

<b>TO:</b>	<b>MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>CLLR. GARETH SNELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b>
<b>RE:</b>	<b>BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT - NOVEMBER 2013</b>

### 1. **Cabinet Meetings**

Since the last meeting of the Full Council on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2013, the Cabinet has met twice on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013 and the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

Decisions sheets for those meeting can be found online using the links below or paper copies being made available upon request.

<http://moderngov.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=118&MId=1893&Ver=4>

<http://moderngov.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=118&MId=1894&Ver=4>

Notable decisions included:

- a. The Corporate Cleaning contract to save the authority money on servicing the cleaning requirement of our building.
- b. The appointment of Cllr Bates as the Council's director on the Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership.
- c. Extension of the Multi-functional device contract to save around £50,000 over the next two years.

### 2. **Financial Challenges**

Due predominantly to the reduction in central government grant the council faces the prospect of a significant reduction in its resource base over at least the next five years and potentially beyond.

The estimated budget gap over the next five years is likely to be around £7,200,000 and this has been reported in the MTFs. This equates to a reduction of around 45% of our net revenue budget and our available capital reserves remain at less than a million pounds with increased demand for capital investment in our services and buildings.

To start the process of dealing with the challenges, Cabinet Members have asked each service area to start modelling what their services will look like with a 20%, 40% or even 60% reduction in resource.

This process is being dubbed "Newcastle 2020" and is looking at how the Council's ever decreasing resource base can be put to best use to meet the needs of the population of the Borough.

It is important that all members of the Council realise that the financial challenges are not behind us and the more difficult years are still to come.

### 3. **Keele Golf Course**

After the previous occupant of the Golf Course went into administration and then liquidation, the course reverted back to the Council's direct control. The Council took steps to ensure that the site remained open and could be relet as a going concern while a long-term operating partner could be found.

The course was managed, in the interim, by Glendale and after two formal bids were received, the Council has let the Golf Course on the 50 year lease to RWT Ltd who, among others, list Ian Woosnam OBE as their directors.

The Course will now be home to the first Ian Woosnam Golf Academy in Britain, employing local people and, in partnership with Newcastle College, will be offering 15 apprenticeships in sports science and golf course management.

This is a very exciting prospect for the Council and has the opportunity to be a considerable asset to the Borough's leisure and cultural offer.

**4. European Local Democracy Week**

The Council participated in European Local Democracy Week with children participating in a Mock Planning Committee, a debate on the merits of HS2, tours of the Civic Offices and a quiz on the history of the Borough as well as being Mayor and Leader for a day.

On the back of this, the Cabinet are now investigating ways in which the Council can formalise a relationship with the young people of the Borough to allow them to be part of the decision making process.

**5. Refurbishment of the Queen Victoria statue**

Although not a Cabinet decision, the Portfolio Holder has accepted an offer from the Newcastle Civic Society for the refurbishment of the statue of Queen Victoria in the Queens Gardens. It would be remiss not to formally acknowledge the Civic Society for this generous offer and all the other work that they undertake within the Borough.