£120,000
Housing Capital Fund 2025/26	£170,000
Carbon Management Fund 2024/25	£190,000
Carbon Management Fund 2025/26	£100,000
Disabled Facilities Grant	£50,000
Funding to be allocated from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/26.	£285,000
<b>Total funding allocation</b>	<b>£2,150,000</b>

- 8.5 The Shared Prosperity Fund Board has allocated funding for the scheme. Additional funding has been allocated to the Council through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for 2025/6, the eligibility of this funding includes further support for existing schemes such as this one. The Housing Capital Fund has funding which can be used for the development of the accommodation. The Carbon Management Fund can be used to fund the energy efficiency elements including LED lighting and control system, heating through air source heat pumps, increased loft insulation. The provision, refurbishment and fit out of the two-ground floor wheelchair accessible rooms and access to them can be funded under the Housing Assistance Policy if the wording change to include the provisions approved in 2021 Policy are approved. The funding outlined above includes the allocation of funding from the 2025/26 capital programme,

this includes the Carbon Management Programme funding and the Housing Capital Funding.

## 9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1 *Unable to deliver the Shared Prosperity Fund project* – consequences are loss of investment and no improvement of facilities for vulnerable local people. Control measures include project governance processes, project approval processes and the actions of the project subgroup in managing delivery of the project and associated risks and issues.
- 9.2 *Cost of inflation* – consequences, unable to deliver the full scope of actions as set out in the Shared Prosperity Fund, lesser outcome for vulnerable local individuals. Control measures, cost control within project specification, prioritisation of actions, project governance processes, project subgroup in place.
- 9.3 *Financial sustainability* – consequences, unable to deliver services to vulnerable local people as planned, failure to deliver full objectives of the Shared Prosperity Fund, partial or full closure of the hub. Control measures, business plan to set out how the hub is to be run and opportunities for creating income.

## 10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

- 10.1 The delivery of the project supports those most vulnerable in line with the following UNSDG's:



## 11. One Council

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

One Commercial Council

*We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.*

Refurbishment of Navigation House is intended to contribute to a reduction in the cost of providing accommodation for those who experience homelessness and to enable the efficient delivery of services to those that need it.

One Digital Council

*We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.*

Following its refurbishment Navigation House will benefit from connection to the Council's new fibre network enabling the efficient delivery of services to both its residents and service users.

One Green Council

*We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle*



The refurbishment includes works to make the building more energy efficient. This includes the removal of gas as an energy source.

## 12. **Key Decision Information**

12.1 This is a key decision as it involves expenditure of more than £100,000.

## 13. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

13.1 Cabinet 19.07.22 [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#)

13.2 Cabinet 18.10.22 [UK Shared Prosperity Fund Contract Award](#)

13.3 Cabinet 19.09.2023 [Progression of the Shared Prosperity Fund and the Homeless Hub](#)

13.4 Planning Permission issued 19 September 2024

## 14. **List of Appendices**

14.1 None.

## 15. **Background Papers**

15.1 None.



## NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO

Cabinet  
07 January 2025

**Report Title: Annual Report - Decarbonisation of the Council's Operations**

**Submitted by: Service Director – Sustainable Environment**

**Portfolio/s: Sustainable Environment**

**Ward(s) affected: All**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

To provide Cabinet with an update on the progress in decarbonising the Council's operational buildings and fleet, which forms a major part of the Council's approved updated Sustainable Environment Strategy (SES).

#### **Recommendation**

**That:**

- 1. Cabinet notes the progress achieved from 2009/10 in decarbonising the Council's operational buildings and fleet by 68.37% and 35% during the past twelve months.**
- 2. Cabinet refers the progress made to the Health, Wellbeing & Environment Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny and comments.**
- 3. Cabinet notes the key activities being undertaken by individual service areas currently and planned for 2025/2026**

#### **Reasons**

Following the production and subsequent approval by Cabinet of the updated Sustainable Environment Strategy (SES) the Council needs to monitor and review progress and plans towards the aims of the SES and report each year on the progress in decarbonising the Council's operational buildings and fleet.

To enable the Council to move forward with an up to date and evolving SES, to achieve its net zero target for its own operations by 2030.

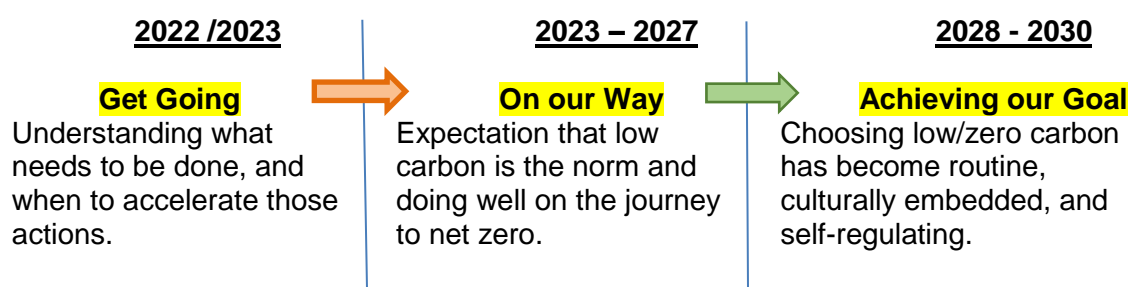
#### **1. Background**

**1.1** The Council adopted through approval by Cabinet its revised Sustainable Environment Strategy in June 2024. The Strategy was a landmark document setting out the Council's commitment to the sustainable environmental future of the Borough and is an over-arching strategy, under which a range of other linked and related 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** In early 2023 the Council commissioned expertise in development of a costed Road Map to Net Zero for the Councils own operations and estate to reach net zero by 2030. Operational buildings have had in-depth surveys and analysis undertaken over the summer, looking at the fabric of the buildings, heating and lighting infrastructure, current insulation, and energy consumption. In addition, the Council’s vehicle fleet has been subject to an in-depth analysis, which includes the rolling ten-year fleet replacement programme.
- 1.4** Development of the roadmap provides a strategic overview of the key priority areas for action and milestones needed for NULBC to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 which has now been built into the revised SES.
- 1.5** The SES does not set out the ‘how’, ‘who’ or the actions needed to achieve the milestones – this is important to stress. It is a strategic framework to help assess what is currently in place and what is needed to get to where The Council collectively needs to be; and then to monitor progress over time.
- 1.6** The Roadmap shows that the net zero target can be realistically met, through a wide range of implemented measures and changes to reduce carbon emissions in the Councils own estate and operations, and can be adopted at scale and pace over the next decade across the Borough.



## 2. Progress to Date

- 2.1** The Council has made significant progress in its journey to Net zero by 2030, and 2023/24 has seen the largest fall in Carbon emissions than any other year since monitoring of emissions began, thanks mainly to the full implementation of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) in its heavy goods vehicle fleet.
- 2.2** The current (revised) SES has a detailed action plan, which requires each directorate and service area within the Council to identify a range of actions, which will help in lowering carbon emissions as the Council moves to its net zero goals. The SES confirms the Councils commitment tackling climate change as follows:
- UN Sustainable Development Goals
  - Climate Emergency declaration

- Nature Recovery declaration
- Borough Tree Planting Strategy

**2.3** In addition, and to support and formally monitor service directorates decarbonisation action and delivery plans, the Council has set up a 'One Green Council Board' using the successful governance arrangements for the 'One Council' project. The board had its first meeting in November 2024, and will be held on a quarterly basis moving forward.

**2.4** It is worth highlighting the positive actions which have been developed by each service directorate as part of the revised SES action plan, which are positively reducing the Councils carbon emissions, notably:

#### **Sustainable Environment SEWG:**

- Procured four 3.5 tonne electric pickups for use by Streetscene, plus 1 electric powered van for the garage workshop.
- Transitioned all heavy goods vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) which has reduced this year's carbon footprint by 661.1 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- Streetscene is trialling and sourcing electric mowers and chainsaws.
- Adopted and conducted the Grassland Management Strategy which saw the promotion of 18 long grassland sites having positive social, economic, and environmental impacts.
- Led the strong application for £3.8M of decarbonisation funding from Salix PSDS for Jubilee 2, results will be announced mid-2025.
- Supported successful bids for Britain in Bloom and Green Flag.
- Commenced a sustainability schools programme to visit and support schools to create Climate Action Plans and deliver on them.
- During 2024 the service has delivered Carbon Literacy training to almost 50 staff in the Council.
- Developed new webpages for sustainability, parks, and a new social media for both Streetscene and Sustainability.
- Developed a Tree Risk Management Strategy due for Cabinet approval in February 2025.

#### **Planning SEWG:**

- Embedded BNG into the new Local Plan and new housing development sites.
- Supporting the implementation of Transforming the Trent Valley Project, the Decarbonisation of Jubilee 2, and various strategies including tree planting, LNRS etc.

#### **Commercial Delivery SEWG:**

- Supported with the delivery of a £3.8M application for Salix PSDS funding for the decarbonisation of Jubilee 2.
- Led the decarbonisation of Kidsgrove Townhall and the Philip Astley Centre.
- Led the installation of Solar PV on multiple sites including Bradwell Crematorium, Kidsgrove Townhall and Keele Cemetery.
- Brampton Museum currently applying for funding from the National Lottery for net zero infrastructural upgrades.

#### **Regulatory Services SEWG:**

- Launching in January of 2025 the service has worked on a Business Sustainability Guide which will be available on the website to inform the borough's businesses about important sustainable actions, funding, and networks.
- Working on the County's Taxi Decarbonisation Project with the goals on a full hybrid then electric fleet.
- Working on the development of a new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

#### **Neighbourhood Delivery SEWG:**

- Procured an additional 2 small electric pickups to add to the exist 3 electric vans for use by MMF team.
- Supported successful bids for Britain in Bloom and Green Flag.
- Since the beginning of the Borough Tree Planting Strategy the service have almost planted 30,000 trees and await the consultation and adoption of Phase 6 for the continuation of tree planting.
- Currently investigating the feasibility of the electrification of the dog warden diesel van with the fleet & site team.

#### **Strategy, People & Performance SEWG:**

- Developing the Green Carbon Action Tracker to track the carbon and cost savings of various sustainable actions.
- Developing new tools to evaluate the sustainability of strategic reports.
- Led the introduction of a compulsory sustainability training module for all staff and are encouraging Carbon Literacy Training.

#### **Information Technology Services SEWG:**

- Programme of work underway to remove IT Data Centres from Depot and Kidsgrove.
- Programme of work underway to remove the physical telephony systems and desk phones in use across council sites.
- Improve operational efficiency through the CRM and data-led decision making, improving the use of field service and officer mobility.

#### **Legal & Governance SEWG:**

- Development of Green Procurement Strategy.

**2.5** In addition, since Cabinet approved the Road Map to net zero, several other initiatives, which build on the refreshed SES, have been approved by Cabinet, notably the Council's Tree and Bio-diversity Management plan, and the councils Grassland Management Strategy.

**2.6** Each year since 2009/10 the Council has monitored carbon emissions for its operational buildings and vehicle fleet, through analysis of energy use, both gas and electric, and fuel in terms of petrol and diesel used in its operational fleet. Carbon output from energy sources is calculated using standard metrics defined and published each year by the government. These metrics change each year as more energy, mainly electricity is produced from renewable sources.



- 2.7 From 2009/10 when the Council first started collecting carbon emission data to 2023/24 carbon emissions have fallen by **68.37%**.
- 2.8 For the year 2023/24 the Council's carbon emissions (scope 1,2, &3) fell by **35%** from 2010.9 tonnes to 1308.2 tonnes as compared to the same dataset in 2022/23.
- 2.9 Details of the reductions in carbon emissions from the Council's operations are shown in appendix 1.

### 3. **Proposal**

- 3.1 The 2024 updated SES and Delivery Plan sets out a framework for collective action on climate change to achieve the Council's ambition to become net zero for its own estate and operations by 2030, and the borough by 2050. The Council, the residents, the businesses, and visitors all have a collective responsibility towards solving climate change.
- 3.2 This Strategy and Delivery Plan benefits the health and wellbeing of the local environment, society and the economy in the borough. The borough will be able to reduce emissions and increase biodiversity through a set of actions tied to four different themes:
- Built Environment & Energy
  - Travel & Transport
  - Natural Environment & Sequestration
  - Engagement & behaviour Change
- 3.3 As the Council reduces its energy requirements as part of its decarbonisation journey to net zero will see the added benefit of reduced costs associated with energy usage in the longer term. These scenarios will be modelled and reviewed as part of the One Green Council Board moving forward.
- 3.4 Monitoring of the actions within the SES will be undertaken through the 'One Green Council' Board at its quarterly meeting, and an annual report to Cabinet in October of each year, as well as being referred biannually for review to the Council's Health Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee (HW&E)
- 3.5 The SES is a living document which means it will evolve and learn overtime as actions are achieved or new actions are created with a goal for a sustainable and net zero Council by 2030 and borough by 2050.

### 4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

- 4.1 The Sustainable Environment Strategy sets out the Council's ambition to be an exemplar local authority in both caring for and enhancing our environment. Adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change means changing the way we do things for the long-term benefit of the Borough.
- 4.2 To evolve the Council's Sustainable Environment Strategy, as a 'living' document with linked plans and initiatives with particular focus on its journey to net carbon zero.

### 5. **Options Considered**

5.1 There is no other option to meet the statutory challenges posed by the legislation.

## 6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 has the following provisions:

- Carbon targets and carbon budgeting - The Act places the government under a legal duty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.
- The Committee on Climate Change - The Act also establishes the Committee on Climate Change, an independent, expert body to advise government on the appropriate level for the targets, budgets, and on matters relating to mitigation and adaptation. The Committee will submit annual reports to parliament on progress towards the targets and the government must respond to this report.

6.2 Councils Duty to reduce carbon emissions - There are currently no statutory requirements for local authorities to set or negotiate targets to reduce their own or area wide emissions. However, the Borough declared a Climate Emergency in April 2019 and committed to reach net zero for its own operations by 2030.

6.3 All Local Authorities also have a “biodiversity duty” under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

## 7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 There are no adverse equality impacts identified as a consequence of this report. Specific actions contained within the proposed revised SES Decarbonisation Action Plan will need to consider any equality impacts on a project-by-project basis.

7.2 However, several of the UN Sustainable Development Goals which the Council is a signatory to relate to issues of social justice and fairness.

## 8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 There are no financial and resource implications arising directly from this report.

8.2 However, the Council has formally recognised a climate emergency and in doing so, it acknowledges that there is a real need to act now and plan in how to tackle the environmental threats posed by climate change. This need to act will require a balance to be found between the prioritisation of funding for projects and the duty to be accountable for the way in which public funds are used.

8.3 The roadmap approved by cabinet in October 2023 identified capital expenditure of £7.4 million is required up to 2030 to decarbonise the Councils operational buildings. Costs for replacement fleet utilising zero and ultra-low emission vehicles, estimated at £10.76m, have been confirmed as being adequately covered under the Councils existing ten-year fleet replacement programme. These sums have now been built into the Councils capital programme moving forward.

8.4 The Council recognises that it will need to make bold decisions where there is a good business case to deliver the right outcomes for our residents and businesses that consider

both financial and environmental returns for that investment. The return on investment (ROI) for many of the projects required is demonstrably quicker as the required technologies become more widely used.

**8.5** To make further progress on this agenda, the 2024/2025 approved Council budget includes the provision of £100,000 within the Budget Growth Fund to enable tree planting within urban greenspaces, preparation of a roadmap to achieving a net zero Council and progress schemes and initiatives contained in the SES Action Plan.

**8.6** External funding will continue to play an important part in allowing projects to come forward and contribute wherever possible to the Councils capital reserves for this area of expenditure. The Council has recently made an application for SALIX funding to assist in the decarbonisation of the J2 leisure centre, which should be determined sometime in March 2025. If successful, this funding will achieve significant reductions in energy, which has seen significant increases over the last year or so, as well as a reduction in carbon emissions.

## **9. Major Risks**

**9.1** There are overarching risks of inaction in respect of the Council's response to the environmental threats caused by:

- Rising carbon emissions (reputational damage, potential statutory penalties from carbon reporting requirements),
- Climate change (excessive urban heat impacts, excess deaths, flooding, air pollution etc.),
- Habitat loss (failure to meet statutory Biodiversity Net Gain in developments),
- Plastic pollution (poor quality water and increasingly toxic soils)
- Poor use of dwindling natural resources (increased pressure on fuel costs).

**9.2** As a result, Councils around the UK and Governments around the world are responding to these threats and public calls for a robust and rapid reduction, and mitigation measures as well as reigniting environmental strategies. Many have declared Climate Emergencies with the aim of accelerating action to achieve carbon neutrality, consider how to mitigate the effects of climate change and change how resources are used.

**9.3** There are growing expectations that Councils take a leading and decisive role in this respect and there are reputational risks to the Council in not acting positively.

**9.4** Any risks associated with specific projects contained within the proposed Action Plan will be assessed and considered on a project-by-project basis.

**9.5** That forthcoming or future projects may not have sufficiently been screened for their carbon impact during planning stages, and negate the investment made in other carbon reduction projects.

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

**10.1** The Sustainable Environment Strategy and linked initiatives will support the realisation of the aims of UN SDG 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15.



## 11. One Council

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

One Commercial Council

*We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.*

The SES supports the development of commercial activities which help to deliver a sustainable borough and facilitate in decarbonising projects.

One Digital Council

*We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.*

The SES supports the work programmes being developed as part of the One Digital Council initiative. Digital technology will play an ever-greater role in decarbonising the Councils operations and wider borough initiatives for citizens and businesses.

One Green Council

*We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle.*

## 12.

The SES, and its Delivery Plan form the basis and underpin the work of the One Green Council programme.

### Key Decision Information

Approval of the report is considered a key decision as it impacts on all Wards in the Borough. It has been included in the Forward Plan.

**13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

There are several previous Council, Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee reports, notably Cabinets approval of the revised sustainable Environment Strategy approved by Cabinet in June 2024.

**14. List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – report and graphs detailing reductions in Carbon emissions 2023/24.

**15. Background Papers**

None

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# Carbon Footprint Report

## April 2023 – March 2024

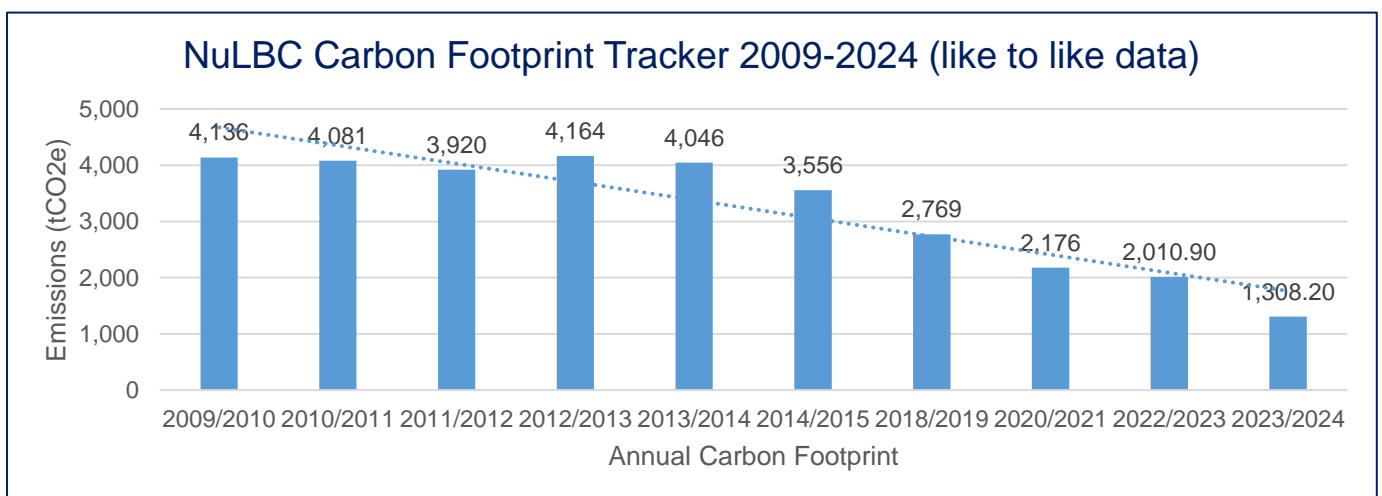
### Introduction & Background

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council plans to be a Net Zero organisation by 2030 and deliver a Net Zero Borough by 2050 which includes all schools, homes, businesses, and transport in Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough. The Council also has ambitions to promote the natural environment as well through multiple actions and engage with the borough such as local schools, residents, and businesses. The Council has a responsibility to report on their own annual carbon footprint to both stay accountable with their constituents and identify the least and most polluting areas to see where more action to decarbonise to reduce emissions is needed.

Comparing data like to like from the 2022/2023 carbon footprint of the Councils own operations the carbon footprint has been reduced by **35%** from 2,010.9 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, to 1,308.2 tCO<sub>2</sub>e for the year 2023/2024, mostly due to the increased use of HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) for heavy vehicles in the Council's fleet.

Figure 1 below shows the Councils carbon footprint for its own operations since data started to be collected in 2009/10. Overall, the Council has reduced its carbon emissions by **68.37%**.

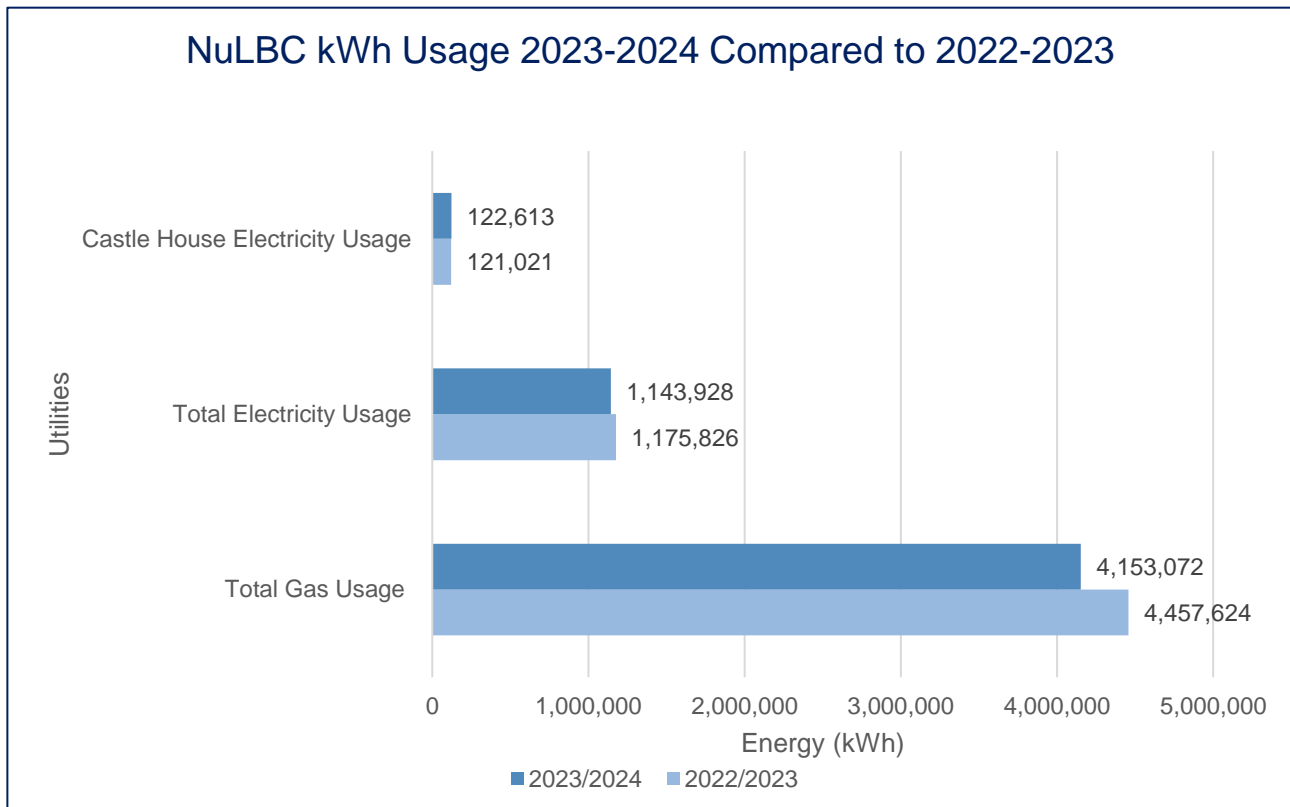
**Figure 1.** NuLBC Carbon Footprint Tracker 2009-2024 (like for like data)



**Council Operational Building energy use kWh.**

Figure 2 below depicts the kWh usage of the Council's electricity and gas compared to the 2022/2023 financial years usage data. It shows slight reductions in total gas usage and electricity usage except for a slight increase in electricity usage for NBC staff at Castle House. The reduction in kWh usage is most likely due to small energy efficient interventions in Council owned sites such as the installation of LED's, air source heat pumps, and solar.

**Figure 2. NuLBC kWh Usage 2023-2024 Compared to 2022-2023**



**Fleet Fuel usage comparing use of diesel to HVO.**

Figure 3 depicts the comparison of fuel use of the Council's fleet in 2023-2024 and 2022-2023. It also reports the litres used between Diesel and HVO (Hydrotreated vegetable Oil). Over the last year HVO has significantly increased in its use in the Council's heavy goods vehicle fleet which is shown through the figures below as HVO use has increased by 285,360.33 litres and diesel has decreased in use by 263,326 litres since last financial year. Diesel will currently still be used for smaller vehicles and assets such as small vans, mowers and other power tools and machines. However as seen due to this increase in HVO use in heavy vehicles like waste freighters the scope 1 emissions of the Council have significantly decreased which has shown the power of this transitional fuel until the Council can fully go to a renewable source of fuel for the fleet such as electric or hydrogen.



**Figure 3. NuLBC Litres of Fuel Used in 2023-2024 Compared to 2022-2023**

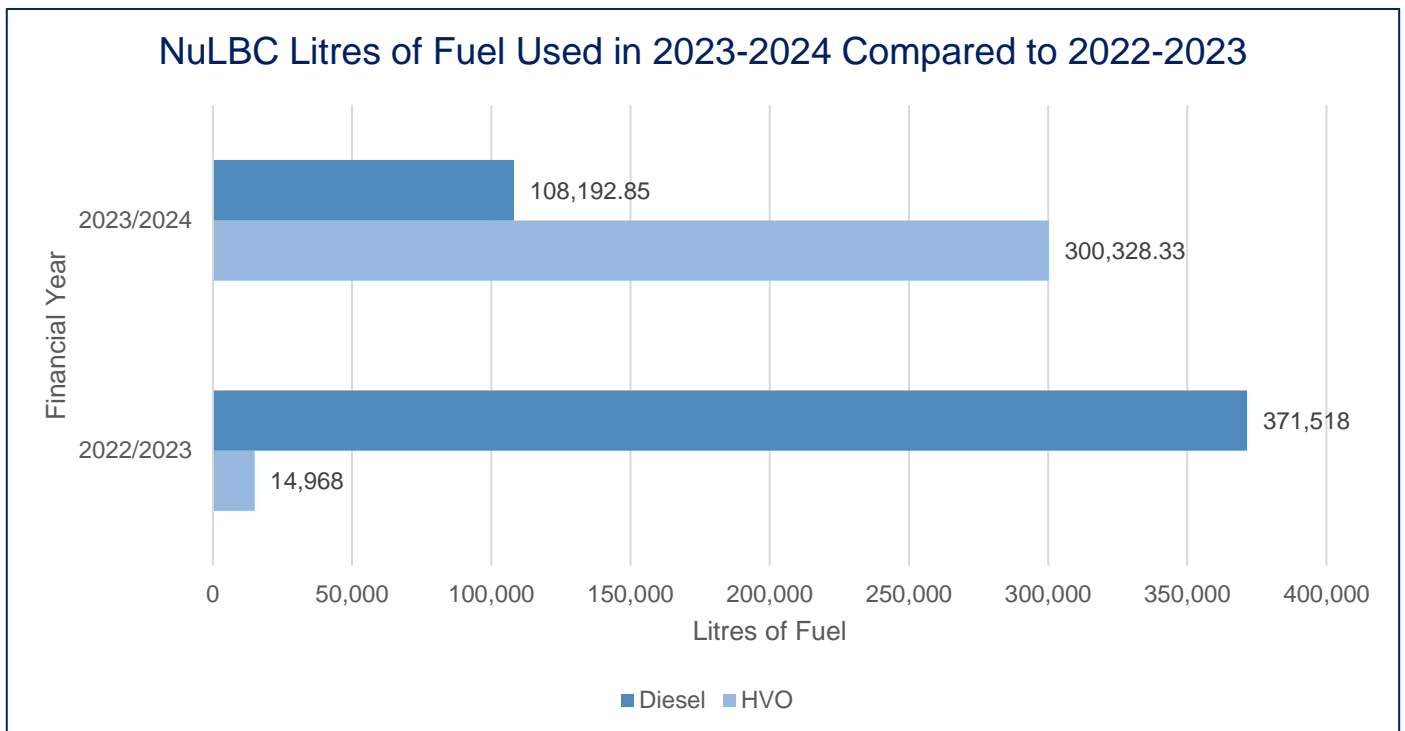
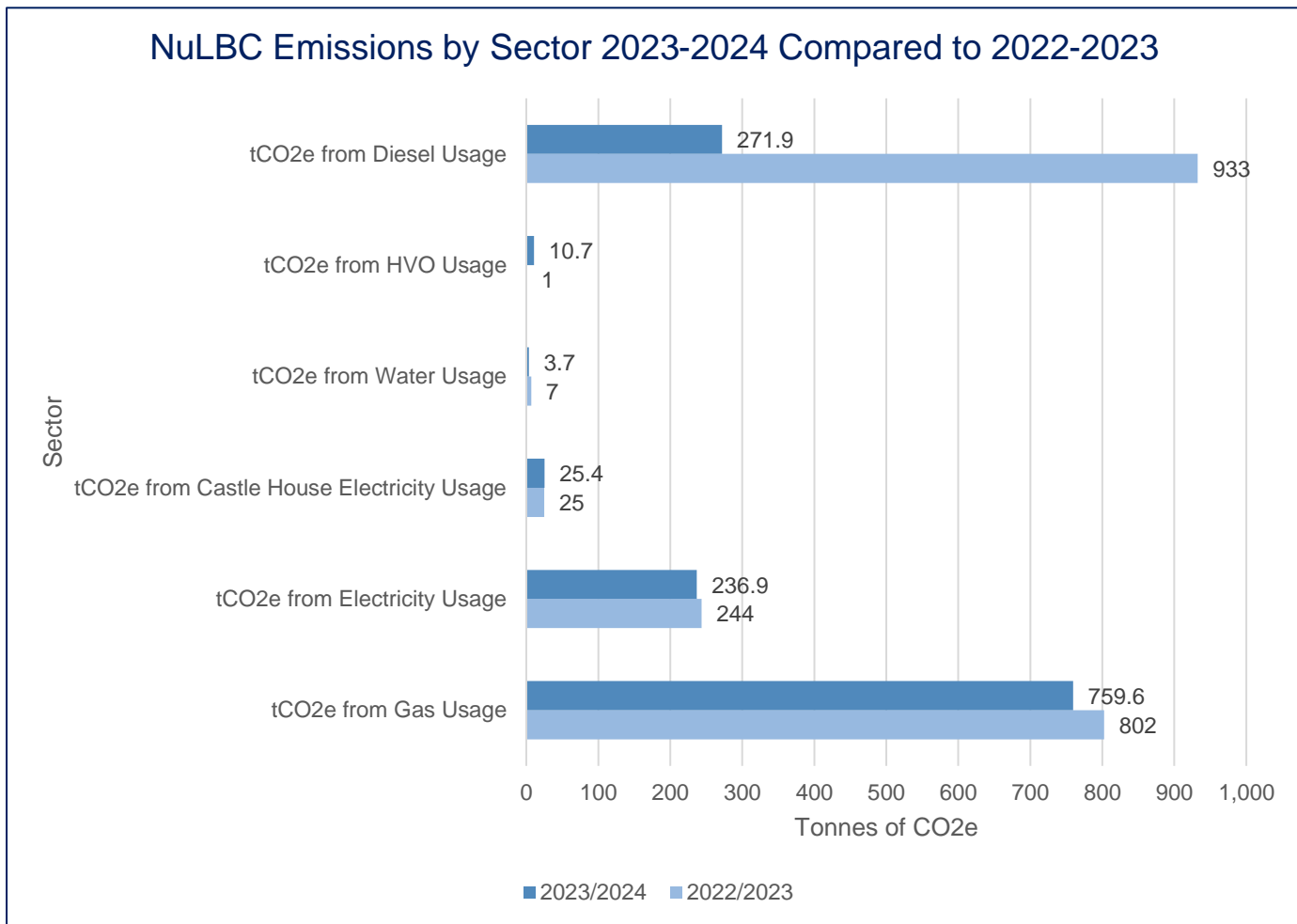


Figure 4 depicts the emissions from different sectors from this financial year compared to last financial year's emissions. It was found that even with the significant increase in HVO use by 285,360.33 litres that due to the low emission from the burning of HVO that scope 1 emissions only increased from around 1 tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>e to only around 11 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. This has seen a reduction in diesel emissions by 661.1 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. As stated, before the small decrease in usage and emissions of gas and electric is most likely due to small efficiencies being created in the Council's built estate.

Figure 4. NuLBC Emissions by Utility Sector 2023-2024 Compared to 2022-2023



**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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

**7<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**Report Title:**           **Memorialisation Headstone Policy**

**Submitted by:**       Service Director - Commercial Delivery

**Portfolios:**           Sustainable Environment

**Ward(s) affected:**   All

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Bereavement Services has undertaken a review of the Council's memorialisation rules and regulations and wishes to increase the memorial headstone maximum height size from 36" to 40" (inclusive of base), update the Terms and Conditions for Memorial Masons and include new memorial rules and regulations regarding inscriptions and materials.</p>			
<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>That Cabinet approves the changes in memorial sizes as detailed in the report, alongside the Terms and Conditions.</p>			
<p><b><u>Reasons</u></b></p> <p>The appearance of the Council's active cemeteries and options given to Bereavement Services customers for the types of memorials affects more than 2 wards, and therefore Cabinet is asked to consider policy changes.</p>			

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The provision of high quality cemeteries is important for the Council as spaces for reflection and a crucial part of residents grieving from the loss of a loved one. The way in which cemeteries are managed can be very emotive as families have differencing views on memorialisation. The Council therefore seeks to offer different types of memorialisation including the traditional headstone. The current policy sets the maximum height of headstones at 36 inches, although its stone masons can also manufacture larger headstones.
- 1.2 As part of the memorial rules and regulations review it is proposed that the maximum size restrictions enforced on the lawn type memorials permitted within the borough cemeteries be increased.
- 1.3 The current lawn type memorial size restrictions set by the Council are:

Height: 36" (plate and base inclusive)  
Width: 35" (plate only)

The proposed new memorial restrictions would allow a headstone of a new maximum size of:

Height: 40" (plate and base inclusive)  
Width: 35" (plate only)

These proposed sizes would be the maximum memorial headstone sizes that would be allowed on an individual grave space, fitted to an independent foundation in compliance with the current BS8415 standard.

- 1.4 The size restrictions for memorials were last reviewed in 2013 and the increase would bring them up-to-date to meet consumer demand, allow the bereaved to be able to personalise memorials more through varied designs, encouraging artistry and allowing them to reflect the individuality of the person that they have lost to help them grieve and remember.
- 1.5 Neighbouring authorities allow bigger memorial headstones on their lawn type graves. This increase would bring the Council's size regulations into alignment with other bereavement facilities, to support the borough's residents and to encourage community involvement and development of our resources.
- 1.6 The current lawn type memorial size restrictions imposed by neighbouring authorities are:
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council  
Height: 5' (plate and base inclusive)  
Width: 45"
- Stafford Borough Council  
Height: 31" (plate and base inclusive)  
Width: 42"
- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council  
Height: 38" (plate and base inclusive)  
Width: 30"
- Cheshire East Council (Orbitas)  
Height: 42" (plate and base inclusive)  
Width: 39"
- 1.7 The increased size would not affect the memorial safety inspection programme of works as Bereavement Services staff are trained to test memorials up to a height of 5ft without the involvement of a structural engineer, thus this would not incur an additional expenditure to the Council's bereavement service.
- 1.8 It is also proposed to include the following in the rules and regulations in regards to memorial inscriptions, design and materials:
- non-offensive jokes are allowed
  - nicknames are allowed

- different coloured stones and fonts are allowed
- lanterns are allowed (as long as they are not glass or protrude from the memorial)
- photographs and scan images are allowed
- non-offensive symbols and logos are allowed (with the correct permissions granted)
- the use of wood as well as stone is allowed
- all material requests will be considered with an emphasis on environmental sustainability

1.9 The terms and conditions and memorial diagrams issued to all Memorial Masons that have been approved to work within the borough's cemeteries and crematorium would be updated to reflect the new sizes and regulations detailed above.

## **2. Issues**

- 2.1 The Council undertook a consultation between 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024. 85% of the 20 respondents said that the memorial headstone sizes are currently too restrictive and should be increased. The comments provided included a range of opinions on cost of headstones, that the increased size differences between different headstones would look out of place, cultural expectations and supporting families coping with bereavement.
- 2.2 Members of the public, especially those from the borough's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) community and bereaved parents, are requesting larger memorial designs and more choice.
- 2.3 Graves are increasingly being used for multiple burials, including the additional burials of cremated remains once two coffin burials have taken place in the grave or when the first burial has been that of a child leaving space for both parents to be individually buried within the grave. There is currently insufficient room on the memorial headstone for more than two inscriptions and a motif or photograph under the current size restrictions.
- 2.4 There are current memorial designs including a double heart design, a book design and a gates of heaven design, that have been requested that do not fit within the current size restrictions but would if they were increased to the new proposed sizes. These designs are allowed within neighbouring authorities' cemeteries.

## **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the changes in the memorial sizes alongside the terms and conditions.

#### **4. Reasons**

- 4.1 To extend memorial range and variety and provide more choice to allow the bereaved to be able to personalise memorials more through design and encourage artistry.
- 4.2 As Gold Award members of the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved, the Council's Targets are:
- to, where possible, extend the range and variety of memorial options
  - to encourage greater artistic input into memorials
- 4.3 After a person has died the memorial headstone on the grave provides a personal focal point and becomes an important part of the grieving process for the bereaved and this should be encouraged to allow the family to grieve and be able to get closure; grief is individual and the chosen memorial design and inscription should reflect the individuality and personality of the deceased.
- 4.4 Memorial designs, construction and fixing methods have changed and improved considerably since 2013 along with trends and choices requested by members of the public.

#### **5. Options Considered**

- 5.1 The Council could maintain the existing policy of headstone heights set up to 35" tall and 35" wide or offer larger memorial headstones or change the sizes.

#### **6. Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 None identified.

#### **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 None identified.

#### **8. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 If the Council is unable to offer burial and memorial options then this would affect the income for the service.

#### **9. Major Risks & Mitigation**

- 9.1 None identified.

## 10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



- 10.1 Providing suitable memorial options helps those grieving and those particularly those who are terminally ill to plan for their funerals, it therefore supports residents mental well-being at such a difficult time.

## 11. One Council

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

One Commercial Council

*We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.*

Offering a wider choice of memorial size improves customer choice and therefore likelihood of purchasing a memorial.

One Digital Council

*We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.*

One Green Council

*We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle*

## 12. Key Decision Information

- 12.1 This affects all the Council's cemeteries so affects more than 2 wards.

## 13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

- 13.1 Cabinet approved the Crematorium and cemeteries Rules and Regulations on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

## 14. List of Appendices

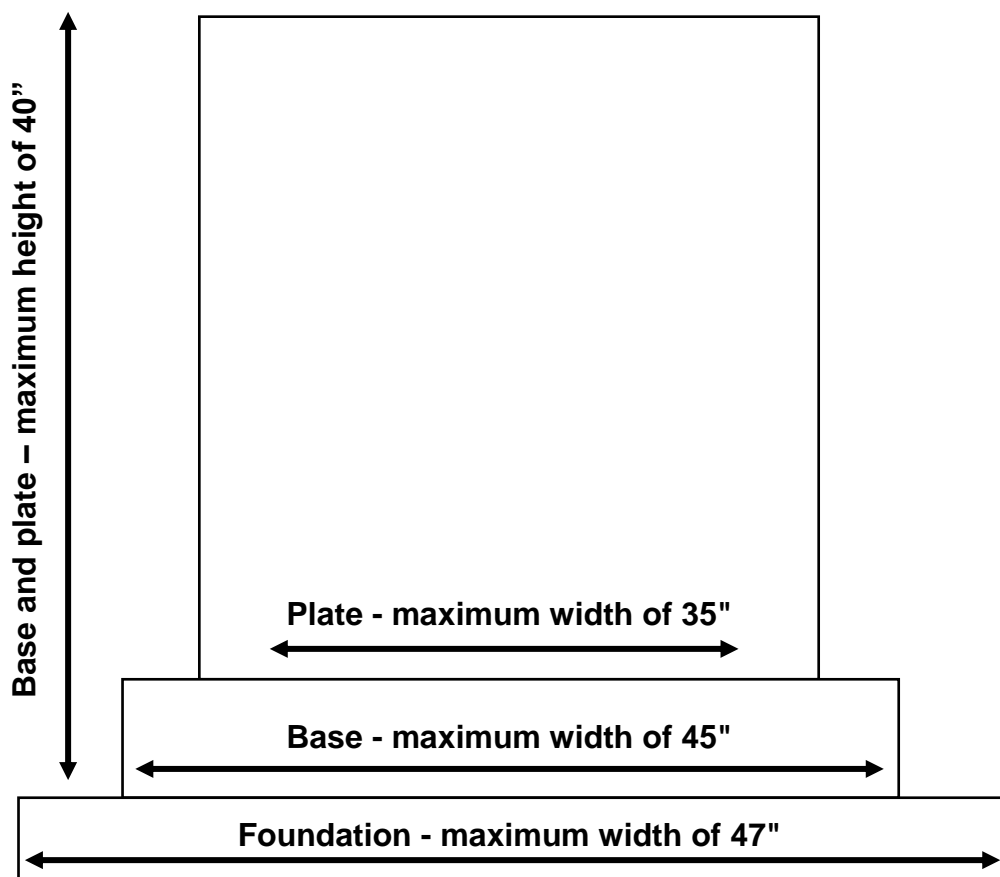
- 14.1 Appendix A – New Memorial Size Diagram  
Appendix B – New Terms and Conditions for Memorial Masons

## 15. Background Papers

- 15.1 N/A

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**FOUNDATION**

All foundations are supplied by the Memorial Mason

Top surface of the foundation must be ground level

There must be a 2” margin (front and back) between the edge of the base and the edge of the foundation in all turfed areas

The recommended size of a foundation is 36” x 18” x 3”

Foundation thickness may be reduced to 2.5” if BS7263

**IF SECOND FOUNDATION**

Same regulations apply

**MEMORIALS WITH A SLOPING BASE**

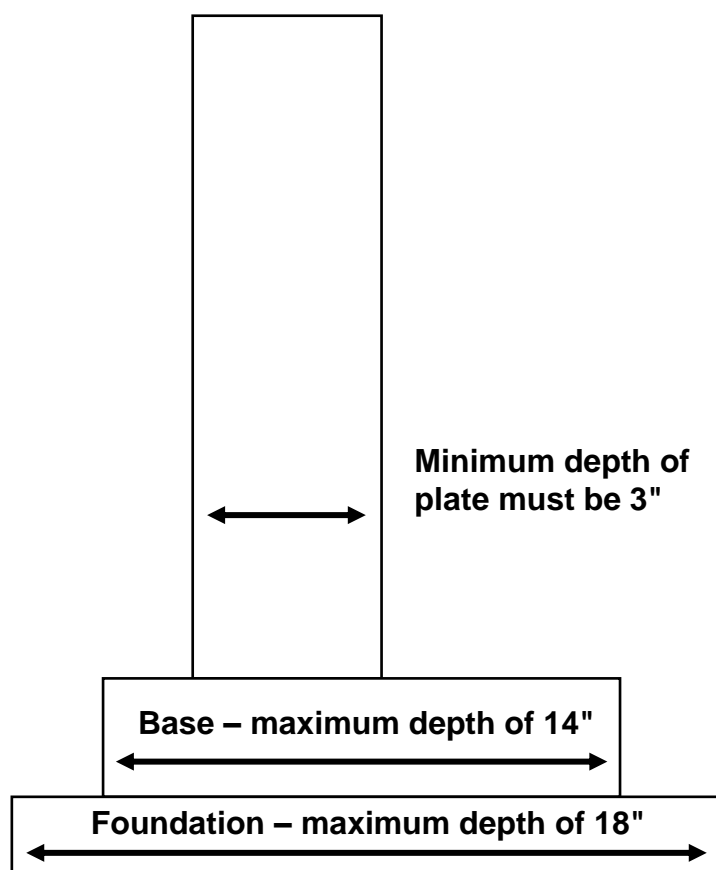
Lowest point of a splayed base must be a minimum of 1” thick

**DOWELS**

All dowels, dowel holes and their usage must comply with the current BS8415

**GROUND ANCHOR**

All memorials must be fitted with a ground anchor that conforms to the manufacturer’s specification



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**Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council**  
**Bereavement Services**  
**Terms and Conditions – Memorials and Memorial Masons**



**The removal, fixing and renovation of memorials in all of the Newcastle Borough cemeteries and at Newcastle Crematorium**

Memorial Masons

- Only Memorial Masons that are on the Council's approved list are allowed to carry out any memorial works within the borough cemeteries and at the crematorium
- To be included on the Council's approved list a memorial mason must make an application to the Council, submitting the requested information
- All approved masons will be BRAMM or NAMM accredited and have the required level of Public Liability Insurance
- Each team of memorial masons will have at least one licensed fixer completing any memorial works on site
- Only memorial removal, fixing and renovating works can be carried out on site; all other works must be completed off site
- All materials must be of the best quality and description
- All debris must be removed from the site leaving the memorial and area in a clean and tidy condition
- The cemetery or crematorium office must be contacted before any memorial works are carried out on site to make sure that there is available access to the site without any disruption to funeral services
- All traffic management instructions on site must be followed and parking is only allowed in the designated areas and bays; no vehicle must drive or park on any grassed area

Removal of Memorials

- A removal form signed by the licensed fixer must be completed and submitted to the cemetery or crematorium office for any and all memorials removed from site
- A memorial being removed to facilitate a burial must be removed by 10:00am at least four clear working days before the burial is to take place
- The entire memorial including the foundation must be removed

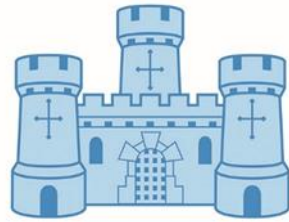
Fixing of Memorials

- A memorial headstone can be erected on any purchased grave within the borough cemeteries and at the crematorium
- Only a cremated remains memorial headstone can be erected on a cremated remains grave in the cemeteries and at the crematorium
- A memorial vase is allowed on an unpurchased grave
- No memorial vases made of glass will be allowed
- Any and all memorial works will require a written application signed by the grave owner(s) to be completed and submitted to the cemetery or crematorium office
- The memorial application will be checked and recorded and if approved a fixing permit will be issued to the Memorial Mason when the works can be completed
- A settlement period of at least six months is required before a memorial can be fixed on to a lawn grave in which a coffin burial or a cremated remains burial at a depth greater than 2ft has taken place
- A cremated remains grave memorial headstone is fitted to a supplied concrete stone slab and there is no settlement period

- The grave number must be engraved and clearly visible on the side of the memorial base
- Upon completion the fixing permit must be signed by the licensed fixer and returned to the cemetery or crematorium office
- All materials and stone type will be considered with an emphasis on environmental sustainability and local sources
- All memorial designs must be of an upright design, sloping tablet or vase; kerb sets and flat stones are not allowed due to grounds maintenance
- Memorial vases are allowed on an unpurchased grave; these will still require a completed application form signed by the applicant
- Figures and statues can be included in the memorial design on a lawn type grave as long as the overall size does not exceed the maximum size restrictions
- Figures and statues must be fixed securely to the memorial base without protrusion
- Lanterns can be included in the memorial design as long as the overall size does not exceed the maximum size restrictions
- Lanterns must be fixed securely to the memorial base without protrusion
- Lanterns must not contain any glass or anything breakable and be free from sharp edges
- All figures, statues and lanterns must be supplied and fixed by the Memorial Mason
- All memorials must comply with the Council's current memorial size specifications
- All foundations are individual and supplied by the Memorial Mason
- All memorials and foundations must conform to and be fixed in accordance with the NAMM Code of Working Practice and to the current BS8415 standard

#### Renovation of Memorials

- Any and all renovation works will require a written application signed by the grave owner(s) or the rightful responsible person to be completed and submitted to the cemetery or crematorium office
- The memorial application will be checked and recorded and if approved a fixing permit will be issued to the Memorial Mason when the works can be completed
- Upon completion the fixing permit must be signed by the licensed fixer and returned to the cemetery or crematorium office
- All memorials must comply with the Council's current memorial size specifications
- All foundations are individual and supplied by the Memorial Mason
- All memorials and foundations must conform to and be fixed in accordance with the NAMM Code of Working Practice and to the current BS8415 standard



**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 January 2025 and 30 April 2025**

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](mailto: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
Draft Revenue and Capital Budget and Strategies 2025/26	To consider a report on the Draft Revenue and Capital Budget and Strategies 2025/26	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	Cabinet 7 January 2025	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	No
Walleys Quarry Odour Update	To consider a report on the Walleys Quarry Odour issues	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 7 January 2025	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Schedule of	To consider a report	Cabinet Portfolio	Cabinet 7	Finance, Assets	All Wards	3 Information	Yes

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
Fees and Charges 2025/26	on the Schedule of Fees and Charges 2025/26	Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	January 2025	and Performance		relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	
Memorial Headstone Policy	To consider a report on the Memorial Headstone Policy	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Environment	Cabinet 7 January 2025	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	Yes
International House Contractor Award	To consider a report on the International House Contractor Award	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	Cabinet 7 January 2025	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
Update on Decarbonisation of the Council's Operational Buildings and Fleet	To consider a report on Update on the Decarbonisation of the Council's Operational Buildings and Fleet	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Environment	Cabinet 7 January 2025	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Revenue and	To consider a report	Cabinet Portfolio	Cabinet 4	Finance, Assets	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)	
Capital Budget Strategies 2025/26	on the Revenue and Capital Budget Strategies 2025/26	Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	February 2025	and Performance			
Walleys Quarry Odour Update	To consider a report on odour issues at Walleys Quarry	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 4 February 2025	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Quarter 3 Finance and Performance Report 2024/25	To consider a report on the Quarter 3 Finance and Performance Report 2024/25	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Finance, Town Centres and Growth	Cabinet 4 February 2025	Finance, Assets and Performance, Audit and Standards	All Wards	N/A	No
Adoption of the Council's Tree Management Strategy	To consider a report on the adoption of the Council's Tree Management Strategy	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Sustainable Environment	Cabinet 4 February 2025	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Agreement of a revised Local Development Scheme	To consider a report on a revised Local Development Scheme	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Strategic Planning	Cabinet 4 February 2025	Economy and Place	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 18 March 2025	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No





**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S**  
**URGENT REPORT TO CABINET**

**9 January 2025**

**Report Title:**            **Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation: White Paper**

**Submitted by:**         **Leader of the Council**

**Portfolios:**            **One Council, People and Partnerships**

**Ward(s) affected:**    **All Wards**

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
To seek the view and agreement of Cabinet in setting out the position of the Council following the release of the English Devolution White Paper in December 2024.	
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	
<p><b>That Cabinet:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes the contents and implications of the English Devolution White Paper.</li> <li>• Pledges to stand up for the historic independence of the Borough.</li> <li>• Continues to work through the Staffordshire Leaders Board to develop and deliver devolution as set out in the Board's submission to Government in September 2024.</li> <li>• Supports the petitioning of residents in relation to the preservation of the Borough.</li> <li>• Calls for Newcastle-Under-Lyme's Members of Parliament to support the Borough's preservation, and that they engage with Government Ministers in stating the case for the Borough.</li> <li>• The Leader &amp; Chief Executive write to the Deputy Prime Minister and relevant Ministers stating the Council's position.</li> </ul>	
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>	
This report outlines the contents of the English Devolution White Paper released on 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2024, its implications for borough and district councils, and an initial response to the likely impacts on the Borough. The report further seeks endorsement of a campaign to stand up for the independence of the Borough, as set out its charter in 1173, and through subsequent local government reorganisations.	

**1.    Background**

- 1.1    Following the release of its English Devolution White Paper on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024, Government has expressed its intention to seek devolution settlements in every part of the United Kingdom, with the creation of new governance arrangements at revised population sizes.

- 1.2 The Government has indicated that it is seeking the creation of new unitary authorities at a population size of some 500,000 residents, and Strategic Authorities at a population level of 1.5 million.
- 1.3 Civil servants have not yet provided any detail about criteria for exceptions to these criteria, or on the precise mechanism of their implementation. They have indicated that the forthcoming letter from the Minister for Local Government formally inviting LGR proposals will set out this detail by the end of January 2025. There will then be a consultation and response period until March (6-8 weeks).
- 1.4 In September 2024, prior to the release of the White Paper and at the Government's request, the Staffordshire Leaders Board submitted its collective devolution plan to Government. This covered five themes:
  - 1.4.1 Devolution must work for all: plans must reflect and respond to a deep understanding of local needs and opportunities. That is what our authorities have been working hard at over the summer.
  - 1.4.2 Form must follow function: if we are to accept another layer of governance in the county, at additional cost to the people of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, then the prize in terms of devolved functions, powers and resources has to be significant.
  - 1.4.3 Governance has to be inclusive: our Leader's Board works because all local authorities get to participate and contribute, and we want to ensure that this is also the case in any devolved arrangements.
  - 1.4.4 Commitment to subsidiarity: devolution should be to the most appropriate level of governance for the function in any question, and that should mean a combination of county-wide, local authority level and, perhaps most importantly, community level. We seek a devolution deal that gives us flexibility to make those judgements together.
- 1.5 The devolution proposal focused on five key areas, linked to the Government's missions and the Staffordshire Leaders' Board priorities:
  - Economic Development
  - Skills
  - Energy and Environment
  - Transport
  - Housing and Regeneration.
- 1.6 The Board awaits feedback from Government on the proposition. Leaders had previously welcomed the Government's flexibility on the governance arrangements for devolved powers, setting out that a deal with an elected mayor would not be suitable for the area.
- 1.7 It should be noted that there was no reference to forced local government reorganisation in the Labour Party Manifesto put before voters ahead of the General Election held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

## 2. Issues

- 2.1 The Loyal and Ancient Borough of Newcastle-Under-Lyme traces its history back to 1173, when records show that Henry II had granted a charter to the town and gave

strong support to the early borough over the next decade. Further royal charters have been granted to the borough by Kings Henry III, Edward I, Edward II, and Richard II, Queen Elizabeth I, Kings Charles II, James II and Queen Victoria.

- 2.2** The late Queen Elizabeth granted a new borough charter in 1974, following the Local Government Act of 1972.
- 2.3** This rich history was recently celebrated in the 850<sup>th</sup> anniversary events of 2023, and subsequent legacy activity. These events demonstrated a strong local association with the borough, including residents, civic groups, businesses and community organisations recognising the visit of the late Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1973 to mark 800 years of the borough, and the statue to this visit was unveiled in 2024 in Queens Gardens.
- 2.4** In 1995, North Staffordshire governance arrangements changed further with the creation of the unitary authority of Stoke on Trent. Through this change, Newcastle-Under-Lyme retained its borough status. The city subsequently trialled an elected mayoral model of governance, later abolished.
- 2.5** On 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024, the Government published its English Devolution White Paper. This set out both a desire to see local authorities work collaboratively, as had been extensively trailed by Ministers, but also set out a plan for local government reorganisation, which had not been shared with district and borough councils. Within this White Paper, the Government has stated that it wishes to see the rapid creation of new, far larger local authorities on a unitary basis, and with it the abolition of existing and historic boroughs, including Newcastle-Under-Lyme.
- 2.6** The reorganisation of local government is intended to happen within the lifetime of the current parliament, with all new structures in place by 2028. The Government is likely to have a policy preference for creating Combined County Authorities or other Strategic Authorities in which districts are not constituent members. It is also likely that the Government will prefer areas to undergo Local Government Reorganisation alongside creating new Strategic Authorities. Guidance is awaited on this, expected by the end of January.

### Borough Council Delivery

- 2.7** The Borough Council has demonstrated that it can focus and influence actions and decisions at a local level, close to residents, across areas which matter to them. This has recently included a number of key interventions.
- 2.8** Regeneration & Planning – developing working partnerships with developers and investors, our local social landlord and community interest groups, delivering a town centre regeneration programme in both Newcastle and Kidsgrove supported by Levelling Up funds which is responsive to both local need and investor opportunity. Forging and maintaining partnerships with national and local bodies has been both possible, and through nimble decision making has seized investment opportunities where a greater level of bureaucracy and more remote decision making may have stalled progress.
- 2.9** The Borough Council's dedicated focus on supporting the community with the extensive and ongoing issues at Walleys Quarry would likely not have been a priority for a larger, more remote authority with multiple demands. This included the Council being bold in using its powers and pressing for permission to pursue legal action against the operators when other agencies were not doing so.

- 2.10** The increased attraction to visitors of the Brampton Museum, attracting investment and greater footfall, expanded facilities and usage by local groups. As the Borough Council's primary cultural facility, efforts have been focused on supporting growth and a heritage-led cultural offer for the borough. These advantages may be lost if the Borough is submerged into a larger Council.
- 2.11** A strong leisure offer, built on local partnerships. Recognising that differing models of delivery work better in local places, the Council has both invested in the Jubilee 2 centre, working with the healthcare sector, local users and groups, but has also supported and secured investment for the community-run Kidsgrove Sports Centre, both facilities providing a complimentary offer across our two towns and the wider borough.
- 2.12** Civic Pride – from its award winning Britain and Newcastle in Bloom achievements, to the introduction of the Civic Pride campaign to work with partners, residents, voluntary organisations and businesses, local people have demonstrated their desire to get behind borough-focused activities which support making our places cleaner, safer and friendlier.
- 2.13** Net Zero and Sustainability – the Council has been able to adapt its working practices, investment and service delivery to ensure it meets its ambitious targets set out when it declared a climate emergency, including tree planting, planning, fleet and assets, and has worked with the private and academic sectors in developing borough-level initiatives. The ability to control these changes at a local level have been a near 70% reduction in our controlled carbon emissions.
- 2.14** The Local Government Peer Challenge reported in 2023 that Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council was delivering quality services for its residents, and that particularly it had strengths in the following areas:
- Strong pride of place and Newcastle-under-Lyme has a distinct identity
  - Partnership working is particularly strong and the role it has in bringing others together to collaborate is highly valued
  - Clear leadership from the Cabinet and senior officers
  - Finances are healthy, and actively managed, which places it in a stable position
  - Officers are recognised as important assets for us and they are committed and keen to deliver for the communities
  - The Council has set out its ambitions for the place and our community and attracted enviable amounts of Government funding to deliver physical regeneration

### **3. Recommendation**

#### **3.1** It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Notes the contents and implications of the English Devolution White Paper.
- Pledges to stand up for the historic independence of the Borough.
- Continues to work through the Staffordshire Leaders Board to develop and deliver devolution as set out in the Board's submission to Government.
- Supports the petitioning of residents in relation to the preservation of the Borough.
- Calls for Newcastle-Under-Lyme's Members of Parliament to support the Borough's preservation and will engage with Government Ministers in stating the case for the Borough.
- The Leader & Chief Executive write to the Deputy Prime Minister and relevant Ministers stating the Council's position.

#### **4. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 4.1 The resource implications for reorganisation cannot be fully assessed without further information from Government, and no figures or investment case has been provided to date.
- 4.2 In relation to demonstrating effective working together with other authorities, the Borough Council has worked extensively with Staffordshire County Council and fellow district and borough councils in identifying working arrangements that provide good value for money where these partnerships make sense. These arrangements are locally agreed, dictated by need, not by blanket application. They are not limited by immediate proximity, and in some cases extend beyond local authority partnerships.
- 4.3 Locally-determined arrangements have included co-location of office premises with Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire Police at Castle House, bringing financial and other benefits including a reduction in carbon emissions, a significant annual revenue saving through a reduction in running costs.
- 4.4 Joint working arrangements include those with the County Council – internal audit, communications and legal support, and with other Councils including out of hours response, CCTV and building control.
- 4.5 The Borough Council has had a strong collaboration with the County Council on regeneration and economic development, bringing in over £55M into the Borough of UK Government Levelling Up funding.
- 4.6 In return, the County Council has benefited from significant shares of UK Levelling Up High Street Fund and Town Deal funding (over £2m of funds distributed).
- 4.7 Through the Staffordshire Sustainability Board, best practice learning and a joint communications plan have brought tangible benefits to help authorities focus on net zero and sustainability whilst retaining control of their programmes and targets.

#### **5. Major Risks & Mitigation**

- 5.1 Much remains unknown of detail at this stage so mitigation measures cannot yet be fully considered. Potential risks at this stage include staff recruitment and retention, a reduction in service delivery under a larger local authority, a potential 'democratic deficit' as elected members may be reduced in number and further from residents and a need to focus on reorganisation rather than get on with the day job of service provision.
- 5.2 *Financial sustainability* – Over recent years, the Council has delivered a balanced budget based on efficiencies across its services and investment in the borough whilst seeking to maintain optimum delivery for residents. It is unknown at what stage in a reorganisation process would restrict spending or borrowing, or whether areas in a much worse financial position would be prioritised over Newcastle.
- 5.3 *Effectiveness of change* – There is a lack of proven success where local government reorganisation has taken place elsewhere in the country to date, and at this stage limited detail on the business case/benefits of the approach being described in the White Paper.

## 6. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



## 7. One Council

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

One Commercial Council

The reorganisation of local government would change the commercial asset holding of councils, for example leisure centres and museums, and decisions would be made on these at a unitary level. The exact nature of changes is unknown at this stage.

One Digital Council

It is probable that newer, larger councils would need to align digital systems, the cost for which is not known.

One Green Council

Newcastle Borough Council has declared a climate emergency and has developed its sustainability programme to meet a 2030 net zero target for its scopes 1 and 2 emissions. Other local authorities are at different stages of implementing net zero approaches.

## 8. Key Decision Information

8.1 This is a key decision as the White Paper may affect residents in all wards.

## 9. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

9.1 Cabinet – 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024 – Staffordshire Leaders Board Joint Committee

## 10. List of Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1 – Staffordshire Leaders Board submission to UK Government.

## 11. Background Papers

11.1 [English Devolution White Paper](#), December 2024, HMSO.

## Appendix 1: Staffordshire Leaders Board Submission to UK Government

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**Angela Rayner and Jim McMahon**

Deputy Prime Minister, and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government / Minister of State, Housing, Communities and Local Government  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

My Ref: AW / TK

Date: 30 September 2024

Dear Angela Rayner and Jim McMahon

**Ref: Staffordshire Devolution**

As the Leaders of all the Councils in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, we are writing to you as a united force to share our future intention to partner with the Government to deliver shared growth and remove barriers to opportunity.

Like you, we want to see tangible and sustained economic growth that improves living standards where it counts - in our cities, our towns and our villages - the places where people live.

Serving over 1.1 million residents across the county and city, the Staffordshire Leaders Board (a joint committee) is already hard at work delivering on Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent's extraordinary economic and place potential.

Since the Leaders Board was established in 2022, we've been exploring how devolution can benefit the area as one of our key priorities. We are committed to this collaborative effort and are ready to work with Government to do more.

Our approach is based on four core principles:

- Devolution must work for all: plans must reflect and respond to a deep understanding of local needs and opportunities. That is what our authorities have been working hard at over the summer.
- Form must follow function: if we are to accept another layer of governance in the county, at additional cost to the people of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, then the prize in terms of devolved functions, powers and resources has to be significant.
- Governance has to be inclusive: our Leaders Board works because all local authorities get to participate and contribute, and we want to ensure that this is also the case in any devolved arrangements.





- Commitment to subsidiarity: devolution should be to the most appropriate level of governance for the function in any question, and that should mean a combination of county-wide, local authority level and, perhaps most importantly, community level. We seek a devolution deal that gives us flexibility to make those judgements together.

Over the summer, we have thought through our opportunities and our asks under five main themes:

- Economic Development
- Skills
- Energy and Environment
- Transport
- Housing and Regeneration.

This work is captured on the enclosed sheets and could provide the basis for a rich dialogue with Government.

Beyond that, we reserve our position on the preferred model of devolution until we have seen the promised devolution framework and guidance. However, we do welcome your ongoing commitment to flexibility on the governance arrangements for devolved powers. Most significantly, whilst there are benefits to elected mayors for some areas, this is not a model which is suitable for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

As you will see from the enclosed materials, we have made an excellent start. We will now await the further Government guidance so that we can continue to develop our collective position, working closely with you and your officials.

Yours sincerely





**Alan White**  
Leaders Board Chair  
Leader of Staffordshire County  
Council

**Jane Ashworth**  
Leaders Board Vice Chair  
Leader of Stoke-on-Trent City  
Council

**Tony Johnson**  
Leader of Cannock Chase  
District Council

**Mick Fitzpatrick**  
Leader of East Staffordshire  
Borough Council

**Doug Pullen**  
Leader of Lichfield District  
Council

**Simon Tagg**  
Leader of Newcastle-Under-  
Lyme Borough Council

**Kath Perry**  
Leader of South Staffordshire  
Council

**Aidan Godfrey**  
Leader of Stafford Borough  
Council

**Mike Gledhill**  
Leader of Staffordshire  
Moorlands District Council

**Carol Dean**  
Leader of Tamworth Borough  
Council



## Economic Development

### The case for change / key opportunity areas:

- **Strategic Economic Policies:** Strengthen the capability and skills of local firms and residents based on local economic geography. This would include consolidating local growth plans to link development opportunities more effectively and take a structured approach to the development of commercial/enterprise spaces.
- **Local Allocation of Funding Programmes:** Target opportunity and wealth creation to address local needs.
- **Enhanced and coordinated private sector investment** through reinstating priority areas eligible for grants or other fiscal incentives.
- **Greater retention of local business rates** potentially related to specific areas or development zones to ensure the local area benefits from future economic growth.
- **Integrated longer-term funding streams for business support** in a form that supports local economic priorities. The ability to strengthen support and provision for budding entrepreneurs particularly, where they are not from conventional business backgrounds, who live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, are in receipt of Universal Credit or who are straight out of college.
- **Creating green technology jobs** in a concentrated area linked to the Major Urban Area through a green corridor with public transport improvement including the Green Innovation Corridor/the M54 Jct2 and i54 and the A50 A500 Manufacturing Corridor.
- **Strategic approach to ensure delivery of sustainability priorities including for green industries, investment sites, green technology jobs, skills, clean energy and transport;** this could include facilitation of sustainable supply chain programmes, supporting compliance, provide advice, funding and incentivisation.
- **Address local need and root cause of issues** such as worklessness, NEET, economic and health inequality through targeted interventions.
- **Coordinated support for Community Enterprise and Co-operatives:** Developing community enterprise through micro-grants, community finance, and asset transfers.
- **Economies of scale across the whole geographical area;** reduced tendering exercises resulting in greater efficiency and less duplication; using collective weight of anchor institutions.

### Key asks:

- **Longer-term agreements for capital regeneration/economic development** with multi-year funding settlements and powers to support direct delivery and ending of competitive funding pots for economic development. Replace with direct allocations.
- **Extension and potential expansion of Enterprise Zone(s):** Nationally supported, locally defined economic development priorities and programmes supporting local sectors.
- **Devolved investment funds for regeneration** of town and city centres and land remediation
- **Funding and powers devolved to locality to support local control and direct delivery** to unlock employment sites, homes, and job-generating schemes. Including business start-up, skills development, job creation initiatives and expansion support.
- **A greater level of innovation investment** to support innovation activity within key industries and economic ambition including Development of crea-tech cluster, Development of concept of International Centre for Ceramics, building on World Craft City status.
- **Single settlement for business support activity** to bring greater local control and the assurance of longer-term funding.
- **Employability programmes** to address economic inactivity in communities with high worklessness and NEET or where there are physical and mental health problems.
- **Continuation of UKSPF & REPF** [and Levelling Up] or funding equivalents with direct allocation to localities to remove the need for bidding and an ongoing funding commitment.
- **Pooled funding for local business support** e.g. start-up, post start up, R&D/innovation etc to be delivered at a local level.
- **Ability to be more innovative with local taxation** to deliver economic growth, e.g. business rate retention, Capital Gains Tax and Stamp Duty.
- **Equitable availability and distribution of housing growth incentives**
- **Carbon reduction funding package** to support businesses to achieve Net Zero and produce cost savings.
- **International trade partnership** between the devolved area and central government

## Difference to the area:

These initiatives aim to create a more robust and resilient local economy, fostering innovation, sustainability, and inclusive growth.

- **Improved local economic development** by aligning national support with local priorities.
- **Sustainable growth and regeneration** through longer-term funding and direct delivery powers.
- **Increased employment opportunities** by unlocking employment sites and supporting job-generating schemes including the Green Innovation Corridor.
- **Delivery of a single settlement for business support activity.**
- **Facilitation of additional borrowing for business support activity** based on the certainty of funding and business rate retention.
- **Enhanced innovation and competitiveness** within key industries.
- **Greater local control and efficiency** in business support and economic development activities.
- **Reduced economic inactivity** and improved employability in high-need communities including NEET.
- **Fostering local entrepreneurialism**; building on relationships with our university partners to provide facilities, advice and training around innovation required to support new and existing start-ups and spin outs across the county.

## Education, Employment and Skills

### The case for change / key opportunity areas:

- **Skills development:** Devolution of responsibility, funding, and powers to develop education, employment, and skills provision at the local level.
- **Develop, inform and support new career pathways:** linked to local need and growing industries
- **Business start-up support:** Enterprise and innovation programs to increase business start-ups and foster an enterprise culture.
- **Green industry:** Green Skills investment programme with local universities

### Key asks:

- **Devolved skills revenue funding to allow local skills commissioning focused on local sector support including:**
  1. 14-19 education support programmes and curriculum improvement powers.
  2. Post-16 education and training provision to allow clear pathways and including targeted work around NEETs to improve levels of attainment and progression at 16 and 19 years.
  3. Adults Skills Plan with clear pathways focussing on level 1/2 skills to create a ladder of opportunity.
  4. Enterprise and innovation programmes targeting local growth sectors and business development skills to increase business start-ups.
  5. Ensure re-investment into communities to enable them to thrive economically and socially.
  6. Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) programmes including the role of colleges, our workforce and lifelong learning.
  7. Programmes and support to tackle economic inactivity and worklessness
  8. Apprenticeship programmes including local control of Apprenticeship Levy
  9. Establishment of a local Skills Advisory Panel
- **Longer-term funding streams:** Integrated funding streams for business support and skills aligned with local economic priorities over the longer term to allow for more effective planning.
- **Devolved capital fund:** For unlocking and facilitating the delivery of strategic employment projects and around development or expansion of FE colleges.

### Difference to the area:

These initiatives aim to create a more robust and sustainable local economy, improve the skills of our residents and enable them to meet the future workforce needs of the area, foster innovation, and provide better support for businesses and residents.

- **Economic Growth:** Strengthening the capability and skills of local firms and residents, leading to economic growth, and supporting key opportunities for growth or specialisation.
- **Enterprise and innovation:** Increased levels of commercialisation and a local skills offer which supports local growth sectors
- **Employment:** Addressing economic inactivity and worklessness, leading to increased productivity and better health outcomes.
- **Local Control:** Greater local control and longer-term funding for business support activities.
- **Cross-public sector:** Devolved skills-based approaches to mental health, troubled individuals and youth justice.
- **Better local integrated offer:** Expanded family hubs/family support programme including learning, skills and employment offer.
- **Supporting key local workforce demand:** Benefits for key sectors such as around care workforce

## Environment & Energy

### The case for change / key opportunity areas:

**Strategic collaboration on energy policy** Local energy planning and funding to create green investment zones and develop bespoke local policies for clean energy

- **Delegation of capital funding to meet carbon reduction targets;** this would allow the locality to meet our strategic ambitions around climate mitigation, sequestration and adaptation and be able to direct support to businesses and homes to transition to Net Zero, invest in green technology and retrofit properties.
- **Use Great British Energy to facilitate Green Solutions Grant Funding** to support the reduction of carbon and produce cost savings within businesses.
- **Use Great British Energy to facilitate sustainable supply chain programmes** to support compliance, provide advice, funding, and incentivization.
- **Use Great British Energy to explore the implementation of hydrogen** in heat works and associated infrastructure
- **Enhanced planning regulations and powers around local energy generation and distribution** including network upgrades on major developments and generation around renewables, domestic heating, EV charging/alternative zero emission fuels).
- **Enhanced powers to implement local environmental policies,** in particular surface water infrastructure and flood defence
- **Preferential PWLB borrowing** for climate change projects.
- **Tackling fuel poverty and addressing affordable warmth**
- **Funding and powers to expand localised energy networks** including district heating networks and use of geo-thermal extraction.
- **Build upon the Future Homes Standard** to incorporate residential energy generation requiring solar panels and air source heat pumps.
- **Address current National Grid challenges** to ensure capacity and capability for now and the future.

### Key asks:

- **Development of a local area energy plan to enable the long-term planning on a regional basis.**
- **County and city-wide planning approach to net zero** - Agreement to consider at a county/city-wide level the Planning implications for Climate change to achieve net zero by 2050.
- **Joined up approach to local area energy planning** – this would include renewables, EV charging/alternative fuel infrastructure, geo-thermal extraction etc.
- **Joined up approach to land management** for planning provision of renewable energy, tree planting, etc.
- **Joined up approach to developing green skills** to deliver transition to a green economy
- **Backing for green enterprise** including battery storage.
- **Development of Local Area Energy Plans** and the expansion of district heating network.
- **Enhanced strategic leadership of Local Transport** working with local bus companies to develop a sustainable bus network based on EV/Hydrogen and transition to zero emissions as part of the Local Transport Plan and Bus Service Improvement Plans.
- **Green Skills programmes** in partnership with Keele and Staffs University, local colleges, and employers.
- **Green Capital Investment Fund** to enable new and existing businesses to invest in green tech and reduce carbon emissions.
- **Enhance planning regulations** around energy generation and distribution.

### Difference to the area:

These initiatives and opportunities can collectively contribute to achieving net zero targets, fostering sustainable development, and improving the overall quality of life.

- **Carbon Reduction:** Implementing clean energy policies and green solutions grant funding can significantly reduce carbon emissions and produce cost savings for businesses.
- **Economic Growth:** Backing green enterprises and creating eco-parks can stimulate economic growth and create job opportunities, such as the Green Innovation Corridor/the M54 Jct2 and i54 and the A50 A500 Manufacturing Corridor.
- **Sustainable Development:** Expanding district heating networks and enhancing planning regulations can lead to more sustainable and efficient energy use.
- **Green Skills Development:** Partnering with universities and colleges to develop green skills can prepare the workforce for a transition to a green economy.
- **Strengthening Leadership Partnership Arrangements** across the geography including with our local research institutions to secure a greater level of national innovation funding aligned to our key industries and economic ambitions.



## Transport

### The case for change / key opportunity areas:

- **Delivery of public transport improvements** through the commissioning and funding bus services and aligning the Bus Service Improvement plans.
- **Multi-Modal Journeys and Efficient Exchanges:** It supports multi-modal journeys and efficient exchanges through a joint strategic approach to multi-modal hubs (cars, trains, buses, active travel with EV charging) and provides greater integration for freight and can support a modal shift to public transport by integrating timetables, ticketing, and transport hubs.
- **Transition to Zero Emissions:** There is an opportunity to link transport to energy provision and work with local bus companies on electric/hydrogen fleets.
- **Improve public transport to support economic activity and leisure including the creation of local green transport options,** including metro to M54 Jct2 and i54 site.
- **Development of a Pipeline of Regional Investment Sites,** such as i54, that were identified in the former Regional Spatial Strategies are coming to an end with nothing new of scale on the horizon.
- **Investment in strategic road networks** would allow us to link development opportunities with key transport routes, e.g. A50/A500 corridor and A449.
- **Development and Delivery of Cross-Boundary Transport Schemes:** This initiative supports a whole region approach enhancing commuter links with Birmingham, Manchester and the East Midlands and an opportunity to more effectively integrate local and national transport networks through joint working with Highways England and Network Rail to reduce congestion caused by a predominately car-borne population.

### Key asks:

- **Five-year Highways and Transport Settlement;** Post HS2 settlement focussed on improvements to roads, bus routes and rail stations, enhancing active travel and development of a whole region approach to public transport including the development of a sustainable bus and rail network for travel to work areas.
- **Devolved funding and power** to the area to create transport plans and strategies covering the whole geography and build relationships with neighbouring Transport Authorities. Devolution of greater powers to coordinate strategic infrastructure activity across the area and adjacent authorities to deliver cross-boundary transport schemes.
- **Strategic Planning Powers and National Planning Policy Framework update** to enable better land use and transport planning integration.
- **Greater influence over National Highways and Network Rail decision making.**
- **Confirm the delivery timetable for the M6/M54 link road, M6 J15 Upgrades and A50 Improvements.**
- **Continue/replace UKSPF & REPF funding** with an ongoing commitment.
- **Powers over trunk road improvements within the area.**
- **Devolution of Bus Franchising Powers** to ensure transport routes meet the reality of where people need to travel, particularly in rural areas and under-served residential areas and to provide a stimulus to work with local bus companies around electric and hydrogen fleet.
- **Reduce reliance on bidding for funding** to support a more joined-up approach to Local Transport Plan policy and schemes.
- **Create a devolved capital fund pot** for unlocking strategic employment projects.
- **Development corporation/delivery vehicles** to deliver Invest to save programmes of road repairs.

### Difference to the area:

- **Strengthened leadership and partnership arrangements** across the geography.
  - **Addressing Transport Connectivity and integration of transport systems:** Prioritizing travel to education/work in opening and intensifying new bus routes and local rail stations to address the lack of transport connectivity in rural parts of the district.
  - **Enhanced economic growth through Inward Investment Opportunities:** Without a devolution deal, there is little certainty over the delivery of large-scale inward investment opportunities.
- Page 240 Improved Public Transport:** This initiative will improve public transport, supporting economic activity and leisure.
- **Increased sustainability and reduced environmental impact:** through green transport options.



## Housing, Regeneration & Strategic Planning

### The case for change / key opportunity areas:

- **Strengthened collaboration around land use** to enable strategic decisions to be made to provide additional benefits across the geography, including the opportunity to engage with Homes England on an area wide basis.
- **Compulsory purchase powers** – with the consent of the relevant local authority, devolved powers could enable potential future growth opportunities
- **Planning & Licensing fee powers** - Currently planning and licensing fees are not set locally. If Local authorities were able to have more control over this, re-investment could be made in the local area.
- **Devolved funding** and targeted business rate retention from future growth to create a strategic regeneration and housing enabling fund - Currently there is a lack of tailored funding to target derelict and non-viable locations across the county as a whole and as a result sites are remaining inaccessible to development.
- **Devolved Homelessness prevention funding** - Currently Councils are struggling to deliver tailored homelessness prevention solutions and to provide adequate temporary accommodation for homeless households.
- **Devolved net zero funding** – this would include funding for retrofitting existing buildings to help meet net zero targets.

### Key asks:

- **Devolved Powers as listed above**
- **Devolved Funding as above**

### Difference to the area:

- **Strengthened collaboration and strategic coordination** – This would substantially enhance cooperation between neighbouring planning authorities across the area and enable authorities to better understand the needs across the wider area. It would also support the development of coherent strategies to address unmet housing needs, deliver spatial and infrastructure plans and enable greater opportunities for enhanced partnership arrangements with Homes England and local authorities across the geography.
- **Compulsory purchase powers** – with the consent the relevant local authorities, this could assist to unlock sites and locations across the area.
- **Planning & Licensing fee powers** - Having these powers set at a local level would enable reinvestment in the local area.
- **Devolved funding and business rate retention to create a strategic regeneration and housing enabling fund** - Devolved funding would be able to provide targeted interventions towards derelict and non-viable locations which would then assist to unlock land for development and would also promote regeneration opportunities.
- **Devolved Homelessness prevention funding** - Devolved funding would enable more flexibility, innovation and allow authorities to provide tailored homelessness prevention solutions to meet the specific needs of their geography.
- **Devolved net zero funding** - Decarbonizing housing stock and improving energy efficiency can reduce the environmental impact and promote sustainability.

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