

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO THE**  
**CABINET**

**Date: 5 DECEMBER 2018**

1. **REPORT TITLE** Newcastle under Lyme – A Growing Borough – Growth Deal 2018-2022
- Submitted by:** Executive Director – Regeneration & Development
- Portfolio:** Corporate and Service Improvement, People and Partnerships
- Ward(s) affected:** Borough-wide impact

**Purpose of the Report**

To seek Members approval for a Growth Deal between the Borough and County Councils.

**Recommendations**

- (a) That the Strategic Alliance between the two Councils be noted and that the Growth Deal be approved.
- (b) That officers be authorised, in liaison with the Leader of the Council, to engage with officers of the County Council and representatives of other partners to prepare projects and initiatives to address the identified priorities.
- (c) That officers, in liaison with the Leader of the Council, establish effective programme governance arrangements.
- (d) That officers report back to Cabinet as required to seek any necessary financial contributions or other necessary resource allocation.

**Reasons**

In the context of diminishing public sector resources it is considered essential to identify joint investment priorities between the two tiers of local government in order to optimise the prospects of achieving ongoing economic growth in the interests of the borough's communities. There is a strong working relationship between the two Councils and a commitment to two-tier local government that is reflected in a Strategic Alliance.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Council has recently approved an updated Council Plan for the period 2018-2022 which sets out a range of clear priorities for the four year term of the current administration. In addition the Council approved an Economic Development Strategy for the period 2018-2023 and is in the process of preparing a joint Local Plan with Stoke on Trent City Council for the period up to 2033. Also the Council has recently refreshed its Asset Management Strategy.
- 1.2 The Growth Deal for Newcastle-under-Lyme as explained below is set within the context of the documents referred to above and emanates from a Strategic Alliance between Newcastle- under-Lyme Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council whereby both parties want to agree shared investment priorities.

- 1.3 The Growth Deal sets out how we will work together and with others, especially the residents and business community of Newcastle, to deliver real and inclusive economic and community growth in key priority areas. The ambition is to achieve economic growth that creates opportunity for all of the local population whether in direct monetary value or through other community focused benefits. In order to do this effectively the two Councils have agreed to focus our resources into a small number of priority activities and initiatives over the next three years, laying the foundations for longer term increased prosperity for the borough.
- 1.4 This Growth Deal document will help to shape and proactively influence the type of employment opportunities by occupations and sectors whilst also working with employers and the education sector to build the right skills to meet the challenges and opportunities we'll face over the next 10 years.

## 2. **Issues**

- 2.1 Some parts of the borough present significant challenges whilst others present real opportunities. This Growth Deal reflects the desire of the two Councils to demonstrate community leadership in the face of relatively weak market conditions by harnessing and targeting the investment decisions of the two Councils in the expectation of stimulating and/or accelerating economic growth.
- 2.2 The main objective for our borough is to stimulate the economy with the anticipated outcome being to increase housing choice and to create more diverse job opportunities. By working together and with key partners it is considered that the optimum impact can be achieved. In addition, from past experiences, we know that it is vitally important to prioritise and target investment.
- 2.3 Consequently members will note that in terms of geographical spread, the Growth Deal hones in on the two main urban centres of Newcastle and Kildgrove along with the University Growth corridor area and Knutton on the west side of Newcastle town centre. In addition there are cross-cutting themes around the two-tier working relationship of the two Councils, housing delivery and skills, training and employment to ensure that the borough's residents secure direct benefit from any physical development interventions.
- 2.4 The four geographical locations present different challenges and opportunities but the key message is that the two Councils will seek to utilise their land and property assets to optimise the quantum and nature of investment in order to achieve shared objectives. So, for example, in the case of Newcastle town centre the jointly-owned Ryecroft site, taken together with the County Council's former library and the Borough Council's Guildhall and Lancaster Buildings, provide a range of opportunities to shape the future of the town at a time when the retail economy is undergoing significant structural change. The Growth Deal reviews the joint asset base and seeks to provide a comprehensive approach to securing future investment, use and/or development in these locations in the long term public interest.

## 3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 Do nothing – the Councils could carry on working independently of one another but the risk is that any added value will be lost and there would be a lack of overall coherence thereby failing to optimise impact and potential benefits. Public sector resourcing may not be deployed efficiently there raising value for money questions.
- 3.2 Approve the Growth Deal – it is considered that this approach would optimise impact, potential benefits and demonstrate best use of public resources.

4. **Proposal**

4.1 It is proposed that the Growth Deal be approved and implemented as the preferred option.

5. **Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities**

5.1 The Growth Deal would align with the Council's two key priorities relating to "A Town Centre for all" and "Growing our People and Places".

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) provides powers of well-being to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 At this stage there is no known potentially adverse impact upon equalities issues.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from the approval of this document other than the contribution of staff resources to the implementation of the programme and the working up of any initiatives in due course; these inputs would be derived from the prioritisation of existing staff resources. Should there be any requirement for additional resources in the future in relation to individual initiatives or projects then the matter(s) will be reported to members accordingly.

8.2 By having this document in place it is anticipated that it would be used as a frame of reference for any bids for external funding such as from the Local Enterprise Partnership, Heritage Lottery Fund and the One Public Estate programme.

8.3 From the Council's perspective the derivation of any capital receipts from land/property disposals will continue to assist with funding the capital programme whilst any capital expenditure requirements will need to feature in the forthcoming 10-year Capital Strategy.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 There are no major risks arising from the approval of this document; it is not legally binding. The major risk would arise if the Councils chose to work independent of one another in a more ad-hoc manner or were seen to be inactive and failing in their community leadership role.

10. **Key Decision Information**

10.1 This is a key decision because the document relates to more than two wards.

11. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

11.1 There are none directly in relation to this Growth Deal but members will recall previous reports in respect of "District Deals" between the two Councils.

12. **List of Appendices**

12.1 Growth Deal 2018-2022 (to follow).

13. **Background Papers**

- 13.1 Council Plan 2018-2022
- 13.2 Economic Development Strategy 2018-2023.
- 13.3 Asset Management Strategy 2018-2022.
- 13.4 Emerging Joint Local Plan.
- 13.5 Current and future Capital Strategy and Capital Programmes.
- 13.6 Government Policy in relation to housing growth.
- 13.7 District Deal letters