



PLEASE NOTE THAT PRAYERS WILL BE HELD AT 6.50PM BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL.

THE MAYOR REQUESTS THAT ANY MEMBER WISHING TO PARTICIPATE IN PRAYERS BE IN ATTENDANCE BY NO LATER THAN 6.45PM.

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the Borough Council of Newcastle-under-Lyme to be held in the **Queen Elizabeth II & Astley Rooms - Castle House, Barracks Road, Newcastle, Staffs. ST5 1BL** on **Wednesday, 30th September, 2026** at **7.00 pm**.

B U S I N E S S

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest from Members on items contained within this agenda.

3 MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 28)

To consider the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) held on 8 July and 2 September, 2026.

4 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5 URGENT DECISION (Pages 29 - 32)

6 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26 (Pages 33 - 36)

7 STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (Pages 37 - 44)

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

8 REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (To Follow)

Reports are expected for the following:

- a) Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee
- b) Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee
- c) Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee

9 REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES (Pages 45 - 64)

Reports are attached for the following:

- Audit and Standards Committee
- Planning Committee
- Licensing and Public Protection Committee

10 MOTIONS OF MEMBERS (Pages 65 - 70)

The following Motions have been received:

- Closure Order Powers – Proposed by Cllr Gullis and Seconded by Cllr Simpson
- Confiscate and Crush – Proposed by Cllr Gullis and Seconded by Cllr Tift

11 QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS (Pages 71 - 72)

12 RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

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

13 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any communications which pursuant to Section B4, Rule 9 of the constitution are, in the opinion of the Mayor, of an urgent nature and to pass thereon such resolutions as may be deemed necessary.

Yours faithfully



Chief Executive

NOTICE FOR COUNCILLORS

1. Fire/Bomb Alerts

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, leave the building immediately, following the fire exit signs.

Fire exits are to be found at the side of the room leading into Queens Gardens.

On exiting the building Members, Officers and the Public must assemble at the statue of Queen Victoria. DO NOT re-enter the building until advised to by the Controlling Officer.

2. Mobile Phones

Please switch off all mobile phones before entering the Council Chamber.

3. Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion other than those listed in Procedure Rule 14 must reach the Chief Executive ten clear days before the relevant Meeting of the Council. Further information on Notices of Motion can be found in Section B5, Rule 4 of the Constitution of the Council.

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

Council - 08/07/26

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 8th July, 2026
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

[View the agenda here](#)

[Watch the meeting here](#)

Present: Mayor.Councillor Christopher Bailey (Chair)

Councillors:	Beeston	Barber	Rogerson
	Bettley-Smith	Clarke	SainReiners
	Casey-Hulme	Downs	Saxton
	Fear	Duffy	Sedgley
	Heesom	Evans	Shaw
	Holland	Fisher	Sparks
	Hutchison	Gullis	Stevenson
	D Jones	Harrison	Swain
	Parker	Harrison	Tift
	J Tagg	Jellyman	Walton
	S Tagg	Kasperowicz	Wood
	Whieldon	Lefroy	Westcott
	Whitmore	Machin	
	Renshaw	Ashworth	

Apologies: Councillor(s) Turnock, Chamberlain and Simpson

Officers:	Gordon Mole	Chief Executive
	Simon McEneny	Deputy Chief Executive
	Georgina Evans-Stadward	Service Director - Strategy, People and Performance
	Geoff Durham	Civic & Member Support Officer
	Craig Turner	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer
	Olwen Brown	Interim Service Director- Legal and Governance/Monitoring Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest stated for items included on this agenda.

2. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN FOR THE BOROUGH OF NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME

Councillor Jonathan Gullis moved and Councillor Simon Tagg seconded that David Allport, Gillian Burnett-Faulkner, Sylvia Dymond, Trevor Johnson, Paul Northcott, Mike Stubbs, Stephen Sweeney, Paul Waring, Ian Wilkes, Gillian Williams and John Williams be appointed as Honorary Aldermen for the Borough of Newcastle under Lyme.

Council - 08/07/26

Resolved: That the following be appointed as Honorary Aldermen for the Borough of Newcastle under Lyme.

David Allport
Gillian Burnett-Faulkner
Sylvia Dymond
Trevor Johnson
Paul Northcott
Mike Stubbs
Stephen Sweeney
Paul Waring
Ian Wilkes
Gillian Williams
John Williams

[Watch the proceedings here](#)

Mayor.Councillor Christopher Bailey
Chair

Meeting concluded at 7.20 pm

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 8th July, 2026
Time of Commencement: 7.20 pm

[View the agenda here](#)

[Watch the meeting here](#)

Present: Mayor.Councillor Christopher Bailey (Chair)

Councillors:	Beeston	Renshaw	Ashworth
	Bettley-Smith	Barber	Rogerson
	Casey-Hulme	Clarke	SainReiners
	Fear	Downs	Saxton
	Heesom	Duffy	Sedgley
	Holland	Evans	Shaw
	Hutchison	Fisher	Sparks
	D Jones	Gullis	Stevenson
	Parker	Harrison	Swain
	J Tagg	Jellyman	Tift
	S Tagg	Kasperowicz	Walton
	Whieldon	Lefroy	Wood
	Whitmore	Machin	Westcott

Apologies: Councillor(s) Turnock, Chamberlain and Simpson

Officers:	Gordon Mole	Chief Executive
	Simon McEneny	Deputy Chief Executive
	Georgina Evans-Stadward	Service Director - Strategy, People and Performance
	Geoff Durham	Civic & Member Support Officer
	Craig Turner	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer
	Olwen Brown	Interim Service Director- Legal and Governance/Monitoring Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Leader declared an interest in item 6, the Borough Local Plan - the landowners of proposed AB2 site were clients of a company that the Leader worked with in a private capacity as a senior advisor.

Councillor Downs declared an interest in item 6 – as a resident in close proximity to a site being discussed this evening.

Councillor Jones declared an interest in item 6 - as an employee of Harper & Keele Veterinary School but would take part in the debate. Also, a declaration of interest was made for item 10 – protecting green spaces as both of his children attended Madeley High School.

The following Members declared an interest in Item 10 – withdrawing from the Local Government Association – who had benefited from training and guidance from the LGA: Cllrs: Beeston; Bettley-Smith; Fear; Holland; Heesom; Hutchison; Lefroy; Sedgley; Swain; J Tagg; Whieldon; Whitmore and S Tagg who had also undertaken mentoring for the LGA.

2. MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Whieldon referred to item 15 on the Minutes regarding her request for a timescale for the implementation of the recommendations and asked when that would be done.

The Mayor advised that a detailed report would be brought to the September meeting of Full Council.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May, 2026 be agreed as a correct record.

3. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made one announcement:

His Civic Service would be held on Sunday, 26th July, 2026 at St Giles Church with the procession commencing at 10.15am approximately, from Castle House.

4. AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

The Leader introduced a report and moved the Motion setting out proposed changes to the Council's Constitution stating that the changes were about clarity, efficiency and accountability.

The proposed changes were shown at paragraph 1.2 of the report and concerned decision making, Council and Cabinet Procedure Rules, Planning Committee provisions- which had been set nationally, Code of Conduct complaints and the removal of substitutes from meetings.

Councillor Rogerson seconded the Motion stated that the proposed amendments would keep the Council's arrangements clear, effective and fit for purpose. He welcomed the changes made to the Council procedure rules.

Councillor Holland introduced the proposed amendments put forward by the Conservative group. He stated that the Conservative group opposed on principle, measures within the report that impeded democratic accountability. They were open to the reform of the petition scheme and asked the Leader to justify his proposed changes. The Conservative group amendment called for a Working Group to discuss the changes.

Councillor Simon Tagg seconded the amendment and reserved his right to speak.

The Leader and Councillor Rogerson did not consent to the Conservative groups' amendment.

A debate took place on the Conservative groups' amendment.

Comments were made by Councillors' Fear and Whieldon stating that the proposed changes would close down local debate and also that the changes were not clear.

Councillor Lefroy stated that the restrictions placed on petitions would affect smaller communities of less than 100 people and the Leader was asked to look into that point as part of the Working Group proposed by the Conservative group. In addition, there seemed to be no provision for petitions between 101 and 249 signatures.

Councillor Jones raised concerns regarding appeals being delegate to the Chief Executive, particularly in terms of impartiality and whether the change would be ACAS compliant. Concerns were also raised regarding the questions time frame as they would have to be submitted before the Council agenda was available.

Councillor Parker arrived at 7.45pm

Councillor Simon Tagg stated that the Conservative group had concerns about several of the proposals and the change in direction of the Council. He agreed that the changes to Planning with the National Scheme of Delegation was out of this Council's control. Reference was made to the Leader writing to the Government putting the case forward for change and Councillor Tagg asked that the Leader write a letter to the Secretary of State relating to the changes to Planning arrangements stating that local accountability was needed.

Councillor Tagg referred to the removal of substitute members from committees and the benefit that would be lost in areas such as sub-committees.

The Leader stated that the peoples democratic rights had not been nullified as they could attend committees, ask questions and submit petitions.

A vote was taken on the Conservative groups' amendment.

In favour:	14
Against:	25
Abstentions:	02

The Conservative amendment fell and a debate took place on the original Motion.

Councillor Simon Tagg stated that his group would be voting against the Motion but asked the Leader if he would take on board writing to the Government regarding the Planning changes.

Councillor Holland stated that he found it ironic that resolution number two empowered the Monitoring Officer in consultation with group leaders when previously a cross party working group had been opposed.

In summing up, the Leader stated that he would be happy to write to the Government regarding the changes to Planning legislation and would be happy to meet with Councillor Lefroy regarding his concerns around the petition scheme.

Resolved:

- (i) That the proposed changes to the Constitution be agreed.
- (ii) That the responsibility for making such changes reflecting the will of Council, be delegated to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Group Leaders; such changes to take effect as soon as the Monitoring Officer has

consulted the Group Leader and made the changes required.

[Watch the debate here](#)

5. BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN

The Leader and Councillor Downs left the room during the debate on the following item.

The Deputy Leader presented a report seeking to adopt the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Local Plan (2020-2040). He stated that the Local Plan had been prepared, promoted and submitted by the previous administration. Four consultations had been carried out prior to its submission. Modifications were consulted on in late 2025 and changes were requested by the Planning Inspector before the Plan could be made sound, including the removal of six proposed housing allocations. The Planning Inspector's final report arrived on 19 May, 2026, the day before the current administration took control.

The new administration wrote to the Planning Inspector asking if changes could be made but were advised that no further changes could be made and that a new plan-making process would be required. Therefore, it was felt that the danger of not adopting the Plan could have serious consequences for the Borough as it would fall back onto old policies.

Councillor Ashworth seconded the Motion stated that the Local Plan was not what the Administration would have written and therefore had tried to change it through writing to the Planning Inspector. Challenges were made to targets around BREAM, energy statements, whole life carbon assessments and a fixed 10% on site renewable target. Stronger protection was sought for agricultural land, a more pro-business approach in Policy EMP1 and tougher controls on HMO's and a Borough wide Article 4 Direction was pushed for.

Councillor Fear presented the amendment submitted by the Conservative group. He referred to the standard calculation which was used to calculate the amount of housing required in the Borough and therefore, any sites removed from the Local Plan would require another site being put in. If the previous administration had not got a Plan in place, the additional 2000 houses that the Government had imposed in the new figures would have had to have been included in the Plan being discussed this evening.

The Conservative groups' amendment, at page 211 of the agenda set out a number of true facts which indicate that the previous administration had done whatever it could to protect green spaces in the Borough. Councillor Fear pointed out a typing error at point D where it should read AB2 instead of B2.

Councillor Simon Tagg seconded the amendment and reserved his right to speak.

Councillors' Shaw and Ashworth consented to the amendment.

Councillor Fear stated that the Plan had been developed to try and ensure that impositions of national government were imposed upon the Borough as lightly as possible. Reference was made to paragraph 3.17 which stated that, although the Borough was under the national average for unemployment, the figures were slightly

over the national average in Staffordshire. It was hoped that the Local Plan would help to provide the jobs required to bring the local unemployment figures down.

The Local Plan was good and sound and had gone through ample consultation and was offering the minimum amount of housing imposed upon the Borough and giving employment opportunities.

Councillor Simon Tagg stated that difficult decisions had to be made in the previous Council and would have to be made in the new Council in the face of objections from local residents on sites being included/not included in the Plan. The housing and employment requirements had been set by national government and this Council settled on the lowest number that it could whilst still providing a sustainable Plan which met the Government's requirements.

Councillor Tagg stated that the Local Plan was very different to the Joint Local Plan that had been put together with Stoke on Trent City Council which would have meant 11,720 houses being built in the Borough between now and 2033. The Plan being discussed at this meeting had approximately 8000 proposed houses.

Councillor Holland stated that in his fifteen years as a Councillor, the Council had not had an up to date Local Development Plan which would come at an enormous cost to the Council's ability to control development in the Borough and had been especially harmful to rural communities.

Councillor Dave Jones stated that he sympathised with the new Administration who had inherited the Plan at its final stage and recognised that the Borough was in a difficult position with speculative applications. Councillor Jones had concluded that a flawed plan that locked in the wrong sites at Audley, damaged a site of real bio diversity at Keele and failed to secure social housing was not automatically a safer choice. He objected to site AB2 at Audley as it would remove 80 hectares of agricultural Green Belt land to become six large distribution warehouses and the Labour group had argued that it should have been met in the Chatterley Valley development site.

Reference was made to the development of 900 homes on the former Municipal Golf Course at Keele, which, since its closure had become one of the most bio -diverse sites in the Borough. It would also put pressure on the infrastructure of Silverdale which was already straining.

Councillor Machin advised that the three Audley Ward Councillors would be voting against the Local Plan as the current Administration did not choose the sites contained within it. Residents had raised concerns about the affect of development on the infrastructure of Audley and the Ward Councillors felt that they needed to be honest with the people whom they represented.

Councillor Bettley-Smith stated that residents within the wards that he represented had become concerned as to what could happen when it was believed that the Local Plan may not be adopted.

Councillor Lefroy pointed out that the original plans for the former Keele Golf Course were for 1800 homes. Although the revised plan was still 900 homes, nearly 60% of the land would be devoted to a country park.

Council - 08/07/26

Councillor Hutchison stated that Silverdale Parish Council had backed the building of the 900 homes – which still left over half of the site to become Keele Park Countryside Park.

Councillor Stevenson opposed the amendment stating that 99% of Newchapel residents did not want housing on the allocated sites.

Councillor Shaw, in summing up, stated that the examination had concluded and no further changes could be made. If the Plan was rejected this evening no areas would be protected, leaving the Borough in a weakened position and the Council would be leaving itself open to the Government's higher housing numbers.

Councillor Duffy left the meeting at 8.40pm

A named vote was requested and taken on the Motion as amended:

ASHWORTH	Y	HARRISON P	N	SHAW	Y
BAILEY	Y	HEESOM	Y	SIMPSON	ABSENT
BARBER	Y	HOLLAND	Y	SPARKS	Y
BEESTON	Y	HUTCHISON	Y	STEVENSON	N
BETTLEY-SMITH	Y	JELLYMAN	Y	SWAIN	Y
CASEY-HULME	N	JONES	N	TAGG J	Y
CHAMBERLAIN	ABSENT	KASPEROWICZ	Y	TAGG S	Y
CLARKE	Y	LEFROY	Y	TIFT	Y
DOWNS – declaration of interest made	-	MACHIN	N	TURNOCK	ABSENT
DUFFY	ABSENT	PARKER	Y	WALTON	Y
EVANS	Y	RENSHAW	Y	WESTCOTT	Y
FEAR	Y	ROGERSON	Y	WHIELDON	Y
FISHER	Y	SAIN-REINERS	N	WHITMORE	Y
GULLIS – declaration of interest made	-	SAXTON	Y	WOOD	Y
HARRISON M	Y	SEDGLEY	Y		

In Favour (Y) – 32

Against (N) – 6

Abstain – 0

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) That the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Local Plan (2020-2040), be adopted subject to:
- (a) incorporating the Main Modifications (Appendix 2) recommended by the Inspector necessary to make the Plan sound as well as the accompanying list of changes to the associated Policies Map (Appendix 3)
 - (b) the schedule of additional modifications (Appendix 4)
 - (iii) withdraws the policies in the adopted Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council Strategy and the adopted Newcastle-under-Lyme Council Local Plan (2003) except for those policies listed to be saved in the Local Plan 2020 – 2040.
- (iv) That the Interim Head of Service (Planning Policy) be authorised to publish a Sustainability Appraisal Statement and a Local Plan Adoption Statement in line with the regulations contained within the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012.
- (v) That the Interim Head of Service (Planning Policy), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, be authorised to make any non-material updates and drafting changes to the Local Plan. This includes the additional (minor) modifications published alongside the Main Modifications (Appendix 4).

[Watch the debate here](#)

The meeting was adjourned for a short break at 8.50pm

The meeting resumed at 9.00pm

6. STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader and Councillor Downs returned to the room

The Leader, Councillor Gullis presented the statement that had been circulated about the activities and decisions made by Cabinet to allow questions and comments. He stated that in a short period of time, the new Administration had saved the taxpayer £6.2m by cancelling net-zero plans for the electric bin lorries. He was proud of the introduction of the Community Funding and the Article Four Direction.

Questions were raised and responses were provided as follows.

On paragraph 2 – Waste Vehicles – Procurement Saving

Councillor Hutchison stated that the road map to net-zero had £7m for fleet replacement. Electric RCV's were put into the budget 4 years ago -in line with Government guidelines. As the previous Portfolio Holder, Councillor Hutchison had

agreed that the Council would not be buying electric waste collection vehicles. The Council had been successfully using hydro treated vegetable oil in its vehicles, reducing carbon emissions so there was no need to purchase electric vehicles. Councillor Hutchison had considered it prudent to leave the budget unchanged and were acting with good judgement thinking about any possible penalties from the Government for not purchasing electric vehicles and any price increases in the purchase of future waste vehicles.

The Leader stated that it was a serious implication to infer that the Council's Section 151 Officer had not made sure that the £2.1m saving from changing the Council's procurement rules was a genuine saving.

There was a plan in the Capital Programme for a future procurement for electric collection vehicles. There was a quote of £4.2m for the infrastructure that was not budgeted for. £6.2m had been saved for the people of Newcastle from future spending in the Capital Programme and ending net-zero.

Councillor Simon Tagg referred to Hansard where it stated that, previously as an MP, Councillor Gullis had welcomed a new electric bus fleet in Stoke on Trent through an investment and asked the Leader what had changed.

The Leader stated that he did argue for the electric buses in Stoke on Trent because a private company was willing to invest almost £40m into improving the bus network which had not been improved in over a decade.

Councillor Mark Harrison stated that he was not opposed to electric vehicles. In his professional background he had been involved in electric vehicle technology – specifically air taxis. For solar power, 3mw would be needed to charge a fleet of vehicles which equated to approximately 7000 solar panels.

Vehicle performance would dip in the winter so the national grid would have to be relied upon.

Paragraph 3 - Article 4 Direction

Councillor Casy-Hulme welcomed this particularly the recognition of uncontrolled growth of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's) and their affect on local communities. The Article 4 Direction would ensure that they were subject to the Planning process allowing their impact to be properly assessed before any approval was given.

The Leader congratulated Councillor Casey-Hulme for her hard work in her Ward in respect of HMO's.

Councillor Fear stated that it was clear that people rightly had concerns regarding HMO's. Councillor Fear asked for assurance from the Leader, in respect of paragraph 3.4 of the agenda report, that when a report goes to Cabinet, it would be investigated thoroughly.

Councillor Simon Tagg welcomed this and referred to the Motion that had come to Council last September which had asked officers to look at HMO's and possible Article 4 Directions. It was Councillor Tagg's understanding that a report had been prepared and the Leader was asked why the report could not be brought to Council sooner than the Autumn.

The Leader stated that when the Article 4 Direction report came back to Cabinet and to Full Council, the detail would be done. There was already a heat map of where registered HMO's were going and detailed work was being carried out regarding where the other HMO's were.

Councillor Kasperowicz asked the Leader if he agreed that vulnerable people should be fully supported with the proper safeguarding procedures in place – including safe accommodation and the full support at the Council's disposal.

The Leader stated that his group were lucky to have Councillor Renshaw with them who had extensive experience, both working as a Housing Officer at the Council previously and leading a successful charity supporting homelessness and addictions within Stoke on Trent. Councillor Renshaw was currently looking at the Homelessness Strategy to ensure that a support package was in place and that the resources of the Council were working with those who wished to engage.

Paragraph 4 – Walleys Quarry

Councillor Casey Hulme asked why the costs order, awarded against Walleys Quarry was not enforced and asked for an update on the multi-agency working group regarding the capping and restoration of the site.

The Leader stated that he did not have the information to hand and would therefore email Councillor Casey-Hulme after the meeting.

Councillor Jones welcomed the announcement of a cross-party working group and asked the Leader for more information on the powers and remit of the group and whether meetings and recommendations would be reported publicly.

The Leader stated that once the group was formed and the first meeting was held, the powers and remit could be discussed there. It was hoped that the first meeting would be held soon – over the summer.

Paragraph 5 – Community Fund

Councillor Jones welcomed this and asked the Leader to advise him of any discussions around governance of the Fund to ensure transparency and management of conflicts of interest and political impartiality.

The Leader stated that the Section 151 Officer had written in the Cabinet report the terms on which the money could be used and not used. Information would be published on every Councillors page where money had been spent and when. Councillors would email either the Section 151 Officer or the Deputy Chief Executive with suggestions and ask for feedback.

Councillor Simon Tagg also welcomed the scheme which had grown out of the Council's Civic Pride Fund. He shared the concerns around the management and audit of the scheme.

Councillor Mark Harrison asked Councillor Simon Tagg if his group could draw on Councillor Tagg's experience of managing such funds in the past.

The Leader, referring to Councillor Harrison's comment stated that Councillor Tagg's experience would be most welcome.

Councillor Kasperowicz asked the Leader how the funds would support grass roots organisations, local events and voluntary organisations.

The Leader stated that it could be used, for example, at Kidsgrove Scouts who needed a new boiler or to contribute towards a new kitchen there. It could be used for community litter picks, skip days, jet washing local bus stops and much more.

Councillor Downs was pleased that local schools looking for help with funding would be another good cause.

Paragraph 6 – Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Councillor Whieldon, referring to digital platforms in regard to LGR stated that the digital platforms had shown that the Leader had shifted his position on LGR since being elected – now being opposed to it, whereas the former Leader had been consistent with his opposition to the process.

The Leader stated that Councillor Whieldon was correct. His Facebook history stated that rather than sitting back, the elected representatives must actively shape a system that truly served the community. The Leader believed that, rather than being reactive- it was sometimes good to be proactive. He accepted that the people of Newcastle, Reform UK Councillors and the wider community had made it clear that LGR should not go ahead and it was sometimes good to admit that you were on the wrong side of an argument and, as Leader would fight for Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's right to exist.

Resolved: That the Statement of the Leader of the Council be received and noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

7. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Reports for the Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee, the Health Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee and the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee were attached to the agenda.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

8. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Reports for the Audit and Standards Committee, Planning Committee and the Licensing and Public Protection Committee were attached to the agenda.

Members were advised that the Audit and Standards Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Full Council.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

9. MOTIONS OF MEMBERS

Four Motions were received:

The first Motion concerned the rescinding of the Climate Emergency Declaration, and was proposed by Councillor Gullis and Seconded by Councillor Ashworth.

The Leader stated that the Council would continue with practical, local environmental action but without the costly net-zero approach. The UK accounted for less than 1% of global territorial greenhouse gas emissions and therefore the taxpayers money should be directed towards statutory duties and residents priorities.

A resolution was passed to continue the meeting as it approached the three hour deadline.

Councillor Ashworth, in seconded the rescinding of the Climate Emergency Declaration stating that it did not mean that the Council had stopped caring about the environment but meant refusing to foot the bill for problems that this Council did not create.

Councillor Parker left the meeting at 10pm

An amendment to the Motion - shown at page 231 of the agenda, had been proposed by Councillor Simon Tagg and seconded by Councillor Hutchison.

Councillor Simon Tagg presented the Conservative group's amendment which, although the new Administration's fresh approach was acknowledged, noted that a lot of valuable work had gone into the policy and it was important to commit to the impact of changing climate. The amendment also requested that a new Sustainable Environment Strategy be brought forward.

Councillor Hutchison seconded the amendment, stressing the need for a new Sustainable Environment Strategy.

The amendment was not accepted by the Leader and Councillor Ashworth, as the proposer and seconder of the original Motion.

The amendment was debated.

Councillor Lefroy stated that he was in favour of the pragmatic approach in tackling climate change. He had visited a factory, covering 40,000m², in his line of work and the entire roof had been covered with solar panels. The factory used no electricity from the grid but did supply it. This Council should be insisting that every new building had solar panels fixed on the roof which would then give no reason for agricultural land to be used to site them.

In summing up, the Leader stated that Councillor Lefroy's suggestion regarding putting solar panels on all new buildings was common sense. However, the country's grid network could not handle the power that was generated. Reference was made to air source heat pumps that had been proposed by the previous Administration for Jubilee2. The Leader stated that no checks had been made as to whether they needed changing and he was now awaiting a report on that matter. If the report stated that they would not need changing, they would not be changed.

Councillor Simon Tagg stated that he stood by his group's amendment. In his time as Leader, he, along with two portfolio holders had taken a measured approach with the Sustainable Environment Strategy to make improvements. Referring to J2, the

Council - 08/07/26

funding for the new boiler, the funding was being focussed into energy efficiency to save taxpayers money.

A vote was taken on the amendment but was defeated.

A vote was then taken on the original Motion and was carried.

For:	24
Against:	15
Abstain:	--

[Watch the debate on the rescinding of the Climate emergency Declaration here](#)

The second Motion, concerning 'Save our Borough' was submitted by the Conservative Group, proposed by Councillor Simon Tagg and seconded by Councillor Holland.

Councillor Simon Tagg presented the Conservative Group's Motion seeking the scrapping of forced council mergers in Staffordshire.

Councillor Holland, in seconding the Motion, thanked the Leader and all who had signed the petition.

An amendment to the Motion - shown at page 235 of the agenda, had been proposed by The Leader and seconded by Councillor Shaw.

The Leader stated that he would make sure that the letter was sent out to the Prime Minister and any councillor who wished to, was invited to sign it.

Councillor Shaw seconded the amendment.

Councillors' Simon Tagg and Holland accepted the amendment.

A vote was taken and the Motion, as amended was carried.

For:	37
Against:	--
Abstain:	2

[Watch the debate on 'Save our Borough'](#)

The third Motion concerned the Protection of Council Owned Green Spaces and was proposed by Councillor Fear and seconded by Councillor Simon Tagg.

Councillor Fear presented the Conservative group's Motion which aimed to 'fire-proof' some of the Council's green spaces for the future. The Fields in Trust status would provide a legally binding Deed of Dedication to protect it from future development. In addition, the Motion called for other landowners to pursue Fields in Trust status.

Councillor Simon Tagg in seconding the Motion, stated that it was about finishing a job that had already been started by the previous Administration, protecting 88 sites across the Borough.

An amendment to the Motion, shown at page 239, was submitted by the Reform UK group, proposed by Councillor Gullis and seconded by Councillor Ashworth.

The Leader presented the Reform UK group's amendment, stating that the original Motion did not guarantee that the sites could not be developed in the future. Having only been in power for seven weeks, the Administration wished to take time to look at the information and understand the implications and costs. Once that had been done, the Administration would report on their findings as they did agree with the desire to protect green spaces.

Councillor Ashworth seconded the amendment, stating that it kept the principle that the Conservative group's Motion, protecting parks, open spaces and playing fields but it did not tie the Council to a legal mechanism as the right safeguard depended upon the site. The amendment also stated that the Reform UK group opposed being forced by Government to produce a new local plan which would have to include 2000 new homes across the Borough.

Councillors' Fear and Simon Tagg did not consent to the amendment, which was then debated.

Councillor Simon Tagg stated that the 88 sites previously referred to were already protected in the Local Plan which gave permanent protection and a number of the sites had Village Green Status.

Councillors' Jones and Casey-Hulme left the meeting at 10.35pm

Councillor Holland stated that the amendment did not mention 'Fields in Trust' which had royal patronage and helped local authorities to place legally binding restrictions on the Council's parks and playing fields so that they were protected in perpetuity.

Councillor Fear stated that the Motion was a neat straight forward solution to protect green spaces in the Borough.

Councillor Downs stated that the new Administration deserved time to look at what was being proposed who were committed to protecting the Council's green spaces and other green spaces in the Borough.

The Leader stated that the Motion could not be clearer about how important green spaces were.

A vote was taken on the amended motion. The amendment was passed and therefore became the substantive Motion.

Councillor Simon Tagg stated that his group would be voting against the amended Motion as Fields in Trust was not included and expanded protection would be gone.

The Leader, in summing up stated that he was proud of the Borough's green spaces and would do all that he could to protect them.

A vote was taken and the Motion, as amended was carried.

For:	24
Against:	13
Abstain:	--

[Watch the debate on Protection of Council-Owned Green Spaces here](#)

The final Motion concerned the withdrawal of the Borough Council from the Local Government Association and was proposed by Councillor Gullis and seconded by Councillor Shaw.

The Leader presented the Motion stating that tens of thousands of pounds of taxpayers money should not be spent on the subscription when nothing was seen by the public in return. To date, the LGA had received £627.63m, through council subscriptions or government grants.

The 2025/26 accounts of the LGA showed that only 51% of its members agreed that it demonstrated value for money.

The Leader stated that Newcastle Borough Council already had elected members, officers, legal advice, financial advice, external auditors, statutory inspection regimes, public scrutiny and scrutiny committees, Cabinet, Council and direct routes to government. Leaving the LGA was not about avoiding scrutiny.

Councillor Shaw seconded the Motion.

An amendment to the Motion had been submitted, proposed by Councillor Simon Tagg and seconded by Councillor Whieldon.

Councillor Simon Tagg presented his amendment stating that the reason for it was to ensure that any decision taken by the Council was based on evidence, a transparency approach and an assessment of the facts. The Council would remain a member of the LGA until at least 2028 and therefore no urgency that required Full Council to make a decision until all relevant information was available. The Motion also requested that the report to Cabinet included information as set out at number 1, under the heading 'Council Further Resolves'.

Members from all political groups had benefited from training and development from the LGA over the years.

Councillor Whieldon seconded the amendment stating that, for £12,145 membership the Council got ad hoc and bespoke support throughout 2024/25, tailored to local challenges, complex issues and new roles and responsibilities. At the same time training was given to Councillors on governance, chairing skills and election scenario, planning and more.

The Leader and Councillor Shaw did not accept the amendment.

A debate took place on whether to accept the amendment.

Councillor Fear stated that the Council did need to know what it got for the money as, some things were expensive when needed and consultants cost a lot of money too. If the Council had a legal problem that the LGA could provide back-up for, it was worth having a cost-benefit analysis. Councillor Fear asked when the Council could leave the LGA as it was his understanding that it could not be left just like that.

The Chief Executive stated that, as Councillor Tagg and the Leader had noted, a report would be going to Cabinet which would include Terms and Conditions for the LGA and officers had been asked to engage with the LGA to challenge that.

The Leader stated that even having paid the subscription, training course fees had to be paid on top of that. He stated that, even with training courses he still could not see any benefit going to the residents of Newcastle.

Councillor Tagg stated that the LGA was about collaboration and the LGA ensured that Councils achieved what was best for their residents.

A vote was taken on the amendment and was defeated.

A debate then took place on the original Motion.

The Leader stated that collaboration had happened at Newcastle without the LGA being involved. He reiterated that the LGA gave no benefit to the residents of the Borough.

Councillor Tagg stated that his group would be voting against the Motion as they did not have the information that had been requested and required the Chief Executive's assessment and pros and cons of leaving the LGA.

Councillor Gullis stated that Reform UK was acting in the interests of the people it served.

A vote was taken on the Motion which was carried.

For:	23
Against:	13
Abstain:	--

[Watch the debate on the withdrawal from the LGA here](#)

10. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Question from Councillor Sue Beeston to the Leader of the Council:

“Can the Leader explain why the Conservation Advisory Working Party (CAWP) meetings scheduled for June, July, August and September following the local elections have been cancelled?”

The CAWP has long provided an important forum for members to review and comment on planning applications affecting listed buildings, conservation areas and the wider historic environment across the Borough. It also plays a key role in advising the Planning Committee, Cabinet and Council on conservation policy, enhancement schemes, design guidance for conservation areas, and applications for historic building grants.

Given the significance of this work, what were the reasons for cancelling these meetings, what arrangements have been put in place to ensure appropriate member input on heritage and conservation matters during this period, and when does the Leader intend the Working Party to resume its regular programme of meetings?”

The Leader stated that it was his intention to end CAWP. Heritage protection in the Borough was not delivered by a monthly meeting but by rigorous experts, statutory scrutiny of every application affected depending upon listed building or conservation area. CAWP was an advisory only, commenting on applications with no decision making powers. Those powers sat and would continue to sit with the Planning Committee and officers under delegated authority, informed by the Conservation Officer and, where required, by Historic England. He did not believe that a parallel advisory forum on top of the statutory process justified the officer and Member time that it took up.

Councillor Beeston asked a supplementary question:

“Who would carry out the work that CAWP had done in the past”

The Leader stated that it would be the Planning Committee, officers under delegated authority – informed by the Conservation Officer and where required, by Historic England.

[Watch the debate here](#)

11. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

12. URGENT BUSINESS

Olwen Brown left the room during the debating of the next item

Appointment of Interim Service Director- Legal and Governance/Monitoring Officer – Olwen Brown

The Leader moved the motion and it was seconded by Councillor Simon Tagg

The appointment was agreed

[Watch the debate here](#)

13. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

There were no confidential items

**Mayor.Councillor Christopher Bailey
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 11.50 pm

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 2nd September, 2026

Time of Commencement: 5.00 pm

[View the agenda here](#)

[Watch the meeting here](#)

Present: Mayor.Councillor Christopher Bailey (Chair)

Councillors:	Beeston	Downs	SainReiners
	Casey-Hulme	Evans	Saxton
	Heesom	Fisher	Sedgley
	Holland	Gullis	Shaw
	Hutchison	Harrison	Simpson
	D Jones	Harrison	Sparks
	Renshaw	Jellyman	Stevenson
	S Tagg	Lefroy	Swain
	Turnock	Machin	Tift
	Whitmore	Rogerson	Walton

Apologies: Councillor(s) Barber, Bettley-Smith, Chamberlain, Clarke, Fear, Parker, J Tagg, Whieldon, Kasperowicz, Ashworth, Wood and Westcott

Officers:	Gordon Mole	Chief Executive
	Simon McEneny	Deputy Chief Executive
	Olwen Brown	Interim Service Director- Legal and Governance/Monitoring Officer
	Andrew Bird	Service Director - Sustainable Environment
	Joanne Halliday	Service Director - Commercial Delivery
	Geoff Durham	Civic & Member Support Officer
	Craig Turner	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

A Motion concerning the Council's response to the Ministerial announcement of 16 July, 2026 relating to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), was proposed by Councillor Simon Tagg and seconded by Councillor Holland.

Councillor Tagg stated that it had now been confirmed that Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council would be abolished and a new authority created with Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Moorlands. The decision did not reflect the wishes of the residents

of the Borough – with more than 11,000 people signing a petition and it was felt that reorganisation of the current local government structure in Staffordshire was not necessary.

There were also financial concerns regarding savings, the cost of transition and how existing debts and liabilities would be managed. Newcastle residents should not be expected to take on Stoke-on Trent's tax burden. The Government should explain why the model was selected and what evidence supported the decision.

This Council should be able to continue challenging where the decision had been made. As the Leader had recently met with Adam Jogee MP, Councillor Tagg asked for an update on what actions the MP was taking to fight this.

It was welcomed that the Council had written to the Secretary of State seeking clarification on the reasons behind the decision. The Leader was asked to clarify when the Council received legal advice, why it took until yesterday for the letter to be sent when the Council only had until 15 October to challenge the decision. The key question was whether the decision was reached lawfully, fairly and in accordance with the Government's own criteria.

Counsel's further advice would be welcomed on what alternative routes could be available to the Council, for example, an opportunity to challenge future structural change order or influence parliamentary scrutiny around the proposal.

The Council's position would be strengthened if it could work alongside other authorities sharing its concerns. The Leader was asked if he had approached the Leader of Staffordshire County Council regarding joint legal action and if so, what the response was.

Councillor Holland, in seconding the Motion stated that larger unitary authorities were less representative, less accountable and more remote from the communities they served. For Newcastle, LGR would mark the end of 853 years of history and identity and its residents would face large financial debts from another Authority.

Councillor Holland felt that LGR should not be happening – but to have the worst version imposed on this Council added insult to injury and deserved to be resisted. The Administration and officers were urged to leave no stone unturned in bringing to light any defects in the Government's reasoning.

An amendment to the Motion – shown on pages 7 to 9 of the agenda, had been proposed by Councillor Gullis and seconded by Councillor Shaw.

In proposing his group's amendment, the Leader stated that on the day that advice was received, a decision was made to start the work to issue the pre-action letter that had now been sent out. The Government now had 14 days to respond and the Council would then see their method behind the decision making. Following which, a legal opinion would be sought to see if the Council had a case to take the Government to court. However, the Council needed to be aware of the consequences of the decision which could cost millions of pounds being spent on a judicial review and, if unsuccessful, any legal costs could be imposed upon this Council.

Nobody in Newcastle wanted LGR. The previous Administration had run a petition which had made it clear that it was opposed to. Almost £800m of Stoke on Trent City

Council's debt was about to be absorbed by Newcastle residents. A new Authority would not, therefore, be financially viable from day one.

The amendment to the Motion acted as an important update as to the actions this Authority had taken. It was hoped that all Newcastle MP's would make it clear to Government that LGR was not wanted.

The Deputy Leader seconded the amendment. He stated that he had written to the Leader of Stoke-on-Trent City Council on 6 August asking twelve questions, mainly regarding the £791m borrowing debt, the actions they would take and how the debt would affect any future combined Authority following LGR. The response received on 20 August only answered one question. They would not sign a joint letter from all concerned councils asking Ministers for confirmation that any future combined Authority would not inherit Stoke-on-Trent's debts.

Councillor Ashworth had stated that all financial governance, operational and implementation matters would need to be considered – including the opening balance sheet of the new Authority. The assets, liabilities, reserves, borrowing, funding arrangements and service responsibilities would be transferred from existing councils.

Newcastle's finances were currently sound, with proper accounting rules and regulations being followed. Stoke-on-Trent's Executive Summary stated that 'the financial sustainability of the Council remained fragile with continued reliance on EFS remaining critical to long term resilience'.

On 19 August, the Government had confirmed that it would not write off any of Stoke-on-Trent's debt.

The amendment was not accepted by Councillor's Simon Tagg and Holland, who wished for the amendment to be debated further.

The amendment was debated.

Councillor Holland stated that the original Motion did require changes as events had moved on and there did seem to be agreement, overall, from Members.

Councillor Lefroy stated that the UK, particularly England, had fewer councillors per head of population than almost any other country in Europe with more than 2000 per councillor. LGR would reduce representation in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent by two thirds. The number of councillors representing local people would reduce by two thirds.

Councillor Lefroy referred to the start time of this evening's meeting – 5pm. It had already proved difficult for some Members to attend but, unitary authorities held their meetings during the day and therefore, more Members in full time employment would be excluded from local democracy as a result.

Councillor Lefroy reiterated that LGR was not wanted and stated that a referendum should have been held.

Councillor Hutchison stated that the previous Administration's Cabinet had submitted a 300+ page proposal showing that Newcastle could and should be a stand-alone unitary authority and the response from Government had been one or two

paragraphs long. The decision made was not evidence based or in the interests of residents of the Borough and should be challenged.

Councillor Whitmore spoke in her dual capacity as a Madeley Borough and Parish Councillor stating that LGR threatened the identity of Madeley as it would strip away local voices. Decision makers who had never been to Madeley would decide on its future, controlling planning decisions, fields and funds.

Councillor Heesom stated that she was sure that the fight to save the Borough Council, its identity and local democracy was agreed by all Members to do their best for residents and work together.

Councillor Simon Tagg stated that his group would support the amendment. Reference was made to Stoke-on-Trent's debt stating that he thought that the whole County may have to pick up some of the debt. The Borough's assets needed to be protected from, as Councillor Shaw had mentioned, asset stripping to cover some of the debt. This could be done through Fields in Trust and other means. He asked the Leader if he had approached the Leader of Staffordshire County Council regarding possible joint legal action and if so, the response received.

The Leader stated that the Administration had looked at Fields in Trust and work continued to put sites under that protection. He had also liaised with Parish Council's to protect land within their Parish. Referring to the amendment, the Leader stated that it outlined the work that the Authority had been doing since the decision had been made by the Government – to impose LGR upon this Council rather than pulling it and having an open dialogue on Strategic Mayoral Authorities.

The Leader stated that he would not risk spending millions of pounds on a court case if it could not be won. The money would be better spent protecting and investing in the Council's assets.

A vote was taken on the amendment and it was accepted.

A debate was then held on the amended Motion, which was now the substantive Motion.

The Deputy Leader stated that LGR showed a total disregard for the lives and concerns of local residents. The Council would continue to do its utmost to ensure that residents' rights and services were protected and provided for if LGR went ahead.

Councillor Jones agreed with Councillor Lefroy's comment regarding the reduction in the level of representation. Similarly, as he believed in devolution, Councillor Jones' view was that decisions were best made close to those people they impacted. The current system meant that decisions on education and social care were made in Stafford and Councillor Jones stated that right from the very start, it had been his belief that a unitary authority for Newcastle was the best way forward. He would support the Motion as it protected the Council's position.

Councillor Holland stated that decision that the Government was the wrong one because of the injustice that was being done to local people.

Councillor Simon Tagg asked the Leader to update Council on any discussions he had had with Staffordshire County Council. If Newcastle were to go down the route of legal action it would be better if it was with the County Council.

Reference was made to a point regarding having a Mayor of Staffordshire through a Strategic Mayoral Authority. Councillor Tagg stated that in the Spring it had become clear that such Mayors would be able to raise Council Tax uncapped.

Councillor Tagg asked the Leader if there could be a Cabinet Panel to discuss LGR. In the Autumn, there would be a Committee which would look into setting up the new Authority with the Leader attending as Newcastle's representative and it would be useful if he could report back to a Cabinet Panel.

The Leader stated that everyone was united in not wanting LGR to go ahead and were all seeking the correct legal advice and expertise as to what could /could not be done. The Leader and Cabinet would be working hard to engage proactively in future joint voluntary committees to ensure that the interests and traditions of Newcastle Borough Council were put first and foremost and that residents had every protection possible.

A vote was then taken on the Motion, as amended, and was carried.

For:	31
Against:	--
Abstain:	--

[Watch the debate here](#)

Mayor.Councillor Christopher Bailey
Chair

Meeting concluded at 6.15 pm

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to Full Council

30 September 2026



Urgent Decision: Committee Proportionality

Lead Member:

Cllr. Jonathan Gullis, Leader of the Council

Lead Officer:

Gordon Mole, Chief Executive

Key Decision: No

Ward(s): Town Ward

Appendices: Committee places balance calculation

Report Assurance:

	Name	Date
Lead Officer	Gordon Mole	14/9/26
Monitoring Officer	Olwen Brown	
Section 151 Officer	Craig Turner	
Chief Executive	Gordon Mole	
Cabinet Member	Cllr. Jonathan Gullis	

Report Summary

It is a legal requirement under The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (“the 1989 Act”) imposes political proportionality requirements in respect of the allocation of seats on ordinary committees to the political groups [section 15(5)].

Under Part B1, para 5.2 (j) of the Council’s Constitution, the Chief Executive has authority to amend the proportionalities (to comply with the rules of political balance). The Chief Executive shall have the authority to amend appointments to committees in accordance with the wishes of Group Leaders.

Recommendations

That Council:

1. Notes the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive, setting out that there is no change to committee proportionality in line with the attached Appendix A to this report.
2. Notes any changes to committee representation as requested by Group Leaders.

1. Background

- 1.1. Regulation 11 (special urgency) allows for a key decision to be made if it is impracticable for notice of the intention to take a key decision under Regulation 9 to be given 28 clear days in advance of the taking of the decision.
- 1.2. This provision also allows for a Key Decision to be taken where it is impractical for public notice at least five working days before the decision is taken to be given in accordance with Regulation 10.
- 1.3. Under the Council’s Constitution, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Group Leaders and Mayor of the Council may make an urgent decision on such matters.
- 1.4. As a result of the resignation of Councillor Christine Duffy in Town Ward, the Chief Executive has considered any changes to committee proportionality.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Following any changes to the political composition of the Council, officers undertake a review of committee proportionality. This is set out in Appendix A to this report.
- 2.2 The review of committee proportionality notes that there is a re-allocation of one committee place from the Labour group to the Conservative group.
- 2.3 The committee place falls within the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee, whose first meeting after the resignation of Cllr. Duffy falls on 17th September 2026.
- 2.4 Committee proportionality will be revisited following the by-election for Town Ward to be held on 8th October, and reported to the next Ordinary meeting of Full Council following that by-election.

3. Finance & Resources

3.1. There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

4. Legal & Governance

4.1 This decision is taken in accordance with provisions for Matters of Urgency within the Council's Constitution. The urgency arises on account of the need for this decision to be taken at a time before a meeting of full Council can be convened.

4.2 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ("the 1989 Act") imposes political proportionality requirements in respect of the allocation of seats on ordinary committees to the political groups [section 15(5)].

5. Supporting Information

5.1. A copy of the Committee Places Allocation Calculation – August 2026 is set out in Appendix A to this report.

Report to Full Council

30 September 2026



Treasury Management Annual Report 2025/26

Lead Member:

Cllr Graham Shaw – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Lead Officer:

Craig Turner – Service Director for Finance (Section 151 Officer)

Key Decision: No

Ward(s): All

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Treasury Management Annual Report 2025/26

Report Assurance:

	Name	Date
Lead Officer	Craig Turner	22/9/26
Monitoring Officer	Olwen Brown	22/9/26
Section 151	Craig Turner	22/9/26
Chief Executive	Gordon Mole	22/9/26
Cabinet Member	Graham Shaw	

Report Summary

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management recommends that Members should be informed on Treasury Management activities at least twice a year.

Council resolved that the Audit and Standards Committee would monitor and oversee the delivery of the Treasury Management Strategy through the receipt of half yearly and year end Treasury Management Reports.

Following submission to the Audit and Standards Committee on 29 June 2026, the Treasury Management Annual Report is hereby reported to Full Council.

Recommendations

That Council:

1. Receives the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2025/26 and notes the Treasury Management activity during this period.

1. Background

- 1.1. Treasury Management operations are carried out in accordance with policies laid down in the currently approved Treasury Management Policy Statement, backed up by approved Treasury Management Practices and Schedules thereto, and the Annual Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2025/26 approved by Council on 12 February 2025.
- 1.2. The Council has been provided with Treasury Management Advisory services for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 by Arlingclose Ltd.
- 1.3. The Treasury Management Annual Report for 2025/26 is attached at Appendix 1. The economic background and economic forecast included in the report has been provided by the Council's Treasury Management Advisors, Arlingclose Ltd.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. To receive the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2025/26 and to review the Treasury Management activity for this period.

3. Strategic Approach

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

4. Finance & Resources

- 4.1. Treasury Management is a major area of risk for the Council in that large amounts of money are dealt with on a daily basis and there are a number of limits and indicators, which must be complied with.
- 4.2. The overriding consideration in determining where to place the Council's surplus funds is to safeguard the Council's capital. Within this constraint the aim is to maximise the return on capital.

- 4.3. Operational procedures, coupled with monitoring arrangements, are in place to minimise the risk of departures from the approved strategy.

5. Legal & Governance

- 5.1. The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management recommends that Members should be informed on Treasury Management activities at least twice a year. It was resolved that the Audit and Standards Committee would monitor and oversee the delivery of the Treasury Management Strategy through the receipt of half yearly and year end Treasury Management Reports.

6. Supporting Information

- 6.1. CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.
- 6.2. Council's Treasury Management Policy Statement.
- 6.3. Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

This page is intentionally left blank

g

Report to Full Council

30 September 2026



Statement of the Leader of the Council

Lead Member: Cllr. Jonathan Gullis, Leader of the Council

Key Decision: Yes

Ward(s): All

Appendices: None

Report Summary

The Leader's Statement provides an update to Members on a selection of activities and decisions of Cabinet since the last ordinary meeting of Full Council, together with the Forward Plan.

Recommendations

That Council:

1. Receives and comments upon the statement of the Leader of the Council.

1. Walleys Quarry

1.1 Walleys Quarry remains an important issue for the Council and, in particular, for residents in the communities surrounding the site who experienced significant odour problems over a number of years. Although circumstances have improved considerably since waste operations ceased and Walleys Quarry Ltd entered voluntary liquidation in February 2025, the Council continues to monitor developments and work with partner organisations.

1.2 Recent monitoring has shown a sustained improvement in conditions. The number of complaints remains at a very low level compared with previous years. At Cabinet in August, Members were advised that only one complaint had been received

during July and that the Environment Agency and its contractors continued to undertake works intended to prevent serious pollution.

- 1.3 The Environment Agency continues to exercise its discretionary powers under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. Work undertaken has included improvements to temporary capping and site containment, leachate management, including off-site disposal, and improved management of surface water within the void area.
- 1.4 The Borough Council continues its own monitoring and assessment work. Residents should continue to report any incidents of odour to the relevant authorities so that an accurate evidential record is maintained.
- 1.5 A cross-party working group has also been established to provide continued political oversight, information-sharing and scrutiny. Cabinet was advised that representation would include Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, the Environment Agency and the Member of Parliament, with the ability to involve other organisations where appropriate.
- 1.6 The significant reduction in odour and complaints is welcome, but the Council's interest in Walleys Quarry does not end with the improvement in the immediate position. Attention must also remain on the long-term management and future of the site, the effectiveness of work undertaken there, and ensuring that residents receive clear information as circumstances develop.

2. Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026–2030

- 2.1 Cabinet considered the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026–2030 in August. The previous Housing Strategy had been adopted in 2021 and the Homelessness Strategy in 2020. These have now been reviewed and brought together within a single strategic framework.
- 2.2 The Strategy is structured around three interconnected priorities: Housing and Health; Housing and Prosperity; and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping. These encompass housing standards and energy efficiency, meeting identified housing needs, affordable housing, regeneration and early intervention to prevent homelessness.
- 2.3 Following the change in political leadership in May, the Strategy was reviewed. The Council's report identified four areas to which the new administration wished to give greater prominence:
 - Article 4 Directive to provide greater local control over Houses in Multiple Occupation;
 - improvements in energy efficiency, reducing fuel poverty and lowering household energy costs rather than focusing solely on decarbonisation objectives;
 - supporting the provision of housing which meets the needs of local communities; and
 - strengthening the focus on supported housing provision within the Borough.

- 2.4 The Strategy recognises that housing policy is not simply about the overall number of properties available. Housing quality, affordability, the mix of accommodation available to local residents, the impact of housing patterns on existing communities and the provision available to people who require additional support are also important considerations.
- 2.5 The Strategy also maintains a strong focus on homelessness prevention and rough sleeping. Preventing homelessness at the earliest possible stage, working effectively with partner organisations and ensuring appropriate support is available to people facing housing difficulties remain central objectives through to 2030.
- 2.6 Work is also progressing separately towards a borough-wide Article 4 Direction relating to HMOs. Taken together, these measures are intended to strengthen the Council's ability to respond to the particular housing pressures experienced by different neighbourhoods while maintaining support for vulnerable residents.

3. Parking and Traffic Regulation Order Amendments

- 3.1 Cabinet approved consultation in August on amendments to the Council's off-street Traffic Regulation Order covering three locations: Lyme Park Countryside Park at Keele, Meadows Road in Kidsgrove and Heathcote Street in Kidsgrove. The Traffic Regulation Order establishes the operating rules for Council-owned car parks and provides the legal basis for those arrangements to be enforced.
- 3.2 At Lyme Park Countryside Park, the proposal is for free parking subject to a maximum two-hour stay and no return within six hours, with separate arrangements available for angling permit holders. The purpose is to maintain turnover of spaces so that people visiting the countryside park can find somewhere to park.
- 3.3 At Meadows Road in Kidsgrove, the redevelopment includes three small enterprise units alongside a realigned car park providing up to 16 spaces. The intention is that these spaces should support customers of local businesses and people using facilities including Kidsgrove Library and the Jobcentre rather than predominantly providing all-day commuter parking.
- 3.4 The proposed arrangement at Meadows Road is therefore for the first two hours to remain free, with a charge applying for longer stays. The proposed Order provides for a charge of £3 for stays of up to 24 hours, with a reduced £1.50 arrangement for Sundays, Bank Holidays and event parking.
- 3.5 At Heathcote Street and King Street, the proposed arrangements are designed to retain free parking while encouraging greater turnover of the spaces closest to shops. They provide 30 minutes' free parking on King Street, up to two hours free in the lower Heathcote Street bays, and free long stay parking in the upper bays.
- 3.6 This means that free parking remains an important part of the Kidsgrove town-centre parking offer, but with different areas serving different needs: very short-stay parking immediately alongside shops, short-stay parking for people visiting the town centre and long-stay provision for people who work there.
- 3.7 It is also important to distinguish the Traffic Regulation Order from the separate Asset Management consultation concerning the possible future use or disposal of Council-owned land. At the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee,

Members were advised that the separate consultation concerning Heathcote Street had generated 32 objections, while the consultation regarding land to the rear of Kidsgrove Town Hall had generated 23 objections.

- 3.8 Those representations will need to be considered as part of the relevant Asset Management decision-making process and should not be confused with the Traffic Regulation Order governing parking arrangements.

4. Local Government Reorganisation

- 4.1 Since the previous meeting of Full Council, there has been a significant development regarding Local Government Reorganisation. On 7 September, the Government announced that the process was being halted while the legality of the proposals was reviewed.
- 4.2 This followed Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council obtaining independent specialist King's Counsel advice and submitting a pre-action protocol letter to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Council sought clarification on precisely what information had been considered when the previous Secretary of State reached the decision announced on 16 July regarding the future local government structure for Staffordshire.
- 4.3 The Government's July announcement had indicated its intention, subject to Parliamentary approval, to replace the current structure with two unitary councils from April 2028, with Newcastle-under-Lyme forming part of a proposed North Staffordshire authority alongside Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Moorlands.
- 4.4 The Council's stated position remains opposition to the abolition of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and its inclusion within that proposed North Staffordshire authority. The Government's pause and review does not, at this stage, amount to the permanent withdrawal of those proposals.
- 4.5 The Council will therefore continue to seek clarity over the future process and the legal, financial and governance issues involved. There also needs to be certainty concerning the implications for local services, assets, liabilities, taxpayers and democratic representation.
- 4.6 In the meantime, the Council must continue to operate and take the decisions necessary to provide services and manage its finances responsibly. Our Asset Management Strategy specifically recognises the need to consider both short- and long-term asset management during the review and to protect locally important assets whatever the eventual structure of local government.

5. Tackling Illegal Trading and Protecting Our High Streets

- 5.1 The Council has continued to work with Staffordshire County Council Trading Standards to tackle businesses involved in the sale of illegal tobacco and vape products.
- 5.2 In July, the Council secured a three-month closure order against Simba's Shop on High Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme. Magistrates were told that illegal tobacco and vapes had been found at the premises and that tobacco had been sold to under-age test purchasers.

- 5.3 Later that month, a further three-month closure order was secured against Cobra Vape Shop. A warrant executed at the premises resulted in the seizure of 71 illegal vapes with an estimated retail value of £923. The closure period was the maximum available under the powers being used and represented the second such town-centre closure within approximately one month.
- 5.4 This work protects consumers and supports businesses which trade lawfully. The Council will continue to work with Trading Standards and other enforcement agencies where there is evidence of unlawful activity and use the powers available where the evidential and legal tests are met.

6. Recycling and Waste Re-Routing

- 6.1 Cabinet has approved changes to collection days affecting approximately 22,000 households in the southern part of the Borough, with the revised rounds due to commence during the week beginning 5 October 2026. The frequency and overall nature of the collection service are not being reduced; for those households affected, the principal change will be the day on which collections take place.
- 6.2 The current routes were established when the twin-stream recycling service was introduced in 2020. At that point the Borough had approximately 53,000 households. During the six years since then, around 4,000 additional properties have been added, representing growth of approximately 7.5 per cent.
- 6.3 At the same time, participation in recycling has increased. Recycling performance rose by approximately 20 per cent in the first year of the current service, while the number of vehicles used for recycling and food-waste collections reduced from 17 to 14. These efficiencies allowed the service to absorb growth for a period, but spare operational capacity has progressively reduced.
- 6.4 The re-routing exercise is intended to rebalance collections across the working week. Under the present southern arrangements, collections finish on Fridays in the Loggerheads area, furthest from the depot and disposal points. This makes it more difficult to recover from disruption at the end of the week. The revised arrangement moves those more distant rounds earlier in the week and redistributes other collections accordingly.
- 6.5 Without intervention, the Cabinet report identifies an increased risk of missed or disrupted collections, additional overtime costs and reduced resilience in responding to vehicle breakdowns, adverse weather and staff absence.
- 6.6 A communications programme has therefore been put in place with the straightforward message of "same service, new day". Residents affected by the changes are being encouraged to check their collection dates, with communication through direct contact, the Council website, social media, telephone messaging and other channels.
- 6.7 The Council also intends to introduce an additional recycling collection vehicle and crew from 2027 to provide greater capacity for future growth. The vehicle is already included within the fleet replacement capital programme at an estimated cost of £330,000, with the additional crew estimated to have an annual revenue cost of £160,000.

7. Lyme Valley Parkway – Pump Track Investment

- 7.1 Cabinet has approved the use of £135,000 of developer contributions to replace the existing BMX facility at Lyme Valley Parkway with a modern all-weather pump track.
- 7.2 The proposed facility is intended for cyclists, skateboarders, scooter riders and rollerbladers across different ages and levels of experience. The intention is to provide a facility which can be enjoyed by beginners while offering sufficient features and variety for more experienced users.
- 7.3 Engagement with residents will help inform the final design before delivery of the scheme. The project will complement the pump-track facilities being provided elsewhere in the Borough and forms part of the Council's wider programme of investment in parks and recreational facilities.
- 7.4 The investment will provide an additional outdoor facility encouraging physical activity and giving children, young people and families another reason to use one of the Borough's principal parks.

8. Civic Pride, Our Flags and St George's Day

- 8.1 On 25 July, the Council held a civic event in Queens Gardens centred on the raising of the Union Flag and the Cross of St George. Stafford Brigades Youth Band performed and the event was attended by the Mayor alongside representatives of the Armed Forces and veterans' community.
- 8.2 This was led by Deputy Leader Cllr Graham Shaw and will form part of a wider effort to bring additional events into Newcastle town centre.

9. Loved & Loyal Pet Crematorium

- 9.1 Planning permission has been granted for the Council's new Loved & Loyal Pet Crematorium within the grounds of Bradwell Crematorium and work is now moving forward on the dedicated facility.
- 9.2 The service will provide guaranteed individual cremations for pets ranging from small birds and rabbits to larger dogs. Specialist equipment will be completely separate from the main crematorium facilities.
- 9.3 A private farewell room will also allow owners to spend time with their pet before cremation. The service will operate on an appointment basis from a detached single-storey building accessed from the main car park.
- 9.4 The facility is expected to open by the end of 2026, subject to the remaining regulatory requirements. Its construction is not expected to interfere with the normal operation of Bradwell Crematorium.
- 9.5 The project provides an additional local service for residents while also adding a new service to the Council's commercial portfolio.

10. Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Fund

- 10.1 The Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Fund is now operating following Cabinet approval in June. The scheme provides each of the Borough's 44 councillors with a

maximum allocation of £2,500 per year, creating a total annual fund of £110,000 for local projects and priorities identified within wards.

10.2 The Fund has been created by reprioritising existing Council resources rather than through an additional cost to taxpayers. The £110,000 consists of £22,000 previously allocated through the Civic Pride Investment Fund and £88,000 transferred from an existing contribution to the Civic Growth Fund.

10.3 As at 21 September, councillors across the Borough have allocated/approved £18,814 from the Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Fund to local projects, groups and community initiatives.

10.4 Examples of support provided through the Fund include:

- Enabling a Christmas tree and festive light switch on event in both Wolstanton and Bradwell;
- The purchase of a Community Speed Watch Camera for a community group in May Bank;
- Support involving free activities for the community at Audley Community Library, free activities for deprived children at St Giles church and weekly free sports sessions for young people at Holditch Miners Football Club;
- The installation of handrailed steps at Clough Hall Bowling Club to improve accessibility;
- Liaison with members of the Kidsgrove Youth Club to provide sports and gaming equipment to support the safe and welcoming space for teenagers in Kidsgrove.

10.5 The scheme has deliberately been designed to allow different communities to identify different priorities. Funding can support one-off projects, events and activities, with examples including equipment for community groups and nurseries, activities for older residents, improvements to local landmarks, community events and contributions towards practical neighbourhood infrastructure.

10.6 Individual allocations are published by the Council so residents can see how Members are using their funding. This provides transparency while placing a modest amount of spending power closer to local communities.

10.7 As further applications are approved during the remainder of the financial year, the intention is that the full £110,000 fund supports tangible projects and activities across Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough.

11. Forward Plan

11.1 A copy of the Forward Plan can be found here: [Forward Plan. Cabinet Forward Plan. 1 September to 31 December, 2026](#)

Cllr. Jonathan Gullis
Leader of the Council

This page is intentionally left blank

Regulatory Committee's Chairs' reports

Audit and Standards Committee

The Committee met on 7th September, 2026.

The following items were considered:

INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT - Q1 2026-27

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT - Q1 2026-27

HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

CODE OF CONDUCT AND STANDARDS REPORT

The committee considered a report recommending updating the arrangements for dealing with Standards complaints and agreed to recommend those to Council for approval. The recommended arrangements are attached as Appendix One to this report. The Committee also appointed three members to sit as the Hearing Panel should this be required after an investigation into Code of Conduct complaints.

Recommendation

Council is asked to approve the attached Arrangements for Dealing with Complaints under the Code of Conduct for members.

WORK PROGRAMME

Cllr Glenn Tift
Chair

Planning Committee

The Planning Committee has met twice since the last full Council meeting:- 21st July and the 18th August.

The following items were considered:

- APPLICATION FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT - BALDWIN'S GATE FARM, NEWCASTLE ROAD, BALDWIN'S GATE. MR CHRIS O'HANLON, BELLWAY HOMES LIMITED. 26/00447/FUL (Refused)
- APPLICATION FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT - BALDWIN'S GATE FARM, NEWCASTLE ROAD, BALDWIN'S GATE. MR CHRIS O'HANLON, BELLWAY HOMES LIMITED. 25/00931/FUL (Refused)
- APPLICATION FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT - BALDWIN'S GATE FARM, NEWCASTLE ROAD, BALDWIN'S GATE, NEWCASTLE. ST5 5ES. MR CHRIS O'HANLON. BELLWAY HOMES LTD. 26/00052/FUL (Refused)
- APPLICATION FOR MINOR DEVELOPMENT - BRADWELL CREMATORIUM, CHATTERLEY CLOSE, BRADWELL. NEWCASTLE BOROUGH COUNCIL. 26/00422/DEEM3 (Approved)
- APPLICATION FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT - TADGEDALE QUARRY. WAIN HOMES NORTH WEST. 24/00589/FUL (Approved)
- APPLICATION FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT - LAND OFF BAR HILL ROAD ONNELEY. OWL HOMES LIMITED. 25/00897/REM (Approved)
- APPLICATION FOR OTHER DEVELOPMENT - 25-27 WELL ST & 82 GARDEN ST, NEWCASTLE. MARSHALLSAY. 26/00051/COU (Refused)
- FIVE-YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY UPDATE REPORT 2026-31 (Approved)

Cllr Christopher Saxton
Chair

Licensing and Public Protection Committee

The committee met on 25th August 2026

The following **Licensing** report was considered:

Martyn's Law Update

- Consideration was given to a report updating Members on the progress of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act, 2025 – commonly known as 'Martyn's Law' and the implications it could have on premises and events within the Borough – and nationally.

Minutes from the meeting held on 15th July 26 were agreed to be correct as recorded.

The following **Public Protection** reports were considered:

Air Quality Action Plan

- Consideration was given to a report regarding the Air Quality Action Plan for 2026-2030 which had been prepared in accordance with the Council's statutory duties under the Local Air Quality Management framework.
- The report was approved and that comments made be received as part of the consultation for the document.
- It was approved that officers commence the 28 day public consultation with delegated authority to the Chair and Portfolio Holder to approve submission to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) following consultation.
- It be noted members will receive a final copy of the Action Plan in due course for information, following approval by Defra.

Air Quality Annual Status Report

- Consideration was given to a report updating Members on the latest air quality data for Newcastle and summarising the Annual Air Quality Status Report.
- The 2026 Air Quality Annual Status Report was received and noted and that it be submitted to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

Minutes from the meetings held on 1 July and 7th July, 26 were agreed to be correct as recorded.

Cllr Simon Kasperowicz
Chair

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to Audit and Standards Committee

07 September 2026



Code of Conduct Update

Lead Member:

CLlr Martin Rogerson- Cabinet Member Legal, Governance and Organisational Performance

Lead Officer:

Olwen Brown- Service Director Legal and Governance

Key Decision: No

Ward(s): All Wards

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints
- Appendix 2 – Member Code of Conduct Complaint Form

Report Assurance:

	Name	Date
Lead Officer	Olwen Brown	1/9/26
Monitoring Officer	Olwen Brown	1/9/26
Section 151	Craig Turner	1/9/26
Chief Executive	Gordon Mole	1/9/26
Cabinet Member	Martin Rogerson	

Report Summary

The council is required by the Localism Act 2011 to have arrangements under which allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct can be investigated, and under which decisions on allegations can be made.

This report recommends some changes and updates to the current arrangements for the committee to then recommend to full Council, who must agree the changed arrangements.

The report also recommends that the Committee agree the three members of the committee, on a politically proportionate basis, who will sit as the Hearing Panel for Code of Conduct complaints, when the Panel is required.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Agree the changes to the current arrangements as proposed in the attached Appendices;
2. Recommend these to full Council.
3. Appoint three members of the Committee to sit as the Hearing Panel for code of conduct complaints when required.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Localism Act 2011 fundamentally changed the way in which complaints against elected and coopted members “standards complaints” were dealt with. Before these changes members were subject to a much stricter and nationally based regime brought in by the Local Government Act 2000, with sanctions that included suspension.
- 1.2. Local authorities were now required to adopt their own Code of Conduct, based upon the Nolan principles, and local authorities other than parish councils were required, as part of the standards regime to have arrangements dealing with how complaints were to be dealt with and how decisions on allegations were made. Complaints against parish council members are dealt with by the principal council in their area for this council so far as all parish councils within the borough are concerned. Such arrangements must involve an Independent Person.
- 1.3. The Council adopted arrangements when it was required to do so. However, these have not been updated for some time.
- 1.4. This Committee appoints three members to sit as a Hearing Panel when this is required. It will only be required after an investigation had been carried out into complaints and the report of the investigating officer makes findings of a breach. Whilst no investigations are currently underway it is recommended that appointments are made so that there is no delay if the panel is needed in the future.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The changes to the arrangements for dealing with code of conduct complaints are designed to make them clearer and more up to date, removing some language that is no longer needed due to the passage of time since the Localism Act, and which also takes account of modern good practice. The Monitoring Officer deals with complaints against elected and coopted members of the Council and also with complaints against elected and coopted parish councillors. In recent months the

number of complaints has been rising significantly, with accompanied resource demands.

- 2.2. There are a couple of more significant changes. At the Council meeting on 8th July, it was agreed to add the public interest test into the consideration of complaints. This has been amplified in the proposed arrangements, with examples given of the sort of considerations that would fall within this test. The proposals emphasise that the Monitoring Officer will seek to resolve matters informally wherever possible.
- 2.3. Another change is to introduce the involvement of the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee who will be consulted by the Monitoring Officer at the “initial view” stage, at the same time that the Independent Person is consulted. These consultations assist the Monitoring Officer in deciding how to deal with the complaints, but the decision remains that of the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.4. The procedure if a Hearing Panel is required is clarified and set out at the end of the arrangements.
- 2.5. The appointment of the three members of the Hearing Panel is felt to be timely; although there is no investigation at present which may require the Panel. If members are appointed, they will be able to meet as required without any further delay. The members of the panel should be appointed on a politically proportionate basis.

3. Strategic Approach

- 3.1. The proposed approach provides an up-to-date approach to dealing with code of conduct complaints which balances the need for a robust approach to member behaviour within the current legislative limits, with the need to consider the public interest test. Where a complaint justifies an investigation, it will receive it; but minor complaints will be dealt with proportionately.

4. Finance & Resources

It is important to ensure that the council has the necessary resources to deal with the complaints it receives.

5. Legal & Governance

- 5.1. The Council is required by the Localism Act 2011 to have arrangements to deal with code of conduct complaints.

6. Supporting Information

None

This page is intentionally left blank



NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME
BOROUGH COUNCIL

ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH STANDARDS ALLEGATIONS UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT 2011

1. Context

These 'arrangements' set out how you may make a complaint that an elected or co-opted Member of this council or of a Parish Council in the Borough has failed to comply with the Authority's Code of Conduct and sets out how the Authority will deal with allegations of a failure to comply with the Authority's Code of Conduct.

Under Section 28(6) and (7) of the Localism Act 2011, the Council must have in place such 'arrangements'. These have to provide for the Authority to appoint at least one Independent Person, whose views must be sought by the Authority before it takes a decision on an allegation which it has decided shall be investigated, and whose views can be sought by the Authority at any other stage, or by a Member or co-opted Member against whom an allegation has been made.

Code of Conduct complaints are dealt with as Strictly Private and Confidential.

2. The Code of Conduct

The Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for Members, which is attached as Appendix A to these arrangements and is available for inspection on the Authority's website and on request from the Monitoring Officer. Parish Councils may choose to adopt this Code or one of their own.

3. Making a complaint

If you wish to make a complaint, please complete the Code of Conduct form below

(To be inserted)

and email it to:

MemberCodeOfConduct@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

Or write to:

The Monitoring Officer
Castle House
Barracks Road
Newcastle-under-Lyme,
Staffordshire, ST5 1BL

The Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for maintaining the Register of Members' Interests and is responsible for administering the system in respect of complaints of Member misconduct.

The Monitoring Officer will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible and will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint.

4. Will your complaint be investigated?

The Monitoring Officer will review every complaint received and, and may speak to the complainant, subject member and any other individual to help reach their decision. The Monitoring Officer will usually consult with the Independent Person and the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee before making their decision about how to deal with the complaint. The Monitoring Officer will inform you of the decision and the reasons for that decision. The decision however is that of the Monitoring Officer.

Code of Conduct complaints are subject to the public interest test.

The Monitoring Officer will consider all the factors put forward in the complaint and each of the public interest factors below in reviewing a complaint.

These factors are not exhaustive and not all may be relevant in every case. The weight attached to each of these factors may also vary in each case.

c) The public interest factors are:

- (i) The seriousness of the alleged breach;
- (iii) Whether the allegation is that the subject member has misused a position of trust or authority, including a breach of confidentiality and caused harm to a person;
- (v) Whether there is evidence of previous, similar behaviour on the part of the subject member;
- (vi) Whether the alleged breach is such that it may damage public confidence in elected members;
- (vii) The resources that would be required to undertake an investigation, compared to the seriousness of the alleged breach and the likely sanction if the subject member was found to have breached the Code;
- (viii) Any admission of guilt, apology or other action already taken by the subject member to resolve or mitigate the complaint; and
- (ix) Whether the complaint appears to be malicious, vexatious, politically motivated or trivial retaliation.

a) The Monitoring Officer will consider the complaint, taking into account the Public Interest Test, and may decide to:

- (i) Take no action;
- (ii) Resolve the matter informally without investigation. This will be done after taking account of the views, if possible, of the complainant and the subject member, and may involve:
 - An apology being made;
 - Remedial action being taken;
 - A recommendation for training to be undertaken; or
 - Mediation.

- (iv) Arrange a formal investigation of the complaint; or

(v) Refer the matter to the police or other relevant regulatory agency.

Where possible, the Monitoring Officer will seek to resolve complaints informally.

There is no appeal against the decision of the Monitoring Officer.

5. How is the investigation conducted?

If the Monitoring Officer decides that a complaint merits formal investigation, they may undertake it themselves or appoint an Investigating Officer, who may be another officer of the Authority, or an external person; as the Monitoring Officer considers appropriate.

The Investigating Officer will decide whether to meet or speak with you to understand the nature of your complaint and so that you can explain your understanding of events, suggest any documents the Investigating Officer needs to see, and who in your view it would be helpful for the Investigating Officer to interview.

The Investigating Officer would normally write to the Member against whom you have complained, provide him/her with a copy of your complaint, and ask the Member to provide his/her explanation of events, to identify what documents he needs to see and whom they feel it would be helpful to interview.

In exceptional cases, the Monitoring Officer can delete your name and address from the papers given to the Member, or delay notifying the Member until the investigation has progressed sufficiently.

At the end of his/her investigation, the Investigating Officer will produce a draft report and will send copies of that draft report, in confidence, to you and to the Member concerned, to give you both an opportunity to identify any matter in that draft report with which you disagree or which you consider requires more consideration.

Having received and taken account of any comments which you may make on the draft report, the Investigating Officer will send their final report to the Monitoring Officer who will take it through the remaining process.

6. What happens if the Investigating Officer concludes that there is no evidence of a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct?

The Monitoring Officer will review the Investigating Officer's report and, if satisfied that the report is sufficient, will write to you and to the Member concerned notifying you that they are satisfied that no further action is required and give you both a copy of the final report. If the member complained of is a Parish Councillor the Parish Clerk will also be informed.

7. What happens if the Investigating Officer concludes that there is evidence of a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct?

The Monitoring Officer will review the Investigating Officer's report and will then either send the matter for local hearing before the Hearings Panel or, after consulting the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee and the Independent Person, and taking into account the Public Interest Test, seek local resolution without a hearing.

In such a case, they will consult with the Independent Person and with you as complainant and seek to agree a fair resolution which also helps to ensure higher standards of conduct for the future.

Such resolution may include the Member accepting that his/her conduct was unacceptable and offering an apology, and/or other remedial action by the authority.

If the Member complies with the suggested resolution, the Monitoring Officer will report the matter to the Standards Committee and the Parish Clerk for information but will take no further action.

However, if you tell the Monitoring Officer that any suggested resolution would not be adequate, the Monitoring Officer will refer the matter for a local hearing.

8. What is a Local Hearing

When a local resolution after investigation is not appropriate the Monitoring Officer will report the Investigating Officer's report to the Hearings Panel which will conduct a local hearing before deciding whether the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and, if so, whether to take any action in respect of the Member.

The procedure for local hearings is attached.

The Hearings Panel is a sub-committee of the Council's Audit and Standards Committee. It comprises three Members of the Council and is politically proportionate.

The Independent Person is invited to attend all meetings of the Hearings Panel and their views are sought and taken into consideration before the Hearings Panel takes any decision on whether the Member's conduct constitutes a failure to comply with the Code of conduct and as to any action to be taken following a finding of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.

The Monitoring Officer will conduct a "pre-hearing process", requiring the Member to give his/her response to the Investigating Officer's report, in order to identify what is likely to be agreed and what is likely to be in contention at the hearing.

The Chair of the Hearings Panel may issue directions before the hearing as to how the hearing will be conducted, including as to how many witnesses may reasonably be called by the Investigating Officer or the Member.

At the hearing, the Investigating Officer will present his/her report, call such witnesses as they consider necessary and make representations to substantiate his/her conclusion that the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct. For this purpose, the Investigating Officer may ask you as the complainant to attend and give evidence to the Hearings Panel. The Member will then have an opportunity to give his/her evidence, to call witnesses and to make representations to the Hearings Panel as to why he/she considers that he/she did not fail to comply with the Code of Conduct.

The Hearings Panel, with the benefit of any advice from the Independent Person, may conclude that the Member did not fail to comply with the Code of Conduct, and so dismiss the complaint.

If the Hearings Panel concludes that the Member failed to comply with the Code of Conduct, the Chair will inform the Member of this finding and the Hearings Panel will then consider what action, if any, the Hearings Panel should take. In doing this, the Hearings Panel will give the Member an opportunity to make representations to the Panel and will consult the Independent Person, but will then decide what action, if any, to take

in respect of the matter.

9. What action can the Hearings Panel take where a Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct?

The Hearings Panel may:

- Censure or reprimand the Member;
- Publish its findings in respect of the Member's conduct;
- Report its findings to Council or to the Parish Council for information;
- Recommend to the Member's Group Leader (or in the case of ungrouped Members, recommend to Council or to Committees) that they be removed from any or all Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council;
- Recommend to the Leader of the Council that the Member be removed from the Cabinet, or removed from particular Portfolio responsibilities;
- Recommend to Council that the Member be replaced as Executive Leader;
- Instruct the Monitoring Officer to or recommend that the Parish Council arrange training for the Member;
- Remove or recommend to the Parish Council that the Member be removed from all outside appointments to which he/she has been appointed or nominated by the authority or by the Parish Council;

The Hearings Panel has no power to suspend or disqualify the Member or to withdraw any allowances.

10. What happens at the end of the hearing?

At the end of the hearing, the Chair will state the decision of the Hearings Panel as to whether the Member failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and as to any actions which the Hearings Panel resolves to take.

As soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, the Monitoring Officer shall prepare a formal decision notice in consultation with the Chair of the Hearings Panel, and send a copy to you, to the Member and the Parish Council, make that decision notice available for public inspection and report the decision to the next convenient meeting of the Council.

11. Revision of these arrangements

The Chair of the Hearings Panel may depart from these Hearing Panel arrangements where they consider that it is expedient to do so in order to secure effective and fair consideration of any matter.

12. Appeals

There is no right of appeal against a decision of the Monitoring Officer or of the Hearings Panel.

If you feel that the authority has failed to deal with your complaint properly, you may make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF A CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT BY THE HEARINGS PANEL

These arrangements apply when an investigation into a complaint has been taken place, the final report of the Investigating Officer is received and in the view of the Monitoring Officer it is not possible to deal with the complaint other than by a hearing.

The Monitoring Officer will report the complaint to the Hearing Panel who will conduct a hearing before deciding if the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and if so what sanctions to apply.

These arrangements are part of the Council's arrangements for dealing with an alleged breach of the member Code of Conduct.

Preliminaries:

1. The Monitoring Officer will propose a date for the hearing to the Member and to the members of the Panel. This will normally be no less than four weeks in advance.
2. The Monitoring Officer will at that time ask the Member if they intend to attend the hearing; of any issues of fact that they disagree with in the Investigating Officers report and see if findings of fact can be agreed; ask if the member wishes to give oral evidence and call any witnesses and if so, who; and will ask the Investigating Officer if they wish to call witnesses and if so, who.
3. If either the Member or the Investigating Officer wishes to call witnesses the Monitoring Officer may consult with the Chair of the Panel who will rule on whether it is reasonable for the Panel to hear from those witnesses
4. The Panel and the parties will be provided with a bundle of documents at least five working days prior to the hearing.
5. The Panel will have three members appointed from the members of the Audit and Standards Committee. The quorum is two members.
6. All matters are decided by a simple majority of votes cast from members present; the chair has a casting vote.
7. If the Member fails to attend the hearing the Panel will take account of any representations received and may then decide either to proceed in the Members absence or adjourn to another date.
8. The Member may choose to be represented or accompanied by a legal representative, fellow member, friend or colleague; except that any legal representation should be notified to the Monitoring Officer no less than 14 days prior to the date set for the Hearing Panel .

Conduct of the Hearing¹

The order of Business is as follows:

1. Elect a Chair (unless already elected at a previous meeting)
2. Apologies for absence
3. Declarations of interest
4. If the Member is absent, consideration of whether to go ahead with the hearing
5. Introduction of parties by the Chair

¹ The Chair can amend the procedure at any time. As advisers to the Panel the Monitoring Officer and Independent Person may ask questions of the parties or clarification at any time.

6. Consideration of whether the hearing should be held in public or private
7. The Investigating Officer presents their report and calls any witnesses
 - a. The Member ²questions the Investigating Officer and witnesses
 - b. The members of the Panel question the Investigating Officer and witnesses
8. The Members present their case and calls any witnesses
 - a. The Investigating officer questions the Member and witnesses
 - b. The members of the Panel question the Member and witnesses
9. The Investigating Officer sums up their case
10. The Member sums up their case
11. The Chair invites the Independent Person to express a view
12. The Panel adjourn and deliberate in private assisted by the Monitoring Officer as required. They may come out of private session to seek additional evidence if necessary. If so, and this cannot be provided they may adjourn and issue direction about the provision of that evidence.
13. The Panel make their decision based on the evidence they had before them and reconvene
14. The Chair announces their findings on the alleged breach and any sanctions applied by the Panel.
15. The meeting closes.

There is no right of appeal against the decisions of the Panel.

² If the Member is legally represented this and all other actions of the member except giving evidence, may be done by their legal representative



THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME

Council Member Code of Conduct Complaint Form

Introduction

This form is for complaining to the Monitoring Officer that a Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Councillor, or a Councillor sitting on one of the Town or Parish Councils in the borough, has acted in breach of their relevant Council Code of Conduct. This form is not for any other type of complaint.

For a complaint to be considered, the Councillor in question must have been acting in their capacity as a Councillor at the time of the issue complained about. The Code of Conduct does not apply to Councillors when they are not acting in that capacity. The Code does not apply to councillors before they are elected.

The conduct complained about must also have occurred within the last 12 months. We may consider older complaints, but you must set out in this form exceptional circumstances as to why the complaint wasn't made within 12 months.

Your complaint will be considered by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the Councils arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints.

Code of Conduct complaints are dealt with on a strictly private and confidential basis.

Use of Data

We will use the information you provide to assess, investigate and determine your complaint and in accordance with data protection legislation. This will include sharing that data with the Council Member you are making a complaint about, and if necessary other relevant individuals such as an investigator, parish clerk, witnesses, councillors on a panel that may be convened to determine the complaint and "independent persons" who are appointed by law to help the Monitoring Officer consider your complaint.

If you do not want us to share your information, including your name and address details, you need to tell us why in this form. This may mean we are not able to consider your complaint, because being unable to share your information may restrict our ability to thoroughly consider your complaint, and the Council Member's ability to fully respond to it. We will need to be satisfied that there is a good reason not to share information, and that the complaint can still be properly and fairly investigated.

We keep all records for a period of 3 years following determination of the complaint, so that we can address any challenges to the process that may arise during that time.

Section 1 – your details

Please provide us with your name and contact details:

Title	
First name	
Last name	
Address	
Daytime telephone	
Evening telephone	
Mobile telephone	
Email	

Section 2

Please tell us which best describes you:



Member of the public	
An elected or co-opted Councillor of an Authority	
Member of Parliament	
Other Council officer or Authority employee	
Other (please specify)	

Section 3

Please provide the name of the Councillor(s) you believe have breached the Code of Conduct and the name of their council or authority.

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNCIL OR AUTHORITY NAME

Section 4

Please explain in this section (or on separate sheets if preferred) what the Councillor has done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct.

For each Councillor complained about, please set out which Code of Conduct you think applies, and which parts of it the Councillor(s) in question have breached.

If you are complaining about more than one Councillor you should clearly explain what each individual person has done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct.

It is important that you provide all the information you wish to have taken into account; either in the space below or attached.

For example:

- Be as specific as possible, about exactly what you are alleging the Councillor said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the Councillor insulted you, you should state what they said or did.
- Provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.
- Confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible. We may contact witnesses you tell us about.
- Provide any relevant background information.

ONLY COMPLETE THE NEXT SECTION IF YOU DO NOT WANT US TO SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COMPLAINT

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint. If you are complaining about a town or parish council matter it is usual for the Monitoring Officer to inform the parish clerk.

Section 5 - Additional Help

Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes electronic submissions to the email address below:

MemberCodeofConduct@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

Please submit your complaint by email if possible. If you cannot do this there is a postal address below.

In line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2000, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing.

We can also help if English is not your first language.

If you need any support in completing this form, please let us know as soon as possible.

Signed:

Dated:

The Monitoring Officer,
Newcastle Borough Council,
Castle House,
Barracks Road,
Newcastle,
Staffs, ST5 1BL

Revised August 2026

Strengthening Closure Order Powers – “Closed for Good”

This Council notes that:

- i. Closure orders under Section 80 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 are a vital tool for tackling rogue traders selling illegal tobacco, vapes and counterfeit goods, and for addressing serious anti-social behaviour on problem premises.
- ii. Under current law, a closure order can only be granted for a maximum of three months, extendable once for a further three months, after which the premises can simply reopen.
- iii. Newcastle-under-Lyme has used these powers twice in July 2026, working in partnership with Staffordshire County Council Trading Standards:
 - a. Simba’s – closed for three months following a test purchase operation on 13 July 2026, in which officers seized 2,980 illegal cigarettes and 0.85kg of hand-rolling tobacco, with a retail value of £1,782.25, concealed within the cellar stairs, alongside evidence that staff had sold tobacco to underage test purchasers.
 - b. Cobra Vape Shop – closed for three months, the maximum period available, after a warrant executed on 16 July 2026 recovered 71 illegal vapes with an estimated retail value of £923; the closure order was granted by North Staffordshire Justice Centre on 28 July 2026.
- iv. The current legislation, however, allows persistent offenders to wait out the closure and reopen, often trading under a new name at the same address, as recently seen in Lichfield, where a shop reopened as “Vape Zone” within days of its previous order expiring and had to be closed a second time.
- v. Government has recognised part of this wider problem and, under the Crime and Policing Act 2026, created a new power under Section 83A allowing the Home Secretary to extend the maximum duration of closure orders by regulation.
- vi. The Home Office subsequently ran a consultation between 22 June 2026 and 31 July 2026 proposing to raise the overall maximum duration of a closure order to 12 months.
- vii. Separately, the Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026 provides for a future national retailer licensing scheme for tobacco, vapes and nicotine products, with powers to revoke both premises and personal licences, although this is not expected before 2027 and its detailed design is still to be consulted upon.
- viii. Under the current legislation, the definition of a “local authority” for the purposes of closure notices and closure orders means that, in two-tier local government areas such as Staffordshire, these powers sit with the relevant district council rather than the upper-tier county council. This means that county council Trading Standards

services, despite often leading investigations into illegal tobacco, vapes and counterfeit goods, cannot independently exercise these closure powers in their own right.

- ix. There is also an inconsistency between the statutory tests for issuing a closure notice and subsequently obtaining a closure order. At the closure notice stage, the legislation allows action principally on the basis of nuisance to members of the public or disorder near the premises associated with their use. However, when an application is subsequently made to the court for a closure order, the legislation additionally allows consideration of disorderly, offensive or criminal behaviour taking place on the premises.

This Council believes that:

- i. Twelve months is still not long enough where illegal trading is serious, deliberate or repeated. Premises proven through the court process to have been persistently or seriously used for illegal activity should be capable of being closed permanently where a court considers that necessary and proportionate.
- ii. Real deterrence means action against the individuals and companies behind repeat offending, rather than simply allowing the same operators to reopen once a temporary closure expires.
- iii. Landlords who knowingly or repeatedly let commercial premises to businesses subject to closure orders bear some responsibility for enabling this activity and should face consequences of their own, in the same spirit as the banning orders and rogue landlord database already used against the worst residential landlords under the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
- iv. In two tier local government areas, upper-tier authorities exercising Trading Standards and other relevant enforcement functions should be able to use closure notice and closure order powers directly, rather than having to rely upon a district council or the police to exercise those
- v. The evidential tests for closure notices and closure orders should be better aligned so that criminal behaviour taking place on premises can be an express ground for issuing a closure notice from the outset. This would allow enforcement bodies to act more effectively where there is clear evidence of criminal activity and would enable relevant evidence obtained by partner organisations, including Trading Standards, the police and Immigration Enforcement, to be fully utilised at the earliest stage.

This Council resolves to:

- i. Write to the Home Secretary and the Minister for Policing, via the Leader of the Council, supporting an extension of closure orders to at least 12 months and urging the Government to go further by giving magistrates a discretionary power to impose a permanent closure order where premises have been persistently or seriously used for illegal activity and the court considers permanent closure necessary and proportionate.

- ii. Call on the Government to introduce a landlord accountability scheme for commercial premises, modelled on the residential rogue landlord banning order and database regime, so that landlords who let premises subject to closure orders on three or more occasions face escalating consequences, up to and including restrictions on their ability to let commercial premises.
- iii. Ask officers to begin recording locally any instances where the same landlord lets more than one premises subject to a closure order, enabling the Council to act quickly should new landlord accountability powers be introduced, and to consider what escalating engagement with such landlords could begin under existing powers ahead of any change in the law.
- iv. Call on the Government to amend the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 so that, in two-tier local government areas, upper-tier county councils are able to exercise closure notice and closure order powers directly, enabling county council Trading Standards services to take enforcement action in their own right where appropriate.
- v. Call on the Government to amend the statutory test for issuing a closure notice so that criminal behaviour taking place on the premises is an express ground for action, bringing the initial closure notice test more closely into line with the test subsequently applied by magistrates when considering an application for a closure order.
- vi. Have the Leader write to all local authorities within Staffordshire to build support for the permanent closure, landlord accountability, Trading Standards enforcement and closure notice reforms contained within this motion.
- vii. Have the Leader write to the Borough's three Labour Members of Parliament – Adam Jogee MP, David Williams MP and Leigh Ingham MP – asking them to publicly back this campaign and co-sign a joint letter with the Leader of the Council to the Home Secretary and Minister for Policing calling on the Government to implement the reforms set out in this motion.

This page is intentionally left blank

Street Racing – Seize It, Confiscate It, Crush It

This Council notes that:

- Illegal street racing, dangerous driving and vehicle-related anti-social behaviour can cause significant noise, intimidation and disruption to residents, while placing pedestrians, other motorists, spectators and those taking part at serious risk.
- Residents should be able to enjoy their homes and communities without public roads being treated as racetracks by a reckless minority.
- Police already possess powers under section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 to seize vehicles being used in an anti-social manner, and those powers have recently been strengthened by Parliament by removing the previous requirement for a warning before seizure in qualifying circumstances.
- However, seizure does not necessarily mean permanent confiscation. Under the current system, vehicles seized using a number of police powers may ultimately be reclaimed once the relevant legal requirements and recovery charges have been met.

This Council believes that:

- Illegal street racing is not a harmless hobby or a minor motoring infringement. Deliberately using a public highway as a racetrack endangers innocent people, causes fear and intimidation within communities and shows contempt for other road users and residents.
- The law should provide a substantially stronger deterrent against those who deliberately use vehicles for illegal street racing.
- Where a court is satisfied that a vehicle has been deliberately used in illegal street racing, the offender should face the prospect of permanently losing that vehicle, in addition to any fine, driving disqualification, penalty points or custodial sentence imposed for the underlying offence.
- There should be appropriate safeguards for innocent third-party owners, including cases involving stolen vehicles, vehicles used without the owner's consent, legitimate hire or leasing arrangements, and other circumstances where confiscation would unjustly penalise someone who was not responsible for the offence.
- Subject to those safeguards and the completion of any criminal proceedings, vehicles permanently forfeited as a consequence of illegal street racing should be capable of being destroyed and crushed rather than returned to the offender.

This Council resolves to:

- Call on the Government to legislate so that, following conviction and subject to appropriate judicial safeguards, courts have clear powers to order the permanent confiscation of vehicles used for illegal street racing.
- Call for vehicles permanently forfeited under such a regime to be capable of being destroyed and crushed, rather than subsequently being returned to the offender.
- Support appropriate statutory protections for genuinely innocent third parties, including owners whose vehicle has been stolen or used without their knowledge or consent.
- Request that the Leader of the Council writes to the three Labour Members of Parliament representing communities within Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough - Adam Jogee MP, David Williams MP and Leigh Ingham MP - asking each of them to publicly support this campaign and to co-sign a joint cross party letter calling for this change in the law.
- Subject to the response of those Members of Parliament, request that the Leader seeks to send a joint cross-party letter, co-signed by the Leader and participating local MPs, to the Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Transport, calling on the Government to introduce the necessary legislation.
- If any of the three MPs declines to support or co-sign the proposed letter, request that the Leader nevertheless writes to the Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Transport on behalf of the Council setting out the Council's agreed position and seeking a formal Government response.
- Send a copy of this motion to Staffordshire Police and the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime, inviting them to support the principle of stronger national powers against illegal street racing and permanent forfeiture for the most serious offenders.
- Reaffirm this Council's commitment, working through the Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Safety Partnership and alongside Staffordshire Police and other partners, to tackling dangerous and anti-social use of vehicles and supporting robust enforcement action against those whose behaviour causes fear, danger and misery for residents.

QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

To the Leader of the Council:

In addition to the Leader's entries in the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and the declaration of interest he rightly made at 8th July Full Council relating to the Local Plan, a news report appeared on opendemocracy.net dated 4th September: www.opendemocracy.net/ex-tory-mp-turned-reform-councillor-landed-lobbying-job-after-defecting/, naming a second client of Councillor Jonathans Gullis's employer that is a developer active within the Borough.

Will the Leader disclose a complete list of any other clients his various firms advise as lobbyists who have a property or commercial interest in our Borough, and can he outline what measures have been put in place to safeguard him from conflicts of interest in his position as Council Leader & Planning Portfolio Holder and the reputation of the Council?

Cllr. Joan Whieldon

.....

This page is intentionally left blank