

CABINET

Tuesday, 8th July, 2025
Time of Commencement: 2.00 pm

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Present: Councillor Simon Tagg (Chair)

Councillors:	Sweeney	Fear	Hutchison
	Heesom	Skelding	

Officers:	Gordon Mole	Chief Executive
	Simon McEneny	Deputy Chief Executive
	Anthony Harold	Service Director - Legal & Governance / Monitoring Officer
	Sarah Wilkes	Service Director - Finance / S151 Officer
	Craig Jordan	Service Director - Planning
	Roger Tait	Service Director - Neighbourhood Delivery
	Geoff Durham	Civic & Member Support Officer
	Paul Dutton	Senior Media Officer

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 3 June, 2025 be agreed as a correct record.

4. **WALLEYS QUARRY ODOUR ISSUES**

The Leader introduced an update report on Walleys Quarry Odours, handing over to the Chief Executive for an update on what had been happening over the past month.

The Chief Executive reported that there had been 16 odour reports in June. Officers were continuing to look at the locations of the reports and were particularly looking at the description of the odour which had changed since the closure of the site.

The Council would continue to work towards recovery over a longer period –including the autumn which had traditionally been a difficult period with weather conditions impacting upon the odours coming from the site.

Twelve proactive assessments were undertaken in June, with the highest rating being 3. This had been taken on site whilst the Leader of the Council, officers and key agencies were on a visit. Works undertaken by the Environment Agency (EA) could be seen, as could works that had been left undone by the company.

The company remained in its liquidated state and had not, as yet, been wound up. The Council had corresponded with the liquidators with regard to the outstanding sums that were owed to the Council and on information on the company's arrangements.

The Leader stated that the visit to the site, which had been arranged by the EA, had been a good one, being able to see the site in a much better state than when the operators left it.

At the site meeting, the Leader had made the case that a close eye needed to be kept on the situation throughout the winter phase. The EA had said that the monitoring station at the pump station on Silverdale Road would be removed to allow for works to take place by Severn Trent Water. The EA stated that they would carry out a review once work was completed at the pump station, to see if the equipment needed to be returned. The Leader was keen for that to happen should there be a resurgence of odours in the autumn. If there was no resurgence, the Council would be moving to a phase looking to restore the site.

The Leader referred to the leachate plant used to control odours had not been kept up to standard and was not therefore doing its job.

Members agreed that a watching brief should be kept on the site, particularly over the next autumn/winter. In addition, it was hoped that the current MP would ensure that the Council received government funding for remediation of the site.

Resolved: That the update report be received.

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5. CIVIC PRIDE (EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITIES) STRATEGY 2025/28

The Leader introduced a report seeking to approve the draft Civic Pride Strategy 2025-28, for consultation and adoption.

There had been a strategy in place for many years for community engagement but had launched the Civic Pride initiative in the last twelve months with a draft three year plan having now been put together to support it.

There were three priorities contained within the Strategy, those being: great places where we live; connecting our communities; and the way that the Council listens, talks and acts.

The consultation, running through the summer would be online, with an event, hopefully in town where people could drop in to see some of the initiatives put forward.

There was a Civic Pride Investment Fund of £22,000 to help support community groups.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing stated that the Council had been proactive with several Civic Pride days across the Borough and with more to come. It was uplifting to see how many people had attended the events. The mobile police station was popular and it was understood that they were receiving a lot of 'intelligence'. There was also take up from other partners.

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment stated that events had taken place in Kidsgrove, Loggerheads, Chesterton, Wolstanton and May Bank where a walk about with the police took place and members of the public approached them with their concerns. Events would take place in Silverdale, Thistleberry, Keele, Madeley, Maer and Whitmore.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth made reference to paragraph 1.3 of the report stating that the one sentence encapsulated it all.

The Leader stated that some of the Council's partners had already been involved in this and it was something that could be built upon.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the draft Civic Pride (Empowering Our Communities) Strategy 2025 – 28 be approved for consultation and adoption
 - (ii) That the draft strategy be referred to the Scrutiny Committees (Health, Wellbeing and Environment, Economy and Place, and Finance, Assets and Performance) for consideration and comment

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6. **NEWCASTLE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION PLAN 2025/26**

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing introduced a report providing an overview of successful work that had been delivered by the Community Safety Partnership in 2024/25 and planned actions for 2025/26 in response to Strategic Assessment priorities for 2025/26.

There were a number of initiatives in progress which formed part of the Local Police and Crime Plan. Priorities for 2024/25 were outlined at paragraph 2.1 of the report and a reduction in incidences were shown in all areas except for drugs related offences, compared to 2023/24. The figures were shown at paragraph 3.1 of the report. Priorities for 2025/26 were outlined at paragraph 4.1 of the report.

For this year, the Community Safety Partnership had been awarded £82,333 and projects that had been commissioned were shown at paragraph 4.3.

The Portfolio Holder for Finances, Town Centres and Growth stated that it was an encouraging report with the town improving all of the time.

The Leader endorsed Councillor Sweeney's comments adding that it was also a busy town with people living and working in it.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the report and be received and the successful

outcomes achieved in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as the work in progress to continue to tackle the strategic priorities, be noted.

- (ii) That the updated Local Crime and Police Plan in line with the Strategic Assessment priorities for 2025/26 be received and endorsed
- (iii) That the report be referred to the Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

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7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Leader introduced a report providing an update on feedback received from Government on the Council's submission of an interim plan and to agree the next steps.

Members had been informed at the last meeting that the Council was awaiting feedback from the Government on the proposal that had been put to them by this Authority and others from around the County. This had been delayed and there was a slippage in the Government's plans in that the 2028 start date for the new Council's was now seen as the most ambitious. This could give councils the opportunity to ask the Government to maybe think again and to rally support to that cause.

As part of the reply to the interim plans, a small amount of money was to be spread across Staffordshire authorities to work on them. Newcastle's plans were to investigate a number of options which it would continue to do. Meetings had taken place among Chief Executives across the County and amongst Leaders of councils too. £200,000 would be transferred from the Business Rates Reserve Fund to the Budget Support Fund to enable the Council to continue the work on Local Government Reorganisation.

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council have a meeting tomorrow evening looking at options, including a North Staffordshire Authority taking in Stoke, Staffordshire Moorlands and Newcastle, and possibly parts or all of East Staffordshire and Stafford – although this Council had not been consulted. The Leader stated that he would be writing to the Leader of Staffordshire Moorlands to put this Council's position, that it was against a merger with Stoke and supported discussions around an option to work with the Moorlands.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning stated that the Council was being forced to waste money on useless and unwanted projects instead of spending it in the community.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth agreed with everything that had been said and stated that it was bizarre that Staffordshire Moorlands had come up with a scheme to be taken over by Stoke.

The Leader stated that the Government's response, as detailed in the report, again completely failed to make the case for a forced reorganisation and did not explain how it would improve services.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the receipt of Government feedback in relation to the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent submissions of Interim Plans for Local Government Reorganisation, be noted.
 - (ii) That it be noted that the Council will now further engage with Government and Staffordshire Leaders through a meeting separate to the Staffordshire Leaders Board.
 - (iii) That it be delegated to the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder, Finance, Town Centres & Growth, to engage the necessary support for the work on the local government reorganisation, noting that the borough is not yet in receipt of funding from Government to partially offset any costs accrued and that the Council continues to seek a fair allocation of this funding.
 - (iv) That £200k to be transferred from the Business Rates Reserve to the Budget Support and Borrowing Fund in order to fund the work needed to submit the Council's final Local Government Reorganisation Plan.
 - (v) That Newcastle-Under-Lyme's Members of Parliament be called upon to support the Borough's resolutions as set out in the report to full Council of 19th March 2025, and that they engage with Government Ministers in stating the case for the Borough.

[Watch the debate here](#)

8. PET CREMATION OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment introduced a report setting out proposals to establish a pet crematorium at a separate location on the Bradwell site which would be run on hydrotreated vegetable oil.

There was a growing requirement for this specialist provision, especially locally as there were other options available but those were several miles away.

The service that would be provided would be both professional and bespoke and would operate totally separately from the existing service.

A confidential report on this was included on the agenda and that would be considered later under closed session.

The Leader stressed the point that this would be a separate operation to the existing one and would be welcomed by residents.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the business case for option three (one cremator with chamber) to expand Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's commercial portfolio to include the provision of pet cremations at Bradwell Crematorium, be approved.
 - (ii) That the expanded and award-winning service already offered by the Council be noted and continue the personalised approach.

- (iii) That that the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment progresses with all necessary planning and regulatory applications.
- (iv) That a further report on the final business proposals be received to ensure the procurement of the service meets all regulatory requirements and service expectations.
- (v) That the virement of funding within the capital programme, be authorised.

[Watch the debate here](#)

9. FORWARD PLAN

The Leader presented the Forward Plan.

Resolved: That the Forward Plan be received and noted.

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10. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Business.

11. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

Resolved:- That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration if the following matter because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs contained within Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

12. PET CREMATION OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

**Councillor Simon Tagg
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 2.46 pm