

Written Responses from the Leader of the Council to Questions raised at the Council Meeting on 28 November 2012

Question from Cllr Loades

Can the leader inform this Council, if the Community Investment type company for the Newcastle Town Centre is now registered officially with the recognized body and all directors listed and declared?

I can confirm that all of the documentation for the registration of the Community Interest Company with Companies house and the CIC Regulator has been completed incorporating all the details of all of the Subscribers to the Company and the first Directors. Those documents are currently being circulated round the Subscribers and Directors for signature and once signed (anticipated within a few days) the formation of the Company will be complete.

In the meantime decisions can be taken but these will of course be subject to ratification by the Company.

Supplementary Question:

Cllr Loades requested information regarding the appointment of the Town Centre Manager and whether this could still go ahead if the Company had not yet been ratified.

The Town Centre Manager was appointed by directors of the Town Centre Partnership CIC after the Company was ratified.

Question from Cllr Mrs Peers

Could the portfolio holder tell the Council what progress has been made on the recruitment and implementation of a town centre manager?

The Town Centre Partnership has undertaken a recruitment process and at this stage has made an informal offer subject to references. It is anticipated that the Manager will be in post in January.

Supplementary Question:

Cllr Mrs Peers requested details regarding how much money had been contributed from Kidsgrove Town Council and other Parish Councils and whether all Town and Parish Councils had been asked to contribute to the Partnership.

Following the change of political control in May it became clear that a separate partnership for Newcastle Town Centre and Kidsgrove Town Centre would be needed to deal with the many years of neglect. The new administration was able to restructure finances in such a way that made available sufficient money to fund the Newcastle Partnership. The Kidsgrove Partnership is currently in the process of being formed and therefore has not incurred any costs. No Parish Council has been asked to contribute anything to the Newcastle Town Centre Partnership but a dialogue has been entered into with Kidsgrove Town Council regarding the formation of the Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership.

Question from Cllr Miss Mancey

Can Cllr Kearon tell the Council how many residents have been assisted by the grant scheme put in place to help vulnerable and older residents with home security?

Revival Home Improvement Agency has produced marketing literature, leaflets have been produced, information is available on-line and articles have been produced in the Reporter promoting the scheme. Officers have worked with the Police / Fire / Aspire and Revival in a joint initiative to target vulnerable properties and residents in high crime areas. The partnership has undertaken door knocking in the town ward to provide advice on home security and safety. To date no-one has taken up the offer of installation of home security measures.

However the future of the whole scheme is now under threat as the County Council has indicated that it intends to withdraw its core funding of £25,000 and therefore the additional funding we have already put in place will be needed to ensure the scheme remains affordable. Our officers are investigating a way forward that ensures those in need of support get it.

Supplementary Question:

Cllr Miss Mancey asked whether the Portfolio Holder thought the scheme could be viewed as a failure as no resident had yet been helped.

Offering help to those in greatest need should never be considered a failure.

Question Raised under the Leader's Statement

A question was raised in relation to the review of the integrated waste and recycling strategy regarding whether nominations for the Cabinet Panel had been received and when that panel would be meeting. The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Recycling confirmed that Group Leaders had been asked to provide nominations. A supplementary question was then raised regarding details of who had actually been nominated. The Portfolio Holder stated that the process was in hand and detailed would be released when the membership was finalised, details regarding how many members would sit on the panel from each party could be found in the report that went to Cabinet in October. The question was also raised as to why this approach to the review had been adopted and what status the Cabinet Panel would actually have. The Portfolio holder stated that she would provide a full written response to this question but that the aim was to look at different ways of providing recycling by 2016 and that the main role of the panel would be fact finding prior to submitting a report to scrutiny. The Portfolio confirmed that the written response would include information on the differences between a Cabinet Panel and the previous groups that had tackled the issue of waste and recycling. Members agreed that a timely start regarding this project was desirable.

The following brief was submitted to and approved at the first meeting of the panel and contains the answers to the questions raised:-

Recycling and Waste Strategy Cabinet Panel

Draft Terms of Reference

January 2013

Background

The councils current recycling and waste strategy has been prepared following the principles agreed by Cabinet in October 2007 and consultation with stakeholders. It sets out the direction for the Waste Management services up to 2016. The strategy was prepared taking account of national guidance (Waste Strategy for England 2007) and the 'principles and policies' set out in the Integrated Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (2020 Vision).

The service under went a major redesign in 2010, with the introduction of weekly food waste collection, fortnightly garden, residual and kerbside recycling of paper, card, plastic, cans and textiles. Due to residents and staff commitment to the service this has seen an increase in recycling from 27% in 2008/9 to 51% in 2011/12, as well as a reduction in residual waste by over 35%. Over the same period it has been possible to provide a more financially efficient service. The service has been recognised on a national basis and has won five national awards and been nominated in a number of others over the last couple of years, due to the design and standard of the service.

Aims

The aim of the Recycling and Waste Cabinet Panel is to review the current recycling and waste service; and to investigate discuss and develop recommendations for the direction and structure of the recycling and waste service post 2016 for 7 to 14 years.

Objectives of the group

The objective of the group is to progress the project in accordance with the timescales indicated in the table below to ensure that there is no risk to the continuity of collection services in July 2016 when current arrangements terminate.

Tasks	2012	2013				2014				2015				2016	
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Formation Cabinet Working Group															
Review of Collection and Treatment Options															
Consultations of Collection and Treatment Options															
Determination of Collection and Treatment Options															
Development of service design															
Procurement of Services															
Implementation of Service															
Start of New Collection Service (6th July 2016)															

This group will be an integral part of the development of the future waste strategy for the borough. The group will be involved in visiting other local authorities and treatment facilities to look at the benefits and weakness of other collection and treatment systems. These visits will enable Members to be well informed when considering the future direction for the Councils recycling and waste services. It is proposed that the Cabinet Panel will be involved throughout the process ie to implementation of service. Recommendations from the Cabinet Panel will be put forward to the relevant Scrutiny Groups and ultimately Cabinet for decision making.

Membership

The Panel will be made up of Members and supported by Officers from the Council. The representation from Members will be made up proportionally as per the Council current political balance. Group Leaders nominated the following Members from their respective groups who will form the Panel. Membership of the Cabinet Panel will be:-

- Portfolio Holder for Environment and Recycling (Chair)
 - Cllr Ann Beech
- Three Members from the Labour Group
 - Cllr Sandra Hambleton
 - Cllr Reginald Bailey
 - Cllr Sophie Olszewski
- Two Members from the Conservative Group
 - Cllr Andrew Fear
 - Cllr David Loades
- One Member from the Liberal Democrat Group
 - Cllr Marion Reddish

Officer Support

- Executive Director for Operational Services
 - Mr Dave Adams
- Head of Recycling and Fleet Services
 - Mr Trevor Nicoll
- Other Officers as required.

Behaviours

It is important that all Members sitting on the Cabinet Panel have strong interest in the social and environmental issues and challenges involved in the development of a modern waste and recycling service.

- Being open and honest with the members of the team, both in meetings and outside.
- Be willing to contribute opinions and challenge constructively and accept challenge.
- Build relationships which respect individual and political differences.
- Bringing a solutions focussed attitude to the table
- Recognise personal development priorities and seek improvement opportunities.

Frequency and location of meetings

Daytime or evening meeting will be required to support the formulation of the new strategy; these are like to be 6 to 8 weekly intervals throughout the process.

During the first half of 2013 there will be a requirement to attend 6 to 8 visits. Due to the nature of these visits they will have to be undertaken during the day.