

HEALTH, WELLBEING & ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 12th June, 2025
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

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Present:	Councillor Rupert Adcock (Chair)		
Councillors:	Barker MBE Beeston Crisp	Dymond Reece Whieldon	Wilkes
Apologies:	Councillor(s) Northcott, Richards and Wright		
Substitutes:	Councillor Sheelagh Casey-Hulme (In place of Councillor Ruth Wright) Councillor Mark Holland (In place of Councillor Paul Northcott)		
Officers:	Nesta Barker Craig Jordan	Service Director - Regulatory Services Service Director - Planning	
Also in attendance:	Deputy Commander – Staffordshire Police Police Officer – Staffordshire Police		

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were shared as listed above.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2025 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. **DISTRICT AND BOROUGH HEALTH SCRUTINY ACTIVITY**

The Chair said there had been an induction meeting on the Monday which he was unable to attend. Training slides had been shared and County Councillor Adam Griffiths had been assigned to working with Newcastle's Scrutiny Committee and officers.

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5. POLICING ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOURS IN THE BOROUGH - STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE

The Chair welcomed Staffordshire Police officers.

Deputy Commander Joel Hurst introduced himself and his colleague Sgt Dave Henshall. A presentation on policing antisocial behaviours in the borough was provided to members.

[Watch the presentation here](#)

Cllr Whieldon enquired about problem profiles.

The Deputy Commander advised that this could be both about assigning a classification to one person's behaviour or to a specific problem.

Cllr Whieldon asked what the police would do once a problem had been identified to stop it from recurring.

Sgt Henshall responded that a problem-solving meeting would take place, and all the information would be brought to one single point of contact who would then address it through education and if deemed necessary prosecution which was often the most efficient way of dealing with matters.

The Deputy Commander added that each problem had its own resolution path. Drug dealing issues for instance could not be addressed the same way as homelessness. The problem-solving meeting would gather organisations and partner agencies that were best positioned to help resolve the situation.

Cllr Reece enquired about nuisance bikes and related criminal activities.

The Deputy Commander responded that crime could be committed alongside nuisance bikes when for example a motorbike helmet or balaclava was used to hide one's identity. These were however separate from anti-social behaviours and dealt with as criminal matters.

Sgt Henshall added that there were fortunately very few of these incidents with no gangs or mass bikers committing robberies in Newcastle.

Cllr Reece wondered about the reporting process and how one could tell the difference between nuisance bikes and crime involving the use of a motorcycle.

The Deputy Commander advised that information about a vehicle could be cross referenced with data held by partner agencies. People simply needed to report what they saw as just a few lines from one person on a record / entry could be matched with a call received from another person.

Cllr Wilkes asked if the police was partnering with motorbike retailers as regards nuisance bikes.

Sgt Henshall responded that they did not, and it would be more to do with trading standards. The Deputy Commander added that it wasn't illegal to sell them, own them or ride them, making it difficult to tackle the issue at the source of sale.

Cllr Dymond asked if it was legal to drive electric scooters on the pavement.

The Deputy Commander responded that it was illegal to drive them anywhere that is not the road.

Cllr Barker said she worked at One Stop community shop in Chesterton and the camera running 24/7 picked up a lot of crime related behaviours which she reported to phone line 101 when she noticed them and could be of interest to the police.

The Deputy Commander advised that the police would come and look at CCTV footage when specific issues were being reported and investigated.

Cllr Whieldon enquired about communication and publicity around the reporting process for members of the public witnessing offenses. She also asked if an audit of CCTV equipment in the hot spot areas had been undertaken as well as what had been done in terms of signage.

The Deputy Commander responded that leaflets had been printed out and were in the process of being distributed. The work around profiling and investigations was not to be broadcasted, however. About CCTV cameras, these were controlled by the County Council and set up in specific locations. Cameras in an open area were likely to be stolen or broken. The police knew where all cameras were and could access them for specific enquiries. Finally and as far as signage went, offenders were aware that they were breaking the law and the costs of putting up and maintaining signs was likely to outweigh the actual benefits.

Cllr Holland referred to a nationwide trial that was government mandated in relation to scooters in July 2020, which Newcastle participated in. The trial was inconclusive, although did show that a lot of vehicles were misused. Injuries and incidents seemed to be higher than with e.g. pedal bikes or roller skates.

Cllr Holland wondered about the Committee responsibility with regard to hot spots areas under the Council's ownership and stewardship such as the former Keele Golf course. The latter would either become a protected area, where more trees could be planted, be developed for housing, or both. In the meantime, the question remained if there was anything the Council could do to address antisocial behaviours taking place there or on Council land elsewhere in the borough.

The Deputy Commander advised that those conversations were taking place as part of the process to address issues, and support was provided by the Council as required.

The Chair commented that, as a Councillor for Silverdale, this was one of the top issues raised by residents and there wasn't much members felt they could do about it. This brought up the question of what the options were in terms of both deterrence and communication. Would potential offenders engage in such behaviours if they knew they would likely be caught? Likewise, would local residents and communities, be encouraged more to report the issues if they thought action would be taken? Reference was made to an advertising campaign operated in Stoke-on-Trent in 2023 including signs. Tenancy enforcement agreements for those occupying Council housing warning tenants of the implications of nuisance activity had also been used.

Sgt Henshall confirmed working with housing associations in relation to tenancy agreements as one initiative. In terms of deterrence, hitting people in the pocket and taking vehicles away seemed to be the most efficient way to address the problem. Investigations were now carried out even after the incidents had stopped and

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anonymous online reporting was making things easier when noticing suspicious behaviours in neighbourhoods.

The Chair referred to communication efforts on social media local communities' pages and asked if this was happening outside of social media as well.

The Deputy Commander said that housing associations were communicating using leaflets and other appropriate means, but this hadn't gone on the wider news channels as far as he was aware. This could be considered going forward.

The Chair requested that the presentation made by the Police to the meeting be shared with members.

Cllr Whieldon asked what the best email address to report incidents was.

The Deputy Commander responded that it was best to either ring 101 or use the Staffordshire Police online portal so that it could be fed into the system's analytics and the information be recorded and used.

The Chair asked if there was a specific option on the website to report off-road vehicle nuisance.

The Deputy Commander said there was a general reporting section which would then take people to different avenues once the process started.

Cllr Whieldon shared the case of a resident who seemed to struggle to get any response going through the reporting process. Cllr Whieldon subsequently tried to call 101 on her behalf and had a bad experience with the operator. Other residents had commented on the poor service received and it was felt that additional training may be required.

The Deputy Commander advised having been informed of issues, that a lot of work had been undertaken through training over the past twelve months. Faster pick-up times should now be noticed however it needed to be recognized that thousands of calls were still received every day. People were encouraged to report issues online, though members were welcome to inform him of any difficulties experienced over the phone.

Cllr Whieldon commented that elderly people did not always have the possibility to use online platforms and would rely on 101.

The Deputy Commander acknowledged the comment.

The Chair thanked police officers for their presentation and for answering questions from members, adding that ward councillors were there to help if there was anything they could do and could be contacted accordingly.

Resolved: That the presentation be received and a copy of the slides be shared with members after the meeting.

[Watch the debate here](#)

6. WALLEYS QUARRY ODOUR ISSUES

The Service Director for Regulatory Services introduced the update report on Walleys Quarry as presented to Cabinet on 3rd June.

Cllr Casey-Hulme expressed concerns over recent news suggesting the landfill had now actually been abandoned. The Environment Agency did not intend to permanently cap and was removing the MMFs with no water services management in place and no restoration of the site. It was feared this would eventually open to the elements, there wouldn't be any security, and children would be able to go and play there. It was requested that the matter be discussed at the next meeting of the full Council.

The Service Director for Regulatory Services responded that the operator having now gone into liquidation the priority was to make things stable on site and then looking at the longer-term options. A staged approach was essential, and the Council was currently working with the Environment Agency to deal with things as they were on site at the moment before moving on to the next stage of development.

Cllr Holland commented that there was always an option to raise issues relating to Walleys Quarry at full Council as the item was included in the Leader's statement. Members were encouraged to never lose an opportunity to represent residents on this matter, the long-term future of the site and inaction demonstrated by the Environment Agency being indeed a great concern. The fact that odours had reduced was very welcomed and the question was now what the Council could do to press the regulator who was stewarding the site.

The Service Director for Regulatory Services confirmed that the dialogue would be maintained to press the government, Environment Agency and liquidators.

The Chair stated that while it was nice to see that a lot of work had been going on and that the site was in much better condition, there hadn't been much detailed information about the long-term future of the site. Another public briefing felt appropriate if this is something that could be asked of the Environment Agency along with more information about the MMFs.

The Service Director for Regulatory Services said she would pass on the request for a public meeting to the Environment Agency. The three MMFs stations were still there and it was expected they would be reviewed over time.

Cllr Casey-Hulme said she had evidence from the judicial review of Matthew Richards that the Environment Agency had stated they would not be restoring the site or manage the water and that they would take away the MMFs.

The Service Director for Regulatory Services said she had not been included in the communication referred to and suggested that the information be shared along with having a conversation.

The Chair commented that this highlighted the need for a meeting with the Environment Agency so that they can explain themselves and address the confusion and anxiety for members of the public around the future of the site.

Cllr Barker asked about the £132,000 owed by Walleys Quarry to the Council.

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The Service Director for Regulatory Services responded that the Council was engaging with the liquidators and awaiting an update.

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

[Watch the debate here](#)

7. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair went through the work programme and indicated that he hoped a report from the Parks and Open Spaces Task and Finish Working Group would be available for the September meeting.

Cllr Whieldon commented that the group was scheduled to meet on the 30th June and would be discussing the final report to be presented to the Committee.

Resolved: That the work programme be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

9. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved: That the next meeting be held on 15th September 2025 at 7pm.

**Councillor Rupert Adcock
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 8.19 pm