

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL



CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S REPORT TO CABINET

2nd December 2025

Report Title: Newcastle Town Deal Update

Submitted by: Deputy Chief Executive

Portfolios: One Council, People & Partnerships, and Finance, Town Centres and Growth

Ward(s) affected: Crackley and Red Street, Bradwell, Holditch and Chesterton West, Wolstanton, May Bank, Cross Heath, Knutton, Silverdale, Thistleberry, Town, Clayton, Westlands, Keele, Westbury Park and Northwood

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
To update Cabinet on progress in delivering projects within the Newcastle Town Deal and to seek approval from Cabinet to progress legal agreements to enable delivery of the remaining Newcastle Town Deal projects yet to be awarded.			
<u>Recommendation</u> That Cabinet: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Notes the progress made with the schemes in Newcastle as part of the Newcastle Town Deal.2. Approves that the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth, and Portfolio Holder for One Council, People and Partnerships, progresses necessary legal agreements to enable continued delivery of projects.			
<u>Reasons</u> To update Cabinet on the strong progress made with all projects as part of the Newcastle Town Deal funding programme.			

1. Background

- 1.1** As reported to previous Cabinet meetings, the Council has secured Town Deal Funds for the redevelopment of several key regeneration sites across Newcastle Town Centre and its wider area as defined in the Newcastle Town Deal Investment Plan.
- 1.2** Progress in delivering projects within the Newcastle Town Deal programme has been very positive. This is set out in further detail below. At its meeting in June 2025, the Newcastle Town Deal Board agreed to support further phases of work within the Sustainable Transport theme and the provision of a music venue at Astley Place. The Council will be progressing these schemes on behalf of the Board.

- 1.3** To ensure delivery continues at pace, it will be necessary for the Council to agree further agreements with delivery partners and also to procure contractors for the remaining areas of work, such as at Newcastle Bus Station and at Knutton village.
- 1.4** As previously reported to Cabinet at its October 2025 meeting regarding the Kildsgrove Town Deal update, in Sept 2025, the Council received formal confirmation of the government's funding simplification for Town Deals and Levelling Up funds, which are being combined into a Local Regeneration Fund. One of the changes as a result of this funding simplification is an extension to the delivery deadline for projects, which is now March 2028.

2. Updates

2.1 Astley Place

Capital&Centric has appointed AC1 as the contractor for the Astley Place construction works, which commenced in October. Completion is expected by the end of 2026.



Newcastle Town Deal funds supported the Astley Centre which has now opened and is operational and additional funds from the grant will be directed to the creation of a new small scale music venue within Astley Place which will be supported by Joules Brewery and a newly created CIC, with the aim of hiring out the facility for new and upcoming music acts, exercise classes, performance activities and art-based functions. The venue is expected to support animation of the new public space with daytime and evening activities supported. Costs for development of the music venue will be separately identified by Capital&Centric to ensure that Newcastle Town Deal funds are appropriately directed.

2.2 Town Centre Gateway Sites

2.2.1 Karparc

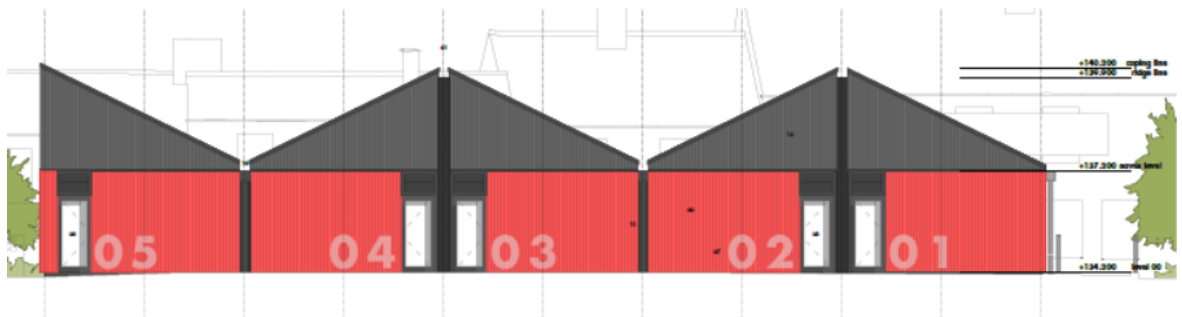
Newcastle Town Deal funding has been used to forward fund proposals for the redevelopment of the former Midway multi storey car park for residential uses. The Town Deal contribution is now substantially complete and these proposals, alongside others in the town centre, have now attracted a substantial amount of funding from Homes England to support the next phase of delivery. Capital&Centric has appointed Clegg Construction as

the contractor for the works which have now started on site and are expected to be completed by the summer of 2027.



2.2.2 Zanzibar

At the Zanzibar site, Town Deal funds are being used for two purposes, it is helping to address the high abnormal costs of land reclamation across the whole site, supporting the Aspire Housing led development of housing on the site, which gained planning consent on 7th October 2025. The second element is development of small-scale enterprise units, for which planning consent has been gained and works are due to start on site in late 2025.



2.3 Knutton and Chesterton

2.3.1 Knutton

Aspire is now well into delivery of the residential development at High Street, with works on the former community centre site due to commence shortly. Town Deal funds, which supported the land remediation element, are expected to be spent by the end of March 2026.



Work on the extension to the Enterprise Centre Is now complete and all Town Deal funds due to this project have been claimed. The new enterprise units are awaiting connection to a sub-station before the units can be occupied, which will probably be January 2026.



The development of the football changing rooms at the Wammy is now complete and following an informal open day at the site to try out the facilities, Newcastle Town Football Club are now in occupation.



The remaining element of the Town Deal funded actions in Knutton, including plans for a village hall, remain in the planning phase, as an end user is yet to be identified to take on management of the village hall. Consequently, the Council is unable to start construction works. If no potential end user steps forward then alternative plans for the site will need to be developed for consideration by the Town Deal Board. Once proposals are agreed the Council will be tasked in undertaking actions to ensure delivery.

2.3.2 Cross Street Chesterton

The Town Deal funding agreement to support the remediation works for Cross St Phase 2 and Phase 3/4 was entered into in September 2024 - this enabled the Homes England funding bid to progress and a start on site for Phase 2 (43 No. Affordable Rented units) was achieved in October 2024, with developer Keon Homes. Phased handovers will commence from late 2025 and this Phase is expected to complete fully by June 2026.



Planning permission for Phase 3, which will deliver 39no social rented apartments and bungalows for over 55's, was granted in September 2024. Following a tender exercise, a Homes England bid was submitted and approved earlier this year. The contract with Countryside was entered into in March 2025 and is expected to complete by November

2026. Town Deal funds, which supported remediation of the land, will be defrayed by the end of March 2026.

2.4 Sustainable Travel

Phase 1 of the sustainable transport works is substantially complete, these encompass:

- A new pedestrian / cycle crossing at Gallowstree Roundabout.
- Pedestrian and cycle improvements at Hassell Street / Barracks Road which include an improved crossing point adjacent to the bus station.
- Installation of Real Time Passenger Information Totems at locations in Newcastle town centre, Keele University and at well used bus stops across the Newcastle Town Deal area
- Introduction of the new 'K' bus route.
- Works to introduce a new bus entrance at Keele University, which are unable to be completed until a number of legal matters are concluded between the landowner and Staffordshire County Council.

Phase 2 of the sustainable transport work are currently under development. These are improvements to the bus station in Newcastle town centre, to create a green and sustainable bus station, and replacement of pedestrian wayfinding around Newcastle town centre and surrounding car parks. Following further design development, the Council will need to appoint a contractor to deliver these elements of work.

2.5 Newcastle Bus Station

In addition to the items in 2.4 the sustainable public transport solutions includes investment in bus infrastructure with the aim of improving the quality of the bus station and passenger experience. The investment is designed to increase bus usage and passenger service satisfaction.

There are already 2 real time passenger information (RPTI) totems which provide bus arrival / departure times, these will be enhanced with RTPI panels at each bus stop. An example of these is shown in the photo below.



One of the key objectives is to make the bus station greener with the introduction of solar panels to provide some of the energy requirements, LED lighting in the shelters and sustainable planting. In line with our policies this will give the opportunity to invest in

sustainable planting schemes which will assist in directing pedestrian traffic to desired areas and create an attractive environment in what is quite a harsh environment.



The Council has been working with the architects to develop plans, further work is required to ensure these deliver the best possible scheme within the constraints of the site. The aim is to submit a planning application in the spring of 2026 with works taking place between Autumn 2026 and Spring 2027.

2.6 Digital Society – 53 Iron Market (Keele in Town)

Keele in Town is now fully open and operational. The addition of Piccoloco as a café operator at Keele in Town was celebrated in September 2025. Some very minor works remain outstanding in the form of acoustic testing for noise transmission around the building which needed to wait until the building was fully occupied before they could be undertaken.

2.7 Electric Vehicle Charging Points

These electric vehicle (EV) works form part of the new Castle Car Park project and are now fully operational.

2.8 Digital infrastructure

ITS Technology Group Ltd have now completed the installation of the new cables through the ductwork. A procurement exercise for the service provider has commenced to deliver the broadband service. Four community centres have been selected to receive a funded provision of both a free broadband connection as well as a managed wi-fi solution. The four centres are:-

- Silverdale Athletic Football Club.
- Marsh Hall Community Centre.
- Porthill Park Cricket Club.
- Northwood Lane Community Centre.

There will then be a second phase utilising Town Deal funding for additional community centre sites that have expressed an interest.

3. Next steps

- 3.1** Next steps are to continue with projects that are already in delivery and to continue design development and delivery of the sustainable transport projects. Further consideration is required before a decision can be taken on the potential for a village hall in Knutton.

4. Recommendation

That Cabinet:

- 1 Notes the progress made with the schemes in Newcastle as part of the Newcastle Town Deal.
- 2 Approves that the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth, and Portfolio Holder for One Council, People and Partnerships, progresses legal agreements to enable continued delivery of projects.

5. Reasons

- 5.1 The Council as accountable body for the Town Deal Funds (Local Regeneration Fund) is responsible for ensuring progress with the projects set out in the Town Investment Plan and as agreed by Newcastle Town Deal Board. Maintaining a focus on delivery is essential to ensure that funding deadlines are met.

6. Options Considered

- 6.1 Options for project delivery within Newcastle Town Deal were considered as a part of developing the Newcastle Town Deal Town Investment Plan. The actions set out in this Cabinet report are in line with those projects agreed in the Town Investment Plan and subsequent decisions by the Town Deal Board in pursuit of delivering Town Investment plan objectives.

7. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 7.1 The Local Government Act 2000 - powers to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the Borough.
- 7.2 The Council will need to make sure that its commercial activities are legally and state aid compliant, including having regard to the Public Sector Duty within the Equality Act 2010, statutory guidance on local authority investments and The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- 7.3 All commercial projects and investment opportunities will be examined to ensure that they are within the Council's powers and legal implications will be identified on a case-by-case basis.

8. Equality Impact Assessment

- 8.1 The development of these projects does not create any specific equality impacts.

9. Financial and Resource Implications

- 9.1 The proposals concern expenditure of Town Deal funds which are granted to the Council by MHCLG. The Council is the accountable body for these funds with the responsibility for ensuring that they are defrayed in line with the objectives of the Town Investment Plan, the guidance of the Newcastle Town Deal Board and by the programme end date of March 2028.

10. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 10.1 A programme risk assessment is maintained on the Council's risk management system. The major risks are to ensure spend within the Government deadline for delivery, which the Council is well on track to achieve using well embedded programme management. Some elements of delivery require planning consent, in which case the delivery team and its key partners work closely with the Development Management team to ensure compliance with requirements.

11. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



12. **One Council**

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

A number of the Newcastle Town Deal projects will result in income generation or cost saving opportunities for the Council. All will support the wider economic development of the Newcastle Town Deal area.

One Digital Council

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

The roll out of a fibre network will support access to fast, reliable broadband access in the community centres and will support commercial provision of fast, affordable broadband connectivity for businesses on the industrial parks that the fibre network enables access to.

One Sustainable Council

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle.

Sustainable travel options is a key feature of Newcastle Town Deal projects. Works funded by Newcastle Town Deal will seek to be in line with a net zero future.

13. **Key Decision Information**

- 13.1 This is a key decision due to the value of funding being granted to the Council and its multi-ward impact.

14. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

Cabinet Report – 18 October 2022
 Cabinet Report - 13 January 2021
 Cabinet Report - 9 September 2020
 Cabinet Report - 4 December 2019

15. **List of Appendices**

- 15.1 None

16. Background Papers

16.1 None