



**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

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 Gullis (Chair), Shaw (Vice-Chair), Fisher, Renshaw, Rogerson and Simpson

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: Where the total membership of a committee is 12 Members or less, the quorum will be 3 members.... Where the total membership is more than 12 Members, the quorum will be one quarter of the total membership.

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

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CABINET

Tuesday, 23rd June, 2026
Time of Commencement: 2.00 pm

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Present: Councillor Jonathan Gullis (Chair)

Councillors:	Gullis	Fisher	Rogerson
	Shaw	Renshaw	Simpson

Officers:	Gordon Mole	Chief Executive
	Nesta Barker	Service Director - Regulatory Services
	Georgina Evans-Stadward	Service Director - Strategy, People and Performance
	Roger Tait	Service Director - Neighbourhood Delivery
	Geoff Durham	Civic & Member Support Officer
	Paul Dutton	Senior Media Officer
	Craig Turner	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer
	Joanne Halliday	Service Director - Commercial Delivery
	Olwen Brown	Interim Service Director- Legal and Governance/Monitoring Officer
	Allan Clarke	Interim Head of Service - Planning Policy

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Leader declared an interest in agenda item 5 – Adoption of the Borough Local Plan (2020-2040), the landowners of proposed AB2 site were client of a company that the Leader worked with in a private capacity as a senior advisor.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 17 March, 2026 be agreed as a correct record.

3. **WALLEYS QUARRY UPDATE**

The Service Director for Neighbourhood Delivery presented a report updating Cabinet on the latest position regarding Walleys Quarry.

The data focussed on the period March-May, 2026. To date, in 2026 there had been seven complaints of odour received. Monitoring undertaken by officers had revealed two occasions of a distinct odour being observed on Cemetery Road and Barnacle

Place in April. Hydrogen sulphide monitoring also recorded a zero level and there was only one week in March where the WHO odour annoyance level was exceeded.

There was now only the one MMF which was sited at Galingale.

The site would continue to be monitored and there were proposals to establish a cross-party working group.

The Leader asked what the current position was, at the present time, regarding legal proceedings.

The Service Director advised that at present, the Council was not involved in taking any legal proceedings. The Environment Agency had identified that they were looking at legal proceedings.

The Leader asked for clarification in respect of the monitoring stations.

The Service Director advised that there was currently one monitoring station which was measuring a wide range of pollutants on the Galingale estate.

The Leader thanked the officers for their hard work over the years and congratulated the previous administration for their hard work. It was now important that justice be sought for residents. The Leader asked if there was any indication that the government would engage in a public inquiry.

Requests had been made for a public inquiry but there was no support for that at this moment in time.

The Leader stated that once the EA had completed its legal proceedings, the Council would reaffirm its commitment to push for a public inquiry.

Resolved: That the contents of the update report be noted

[Watch the debate here](#)

4. ADOPTION OF BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN (2020-2040)

The Interim Head of Service – Planning Policy presented a report considering the adoption of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan (2020-2040). The local plan had been submitted for examination in December, 2024.

The development of the plan had involved a number of consultation stages and had been informed by a significant evidence base. Local plan examination hearing sessions were held throughout May and June, 2025, following which, changes were made and those were consulted upon in November/December, 2025.

The Inspector issued a final report on the plan in May, 2026 which marked the end of the local plan examination. The Inspector concluded that the plan could provide an appropriate basis for planning in the Borough and could be found sound and legally compliant, subject to a list of main modifications – summarised at paragraph 2.2 of the agenda report. No further changes could now be made to the plan.

Options available to the Council presented a binary choice; to adopt the plan with the modifications or to not adopt.

The Leader stated that the Council had written to the Planning Inspector following the final report in May, seeking to make amendments in terms of certain policies and also to open up the possibility of certain sites being removed and replaced if viable and asked the Interim Head of Service what the response had been.

The response had confirmed that the examination had ended and there was no way of changing any aspects of the plan.

Referring to recommendation 2, the Leader asked the Chief Executive if a change could be made, as he felt that there was still time to discuss the issue further with his group and to seek reassurances from other group leaders, particularly the Conservative group leader who instigated and delivered the draft local plan in the hope that he would second any motion coming before full council. The Leader then proposed an amended recommendation (ii).

The Chief Executive stated that he would look at the amended recommendation wording, and what it would entail before the publication of the full council papers next week.

The Service Director – Legal and Governance/Monitoring Officer urged the Council to be careful if it did not accept the plan as it stood because it could leave the Council open to potential litigation.

The Leader asked, with the number of sites that were currently proposed within the local plan, how many currently had applications sitting or waiting and what would the likely outcome be if the local plan was not adopted and planning applications were put in for those sites. Could the Council reject them or would appeals and costs be faced and, if so, what costs would be associated with such appeals.

The Interim Head of Service advised that applications had already been made to locations included in the plan and the Council was aware of other proposed developments in the pipeline.

The Leader asked what would be the risk to all green spaces and green belt sites if the local plan was not adopted.

Not having an up to date policy context within the local plan may expose the Borough to speculative development in order to meet identified development needs. The Council could not currently identify a five year supply of homes and also the possibility of direct intervention from the Secretary of State who had powers to approve the plan.

The Leader referred to a number of local authorities who had had their powers in relation to planning taken. Would this council be at risk of that happening should the local plan not be adopted.

There had been recent examples in relation to powers in determining major applications and another authority had a direct intervention from the Secretary of State asking them to take certain actions in respect of their local plan.

The Leader was happy to take the first recommendation for the report but again asked the Chief Executive if the Administration could confirm on 3 July of its intention.

The Chief Executive suggested wording that the Administration wished to see productive and engaging conversation with all groups, ahead of a decision and there

was a wish from the Administration to have that in place ahead of the next full council meeting.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the outcomes of the Inspectors report into the examination of the Borough Local Plan 2020-2040 (appendices 1 and 2 to this report), be noted.
 - (ii) Notes that the Administration seeks positive engagement and, where possible, agreement with opposition groups on the respective positions towards the adoption of the Borough Council Local Plan (2020-2040) in advance of the meeting of Full Council.

[Watch the debate here](#)

5. NEW LOCAL PLAN: COMMENCEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Leader introduced a report which was to confirm the formal commencement of a new Borough Local Plan for Newcastle-under-Lyme. The Leader stated that there was now a situation where the government had introduced an additional 2000+ housing target requirement for the Borough. Therefore, as the current draft local plan did not meet the revised housing target, the Council would be expected to put a new plan forward

The Interim Head of Service – Planning Policy advised that arrangements in the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework introduced a new method for calculating housing need which increased the Borough's requirement for housing to around 559 dwellings per year compared to the 400 per year in the emerging plan. As the Council's local plan provided for less than 80% of the required figure, the Authority was required to start preparing a new local plan.

Published regulations stated that the Council must start preparing a new local plan by issuing a notification of commencement by 30 June, 2026 alongside a timetable to complete the plan. The timetable anticipated that the local plan would be submitted for examination in October, 2028.

The Council had been successful in acquiring additional funding from the government to support the early stages of plan making but further additional funding would be required.

The Leader stated that this council being asked, at a time of uncertainty- with local government reorganisation, to utilise thousands of hours of officer time and approximately £1m of taxpayers money into a local plan that potentially would not see the light of day - if the reorganisation went ahead, would be foolish.

The Leader therefore felt that Cabinet could not approve the preparation for a new local plan. A letter had been written to the Secretary of State advising that, whilst a decision on local government reorganisation was awaited, it would be sensible to, at the very least, pause the process. No response had yet been received. The Leader

would write a further letter making it clear that this council refused to take part in any local plan process going forward. The Leader asked what the risks would be of refusing to take part in the process.

The Interim Head of Service advised that preparation of a local plan was a statutory requirement and regulations published at the end of March noted that councils through transitional arrangements such as this council were required to start the local plan making process by the end of this month. There was also a risk financially that the money provided by the government to start the process would have to be returned and intervention from the Secretary of State on any decision not to move forward at this stage.

Regarding the money provided by the government, the Leader asked the Service Director – Finance/ Section 151 Officer if that money was still unused and could be sent back to the government if required.

The Service Director confirmed that was correct.

Resolved: That work on the new Local Plan not be taken forward until the outcomes and implications of Local Government Reorganisation is known.

[Watch the debate here](#)

6. NEWCASTLE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES UPDATE

The Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery presented a report which provided an update on the performance of the Community Safety Partnership for 2025/26 and the Night Time Economy Strategy.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 2.2 of the report which outlined the findings of the Community Safety Strategic Assessment.

The Community Safety Partnership worked to deploy resources into areas where there were localised issues – particularly in Newcastle town centre.

The report set out a detailed review of data along with a comprehensive list of the Partnership's activities and operations in progress to identify priorities. Those identifies for 2026/27 were listed at paragraph 2.3 of the report.

Issues local to Newcastle that were being addressed were business crime, shoplifting, domestic abuse and drugs and County Lines.

The Local Police and Crime Plan was appended to the report which set out the response to the issues.

The Deputy Leader asked if there were any rotas for visible policing in Newcastle town centre.

The Service Director stated that, for obvious reasons, the focus was on the night time economy. There was a rota for safer policing at weekends. The police did have a presence in the town centre during the day time but it was dependent upon what came in during the course of the day.

The Deputy Leader stated that a zero tolerance policy was needed in respect of anti-social behaviour (ASB), especially in the town centre. He had not seen many police visible and suggested that crime rates may be dropping because they were not always being recorded.

The Service Director stated that he could ask the police for information on rotas for day time policing, which was then agreed.

The Leader stated that traders and the Business Improvement District (BID) had raised this, particularly regarding early mornings with rough sleepers or street drinkers and something needed to be done. The Leader referred to Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) and asked how successful they had been. Reference was made to Stafford, which had included face coverings in their PSPO and it would be good to include that in Newcastle's Order.

The Service Director advised that the PSPO for Newcastle town centre had been successful in terms of hotspot activity times in the night time economy, which was when the bulk of the breaches occurred. The current PSPO would need to be checked in respect of face coverings to see if there was any interpretation and if that was not the case, to see if it could be included in the next scheduled review in three years. Regarding the early morning issues, a lot of the people had complex needs and a lot of work went into engaging with people and trying to support them. However, for individuals who refused to engage, the Council did have powers to start looking at moving them on.

The Leader had concerns about those who were persistent and refused any assistance which endangered the wider public and a good strategy on communication was needed to get reporting levels up.

The Cabinet Member for Legal, Governance and Organisational Performance stated that, if there were not any rotas, would it be possible to look at whether there was a presence in the town centre. He had found it quite intimidating walking in the town at lunchtime and there had been a visible odour of drug smoke in the air. A police presence would pick up on that and check and search. People could be asked to be more responsive in reporting the matters.

The Leader suggested that it would be profitable to meet with the Local Policing Commander, looking at the strategy and seeing where the Council could work in corroboration with them. There needed to be a clear partnership update in terms of demands on the officers and what was expected in terms of the Council working with them to provide things such as CCTV coverage, Rangers and reporting systems. It was hoped that the Night Time Economy Pilot Town status bid would be awarded for up to three areas.

The Service Director stated that, in terms of the bid, the Council should hear very soon if it had been successful. It would include a 'twilight zone' in the town between schools and colleges finishing until the pubs became busy – which was when ASB was experienced. Having legitimate activities occurring during that time would help with natural surveillance.

Resolved: (i) That the report be received and the outcomes for 2025-2026 and the work of the Community Safety Partnership in continuing to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as the work in progress to continue to tackle identified priority issues, be noted.

- (ii) That the Service Director - Neighbourhood Delivery be authorised to formally accept project funding for the Night Time Economy Pilot Town status, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Residents Services and Neighbourhoods, if the bid is successful, and to implement the project.

[Watch the debate here](#)

7. NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME COMMUNITY FUND

The Service Director – Finance (Section 151 Officer) presented a report seeking to establish the Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Fund enabling Councillors to respond directly to priorities within their wards.

The Fund would provide each Councillor with up to £2,500 per year and aimed to strengthen community wellbeing, encourage local collaboration and support projects which delivered tangible benefits for residents. Details of how the budgets could be used, and how they should not be used were shown in the protocol at Appendix 1 of the report.

The Deputy Leader thanked the Service Director for his help in initiating the Fund and asked for clarification as to where the money for the project had come from.

The Service Director stated that the £110,000 Fund (£2,500 each for 44 Members) had come from the previous 'Civic Pride Investment Fund' which was £22,000. The remaining £88,000 would be vired from a previous contribution to the Civic Growth Fund for Sustainable Environment and Town and Place.

The Leader stated that this was exciting and for wards with more than one Member it would mean more money to spend on local projects and, with County Councillor contributions a Borough Councillor could, for example purchase a grit bin and it would then be the County Council's responsibility to keep it full and maintain it.

Resolved: That the establishment of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Fund which allocates Councillor's a maximum of £2,500 per annum to address local priorities within their wards, as identified by their local communities, be approved.

[Watch the debate here](#)

8. BRAMPTON MUSEUM APPLICATION TO THE NATIONAL LOTTERY FOR MUSEUM IMPROVEMENTS

The Service Director – Commercial Delivery presented a report updating Cabinet on the museum's proposed 2027-29 National Lottery funding bid and to seek approval to apply for up to £150,000 funding.

The project would seek to make improvements which were outlined at paragraph 1.4 of the report.

The bid would require minor match funding which could be delivered through the Conservation and Exhibition budget.

The Leader stated that Brampton Museum was a very important community

asset.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That an application to the National Lottery of up to £150,000 to deliver a project between April 2027-March 2029, be approved.
 - (ii) That the museum be approved to use its previous public fundraising and forthcoming public fundraising to provide the 10% match funding.
 - (iii) That, to meet the additional grant match funding, the use of £500 from the museum's existing annual conservation budget and £1,000 from the annual exhibition budget to carry out preventative conservation and create a high-quality exhibition celebrating the history of Newcastle high street, be approved.
 - (iv) That the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader & Cabinet Member for Planning & Town Centres be authorised to accept and utilise any funding allocated in line with the bid, including any necessary contracts.

[Watch the debate here](#)

9. **PET CREMATION PROGRESS REPORT**

The Leader introduced a report regarding the updated Business Case for the Pet Crematorium and seeking approval to proceed with the necessary contracts including delivery of the cremation unit. He asked for clarification on the service being offered by Stoke on Trent City Council.

The Service Director – Commercial Delivery presented the report and stated that the new service would be totally separate to the existing one. The Pet Cremation service would be a personal service where all pets would be treated with dignity on an individual basis.

A planning application had been submitted and the tendering process for the cremator had been completed. The result of the tendering process would be discussed in closed session at the end of this meeting. The Business Case had been reviewed and updated and that too would be discussed under closed session.

The report showed the proposed fees and charges for the service and those were listed at paragraph 8.6 of the report.

The service would trade as 'Loved and Loyal Pet Crematorium' and web addresses had been purchased.

Stoke City Council had a scattering area for cremated remains of pets within Carmountside Crematorium grounds and should a resident of Newcastle or Stoke use the pet cremation service they could scatter the ashes at Carmountside if wished.

The proposal had received positive feedback from residents.

The Leader asked if the planning application was currently live online and therefore open for people to make comments. This was confirmed.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Green Spaces asked if residents would be expected to take their pets to the crematorium themselves.

The Service Director confirmed that that would be the intention, although if corporate contracts with veterinary practices existed, they could deliver the pet to Bradwell.

The Leader asked what type of pets would be accepted at the crematorium.

The Service Director stated that there would be two chambers in the cremator – one would accept up to a large dog and a smaller one for 'hamster sized' pets.

The Leader stated that this had a strong business case and would be an asset to the Borough.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That continued support be given to the development of a pet cremation service to provide residents with a local caring service when needed.
 - (ii) That the progress made in relation to the planning application and the procurement of the necessary products to deliver the service in line with the up to date business plan, be noted.
 - (iii) That the Service Director for Commercial Services in consultation with the Leader & Cabinet Member for Planning & Town Centres be delegated authority to complete all necessary contracts to ensure the effective delivery of the project in line with the legislative requirements.
 - (iv) That the fees and charges as set out in the report and marketing commences at the appropriate time, be adopted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

10. RENEWAL OF THE POOL WATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS & MOVEABLE FLOOR/LIFT SERVICING & MAINTENANCE CONTRACT AT JUBILEE 2

The Service Director – Commercial Delivery presented a report seeking authority to enter into a new contract for the planned and reactive maintenance and servicing covering the pool filtration/chemical and moveable floor/lift components in support of the safe operation of both pools at J2.

The Current Contract would end on 30 September this year so it was recommended to go out to tender. It was essential that the contract and service were in place, as, without it the safe clean water could not be guaranteed or that the moving parts of the pool were safe and useable. The contract would be for two years with a one year extension subject to successful service delivery.

The Leader asked if the current contract could just be extended or was the Council just abiding by normal procurement process.

The Service Director advised that the usual extensions, as set out in the original contract had been used and therefore, to be compliant with the procurement regulations, the Council should go back out to re-tender which enables the current contractor to bid again.

The Cabinet Member for Residents Services and Neighbourhoods asked why the Council was looking at a two plus one year contract. Was this due to regulations or the framework that was used.

The Service Director advised that a longer service could be sought but a lot of the current contracts had been set up this way on the basis of waiting for a decision on local government reorganisation.

Resolved: That, subject to the successful procurement process of a new contract, it be approved that the Service Director Commercial Delivery in consultation with the Leader & Cabinet Member for Planning & Town Centres, to enter into a contract with the successful provider for a period of two years with an option to extend the term by a further year.

[Watch the debate here](#)

11. FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW REPORT - FOURTH QUARTER 2025/26

The Service Director – Finance/Section 151 Officer presented the financial aspect of the report which provided figures for the fourth quarter of 2025/26.

The Council ended 2025/26 in a stable financial position, achieving £115,000 revenue surplus against a £19.7m balanced budget. Strong planning income, investment interest and reduced borrowing costs had helped to offset income pressures in leisure, parking and bereavement services.

Capital investment had remained a major focus, with over £27m spent on regeneration, town deals and community projects. Whilst capital expenditure was below the planned £36m most of the variance reflected projects being reprofiled into 2026/27.

The Audit and Standards Committee would be presented with the Council's draft Statement of Accounts at its next meeting on 29 June for review and publication approval.

Overall, sound financial management was demonstrated and there had been compliance with all statutory deadlines and there was continued momentum on key regeneration priorities.

The Service Director - Strategy, People and Performance presented the performance figures for the fourth quarter. Forty nine indicators had been measured and 70% of those were on target. For the 30% that were not on target the report contained narrative as to the reasons for that.

There was consistently good performance across the services and the purpose of the report was to see where improvements could be made.

The Cabinet Member for Legal, Governance and Organisational Performance stated that he would rather see actual figures rather than percentages for the performance figures.

Referring back to the finance figures, the Leader asked for clarification that there were changes to pension contributions and also interest secured from Town Deal investment which had aided the Council's finances.

The Service Director – Finance/Section 151 Officer confirmed that pension contributions would have helped to bridge the gap in 2026/27 and the receipt of Town Deal monies in advance of spend had generated interest which had also helped to offset some income shortfalls throughout the year.

The Leader asked what the plan with the finances where Town Deal money was starting to be spent and would therefore no longer be in the accounts – how would potential shortfalls be dealt with, going forward.

The Service Director advised that the Council had not relied on any of the interest for the budgets, so for 2026/27 the budget for interest receivable would be nil. In terms of income areas where losses had been experienced going back to Covid, in each year of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Council had had a reduction in terms of income levels. By the end of the current financial year it was hoped that the Council would be in a much better position in terms of income.

The Leader referred back to fly tipping, the Council had averaged 4.77 days which was within target but enforcement was not.

The Service Director - Neighbourhood Delivery advised that enforcement had previously been measured in such a way that it looked like action was not being taken in relation to every single fly-tip. Going forward, every fly-tip incident would be investigated in such a way that the Streetscene team would go out and look through the rubbish for evidence of the offender. Evidence would then be passed to the Neighbourhood Delivery team to pursue any enforcement action that could be taken. The actual investigation was an enforcement action and therefore almost 100% of incidents had some kind of enforcement action associated with them.

Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecution can only be proceeded if evidence was found at the fly-tip and, at present that level of evidence was not being acquired. However, there was currently funding to employ some mobile re-deployable CCTV cameras to place at hotspots. These could act as a deterrent and also gain evidence.

The Leader referred to planning enforcement and stated that the year to date figures for informing complainants within the required timescale was 68.1% and below the 75% target – although the Quarter Four figure was 82.4%. The Leader asked why the annual target was missed.

The Chief Executive stated that the planning enforcement team had been working on actions to improve the figures. It was an evidence-led process and reporting-led process. There were limited resources in the enforcement area which the Council was keen to look at going forward to ensure that there was the right balance in place.

The Leader stated that he was keen to ensure that the Council was using its enforcement officers to be proactive and aggressive in enforcement in terms of issuing fines or seeking legal action against landlords or land owners who were not maintaining or looking after their property. He referred to some work that the Service Director – Regulatory Services was undertaking regarding vape shops and barber shops that the Council had concerns about.

The Leader asked what the Council Tax increase would be for the years going forward.

The Service Director -Finance/Section 151 Officer stated that, in the currently approved MTFS, there was an assumption that it would remain at 1.99%. The figure would be refined during the budget setting process in September.

Resolved: That the contents of the attached report and appendices be noted and the Council's service and financial performance for this period be continually monitored and challenged.

[Watch the debate here](#)

12. FORWARD PLAN

The Chief Executive advised that the Forward Plan would be published on the first working day of July which would cover up to four months' activity. Areas of work had been given by Cabinet and the Administration and those would be added prior to publication.

Resolved: That the update on the Forward Plan be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

13. URGENT BUSINESS

The Leader asked the Chief Executive if he could add an item of Urgent Business.

An encampment had been set up near to Aldi and the Leader asked what action had been taken.

The Chief Executive advised that the site was on private land and the Mobile Multi-Functional Team had been working with the site owners and with other agencies. It was the responsibility of the private landowner to lead and it was understood that they were seeking enforcement by the court for removal of the encampment.

The Council had limited powers in private land situations but the Council was closely monitoring the situation. Advice would be offered by the Council to the landowner in respect of securing their property.

The Leader asked if the Council was confident that the landowner had started the process of taking action to bring the situation to an end.

The Service Director- Neighbourhood Delivery stated that the Council was awaiting a report back from the landowner today but indications were that they were pursuing it as best they could.

The Leader asked if there was any indication on timescale.

The Service Director advised that this would not be known until the landowner engaged with the court. A court date would need to be set to secure an eviction order or possession order for the land to enable an eviction.

The Leader asked what action the Council could take against the landowner if it was felt that they were making insufficient effort to clear the site.

The Service Director stated that there were two possible actions. Firstly, the Council could serve a Community Protection Warning because of any nuisance that was being caused and secondly, it was on the police radar so if there were any issues or criminality associated with the site it would open up another avenue for action.

14. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

Resolved:- That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of 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.

15. PET CREMATION PROGRESS REPORT

**Cllr Jonathan Gullis
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 3.05 pm

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Report to Cabinet

04 August 2026



Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030

Lead Member:

Cllr Vanessa Renshaw
Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Protection

Lead Officer:

Nesta Barker - Service Director - Regulatory Services

Key Decision: Yes

Ward(s): All

Appendices: None

Report Assurance:

	Name	Date
Lead Officer	Nesta Barker	01/07/26
Monitoring Officer	Olwen Brown	20/07/26
Section 151	Craig Turner	17/07/26
Chief Executive	Gordon Mole	17/07/26
Cabinet Member	Cllr Vanessa Renshaw	21/07/26

Report Summary

The process of reviewing and updating the Housing and Homelessness Strategy commenced in 2025. The Draft Strategy has subsequently been considered by a previous cabinet, subject to public consultation and reviewed by the current administration. Following these stages, and the incorporation of relevant amendments, the Strategy is now presented to Cabinet for approval and publication.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet:

1. Approves the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030.

1 Background

- 1.1 Developing and maintaining a housing strategy enables the local authorities to assess current and emerging challenges, establish priorities and objectives, and plan effectively for the future.
- 1.2 Housing plays a vital role in people's health, wellbeing and quality of life. Regularly reviewing and updating the Strategy ensures that the Council continues to provide an appropriate framework for working with residents, partners and stakeholders to address local housing needs.
- 1.4 The current Housing Strategy was adopted in 2021 with an associated four-year action plan. The current Homelessness Strategy was adopted in 2020 with a five-year action plan. As a period of 4 years had passed, it is considered appropriate to review and refresh the strategy.
- 1.5 The process of updating the Housing and Homelessness Strategy began in 2025. On 2 December 2025, Cabinet considered a report on the Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030. Cabinet approved the draft strategy for public consultation and authorised the Service Director - Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing, to agree the final version for publication following the consultation stage.
- 1.6 The draft strategy was published for public consultation on the Council's website on 20 January 2026. In addition, members of the Homelessness Forum were notified by email and invited to submit their views and comments on the draft strategy.
- 1.7 Three responses were received during the consultation period. Overall, the feedback was positive, with respondents expressing support for the strategic priorities and objectives set out within the Strategy.
- 1.8 Following consultation, a small number of amendments were made. These included specific reference to Aspire Housing to recognise its important role in delivering housing-related projects and services across the borough. References to the Renters' Rights Bill were also updated to reflect its enactment as an Act of Parliament.
- 1.9 The amendments made following consultation were minor in nature. The consultation responses did not identify any significant issues or recommend substantial changes to the strategic priorities, objectives or proposed actions

contained within the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030 which is at Appendix 1 of this report.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 In May 2026, Borough Council elections resulted in a change in political leadership. The draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy has subsequently been reviewed by the new administration. Whilst supportive of the overall direction, aims and objectives of the Strategy, the administration has identified four areas that it wishes to give greater prominence within the document:
- Advocacy for Article 4 Directions to enable greater local control over Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
 - Prioritising improvements in energy efficiency, reducing fuel poverty and lowering household energy costs, rather than focusing solely on decarbonisation objectives.
 - Supporting the provision of housing that meets the needs of local communities.
 - Strengthening the focus on supported housing provision within the borough.
- 2.2 As a result, amendments have been made to the wording of the Strategy to reflect these priorities. These changes do not alter the overall strategic direction of the document but seek to place greater emphasis on matters of importance to the current administration.
- 2.3 Although Cabinet previously authorised the Service Director - Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing, to agree the final version of the Strategy following public consultation, it is considered appropriate that the revised document be referred back to Cabinet for consideration and formal approval.
- 2.4 Given that the Strategy was subject to an eight-week public consultation in early 2026, and that the amendments subsequently made are limited in scope and do not materially alter the Strategy's strategic objectives, it is not considered necessary to undertake a further round of public consultation before adoption.

3 Strategic Approach

- 3.1 The Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030 is structured around three cross-cutting priorities that recognise the links between housing, health, economic prosperity and homelessness:
- Housing and Health
 - Housing and Prosperity
 - Homelessness and Rough Sleeping
- 3.2 These priorities have associated objectives.

Priority 1: Housing and Health aims to foster strategic joined-up thinking and policy setting on health and housing, and to continuously improve housing standards and the energy efficiency of the housing stock.

Priority 2: Housing and Prosperity seeks to develop a housing market that is vibrant and economically prosperous and meets the needs of our residents; to facilitate the development of a range of affordable housing that meets identified housing needs; and to contribute to the economic regeneration of town centres through the incorporation of mixed-use developments.

Priority 3: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping endeavours to continue providing early intervention and partnership working in order to prevent homelessness; to support those who are faced with homelessness issues, particularly those who are rough sleeping; and to operate a housing allocation system, including both registration and allocation processes, that enables those in housing need to access appropriate social housing.

4 Finance & Resources

- 4.1 Delivery of the actions set out within the Housing and Homelessness Strategy will have implications for a number of Council services. It is intended that these actions will be embedded within existing and future service plans and delivered through available resources where possible. Any financial implications arising from the implementation of the Strategy will be considered and managed through the Council's annual budget-setting process and service planning arrangements.

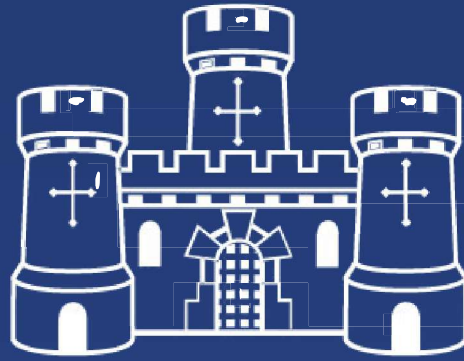
5 Legal & Governance

- 5.1 Whilst there is no statutory requirement for the Council to adopt a Housing and Homelessness Strategy, it provides an important framework for setting priorities and coordinating activity across a range of policy areas, including planning, housing standards, homelessness prevention, disabled facilities grants and partnership working with key stakeholders.

6 Supporting Information

- 6.1 Draft Housing Strategy 2026-2030
- 6.2 <http://vm-azmodern.gov/documents/s45793/Housing%20and%20Homelessness%20Strategy%20Cabinet%20Report.pdf>

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET 2nd December 2025: Report Title: Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030



NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL



HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

2026 - 2030

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Foreword

A safe, secure and suitable home is fundamental to a good quality of life. It provides stability for families, supports better health and educational outcomes, enables people to live independently and helps create strong, settled communities.

This Housing and Homelessness Strategy puts the needs of Newcastle-under-Lyme residents first. It sets out a practical approach to improving housing standards, increasing the availability of affordable and accessible homes, preventing homelessness at the earliest possible stage and ensuring that support is available for those who genuinely need it.

We want housing development to meet the needs of local people and strengthen, rather than undermine, the communities in which it takes place. That means protecting the supply of family homes and giving the Council greater local control over the future growth of Houses in Multiple Occupation.

We will also take a firm approach to supported housing. Vulnerable residents, including people facing homelessness, survivors of domestic abuse and those with complex needs, deserve safe accommodation and genuine, effective support. Providers receiving public money must deliver proper standards, positive outcomes for residents and demonstrable value for taxpayers. Poor-quality provision that fails residents or exploits the benefits system must not be tolerated.

Our approach is both compassionate and responsible. We will support those in genuine need, intervene early to prevent homelessness, enforce proper housing standards and ensure that taxpayers' money is spent wisely. By working with residents, registered housing providers, landlords, developers, health and care services and the voluntary sector, we will deliver a housing system that protects vulnerable people, supports aspiration and strengthens communities across our Borough.



Councillor Vanessa Renshaw
Cabinet Member for Housing &
Public Protection

Housing is fundamental to the wellbeing of people, their families and their wider communities. Improving housing standards, options, conditions and neighborhoods within the Borough is essential for enhancing economic growth, tackling vulnerabilities, improving outcomes for our children including their educational attainment, health and wellbeing, and community cohesion.

The Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030 supports the Council's aims and objectives for the Borough and sets out our strategic housing priorities. The policy details a range of actions we intend to take in partnership with relevant partners and stakeholders to support residents to access good quality, suitable and affordable housing while preventing homelessness and rough sleeping.

We recognise that the most dominant issues currently facing residents within the Borough and the United Kingdom is the continuity of economic instability and the cost-of-living crisis post Covid-19 resulting in a reduction of available public funding.

Despite the tough economic conditions, the Council has been working with a wide range of local partners including Registered Housing Providers, developers, private landlords and other organisations, to identify residents' housing needs, maximize the number of affordable homes built across the Borough, and improve the quality and choice of homes for all residents. This partnership approach is key to the future delivery and development of affordable and market housing and will help improve the Borough's housing offer.

Our 3 key priorities are thematic, cross cutting and we acknowledge the correlation between different policy areas and how one will interplay with another. These are:

- Housing and Health
- Housing and Prosperity
- Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

For each priority, we have set out their associated objectives, helping us to visualise what we intend to achieve.

Linkages with Strategy

The Housing and Homelessness Strategy exists alongside a range of interconnected plans, policies, and strategies. We aim to strengthen this relationship through this strategy and associated activities.



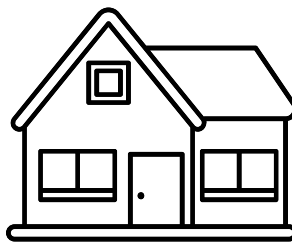
Profile of the Borough

Demographics and Population



- 58,500 households provide for a population of approximately 127,700 (2025 Experian)
- Between the last two censuses 2011 and 2021, the average (median) age of Newcastle-under-Lyme increased by two years, from 41 to 43 years of age.
- The number of people aged 65 to 74 years rose by just under 2,100 (an increase of 17.4%), while the number of residents between 35 and 49 years fell by around 4,100 (16.1% decrease).

Housing



The 2021 Census showed that 38 per cent of households were owned outright – a higher proportion than any other housing tenure. 30 per cent of households owned property with a mortgage, 17 per cent were social renters and 15 per cent were private renters or occupied rent free.

The Government standard method for determining the minimum number of homes needed in an area suggests that at least 347 dwellings per annum are needed in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

The most common housing type in the Borough is that of a semi-detached house. 45 per cent of households live in such a property, with the next most-common types being a detached house with 26 per cent of properties and terraced with 19 per cent. 9 per cent of households live in a purpose-built block of flats or tenement.

The average house price in Newcastle-under-Lyme was £211,000 in August 2024 (provisional), up 8.0% from August 2023. This was higher than the rise in the West Midlands (2.6%) over the same period.

Private rents rose to an average of £724 in September 2024, an annual increase of 7.4% from £674 in September 2023. This was lower than the rise in the West Midlands (8.8%) over the year. The average price paid by first-time buyers was £185,000 in August 2024 (provisional). This was 8.6% higher than the average of £171,000 in August 2023 (revised).

For homes bought with a mortgage, the average house price was £218,000 in August 2024 (provisional). This was 8.2% higher than the average of £201,000 in August 2023 (revised).

Socio-Economic Context

There are 80 Lower-layer Super Output Areas in the Borough, each containing an average (mean) of 1,540 residents. Ten of these LSOAs are in the 20 per cent most deprived in England and Wales, according to the 2025 Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Two LSOAs, one predominantly in Cross Heath ward and one predominantly in Knutton are in the 10 per cent most deprived.

In the 2021 Census, 80.1 per cent of residents described their health as being either very good or good. 13.9 per cent said it was fair, with the remaining 5.9 per cent saying it was either bad or very bad. In the recent census, 20.1 per cent of people said that they were disabled according to the Equalities Act.

As of December 2024, an estimated 2.9 per cent of eligible adults aged 16-64 were claiming unemployment benefits. This rate is very slightly higher than for Staffordshire but lower than for Great Britain as a whole. In mid-2022, 81.1 per cent of residents aged 16-64 were economically active, a higher rate than for the West Midlands region and the country. According to the 2021 census the Borough's residents who were employed at the time of the 2021 census, 61 per cent worked for an average of between 31 and 48 hours per week. The 2024 Office for National Statistics (ONS) Business Register and Employment Survey found that, in 2024, 68.1 per cent of Borough residents' jobs were full-time, with 31.9 per cent part-time. The proportion of full-time jobs is higher in the West Midlands (69 per cent) and Great Britain (69.2 per cent).

Social Housing Register

In September 2025, there were 1,724 households on the Council's housing register.

- 51% were in need of a one bedroom property
- 26% were in need two bed property
- 18% were in need of a three bed property
- 5% were in need of a four bed property

ONS median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings ratio was 5.45
ONS lower quartile house price to lower quartile gross annual workplace-based earnings ratio was 6.15

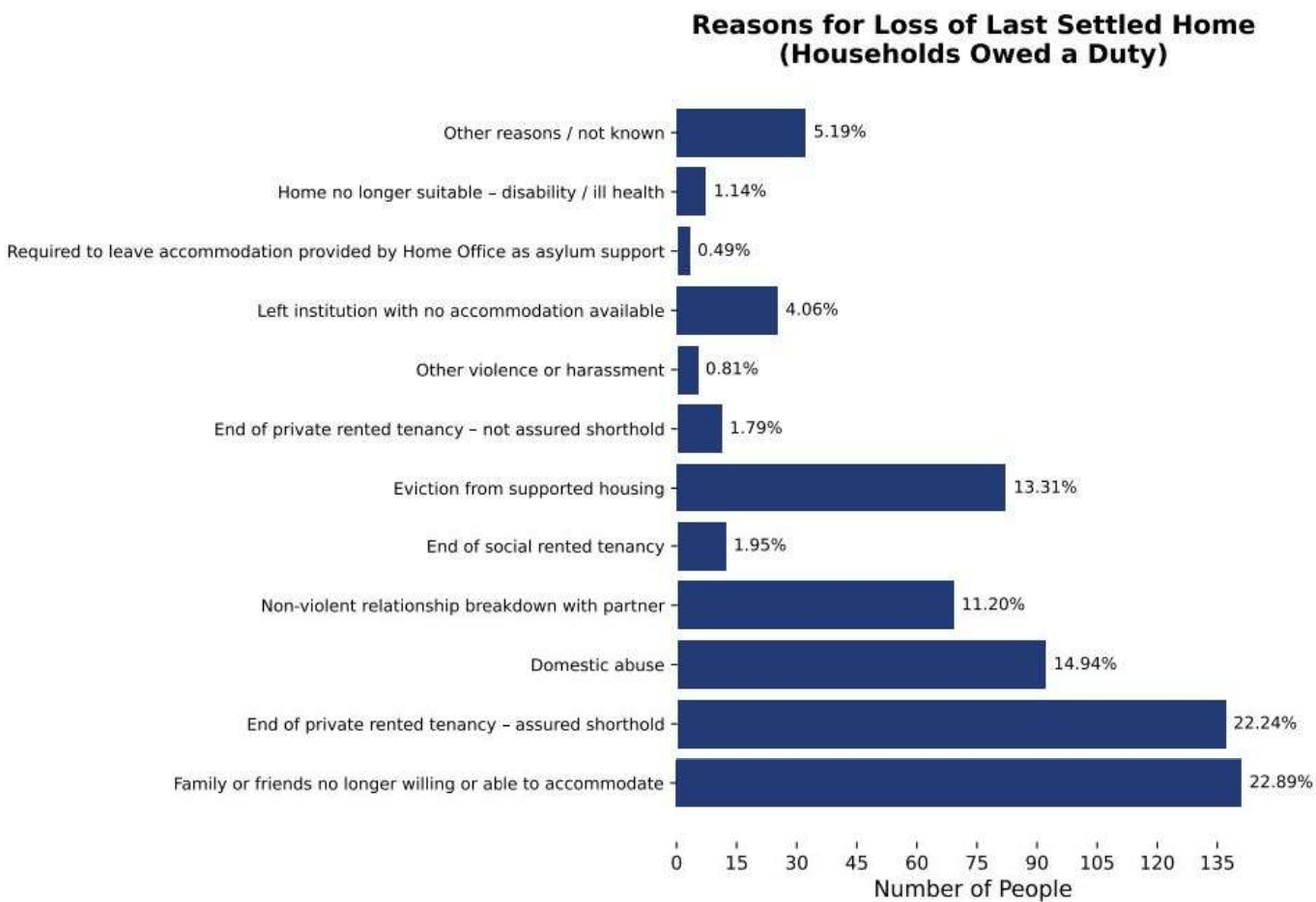
Statutory Homelessness

There are legal duties on local authorities in England to take ‘reasonable steps’ to help eligible applicants:

- avoid homelessness if they are threatened with homelessness. This is commonly referred to as the ‘prevention’ duty.
- secure suitable accommodation if they are homeless. This is commonly referred to as the ‘relief’ duty.

In 2022/2023, 491 households were assessed under statutory homelessness, of which 487 were deemed as owed a duty. In 2023/2024, 632 households were assessed and 616 owed a duty. This represents a 27.2 % increase.

Of the 616 households assessed as owed a duty; 196 were owed a prevention duty (31.8 %) and 420 households (68.2%) were owed a relief duty.



Priority: Housing and Health

Key objectives:

- To foster strategic joined up thinking and policy setting on health and housing
- To continuously improve housing standards and energy efficiency in the housing stock

Housing is a key determinant of health. The quality and suitability of the living environment is crucial in preventing the onset of ill-health, supporting recovery, and slowing the deterioration of certain conditions.

Despite this, nearly eight million people live in a home that does not pass the government's definition of basic decency: 15% of homes (Centre for Ageing Better, 2023; DLUHC, 2023).

Unsafe homes and their associated health conditions translate into an avoidable burden on public services, with an estimated cost to the NHS of £1.1 billion per year (BRE, 2023), £1.1 billion in formal/paid social care costs, and a further £3.5 billion in unpaid care costs (Brimblecombe et al, 2024)

In recognition of the importance of this, the Council commits to several strategic objectives.

Strategic Partnership and Collaborative Working

There is recognition that a range of complex and inter-linked challenges that impact on the quality of life of people cannot be effectively tackled by any one partner alone and more can be achieved by working together.

We work in partnership with a range of organisations such as:

- Social care, health (including mental health and drug and alcohol services)
- Advice agencies
- Money advice
- Voluntary and community sector groups
- Police and other emergency services
- Domestic abuse services
- Registered Providers

As the local authority operates in a two-tier local authority structure, responsibilities are shared with the County Council. There has been longstanding acknowledgment and recognition that a collaborative approach between the County and the local authority is essential to progress the housing and health agenda. The County Council has adopted Staffordshire Housing with Care Strategy 2024-2029, with an action plan centered on collaboration, specifically with Disabled Facilities Grants and Supported Housing. We will seek to engage and contribute to this partnership approach with Staffordshire County Council.

Supported Exempt Accommodation

Supported Exempt Accommodation (SEA) is housing where vulnerable adults are supported to live independently. It normally provides accommodation for: people who are homeless, people recently released from prison, survivors of domestic abuse, people with substance dependencies, people with mental health issues and refugees. This form of housing was considered to be somewhat unregulated and The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act was enacted in 2023 to introduce national supported housing standards. These will provide minimum standards for both the property and the care or support provided in supported accommodation.

Consultation on the implementation of the Act has proposed a licensing scheme for the Supported Housing and reformation to the Housing Benefits System. Under the Act, the Council will need to outline local need and supply of accommodation, carry out a review of the supported exempt accommodation in the district, and in the light of that review, publish a supported housing strategy, for the provision of supported exempt accommodation within the Borough. The Council acknowledges that rising Housing Benefit expenditure now reflects growing pressure on the housing system. These costs principally arise from Supported Housing and Temporary Accommodation provision. The Council intends to focus and reform these areas so that achieves appropriate provision and value for money, working alongside partners such as Aspire Housing.

The Council has established an internal working group, led by senior leadership, to focus on supported housing. Its purpose is to develop a sector that provides genuine support, delivers positive outcomes for residents, meets identified local needs, and offers value for public money.

Housing Conditions

According to English Housing Survey: local authority housing stock condition modelling, 2020, there are approx. 7,000 properties that are non-decent and approx. 5,000 dwellings with a Category 1 hazard in our Borough. We assess housing conditions under the Housing and Health Rating System. The key principle of the system is to consider the health and safety of the people living in these properties in relation to 29 hazards. These include damp and mould, excess cold, fire, falls, and electrical hazards. In the last 12 months we have inspected 84 properties. We have identified 98 Category 1 hazards and Category 2 hazards, which were subsequently rectified.

The Government has committed to reforming the Private Rented Sector, making it fair, secure and fit for purpose. The Council will have a new legislative framework, of raising awareness and enforcing, to ensure that the private rented sector works well within the Borough and provides a stable form of accommodation.

Under the Housing Act 2004 , local authorities must keep the housing conditions in their area under review. Our Council will use various data sets, both of a primary and a secondary nature to keep housing conditions under review.

During 2023 there was a Housing Task Finish Group looking at housing conditions throughout the Borough including social housing. The concluding report of the group recommended a stock condition survey be included into the next Housing Strategy Action Plan.



Houses in Multiple Occupation

In the private rented sector, a property may have three or more people from two or more households and share a facility such as a kitchen or bathroom. These are known as Houses in Multiple Occupation and are often an affordable form of housing and student accommodation but do have an inherent higher risk related to fire safety, poor standards and inadequate amenity provision. Properties that are Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) consisting of five or more persons living in two or more separate households are subject to greater legal requirements and mandatory licensing; set out in the Housing Act 2004 and The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006.

The Council has 200+ mandatory licensed HMOs, most of which serve as student accommodation for Keele University. These are subject to conditions to ensure that HMOs are of the appropriate standard and fit for purpose given the number of households or persons in occupation, address anti-social behaviour, prevent overcrowding and are free from housing defects.

The Council recognises that Houses in Multiple Occupation can meet some housing needs, including accommodation for students, younger residents and single-person households. The Council also recognises the separate importance of specialist and supported accommodation, including women's refuges, where these meet an identified local need and are properly managed.

However, the Council is clear that uncontrolled growth or excessive concentrations of HMOs can have a damaging impact on local areas. This can include the loss of family housing, changes to tenure balance, pressure on parking, waste and local services, reduced residential amenity, and wider impacts on neighbourhood sustainability and community cohesion.

Under current planning legislation, certain changes of use from a dwellinghouse to a small HMO, accommodating between three and six unrelated occupants, can take place under permitted development rights without the need for a planning application. This means such changes can occur without the Council being able to properly assess their cumulative impact on the surrounding area.

The Council therefore intends to introduce a Borough-wide Article 4 Direction to remove these permitted development rights for future changes of use from dwellinghouses to small HMOs. This will ensure that proposals for new HMOs are brought within the planning process, giving the Council greater local control and enabling it to consider relevant factors including housing need, local housing supply, community balance, residential amenity, parking, waste management and the wider impact on neighbourhoods.

This approach is not intended to impose a blanket ban on HMOs. Rather, it is intended to ensure that future HMO development is properly managed, evidence-led and consistent with maintaining balanced and sustainable communities. Any Article 4 Direction would apply prospectively and would not affect existing lawful HMOs. Its purpose is to guide future development and ensure decisions are made with proper regard to both housing need and the long-term interests of local communities.

Housing Strategy Disabled Facilities Grants

A suitable home can help disabled people of all ages build and sustain their independence and maintain connections in their community. Many homes are however poorly designed for older age or changes in care and support needs. Adaptations can therefore be vital in supporting older and disabled individuals, along with their caregivers, to live independently, confidently and safely in their own homes. They can minimise the impact of a disabling environment, promote independence and personal resilience, improve overall well-being and reduce the amount of formal care and support a person may need.



Disabled Facilities Grant funding is paid to local authorities through the Better Care Fund in recognition of the importance of ensuring adaptations are part of an integrated approach to housing, health and social care locally. The Disabled Facilities Grant service returned to being an in-house service in April 2023. Since then we have been working to enhance the service, reduce enquiry to completion times and develop relationships with local contractors. In that time we have facilitated over 300 adaptations an investment of nearly £3 million. Delivering stairlifts, ramps, through floor lifts, ground floor living and level access showers to enable independence, dignity and safety at home.

Registered Providers such as Aspire Housing are key partners working with tenants with disabilities and we seek to work collaboratively to find suitable accommodation where it is an alternative option to adapting homes. There are 172 households on the housing register who are waiting for an adapted property, of which 18 are waiting for a wheelchair accessible home. Registered providers also make a contribution to funding adaptations, delivering minor adaptations to their tenants and contributing to major adaptations. Through the life of this strategy we will also be looking at ways to work with Registered Providers to adapt properties prior to re-letting to reduce the disruption of major works and to consider options for a decant property to support major works.

Priority: Housing and Prosperity

Key objectives:

- *To develop a housing market that is vibrant and economically prosperous, which will meet the needs of our residents*
- *To facilitate the development of a range of affordable housing, that meets identified housing*

An increase in the housing supply i.e. building more homes, will increase prosperity through growth.

Housing makes up significant proportions of households' spending and investment, as it typically absorbs 20-25% of household incomes. It is the largest asset held by households and the largest component of household debt.

Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are strongly encouraged by the Government to prepare a 'Local Plan'. This sets out planning policies for their area, including an assessment of how much new housing will be needed to accommodate growth.

Our Council has an Emerging Local Plan for the period 2020-2040 which has been submitted to the Secretary of State. An examination hearing took place between 19 May and 26 June 2025. The council is now awaiting a report from the Inspector.

This emerging Local Plan sets out the vision and objectives for the Borough up to 2040. It proposes the amount of housing and employment growth needed in the Borough alongside allocations to meet the development requirements.



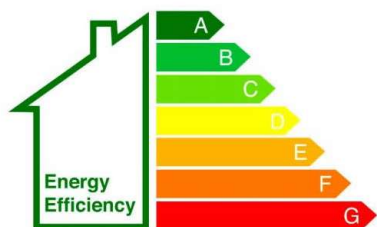
A key objective of the Plan related to Housing is to *“provide a mix of housing types which are attractive to people who want to live and work in the Borough and to provide aspirational housing, which is well designed, safe, secure, and adaptable.”*

It also includes a number of planning policies to help with decision taking, including on matters including affordable housing and housing standards.

The emerging policy aims to deliver affordable housing as a proportion of residential development from market housing developments to address local needs. It sets a framework for seeking and negotiating affordable housing.

"Energy Efficiency, Affordable Warmth and Housing Quality"

In 2022, the residential sector accounted for 17 per cent of all UK carbon emissions. National Energy Action has also estimated that in July 2024, 5.6 million UK households were in fuel poverty. The government has a target that all fuel-poor homes should be at least band C by 2028 and an aspiration for as many as possible homes across the country to be at least band C by 2035.



There are a wide range of different schemes to help improve the energy efficiency of homes. Most of these are targeted at lower income households living in less energy efficient properties. Some schemes are taxpayer funded, others are delivered by energy suppliers and funded through a levy on energy bills; e.g. The Energy Company Obligation (ECO), ECO+/Great British Insulation Scheme and Green Homes Grant: Local Authority Delivery.

The Council has actively participated within these schemes, in collaboration with neighbouring local authorities and the County Council, under the Staffordshire Warmer Homes.

The Warm Homes: Local Grant is a new grant which will start in 2025 and will provide energy performance upgrades and low carbon heating to low-income households via local authorities. It has been allocated £500 million over three years as part of the Autumn Budget 2024 settlement. The Council also works in partnership with a local charity Beat the Cold. This is a telephone advice services providing energy efficiency and mitigation of fuel poverty aimed at the most vulnerable residents within the Borough.

With energy prices expected to remain significantly above pre-pandemic levels until at least 2029, fuel poverty will continue to be a key concern for the Council. The Council will therefore maintain an active role in delivering and supporting energy efficiency and cost-reduction initiatives aimed at lowering household energy bills.

The Council's position is that decarbonisation will not be pursued as the sole or primary objective of energy efficiency interventions. Instead, schemes involving low-carbon technologies will be assessed primarily based on the benefits they deliver to residents, including affordability, practicality, and value for public money. Where these criteria are met, and where there is a clear benefit to residents, the Council will actively consider participation in and engagement with such schemes. Decarbonisation may be an additional outcome of these interventions, but it is not, in itself, the principal determining factor in decision-making.

Through participation in relevant schemes and partnerships, the Council will seek to improve the energy performance and overall quality of housing stock, while providing targeted support to residents most affected by rising costs. This approach will help mitigate the impacts of ongoing cost of living pressures and contribute to improved health, wellbeing, and housing sustainability across the Borough.

The emerging policies will also aim to ensure that new housing development is delivered at appropriate densities, makes efficient use of land, and provides for a mix of homes (according to size, type and tenure) that meets local needs over the plan period, meeting the needs of older people and those who require specialist housing.

This emerging policy seeks to prescribe housing standards in new developments to ensure that the internal space of housing is delivered to the Nationally Described Space Standard.

The Optional Building Regulations 2016 (Part M4) set out accessibility standards for dwellings. These are: the Part M4(2) Standard (accessible and adaptable homes) requirement which is met when a new dwelling provides reasonable provision for most people to access the dwelling and includes features that make it suitable for a range of potential occupants, including older people, individuals with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users; and the Part M4(3) Standard (wheelchair user dwelling) requirement which is achieved when a new dwelling provides reasonable provisions for a wheelchair user to live in the dwelling and have the ability to use any outdoor space, parking and communal facilities.



Newcastle Town Deal has received £23.6m to deliver transformational projects in the Newcastle Town Deal area.

The objective of the Fund is to drive the economic regeneration of towns to deliver long term economic and productivity growth through urban regeneration, planning and land use: ensuring towns are thriving places for people to live and work, including by: increasing density in town centres; strengthening local economic assets including local cultural assets; site acquisition, remediation, preparation, regeneration; and making full use of planning tools to bring strategic direction and change.

The Town Deal investment area contains a significant amount of housing stock which is no longer fit-for-purpose, including at key town centre sites, while several areas, such as Cross Heath and Knutton, are subject to significant market failure as signified through their inclusion in the Housing Market Renewal Initiative.



The Town Investment Plan has delivered:

Investment in key gateway sites – The re-occupation of key derelict gateway sites to provide housing will help to transform the Town Deal Investment area. Town Deal Investment will unlock development at the former Zanzibar nightclub site, which will be repurposed toward young professionals accommodation with small industrial units for start-up businesses and 'move-up' accommodation for incubator/innovation focused businesses also delivered on site. It will also demolish the Midway multi story carpark to make way for 126 homes for key workers and young professionals, as well as an element of extra care accommodation.

Putting the heart back into Knutton village – a program of investment to enable the development of key strategic housing sites within the Knutton masterplan, bringing forward 282 new houses, 25% of which would be socially rented; improved business accommodation through the replacement and repurposing of 2 wings (8,000sqft) of Knutton Business Centre and investing in modern community facilities to create a stronger village core through a new Village Hall, Village Green and play area.

Cross St Chesterton – Investment to progress the delivery of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)-supported Cross St Chesterton Masterplan, led by Aspire Housing enabling the demolition of 74 houses that are no longer fit for purpose to enable delivery of 125 high quality, mixed tenure housing options for the local community.

In the medium to longer term priorities, the Council will focus on opportunities and channel investment more widely to regenerate communities that have lacked investment, in particular other former mining communities that were subject to the Housing Market Renewal Initiative.

Priorities to include:

- Aspire’s Estate Regeneration Plan for Chesterton (further phases);
- Knutton Masterplan (further phases);
- Aspire Housing’s wider housing provision strategy; and
- Masterplan development and delivery in other areas of relative disadvantage e.g. Silverdale and Cross Heath



We will facilitate the development of a **range of affordable housing**, that meets identified housing.

There are households within the Borough whose housing need cannot be met by the market, i.e. they are unable to afford to either buy or rent from the private market.

The Housing Needs Assessment (HNA, 2024) identifies an annual need for 278 affordable homes throughout the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme over the plan period to 2040.

The Government has indicated that it wants the delivery of social rented homes to rise and intends to inject more funds into the Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP) as well as promised greater stability in rent policy. These would be elements of 'a long-term housing strategy' which aims to 'deliver the biggest increase in affordable housing in a generation'.



We will implement our Planning Policy requirements of ensuring that major and large developments have an appropriate level of affordable housing

We will work with Homes England to support bids for grant funding by providers to deliver new affordable homes. We will also work with providers to deliver affordable housing that has been secured via Section 106, planning obligations.

We seek early engagement with providers to support their development programmes and help ensure that their proposals will most effectively meet local needs.

Priority: Homelessness & Rough Sleeping

Key objectives:

- *To provide early intervention and partnership working to prevent homelessness*
- *To support those who are faced with homelessness issues, specifically, those rough sleeping*
- *To operate a housing allocation system; both registration and allocation which will allow those in housing need to be able to access appropriate social housing*

Early intervention and partnership working to prevent homelessness

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA 2017), placed statutory duties, on local authorities to “prevent” and “relieve” homelessness. The UK homelessness charity Crisis has estimated that the upfront costs of preventing homelessness are 14 times lower than the cost of providing support over 12 months once a household experiences homelessness. The Council has adopted an ethos of homelessness prevention into its working practices.

The Council has worked with a range of partners, to foster a shared duty across all public services, from education and health care to social care and employment support for the prevention of homelessness. However, despite our best efforts, homelessness, in all aspects, has increased and there has been a greater use of temporary accommodation as interim housing. The effect of which is that Local Authority spending on homelessness services has increased significantly in real terms.

This increase is not unique to the Borough but is consistent with a national trend. Structural factors such as an increase in the level of private rents, rising evictions and a lack of affordable social housing has been behind this significant increase. The Council will continue to prevent homelessness, developing personalised housing plans for those that are likely to experience homelessness. We have embedded an early homelessness prevention ethos, with resources dedicated to devising creative ways and schemes in preventing homelessness ranging from negotiations and engagement with private landlords, to managing rent arrears. We have developed a pre-eviction process with several housing providers to ensure that if homeless is to take place than it does not present as a crisis but as a managed process.

Temporary Accommodation Policy

We have created a temporary accommodation policy setting out our approach to the use of temporary accommodation, to ensure that it is suitable, cost-effective and meets local needs. We continue to explore and develop the procurement of temporary accommodation options to provide support for homeless singles and families and individuals presenting with more complex needs, including rough sleepers. The Government has committed to reforming the Private Rented Sector, making it fair, secure and fit for purpose.



Renters' Rights Act

The Renters' Rights Act has been enacted and will significantly transform the private rented sector. By creating a more stable and secure environment for tenants, it is expected to reduce homelessness presentations. The Council will operate within this new legislative framework to enhance awareness, ensure effective enforcement, and support a well-functioning private rented sector across the Borough. This approach will help to provide a more reliable and sustainable form of accommodation for residents.

Supporting those facing homelessness and rough sleeping

Rough sleeping is the most visible and damaging form of homelessness and can have significant physical and mental health impacts. In recent decades, successive governments have tried to reduce or end rough sleeping altogether.

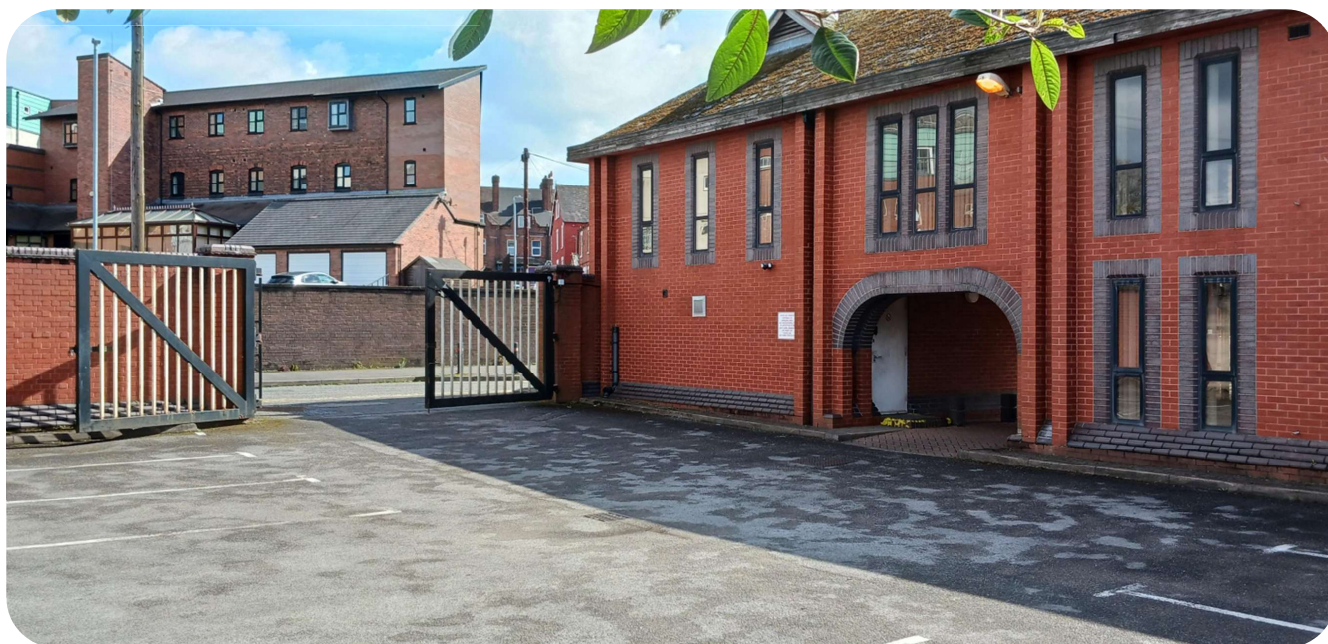
Local Authorities have statutory homelessness duties set out in part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 ('the 1996 act') Those who do and those who are at risk of rough sleeping often have multiple, complex needs, involve co-occurring mental health challenges and alcohol and/or drug misuse. In recognition of this, the Council has embedded a collaborative, partnership approach towards addressing rough sleeping; the establishment of a multi-agency hub to bring together services and to strengthen the prevention and recovery pathway.

The Hub offers; information and advice; signposting to accommodation, services; wellbeing and recovery including specialist health roles and various other partners.

This approach was recognised by LGA Peer Review Assessment describing the multi-agency Vulnerability Hub as "sector leading and a great example of the strong partnership work delivering impressive outcomes" and where "partners all have the same passion to make the difference and with no hierarchy - with everyone's contribution being equally valued."

Severe Weather Emergency Protocols (SWEP) are aimed at preventing harm or death among individuals sleeping rough during severe weather by providing emergency support and accommodation. The Council has adopted SWEPs in collaboration with several partners ranging from local authorities and voluntary organisations.

In the colder months (from November to March) when the temperature is forecast to drop to zero degrees (or below), Brighter Futures Rough Sleepers Team (RST) outreach service in conjunction with the Newcastle Rough Sleeper Team, will identify those rough sleeping who require accommodation.



In line with Government Strategy, the Council has an aspiration to significantly reduce rough sleeping in the Borough. We have embarked on an ambitious approach to achieve this. The Shared Prosperity Fund Board have approved capital and revenue funding to develop a innovative Homeless Hub for Newcastle-under-Lyme; Navigation House, which will serve several functions.

This will support homeless individuals who are some of the most disadvantaged in society and the furthest from accessing mainstream services. It will provide safe, secure emergency accommodation; a unit of 12 beds and 24/7 supported accommodation. It will also provide a conducive environment where an array of agencies; (Department for Works and Pension, Citizens Advice Bureau, rough sleeping services, housing providers, probation, adult social care, homeless healthcare, drug and alcohol services, etc) will be available to support individuals without the need for an appointment.

In addition to this, we will continue to work alongside our partner Aspire Housing who provide an array of initiatives to reduce rough sleeping and support households facing homelessness.

Housing need and accessing appropriate social housing

Affordable housing is key in preventing homelessness and alleviating it. Affordable rented and social rented properties are owned and managed by Registered Providers (RP), which are let below local market rents. The activities of RPs are overseen by the Regulator of Social Housing. Affordable housing can also meet a specific need, such as specialist housing for vulnerable, older or disabled people, known as “supported housing”.

In collaboration with Aspire Housing, who is the largest RP within the Borough, we have created a joint housing register and implemented an online system for the allocation of social housing, a choice-based lettings (CBL) system, allowing those on the housing register to bid for properties.

We have a range of nominations agreements with several registered providers with social housing stock in the Borough, to ensure that available social housing is used in the most effective manner to meet housing needs and to ensure that homeless households are accessing the most appropriate housing stock available. We understand that increasing the supply of affordable housing is important in helping us to address homelessness.

The Council recognises that increasing the supply of affordable housing remains essential to meeting local housing demand and reducing homelessness pressures. Alongside supply, ensuring the efficient use and allocation of existing stock is fundamental to achieving the best possible outcomes for residents.

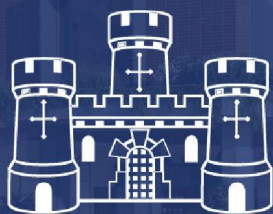




	Actions
Housing and Health	1. To work collaboratively with organisations to improve health through housing, in particularly with Staffordshire County Council
	2. To identify actual projects related to Housing and Health that bring about tangible outcomes i.e. Damp and Mould, Joint Commissioning of Supported Accommodation
	3. To improve Housing Conditions through the utilisation of the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme, which will be both reactive, responding to complaints, and proactive, instigating inspections where appropriate
	4. To stay informed on the requirements of the Renters Rights Act and ensure readiness for its implementation.
	5. To reform the Supported Housing Accommodation Sector, in line with directives of Government, which is to ensure appropriate service provision and value for monies
	6. To work in collaboration with Staffordshire County Council to deliver the Warm Homes Local Grants
	7. To work with Beat the Cold and other organisation to provide an energy advice service that mitigates fuel poverty
	8. To provide efficient, timely adaptations, without compromising on quality to ensure we provide the best service for our applicants
	9. To identify Contractors from the local area who are able to provide adaptations to a high standard supporting the council's local plan and local economy
	10. To enhance the partnership working relationships with registered housing providers and private landlords to embed the introduction of Landlord Applications for Disabled Facilities Grants
	11. To submit a business case for capital funding to complete a borough-wide stock condition survey



	Actions
<i>Housing and Prosperity</i>	1. To embed and implement the Housing Policies in the Local Plan, once it has been adopted, which will bring about open market housing and affordable housing via planning gain 2. To deliver the projects that have been set out within the Town Deals scheme 3. To develop specific projects that would achieve the medium to long term vision of regeneration of communities that have lacked investment, in particular other former mining communities that were subject to the Housing Market Renewal Initiative 4. To work with Registered Providers, with a view of facilitating affordable and accessible housing via grant funding
<i>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping</i>	1. To work with Homes England to bring about Affordable Housing within the Borough 2. To create a step-down housing pathway from Navigation House 3. To work collaboratively with our partners to focus on preventing rough sleeping and homelessness 4. To continue our partnership working to coordinate efforts and resources



NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL



HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

2026-2030

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Report to Cabinet

04 August 2026



Traffic Regulation Order Amendment Consultation

Lead Member:

Cllr Jonathan Gullis – Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Commercial Services

Lead Officer:

Joanne Halliday – Service Director, Commercial Services

Key Decision: Yes

Ward(s): Kidsgrove and Ravenscliffe, Keele

Appendices: Appendix A – Traffic Regulation Order Amendment 2026 Consultation

Report Assurance:

Name		Date
Lead Officer	Joanne Halliday	08/07/26
Monitoring Officer	Olwen Brown	20/07/26
Section 151	Craig Turner	17/07/26
Chief Executive	Gordon Mole	17/07/26
Cabinet Member		

Report Summary

Traffic Regulation Orders are used to control the operating requirements for Council owned car parks. The Council has an adopted Traffic Regulation Order which it is proposed to amend to include 3 new car parks; Lyme Park Countryside Park, Keele, Meadows Road, Kidsgrove and Heathcote Street, Kidsgrove.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet:

1. Approve the Traffic Regulation Order Amendment for consultation.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Commercial Services to review the consultation response and make minor alterations as appropriate before adopting the Traffic Regulation Order.

1. Background

- 1.1. Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) are used by the Council to control car parks, they set out the operating rules and form the basis for drivers to know when and how they can park, which in turn is used to enforce where these rules are breached.
- 1.2. Before adopting or altering a TRO the Council should outline the proposals and consult to ensure that the proposals deliver the intended outcomes.
- 1.3. The appended TRO proposal seeks to introduce regulations on the following car parks:
 - 1.3.1. Lyme Park Countryside Park, Keele
 - 1.3.2. Meadows Road, Kidsgrove
 - 1.3.3. Heathcote Street, Kidsgrove
- 1.4. Cabinet previously approved the formation of the Lyme Park Countryside Park with the proposal for a time restriction on parking set at 2 hours. This is to ensure that there is a turnover of cars and that local people wishing to use the Park are able to find a space when they arrive.
- 1.5. Meadows Road, Kidsgrove is part of the UK Government-funded Local Regeneration Fund (Town Deal) programme with the construction of three small enterprise units on Meadows Road car park alongside realignment of the car park to provide up to 16 car parking spaces for short term use by both customers of local businesses and also those using public facilities such as the Library and Job Centre, as at the moment it is used by commuters using the train station. The TRO seeks to enable free parking for up to 2 hours and then chargeable after, with a discount for Sunday, Bank Holidays and event parking.
- 1.6. Heathcote Street, Kidsgrove, this is also part of the Town Deal programme whereby improvements are being made to the public realm in the town centre and the car parking closest to the shops is prioritised for use by customers. This TRO seeks to enable nipper parking of 30mins on King Street by the shops, short stay on the redeveloped lower bays of a maximum of 2 hours and long stay on the upper bays, all free. The intention of this is to ensure the turnover of the spaces closest to the shops but still provide free parking for those working all day in Kidsgrove.

2. Reasons

- 2.1. It is appropriate that Cabinet are aware of and support the TRO proposals before the consultation commences.
- 2.2. By combining the proposals for Lyme Park Countryside Park and the regeneration projects involving the car parks in Kidsgrove the Council is being efficient in utilising officer time and in minimising the advertising costs.

3. Strategic Approach

- 3.1. An up to date TRO enables the Council to effectively charge and enforce parking regulations which in turn supports the delivery of the Council Plan.

4. Finance & Resources

- 4.1. The costs of advertising for the TRO can be met from existing Kidsgrove Town Deal and Lyme Park revenue budgets. The enforcement will be undertaken by the existing staffing resources within the Neighbourhood Delivery service's Mobile Multi-functional team.

5. Legal & Governance

- 5.1. The Council uses its powers under Sections 32, 33, 35 and Parts III and IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 ("the 1984 Act") and the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 ("the 2004 Act") and of all other enabling powers to make the Order Amendment.
- 5.2. In developing these proposals, the Council believes that the benefits of the amendments are worth pursuing the proposals. There is a risk that the consultation will raise objections. If after due consideration these objections are viewed to be minor and can be safely incorporated into the proposals, the order can proceed in the current form. Should the objections be significant the Council would have to consider if the order should proceed in its current form or not.

6. Supporting Information

- 6.1. On 14 October 2025, Cabinet agreed that 'a Traffic Regulation Order 2025 Amendment is drafted for consultation on the basis that the car park to serve the Lyme Park Countryside Park is free for a 2-hour limit per day, then subject to consultation comments that delegation is given to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth to adopt the amendment.'
- 6.2. A key objective of the Kidsgrove Town Deal Investment Plan is to create a connected, accessible town centre which links key assets, retains the heritage and uniqueness of Kidsgrove, promotes active travel and diversifies and drives new demand and footfall.

- 6.3 Appendix 1 to this report sets out the Traffic Regulation Order Amendment 2026 Consultation Version, containing the legal basis for the order and the operating proposals for the car parks.

**THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME 'OFF-
STREET PARKING PLACES' AMENDMENT ORDER 1/ 2026
CONSULTATION**

The Borough Council of Newcastle-under-Lyme ('the Council') in exercise of its powers under Sections 32, 33, 35 and Parts III and IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ('the 1984 Act') and the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 ('the 2004 Act') and of all other enabling powers, after consultation with the Chief Officer of Police hereby make the following Order:

THE COMMON SEAL of THE BOROUGH
COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME
was hereunto affixed in the presence of: -

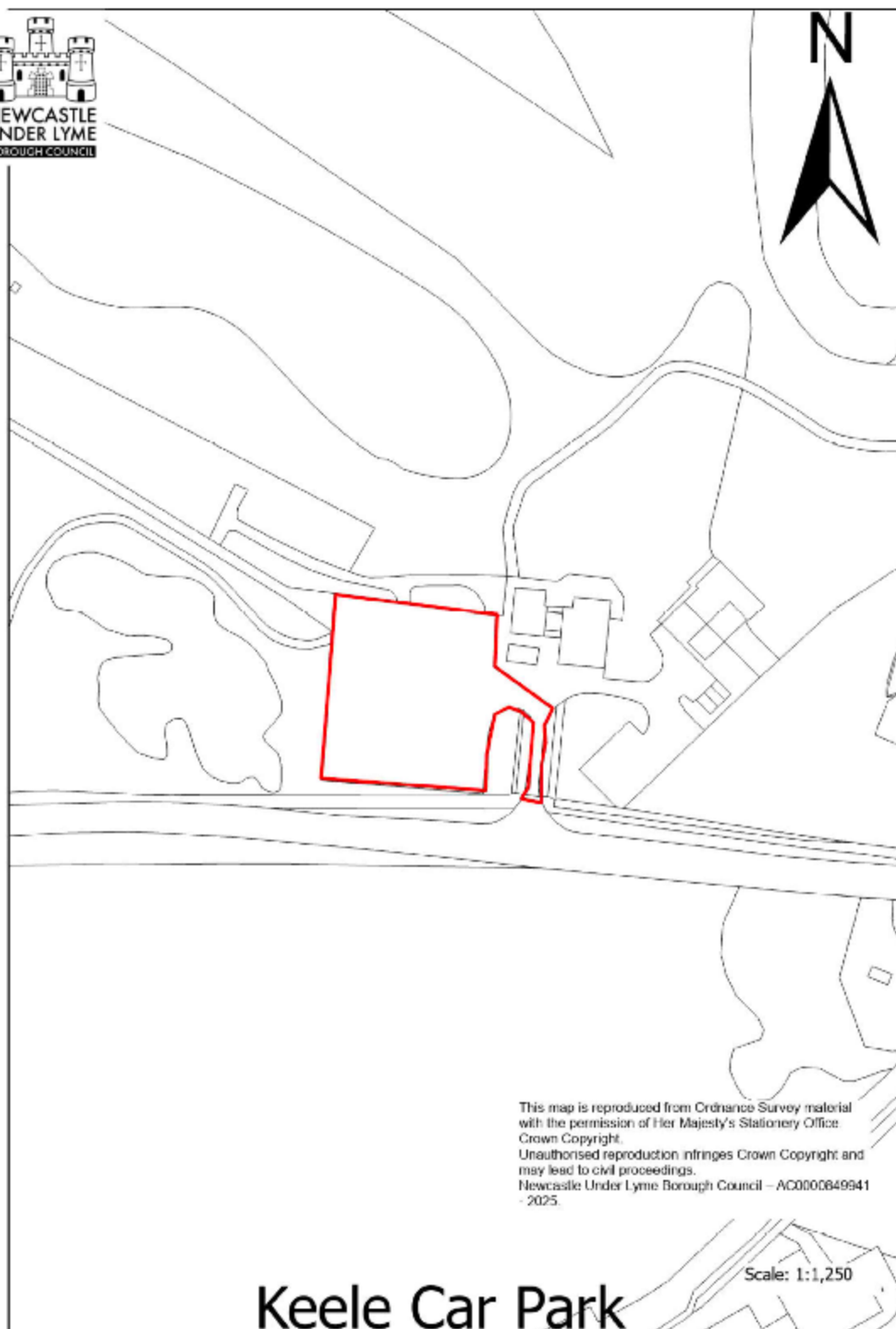
Mayor / Councillor

Authorised Signatory

Dated

FIRST SCHEDULE

No.	Parking Place	Classes of Vehicles	a) Days of operation b) Hours of operation	Charging days and hours	Maximum period of waiting	Scale of Charges (£)
1	Lyme Park Countryside Park	Passenger vehicles Goods vehicles Motor vehicles	a) All days b) All hours	Free	2 hours and no return within 6 hours Angler Permits unlimited waiting	£0
2	Meadows Road	Passenger vehicles Goods vehicles Motor vehicles	a) All days b) All hours	Monday to Sunday 24 hours	24 hours	Up to 2 hours Free Up to 24 hours £3.00 Sunday, BH and Event Parking £1.50
3	Heathcote Street	Passenger vehicles Goods vehicles Motor vehicles	a) All days b) All hours	Monday to Sunday 24 hours	Shop/Nipper on King Street – 30mins Short Stay lower bays – 2 hours max stay Long Stay upper bays – 24 hours	Short Stay (under 2hours) £0 Long Stay (over 2hours) £0







Heathcote Street - Short Stay Lower Bays

Report to Cabinet

04 August 2026



Lyme Valley Pump Track

Lead Member:

Cllr Andrew Fisher – Portfolio Holder for Residents Services and Neighbourhoods

Lead Officer:

Roger Tait – Service Director, Neighbourhood Delivery

Key Decision: Yes

Ward(s): Clayton

Appendices: Initial Design and Costing Proposals for Consultation

Report Assurance:

	Name	Date
Lead Officer	Roger Tait	24/06/26
Monitoring Officer	Olwyn Brown	
Section 151	Craig Turner	17/07/26
Chief Executive	Gordon Mole	17/07/26
Cabinet Member	Andrew Fisher	

Report Summary

The report seeks approval to transform an existing BMX Track in Lyme Valley into a modern pump track facility to cater for a range of wheeled sports, and to allocate existing Section 106 Agreement funding to the project. Public consultation will be undertaken online to gauge community views on options for the facility, which have been prepared by specialist design and build contractors.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet:

1. Approves the initial draft proposals received from specialist design and build contractors for consultation;
2. Authorises the Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Residents Services and Neighbourhoods, to approve the final design having considered the consultation responses, and to award the contract for construction of the facility to the lowest suitable tender subject to the full costs falling within the available budget;
3. Allocates the identified Section 106 Agreement funding totalling £135,000 to the project, and authorises officers to continue to seek additional funding to bridge the gap to the estimated total cost of £150,000.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Lyme Valley is one of the Borough Council's strategic parks, serving a large catchment area and providing a wide range of sporting and recreational facilities to cater for all ages.
- 1.2. There is an existing BMX Track in Lyme Valley which was installed around 20 years ago as part of the "Greening for Growth" programme which invested in green spaces across the North Staffordshire conurbation as a contributor to economic development.
- 1.3. Although popular, the BMX Track is in need of updating and remodelling to enable it to cater for other wheeled sports. The more modern version of this type of facility is a pump track, which can be used by BMX bikes, skateboards, scooters and rollerblades. A very successful pump track was installed at Newchapel Recreation Ground in 2021 as part of the Kidsgrove Advance Town Deal Fund, and another pump track is currently under construction at Bradwell Dingle.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The estimated cost of installing a pump track at Lyme Valley, based on previous similar projects, is around £150,000. To date, approximately £135,000 has been identified in existing secured Section 106 Agreement funds which can be allocated to the scheme.
- 2.2. The project would reprofile and extend the existing BMX Track and surface it in tarmac to provide a smooth riding surface for wheeled sports.

- 2.3. Specialist design and build contractors were invited to provide options for the facility within the prescribed budget envelope. The initial draft design options are attached to this report at Appendix 1.
- 2.4. It is proposed that the options are now subject to a public consultation exercise via the Council's website and with targeted stakeholders (ward members, community groups etc) for a period of around 6 weeks.
- 2.5. Subject to the consultation outcome, it is proposed that the final detailed scheme is approved and the contract is awarded to the lowest suitable tender in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Residents Services and Neighbourhoods. Following this, the construction contract would be let with an estimated build time of 10-12 weeks.
- 2.6. It is estimated that the facility would be open for use in late 2026, based on the above sequencing and subject to the full amount of required funding being secured.
- 2.7. The project would be managed by the Neighbourhood Delivery Service (Landscape and Community Team) by outsourcing to a specialist design and build contractor.

3. Strategic Approach

- 3.1. The Lyme Valley is a strategic park in the Borough and serves a large catchment area, providing a range of sport, play and recreational facilities catering for all ages. This project will enhance the offer in the park and provide further opportunities for young people to engage in outdoor activities which contribute to improved health and wellbeing.

4. Finance & Resources

- 4.1. The estimated capital cost of installing a pump track in Lyme Valley on the site of the current BMX Track is approximately £150,000.
- 4.2. To date, approximately £135,000 has been identified in secured Section 106 Agreement funds which can be allocated to the project. Officers will continue to review opportunities to identify additional funds but in the meantime, the brief to specialist design and build contractors specified an option within the current secured budget envelope of £135,000, and a provisional option for a scheme within a budget envelope of £150,000, which could be progressed if additional funds are secured.
- 4.3. Staff resources within the Neighbourhood Delivery Service are limited but have been diverted into initiating this project as members decided that it is a priority. This may impact on the ability to deliver other projects or workstreams.

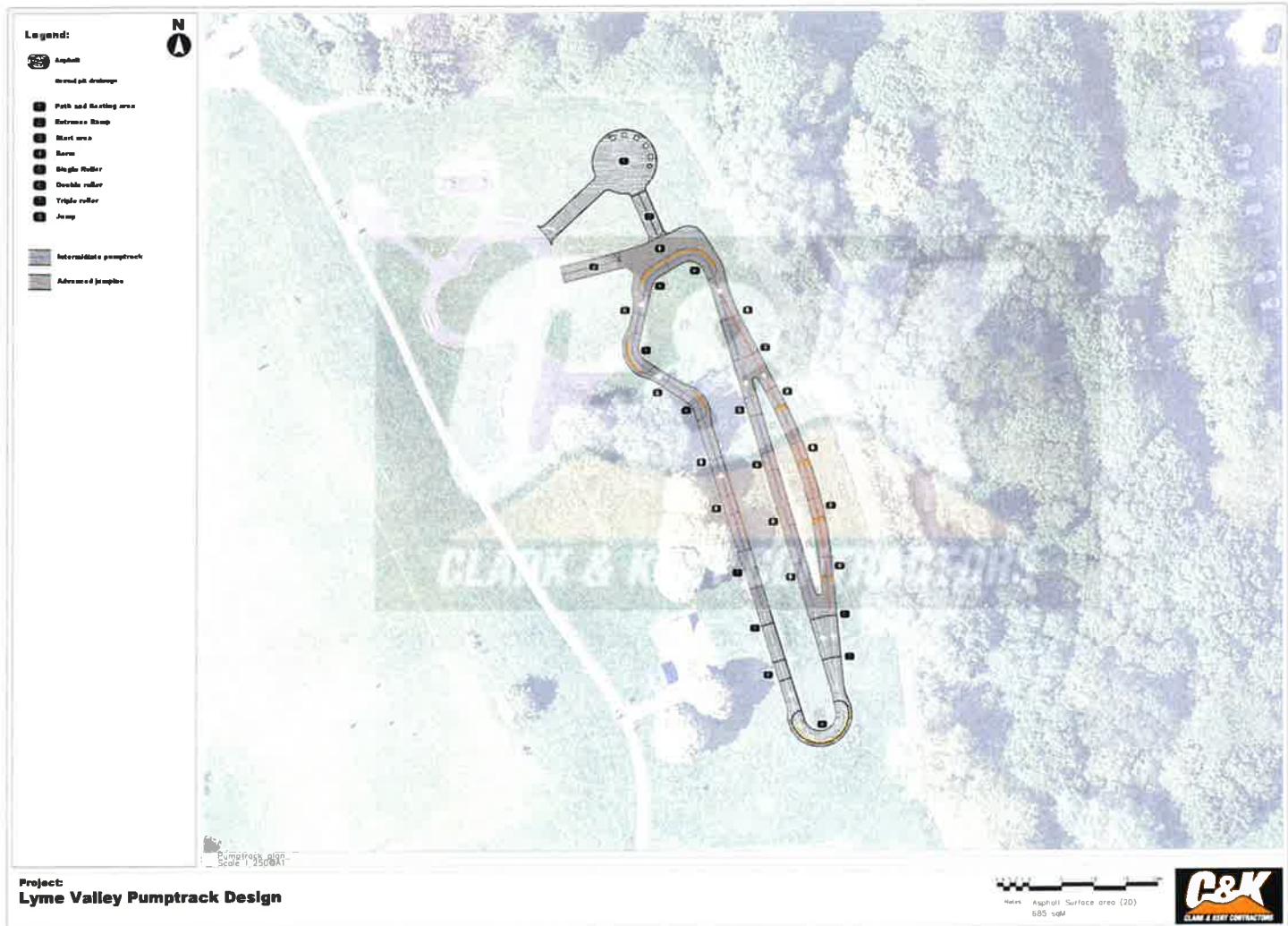
5. Legal & Governance

- 5.1. The Council owns and manages the land in Lyme Valley Parkway and has the power to provide recreational facilities for the community in such sites.
- 5.2. There is a risk that the scheme costs could exceed the current budget. This has been mitigated by specifying the available budget envelope in the brief to the contractor, and by continuing to seek additional funding opportunities.
- 5.3. There is a risk of an adverse response to the consultation on the facility from the community. This will be mitigated by siting it on the existing footprint of the BMX Track where use of this nature is already established.

6. Supporting Information

6.1. Appendix 1 – initial design options and costings for consultation.

4. Design Proposal (35%)



Design Philosophy

The proposed pump track will be designed as a flowing, organic circuit that blends naturally into Lyme Valley Park. Largely utilising all of the existing footprint of the track along with using some of the space to the north of the existing track. Having grown up in and around the borough and using Lyme valley pump track when it was originally built we have a good understanding of the area, site access, user group and what it means for the local community.

Key objectives include:

- Suitable for beginners through to experienced riders
- Continuous riding without pedalling
- Inclusive layout
- Safe sight lines

- Natural landscaping integration
- Durable low-maintenance construction and low future on costs to the council

Proposed Features

Main loop

Advanced line

Rollers

Berms

Table tops

Progression features

Rest area

Viewing area

Seating

Native planting around perimeter

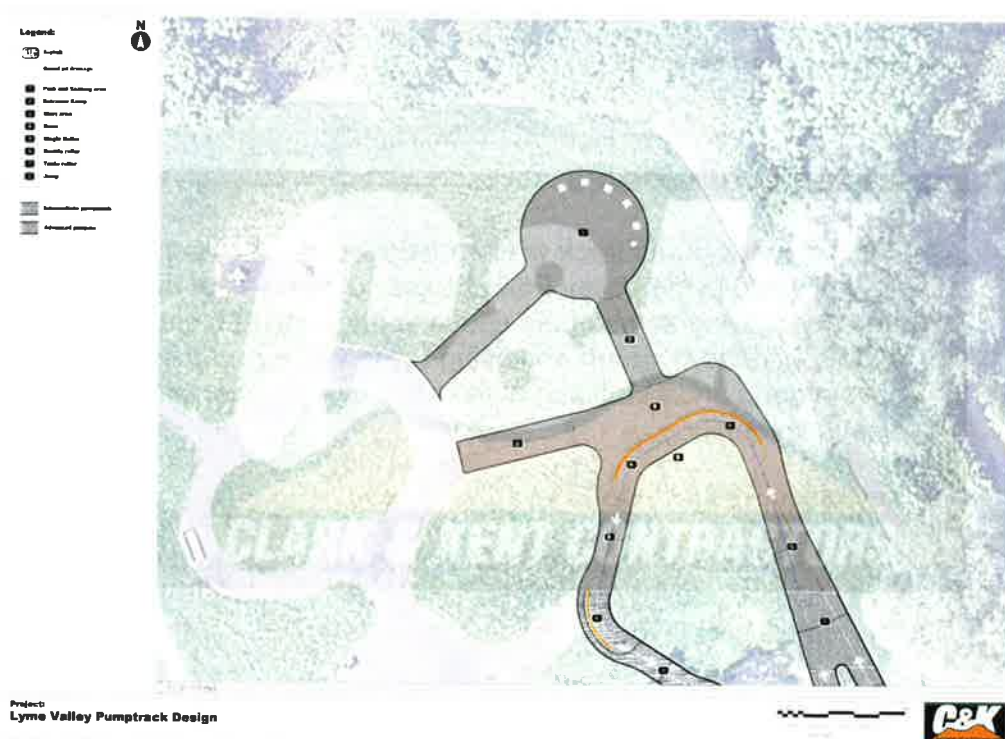
Seating Area

A robust seating area will be positioned overlooking the pump track to allow:

- Parents supervision
- Rest area
- Social gathering space
- Informal meeting point

Materials:

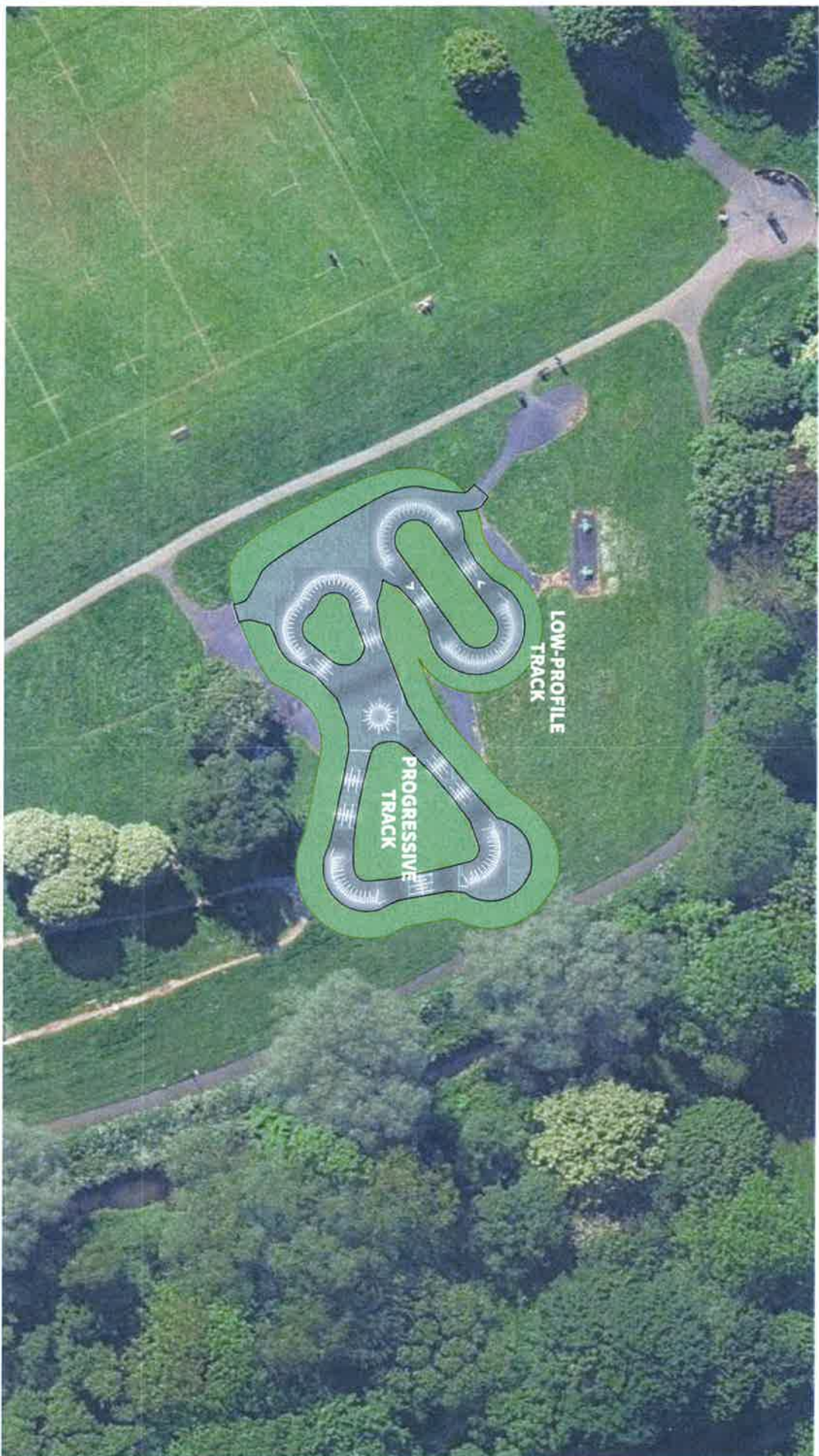
- Concrete cube seating
- Tarmac surface
- Anti-vandal finishes



ON TRACK

SKETCH DESIGN

PRICE ESTIMATE - £135,000



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Report to Cabinet

04 August 2026



Local Government Association Withdrawal

Lead Member:

Cllr. Jonathan Gullis – Leader of the Council

Lead Officer:

Gordon Mole – Chief Executive

Key Decision: No

Ward(s): All Wards

Appendices: Not applicable

Report Assurance:

	Name	Date
Lead Officer	Gordon Mole	13/07/26
Monitoring Officer	Olwen Brown	20/07/2026
Section 151	Craig Turner	17/07/26
Chief Executive		
Cabinet Member		

Report Summary

Following the resolution of full Council on 8th July 2026 to withdraw from the Local Government Association (LGA) immediately, this report sets out the Council's position in respect of its membership and next steps to be carried out.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet:

1. Notes the will of the Council to seek immediate withdrawal from the Local Government Association including all committees, events, activities, and information sharing;
2. Notes the terms and conditions of LGA membership and agrees to delegate to the Service Director for Finance and Service Director, Legal & Governance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Portfolio Holder for Legal, Governance & Operational Performance to engage with the LGA to withdraw on immediate terms;
3. Notes the engagement with other authorities to understand the position of the Council outside of the LGA;
4. Notes the Council's withdrawal from LGA associated bodies, including the Local Councils Network and LG Inform.
5. Agrees that, should the purpose and structure of the LGA change significantly to address members' concerns as expressed in the motion to full Council, Cabinet will give due consideration to membership in future years.

1. Background

- 1.1. Following the commencement of the Council's new administration in May 2026, on 8th July 2026 a motion was resolved at full Council to withdraw immediately from the Local Government Association.
- 1.2. The LGA acts as a representative body for councils in England, offering events, advice, training for members and officers and representation of the local government sector to UK Government.
- 1.3. Membership of the LGA is voluntary, and is paid in advance for each financial year. Annual membership of the LGA for 2026/2027 for the Council was £11,xxx. Additional costs are applicable for attendance at some events and activities, such as the annual LGA Conference.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's departure from the LGA has precedent, with a number of councils having left the LGA (with some electing to rejoin following changes of administration). Officers have sought to engage with those councils and officers who have experience of operating outside of the LGA to understand what, if any, areas they have required to resource which were previously provided by the LGA.

3. Strategic Approach

- 3.1. Officers have reviewed the relevant services provided by the LGA in the following areas:
 - 3.1.1 Annual employer-side negotiation of employee pay
 - 3.1.2 Data and information
 - 3.1.3 Information from UK Government
 - 3.1.4 Member and officer training
 - 3.1.5 Member committees and networks
 - 3.1.6 Participation in reviews and peer activity

Annual Employer-side negotiations of employee pay

- 3.2. Advice in relation to the Council's position in respect of annual pay negotiations was sought from West Midlands Employers, the representative body for councils in the region.
- 3.3. The LGA, as a membership body, acts as the host body for the Employers side of the NJC and the other local government negotiating bodies such as Fire and Rescue services, Teachers and Craft/ Red Book staff. In this role, the LGA acts as the national secretariat but agreements are technically negotiated by Elected Members which make up the Employer Side.
- 3.4. The Council will continue to implement its pay awards for National Joint Council (NJC) and JNC settlements. National Joint Council (Green Book) or JNC (Senior Manager) contracts mean that within their terms and conditions the Council has agreed, as the employer, to adhere to a number of provisions within those frameworks (for example the NJC pay spine and annual pay awards) in addition to any existing local arrangements of the employment contract which are not specified within the Green Book.
- 3.5. Councils including Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council who are NJC employers are bound by agreements made jointly by trades unions and the Employers Side negotiating body, independent of the involvement of the LGA. Employers can therefore apply NJC pay awards and whether they are LGA members or not.
- 3.6. West Midlands Employers shares all relevant staffing and pay-related information with all councils in the region, including those emanating from the LGA.

Data and Information

- 3.7. The LGA hosts the data resource *LG Inform*, which provides contextual, financial and performance data across a range of topic areas. This resource is funded by UK Government and is free to access. A separate product, *LG Inform Plus*, is utilised by the Council to complete its annual API (application programmable interface) data submission. *LG Inform Plus* is a commercial, chargeable product which does not form part of LGA membership and is available to all organisations whether members of the LGA or not.
- 3.8. Officers are currently reviewing the data required to enable Local Government Reorganisation and that which may be needed in the development of a new Council Plan 2026-2030.
- 3.9. Following the announcement of Local Government Reorganisation, officers will be working closely with officers from other Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent authorities and regularly network with other authorities through professional networks.

- 3.10. Officers will monitor any areas which require alternative data or information sharing arrangements and work with the Administration on requirements as may arise.

Information from UK Government

- 3.11. Since 2025, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has implemented a daily email briefing during parliamentary terms directly to all local authorities with key information and updates. MHCLG also hosts a place engagement team, whom officers meet on a regular basis to raise any points which may be applicable to the local government sector. Further updates are provided through West Midlands Employers.
- 3.12. UK Government funds a range of support activity which is delivered through organisations including the LGA, on areas such as sector support for Local Government Reorganisation. This support is available to all local authorities, whether members of the LGA or not.
- 3.13. UK Government departments also write regularly to the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive, Statutory and Chief Officers, on a range of matters such as grant information, data provision and requests, legislative and policy changes.

Member and Officer Training

- 3.14. The LGA has previously provided training to elected members including seminars on policy and practice, equality, regulatory committees (including training on licencing and planning), and induction resources (some of which are free to access).
- 3.15. The Council will not be able to access LGA training and briefing materials, or resources such as coaching for elected members. Officers have recently delivered training to committee members for planning and licencing, and are developing in-house training for newly elected members in areas such as standards and media training, and will regularly review what additional areas of training and development may be required. There may be an additional cost if this cannot be delivered by officers.
- 3.16. As noted above, MHCLG funds some training and development programmes, for example seminars to district and borough council officers on upper tier council services (SEND, Children's Services and Adult Social Care), which are delivered through the LGA but are open to all local authorities.
- 3.17. Through service training budgets and a commitment to continuing professional development, officers remain able to access to training and upskilling, including through sector professional networks.
- 3.18. LGA also provides advice to councils in areas such as workforce issues, skills and member support. Whilst the Council has significant professional experience in these and other areas, officers will utilise its networks, including West Midlands Employers, for any ad-hoc advice required.

Member committees and networks

- 3.19. Annual Council nominates a representative to the Local Government Association, currently the Leader of the Council. This role acts as the key representative for the Council at the LGA. Members may seek election to policy and other committees such as the Local Government resources Committee, Neighbourhoods Committee and Inclusive Growth Committee within the LGA structure, which are based on a balance of council type and political balance.
- 3.20. The Council's appointed LGA representative attends the General Assembly as the Council's formal representative, while attendance at boards, committees, forums and networks depends on whether individual councillors have been appointed or elected into those LGA roles.

- 3.21. General Assembly is held during the LGA Annual Conference, for which there is an additional cost. In 2025, the price of attendance was c. £3,000, including accommodation for three representatives (one officer and two elected members). The Council did not attend the 2026 Annual Conference.
- 3.22. Elected members have also been able to provide services to other LGA members, such as peer support.
- 3.23. Going forward, in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, formal arrangements are in place for a Staffordshire Leaders' Board which covers a range of thematic areas, together with a focus on forthcoming implementation of Government policy in areas such as devolution. In addition, members may elect to work with their political groups for any formal or informal networks which exist.
- 3.24. Councillors and officers will not be able to attend LGA events following the passing of the resolution at full Council on 8th July 2026 in their capacity as elected members or representatives of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council.
- 3.25. The LGA also comprises networks for upper and lower-tier local authorities. The Local Councils Network (previously District Councils Network) provides support, advice, networking and guidance to lower-tier authorities, and membership of this body will also cease following the motion to full Council.

Participation in reviews and peer activity

- 3.26. The LGA oversees and supports additional activity, such as peer reviews for authorities. These remain accessible to authorities outside LGA membership, and London Borough of Bromley, which left the LGA in 2010, has just completed its peer review process. The Council was last peer reviewed in 2023 and is not due any further review ahead of Local Government Reorganisation.
- 3.27. In the development of this report, officers engaged with the LGA Regional representative, West Midlands Employers and officers who had direct experience of withdrawing from the LGA in LB Barnet and LB Bromley. LB Bromley withdrew from the LGA some 16 years ago, and notes that in their consideration there are no areas of concern around being outside of the LGA, and no plans to rejoin the association.

4. Finance & Resources

- 4.1. The Council's primary outlay in respect of the LGA is its annual subscription. Table 1, below sets out the subscription costs since 2021/2022, together with costs associated with the LGA Annual Conference, as noted in para 3.20 above. These costs do not include travel or accommodation expenses in relation to attendance at events and meetings, which are accrued to service budgets for officers or to corporate expenses for elected members.

Financial Year	Subscription	Events	Staff Time (inc. on costs)	Accommodation/ Expenses	Total
2026/27	£11,538	-	-	-	£11,538
2025/26	£11,311	£1,734	£1,946	£1,088	£16,079
2024/25	£11,311	£1,701	£1,879	£1,643	£16,534
2023/24	£11,311	£2,065	£2,504	£1,392	£17,272
2022/23	£11,090	£1,689	£1,750	£1,284	£15,813
2021/22	£10,872	-	-	-	£10,872
Total	£67,433	£7,189	£8,079	£5,407	£88,108

Table 1: Subscription and associated costs for LGA membership, note subscription for 2026/27 paid in April 2026

- 4.2 The Council will accrue savings from 2027/2028, subject to exiting the membership agreement with the LGA.

5. Legal & Governance

- 5.1. The LGA Articles of Association sets out the conditions of payment for membership as below.
- 5.1.1 Any Member Authority wishing to terminate its individual membership of the Association... shall give not less than twelve months' notice in writing to the Chief Executive to expire on 31 March in any year. [] At the expiration of the period of notice the Member Authority giving notice shall cease to be a Member Authority and shall become a Past Member Authority.
- 5.2 The membership cycle for the LGA is not concurrent with the elections cycle and therefore is not aligned to a political change in leadership and direction. Officers are therefore engaged with the LGA to seek early release from the association, noting that a payment had been made in 2026 ahead of the May elections.

6. Supporting Information

- 6.1. None



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 August 2026 and 30 November 2026

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	Key Decision
Walleys Quarry Odour update	To consider a report on the Walleys Quarry odour update	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 4 August 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Proposed Pump Track at Lyme Valley Parkway	To consider a report on a proposed Pump Track at Lyme Valley Parkway	Cabinet Member for Residents' Services and Neighbourhoods	Cabinet 4 August 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	Town	N/A	Yes
Traffic Regulation	To consider a report on a Traffic Regulation	Cabinet Member for Planning and Town	Cabinet 4 August 2026	Economy and Place	All Wards	N/A	Yes

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
Order Consultation	Order Consultation	Centres					
Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030	To consider a report on the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030	Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Protection	Cabinet 4 August 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Local Government Reorganisation Update	To consider a report on Local Government Reorganisation	Cabinet Member for Finance, Cabinet Member for Legal, Governance and Organisational Performance	Cabinet 4 August 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Withdrawal of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council from the Local Government Association	To consider a report on the withdrawal of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council from the Local Government Association	Cabinet Member for Planning and Town Centres	Cabinet 4 August 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Walleys Quarry Odour Update	To consider a report on the Walleys Quarry Odour issues	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 15 September 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Article 4	To consider a report	Cabinet Member for	Cabinet 15	Economy and	All Wards	N/A	Yes

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
Direction	seeking to implement an Article 4 Direction across the Borough	Planning and Town Centres, Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Protection	September 2026	Place,Health, Wellbeing and Environment			
Medium Term Financial Strategy - Refresh 2027/28	To consider a report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy - Refresh 2027/28	Cabinet Member for Finance	Cabinet 15 September 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Quarter 1 Finance and Performance Report 2026/27	To consider a report on Quarter 1 Finance and Performance 2026/27	Cabinet Member for Finance, Cabinet Member for Legal, Governance and Organisational Performance	Cabinet 15 September 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	No
Improving Welfare and Safety infrastructure at Knutton Lane Depot	Improving Welfare and Safety infrastructure at Knutton Lane Depot	Cabinet Member for Finance, Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Green Spaces	Cabinet 15 September 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance,Health, Wellbeing and Environment	Town	N/A	Yes
Recycling and Waste re-routing	To consider a report on recycling and waste re-routing	Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Green Spaces	Cabinet 15 September 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	Yes

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
Approval for Continuing Contract for H&S Monitoring	To consider a report for approval for Continuing Contract for H&S Monitoring	Cabinet Member for Legal, Governance and Organisational Performance	Cabinet 15 September 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Walleys Quarry Odour Update	To consider a report on the Walleys Quarry Odour Update	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 6 October 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Housing Assistance Policy	To consider a report on the Housing Assistance Policy	Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Protection	Cabinet 6 October 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Annual Report	To consider the Annual Report	Cabinet Member for Legal, Governance and Organisational Performance	Cabinet 6 October 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	No
Council Plan	To consider a report on the Council Plan	Cabinet Member for Planning and Town Centres	Cabinet 6 October 2026	Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Joint Allocations Policy 2026	To consider a report on the Joint Allocations Policy 2026	Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Protection	Cabinet 6 October 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Asset Management Plan	To consider a report on the Asset Management Plan	Cabinet Member for Planning and Town Centres	Cabinet 6 October 2026	Economy and Place	All Wards	N/A	Yes

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
Section 106 Strategy for Investment in Green Spaces	To consider a report on necessary updates to the use of Section 106 Funding for use in investing in parks and green spaces	Cabinet Member for Planning and Town Centres	Cabinet 6 October 2026	Economy and Place	All Wards	N/A	No
Facilities Upgrades for Service provision	To consider a report on investment in operational facilities for enhanced service provision	Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Green Spaces, Cabinet Member for Finance	Cabinet 6 October 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment, Finance, Assets and Performance	All Wards	N/A	Yes
Walleys Quarry Odour Update	To consider a report on odour issues at Walleys Quarry	Cabinet Portfolio Holder - One Council, People and Partnerships	Cabinet 3 November 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Safeguarding Policy	To consider a report on the Safeguarding Policy	Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Protection	Cabinet 3 November 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Domestic Abuse Policy	To consider a report on the Domestic Abuse Policy	Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Protection	Cabinet 3 November 2026	Health, Wellbeing and Environment	All Wards	N/A	No
Outcome of Land Disposal Consultation	To consider a report on the outcome of the Land Disposal	Cabinet Member for Planning and Town Centres	Cabinet 3 November 2026	Economy and Place	All Wards	N/A	Yes

Report Title	Description	Portfolio	Intended Decision Taker and Date	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Wards Affected	Reason for Determining in Private Session (if Applicable)	
	Consultation						
Playing Pitch Strategy	To consider a report on the Playing Pitch Strategy	Cabinet Member for Planning and Town Centres	Cabinet 3 November 2026	Economy and Place	All Wards	N/A	Yes

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