

**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan

2013 -14 to 2015 -16



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Message

from the Leader of the Council

Councillor Gareth Snell



**Councillor
Gareth Snell**
Leader of the Council

The Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan serves as the basis for everything we do as a council. The services we provide to our residents and the way we go about improving the borough are all determined by this plan and is empowered by the mandate the current administration has from the people of the borough.

With bold and ambitious plans to make the borough the best it can be, the plan sets out what we hope to achieve over the next three years and how we are going to turn a plan into reality.

Councils continue to have their funding cut by Government and legislative changes to the responsibilities of local councils means there will be some tough decisions ahead in the near future. This plan demonstrates our commitment to protecting vital public services and addressing the needs of local people while keeping Council Tax as low as possible during these difficult times.

Overall this plan is everyone's plan. The outcomes and priorities are derived from the mandate the Labour Party received at the ballot box and reflect the promises we made to everyone. However, this plan is a living document and we want to encourage local people to help shape our borough by improving opportunities to get involved and have a real say in the decisions that affect their lives.

To ensure the success of the council and delivery of our Council Plan, we want to make it easier for everyone to find out about their council, talk to their councillors, help develop their local services, and help us tackle the issues that are really important to you.

***. . . using
resources well
to provide good
public services***

***. . . targeting
support for
those who need
it most***

***. . . local people
involved and
having a say***

Welcome

from the Chief Executive

We want to make the borough a better place to live, work and invest.

Our Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan sets out how the council will seek to achieve this over the next three years.

In these challenging economic times it is important that we use resources prudently and effectively. In producing this plan we have reviewed the way we do things and considered what is important for the borough.

Our plan focuses on doing those things which will deliver our priorities and ensure that we continue to deliver high quality services for our customers.



John Sellgren
Chief Executive

This Council Plan takes account of several drivers for change:-

- **Our area and its people**
- **The Welfare Reform Act**
- **Localism Act**
- **Our Local strategies**
- **Performance Management review**
- **The Way We Work**
- **Making good use of public money**



Our Vision

.... is to create a borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe



We want Newcastle-under-Lyme to be a borough in which people are proud to live, work, visit and do business. Moreover, we want the borough council to be an open, honest and transparent organisation which is accountable to local people and which, through co-operation with partners, will work together to improve where we all live. By trying to deliver better services, focused on the needs of local people, we aim to create a council which is responsive and in touch with the people it serves.

A borough of opportunity

We will work with our partners to maximise investment and encourage enterprise and employment - generating activities that will create opportunities for improving the wealth, prosperity and housing choices of our residents.

A healthy and active community

We will work with partners to make sure residents and visitors are able to access a range of facilities and support activities that will enable them to improve their health and quality of life.

“ safer place to live, work and visit with long-term crime rates falling over the last few years ”

Becoming a co-operative council which delivers high quality, community-driven, services.

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is working towards being a co-operative council which means we are working together with our residents, partners and local organisations to collectively deliver the best we can using the resources we have.

Priorities

A clean, safe and sustainable borough

We will improve the environment so that everyone can enjoy our safe, sustainable and healthy borough.



**“ Newcastle
is a
co-operative
council ”**

**What is a
co-operative council?**

We are working to:-

- Bring more public services together so that people get what they need at the right place and the right time.
- Encourage more involvement from local people and our staff in the planning and delivery of services.
- Support our communities better and encourage people to do more to help their own communities.

Whilst we still face budget cuts, the council is making sure local people are more involved in reducing our costs and challenging what we spend.

We are involving the community and business leaders in developing our future plans, drawing on the skills and expertise that exists in the borough.

**Working with our
communities**

The Newcastle Partnership works with 11 Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) across the borough in offering opportunities for residents and communities to get involved in activities, engagement and decision-making in their area.

LAPs represent the Partnership’s established infrastructure for the delivery of locality working and offer communities enhanced and focused access to a range of partners in order to address and deliver against local priorities.



**... projects
taking place
in partnership
with the
community**

**... LAPs
or 'Friends of'
groups**

**... collaborative
working with
our strategic
partners**

**... partnerships
and commissioning
arrangements
with the
third sector**



Drivers for change

We have many things to consider when delivering a service to residents.

Our area and its people

Recently released figures from the 2011 Census tell us that Newcastle's population has grown by 1.5 per cent since 2001 and there are now an estimated 123,900 residents in the borough.

Our population is ageing, with about 14 per cent more residents aged over 60 than in 2001. The biggest increase has been amongst people aged over 85 and this is expected to grow further in the coming years. This increasing old-age dependency ratio will have wide ranging implications on the economy of the borough.

Newcastle-under-Lyme continues to become more diverse, estimates suggesting that around five per cent of residents are from BME communities, compared with around two per cent at the time of the 2001 Census.

Our borough is becoming a safer place to live, work and visit, with long-term crime rates falling over the last few years. Reports of anti-social behaviour have also been falling steadily over the past four years.

Residents are happy with Newcastle-under-Lyme as a place to live but in some areas the fear of crime remains a concern despite falling crime rates.

The economic downturn has meant that there has been a seven per cent reduction in the number of jobs in the borough between 2006-2010, meaning that there are now around 3,200 fewer jobs.

Despite this, the rate of unemployment is not particularly high when compared to the national picture. However, long-term worklessness and benefit dependency due to ill-health remains a problem.

Business start up rates in Newcastle are relatively low, but survival rates for those that do get off the ground are relatively good.

“ Residents are happy with Newcastle as a place to live ”

The Welfare Reform Act

The Act provides for the introduction of a Universal Credit to replace a range of existing means-tested benefits and tax credits for people of working age, starting from April 2013.

This is the Government's proposals for reforming welfare to improve work incentives, simplify the benefits system and tackle administrative complexity. Besides introducing Universal Credit and related measures, the Bill makes other significant changes to the benefits system.





Localism Act

The Localism Bill was introduced to Parliament in December 2010 and shifts power from central government into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.

Localism isn't simply about giving power back to local government but to individuals, neighbourhoods, professionals and communities as well as local councils and other local institutions - close to the people who are affected by the decisions.

The Localism Bill includes five key measures that underpin the Government's approach to decentralisation:-

- **Community Rights**

New community rights will ensure that community organisations have the Right to Challenge by expressing an interest in the running of a local authority service. Communities can also bid to take over land and buildings that are important to them through the Right to Bid.

- **Neighbourhood Planning**

New rights will allow local communities to shape new development by coming together to prepare neighbourhood plans.

- **Housing**

This will mean that more decisions are taken locally, allowing councils to decide how best to help their homeless people, improve their housing allocations and give direction to providers on the type of tenancies suitable to better meet local housing needs.

- **General power of competence**

Councils will be able to take action and get on with things they think will benefit their local area. The new power will give councils the freedom to work together to improve services, drive down costs and enhance their local area.

- **Empowering cities and other local areas**

The Act enables the transfer of public functions to local authorities in order to improve local accountability or promote economic growth.



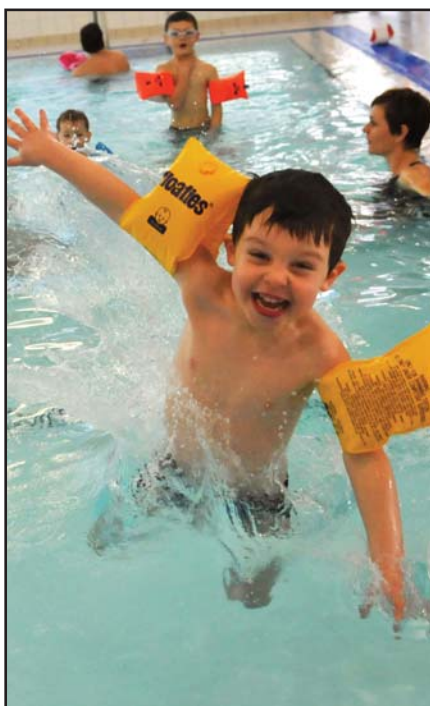


Local Strategies

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council has three main strategies linked to its priorities:-

- Economic Development Strategy
- Stronger and Safer Communities Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy

These strategies show how the council is planning to work with partners and other organisations to improve and develop local communities to deliver our vision for the borough.



The Way We Work (TWWW)

This project was established in January 2011 and stemmed from the council's Transformation Programme. Our aim was to focus resources and energy on four key projects in order to achieve efficiencies:-

- Review the way the council uses its accommodation/offices.
- Home working.
- Flexible working.
- Electronic document and records management system.

Examples of areas of work within these projects included:-

- ❑ Expand home working opportunities for staff to deliver more efficiencies.
- ❑ Improving mobile working by giving officers in the field access to the right technology.
- ❑ Improving our Civic Hub to make public services more accessible and joined up.
- ❑ Reducing paper by scanning documents and using/storing them electronically.
- ❑ Becoming more energy efficient.

Work undertaken beneath the TWWW heading is now being taken forward in relation to a new programme of work focused on how we work with our customers and respond to the government's Welfare Reform agenda.

Making good use of public money

Having to do more with less means we will be looking more creatively at how we provide, and deliver, our services over the next four years - on our own and together with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors. We will undertake a strategic review of our assets - working hard to keep Council Tax low, maximising our resources and seeking efficiencies in everything we do.

Performance Management Review

The council is always looking to improve the way it delivers services and will make the best use of information to target services to groups and individuals in our communities in the most efficient and effective way. To do this effectively we need to ensure that we are clear about what specific outcomes we want to achieve.

We have recently reviewed our approach to performance management to ensure that we focus much more on the outcomes that we want to achieve, and how we measure our progress.

Priorities, Outcomes and Activities

In this section we have set out, under each of our priorities, the outcomes that we are committed to delivering.

For each of the outcomes you will find:-

- An explanation of why improved outcomes are needed.
- Activities we will be undertaking over the next three years to achieve improvements.
- Performance indicators we will use to measure our success.
- A list of targets, linked to each indicator, showing how we propose to deliver the improvements over the next three years.

By 2016 the borough will look and feel like this:-

A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcomes:-

- Levels of safety will have improved, along with standards of public health.
- Newcastle will be safer with vulnerable victims of crime and disorder receiving high quality support.
- The negative impact that the council, residents and local businesses have on the environment will have reduced.
- Our streets and open spaces will be clean, clear and tidy.
- Town centres across the borough will be sustainable and safe.



A borough of opportunity

Outcomes:-

- Levels of worklessness will have reduced.
- Local people will be able to access opportunities for personal development and growth.
- Housing will be available and accessible to meet a range of diverse needs.
- Key parts of the borough will have been regenerated and there will have been overall economic growth.



A healthy and active community

Outcomes:-

- People who live, work, visit or study in the borough will have access to high quality facilities.
- Levels of cultural activity and participation in the arts will have increased.
- There will be a range of healthy lifestyle choices, resulting in an increase in participation in sport and physical activity.



A co-operative council delivering high quality, community-driven, services.

Outcomes:-

- The council will have increased the capacity and skills of its workforce.

- Councillors will be community champions and powerful community advocates.
- The council will have delivered further efficiencies.
- Local communities are engaged and able to shape and deliver services which impact on their lives.
- Increasing the resilience in communities by building effective and strong partnerships across the borough and utilising public and community resources.



Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcome 1.1 Levels of safety will have improved, along with standards of public health

Why are the improvements needed?

The council has a duty to protect the public's health and improve the general quality of life where possible.

We know that . . .

- people are injured on the roads
- people suffer food poisoning
- past historic industries may have caused contaminated land

You told us that . . .

- you want safer places to eat
- you are concerned about the danger of unrepaired housing
- you want roads that are safe for the everyone to use

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Respond to outbreaks of food poisoning to try to prevent spread and reoccurrence
- Contaminated land strategy reviewed and published in 2013
- Continue to inspect food businesses in our planned programme to ensure they are safe to eat
- A new Public Health Strategy to be produced

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Number of people killed or seriously injured on the borough's roads (1.1.1)
- Percentage of food premises that have a zero or one national food hygiene rating. (1.1.2)
- The amount of contaminated land that has been remediated and is now in use (1.1.3)
- Percentage of Category 1 housing disrepair hazards concerns brought to the attention of the Council that are investigated and addressed (1.1.4)
- The number of food establishments which are broadly compliant with good hygiene law (1.1.5)

Outcome 1.2 Newcastle will be safer with vulnerable victims of crime and disorder receiving high quality support

Why are the improvements needed?

To offer an optimum service to reassure, support and protect vulnerable people in the borough.

We know that . . .

- too many people suffering from incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour are vulnerable because they are subject to this repeated behaviour
- some victims are more vulnerable than others and need more support
- early intervention is key in tackling and positively resolving incidences

You told us that . . .

- you want to live in a community where you feel safe
- you want to know that services are available to support and help when needed

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Review Anti-Social Behaviour policy 2013
- Work with partner organisations and key groups, together with communities to deal with crime and raise awareness of support services for the public
- Domestic Violence - Early Intervention Worker recruited to support services
- Continuation of funding for Anti-Social Behaviour Victims Worker
- Develop the existing multi-agency conference system to address the problems faced by vulnerable people

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Level of satisfaction with the support provided to vulnerable citizens (1.2.1)
- Number of interventions to support vulnerable citizens and victims of crime (1.2.2)
- Reduction in incidents of violence with injury, anti-social behaviour, serious acquisitive crime and domestic violence (1.2.3-6)

Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcome 1.3

The negative impact that the Council, residents and local businesses have on the environment will have reduced

Why are the improvements needed?

We know that . . .

- too many carbon emissions is harmful to the environment and impacts on the quality of life for residents and visitors alike
- to reduce excess waste the council needs to work with residents and businesses to minimise residual waste year on year

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned about the future of the environment
- you want to maintain the level of the council's national award winning recycling service
- you would want recycling to be reprocessed in the UK
- you would also like to see other types of recycling introduced such as small appliances

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Continue to monitor air quality in the borough, consult with residents on findings and devise plans for monitoring and control of air quality
- Continue to investigate and take action in respect of nuisance identified in the borough
- Investigate and implement the kerbside collection of small electrical appliances and batteries
- Establish a trial recycling service for businesses and community buildings

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The amount of residual waste per household (1.3.1)
- Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (1.3.2)
- The amount of carbon emissions by the Council (1.3.3)
- The number of non-residential collections covered by the trade waste recycling scheme - includes Council properties and schools (1.3.4)
- The level of air quality (1.3.5)
- Number of general nuisance complaints (1.3.6)

Outcome 1.4

Our streets and open spaces will be clean, clear and tidy

Why are the improvements needed?

Research has demonstrated that there are clear cross-cutting links between local environmental quality and other policy agendas;

- Clean, safe, green infrastructure has a vital role in ensuring mental and physical health.
- Good design and high standards of maintenance and cleansing are vital in reducing anti-social behaviour and other environmental crime

We know that . . .

- too much litter and detritus in the area does not attract people to live, work and invest in the area

You told us that . . .

- you are generally satisfied with the cleanliness of our streets and parks and open spaces but there are "hot spots" which need to be improved

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Local Environment Quality (LEQ) surveys (3 per year) and resultant action plan to tackle hot spots
- Environmental Education and Enforcement Action Plan
- Community engagement and participation in caring for local green spaces and neighbourhoods
- Service challenge and review to ensure resources are deployed effectively and efficiently to tackle cleanliness issues

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Levels of street and environment cleanliness (LEQ survey) free / predominantly free of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting (1.4.1)
- Number of community volunteer groups/hours spent caring for their local green spaces and neighbourhoods (1.4.2)
- Quality standards achieved eg Britain in Bloom, Green Flag Awards (1.4.3)
- Satisfaction with cleanliness of streets and green spaces (1.4.4)

Priority 1: A clean, safe and sustainable borough

Outcome 1.5

Town centres across the borough will be sustainable and safe

Why are the improvements needed?

The town centres within the borough play a vital role in providing employment, local services and entertainment for residents and visitors. The challenge is to ensure each centre remains sustainable and safe despite any economic downturn. For economic growth there is a need to work with other agencies and partnerships to keep the town centres as safe as possible and that crime is kept at a low level.

We know that . . .

- you value the town centres and want the council to ensure they remain vibrant and attractive - visually and economically
- it is important to develop town centres for the future

You told us that . . .

- regeneration for the borough's town centres is important to you
- you are concerned about levels of crime
- you are also concerned about visiting the town centre at night

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Town centre partnership established in Kidsgrove and Newcastle and town plans developed
- Scoping exercise to be undertaken of footfall within the town centre
- To take forward the retail-led redevelopment of the former Sainsbury/Ryecroft site.
- Completion of public realm improvements in the town centre and introduction of new market stalls
- Complete the gating off of problematic alleyways under the Green Routes scheme
- Attain a purple flag for the safety of night time economy

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Town centre vacancy rate (1.5.1)
- Percentage of investment portfolio (NBC owned) vacant (1.5.2)
- Levels of crimes in our town centres (1.5.3)
- Level of safety of town centres as indicated by residents (1.5.4)
- The level of town centre attractiveness as indicated by residents (1.5.5)



Priority 2: A borough of opportunity

Outcome 2.1 Levels of worklessness will have reduced

Why are the improvements needed?

The level of unemployment in the borough is 2.6% at November 2012 which is lower than the regional and national rates. Amongst people aged 18 to 24 years the level increases to 4% (compared to 8.7% in the West Midlands and 7% in Great Britain).

We know that . . .

- it is key to raise skill levels to help drive enterprise, to create more and better jobs
- training opportunities for people to develop and gain confidence is essential

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned about levels of worklessness in the borough

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Plans to encourage enterprise within the borough to be developed
- Town Centre Partnership action plan
- Work with the "Make it" initiative
- Support given to unemployed by the Newcastle Business Enterprise Coach

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The level of employment in the borough (2.1.1)
- The number of jobs created by Council-backed initiatives in the borough (2.1.2)
- The percentage of people of working age claiming benefits (2.1.3)
- The level of NEETs (2.1.4)

Outcome 2.2 Local people will be able to access opportunities for personal development and growth

Why are the improvements needed?

The council understands the importance of working with partners to ensure there are opportunities available to access to support development.

We know that . . .

- it is important to provide a wide range of activities to support our communities
- volunteering activities need to be encouraged and supported

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned whether opportunities will be limited in the future

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Work with Newcastle Employment and Skills Group (NESG) to identify areas for improvement and further opportunities

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The number (or percentage) of people obtaining NVQ levels (2.2.1)
- The number of people gaining additional educational qualifications as a result of Council-backed initiatives (2.2.2)
- The number of volunteers used by the council/taken on by the council who go on to gain employment (2.2.3)
- Narrative on the impact of the Council's role as employer of volunteers (2.2.4)
- Number of organisations working with the council to take on volunteers (2.2.5)
- Number of hours worked by volunteers in council co-ordinated activities (2.2.6)

Priority 2: A borough of opportunity

Outcome 2.3

Housing will be available and accessible to meet a range of diverse needs

Why are the improvements needed?

Housing is most frequently cited in terms of its appropriateness and affordability.

Appropriate housing meets the needs of residents in terms of size, physical attributes and location. Affordable housing includes affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to specific eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. With many local residents unable to access a home that meets their needs, it is important that the council works with local housing providers to deliver needed accommodation.

We know that . . .

- there is a lack of suitable available housing in the borough
- there are nearly 3,000 households on the housing register wanting affordable housing

You told us that . . .

- you prefer affordable longer term tenancies with greater security
- you are concerned about homelessness
- you are concerned about increasing fuel bills and want to be able to keep your home warm

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Partnership working with Registered Providers and the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver new affordable housing in line with the Local Investment Plan
- Delivery of new homes at Charter Road
- Encouragement and support to private home owners to return their empty properties back into use
- Development of Eco brokerage service

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The number of affordable homes provided as a result of partnership working with Registered Providers and the Homes & Communities Agency (2.3.1)
- The net number of additional homes provided (2.3.2)
- Number of empty properties brought back into use (2.3.3)
- Percentage of referrals for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) approved within six months (2.3.4)
- Percentage of minor adaptations delivered within four months (2.3.5)
- Number of homelessness cases prevented (2.3.6)



Priority 2: A borough of opportunity

Outcome 2.4

Key parts of the borough will have been regenerated and there will have been overall economic growth

Why are the improvements needed?

To enable further growth of the borough, the council needs to attract inward investment from the private sector. To facilitate this the Council will work with the private sector and partners to bring forward suitable and viable development opportunities.

We know that . . .

- to provide more employment opportunities, more suitable development sites to attract investment are needed

You told us that . . .

- regeneration in the borough is important to you

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Work with Make It inward investment service for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire to promote the area for inward investment
- Bring forward attractive development sites
- Marketing of specific development opportunities
- Work with Business Enterprise Support (BES) to help in the delivery of its enterprise support scheme
- Delivery of the Annual Newcastle Business Boost competition
- Consultation to be undertaken by the council with communities on a draft Site Allocation Policies Local Plan
- Develop coordinated enterprise strategy
- Support development of the emergent knowledge intensive sectors
- Support development of professional and business services sectors
- Make the most of the Borough's successful logistics sector
- Promote further development of Keele Science and Business Park

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Level of economic health across the borough (2.4.1)
- Percentage of investment portfolio which is vacant (2.4.2)
- Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) showing employment growth (2.4.3)
- Buildings within the built heritage asset register improved and no longer at risk (2.4.4)
- Number of proposed jobs from successful planning applications (2.4.5)
- Rate of new VAT business registration (2.4.6)
- Average stall occupancy rate for markets (2.4.7)



Priority 3: A healthy and active community

Outcome 3.1 People who live, work, visit or study in the borough will have access to high quality facilities

Why are the improvements needed?

The Council is committed to ensuring there are high quality facilities available to residents and visitors to the borough. Significant capital development at J2 has resulted in increased participation and substantial operational revenue savings.

We know that . . .

- it is important to recognise the vital role that being active plays in the lives of everyone
- access to well equipped and safe facilities is important

You told us that . . .

- you want quality and affordable leisure services
- you want open spaces and parks to be safe places to visit

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Full feasibility study developed for the refurbishment/ replacement of Kidsgrove Sports centre
- Complete the review of community centres
- Develop outline business case for future management/ governance of leisure and cultural services

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Number of parks which have green flag status (3.1.1)
- Level of satisfaction with Council-run parks and open spaces (3.1.2)
- Level of satisfaction with Council-run a) leisure and b) cultural services (3.1.3)
- Level of satisfaction with Council-owned car parking facilities (3.1.4)
- Levels of satisfaction with bereavement services (3.1.5)
- Level of service quality of the two main Council information centres – Guildhall and Kidsgrove (3.1.6)
- Percentage of town centres public toilets that meet the Council's minimum standard for quality and cleanliness (3.1.7)

Outcome 3.2 Levels of cultural activity and participation in the arts will have increased

Why are the improvements needed?

Involvement in artistic and cultural activities is beneficial physically, mentally and emotionally for young and older people.

We know that . . .

- the cultural facilities contribute significantly to the economy of the borough
- it is important for the council to encourage cultural activity in the borough to ensure people can enhance their life experiences

You told us that . . .

- the availability of local events and facilities to visit are important in your lives

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Programme of cultural events and exhibitions
- Development programme for volunteers
- Multi-agency Arts Strategy to be developed
- Feasibility study into the development of the museum to meet future aspirations

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Visitor satisfaction (3.2.1)
- Number of people visiting museums (3.2.2)
- Number of people attending local theatres (3.2.3)
- Economic impact of visitors to museums (3.2.4)
- Impact of volunteer development programme (3.2.5)
- Impact of community-run cultural events and people attending (3.2.6)

Priority 3: A healthy and active community

Outcome 3.3

There will be a range of healthy lifestyle choices, resulting in an increase in participation in sport and physical activity

Why are the improvements needed?

The council wants to encourage people to adopt healthier lifestyles.

We know that . . .

- too many people do not exercise on a regular basis
- well equipped, accessible and affordable facilities are necessary

You told us that . . .

- leisure facilities and play areas are very important to you

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Sportivate programme to encourage younger people to participate in physical activities
- Sportmakers programme to increase adult participation
- Healthy walk programme
- Delivery of programme of healthy initiatives with partners including:
 - GP referral scheme
 - Cardiac rehabilitation scheme
 - Joint/muscle mobility exercise
- Allotment policy review
- Delivery of improvement projects to outdoor sport facilities

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- The percentage of primary school children who are categorised as obese (3.3.1)
- The number of referrals from GPs to organised sporting activity (3.3.2)
- Percentage of people referred for exercise by GPs whose health improves (3.3.3)
- The number of teenage pregnancies (3.3.4)
- The number of premature deaths (3.3.5)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.1

The Council will have increased the capacity and skills of its workforce

Why are the improvements needed?

In order to maintain high levels of service and deliver efficiencies, the capacity and skills of our existing workforce need to continue to be developed.

We know that . . .

- our customers expect a high standard of service when they contact the council
- our customers want easy access to multiple agency services at convenient locations. Joint working and engagement with partners in day to day service delivery provides a valuable learning environment that improves the skills of the joint workforce

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned that services may suffer as a result of the economy

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Delivery of the Workforce Development Plan
- Develop a Shared Apprenticeship Scheme with partners
- Development of e-learning facilities
- Increasing the ways in which customers can contact us, by providing greater choice - developing self service, web services, SMS, email and other means of contact - linked to customer need
- Deliver further customer service training to continue to meet Customer Service Excellence standards.
- Programme of skills development for ICT to ensure we maximise the benefits of existing and new technology

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Number of apprenticeships /shared apprenticeship placements offered (4.1.1)
- Percentage of workforce with completed learning and development plans (4.1.2)
- Percentage of staff who have completed accredited training courses (4.1.3)
- Number of e-learning modules completed (4.1.4)
- Percentage of staff who feel they have the necessary skills/competencies to do their job effectively (4.1.5)

Outcome 4.2

Councillors will be community champions and powerful community advocates

Why are the improvements needed?

Communities need representation and support in order to empower their communities.

We know that . . .

- Good communication is necessary to understand the needs of communities of the borough and also to ensure that the council delivers clear, transparent messages of what they have achieved or want to improve upon

You told us that . . .

- you want to know what is planned which will impact upon your community

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Delivery of Scrutiny work plan
- Training programme for members

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Percentage of elected members who have a personal development plan (4.2.1)
- Impact of actions from the work plan (4.2.2)
- Percentage attendance at planned meetings by members (4.2.3)
- Number of issues raised by members (4.2.4)
- Percentage of candidates and agents satisfied/very satisfied with electoral service (4.2.5)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.3

The Council will have delivered further efficiencies

Why are the improvements needed?

We want to ensure services are delivered efficiently and of high quality to its customers. The council strives to deliver effective services within the restraints of its budget.

We know that . . .

- the economic downturn may impact upon the council and add further pressure to its budget with a greater demand for its services.

You told us that . . .

- you are concerned about the council being more efficient and effective

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Medium Term Financial Strategy reviewed annually and reported
- Monthly budget monitoring programme
- Delivery of the Procurement (Strategic) work plan

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Percentage of planned procurement efficiencies achieved (4.3.1)
- Percentage projected variance against full year council budget (4.3.2)
- Average number of days per employee lost to sickness (4.3.3)
- Percentage of residents who feel that the Council is providing value for money (4.3.4)
- Achieving a balanced budget (4.3.5)
- Percentage return on council investments (4.3.6)
- Ratio of planned versus responsive maintenance expenditure on all Council owned buildings (4.3.7)
- Net income collected from Council assets (4.3.8)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.4

Local communities are engaged and able to shape and deliver services which impact on their lives

Why are the improvements needed?

To impact on solving problems of everyday life in local communities, the people need to be able to see how their views can shape the solutions that will make a lasting difference in the way services are delivered. In doing this the Council will be an open, honest and transparent organisation which undertakes regular consultation with its residents and listens to their views.

We know that . . .

- different communities have problems to face unique to their neighbourhood
- support is necessary to encourage engagement
- communication within a community and involvement of stakeholders is key to solving solutions

You told us that . . .

- you do not always feel you have the confidence or skills necessary to be involved or influence decision making in your community

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Support to groups from funded infrastructure project
- Develop communities around the localism agenda
- Focus on dealing with troubled families and enhancing community involvement and self-reliance
- Further Community Pride events to deal with community issues

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Level of satisfaction with the role of the Council in supporting communities to solve local problems, as indicated by local people (4.4.1)
- Level of satisfaction with the Council's support to communities, as indicated by partner organisations (4.4.2)
- The impact of the Council's support in empowering communities to solve specific local problems (4.4.3)
- The overall level of satisfaction with the Council as a provider of services (4.4.4)
- Percentage of people who feel that they can influence Council decisions (4.4.5)
- Level of satisfaction with the support provided to LAPs and other community groups to improve their organisational strength (4.4.6)
- Increase the number of residents, community and voluntary groups engaged with LAPs (4.4.7)
- Percentage of requests resolved at first point of contact (4.4.8)

Priority 4: A co-operative Council, delivering high-value, community-driven services

Outcome 4.5

Increasing the resilience in communities by building effective and strong partnerships across the borough, and utilising public and community resources

Why are the improvements needed?

In order to deliver appropriate and optimum services to the people of the borough it is necessary for the council to continue to work with existing partners and develop strong new partnerships across all sectors. Also, the Borough Council recognises that the priorities set by the council cannot be delivered by the council alone.

We know that . . .

- strong partnerships are necessary to progress our outcomes effectively

You told us that . . .

- you would like to see more partnership working involving the council

Activities aimed at delivering the outcome:

- Investigate opportunities to develop a Social Enterprise with key partner agencies
- Build on relationships with the voluntary and community sector in delivering key services to local people
- Deliver the Lets Work Together (LWT) project in partnership with others
- Develop and implement a Co-operative Strategy for the council with other key stakeholders
- Develop health promotion work in areas of greatest need
- Map vulnerability across the Borough and its neighbourhoods to target services more effectively
- Welfare reform - to be delivered with partners

Performance indicators to measure success in delivering the outcome

- Community/citizen satisfaction levels increased (4.5.1)
- Communities feel they are able to influence decisions (4.5.2)
- Engagement with LAPs increased (4.5.3)
- Quality of service delivery (4.5.4)
- Knowledge amongst public about co-operative approaches (4.5.5)
- Decrease in anti-social behaviour levels and domestic violence - linked to LWT project (4.5.6)
- People feeling safe in their homes and fear of crime lessened (4.5.7)

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan

2013 -14 to 2015 -16



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