



# CABINET

25 October 2017

A meeting of the CABINET will be held on Thursday, 2nd November, 2017, 6.00 pm in Committee Room 1, Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, B79 7BZ

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## A G E N D A

### NON CONFIDENTIAL

**1 Apologies for Absence**

**2 Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 6)**

**3 Declarations of Interest**

*To receive any declarations of Members' interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary) in any matters which are to be considered at this meeting.*

*When Members are declaring a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in respect of which they have dispensation, they should specify the nature of such interest. Members should leave the room if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in respect of which they do not have a dispensation.*

**4 Question Time:**

To answer questions from members of the public pursuant to Executive Procedure Rule No. 13

**5 Matters Referred to the Cabinet in Accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules**

Verbal report from the Chair of Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee on Electric Car Charging.

**6 Budget Consultation 2018/19 (Pages 7 - 54)**

*(Report of the Leader of the Council)*

**7 Council Support For The Starfish Winter Nightshelter For The Homeless (Pages 55 - 70)**

*(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services)*

**8 Urgent Renewal of Peel House Lift** (Pages 71 - 94)

*(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services)*

**9 Pilot - Use of Council stock for temporary accommodation** (Pages 95 - 122)

*(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services)*

**10 The Council's approach to Emergency Accommodation** (Pages 123 - 148)

*(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services)*

**11 Purchase Of New Build Properties Under The Council's Acquisitions Policy**  
(Pages 149 - 154)

*(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Portfolio Holder Housing Services)*

Yours faithfully



**Chief Operating Officer**

*People who have a disability and who would like to attend the meeting should contact Democratic Services on 01827 709264 or e-mail [committees@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:committees@tamworth.gov.uk) preferably 24 hours prior to the meeting. We can then endeavour to ensure that any particular requirements you may have are catered for.*

To Councillors: D Cook, R Pritchard, S Claymore, S Doyle, J Goodall and M Thurgood.



## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 19th OCTOBER 2017**

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Cook (Chair), Councillors R Pritchard (Vice-Chair), S Claymore, S Doyle, J Goodall and M Thurgood

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Operating Officer), Stefan Garner (Director of Finance), Anica Goodwin (Director - Transformation and Corporate Performance), Michael Buckland (Head of Revenues), Joanne Sands (Head of Community Safety) and Paul Weston (Head of Asset Management - Property Services)

### **42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies

### **43 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017 were approved and signed as a correct record

*(Moved by Councillor M Thurgood and seconded by Councillor J Goodall)*

### **44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **45 QUESTION TIME:**

None

### **46 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES**

None

**47 FUTURE DELIVERY OF THE DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT PROGRAMME**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance to inform Cabinet on the proposed service delivery mechanism for the future of the Disabled Facilities Grant process and seek approval to participate in the County wide agreements and sets out arrangements for the appointment of a new County wide service provider.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet

1. Approved proposals for the future delivery of the Disabled Facilities Grant process from April 1st 2018 for a period of up to 7 years.
2. Approved Tamworth Borough Council's participation in the County wide arrangement for delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants, subject to the outcome of the competitive tender process.
3. Agreed to invite competitive tenders through a process to be administered by Staffordshire County Council participation agreement.
4. Delegate authority to Portfolio Holder for Assets & Finance and Chief Operating Officer to enter into an agreement for the appointment of a County wide service provider following a competitive procurement process administered by Staffordshire County Council, subject to the outcome of the competitive tender process being favourable to Tamworth Borough Council.

**Or**

1. Delegate of authority to Portfolio Holder for Assets & Finance and Chief Operating Officer to withdraw from the County wide arrangement should it be found that following procurement process it would not be financially viable for Tamworth Borough Council to participate.

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

**48 STAFFORDSHIRE PILOT FOR 100% BUSINESS RATES RETENTION IN 2018/19**

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance to provide Cabinet with details of the potential for the Council to participate in a Business Rates Pilot in 2018/19 and to outline the Business Case and relevant risks and rewards from pilot arrangements. The report will also update Members on the implications to existing pooling, and membership of Local Enterprise Partnerships, resulting from membership of a pilot and present the draft governance arrangements (Memorandum of Understanding) for the new pool. The report notes the “No Detriment” requirements of the pilot application.

- RESOLVED:** That approval was granted for the participation in the Expression of Interest to form a Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Pool based upon piloting the 100% Business Rates Scheme based upon all eleven Authorities covering the full Staffordshire Geography.
- Subject to**
- a) Notifying the GBSLEP pool of the Council’s intention to be part of a pilot application and if successful leave that pool;
  - b) in the event of the pilot application not being successful, continue membership of the GBSLEP pool;
  - c) in the event of the pilot application being successful, continue to support a GBSLEP ‘virtual’ pool through a voluntary contribution;
- and
- d) in the event of the pilot application not being successful and the GBSLEP pool being dissolved, take appropriate action to join the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Pool.

Authorising the Chief Operating Officer and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder to submit a firm Expression of Interest to be a member of one of the above pools.

*(Moved 5 votes to 1 by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor D Cook)*

#### **49 MANDATORY AND DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY**

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance to seek Cabinet approval of the proposed Discretionary Rate Relief Policy (Appendix A) with effect from 1 April 2017.

**RESOLVED:** That Members:

- 1 Noted the Government Funding for Supporting Small Business Rate Relief and Public House Relief.
- 2 Endorsed the Council's proposed Local Discretionary Rate Relief Scheme which has been subject to consultation with major preceptors.
- 3 Approved the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy which will be applied with effect from 1 April 2017.

*(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor S Doyle)*

**50 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS (RENEWAL OF DOG CONTROL AND DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACE ORDERS)**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Communities to consider the implication of the automatic renewal of Designated Public Place and dog control orders in Tamworth orders as Public Space Protection Orders under the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014.

**RESOLVED:** That Members

1. Approved the automatic conversion of the current Tamworth Dog Control Orders to Public Space Protection Orders based on continued need and proportionality
2. Approved the automatic conversion of the current Designated Public Place orders in the town Centre and Amington to Public Space Protection Orders based on continued need and proportionality

*(Moved by Councillor S Doyle and seconded by Councillor D Cook)*

**51 COUNCIL TENANTS FIRE SAFETY STRATEGY**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services to consider the Councils policy statement with regard to fire safety in its Council Owned housing stock.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

- 1 Approve The Fire Safety Policy

- 2 Delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder of Housing; in consultation with the relevant Directors; to approve development of associated action plan and procedural arrangements to deliver key policy commitments.
- 3 Endorse the involvement of Health & Well-being Scrutiny to inform the policy development, details of presentations and FAQs emerging are shown on the Councils dedicated web area for landlord fire safety. <http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/fire-safety>
- 4 Include an annual review of fire safety on the relevant scrutiny work-plan

*(Moved by Councillor M Thurgood and seconded by Councillor D Cook)*

## 52 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

The report of the Portfolio Holder for Communities to secure Members' approval to adopt the proposed Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour policy which outlines a "whole Council" approach to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour.

**RESOLVED:** That Members approve:

- 1 The revised Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) policy.
- 2 A corporate mandate to progress towards integration of ASB procedures within the Council and with partners subject to future reports on this matter as appropriate.

*(Moved by Councillor S Doyle and seconded by Councillor D Cook)*

## 53 FESTIVE WARD GRANT PROPOSAL

The report of the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer to consider a proposal for Festive Grants across the Borough in each Ward to replace the Mayoral Hamper Scheme.

**RESOLVED:** That

- 1 The scheme be administered by the Cabinet Grants Sub Committee

- 2 agreed to support the proposals for £300 per ward
- 3 Authority be delegated to Portfolio Folder for Assets & Finance & Head of Paid Service & Solicitor to consider Governance arrangements

*(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor R Pritchard)*

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Leader



THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2017

**REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL****BUDGET CONSULTATION 2018/19****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

There is no exempt information

**PURPOSE**

To inform Cabinet of the outcomes arising from consultation undertaken with residents, businesses and the voluntary sector in accordance with the corporate budget setting process.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Cabinet endorse the report and take account of the findings along with other sources of information when setting the 2018/19 Budget.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****The vision and priorities**

- Living a quality life in Tamworth

All ambitions under this strategic priority were seen as important by more than half of respondents, the most important being 'people will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour'. The ambition 'more people will live longer; healthier lives' was seen as the second most important.

- Growing strong together in Tamworth

The ambition with the highest rating under this strategic priority was 'Tamworth Town centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer'. This was closely followed by the ambition that Tamworth will be a 'great place to live'.

- Delivering quality services in Tamworth

All ambitions under this strategic priority were seen as important by more than half of respondents, the most important being 'access to all Council services will be improved'. This was closely followed by the ambition that 'the Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff'.

**What makes Tamworth a better place to live and prosper**

'Low levels of crime' and 'good health services' were clearly the two areas considered important in making somewhere a good place to live by residents. These areas were also regarded as ones that need to improve.

Businesses chose a 'reduction in business rates and charges' as their main area for improvement followed by 'reducing the number of empty business premises'.

## **Spend on services**

Most respondents would prefer the level of spend in most service areas to remain the same. Like last year, the most popular service area to maintain spend was 'refuse and recycling' (75%). Spend on 'tackling anti-social behaviour' was again an area where respondents (60%) would like to see an increase on spend.

The areas where respondents wanted to see less spend were 'housing', 'business support and advice', 'grants for voluntary organisations and charities' and 'improved access to customer services'.

The reduction in car parking charges is an area where the majority of respondents (81%) would still like to see a reduction

## **Council Tax increase**

The largest proportion of residents (55%) opted for the smallest increase of 0.6%

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no resource implications arising from this report

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

It is a statutory duty to consult before the development of the budget. Budget consultation ensures our compliance with this.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

As part of an annual process Tamworth Borough Council reviews its Council Tax and Charges strategy for the development of the budget. This process ensures that funding is put into areas of highest priority. An important element of this process is to understand the views of residents, businesses, and local voluntary groups on what these priorities are.

## **REPORT AUTHOR**

John Day.

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

## **APPENDICES**

Budget Consultation 2018/19 – Full report.

# Budget Consultation Report 2017

## FOR THE 2018/19 BUDGET

## DOCUMENT DETAILS

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This document has been produced on behalf of Tamworth Borough Council by the Staffordshire County Council Insight Team



<b>Title</b>	Budget Consultation Summary Report
<b>Date created</b>	September 2017
<b>Description</b>	The purpose of this document is to provide Tamworth Borough Council with the consultation results which illustrate residents, businesses and community and voluntary organisations budget priorities for the year ahead.
<b>Produced by</b>	Alice Walters, Research Officer, Insight, Planning and Performance Team, Staffordshire County Council  Tel: 01785 278150    Email: <a href="mailto:alice.walters@staffordshire.gov.uk">alice.walters@staffordshire.gov.uk</a>
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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### 1.1 Vision and priorities

Tamworth Borough Council's vision, 'One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed – Open for business since the 7th Century A.D' sits above three strategic priorities, 'living a quality life in Tamworth', 'growing stronger together in Tamworth' and 'delivering quality services in Tamworth'. Endorsement was provided through respondents' views on the priorities themselves and also reflected in residents outlook on what's important and what needs improving in the local area.

All priorities under 'living a quality life in Tamworth' were given a high importance rating by half of respondents or more. The most important priority was 'people will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour'. 81% gave this a high rating. This was closely followed by 'more people will live longer, healthier lives' which was rated of high importance by 72% of respondents.

Six of the seven priorities identified under 'growing stronger together in Tamworth' were given a high importance rating (of 1 or 2) by half of respondents or more. The most importance priority was 'Tamworth Town Centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer' with 74% giving it a high rating. This was closely followed by 'Tamworth will mean 'a great place to live' not simply 'a place with more houses' which was considered a high priority by 71% of respondents.

All priorities under 'delivering quality services in Tamworth' were given a high importance rating by half of respondents or more. Of the five priorities, 'access to all Council Services will be improved 'was the most important priority with 80% rating this as highly important. This was closely followed by 'the Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff' which was considered of high importance by 77% of respondents.

### 1.2 Spend on services

It was most common for respondents across the majority of service areas to say that they would prefer the level of spend to remain the same. This was particularly apparent regarding spend on 'refuse and recycling' with 75% wanting to maintain the same level of spend on this service.

Spending less was the second most common response. Around a third of respondents wanted to see less spending in each of the following areas; 'housing (excluding Council Housing)' (33%), 'improved access to information/customer services' (33%), 'business support and advice' (31%) and 'grants for voluntary organisations and charities' (30%).

Spending more was still a priority in some areas and mostly notably for 'tackling anti-social behaviour'. Almost two-thirds (60%) wanted spending increased on this major cost area.

If the Council were to consider changes to the charges it places upon it's services, increasing charges for 'leisure and other activities' would be met with least resistance. 57% of respondents would support increased charges for this. Conversely, decreasing charges for 'car parking' would be a popular move. 81% said that they would like to see these decreased.

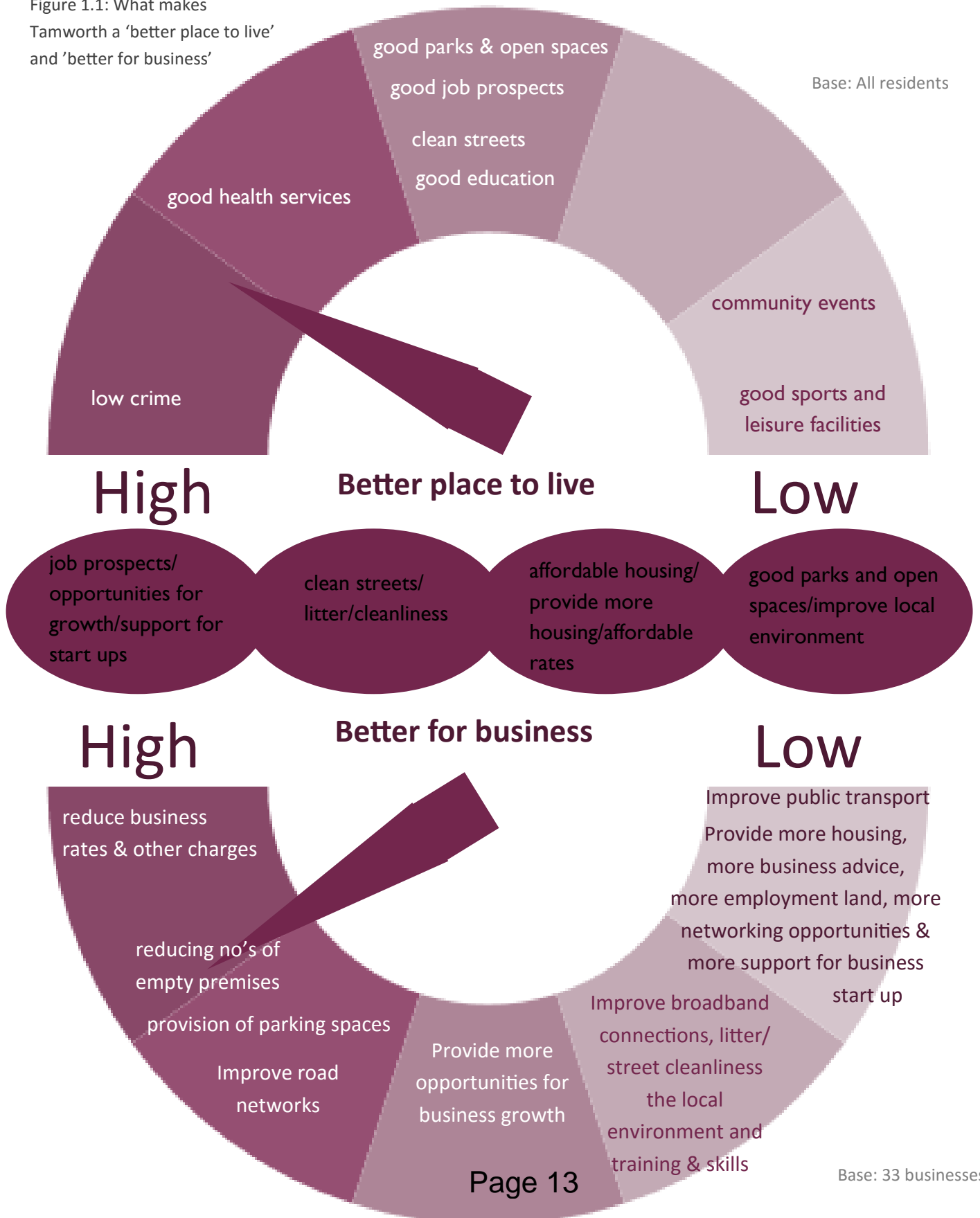
The largest proportion of respondents would prefer the lowest level of increase offered with over half of all respondents (55.3%) selecting option A as their preferred choice. Option B, the second lowest level of increase was also the second most popular option for increases.

Option D, a 3.0% increase on a band D property is most similar to the average level of increase witnessed for all authorities across the West Midlands (3.8%) according to CIPFA's (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) latest annual council tax survey.

### 1.3 What makes Tamworth a better place to live and prosper?

'Low levels of crime', 'good health services' and 'good parks and open spaces' were considered by residents to be highly important in making somewhere a good place to live. All three of these were also high priorities for improvement, in making Tamworth a better place to live. For businesses, 'the cost of business rates' was the main request for improvement. What makes Tamworth a better place to live and better for business are highlighted from high to low in the graphic below. Common synergies between the two groups are also annotated.

Figure 1.1: What makes Tamworth a 'better place to live' and 'better for business'



## WHAT HAS CHANGED OVER TIME?<sup>1</sup>

### 1.4 What's important in the local area?

This year has seen a change in the top three priorities for the first time with 'good parks and open spaces' replacing 'good jobs and prospects' as the third most important priority by a very small margin. This year also sees 'good education provision' falling out of the top five priorities for the first time (ranked 6 out of 10 this year). Trend data on performance for the current top five priorities is contained in the graph below.

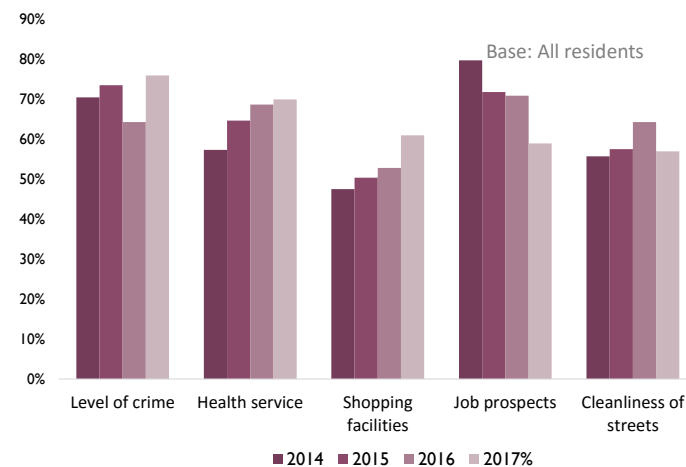
Figure 1.2: What's important in the local area? (%)



### 1.5 What needs improving in the local area?

The top five priorities for improvement remain unchanged since last year but the ranked order has change somewhat with 'level of crime' resuming first position and replacing 'job prospects' which was ranked 4 of 10 this year. 'Shopping facilities' was ranked 3 of 10 this year (compared to 5 of 10) last year and 'cleanliness of streets' has moved from 3 of 10 last year to 5 of 10 this year. Trend data for the performance for the current top five priorities is contained in the graph below.

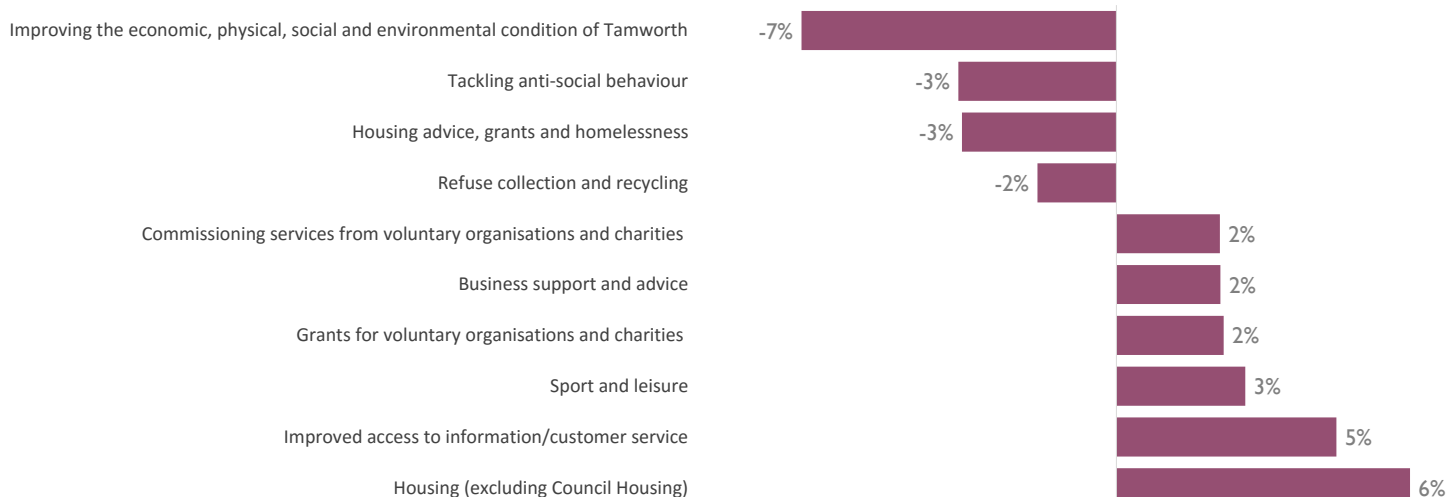
Figure 1.3: What needs improving in the local area? (%)



### 1.6 Views on spend over time

This year, as with last, it was most common for respondents to want the level of spend to remain the same. Respondents most wanted to maintain spend on 'refuse and recycling services'. This year as with last year, respondents second overall priority was for reduced spend. However, during the last year respondents strength of feeling has changed with the overall proportion of respondents wanting reduced spend seeing some changes, a number declines and a number of increases. The greatest changes have been documented in the figure below.

Figure 1.4: Percentage change between 2016 and 2017 in people saying they would spend less (% change)



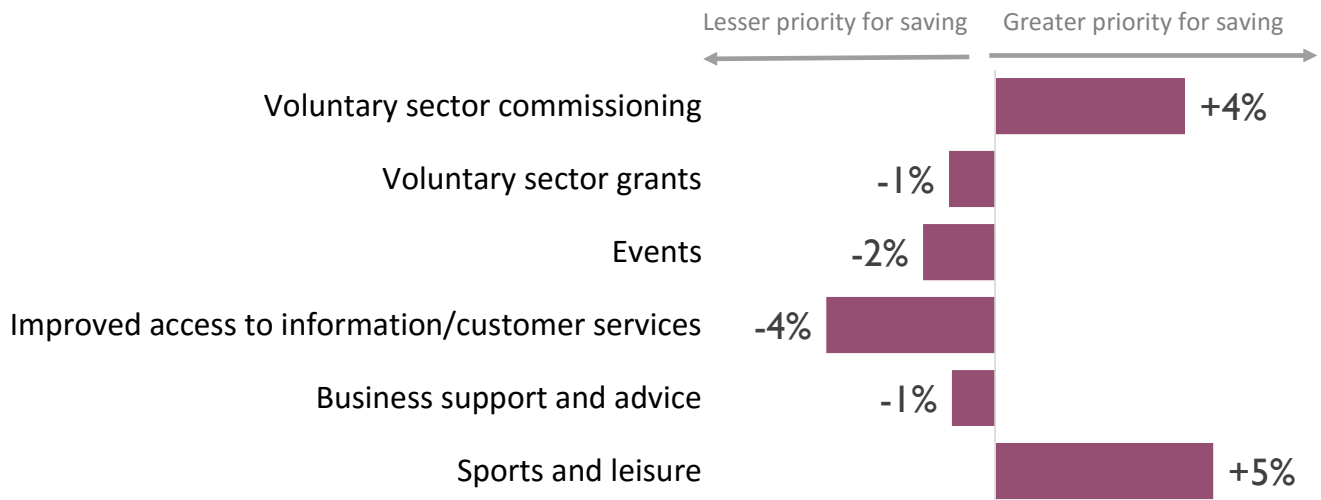
<sup>1</sup> Some caution should be applied when interpreting residents results over time. This is because residents responses have an overall confidence interval of +/-6% meaning that the proportion of responses they have given to any questions could fall in the range of 6% higher or 6% lower than the actual response given. Results should be seen as indicative of possible trends which could be explored further through additional research.



### 1.7 Priorities for savings

This year, the most important priorities for saving were ‘voluntary sector commissioning’, ‘voluntary sector grants’, ‘events’, improved access to information/customer services’, ‘sports and leisure’ and ‘business support and advice’. These were also the main priorities for savings for 2015 and 2016 . However, during this time, respondents perceptions of these priorities has changed. The most noticeable change from last year is for ‘sports and leisure ‘ and ‘voluntary sector commissioning’ with a greater proportion of respondents now wanting to see savings in both of these areas. Equally this year saw a greater proportions of respondents less likely to want to see savings made to ‘improved access to information/customer services’ and slightly less likely to want to see savings made in ‘events’, ‘voluntary sector grant’ and ‘business support and leisure’.

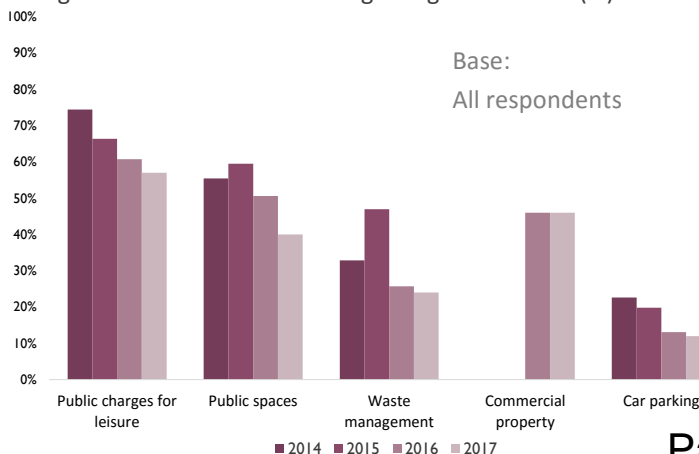
Figure 1.5: Percentage change in the most important priorities for saving between 2016-2017 (% change)



### 1.8 Increasing charges

Over the last four years it has been most common for respondents to indicate that increased public charges would be most acceptable for ‘leisure and other activities’. The proportion of respondents who selected this as an option has however declined steadily over the last three years. Increases for ‘car parking’ were least popular. Since 2015, fewer respondents indicated their support for increased charges across all service areas, with the exception of commercial property.

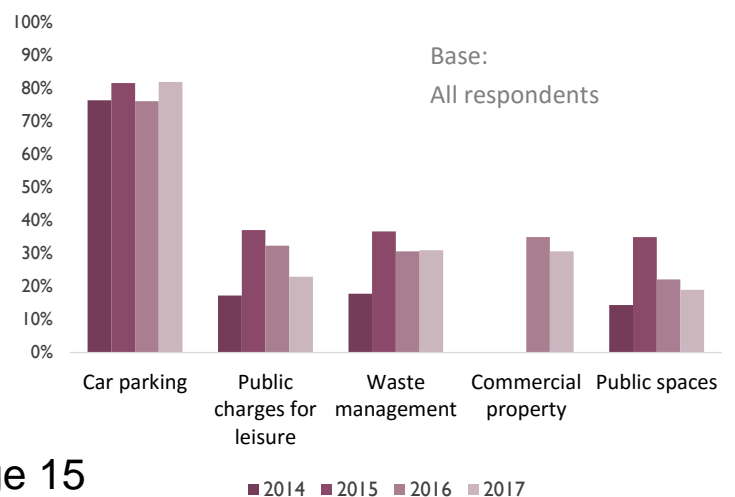
Figure 1.6: Views on increasing charges over time (%)



### 1.9 Decreasing charges

It was most common for respondents to want decreased charges for ‘car parking’ and this has been a consistent trend over the last four years. Decreasing charges was less important in the other four services areas. All service areas apart from ‘Car parking’ showed a reduction in the proportion of people wanting decreased charges compared with 2016.

Figure 1.7: Views on decreasing charges over time (%)



## 2. 1 INTRODUCTION

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Tamworth Borough Council reviews its council tax and charges on an annual basis and this helps to develop the Council's budget and ensures funding is put into areas which are of priority.

Residents, businesses and the voluntary sector are always an important part of this process. Therefore this year as in previous years, all these groups were invited to share their views on priorities for the year ahead. This year there are some new additions to the surveys including revisions to the vision and the priorities.

This report summarises the views of those who participated. While this is not fully representative of Tamworth opinion it provides a helpful addition to the information that will inform the Council's budgeting decisions for the year ahead.

The report presents the analysis of the combined results from all three respondent groups and emphasises where there are differences in opinions between the different groups. Comparisons with the results of the consultation from previous years have also been made in order to identify commonality or differences in opinions over time.

## 2.2 METHODOLOGY

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The consultation for the 2018/19 budget ran from 1st August to the 12th September 2017 and three key groups (residents, businesses and the voluntary sector) were encouraged to share their views through tailored paper and online surveys.

These surveys were developed by Tamworth Borough Council in conjunction with Staffordshire County Council's Insight, Planning and Performance Team. These were largely based on surveys from previous years.

All three surveys were promoted via a range of communications channels. These included press releases in the local newspaper (The Tamworth Herald), a prominent feature on the Tamworth Borough Council website and through social media including Twitter, Facebook and the Tamworth Borough Council blog.

Specific groups were also targeted to take part in the consultation. These included;

- Members of the Tamworth Borough Council Citizens' Panel and Tamworth Borough Council Housing Tenants. Both groups received a direct letter or email encouraging them to participate in the residents survey.
- Businesses received an email encouraging them to participate in the business survey. This was also widely promoted by the Economic Development Team.
- Voluntary sector organisations and recipients of small sports and arts grants were also emailed to encourage their involvement. E-mailed to recipients of Small, Sports & Arts Grants,
- Involvement was also supported and promoted by Support Staffordshire and Tamworth Borough Council's Community Development Team.

## 2.3 RESPONSES

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A total of 271 responses were received to the consultation and these consisted of:

- 238 residents.
- 33 businesses; 37% were on an 'industrial estate', 27% were based in a 'town centre site', 17% were 'out of town', 10% were 'based at home' and 10% were in a 'local neighbourhood area'.
- 3 community and voluntary organisations; two of these were 'a registered charity' and one was a voluntary group'.

For the purpose of analysis, responses from all three groups have been combined. Where differences were apparent by respondent type, these have been highlighted graphically or through a textual summary.

Some caution should be applied when interpreting the results, particularly in relation to those business and voluntary organisation responses. Responses from these groups were relatively low and therefore should not be viewed as representative of the overall communities which they represent.

## 2.4 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS FOR THE RESIDENTS SURVEY

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In total, there were 238 responses to the Tamworth residents survey. This equates to 0.4% of the adult population of Tamworth<sup>2</sup> and compares similarly to last years response rate.

In statistical terms, the 95% confidence level has been applied to the residents survey results. This means that if the survey was repeated, in 95 out of 100 cases, the same response would be achieved.

Residents responses have an overall confidence interval of +/-6% meaning that the percentage responses they have given to any questions could fall in the range of 6% higher or 6% lower than their actual response. A confidence interval of +/-3-4% is fairly typical for a statistically robust survey<sup>3</sup>.

When considering key demographics, responses were representative of some key characteristics but were less so of others:

- ⇒ The residents survey falls within an acceptable range of representation by gender; 52% of respondents were female and 48% were male<sup>4</sup>.
- ⇒ It was more common for older residents to participate in the residents survey and therefore the results are generally over representative of those respondents aged 55 and above, representative by those aged 45-54 and under representative of those residents aged 44 and below<sup>4</sup>.
- ⇒ By disability, the survey results are slightly over representative of those respondents who had a disability. 35% of respondents said they had a disability compared to 18% in the overall population<sup>5</sup>.
- ⇒ Responses are representative of the most commonly occurring ethnicities of White British and White Other. In their survey responses, 95% described themselves as White British and 2% as White Other<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> The adult population of Tamworth includes those residents who are aged 18 and above, MYE 2016.

<sup>3</sup> To achieve a +/-4% confidence interval for the residents survey, 594 responses would need to be achieved from Tamworth Borough Residents and to achieve a +/-3% confidence interval, 1049 responses would need to be returned.

<sup>4</sup> Mid Year Population Estimates, 2016, ONS

<sup>5</sup> Census 2011, ONS

### 3. VIEWS ON THE CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The Council’s vision is for ‘One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed—Open for business since the 7th Century AD’ with a focus upon working with partners to ensure:

**‘Living a quality life in Tamworth’:** which includes protecting vulnerable people, tackling inequalities, enabling healthy lifestyles and ensuring a safe, clean and green environment.

**‘Growing stronger together in Tamworth’:** which includes encouraging economic growth and development, working with schools to encourage higher skilled, better paid jobs, creating a vibrant and sustainable town centre, protecting culture and heritage and adopting a commercial approach to asset management.

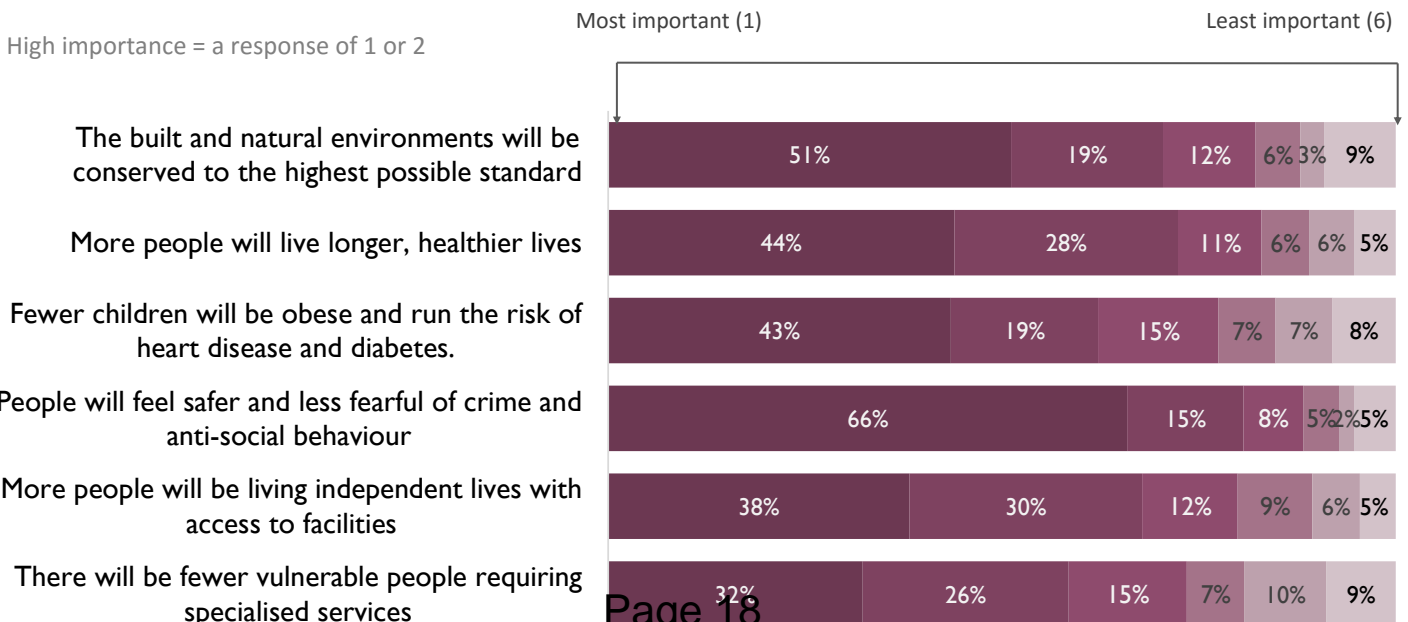
**‘Delivering quality services in Tamworth’:** which includes providing accurate information, improving access, supporting residents and businesses, enabling greater public engagement and ensuring value for money.

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the importance of the priorities which sit beneath the visionary themes of ‘living a quality life in Tamworth’, ‘growing stronger together in Tamworth’ and ‘delivering quality services in Tamworth.’ Respondents were asked to rate how important each of the priorities were on a range of scales; 1 to 6 for ‘living a quality life in Tamworth’, 1 to 7 for ‘growing stronger’ and 1 to 5 for ‘delivering quality services in Tamworth’, with one being the most important and 5, 6 or 7 being the least important.

#### 3.1 Living a quality life in Tamworth

- ⇒ All priorities under ‘living a quality life in Tamworth’ were given a high importance rating by half of respondents or more.
- ⇒ The most important priority was ‘people will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour’. 81% gave this a high rating. This was closely followed by ‘more people will live longer, healthier lives’ which was rated of high importance by 72% of respondents.
- ⇒ Considered least important was ‘there will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialised services’. However, 58% still gave this a high importance rating.
- ⇒ Respondents overall views are documented in the figure below.

Figure 3.1: Please tell us how important our priorities under ‘living a quality life in Tamworth’ are to you/your business/organisation, with 1 being most important and 6 being the least important (%)

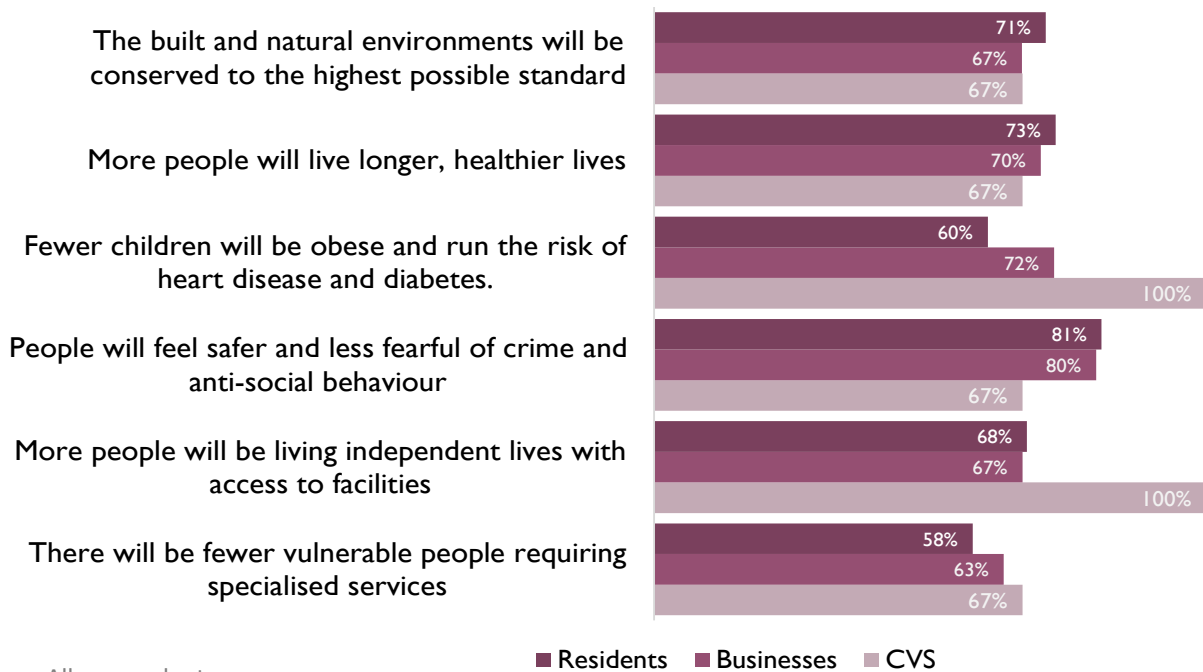


### 3.2 Comparing results by respondent group

The graph below illustrates the breakdown of responses for each priority by respondent group. The results shown are the proportion of each group who felt that each of the priorities were of high importance (i.e. respondents provided an importance rating of one or two). Differences by respondent group are outlined below;

- ⇒ The most important priority overall, ‘people will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour’ was a greater priority for residents and businesses (with 81% and 80% giving it a high importance rating respectively) when compared to community and voluntary groups (67%). Community and voluntary groups reflected a greater strength of feeling in two other priorities, ‘fewer children will be obese and run the risk of heart disease and diabetes’ and ‘more people will be living independent lives with access to facilities’.
- ⇒ Whilst broadly speaking residents and businesses demonstrated similar views on the importance of each priority, businesses considered ‘fewer children will be obese and run the risk of heart disease and diabetes’ to be the second most important priority while residents felt this was much less important, ranking it 5th out of 6. Similarly residents ranked ‘the built and natural environments will be conserved to the highest possible standard’ as the second most important priority while businesses ranked it as the second least important (ranked 5 of 6 ) priority.

Figure 3.2: The importance of priorities under ‘living a quality life in Tamworth’ by respondent group (%)

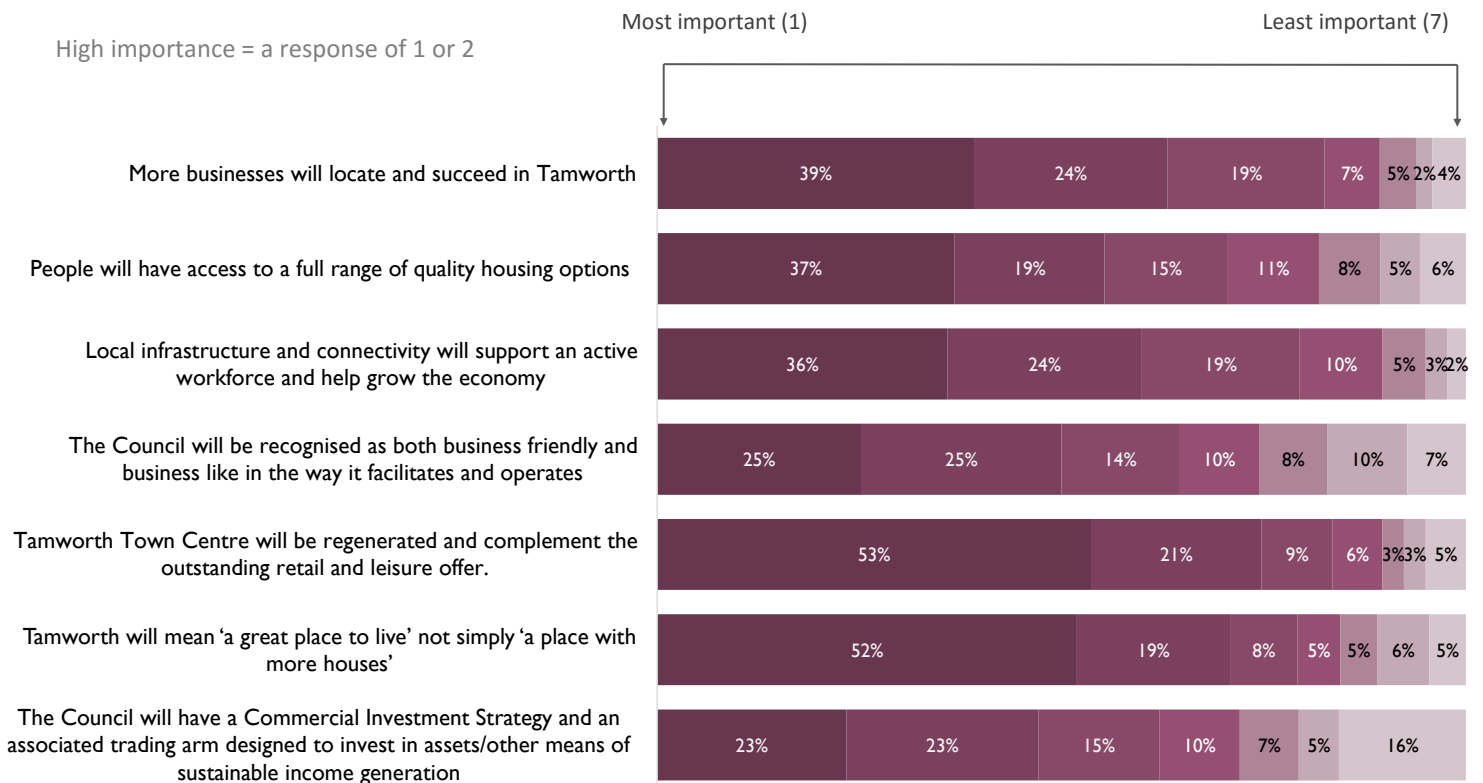


When drawing conclusions from these responses, it is important to remember that the business respondent group and the community and voluntary groups responses are considerably smaller than the residents response group, therefore results may not be representative of their overall group.

### 3.3 Growing stronger together in Tamworth

- ⇒ Six of the seven priorities identified under ‘growing stronger together in Tamworth’ were given a high importance rating (of 1 or 2) by half of respondents or more.
- ⇒ The most importance priority was ‘Tamworth Town Centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer’ with 74% giving it a high rating. This was closely followed by ‘Tamworth will mean ‘a great place to live’ not simply ‘a place with more houses’ which was considered a high priority by 71% of respondents.
- ⇒ ‘The Council will have a Commercial Investment Strategy and an associated trading arm designed to invest in assets/other means of sustainable income generation’ was the priority considered of least importance with 21% ranking it as 6 or 7. However 46% of respondents still considered it to be of high importance.
- ⇒ Respondents overall views are documented in the figure below.

Figure 3.3: Please tell us how important our priorities under ‘growing stronger together in Tamworth’ are to you/your business/organisation, with 1 being most important and 7 being the least important (%)<sup>6</sup>



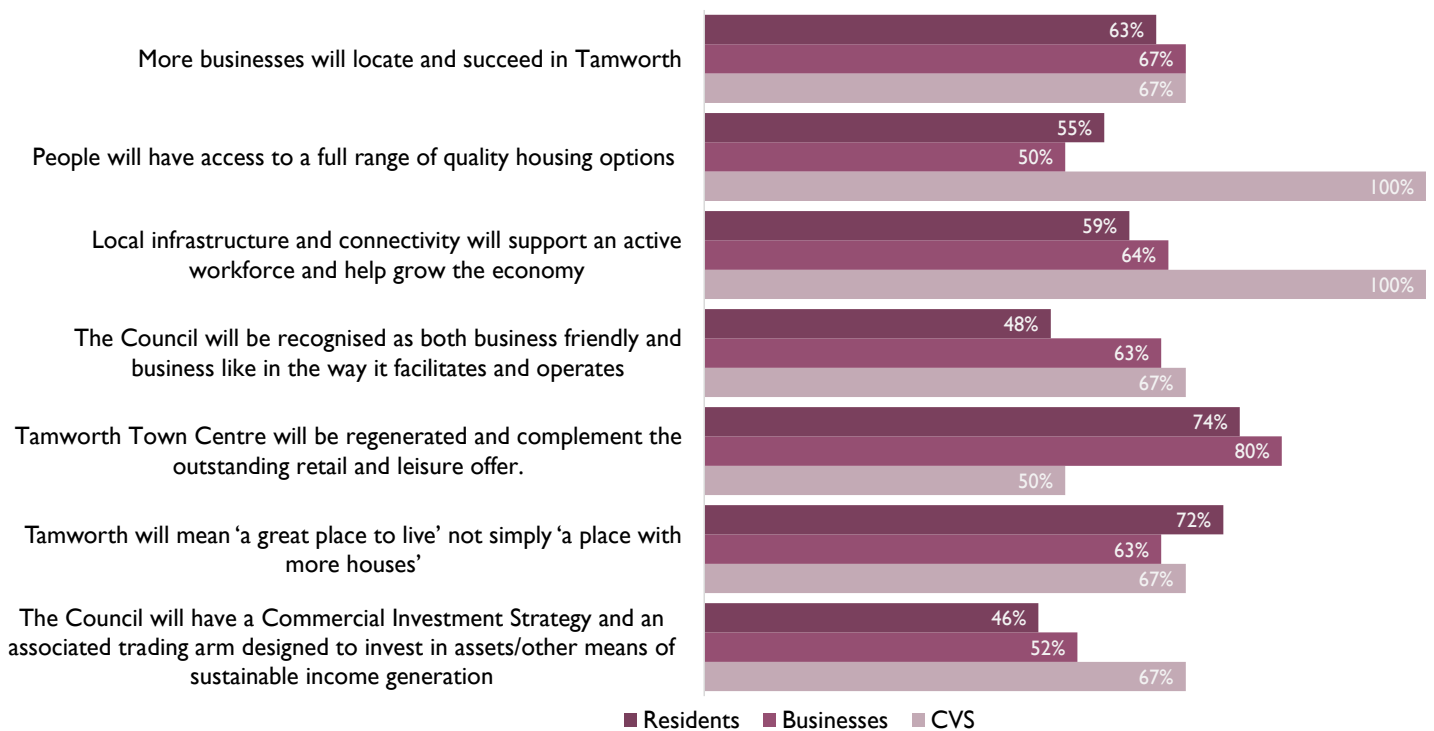
<sup>6</sup> Where responses in the graph do not exactly match reported figures in the text, this is due to rounding to the nearest percentage point in the graphical display.

### 3.4 Comparing results by respondent group <sup>8</sup>

The graph below illustrates the breakdown of responses against each priority by respondent group. The results shown are the proportion of each group who felt that each of the priorities were of high importance (rated 1 or 2) to address.

- ⇒ Both residents and businesses rated the priority ‘Tamworth Town Centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer’ as most important while, conversely, community and voluntary services felt that this was the least important priority.
- ⇒ ‘More businesses will locate and succeed in Tamworth’ was one of the top three priorities for all three respondent groups, with businesses ranking it second and residents and community and voluntary services ranking it third.
- ⇒ All three respondent groups indicated that ‘The Council will have a Commercial Investment Strategy and an associated trading arm designed to invest in assets/other means of sustainable income generation’ was the one of the least important priorities, with residents ranking it as the least important (7 of 7) and businesses and community and voluntary services ranking it as 6 of all 7 priorities.
- ⇒ Community and voluntary services reflected a greater strength of feeling towards two priorities in particular, namely ‘people will have access to a full range of quality housing options’ and ‘local infrastructure and connectivity will support an active workforce and help grow the economy’.

Figure 3.4: The importance of priorities under ‘growing stronger together in Tamworth’ by respondent group (%)

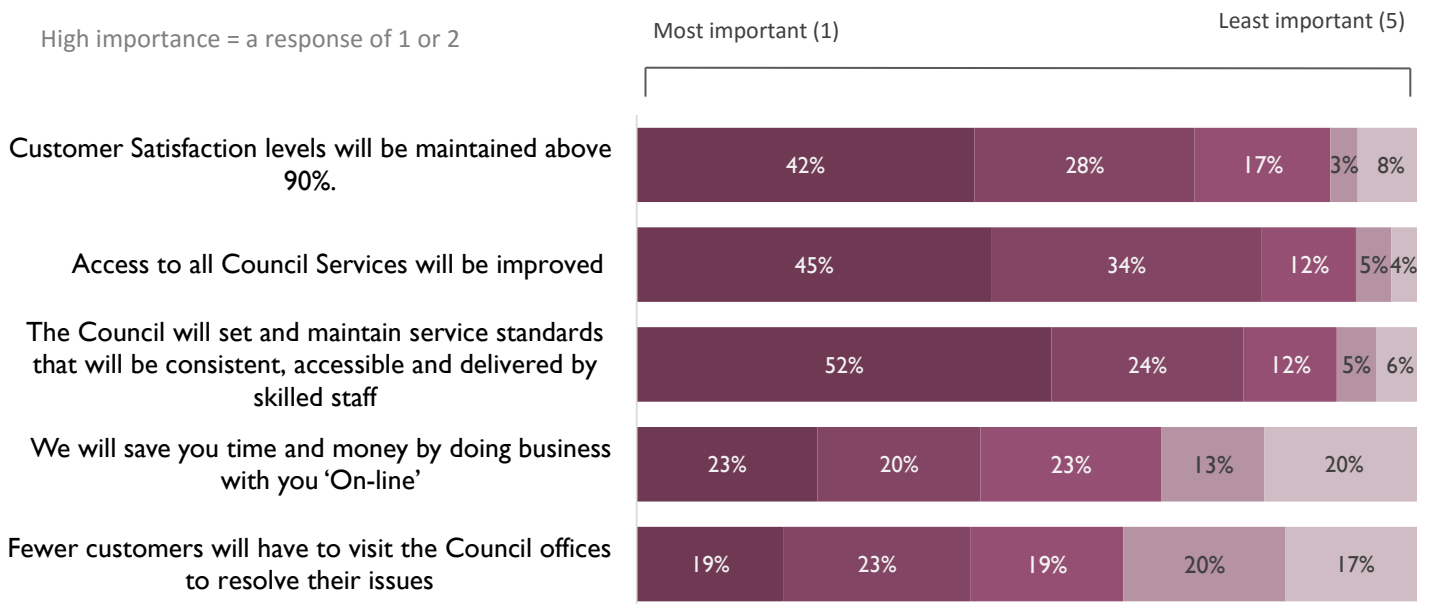


<sup>8</sup> When drawing conclusions from these responses, it is important to remember that the business respondent group and the community and voluntary groups responses are considerably smaller than the residents response group, therefore results may not be representative of their overall group. **Page 21**

### 3.5 Delivering quality services in Tamworth

- ⇒ All priorities under ‘delivering quality services in Tamworth’ were given a high importance rating by half of respondents or more.
- ⇒ Of the five priorities, ‘access to all Council Services will be improved ‘was the most important priority with 80% rating this as highly important. This was closely followed by ‘the Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff’ which was considered of high importance by 77% of respondents.
- ⇒ Considered least important was ‘fewer customers will have to visit the Council offices to resolve their issues’. However, 42% still gave this a high importance rating.
- ⇒ Respondents overall views are documented in the figure below.

Figure 3.5: Please tell us how important our priorities under ‘delivering quality services in Tamworth’ are to you/your business/organisation, with 1 being most important and 5 being the least important (%)





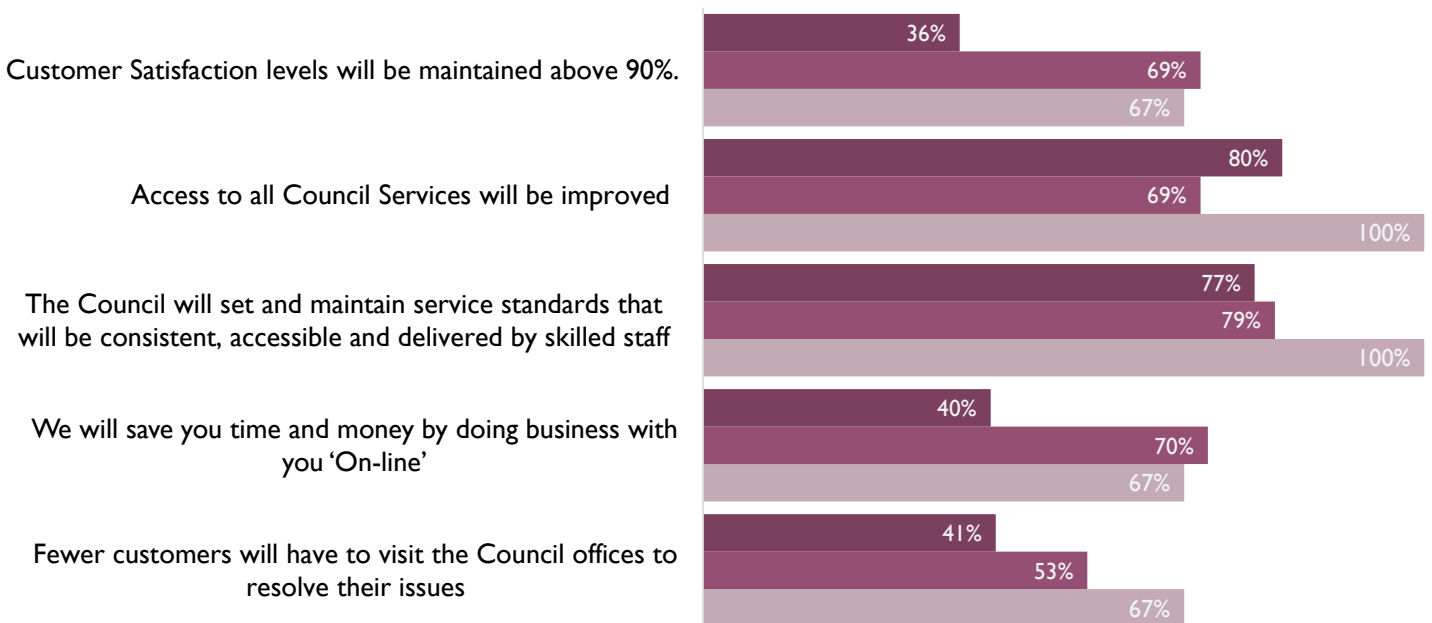
### 3.6 Comparing results by respondent group<sup>10</sup>

The graph below illustrates the breakdown of responses for each priority by respondent group. The results shown are the proportion of each group who felt that each of the priorities were of high importance (i.e. respondents provided an importance rating of one or two).

- ⇒ Residents and community and voluntary services both agreed that ‘access to all Council Services will be improved’ is the priority with the highest importance. Businesses did not rate the importance of this priority as high however, ranking it joint third alongside ‘customer satisfaction levels will be maintained above 90%’.
- ⇒ For businesses, the priority which was considered most important was ‘the Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff’
- ⇒ Only two of the five priorities for ‘delivering quality services in Tamworth’ were considered of high importance by over half the respondent group, namely ‘access to all Council Services will be improved’ (80%) and ‘the Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff’ (77%). The ratings from residents for the other three priorities were much lower than for the other two respondent groups.

High importance = a response of 1 or 2

Figure 3.6: The importance of priorities under ‘delivering quality services in Tamworth’ by respondent group (%)



Base: All respondents

<sup>10</sup> When drawing conclusions from these responses, it is important to remember that the business respondent group and the community and voluntary groups responses are considerably smaller than the residents response group, therefore results may not be representative of their overall group.

### 3.7 Views on the vision and priorities

Generally, respondents support the vision and acknowledge that it *“will be a great improvement to Tamworth if this objectives and vision is attained”* but deliverability is key,

- *“visions are lovely but doing something constructive is essential. Tamworth Borough Council have never been able to have a vision that Tamworthians agree with or are able to deliver”*
- *“it's one thing having a vision but you need a great team to help deliver it . I don't think you have a great team on board...the council rarely delivers what it says it will.”*

All of the 'priorities' were considered important for Tamworth as a community and this was reflected through the importance ratings they attributed to each of them.

Respondents were generally keen to comment on both the strategic priorities and the priority aims which fall beneath these. Those comments shared were not necessarily reflective of all respondents however they may be of use to decision makers as they raise questions, queries and present ideas for reflection. Comments were largely focussed on 'growing stronger together in Tamworth' and 'delivering quality services in Tamworth'. These have been summarised below;

#### **'Living a quality life in Tamworth'**

- *“your vision is good but there is nothing in Tamworth for adults with Autism, they want a place to live with support and with other Autistic adults.”*

#### **'Growing stronger together in Tamworth'**

Many comments focussed on the importance of regenerating the town centre, encouraging more business to open shops there and more residents to shop there. In addition, some respondents discussed the importance of infrastructure to support new housing schemes in the town:

- *“Although it is accepted that we need more housing I feel the infrastructure is very lacking to accommodate this, the roads, doctors, surgeries, schools cannot cope.”*
- *“Dropping parking fees would help regenerate the town centre. Tamworth Castle is a HUGE tourist attraction and should again be floodlit at night - PRIDE IN TAMWORTH!”*
- *“Emphasis should now be placed on encouraging the building of more housing in the town centre rather than shop units. An ageing population and more shopping on line mean less shops are needed. Also having more people living in the town centre will ensure demand for services there”*
- *Jobs, jobs, jobs, to create a vibrant town centre and content population.*
- *“Invest in infrastructure for businesses, regenerate town centre and surrounding areas ensuring good access, drive out waste from Council spending ensure adequate health, education, leisure and housing with investment.”*

#### **'Delivering quality services in Tamworth'**

A considerable number of comments focussed on the importance of the Council maintaining an aspect of face to face or telephone contact with residents as well as encouraging more online interaction:

- *“Not all people have access to or use internet, so it is important to maintain a personal service.”*
- *“People like to speak to a friendly person at the Council Offices.”*
- *“I expect council tax monies to be spent on services and the good of the majority of the people not the few. You have a lot of older generation that do not understand technology with this in mind technology should be introduced slowly.”*
- *“I feel it is important to be able to deal with the Council face to face rather than online all the time. The Council does not need to lose its personal face!”*

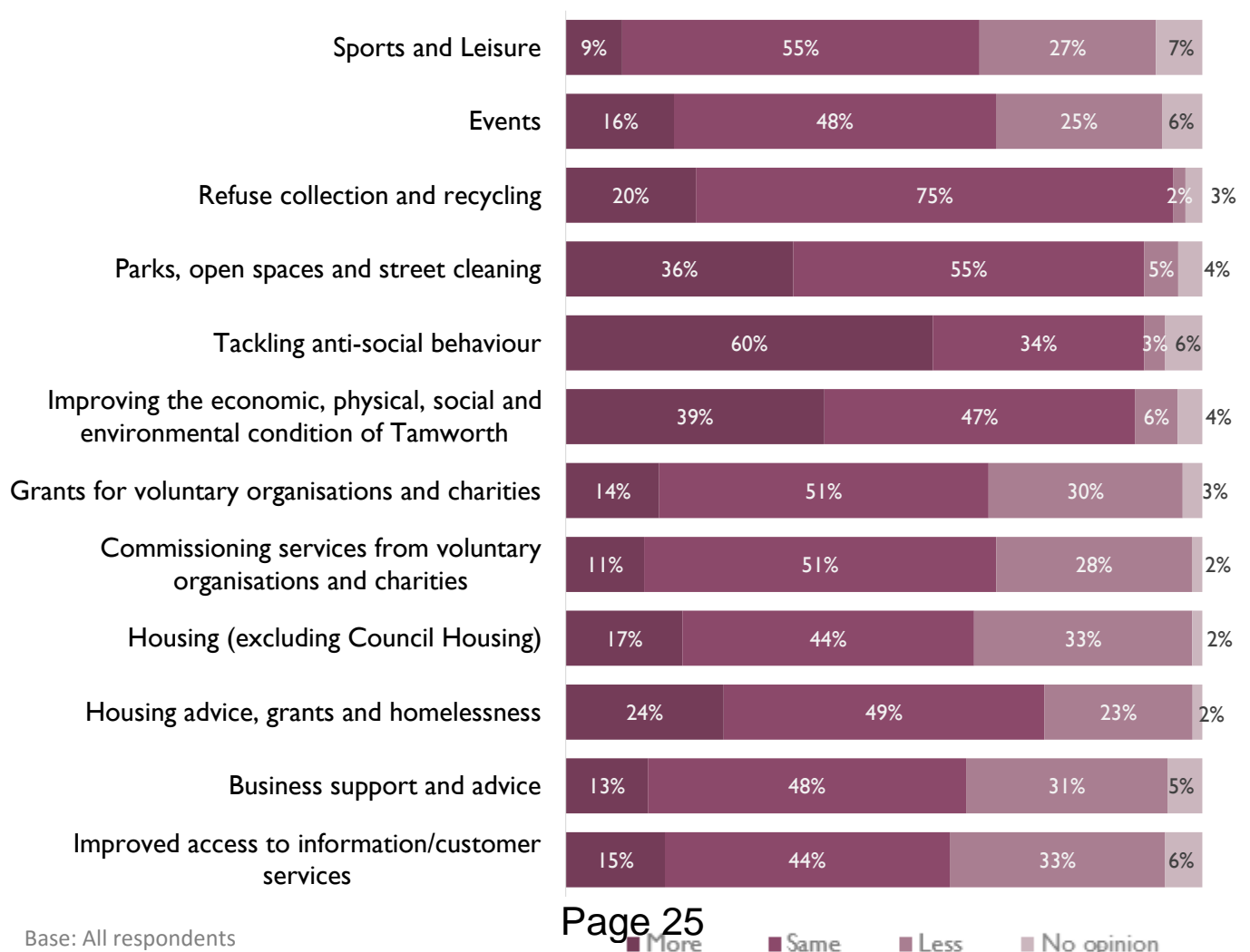
## 4. SPENDING ON SERVICES

Respondents were provided with planned spend on major cost areas for 2017/18 and were asked whether they felt the Council should increase, decrease or keep spending the same.

- ⇒ It was most common for respondents across the majority of service areas to say that they would prefer the level of spend to remain the same. This was the case in 11 of the 12 major cost areas.
- ⇒ This was particularly apparent regarding spend on 'refuse and recycling' with 75% wanting to maintain the same level of spend on this service. In addition, over half indicated their preference for keeping spend the same in four further areas, namely, 'sports and leisure' (55%), 'parks, open spaces and street cleaning' (55%), 'grants for voluntary organisations and charities' (51%) and 'commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities' (51%).
- ⇒ Spending less was the second most common response (in 7 out of the 12 major cost areas). Around a third of respondents wanted to see less spending in each of the following areas; 'housing (excluding Council Housing)' (33%), 'improved access to information/customer services' (33%), 'business support and advice' (31%) and 'grants for voluntary organisations and charities' (30%).
- ⇒ Spending more was still a priority in some areas and mostly notably for 'tackling anti-social behaviour'. Almost two-thirds (60%) wanted spending increased on this major cost area.

The collective views on all respondents are illustrated in the graph below:

Figure 4.1: Preferred spend for 2017/18 on major cost areas (%)

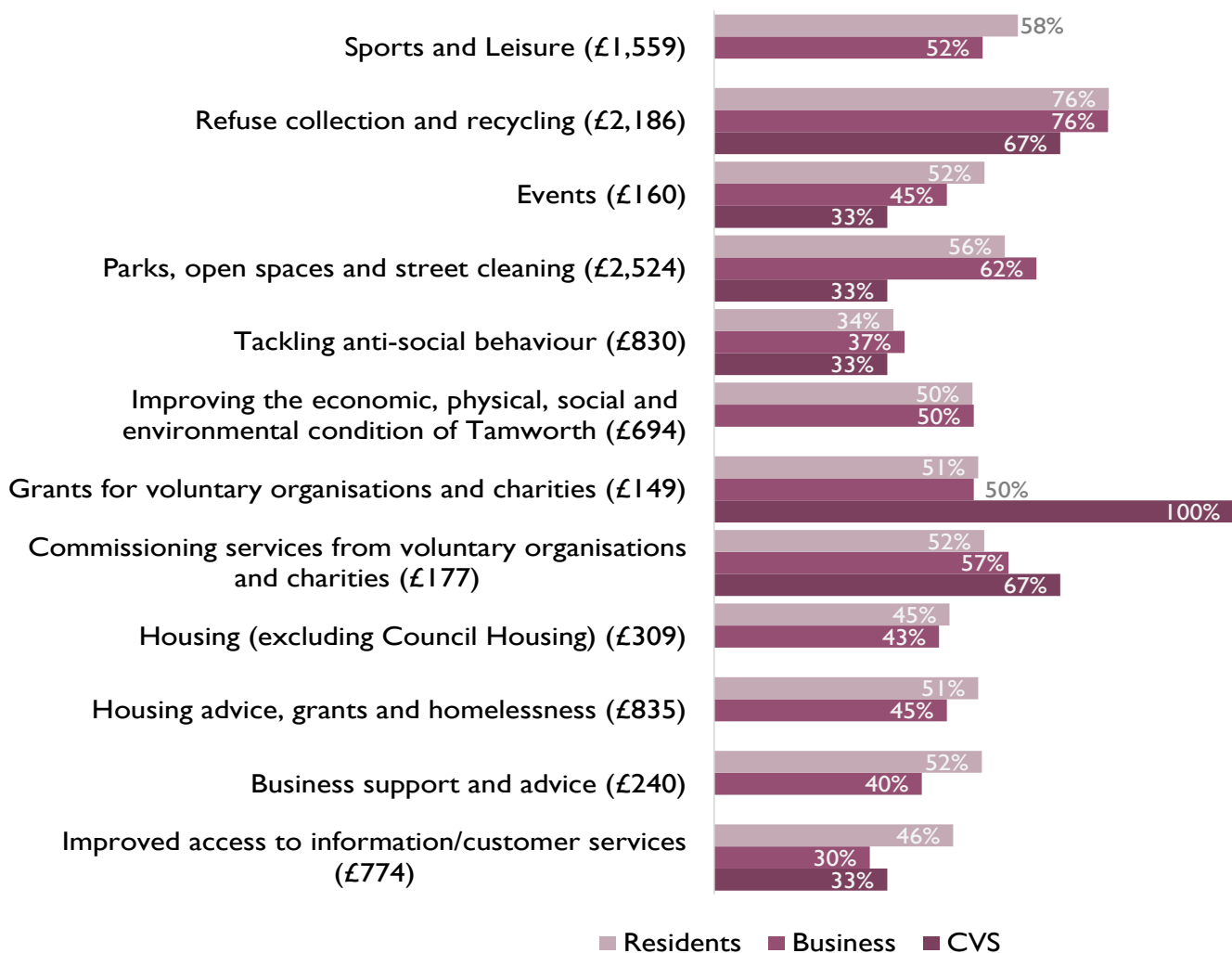


#### 4.1 Maintain levels of spending<sup>11</sup>

There were similarities but also some differences in views by respondent group. Residents views generally mirrored those of the overall results (as they were the largest group).

- ⇒ All three groups agreed that spend on ‘commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities’, ‘grants for voluntary organisations and charities’ and ‘events’ should stay the same.
- ⇒ Residents expressed strong support for maintaining levels of spend in all but 1 cost area while businesses mirrored this opinion in all but 2 cost areas.
- ⇒ Of the three groups, community and voluntary groups had the most varied opinions and as such, only stipulated support for maintaining levels of spending in 3 out of the 12 major cost areas.

Figure 4.2: Maintaining spend for 2017/18 on major cost areas by respondent group (%)



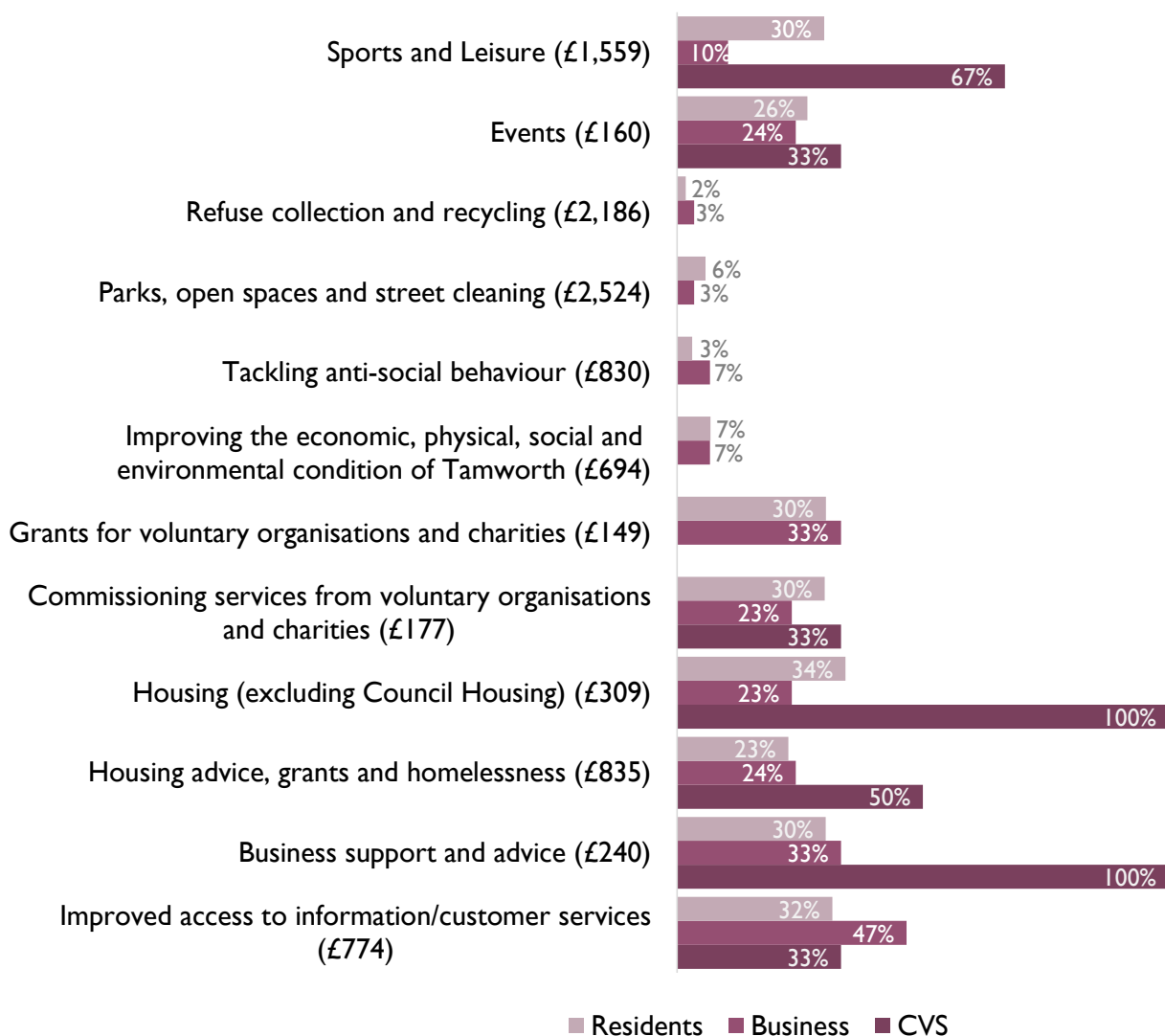
<sup>11</sup> When drawing conclusions from these responses, it is important to remember that the business respondent group and the community and voluntary groups responses are considerably smaller than the residents response group, therefore results may not be representative of their overall group.

#### 4.2 Reduce levels of spending<sup>12</sup>

There were clear differences in views by respondent group for reduced spending.

- ⇒ Residents did not feel that spending should be reduced in any of the 12 cost areas.
- ⇒ Businesses only felt that there could be a reduction in spend for 'improved access to information/customer services'.
- ⇒ Community and voluntary services was the respondent group that expressed support for less spending in 3 of the 12 cost areas, namely, 'housing (excluding Council Housing), 'business support and advice' and 'sports and leisure'.

Figure 4.3: Reducing spend for 2017/18 on major cost areas by respondent group (%)



Base: All respondents

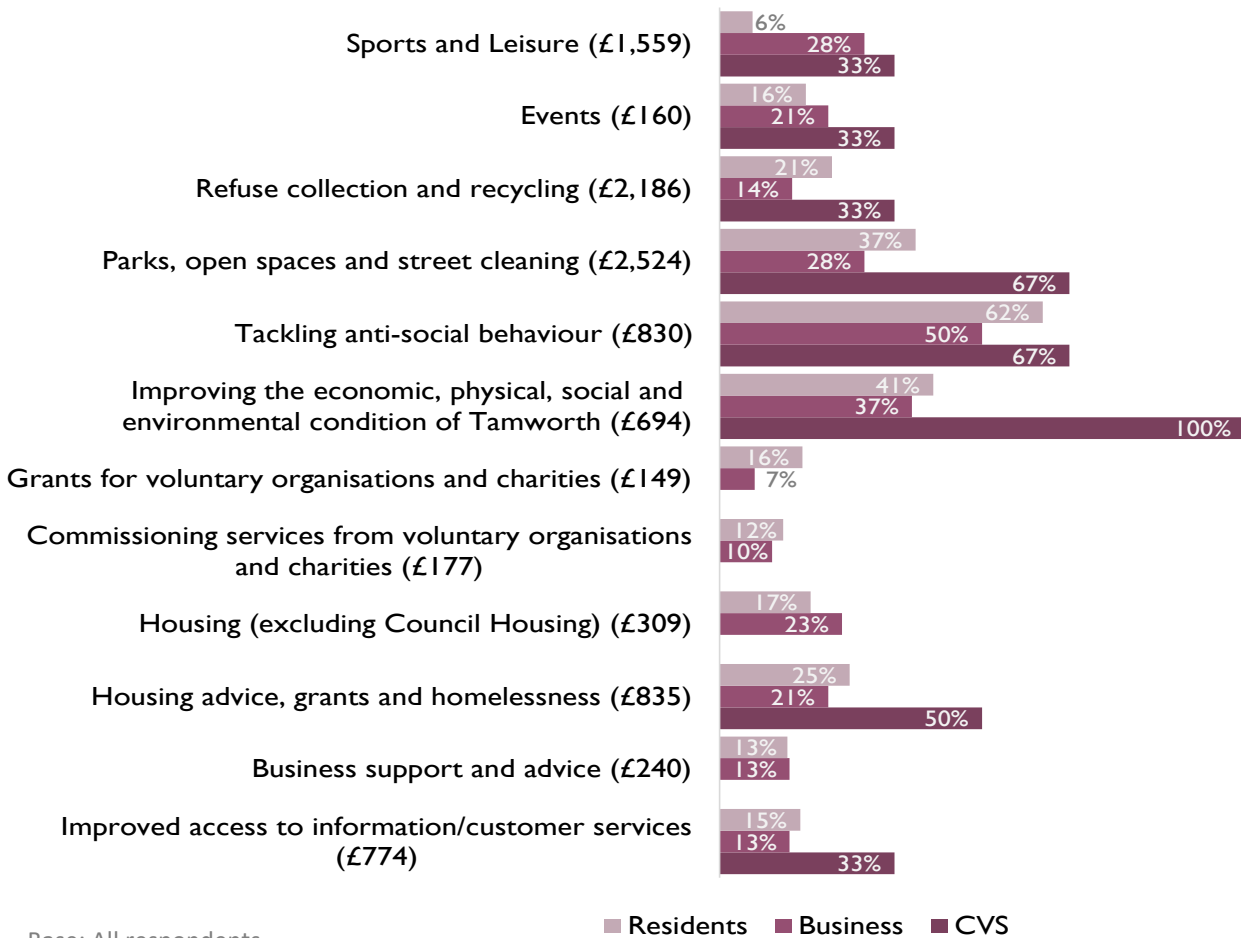
<sup>12</sup> When drawing conclusions from these responses, it is important to remember that the business respondent group and the community and voluntary groups responses are considerably smaller than the residents response group, therefore results may not be representative of their overall group.

### 4.3 Increase levels of spending<sup>13</sup>

There were similarities but also differences in views by respondent group.

- ⇒ All three groups also agreed that more money should be spent on ‘tackling anti-social behaviour’. This was the only cost area that both businesses and residents felt that increased spend should be implemented.
- ⇒ Community and voluntary groups were more likely than any of the other groups to advocate increased spend. This was the case in 3 out of the 12 major cost areas (and a further 3 areas where equal numbers of respondents selected more as well as same and/or less).

Figure 4.4: Increasing spend for 2017/18 on major cost areas by respondent group (%)



### 4.4 Comments on spend

A relatively small proportion of respondents chose to comment on this question and therefore the views shared may not necessarily be reflective of all respondents.

The main theme running through the comments was that respondents felt that it was important for spend to be focussed on those things that will attract more people to the town, for businesses to invest and in turn to generate more money for the town;

- *“We should be encouraging people to use our town centre therefore eventually making more monies to be spent on our town.”*
- *“It's not a question of how much you spend but ensuring that you get value for money and return*

<sup>13</sup> When drawing conclusions from these responses, it is important to remember that the business respondent group and the community and voluntary groups responses are considerably smaller than the residents response group, therefore results may not be representative of their overall group.

*from what you spend money on. The council say they wish to encourage tourism but close public toilets and downgrade their tourist information centre to a corner of Marmion House. They employ numerous community wardens whose role seems to be very unclear and mirrors that undertaken by PCSOs. They spend huge sums on headline grabbing projects such as The Gateway Project over Ladybridge and in Victoria Rd using the finest materials while the rest of the town centre looks neglected, potholed patched paving and tired."*

- *"Make more use of our cultural heritage we have a history deeper than Stratford use it make people want to come to Tamworth ."*
- *"More should be given to street cleaning. Tamworth has parts that are really ugly, and we should have more people out there cleaning it up."*

Some respondents felt that the information provided was *"too vague"* and therefore did not feel these were in a position to pass comment:

- *"Residents aren't given enough information to give informed answers."*
- *"As I do not know what the money is precisely spent on, I find this difficult to answer."*

Other comments made were more individual in nature, several of which are included below:

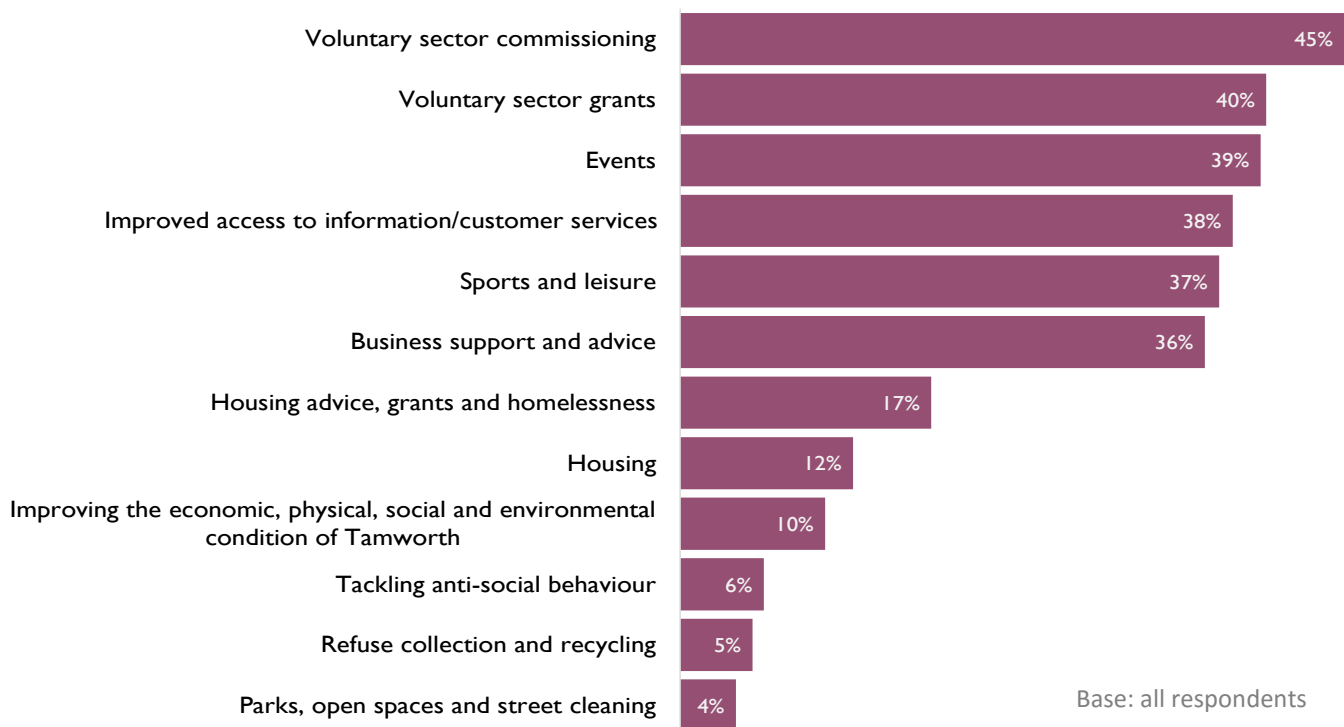
- *"Maybe we should increase council tax beyond the central government dictate and invest in our future education and attracting higher paid jobs to our town."*
- *"Money for housing should be spent on building more Council Housing rather than houses for sale."*
- *"More should be done to encourage recycling etc. Perhaps some penalty if not done?"*
- *"Spend money on people not places."*

#### 4.5 Savings and reducing costs<sup>14</sup>

Respondents were provided with a list of services and asked to indicate up to three which could be prioritised for savings or reduced costs.

It was most common for respondents to indicate that they would like to see savings or reduced costs in the following areas; 'voluntary sector commissioning', 'voluntary sector grants' and 'events'. Respondents were least likely to want savings made to 'parks, open spaces, street cleaning' 'refuse and recycling services', and 'tackling anti-social behaviour'.

Figure 4.5: Which THREE services should the Council look at if they had to make savings or reduce costs? (%)



'Voluntary sector commissioning' and 'events' were both within the top three priorities for savings or reduced costs across all three respondent groups. For residents and businesses, 'voluntary sector commissioning groups' was their first priority for savings while for community and voluntary groups it was their joint third priority. Community and Voluntary Services felt that the top priority for savings or reduced costs was 'business support and advice'. 'Events' was the second priority for residents but the third priority for both businesses and community and voluntary services.

#### 4.6 Comments on savings

Very few comments were made regarding savings and therefore the views shared may not necessarily be reflective of all respondents. While it was acknowledged that savings do need to be made, a number of respondents expressed difficulty in making a decision as to where the focus should be as "[all areas] are all important in their own right" and "all must gain value for money."

Several respondents felt they did not know enough detail to be able to pass comment on where these savings are best placed, "I don't know enough about these to say they could be sustained with less costs". One respondent felt that a long-term plan would be more beneficial rather than "year by year pruning away at services."

<sup>14</sup> When drawing conclusions from these responses, it is important to remember that the business respondent group and the community and voluntary groups responses are considerably smaller than the residents response group, therefore results may not be representative of their overall group.



**4.7 Which TWO income areas do you think the Council could/should increase and decrease charges for?**

**Increase charges:** It was most common for respondents to stress the need to increase public charges for ‘leisure and other activities’ (57%), ‘commercial property’ (46%) or ‘public spaces’ (40%). However, respondents comments reflected a genuine reluctance for increases in charges to any of the identified areas of spend because of the impact on vulnerable people, as well as residents and businesses in general,

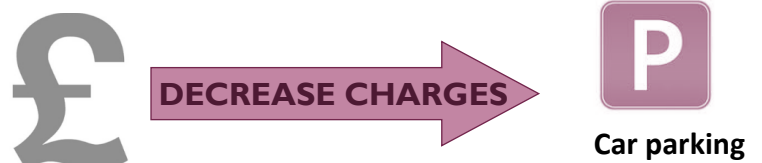
- *“increased charges to public areas will negatively impact on those from poorer families”*
- *“there should be reduced prices for elderly or low income though so that they can still access these”*



Respondents were particularly concerned about the impact of current ‘car parking’ charges on the town centre and were most adverse to increased charges for these.

- *“parking charges are a major factor in Tamworth's rejuvenation.”*
- *“there does need to be a review of car parking charges as high charges discourages people from coming into the town centre. 2-3 hours free parking maybe an idea.”*

**Decrease charges:** Respondents were most likely to say that they would like to see decreased charges for ‘car parking’. Four-fifths of respondents overall (82%) indicated that they would like to see these decreased. ‘Car parking’ and ‘rents/rates’ featured prominently in respondents comments:



- *“decrease charges for car parking helps visitors. Rates for commercial property is too high - shops don't last long.”*
- *“I urge you to look very urgently at the town's commercial rates, it's killing small businesses.”*

Figure 4.6: Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council should increase charges for (%)

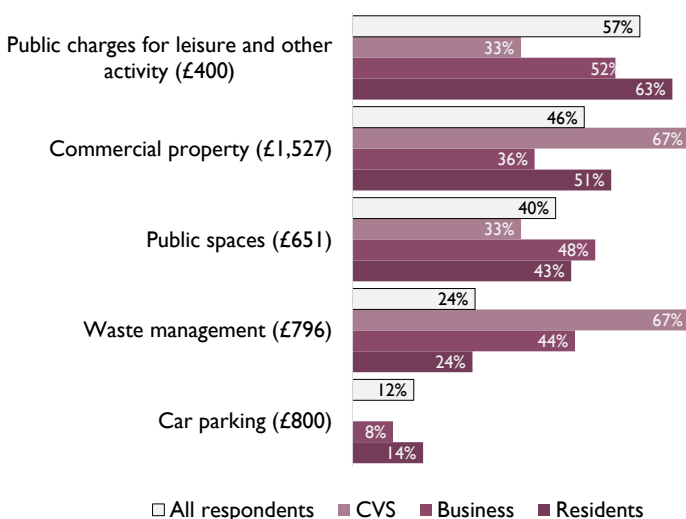
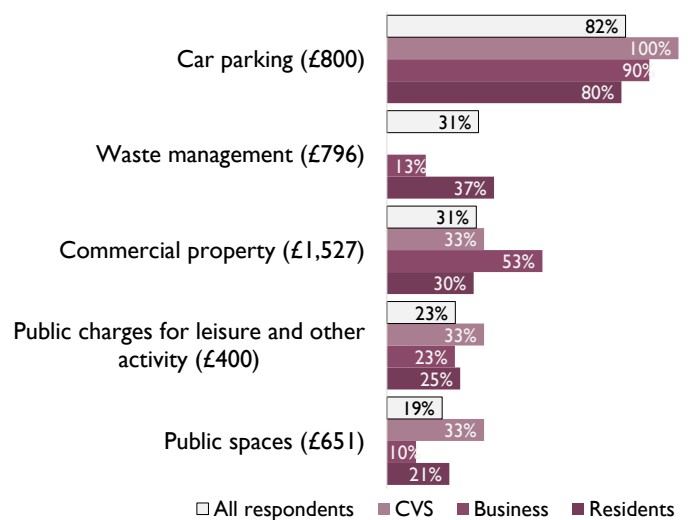


Figure 4.7: Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council should decrease charges for (%)



## 5. MAKING TAMWORTH A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE

The following questions were posed to those respondents who were participating in the consultation as a local resident.

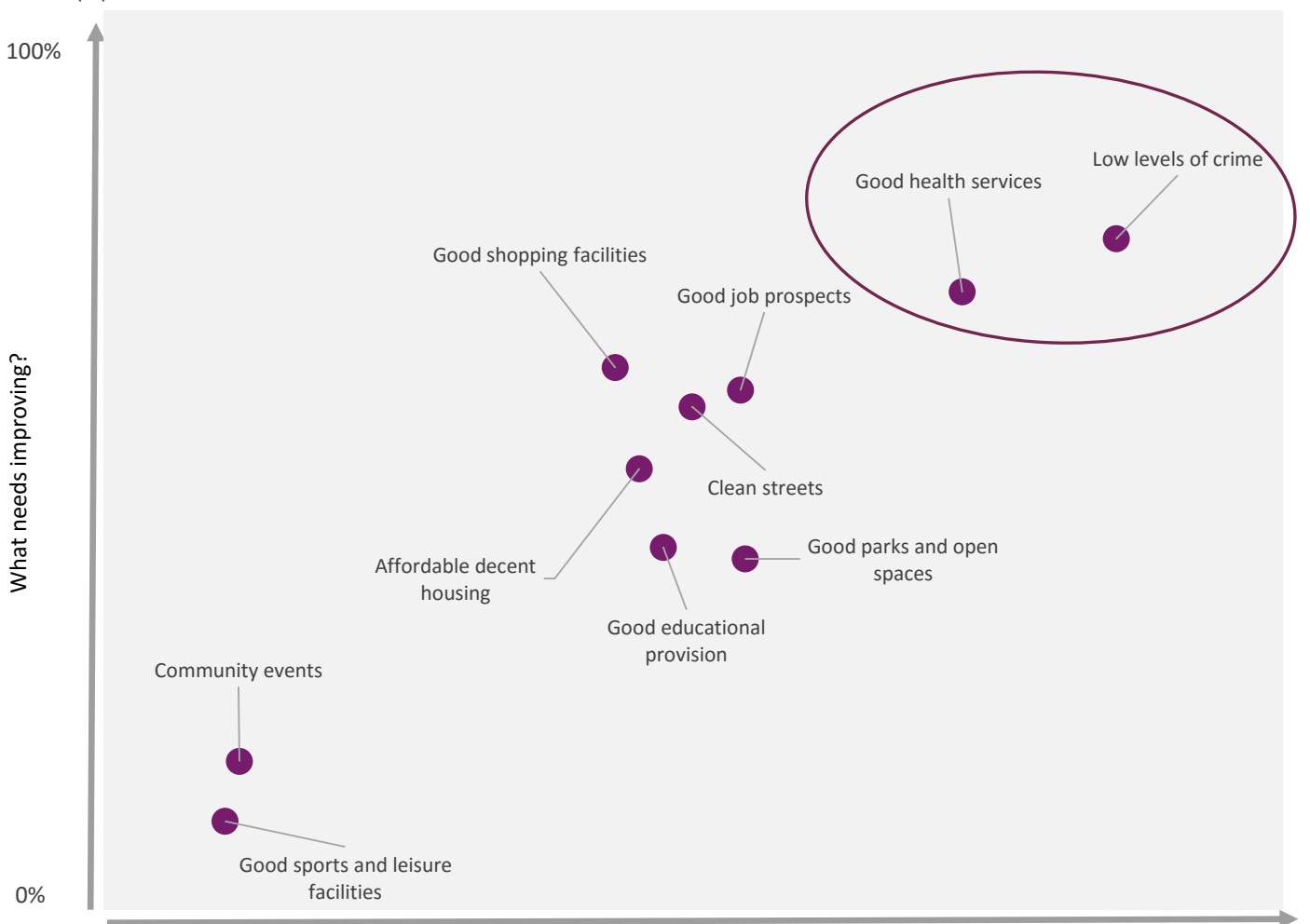
### 5.1 What makes somewhere a good place to live AND what needs improving most to make Tamworth a better place to live?

The graph below depicts both 'what's important' and 'what needs improving most to make Tamworth a better place to live'. It is clear to see that 'low levels of crime' and 'good health services' are considered the two most important aspects which were most likely to make somewhere a good place to live are also viewed as the top two elements which respondents felt as needing improvement.

This year has seen a change in the top three priorities for what is important for making Tamworth a better place to live for the first time. 'Good parks and open spaces' has replaced 'good jobs and prospects' as the third most important priority by a very small margin. This year also sees 'good education provision' falling out of the top five priorities for the first time.

While the top five priorities for improvement remain unchanged since last year the ranked order has change somewhat with 'level of crime' resuming first position and replacing 'job prospects' which was ranked 4 of 10 this year. 'Good shopping facilities' was ranked 3 of 10 this year (compared to 5 of 10) last year and 'cleanliness of streets' has moved from 3 of 10 last year to 5 of 10 this year.

Figure 5.1: 'What makes somewhere a good place to live' AND 'what needs improving most to make Tamworth a better place to live?' (%)



## 5.2 What would make Tamworth a better place to live

Residents of Tamworth were invited to suggest improvements which they felt would make Tamworth a better place to live. Respondents were keen to comment providing suggestions across a range of themes. A summary of respondents comments, in order of their identified priority for improvement, have been outlined below.

### Low level of crime

'Low level of crime' was deemed the most important area to improve by residents this year. However, it was not a focal point for many comments. Those that did comment expressed that *"crime reduction and police on the beat should be number 1 priority"* with a desire to see *"more police presence"* and *"Improve the antisocial behaviour in the streets."*

### Good health services

'Good health services' were a high priority for improvement (ranking 2 out of 10) and they were also a focal point for respondents' comments. Many comments centred around the town's hospital and it's unsuitability for the size of the town,

- *"Tamworth should have its own A&E Department, the population is growing and we should not have to travel to Birmingham or Burton or Nuneaton to access this and other health services"*

### Good shopping facilities

'Good shopping facilities' has become an increasingly important priority for residents, culminating in it being ranked 3 of 10 in areas that needed improvement. Consequently, this was the most frequently mentioned priority in residents comments. Many respondents stressed the importance of restoring the town centre, encouraging more businesses, particularly independent businesses, to open premises by reducing rates and encouraging more people to shop in the town by reducing parking charges. Many felt that there was too much focus on Ventura Park and this was having a detrimental affect on the town centre shops. Several respondents commented on the importance of good transport links between the town centre shopping area and Ventura Park.

- *"Town centre needs urgent regeneration with more visitor friendly shops and streets."*
- *"Free parking for the first 2 hours would generate more business in the town."*
- *"Tamworth is currently a depressing place to be. The town centre is dying but parking charges are still excessively expensive.....we need more of a community feel to the town centre especially. Little independent retailers, community cafes, activities for all age groups."*
- *"To make sure that Tamworth town centre is 're-modelled'. It needs a revamp and detail to 'old' Tamworth (that which is left) should be maintained. Independent shops should be encouraged. Try to get back the small 'town centre' that enhances our history, so many think that 'Tamworth' is Ventura Park"*

### Good job prospects

Whilst 'good job prospects' was one of the top five priorities for improvement (it ranked 4 out of 10), it was not a common focal point of respondents' comments. Those that did remark on it stressed the need for professional and higher paid jobs.

- *"Better quality jobs so that those on higher incomes can work in Tamworth. Right now, most higher earners commute out of town."*
- *"Most work in Tamworth is low level of pay for unskilled workers"*

## Clean streets

This was a medium priority for improvement and a relatively popular subject for discussion amongst residents.

- *“Employ litter wardens to generate revenue while reducing the million pounds you spend on cleaning. Encourage communities to keep their paths clean outside their home, clean up litter and dog mess.”*
- *“The state of the cleanliness and condition of some council housing areas are dreadful. The amount of weeds, nettles and brambles growing in some pathways are quite dangerous to young children.”*
- *“The streets need to be cleaned more often ...more litter bins and patrolling is needed to improve the situation”*

## Affordable decent housing

Respondents commented on the need for ‘affordable decent housing’ and expressed concern that the new houses that have been or are currently being built in the area are not necessarily the type of housing that is needed,

- *Less large four/five bed family homes and more two/three bed houses and one/two bed quality flats needed.”*
- *“A large number of houses are in the planning phase. How many will be 'affordable'?”*

Furthermore, concerns were expressed that the necessary infrastructure is not being put into place to support this additional housing,

- *“Far too much housing going on without the infrastructure, recently I wanted a doctors appointment and the wait was 5 weeks !!! I had to appeal for all 3 of my children to go to the school most local to us because houses being built within the changed catchment now get priority”*

## Good education provision

‘Good education provision’ ranked higher than last year but still relatively low (7 out of 10) in respondents overall priorities for improvement. Nevertheless, several comments were made by respondents, expressing concerns at not only the standard of education provision but also the accessibility of school places given the nature in which the town’s population is growing.

- *“Schools are about the same size as when my boys now aged 34 and 39 were there.....provisions of school places have not been thought about in the planning of these houses.”*
- *“Tamworth does not currently have a single secondary school rated 1. Children are our future.”*
- *“No University provision in Tamworth, why can't we have satellite sites assigned to Birmingham Uni or Loughborough etc. This would encourage local take up and also the offering of Tamworth.”*

## Good parks and open spaces

‘Good parks and open spaces’ were a low priority for improvement, ranking 8 out of 10. They were however discussed frequently in residents comments. Residents showed their appreciation for current facilities and suggested ways and means for improvement.

- *“there are lots of open spaces that could do with some care. The Castle grounds are magnificent but I hope they are not used as an excuse for not looking after other areas. The cycle paths are often overgrown with trees that need cutting back”*
- *“Wildflower patches along roads was a BRILLIANT idea - bee and insect friendly and good 'feel good' 26*

factor - more please.”

- “No more building should be allowed on the fields and green spaces surrounding the area.”
- “Why not have boat rides on the river open little cafes for visitors.”

### Community events

‘Community events’ ranked low (9 out of 10) in respondents priorities for improvement and no respondents made any further comments about it.

### Good sports and leisure facilities

‘Good sports and leisure facilities’ ranked lowest (10 out of 10) in residents priorities for improvement. These were also not a focal point for residents comments with just one respondent commenting that “sports and leisure need to be affordable and the gyms are very expensive.”

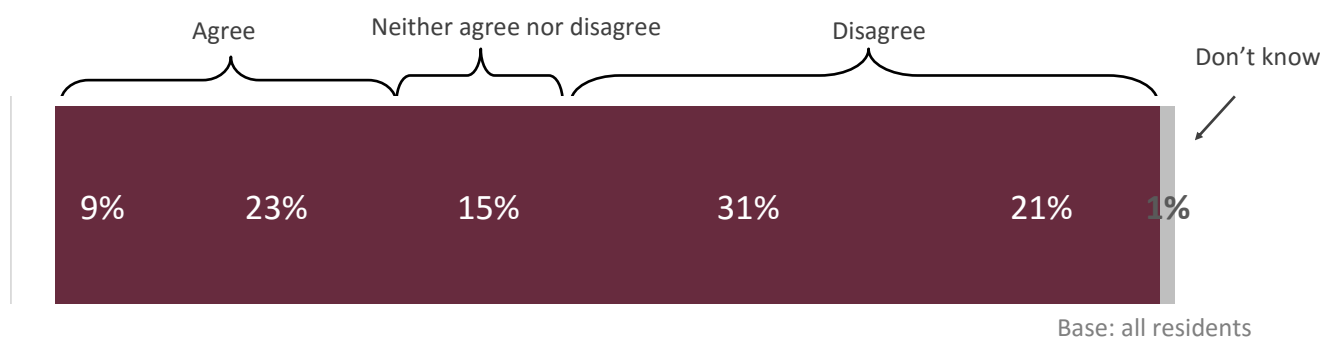
### Additional comments

Additional comments on other priorities for improvement were mainly focused on ‘roads and highways’. These included the need to both improve the quality of roads and to develop the network to ensure it could cope with future pressures. Several respondents commented that the town had been “neglected” and was “off putting”, with one respondent having gone so far as to say that proposals for change were “too little, too late”. There were a number of comments regarding the closure of public toilets and the importance of re-opening them as they would be needed if more people were to visit the town centre.

## 5.3 Can you influence decisions which affect your local area?

Whilst views on this question were diverse, a considerably larger proportion of respondents did not feel that they could influence decisions which affected their local area; 52% of respondents either tended to or definitely disagreed compared to 32% who tended to or definitely agreed.

Figure 5.2: % who agree/disagree that they can influence decisions which affect their local area



## 5.4 Would you like to be more involved in the decisions which affect your local area?

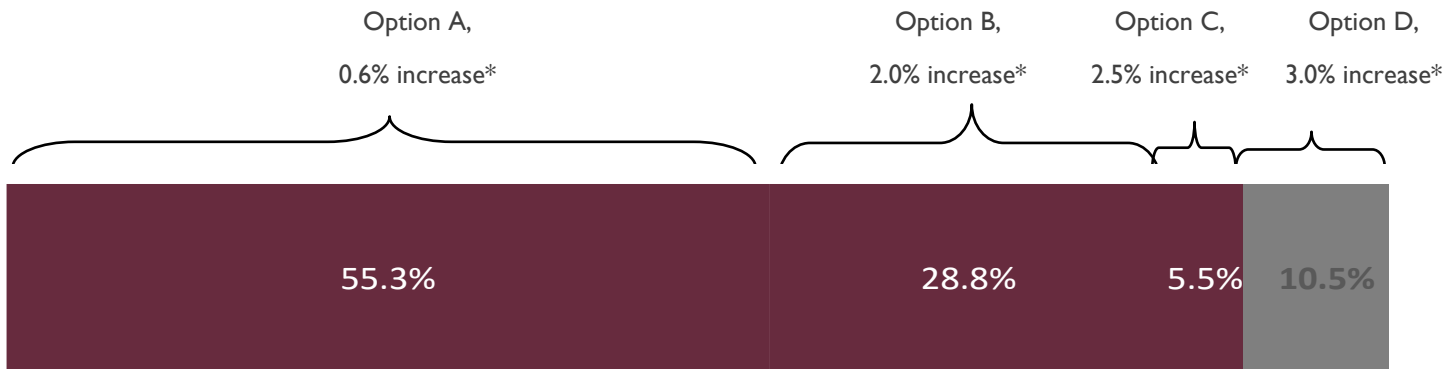
A clear majority of respondents were in support of being involved in decisions which affected their local area. 43% said ‘yes, they would like to be involved’ and 49% would like to be involved, ‘depending on the issue’.

### 5.5 What would you consider to be an acceptable Council Tax increase for the 2018/19 budget?

The largest proportion of respondents would prefer the lowest level of increase offered with over half of all respondents (55.3%) selecting option A as their preferred choice. Option B, the second lowest level of increase was also the second most popular option for increases. Minimal support was evident for both options C and D but interestingly option D had more support than option C despite being a greater increase.

Option D, a 3.0% increase on a band D property is most similar to the average level of increase witnessed for all authorities across the West Midlands (3.6%) according to CIPFA's (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) latest annual council tax survey.

Figure 5.3: What would you consider to be an acceptable Council Tax increase for the 2018/19 budget?



\*Increases shown are based on a Band D property

Base: all residents

## 6. MAKING TAMWORTH BETTER FOR BUSINESS

Respondents who completed the questionnaire from the perspective of a local business were asked to provide their opinions and comment on a number of business related questions in order to gather a picture of how Tamworth can be made better for businesses.

A total of 30 businesses responded to the survey which is a considerable increase from the responses to last year's survey (19). This section explores the questions businesses were asked and the responses that they gave<sup>15</sup>.

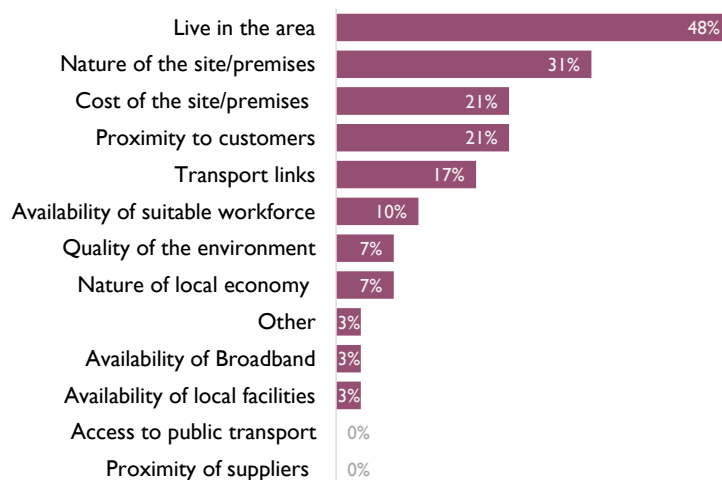
### 6.1 Business type and location

Of the businesses that responded to the consultation, location on an 'industrial estate' (37%, 11 businesses) was most common, followed by a 'town centre site' (27%, 8 businesses). Of the remaining respondents, 17% (5 businesses) were sited 'out of town', 10% (3 businesses) 'at home' and 10% (3 businesses) in a 'local neighbourhood area'. None of the businesses were based on 'out of town shopping parks'.

The majority of businesses were independent with no other branches (67%, 20 businesses). 13% (4 businesses) were a head office and 7% (2 business) a branch or subsidiary of a larger group. 13% (4 businesses) described themselves as another type of business and qualified that they were a 'sole trader/self-employed', 'home business', 'church, office and hall' or 'social club'.

When asked to disclose the main reasons why their business was based in Tamworth, the most common answer, cited by almost half (48%) of the respondents was that they 'live in the area'. The 'nature of the site/premises' was also a popular reason, cited by almost a third of respondents (31%) followed by 'cost of the site/premises' (21%) and 'proximity to customers' (21%). No respondents stipulated that 'access to public transport' or 'proximity to suppliers' influenced their choice in basing their company in the area.

Figure 6.1: What are the main reasons why your company is based here?



Base Number : 30 businesses

### 6.2 Future business needs

Businesses were asked to indicate whether their current premises were likely to be suitable for their future needs. Whilst the majority did think that they were (76%, 22 businesses), 24% (or 7 businesses) did not feel this was the case for them. These included businesses based on an 'industrial estate' and those in a 'town centre location'. Over half of the businesses (53%, 16 businesses) stated that they intended to stay in the same location, whilst a third (33% , 10 businesses) were considering expanding. Those considering expanding were currently based in a variety of locations which included 'town centres', 'industrial estates' and 'out of town' locations as well as business 'based at home' or in 'a local neighbourhood area'.

<sup>15</sup> Business responses have not been statistically analysed by type as the number of responses does not allow this. When drawing conclusions from business responses, it is important to remember that business group responses are relatively small and therefore results may not be representative of their overall group.

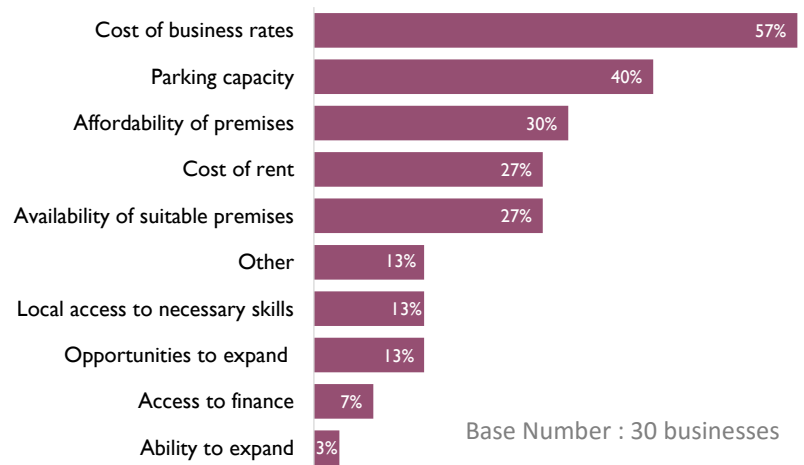
### 6.3 Barriers to business expansion

As identified in the vision and priorities, the Council is keen for local businesses to grow and therefore needs to be aware of what barriers need to be broken down in order for this to happen.

Businesses were asked to identify what they felt were the main barriers to business expansion.

The ‘cost of business rates’ was viewed as the main barrier to expansion. Over half of all respondents selected this as an option and this was also the main barrier to expansion in the previous three years consultation results. ‘Parking capacity’ was the second most common barrier to expansion. ‘Other’ identified barriers to business expansion included *“competition from outside area”*, *“town centre parking costs”*, *“time”* and the fact that the business is housed in an *“historic building”*.

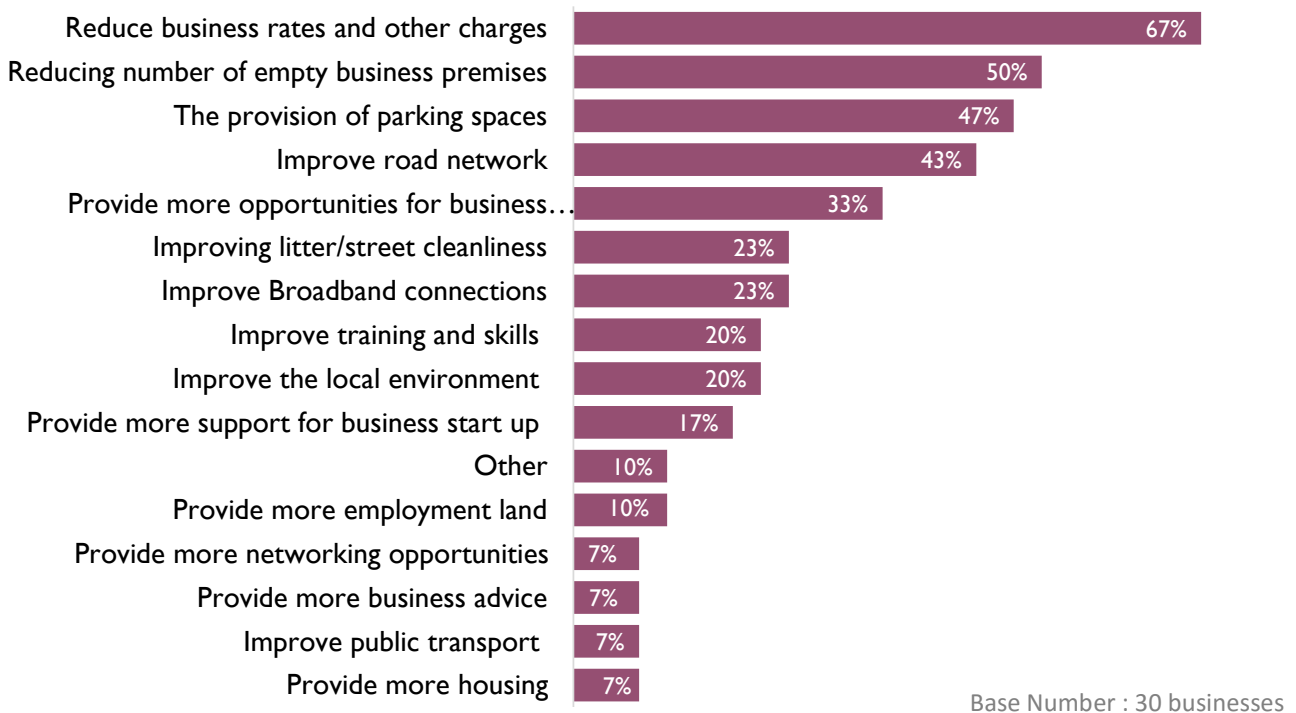
Figure 6.2: What are the barriers to business expansion?



### 6.4 How can Tamworth be improved to assist business and the economy?

Respondents were invited to indicate up to five priorities which could assist businesses and the economy and help to improve Tamworth. Respondents were able to select their priorities from a list of 15 potential priorities and their responses are illustrated in the figure below. The majority felt that ‘reducing business rates and other charges’ would assist business and the economy. This has now been the most popular priority for the last four years.

Figure 6.3: How can Tamworth be improved to assist business and the economy?





Four businesses provided additional comments on how Tamworth could be improved. These were very much individual commentaries from businesses and as such cannot be considered to be representative of businesses overall. They do however provide useful feedback on issues;

- ⇒ *“Up to date sign posting. Remember you have more historic building in Tamworth other than the Castle. We are a busy centre church and can be used for lots of activities”.*
- ⇒ *“encourage people to come to Tamworth by providing permanent FREE parking in all car parks”.*
- ⇒ *“Having recently moved to premises that are double the size of our previous site in Tamworth due to expansion, rent and business rates have doubled. Our growth however does not double overnight. As a business moving (for the second time) within Tamworth, a gradual business rate increase from previous level would have helped. I am aware of other companies that struggle to overcome the double whammy of double rent and rates and they stay put and don't expand as a consequence.”*
- ⇒ *“Reduce Town Centre parking costs.”*

## 7. COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES ORGANISATIONS

Those respondents who completed the questionnaire from the perspective of a community or voluntary organisation were asked to provide their opinions and comment on a number of questions posed to gather a picture of the impacts of public sector cuts and how the organisations and their clients have been impacted by the economic downturn. In total, just three Community and Voluntary Organisations participated in the survey<sup>16</sup>.

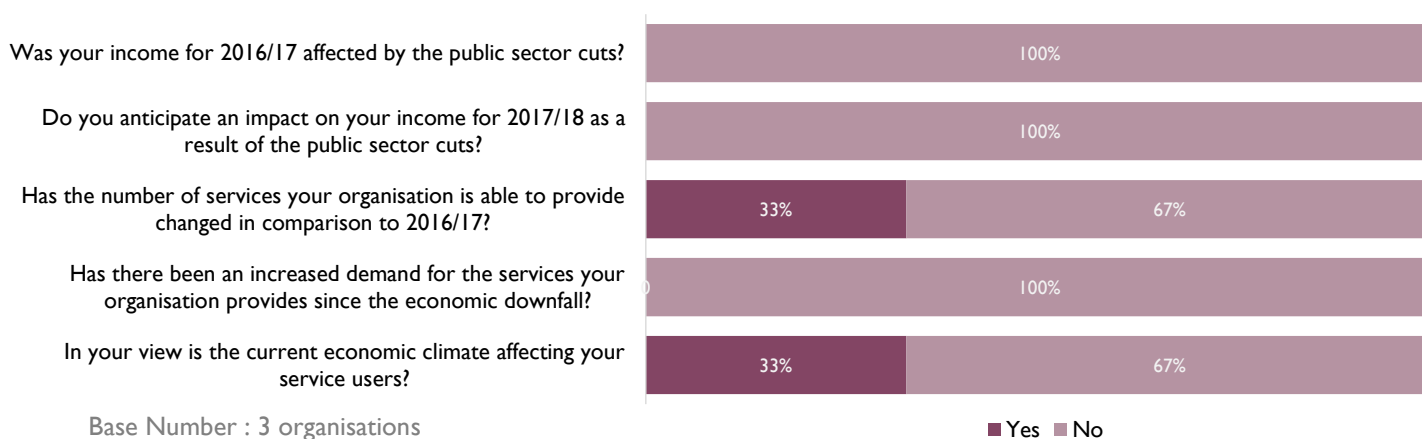
### 7.1 Type of organisation

Two of the three community and voluntary organisations participating described themselves as a being a 'registered charity' while the remaining one was a 'voluntary group'. No responses were received from 'community groups', community interest companies' or 'companies limited by guarantee'.

### 7.2 The impact of budget cuts and the economic downturn on the services provided by Community and Voluntary Organisations

Organisations were invited to answer 'yes' or 'no' to a range of questions about the impact of the budget cuts and the economic downturn. None of the respondents from community and voluntary services said that there had been an 'increased demand for services since the economic downfall' but two of them felt that the 'current economic climate was affecting service users'. No respondents said that their income for 2016/17 had been affected by the public sector cuts, neither did they anticipate an impact on their income for 2017/18. The views shared by all organisations are illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 7.1: Community and Voluntary Organisations responses to a range of questions about the impact of budget cuts and the



Organisations were encouraged to explain how service users had been impacted by the economic downturn. Their responses have been summarised below.

### 7.3 The current economic downturn is affecting service users

Two of the three respondents did feel that the current economic climate was affecting service users. Reasons given for this included;

- ⇒ *"We charge a subscription for the young people to attend the group. In addition where events are organised we need to charge the families to attend. We try to keep these costs to a minimum to ensure that disadvantaged families are able to participate which does impact on our reserves. We do consider the financial viability of any events we organise to ensure that all can participate."*
- ⇒ *"Reduction in monthly giving."*

<sup>16</sup> When drawing conclusions from community and voluntary services organisations, it is important to remember that the base number of responses is small and therefore results may not be representative of the sector overall.

## 8. RESIDENT RESPONDENT PROFILE

### Are you male or female?

Gender 18+	Survey responses		Tamworth MYE 2016
	No's	%	%
Female	119	52%	52%
Male	110	48%	48%
Prefer not to say	1	0.4%	

### Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

	Survey responses		Tamworth 2011 census comparison
	No's	%	%
Yes	79	35%	18%
No	140	62%	82%
Prefer not to say	8	4%	N/A

### What type of disability do you have?

	Survey responses	
	No's	%
Communications	-	
Hearing	14	18%
Learning	3	4%
Mental Health	7	9%
Mobility	49	63%
Physical	35	45%
Visual	2	3%
Other	8	10%

### Ward

Survey responses							
Ward	No's	%	Population Estimates mid 2015	Ward	No's	%	Population Estimates mid 2015
Amington	29	14%	10%	Mercian	20	10%	9%
Belgrave	18	9%	10%	Spital	17	8%	9%
Bolehall	19	9%	10%	Stonydelph	22	11%	10%
Castle	27	13%	10%	Trinity	19	9%	9%
Glascote	24	12%	10%	Wilnecote	11	5%	12%

### What is your age?

	Survey		Tamworth MYE 2016
	No's	%	%
18-24	-	-	8%
25-34	11	5%	13%
35-44	23	10%	13%
45-54	33	14%	14%
55-64	63	27%	12%
65-74	69	30%	11%
75+	29	13%	7%
Prefer not to say	4	2%	

### What is your ethnicity?

	Survey responses		Tamworth 2011 census
	No's	%	%
Asian/Asian British	1	0.4%	0.8%
Black/Black British	-	-	0.51%
Chinese	-	-	0.2%
Mixed Heritage	3	1%	1.0%
White British	218	95%	95%
White-Other	5	2%	2.3%
Other	-	-	0.1%
Prefer not to say	3	1%	N/A

## 9. COMBINED TABLES OF RESULTS <sup>17</sup>

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'living a quality life in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.

	Survey responses					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
The built and natural environments will be conserved to the highest possible standard	51%	19%	12%	6%	3%	9%
More people will live longer, healthier lives.	44%	28%	11%	6%	6%	5%
Fewer children will be obese and run the risk of heart disease and diabetes.	43%	19%	15%	7%	7%	8%
People will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour.	66%	15%	8%	5%	2%	5%
More people will be living independent lives with access to facilities	38%	30%	12%	9%	6%	5%
There will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialised services	32%	26%	15%	7%	10%	9%

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'growing stronger together in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important.

	Survey responses						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
More businesses will locate and succeed in Tamworth	39%	24%	19%	7%	5%	2%	4%
People will have access to a full range of quality housing options	37%	19%	15%	11%	8%	5%	6%
Local infrastructure and connectivity will support an active workforce and help grow the economy	36%	24%	19%	10%	5%	3%	2%
The Council will be recognised as both business friendly and business like in the way it facilitates and operates	25%	25%	14%	10%	8%	10%	7%
Tamworth Town Centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer.	53%	21%	9%	6%	3%	3%	5%
Tamworth will mean 'a great place to live' not simply 'a place with more houses'	52%	19%	8%	5%	5%	6%	5%
The Council will have a Commercial Investment Strategy and an associated trading arm designed to invest in assets/other means of sustainable income generation	23%	23%	15%	10%	7%	5%	16%

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'delivering quality services in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.

Survey responses					
	1	2	3	4	5
Customer Satisfaction levels will be maintained above 90%	42%	28%	17%	3%	8%
Access to all Council Services will be improved	45%	34%	12%	5%	4%
The Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff	52%	24%	12%	5%	6%
We will save you time and money by doing business with you 'On-line'	23%	20%	23%	13%	20%
Fewer customers will have to visit the Council offices to resolve their issues	19%	23%	19%	20%	17%

From the services listed below, if the Council had to make savings or reduce costs, which services do you think we should look at. Please select THREE.

Survey responses			
Sports and leisure	37%	Voluntary sector grants	40%
Events	39%	Voluntary sector commissioning	45%
Refuse collection and recycling	5%	Housing	12%
Parks, open spaces and street cleaning	4%	Housing advice, grants and homelessness	17%
Tackling anti-social behaviour	6%	Business support and advice	36%
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	10%	Improved access to information/customer services	38%

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should increase?

	Survey responses
Car parking (£800,000)	12%
Public charges for leisure and other activity (£400,000)	57%
Waste management (£796,000)	24%
Public spaces (£651,000)	40%
Commercial property (£1,527,000)	46%

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should decrease charges?

	Survey responses
Car parking (£800,000)	82%
Public charges for leisure and other activity (£400,000)	23%
Waste management (£796,000)	31%
Public spaces (£651,000)	19%
Commercial property (£1,527,000)	31%

For the following services, do you think we should spend more, the same or less?

<b>Survey responses</b>				
	<b>More</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Less</b>	<b>No opinion</b>
Sports and Leisure	<b>9%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Events	<b>16%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>6%</b>
Refuse collection and recycling	<b>20%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Parks and open spaces and street cleaning	<b>36%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Tackling anti-social behaviour	<b>60%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>6%</b>
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	<b>39%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Grants for voluntary organisations and charities	<b>14%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities	<b>11%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>2%</b>
Housing	<b>17%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>2%</b>
Housing advice, grants and homelessness	<b>24%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>2%</b>
Business support and advice	<b>13%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>5%</b>
Improved access to information/customer service	<b>15%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>6%</b>

## I0: RESIDENTS TABLES OF RESULTS

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'growing stronger together in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 9 being the least important.

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'living a quality life in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.

	Survey responses					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
The built and natural environments will be conserved to the highest possible standard	52%	19%	11%	6%	4%	9%
More people will live longer, healthier lives.	45%	28%	10%	7%	5%	5%
Fewer children will be obese and run the risk of heart disease and diabetes.	43%	17%	16%	8%	8%	8%
People will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour.	67%	14%	7%	5%	1%	6%
More people will be living independent lives with access to facilities	39%	29%	13%	9%	6%	4%
There will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialised services	34%	24%	14%	8%	11%	9%

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'growing stronger together in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important.

	Survey responses						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
More businesses will locate and succeed in Tamworth	39%	24%	20%	6%	5%	2%	3%
People will have access to a full range of quality housing	38%	17%	14%	12%	7%	5%	6%
Local infrastructure and connectivity will support an active workforce and help grow the economy	34%	25%	21%	10%	5%	3%	2%
The Council will be recognised as both business friendly and	22%	26%	14%	11%	9%	10%	7%
Tamworth Town Centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer.	54%	21%	9%	7%	3%	2%	5%
Tamworth will mean 'a great place to live' not simply 'a place with more houses'	53%	19%	6%	6%	4%	7%	4%
The Council will have a Commercial Investment Strategy and an associated trading arm designed to invest in assets/other means of sustainable income generation	23%	24%	15%	10%	7%	6%	16%

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'delivering quality services in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.

Survey responses					
	1	2	3	4	5
Customer Satisfaction levels will be maintained above 90%	45%	27%	17%	4%	8%
Access to all Council Services will be improved	48%	32%	11%	4%	4%
The Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff	53%	24%	13%	5%	6%
We will save you time and money by doing business with you 'On-line'	21%	18%	25%	13%	22%
Fewer customers will have to visit the Council offices to resolve their issues	18%	23%	19%	22%	18%

Please select FIVE things from the list below that you believe are the most important for making somewhere a good place to live.

Survey responses			
Low levels of crime	90%	Affordable decent housing	48%
Good health services	76%	Good parks and open spaces	57%
Clean streets	52%	Good sports and leisure facilities	11%
Good education provision	50%	Good job prospects	57%
Good shopping facilities	46%	Community events	12%

Please tick FIVE things you feel need to improve most to make Tamworth a better place to live

Survey responses			
Level of crime	76%	Affordable decent housing	50%
Health service	70%	Parks and open spaces	40%
Cleanliness of streets	57%	Sports and leisure facilities	10%
Education provision	41%	Job prospects	59%
Shopping facilities	61%	Community events	17%



For the following services, do you think we should spend more, the same or less?

Survey responses				
	More	Same	Less	No opinion
Sports and Leisure	6%	58%	30%	5%
Events	16%	52%	26%	5%
Refuse collection and recycling	21%	76%	2%	1%
Parks and open spaces and street cleaning	37%	56%	6%	1%
Tackling anti-social behaviour	62%	34%	3%	1%
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	41%	50%	7%	3%
Grants for voluntary organisations and charities	16%	51%	30%	3%
Commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities	12%	52%	30%	6%
Housing	17%	45%	34%	3%
Housing advice, grants and homelessness	25%	51%	23%	2%
Business support and advice	13%	52%	30%	5%
Improved access to information/customer service	15%	46%	32%	7%

From the services listed below, if the Council had to make savings or reduce costs, which services do you think we should look at. Please select THREE.

Survey responses			
Sports and leisure	38%	Voluntary sector grants	39%
Events	41%	Voluntary sector commissioning	44%
Refuse collection and recycling	5%	Housing	12%
Parks, open spaces and street cleaning	4%	Housing advice, grants and homelessness	18%
Tackling anti-social behaviour	6%	Business support and advice	37%
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	10%	Improved access to information/customer services	40%

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should increase?

	Survey responses
Car parking (£800,000)	14%
Public charges for leisure and other activity (£400,000)	63%
Waste management (£796,000)	24%
Public spaces (£651,000)	43%
Commercial property (£1,527,000)	51%

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should decrease charges ?

	Survey responses
Car parking (£800,000)	80%
Public charges for leisure and other activity (£400,000)	25%
Waste management (£796,000)	37%
Public spaces (£651,000)	21%
Commercial property (£1,527,000)	30%

Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?

Survey responses		Survey responses	
Definitely agree	9%	Tend to disagree	31%
Agree	23%	Definitely disagree	21%
Neither agree or disagree	15%	Don't know	1%

Would you like to be more involved in the decisions that affect your local area?

Survey responses		Survey responses	
Yes	43%	Depends on the issue	6%
No	49%	Don't know	2%

What would you consider to be an acceptable Council Tax increase for the 2016/2017 budget?

Survey responses		Survey responses	
Option A (0.6%)	55%	Option C (2.5%)	6%
Option B (2.0%)	29%	Option D (3.0%)	11%

## II: BUSINESS TABLES OF RESULTS

Which of the following best describes your business location?

Survey responses			
Town centre location	27%	Out of town shopping park	-
Out of town location	17%	A local neighbourhood area	10%
Industrial estate	37%	Based at home	10%

What is the status of your company at this location?

Survey responses			
Independent with no other branches	67%	Public sector organisation	-
Head office	13%	Other	13%
Branch or subsidiary of a larger group	7%		

What are the main reasons why your company is based here?

Survey responses			
Availability of suitable workforce	10%	Cost of the site/premises	21%
Nature of local economy	7%	Availability of local facilities	3%
Proximity of suppliers		Access to main road network	-
Proximity to customers	21%	Availability of Broadband	3%
Quality of the environment	7%	Other	17%
Nature of the site/premises	31%		48%
			3%

Are the premises suitable for your current or likely future needs?

Survey responses	
Yes	76%
No	24%

What are your company's intentions with regard to this location?

Survey responses			
Expand	33%	Stay the same	53%
Contract	-	Relocate	17%

In your opinion, what are the barriers to business expansion? (Please select three)

Survey responses			
Cost of business rates	57%	Ability to expand	3%
Affordability of premises	30%	Opportunities to expand	13%
Parking capacity	40%	Local access to necessary skills	13%
Availability of suitable premises	27%	Access to finance	7%
Cost of rent	27%		13%

How can Tamworth be improved to assist businesses and the economy? We need your top five priorities from the examples given below, or if not listed tell us what they are by completing 'other'?

Survey responses			
Provide more employment land	10%	Improve training and skills	20%
Provide more housing	7%	The provision of parking spaces	47%
Improve road network	43%	Reducing number of empty business premises	50%
Improve public transport	7%	Improving litter/street cleanliness	23%
Improve the local environment	20%	Provide more support for business start up	17%
Improve Broadband connections	23%	Provide more opportunities for business growth	33%
Reduce business rates and other charges	67%	Provide more networking opportunities	7%
Provide more business advice	7%	Other	10%

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'living a quality life in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least important.

Survey responses						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
The built and natural environments will be conserved to the highest possible standard	43%	23%	20%	3%	-	10%
More people will live longer, healthier lives.	37%	33%	13%	-	7%	10%
Fewer children will be obese and run the risk of heart disease and diabetes.	45%	28%	10%	3%	3%	10%
People will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social	60%	20%	10%	-	7%	3%
More people will be living independent lives with access to	30%	37%	10%	13%	3%	7%
There will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialised	20%	43%	23%	-	7%	7%

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'growing stronger together in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important.

	Survey responses						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
More businesses will locate and succeed in Tamworth	40%	27%	13%	10%	-	-	10%
People will have access to a full range of quality housing	23%	27%	23%	10%	10%	3%	3%
Local infrastructure and connectivity will support an active workforce and help grow the economy	46%	18%	7%	14%	7%	4%	4%
The Council will be recognised as both business friendly and	50%	13%	17%	3%	3%	7%	7%
Tamworth Town Centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer.	53%	27%	7%	-	-	7%	7%
Tamworth will mean 'a great place to live' not simply 'a place with more houses'	40%	23%	23%	-	7%	-	7%
The Council will have a Commercial Investment Strategy and an associated trading arm designed to invest in assets/other means of sustainable income generation	28%	24%	14%	10%	10%	-	14%

Please tell us how important our priorities under 'delivering quality services in Tamworth' are to you, with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.

	Survey responses				
	1	2	3	4	5
Customer Satisfaction levels will be maintained above 90%	28%	41%	24%	-	7%
Access to all Council Services will be improved	21%	48%	21%	7%	3%
The Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff	48%	31%	3%	7%	10%
We will save you time and money by doing business with you 'On-line'	33%	37%	10%	13%	7%
Fewer customers will have to visit the Council offices to resolve their issues	23%	30%	27%	7%	13%

For the following services, do you think we should spend more, the same or less?

Survey responses				
	More	Same	Less	No opinion
Sports and Leisure	28%	52%	10%	10%
Events	21%	45%	24%	10%
Refuse collection and recycling	14%	76%	3%	7%
Parks and open spaces and street cleaning	28%	62%	3%	7%
Tackling anti-social behaviour	50%	37%	7%	7%
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	37%	50%	7%	7%
Grants for voluntary organisations and charities	7%	50%	33%	10%
Commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities	10%	57%	23%	10%
Housing	23%	43%	23%	10%
Housing advice, grants and homelessness	21%	45%	24%	10%
Business support and advice	13%	40%	33%	13%
Improved access to information/customer service	13%	30%	47%	10%

From the services listed below, if the Council had to make savings or reduce costs, which services do you think we should look at. Please select THREE.

Survey responses			
Sports and leisure	24%	Voluntary sector grants	59%
Events	34%	Voluntary sector commissioning	62%
Refuse collection and recycling	7%	Housing	14%
Parks, open spaces and street cleaning	3%	Housing advice, grants and homelessness	14%
Tackling anti-social behaviour	7%	Business support and advice	24%
Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth	14%	Improved access to information/customer services	31%

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should increase?

	Survey responses
Car parking (£800,000)	8%
Public charges for leisure and other activity (£400,000)	52%
Waste management (£796,000)	44%
Public spaces (£651,000)	48%
Commercial property (£1,527,000)	36%

Which TWO of the below income areas do you think the Council could/should decrease charges ?

	Survey responses
Car parking (£800,000)	90%
Public charges for leisure and other activity (£400,000)	23%
Waste management (£796,000)	13%
Public spaces (£651,000)	10%
Commercial property (£1,527,000)	53%

## I2: COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION RESULTS

What type of organisation are you?

	Survey responses
A registered charity	67%
Company limited by guarantee	-
Community interest company	-
Voluntary group	33%
Community group	-
Other	-

Has your income for 2016/17 been affected by the public sector cuts?

	Survey responses
Yes	-
No	100%

Do you anticipate an impact on your income for 2017/18 as a result of the public sector cuts?

	Survey responses
Yes	-
No	100%

Has there been an increased demand for the services your organisation provides since the economic downfall?

	Survey responses
Yes	-
No	100%

In your view is the current economic climate affecting your service users?

	Survey responses
Yes	67%
No	33%

Has the number of services your organisation is able to provide changed in comparison to 2015/16?

	Survey responses
Yes	33%
No	67%

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THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2017

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING SERVICES****COUNCIL SUPPORT FOR THE STARFISH WINTER NIGHTSHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

N/A

**PURPOSE**

To outline arrangements for the provision of a Winter Night Shelter for homeless people for 3 months from December 2017 to February 2018 and to request that Council support be given to the setting up and running of the scheme. This includes releasing £6,000.00 of Homelessness Prevention Grant via a grant to the Starfish Project Trustees and the Tamworth Covenanting Churches to support the employment of a part time project co-ordinator. The co-ordinator will oversee the setting up and operation of the project until March 2018.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**It is recommended that Cabinet agree to the Council supporting the provision of a Winter Night Shelter for homeless people for 3 months from December 2017 to February 2018.**

**It is further recommended that £6,000.00 Homelessness Prevention Grant is provided as a grant to support the setting up and operation of the project to March 2018.**

**Additionally, it is recommended that outcomes from the project are reported to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee following the close of the scheme in March 2018.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Following the successful Winter Night Shelter trial, run by the Starfish Project in February 2017, the Starfish Project Trustees and the Tamworth Covenanting Churches have decided to operate a Winter Night Shelter for 3 months in 2017/2018. The Shelter will be open to homeless persons and rough sleepers from 1st December 2017 through to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

The February 2017 project was set up with external support from Housing Justice, an organisation that has considerable experience of helping to set up similar ventures in other areas. The pilot was deemed to be a success with, on average, six guests being provided with hospitality and accommodation on each night the pilot was in operation.

Evidence provided by Starfish demonstrates that relevant policies and procedures were developed with the support of Housing Justice to ensure risks, safeguarding and referral processes, including forms and procedures, were designed and in place. Additional public liability and property insurances were also arranged for all seven venues utilised in the pilot.

The Council did not formerly support the pilot project but did engage with the project steering team to ensure an awareness of arrangements for the operation of the pilot, to re-iterate the Council's statutory duties with regard to homelessness and to ensure effective liaison between the Housing Solutions team, other agencies such as the police and the project team during the operation of the pilot.

The Council received a report from Starfish in April 2017 (attached at **Appendix 1**) that provided information concerning the operation of the pilot scheme and issues that had arisen. The report concluded by outlining future plans for a 3 month scheme in 2017/18 and suggesting that it was their intention to seek support from Tamworth Borough Council to operate an extended scheme during the coming winter period.

Discussions with Starfish Project Trustees and the Tamworth Covenanting Churches regarding their proposals have been on-going since April 2017. In June 2017, the Council received a formal proposal (attached at **Appendix 2**) requesting support for the proposed 3 month scheme.

The scheme is now going ahead as planned it is proposed the Council support the project as requested. A project co-ordinator has now been appointed and preparations are now being made to ensure the Night Shelter is fully operational on December 1<sup>st</sup> as planned. Given the financial pressures this process has placed on the scheme organisers to date, the provision of financial and other support from the Council would assist in not only ensuring the scheme runs successfully this winter but will also ensure future plans can be devised that will assist homeless people in future years.

There are a number of benefits to the Council in agreeing to support the Night Shelter this winter. These can be summarised as follows:

- The Council supporting the scheme will ensure we can influence arrangements around safeguarding, appropriate training for volunteers and the setting up of project. This is especially important as we anticipate the project to take place regardless of Tamworth Council's financial support. Support from the Council will assist in solidifying joint working between Starfish / the voluntary and community sector and the Housing Solutions Team to ensure full appreciation of the Council's statutory duties, effective liaison with other agencies (i.e. police, medical practitioners, social care) and the development of a pathway approach that supports the needs of those assisted (including re-housing options and other support needs to sustain accommodation and wellbeing)
- Joint working would be strengthened and possible links to other initiatives in the community (e.g. food banks) could be further developed to support those in need
- Joint working would provide opportunities for further project development or voluntary and community sector delivery of homelessness prevention services on behalf of the Council (e.g. SWEP over the winter months to assist rough sleepers). This approach would be compatible with requirements around the role of partners as set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Council support would further enhance the positive profile of our focus on reducing homelessness by making it a priority of this Council
- Support would assist in building public understanding of the Council's roles and responsibilities regarding homelessness
- Council engagement with the project would support the Corporate priority "Living a quality life in Tamworth" especially with regard to "There will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialised services".

Safeguarding, Community Safety and Strategic Housing Officers have continued discussions with the project steering group and have worked to ensure that if support is agreed, the scheme will operate in accordance with the Council's requirements

**OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

<p><b>Option 1:</b> The Council does not support the scheme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No expense incurred by the Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No TBC influence on running of the scheme</li> <li>• Potential for adverse publicity a) for not supporting the scheme or b) if issues arise</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased demand on the Housing Solutions team &amp; resources arising from lack of understanding of TBC role &amp; responsibilities</li> <li>• Partner organisations' financial resources depleted</li> </ul>
<p><b>Option 2:</b> The Council defers it's support &amp; continues to work informally with Starfish</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No expense incurred by the Council</li> <li>• Additional time to make plans for potential support in 2018/19</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No TBC influence on running of the scheme</li> <li>• Potential for adverse publicity a) for not supporting the scheme or b) if issues arise</li> <li>• Increased demand on the Housing Solutions team &amp; resources arising from lack of understanding of TBC role &amp; responsibilities</li> <li>• Voluntary &amp; community sector less likely to work in partnership with TBC</li> <li>• Potential to stifle development of innovative solutions &amp; comprehensive, joined up approach to homelessness prevention</li> <li>• Partner organisations' financial resources depleted</li> </ul>
<p><b>Option 3:</b> The Council provides support as requested</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council influence running of the scheme</li> <li>• Enhanced provision for homeless people</li> <li>• Enhanced joint working arrangements</li> <li>• Partner organisations retain financial stability &amp; ability to undertake other projects</li> <li>• Greater public awareness of homelessness &amp; prevention approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for adverse publicity if issues arise</li> <li>• Potential duplication of provision &amp; cost if not run in tandem with SWEPP</li> <li>• TBC expend prevention grant when resources are limited &amp; SWEPP provision is in place</li> <li>• Still potential for increased demand on Solution Team</li> <li>• Potential for legal challenge from those assisted and / or volunteers</li> </ul>

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Project steering group have requested that the Council meet the costs of employing a

part time project co-ordinator. This will equate to £6,000.00 to cover employment to this role from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. If agreed, this amount can be paid as a retrospective grant (given a co-ordinator has already been appointed) and be met from existing Homelessness Prevention Grant funding. It is considered the one off contribution of £6,000.00 will be sufficient to cover the period to March 2018. The use of the Council's funding will be monitored and outcomes from the scheme reported to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee following the close of the scheme.

As a budget of £3,000.00 has previously been allocated from Homelessness Prevention Grant to support the SWEP programme from October through to March 2018, £1,500.00 can be re-diverted to support the Night Shelter scheme to cover the 3 months when the shelter is operational (and subsequently providing shelter as per temporary accommodation provided under SWEP) with the remaining £4,500.00 coming from the main Homelessness Prevention Grant.

The many benefits of supporting the scheme (as highlighted above) outweigh the increased cost of supporting the project and resourcing emergency SWEP accommodation over the winter months when the project is not operational. Evidence from the pilot scheme last year suggested that the scheme had made an impact as Council statistics clearly demonstrated a reduction in the number of rough sleepers in the town. Should the project be delivered in partnership with the Council successfully this year then future plans may involve SWEP provision being run on the Council's behalf by the voluntary and community sector via a further extended Night Shelter scheme that operates from October through to the following March.

Additionally, there is a clear expectation as set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 that the voluntary sector will be engaged in the delivery of wider homelessness prevention activities. Working in partnership on the Night Shelter project will strengthen the Council's relationship with third sector colleagues and provide a firm basis via which to develop other joint work streams in line with requirements of the new legislation.

It should also be noted that officer time devoted to supporting this project has already been substantial and that during the operational phase, the Housing Solutions Team will be required to fully liaise with the project to ensure statutory duties continue to be applied and future housing pathways are devised to assist those people supported into sustainable accommodation.

Again, the wider benefits of supporting the scheme, combined with the fact that in all likelihood the Solutions team will be required to intervene regardless of what temporary accommodation is provided, will not adversely affect the services delivered by the Council and longer term are likely to enhance that provision as previously discussed.

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

Should the Council agree to support the Night Shelter project, there are possible legal implications for the Council concerning:

- Health and Safety (accommodation utilised; service users and volunteers; residents residing in the vicinity of the church buildings utilised to deliver the scheme)
- Complaints / challenges from those assisted should incidents occur / safeguarding / the accommodation be sub-standard / DDA / deterioration in health and wellbeing / equalities and diversity
- Possible challenges from volunteers and members of the public

However, as highlighted above and within the appendices to this report, Council officers have worked with the project steering group to ensure identified risks have considered in order to reduce the potential for harm to individuals or legal challenge to the Council's involvement with the project.

Risks associated with the project are highlighted in the Options Considered table above and

again, Council officers have worked with the project steering group to ensure these identified risks have been recognised and provisions have been put in place to lessen those risks. This process has included the Council's Safeguarding Officer working with the project steering group to:

- amend relevant policies to ensure they are up-to-date and fit for purpose
- provide assistance to the newly appointed project co-ordinator in terms of the provision of safeguarding training for volunteers
- review individual Church risk assessments in addition to specific, project related assessments
- seek assurance that appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks have been completed

Although the Council has worked with the project to reduce risks it is not possible for risk of harm to individuals to be entirely mitigated. Clearly, if an individual accommodated by the project were to be harmed then the Council involvement in the scheme would be subject to scrutiny. However, this must be set against the risk of harm to individuals who may, because the scheme is not available, sleep rough or be accommodated by the Council elsewhere. It is considered that on balance the risk of harm to individuals is lessened by the operation of this scheme.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are significant beneficial implications of supporting the Night Shelter project as listed above. These include:

1. Assisting rough sleepers who are exposed to winter weather conditions
2. Preventing homelessness in Tamworth
3. Contributing to healthier outcomes for those assisted by the project
4. Enabling vulnerable residents to access sustainable and good quality accommodation
5. Further developing a multi-agency response to rough sleeping / homelessness prevention to assist the effective implementation of new legislative requirements

These and other associated outcomes would contribute towards the delivery of key priorities identified by the Tamworth Strategic Partnership and adopted by Tamworth Borough Council. Specifically, Council engagement with the project would support the Corporate priority "Living a quality life in Tamworth" especially with regard to "there will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialised services".

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Following the successful trial Winter Night Shelter run by the Starfish Project in February 2017, the Starfish Project Trustees and the Tamworth Covenanted Churches have decided to operate a Winter Night Shelter for 3 months in 2017/2018. The Shelter will be open to homeless persons and rough sleepers from 1st December 2017 through to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

The overall responsibility for the operation of the Shelter will rest with the Starfish Trustees working through a Steering Team Further details of the individuals involved are provided at **Appendix 2**).

Lessons learned from the pilot project last winter have been applied and the need for an effective project co-ordinator remains central to the success of the extended, 3 month scheme this winter. The Trustees have appointed an appropriately qualified co-ordinator who will have day to day responsibility for the running of the scheme, in conjunction with the Steering Team. The Co-ordinator will be paid £10 per hour and will be employed from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

As was the case with the pilot project in February 2017, each of the seven Churches participating in the scheme will provide the shelter accommodation on one night per week, on a rotating basis. In each of the churches there will be teams of volunteers working in three shifts. The church buildings that will be utilised to provide accommodation are:

- ❖ St John's Catholic Church, Tamworth
- ❖ Baptist Church, Belgrave;
- ❖ St Barnabas Church, Mile Oak
- ❖ Elim Church, Glascote
- ❖ St Peter's Church, Glascote Heath
- ❖ Holy Trinity Church, Wilnecote
- ❖ St Andrew's Methodist Church, Leyfields

Evidence provided by Starfish demonstrates that relevant policies and procedures were developed with the support of Housing Justice to ensure risks, safeguarding and referral processes, including forms and procedures, were designed and in place. Additional public liability and property insurances were also arranged for all seven venues utilised in the pilot.

Re-assurance around relevant points pertaining to health and safety; safeguarding, insurance, financial management and compliance with applicable legislation are included in **Appendix 2**. In addition, relevant policies and procedures are in place that have been both updated and assessed by Council officers as now being "fit for purpose". Further, Council officers have worked with the project team to ensure the policies and procedures utilised to run the pilot scheme have been implemented effectively and backed up with the required training and risk assessments.

Specifically, the project team were asked, in addition to relevant policies and procedures, to provide:

- more detail on how these have been / are to be implemented
- further detail on training that has been undertaken with volunteers / future training requirements
- Detail on risk assessments and evidence on how identified risks are to be mitigated
- Safeguarding – how this will be applied to both volunteers and those people assisted
- More detail on the co-ordinator role (e.g. experience, training)

Whilst risk can never be eliminated from any project of this nature, it is considered that arrangements are now in place that diminish those risks and lessen the likelihood of challenge against the Council. Indeed, should support for the project not be forthcoming, it remains the intention of the Board of Trustees to go ahead with the project regardless of the stance adopted by the Council. Consequently, the Council would arguably be at even greater risk of challenge as highlighted previously within this report should issues arise and we had been seen not to assist in helping deliver the scheme.

It is therefore recommended that the Council support the Night Shelter project as detailed above and continue to work with partners to develop a comprehensive approach to homelessness prevention in Tamworth

#### **REPORT AUTHOR**

Steve Pointon  
Head of Strategic Housing

#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

#### **APPENDICES**

1. **Starfish Report on Pilot Scheme**
2. **Formal Scheme Proposal**



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## **The Starfish Winter Night Shelter**

### **Introduction:**

The churches of Tamworth, under the banner of Tamworth Covenanting Churches (TCC), have spoken about the problems of homelessness, especially those who sleep rough, for some years. However, in 2016 there was a fresh and growing desire to somehow meet the need of the homeless ourselves, rather than merely persuade local housing charities or statutory bodies into action. The churches of the town interact regularly, through their many community projects, with people who are vulnerable and on the margins of society, and felt that they had a sufficient understanding of the need, if not necessarily the expertise to run the project themselves without any external guidance and support.

For this reason, and at an early stage of discussions, church leaders met with Emma Neill from Housing Justice, a Christian organisation with a background of enabling faith groups to set up and run successful winter night shelters for rough sleepers. Housing Justice has considerable experience and expertise in this area having been involved in the setting up and running of over 70 such centres.

Following this, the clergy of TCC suggested that this project might sit within the Starfish Project charity, which has been running in Tamworth for 11 years, during which time it has extended its reach from one centre to five centres throughout Tamworth. The Starfish Project was set up initially as an outreach project of TCC, reaching those affected by drug use— though its focus has extended to working with the disenfranchised and marginalised, not just individuals and families affected by drug use. The memorandum and articles of association of the Starfish Project states that six of its trustees are to be clergy from TCC demonstrating a very close association between the two bodies.

The suggestion was put to the trustees of Starfish and it received unanimous backing to run a pilot scheme for one month in February 2017. The trustees were aware of the significant challenge in running this scheme when this decision was made in late October 2016 with only a three month lead-in time. However, if possible, it was felt that it would be better to run this pilot scheme in February as the alternative was to wait until the winter months of 2017/18 which would then push back the actual project another year.

### **Preparation:**

The Starfish trustees appointed a steering team to oversee and guide the pilot scheme. The four members of the steering team were:

- Rev Dr Steve Jonathan: Senior Minister of the Elim Church, Chair of Trustees of the Manna House charity hosting a number of community projects, and Chair of Trustees of the Starfish Project.
- Rev Michael White: Parish Priest of St John's and Sacred Heart RC churches. Michael is also a trustee and founder member of Heart of Tamworth Community project, and has experience in running a number of community projects.

- Mr Jack Brierley: Jack has worked as a Company Secretary in his working life and is an active church member of St Andrew's Methodist Church, Leyfields, and a trustee and Company Secretary for the Starfish Project.
- Mr John Larkin: John has worked for Birmingham City Mission for many years before taking on the role of Starfish Project manager in 2005. John also kindly agreed to act as coordinator for the pilot scheme.

The steering team worked hard to communicate and inspire people from across the town, mainly through the TCC network of churches. During the next couple of months, the following was achieved:

- Further consultation with Housing Justice.
- Seven churches offered their premises to be used for the winter night shelter. All premises were then assessed by our coordinator of the pilot scheme according to the guidelines of Housing Justice. The seven churches all possessed the relevant Food Hygiene certificates for their kitchens.
  - ~ Sunday – St Barbabas's, Mile Oak
  - ~ Monday – Manna House/Elim Church
  - ~ Tuesday – St Peter's
  - ~ Wednesday - Holy Trinity
  - ~ Thursday – St Andrew's
  - ~ Friday – St John's
  - ~ Saturday – Tamworth Baptist
- Camp beds were kindly offered to the project by the army (4th Battalion of the Mercian Regiment) through Rev Tim Flowers (local Methodist minister and Army Chaplain).
- Bedding was supplied by the Holiday Inn as they refurbished and upgraded their stock.
- Co-ordinators were selected and trained for each of the seven venues.
- Suitable publicity for the pilot scheme was disseminated to all churches in the town.
- Volunteer forms were created and were distributed to around 180 people through the TCC network. Forms and accompanying references were scrutinised by the venue coordinators.
- A training night for all volunteers was hosted with Housing Justice. Further training was rolled out for those unable to attend.
- All venues were required to have holders of Food Hygiene Certificates.
- It was agreed that the night shelter should run from 8.00pm to 8.00am with three shifts, in all centres.
- Transport of beds from venue to venue was agreed.
- All policies were adapted from the Housing Justice set policies. See Volunteer Handbook attachment.
- Tamworth Borough Council Housing Department representatives were informed of the details and developments of the pilot scheme.
- Additional public liability and property insurances were arranged for all seven venues.
- Referral processes, including forms and procedures, were designed, based on the Housing Justice model (see attachment).

### **The Pilot Scheme**

Number of guests: On average, six guests were provided hospitality and accommodation each night.

#### *Feedback from Venue Co-ordinators:*

- ~ Growing friendship, comradery and support between the venues
- ~ Pilot scheme ran smoothly
- ~ Excellent administration
- ~ Greater understanding of plight of homeless, especially rough sleepers
- ~ Support from Housing Justice was valuable
- ~ Community spirit experienced between volunteers and guests sharing meals together
- ~ Communication channels didn't always work well
- ~ Overnight session was more difficult to cover with volunteers in some venues
- ~ Moving beds was significant commitment for one couple who took on this role for the duration of project
- ~ Occasional challenging behaviour from guests
- ~ Not enough time to meet with guests before they wanted to bed down
- ~ Significant concern for guests who will return to the streets at the end of the project
- ~ Negligible support from Tamworth Borough Council was a concern by some

#### *Comments from Guests*

- ~ Gratitude for the provision
- ~ Some meals were preferred to others
- ~ Some venues were preferred to others
- ~ Occasionally, a guest felt patronised

#### *Areas of concern / change:*

- ~ A question of whether two or three months was the right move for Winter 2017/18
- ~ More training for volunteers on dealing with challenging behaviour
- ~ Open venues at 7.00pm with meal at 7.30pm (instead of 8.00pm and 8.30pm)
- ~ Each venue to arrange for the transportation of beds to next venue
- ~ Many who offered to volunteer were not used in the pilot scheme, especially those from churches not offering a venue. This was largely due to the short lead-in time to the pilot scheme. It is hoped that all suitable volunteers will be given opportunity to serve next winter.
- ~ Need to work in partnership with Tamworth Borough Council and other agencies.
- ~ Need for improvement of referral process with other agencies.
- ~ Need a part-time salaried co-ordinator. This role is **vital** for the success of the project.

### **Future plans**

- Winter 2017/2018: it is our aim to run the winter shelter for the months of December 2017 to February 2018 (inclusive).
- We aim to employ a part-time co-ordinator at 20 hours / week for the duration of the project, and 10 hours/week for two months prior to the commencement of the winter shelter. The cost of this post will be in the region of £6000. This would require a start date at the beginning of October, thereby requiring interviews before the end of July.
- We will seek external funding Tamworth Borough Council who will be invited to act as partners for the winter shelter. Failure to secure funding will jeopardise the future of the project.
- Based on December 2017 — February 2017 (inclusive) where there was 28 recorded days at zero degrees and below (Birmingham), the saving to the council for just six people not requiring SWEP help would be  $28 \times 6 \times £40 = £6720$  (£40 is an estimate cost. Tamworth Borough Council will be able to confirm the actual cost per head). Since the winter night shelter will be offering 10 places, the saving to the council would amount to £11,200 (based on £40 per night). This calculation is for illustrative purposes only.

Attachment:

- Volunteer hand Book

SJ/April2017

**STARFISH WINTER NIGHT SHELTER**  
**2017/2018**

**Proposal for Tamworth Borough Council**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Following the successful trial Winter Night Shelter run by the Starfish Project in February 2017, the Starfish Project Trustees and the Tamworth Covenanting Churches have decided to operate a Winter Night Shelter for 3 months in 2017/2018. The Shelter will be open to homeless persons and rough sleepers from 1st December 2017 through to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

**2. Operation of the Scheme and its Timelines**

2.1 The overall responsibility for the Shelter would rest with the Starfish Trustees working through a Steering Team of four. The Steering Team comprises:

Revd Dr Steve Jonathan – Chair of the Starfish Trustees;

Revd Father Michael White – Parish Priest for the Catholic Parish of St John the Baptist with Sacred Heart;

John Larkin – Project Manager for the Starfish Project (John also acted as Project Co-ordinator for the one month trial Winter Night Shelter in February 2017); and  
Jack Brierley – Starfish Company Secretary

2.2 The Trustees are currently advertising for a paid Shelter Co-ordinator, who will have day to day responsibility for the running of the scheme, in conjunction with the Steering Team. The Co-ordinator will be paid £10 per hour and will be employed from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. During those 6 months, the Co-ordinator will work around 430 hours. The closing date for applications for the Shelter Co-ordinator post is 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017. A Job Description and Person Specification have been prepared and will be circulated to applicants. It is estimated that the cost of this post will be around £6,000.

2.3 Working under the Shelter Co-ordinator will be a Venue Co-ordinator for each of the seven Churches which will provide the shelter accommodation on one night per week, on a rotating basis. In each of the churches there will be teams of volunteers working in three shifts – evening shift, overnight shift and the morning breakfast shift. Most of these volunteers worked in the trial Shelter earlier this year and have acquired a lot of experience during the trial.

2.4 The seven churches around Tamworth, which will provide the shelter accommodation are:

St John's Catholic Church, Tamworth

Baptist Church, Belgrave;  
St Barnabas Church, Mile Oak  
Elim Church, Glascote  
St Peter's Church, Glascote Heath  
Holy Trinity Church, Wilnecote  
St Andrew's Methodist Church, Leyfields

### **3. Health and Safety**

3.1 All participating churches have their own comprehensive Health and Safety regimes

### **4. Safeguarding**

4.1 Many of the Venue Co-ordinators and Volunteers have undergone Safeguarding, Listening and First Aid training through their own churches and through Starfish itself.

4.2 Starfish is also looking at securing additional training on safeguarding and dealing with aggressive behaviour.

4.3 Starfish Volunteers all hold Enhanced DBS certificates

### **5. Insurance**

5.1 All seven hosting churches have taken out additional public liability and property insurance cover in connection with the Night Shelter.

### **6. Financial Management and Value for Money**

6.1 As a registered charity (Charity registered number 1149803), Starfish is well aware of its financial responsibilities and is always prudent in its financial dealings, seeking value for money, wherever possible. In any event, all charities are legally charged with the duty of financial prudence.

6.2 The Starfish Treasurer, Peter Jenkinson, is a retired Accountant of many years standing. Starfish also retains the services of Phillip Barnes & Co, the Tamworth based firm of Accountants and Business Advisors.

### **7. Compliance**

7.1 Starfish is a Company Limited by Guarantee (Company Number 7004934). Its Company Secretary, Jack Brierley, has many years experience of acting as a Company Secretary and is also a qualified Chartered Secretary. One of his main duties as Company Secretary is to ensure that everything done complies with charity law, company law and the general law. He was formerly a local authority Chief Officer – Borough Secretary (Head of Administrative and Legal Services).

## **8. Competency**

8.1 As will be seen above, the Starfish Project is well established and organised and has been running for over 10 years. Its Trustees are all registered with Companies House and the Charity Commission and are all competent in their own fields.

8.2 The Trustees comprise 6 Ministers directly appointed by the Tamworth Covenanted Churches, 5 Starfish Centre Co-ordinators, the Starfish Project Co-ordinator, the Company Secretary and one representative from the Starfish Vision Group.

## **9. Requests for the Borough Council to consider**

9.1 These can be summarised as:-

- a. Financial assistance towards the cost of employing the Shelter Co-ordinator (paragraph 2.2)
- b. The direct provision of training (paragraph 4.2)
- c. Referring homeless persons and rough sleepers to the Shelter Co-ordinator – this will also be a responsibility for other Shelter partner organisations, we shall be contacting
- d. Onward support in securing long term accommodation for our guests – the homeless persons and rough sleepers
- e. Any Officer support the Council is able give

## **10. Conclusion**

10.1 It is hoped that this submission is acceptable to the Council, but please let us know if there is any further information which is needed.

10.2 If it would be helpful, one or two of us are prepared to attend your meeting to formally present this proposal and to answer any questions there might be.

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THURSDAY, 02 NOVEMBER 2017

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING SERVICES****URGENT RENEWAL OF PEEL HOUSE LIFT****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

Non-Confidential

**PURPOSE**

This report sets out the current situation in relation to the defective lifts in Peel House, the impact of lift renewals on the current capital programme and the implications relating to Leaseholders.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet approve:-

- Option 3 detailed in the report allowing for the installation of the EVEN lift to be delayed until at least May 2018 be endorsed
- The ODD lift is ordered immediately with a view to installing as soon as possible [Mid-March 2018]
- The consultation process for Leaseholders be waived to allow for immediate ordering and renewal of the ODD lift as it is assessed as immediate and necessary urgent works that without could constitute a breach to Health & Safety and compromise compliance with the Council's Home regulatory standard. Consultation on the EVEN lift was completed prior to ordering the EVEN lift.
- Leaseholders be charged the maximum amount allowable without having completed statutory consultation of £250.00 each. The contract for the installation of the ODD lift be awarded to Classic Lifts on the basis of their previous submission using a mini-competition under the Fusion 21 Framework
- The virement of £120,160 from the Housing Revenue Account Prior to Paint revenue budget to the Housing Revenue Account Lift Renewals capital budget to fund the installation of the ODD lift which is an addition to the programme.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Council as landlord is obliged to comply with the Home Standard<sup>1</sup> which requires landlords to:-

(a) provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time

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1

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419208/Home\\_Standard\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419208/Home_Standard_2015.pdf)

(b) meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

To ensure regulatory compliance an assessment of the lifts at the high rise flats has been undertaken. Following a series of discussions with the Portfolio Holder for Housing along with Castle Ward members the recommendations being made incorporates political views and seeks to mitigate the headline risks are summarised as:-

- Following planned works to replace 4 lifts at the high-rise; commencing with Peel house EVEN the ODD lift has developed a series of recurrent faults taking it out of service temporarily
- Mobility Scooter misuse is judged to be the cause of 77% of the breakdowns
- If Peel EVEN went ahead for replacement (taking it out of action for up to 12 weeks) Peel ODD could be highly likely to experience further fault – effectively meaning there is no lift access available in Peel house

There are two lifts in each of the high-rise blocks, other than at the ground floor and top floor each lift stops at alternate levels (ODD/ EVEN).

Under the current HRA capital programme four lifts had been identified for renewal in four different blocks, these had been selected based on recent historic failure rates and the age of the lift; the lifts have been selected for renewal as they have reached end of life and parts are becoming obsolete. To comply with our obligations under the Commonhold & Leasehold Reform Act consultations have taken place with all Leaseholders in the affected blocks. Lifts were subsequently procured by way of a mini-competition within the Fusion 21 Framework agreement. The consultation process for Peel House only included one lift, that being the EVEN lift and as such there has been no consultation for the second lift, the ODD Lift.

At the time of agreeing the programme there had been frequent failures of the EVEN lift in Peel House and as such this lift was scheduled for replacement. Since placing the order for this lift we have experienced a number of failures with the ODD lift, one of these failures have left the lift out of action for several weeks. In addition to failures due to age/obsolescence there have been a number of failures resulting from resident misuse, namely impact damage from mobility scooters. The Housing Management Team are working with residents to address these issues.

The EVEN lift has been ordered and is now approaching the end of the off-site manufacturing period, the original plan being to commence installation towards the end of October 2017 with completion being due in January 2018. Following a consultation with Members and colleagues in the Business Continuity Team the decision has been made to postpone this installation until May 2018, this will give us sufficient time to implement contingency plans as it is felt to be inevitable that at some point during 12 week installation period both lifts will be out of action for a period due to mechanical failure. The cost of delaying until January is approx. £2k, if we delay until after the ODD has been installed the cost would be approx. £5k.

During discussions with Members concerns were raised over the decision to renew the EVEN lift first when it is now the ODD lift that appears to be suffering the most frequent number of breakdowns. Members have asked that we consider delaying the installation of the EVEN lift and instead bring forward the installation of the ODD lift which would then be followed by the EVEN lift later in 2018.

Whilst there is no technical or physical reason preventing this there are some issues that would need to be resolved.

## **Procurement**

The original procurement process was for 'up to six lifts'; we have entered into contract and currently have approved budget for four. The ODD lift in Peel House was not one of the

original six procured, however the tendered price for each lift is the same so from a price consideration swapping out one of the remaining two lifts for the Peel House lift would not be an issue

It should also be noted that Leaseholders, if properly consulted, may nominate their own supplier from whom tenders should be invited. This has never been taken up previously by Leaseholders but the option exists.

### **Budget**

The budget for 2017/18 is sufficient to install four lifts, a contract has been entered into for four lifts. We know that given the current timing of the programme it will not be possible to complete all four lifts before March 2018 and as such 75% of the programme is going to be re-profiled into 2018/19. A Capital Bid has been submitted for additional lifts to commence from 2018/19. Arrangements would need to be made to either bring forward budget from future programmes or to release funds from revenue to enable an order to be placed for the ODD lift within the current financial year.

### **Leaseholder Consultation**

We have only consulted with Leaseholders over one of the two lifts in Peel House although it should be noted that the specific lift was not identified in the consultation. The consultation process, if followed strictly takes a minimum of three months to complete, assuming that there are no valid representations and assuming that none of the Leaseholders nominate their own preferred supplier to tender.

If we do not properly consult Leaseholders they would have grounds to challenge any future demands for payment in relation to the lift installation; if successful this would limit their liability to £250.00 per Leaseholder. There are 11 Leaseholders in Peel House; each would be liable to contribute £2071.00 giving a total of just over £20k which would be lost if Leaseholders are not properly consulted.

It should be noted that precedent has existed where due to the immediate and necessary nature of the works consultation has been dispensed with to avoid unnecessary hardship to tenants & leaseholders' and to mitigate serious health and safety considerations in the event of further component failure. Whilst a breakdown history shows that Peel ODD appeared out of service the same amount of times as Peel EVEN; within the last 12 months it has been Peel ODD that has been out of action for longer – upwards of 5 weeks if all the lost days are added together compared with 8 days to the Peel EVEN – accepting of course this is not continuous loss of the lift rather a series of intermittent faults that when added together give a cumulative loss in service.

### **Reputational Damage**

Guidance has been sought from the Councils Corporate Press Officer and the recommendations supported. Cabinet should be aware of the national press attention and that the Council would be criticised if it is perceived to have replaced the opposite lift to that breaking down and there would be little sympathy if works were undertaken in the full knowledge that both lifts being out of service was likely if Peel Even was done first. At the point in time that the EVEN lift was ordered it had been the lift that had suffered the greatest number of failures; in recent months the ODD lift has suffered more frequent failures. There have already been a number of negative comments made through the Tell Us process and through Social Media there has also been interest from the press. The concern is that residents and the press will be highly critical of the Council if we proceed with the replacement of the EVEN lift before the ODD lift given the current issues.

### **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

## Do Nothing

Given the frequency and severity of the breakdowns and failures over recent weeks and months doing nothing is no longer an option as it is clear that the lift has reached 'End of Life' and that keeping the lift running in the longer term is not realistically achievable.

## Defer Renewal until the 2018/19 Programme

Delaying the ordering of a new lift until April 2018 will mean that the actual installation wouldn't take place until July 2018 due to the length of time it takes to manufacture the lift 'off site'. It is almost certain that the lift will suffer regular failures between now and July, there is also a very real likelihood that there will be an irreparable failure during that time.

Option	Risks	Benefits	Timeline Lift 1	Timeline Lift 2
1. Do Nothing (continue with original plan)	Both lifts fail in Peel house in the run up to Christmas leading to a significant council wide business continuity challenge	Time to undertake the requisite leaseholder consultation allowing for a charge to Peel House residents for both lifts  No additional costs for storing the manufactured lift EVEN	<b>EVEN LIFT</b>  Installation of EVEN lift commences <b>Nov 17</b> for a period of 12 weeks	<b>ODD LIFT</b>  Consultation Letter 1 issued in Nov 17 with 28 day response time.  Procurement if required during Dec 18  Consultation Letter 2 issued Jan 18 with 28 day response time  Order placed Feb 18.  Off site manufacture 14 weeks.  Commence installation <b>May 18</b> for period of 12 weeks.
2. Delay Programme starting with Peel EVEN in January 2018 followed by Peel ODD in March 2018	Both lifts failing creates major disruption and even though after Christmas for planning is still assessed as a more of a risk than doing Peel ODD first	Lift works could commence on Peel EVEN which historically has suffered breakdowns (although not recently).	<b>EVEN LIFT</b>  Installation of EVEN lift commences <b>Jan 18</b> for a period of 12 weeks	<b>ODD LIFT</b>  Place order for ODD lift Nov 17  Offsite manufacture 14 weeks  Commence installation <b>March 18</b> for

				period of 12 weeks.
3. Delay Programme, dispensing with leaseholder consultation allowing Peel ODD to be manufactured immediately following cabinet and Commence replacement with Peel ODD in January 2018 followed by Peel EVEN in March 2018	As above	Delaying allows for careful planning to put appropriate and proportionate arrangements in place to support all residents  Peel ODD being done first will be expected as this is the one with most recent breakdown	<b>ODD LIFT</b>  Place order for ODD lift Nov 17  Offsite manufacture 14 weeks  Commence installation <b>March 18</b> for period of 12 weeks.	<b>EVEN LIFT</b>  Commence installation of already manufactured lift in <b>May/June 18</b> for a period of 12 weeks.

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- There is a cost in delaying the installation of the EVEN lift as it will have to be stored. If delayed until January this would be approx. £2k if delayed until after the ODD lift is complete it will be closer to £5k
- Failure to properly consult with Leaseholders could lead to a failure in being able to collect service charges which would be in the region of £20k.
- Cost implications of a double failure is assessed as being approximately £10k per night which represents having to find 40 of the 56 households temporary accommodation if they could not return to their flat. Whilst the even lift is being repaired should the odd lift fail for up to a week this could cost up to **£100k** in temporary decant and associated management arrangements.

There is insufficient budget within the 2017/18 HRA Capital budget to enable an additional lift to be ordered. Delays in the delivery of the wider High-Rise works pending the outcome of a planning application will result in an underspend of the Housing Revenue Account Prior to Paint [HRA PTP] budget this underspend will exceed the £120,160 required to fund the installation of the additional lift and as such £120,160 should be vired from the HRA PTP Revenue Budget to the Housing Revenue Account Lift Renewal Capital Budget to fund the installation of the additional lift.

## LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

As the lifts concerned are end of life it is clear that all options present risks and it is possible both lifts could fail regardless of the recommendations being made. However by using the breakdown history in terms of lift failure it is a lower risk to a) defer the programme until after Christmas when any reduced lift capacity would cause the most disruption and b) commence with the ODD Lift as reputationally the perception is that this has been the most likely to break down.

Head line risks are

Risks	Mitigation
Whilst 1 lift is out of service for up to 12 weeks during replacement this leads to a negative impact on those residents using the lift for their floors (up to 22 households as ground floor and penthouse are not reliant on the lift)	There is a routine project risk assessment for the high rise planned work. 1 Lift being out of service during replacement is well mitigated with a range of support services including temporary accommodation &/or decant arrangements if necessary as well as usual welfare and targeted support from local scheme staff; free deliveries for shopping from the co-op and weekly progress updates
Both lifts in the same block fail resulting in 54 of the 58 flats being affected (- 4 ground floor)	This creates a serious issue around business continuity. The Councils Business Continuity team is working on plans should this eventuality be realised and arrangements are being put in place. However it needs to be recognised that managing issues around a double failure will require the allocation of significant staff and financial resources. Furthermore there is the potential for significant disruption for up to 40 households some of which will require rehousing on a temporary basis.
Tenant &/or Leaseholder Dissatisfaction that plans have been delayed	The Portfolio Holder for Housing is keen that once Cabinet have made a key decision then an explanation of this will be communicated and sufficient lead in time provided for resident targeted support
Waiving charges for leaseholders could raise questions of equity across other charges	Peel House leaseholders are already paying for 1 lift. It is perfectly legitimate to identify works that are immediately necessary in accordance with Health and safety thereby seeking to waive this specific consultation process

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Due to the urgent nature of these works it has not been possible to issue 28 days notice of a key decision as such notice under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 Paragraph 10 has been issued and is attached as Appendix 5.

### REPORT AUTHOR

- Paul Weston, Head of Asset Management.
- Tina Mustafa, Head of Landlord Services.

### LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

### APPENDICES

## High Rise Lift Refurbishment Programme 2017-2019

### Communications Plan

Communication & format	Date and Frequency
<p>Initial letter to residents to advise on refurb works and timeline. To include information that residents will be contacted by the Tenant Regulatory &amp; Involvement Team to arrange 1-2-1 discussions if additional support/assistance is required</p> <p>FAQ to be included as per previous refurbishment programme with key contact numbers including Free phone 0800 183 0454</p>	<p>Letter hand delivered week commencing??</p>
<p>Tel calls to be made to offer a 1-2-1 discussion with residents. If a visit is not required then a note should be made on the High Rise refurb spreadsheet as should any updates in relation to 1-2-1 discussions/tel enquiries/complaints/issues/support requests/scooter storage/ co-op deliveries etc. – This will support any future complaints enquiries.</p>	<p>Tel calls to be made week commencing??</p>
<p>Customer profile/vulnerability form to be completed at 1-2-1 discussions to include information on health, mobility, issues and any general concerns/NOK details/carer &amp; support information/ mobility scooter advice and disclaimer/possible decant/shopping assistance, negotiate flight of stairs etc.</p>	<p>Personal visit – appointments to be made week commencing??</p>
<p>Email to Housing, Ward Councillors, Customer Services, Wates, CCTV, Jo Sands, Larry Phillips to advise of forthcoming lift refurb works and that residents have been advised.</p>	<p>Email week Commencing??</p>
<p>Weekly tel calls/home visit to be offered to those residents who have requested more regular/frequent contact. Scheme Manager (Sunset Close) to call tenant direct to agree tailored weekly contact i.e. visit/call</p>	<p>Sunset Close Scheme Manager to provide weekly calls/visits as agreed with resident/s</p>
<p>Weekly newsletter to residents, ward Councillors and Communications Team to update web</p>	<p>Newsletter hand delivered every Friday week commencing??</p> <p>Email to ward Councillors/Comms Team every Friday</p>

<p>Letter to residents regarding mobility scooter storage arrangements and request for disclaimer to be signed. Residents will be advised of the last day to store mobility scooters in the basement area. After this date scooters will not be able to be moved for the duration of the 12 week works period.</p>	<p>Letter hand delivered week commencing??</p>
<p>No contact with residents – Letter. This will be delivered when contact has been unsuccessful.</p>	<p>Hand delivered as appropriate  Continue to engage/make contact as appropriate</p>
<p>Lift Refurbishment Project Team Meetings to be arranged – Work Stream action plan/Agenda to be circulated to lead work stream Officers to update in readiness for the following months meeting</p>	<p>Monthly</p>
<p>Door knocking exercise at the end of every month to determine if any residents circumstances have changed (in addition to providing contact numbers) – TRIM</p>	<p>Every 4 weeks - door knocking exercise</p>
<p>Monthly drop ins if appropriate in addition to other tailored contact and communication as agreed with residents</p>	<p>To be scheduled monthly over the 12 week works period</p>



**High Rise Refurbishment Programme 2017-2019  
Work Streams monthly update**

**Date:**

**Project Lead:** Tina Mustafa/Paul Weston

Work-stream	Lead	Actions	Progress to date	Actions agreed at Project Meeting (date)
<p align="center"><b>Communication &amp; Consultation</b></p>	<p>Leanne Lea / Grace Valente/ Diane Hughes/ Marilyn McNally Helen Rich</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerability/profile assessment</li> <li>• Produce timeline and update in accordance with works 2018-2019/20</li> <li>• Weekly Newsletter/weekly tailored contact /correspondence/free phone</li> <li>• Member briefings and weekly newsletter updates</li> <li>• Scheduled drop- ins</li> <li>• Additional support: scooter storage/shopping deliveries</li> <li>• Weekly 1-1- calls/Scheme support via Sunset Close</li> <li>• Use of High Rise Social Club for the duration of works programme</li> <li>• Comms – Out of hours escalation procedure</li> <li>• Arrange monthly Project Group Meetings – Circulate action plan 1 week in advance for updates and collate prior to meeting/circulate agenda and updated action plan in readiness of all scheduled meetings</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Technical</b></p>	<p>Paul Weston</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifts refurb programme up to March 2019 – Classic-Dyson-Design vis scooters/Leaseholder consultation for Peel House Odd lift</li> <li>• Wates works programme up to March 2019– Balcony works/internal decoration/replacement doors and landing areas -Wates to provide Tenant Liaison support</li> <li>• Sprinklers – To be tendered/Stuart Ruckledge (SFARS)</li> </ul>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scooter storage – installation of electric points/SFARS</li> </ul>		
<b>Tenancy Management</b>	Sue Philp/Lisa Hall/Dee Ferlance/Leon Hackett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce Scooter Guidance/restrictions for residents</li> <li>• Relocating (Decant) and vulnerability</li> <li>• Visits – Scooter checks compliance – Dee/Leon</li> <li>• Liaise with co-op regarding delivery charges as per previous refurb arrangements</li> <li>• Vulnerability support</li> </ul>		
<b>Risks</b>	Tina Mustafa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project management risk - Risk Assessment (LL)</li> <li>• Unmanaged risk - Business Continuity – Tina</li> <li>• Contingency Planning meeting to be arranged - PW</li> </ul>		
<b>Repairs</b>	John Murden/Darren Jackson/Trevor Wylie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caretaking cleaning inspections</li> <li>• Out of Hours escalation</li> <li>• Stannah – to provide ‘Premium service’</li> <li>• Classic – during the day will support i.e. reset</li> <li>• Cabin restrictions – Information to be forward to Tenancy Sustainment once confirmed by Stannah</li> <li>• Stannah Survey to be completed by Oct 31 2017</li> </ul>		

### High Rise Lift Refurbishment Programme 2017-2019

4 Lifts to be refurbished 2017 – 2019

- Peel House – Odd 08/01/18 – 30/03/18
- Peel House – Even 09/04/18 – 29/06/18
- Townshend House – Even 09/07/18 – 28/09/18
- Harcourt House – Odd 08/10/18 – 21/12/18

3 lifts already refurbished 2014-2015

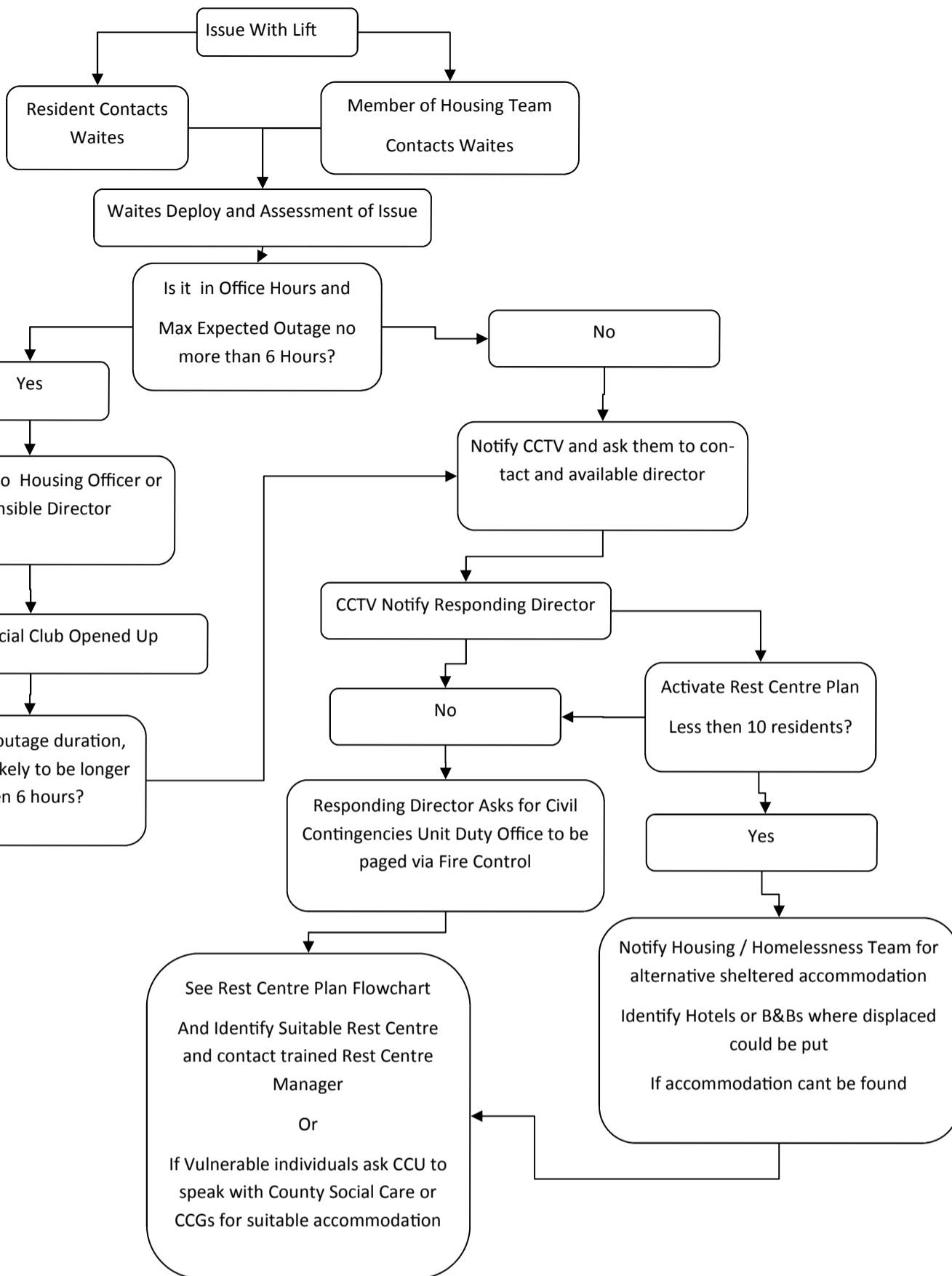
- Townshend House - Odd
- Strode House - Even
- Stanhope House - Even

5 lifts remaining – There is already a capital bud in - Stannah currently carrying out surveys

- Harcourt House – Even
- Weymouth House – Even
- Strode House - Odd
- Stanhope House – Odd
- Weymouth House – Odd

**Project Team:** Tina Mustafa, Paul Weston, Leanne Lea, Lee Birch, Sue Philp, John Murden, Darren Jackson, Trevor Wylie, Lisa Hall, Dee Ferlance, Leon Hackett

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**Consider**

- Will Waites or Housing Team open building up?
- Staffing number within the High Rise Social Club—Considering calling Rest Centre trained staff via responding director
- Action Card :- Communication to Residents
- Action Card :- How to Turn on Utilities
  - Medical or Welfare Needs
- Can St John or Red Cross assist in moving residents—Ask Director to page CCU Duty Officer via Fire Control

Access Details for High Rise Social Club :-

Contact Details for CCTV :-

Contact for Council House Switchboard :-

Housing Team Contacts :-

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**RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

**Organisation / department / function / project;** High Rise Lift Refurbishment Programme 2017 - 2019

**Business Objective:** To deliver a High Rise Refurbishment programme between 2017 – 2019

**Completed by:** Leanne Lea

**Date completed:** October 2017

No	Risk & Impact (Threat/Opportunity to achievement of business objective)	Assessment of Gross Risk			Risk Treatment Measures Implemented	Assessment of Current Risk [With control measures implemented]			Action Plans for Additional Treatment Measures	Timescale
		Impact (Severity) [ I ]	Likelihood (Probability) [ L ]	Risk Score [ IxL ]		Impact (Severity) [ I ]	Likelihood (Probability) [ L ]	Residual Risk Score [ IxL ]		
1	Residents housebound	3	3	9	<p>Decant properties identified to include sheltered housing guest rooms (for older tenants only who are able to live independently) *****</p> <p>Pre planning &amp; information gathering - vulnerabilities to be identified following survey/door knocking exercise and one to one discussions week commencing *****</p> <p>Arrangements in place with Co-op - Invoice TBC direct for delivery charges at the end of the 12 week period - £4 to be paid by TBC for the 12 weeks – LH/DF to arrange and email co-op address details as per previous arrangements</p> <p>FAQ to include details of other supermarket online shopping &amp; deliveries, refuse collection arrangements, contact details with regards to temporary moves etc.</p>	2	3	6		<p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p> <p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p> <p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p>

2	Resident dissatisfaction	2	2	<p>4</p> <p>Initial communication week commencing *****</p> <p>Weekly newsletter/update to residents for the 12 week period. Door knock exercise to be carried out by Tenant Regulatory &amp; Involvement Team at the end of every month for the 12 week period</p> <p>In addition to the above, specific tailored communication with vulnerable residents with specific needs – telephone/face to face contact delivered through TRIM. One to one discussions week commencing *****</p> <p>Regular visits/calls to be offered via Independent Living Manager (Sunset)/TRIM</p> <p>Vulnerable residents to be assigned to staff member for additional support – provided with a contact sheet for their officer detailing all contact telephone number and day/time of availability – this to include out-of-hours contact numbers / emergency numbers</p> <p>Scheduled drop-ins as appropriate</p> <p>Information/courtesy email to housing/customer services/CCTV/Communications/Ward Councillors/Jo Sands/Larry Philips/Property Services/Wates</p>	1	1	1		<p>Weekly/ Monthly from the beginning of the 12 week works period</p> <p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p> <p>As agreed with residents</p> <p>Monthly</p> <p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p>
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3	Political concern	3	3	9	<p>Tina/Paul to meet with ward members and update accordingly – Thursday 28 September 2017 and update via progress accordingly</p> <p>Weekly fact sheet/update/regular communication to be forward to ward members for the duration of the works</p>	2	1	2		<p>Oct 2017</p> <p>Weekly for the 12 week works period</p>
4	Fire/increased hazard by construction works	3	2	6	<p>FARS notified – specific vulnerable residents/PW</p> <p>All notification to blue light services via contractor/s</p> <p>Daily inspections carried out by staff (if Tina agrees to this we need to identify a member of staff responsible for this role and what is expected from them)</p>	3	1	3		<p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p>
5	Health & Safety of residents during works	2	2	4	<p>Contractor H&amp;S statement</p> <p>Enclosed working areas/lockable enclosed containers on site for components and tools</p> <p>Daily inspections of working areas by contractor</p> <p>Daily collection of refuse for those directly affected and unable to use stairs on the ground floor. Rubbish to be left outside property before 10am and will be collected by the Caretaking Team/Cleaner daily – TW</p>	1	1	1		<p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p> <p>Daily</p> <p>Daily</p>

6	Obstruction of scooters	3	2	6	<p>For the 12 week period, residents with mobility scooter/electric wheelchair, directly affected by works, will be given access to electrical points in the basement area to charge equipment – residents to sign disclaimer</p> <p>Residents to be advised, via FAQ, that electrical equipment will need to be moved to the basement area by *****at the latest. After this time equipment cannot be moved</p> <p>Caretakers/Cleaners to monitor landings during the period of works on a daily basis – TW</p>	2	1	2		<p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p> <p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p> <p>Daily</p>
7	Support Needs increased	3	3	9	<p>Pre planning &amp; information gathering - Survey/door knocking exercise to identify support needs/text tools/telephone communication/one-to-one discussions</p> <p>Increased communication/contact from contractor</p> <p>Welbeing to be notified to contact vulnerable residents that do not currently receive Welbeing service – via LB</p> <p>Regular visit via Independent Living Manager if requested – via LB</p> <p>Arrangements in place with Co-op regarding delivery charge. £4 to be paid by TBC for the 12 week period</p>	2	2	4		<p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p> <p>As agreed with tenants</p>

8	Failure of alternative lift during works	3	3	9	<p>Classic on site as per programme of works</p> <p>Stannah to offer Premium service throughout works programme</p> <p>Breakdown of 3 hours or less – Residents to be offered use of High Rise Social Club – refreshments/shelter/bathroom facilities</p> <p>Breakdown of 3 hours or more – Business continuity contingency planning</p> <p>Contingency planning meeting 04.10.2017</p>	2	3	6		
9	Lack of Communication	2	2	4	<p>All emergency services to be advised accordingly</p> <p>WEL/Customer Services (Marmion House), Landlord Services to be notified</p> <p>Weekly updates to residents and specific tailored communication to vulnerable residents</p> <p>Updates via website/Communications Team – advertise Freephone number via all communication</p> <p>Initial contacts for enquiries to be included within all communication/s</p>	1	1	1		<p>Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing</p> <p>Weekly</p> <p>Weekly</p>

10	Out of hours activity	2	1	2	Larry (CCTV) to be notified. To include commencement/completion dates and complimentary FAQ with contact details – LH	1	1	1		Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing
11	Increased Parking	2	2	4	TM/PW - relax civil parking – passed to Jo Sands?  Wates will create their own temporary car parking space causing minimal disruption to residents  Information of refurbishment works and FAQ to be updated to Jo Sands for consideration	1	1	1		Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing
12	Conflict with other projects	2	3	6	Diarise monthly High Rise Refurbishment Project Team meetings to update as appropriate  Continued internal communication with other project leaders	1	2	2		2017-2019
13	Lack of Staffing, resources to deliver the project	2	3	6	Internal support in place to assist in delivery the project  JD/Person Spec (JE) to provide external support if appropriate  Tenant Regulation & Involvement Team to support for the duration of the works – Communication/consultation as per previous lift refurbishment works	2	1	2		2017-2019

	Negative PR/reputational damage	3	2	6	<p>Clear work streams action plan with designated leads/actions</p> <p>Monthly High Rise Refurbishment Project Team meetings to ensure effective, continued and updated communication/information</p> <p>High Rise Project Plan timeline to be advertised with staff/Wates/Contractors/Residents/ Members</p> <p>Effective and continued member/Comms Team updates - weekly</p>	2	1	2		Oct 2017/ Start of every new block where lift works are commencing
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<b>Score</b>	<b>Likelihood (Probability) - Definition</b>
1	Highly Unlikely
2	Possible
3	Highly Likely

<b>Score</b>	<b>Impact (Severity) - Definition</b>
1	No Injury/Impact
2	Major Injury/Impact
3	Multiple Injury/Fatality/Major Impact

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**Notice under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 Paragraph 10;**

The making of the decision **Urgent Renewal of Peel House Lifts** which is due to be made by Cabinet on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred because;

1. Over recent weeks and months both lifts in Peel House have suffered from frequent failures resulting in significant periods of inconvenience for the residents, many of whom are vulnerable and unable to manage without the lifts. Plans are already in place to renew one of the two lifts but the nature and frequency of recent failures have lead us to conclude that both lifts need to be replaced as soon as possible.
2. There is a relatively long lead-in period for lift renewals and as such an early decision is needed so that orders can be placed as soon as possible.
3. Failure to address the situation quickly is likely to lead to residents being significantly inconvenienced and in some cases unable to remain in their own homes.
4. The potential costs associated with a double failure are significant, the longer the overall process takes the more likely it is that both lifts will fail realising these costs.

Tamworth Borough Council is therefore unable to comply with the requirements under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 Paragraph 9 in respect of Publicity in connection with key decisions.

Tamworth Borough Council has taken the following steps to comply with the requirements under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 Paragraph 10 in respect of the general exception;

1. The Proper Officer (Chief Operating Officer Andrew Barratt) has notified the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, Andrew James in Writing.
2. The Proper Officer has made arrangements for this notice to be made available at the Council Offices at Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, B79 7BZ and on the Council's website;  
<https://www.tamworth.gov.uk/executive-decisions-2017-18>
3. That at least 5 clear days will have elapsed prior to the decision been made on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017.

I am therefore satisfied that The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access of Information) (England) Regulations 2012 paragraph 10 has or will have been complied with.

Signed



.....  
Andrew Barratt  
Chief Operating Officer

Dated 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017

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THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2017

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING SERVICES****PILOT - USE OF COUNCIL STOCK FOR TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

N/A

**PURPOSE**

This report seeks to set out the arrangements for a landlord pilot scheme whereby up to 5 council housing properties will be used for temporary accommodation; between Monday 2nd April 2018 until Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

The report details how this supports the Landlord Regulatory Standard (Tenancy) as well as supporting the Councils strategic housing function in the discharge of its statutory duties around homelessness.

**RECOMMENDATIONS****Cabinet approve:-**

- A landlord pilot scheme for the use of up to 5 Council properties as temporary accommodation for homeless households for the period during the pilot
- The use of non-secure tenancy agreements for the purposes of the scheme for homeless households placed in Council properties
- The implementation timetable contained within the report including arrangements for the review and community based impact assessments arising from the pilot forming part of a further report to Cabinet in July 2019

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

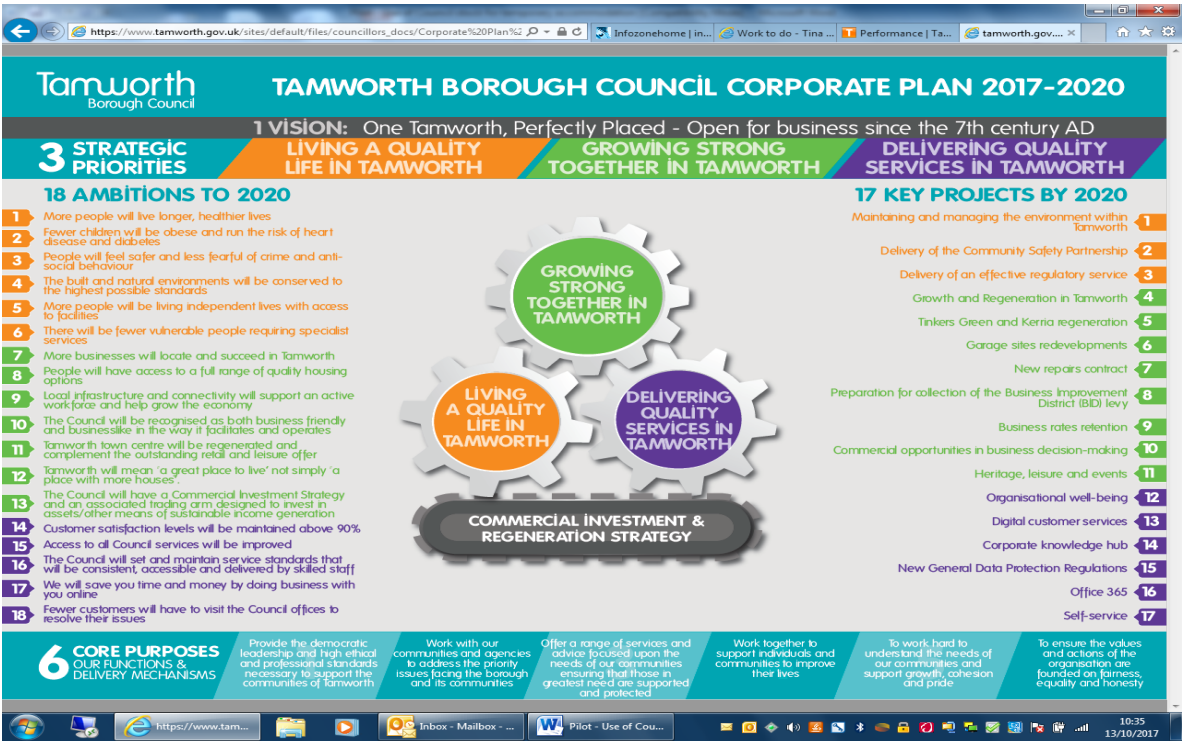
The DCLG reported earlier this year<sup>1</sup> that the Homelessness reduction Act (HRA) 2017 seeks to transform England's homelessness legislation by shifting the emphasis from one of perceived 'gate-keeping' to one of prevention and early help; providing specialist and tailored support to all client groups, not just those in priority need. Elsewhere on the agenda the Housing Strategic team are reporting on the implications of this for emergency and temporary accommodation. Whilst the HRA 2017 received Royal Assent April, a code of guidance and new secondary legislation is being developed. With this in mind maximising all available opportunities to

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.npsservice.org.uk/doc/DCLG%20Update%20-%20Jo%20Beck.pdf>

facilitate earliest help remains a key priority and is intrinsic to Tamworth’s demand management operating model.

Across the sector numerous LAs are reporting opportunities as well as challenges with this new legislation. Early help and a model supporting a positive pathway for homeless households into settled accommodation starts with housing first principles. A number of the Councils strategic ambitions support this approach, particular ambition 8 around “ensuring people have access to a full range of quality housing options”



The aim of this particular pilot scheme is modest and whilst it only plans to use up to 5 council properties for a 12 month period commencing Monday 2nd April 2018 until Friday 29th March 2019; it is designed to add to the range of comprehensive measures already in place by strategic housing colleagues. Elsewhere on the agenda, the report detailing emergency accommodation shows an impressive reduction in the use of B&B; to its lowest levels for the last 3 years. Therefore whilst the scheme may not be considered as necessary – it is designed to act as one of the alternatives to ensure B&B is a last resort. Other LAs are also making the case for a range of flexible; short terms and focused temporary accommodation arrangements, arguing these are a prerequisite to responding to challenges within the HRA 2017 and that this provides an additional and low-cost opportunity. Neighbouring landlords are also suggesting that the Homes Community Agency (HCA) will also be reviewing the Tenancy regulatory standard in support of early help and to translate the prevention agenda within the HRA 2017 into landlord regulatory practice.

The pilot scheme is designed to be flexible and therefore properties will be selected based on need, availability and suitability for the applicants’ involved; consequently properties are likely to be ‘anywhere’ within the Borough. The scheme is designed to

contribute to the range of temporary accommodation options open to the strategic housing solutions staff continuing to minimise the use of B&B accommodation.

This report details the current landlord regulatory obligations under the Tenancy standard to support the Councils strategic housing function in discharging its duties around homelessness and provides a value for money alternative to supporting the overall reduction in costs to the Council

**FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Using Council properties under this scheme will not require subsidy from the Housing Revenue Account as the rent (and service charges where applicable) would be charged as normal which would then be met via Housing Benefit &/or direct payment depending on individual circumstances

As the scheme is designed for homeless households there is a requirement for a basic furniture pack. A maximum of £5000 will be available for this purpose for the duration of the pilot scheme and can be met from the existing tenants removals budget. Furniture will be recycled and stored locally using existing council premises (at nil cost) and therefore costs associated with the provision of essential furniture items minimised.

By using Council properties as opposed to emergency accommodation there is the potential for a financial saving to the General Fund as this scheme contributes to the overall reduction of B&B accommodation use. The exact annual saving will not be known until the scheme has been in place for at least 12 months; however for each Council property used it is estimated this will make an average saving of £355.03 per week.

**LEGAL & RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Properties to be let as temporary accommodation will be identified from the Council’s own stock. Under section 79 of the Housing Act 1985, any Council lettings of separate dwellings qualify as secure tenancies under the 1985 Act, unless they fall within one of the exemptions set out in Schedule 1 of the 1985 Act.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/68/section/79>

One of the exceptions in Schedule 1 is the use of Council accommodation to discharge the Council's duties under homelessness legislation. This therefore allows the Council to grant non-secure tenancies to homeless people whilst discharging its homeless duty in pursuance of any function under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/68/schedule/1>

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Control</b>
The pilot provides a modest number of properties and using up to 5 is simply intended to be only one of a range of options to mitigate homelessness. On its own it is will not replace the need for alternative and additional temporary accommodation	Using Council properties provides the Council with additional temporary accommodation in exceptional circumstances.

<p>More (indeed less) Council properties may be assessed as being required and expectations will have to be managed.</p>	<p>Whilst the regulatory tenancy standard requires providers to co-operate with their LAs strategic housing function and their duties to meet identified housing need; the overriding obligation is that tenancies are let in a fair, transparent and efficient way making best use of its housing stock; whole scale use for temporary accommodation would clearly be contrary to this.</p> <p>The impact will be assessed at end of the proposed pilot scheme and reported back to Members in July 2019 to to consider its effectiveness and whether it is recommended going forward</p>
<p>Applicant(s) do not want to move out of Council property</p>	<p>By issuing a non-secure tenancy agreement applicants are treated fairly and equally. Where a reasonable offer of suitable alternative accommodation is refused or where the tenancy agreement has been breached, a Notice to Quit will be served giving four weeks' notice in writing. Where the property is not vacated by the date the Notice to Quit expires, court proceedings will be commenced.</p>
<p>Availability of Council properties may not fit the required profile</p>	<p>Identified properties may be undergoing void repair works and may not be ready for letting immediately therefore applicant(s) may need other sources of temporary accommodation for a short time</p>
<p>Non-payment of rent</p>	<p>Robust rent arrears recovery processes already in place.</p>
<p>5 less general needs properties available for allocation in the year</p>	<p>The scheme is designed to be flexible and properties will not be left vacant for the purposes of this scheme. Moreover that where there is an identified requirement then properties will be made available on a property by property basis.</p>

## MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

### What is the Pilot Scheme?

The aim of the pilot scheme is to use up to 5 council properties for a 12 month pilot period commencing Monday 2nd April 2018 until Friday 29th March 2019. The pilot scheme is designed to be flexible and therefore properties will be selected based on need, availability and suitability for the applicants' involved; therefore properties are

likely to be ‘anywhere’ within the Borough. The scheme is designed to contribute to the range of temporary accommodation options open to the strategic housing solutions staff to minimise the use of B&B accommodation. Properties will be partly furnished and managed by the existing housing staff.

**Aims and Objectives of the Pilot Scheme**

- To contribute to meeting required outcomes in the Landlord regulatory Tenancy Standard, in particular point 2.1.1., which states *“Registered Providers shall co-operate with local authorities’ strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs”*. This includes assistance with local authorities’ homelessness duties, and it is assessed that this scheme provides tangible evidence of meeting that obligation.
- It is recognised that as part of the ‘Homelessness Reduction Act 2017’ the associated Tenancy regulatory standard is likely to be reviewed and this will be incorporated into the review of the scheme.
- The Pilot Scheme will run for 1 year initially with the option of becoming a main stream service in the future if value for money can be demonstrated;
- It provides an additional resource for the placement of homeless applicants and therefore reduces the use of Bed and Breakfast type accommodation;
- Provides quality accommodation with access to information in relation to housing and support;
- Seeks to avoid moves between temporary accommodation, particularly for households with children;
- 
- To provide a flexible approach to meet the peaks and troughs of the demand for temporary accommodation for homeless applicants with the relevant properties reverting back to general needs housing stock when not required.

**How does the funding work?**

Cabinet should be aware the ‘Homelessness Reduction Act 2017’ does propose material changes to the financing of temporary accommodation. Future financing of the scheme will therefore be part of the 2019 review of the pilot scheme and will consider welfare benefit implications especially around the local housing allowance and universal credit. Notwithstanding that, details below have been submitted on advice from Trowers (Independent solicitors) and Tamworth’s own Housing Benefit team and therefore reflects the current financing position.

Under current Housing benefit rules a family in bed and breakfast (1 family room) can only claim the maximum figure of £98.09 Housing Benefit per week. So the net cost of bed and breakfast to the general fund is in the region of £437.50 per week/per family based on 1 bedroom rate. By using council properties for temporary accommodation the Council can receive Housing Benefit in full up to Local Housing Allowance rate and therefore recoup all costs incurred in the provision and management of the Council property.

*Illustrative example of costs comparison & savings to general fund*

<b>Temporary accommodation Type</b>	<b>Charge per week</b>	<b>HB eligibility</b>
Current B&B charge for family	£420.00 per week +	Housing Benefit

room currently met by the general fund	£17.50 per week service charge = <b>£437.50 per week</b>	entitlement is the LHA rate for a 1 bed property of £98.08 per week
Typical rent charge for 2 bedroom council property	<b>£82.47 per week</b>	Housing Benefit entitlement is LHA of £113.92 per week
Typical saving to the general fund by using a Council property instead of a B&B - based on typical 2 bed rent	<b>Potential saving of £355.03 per week to general fund by using Council property as temporary accommodation rather than B&amp;B.</b>	

## **Applicant Impact**

There will be additional charges payable by the applicant. Gas, water and electricity service charge costs are not met by housing benefit and the occupants would be liable for these costs themselves, which would be no additional cost to the individual than compared to living in permanent accommodation.

The process map shown at Appendix 1, details how council properties will be selected and used. It is envisaged that it will provide a short term solution and applicants will be moved on into more settled accommodation in line with their assessed statutory rights. In any event accommodation will only be available for a maximum of three months with targeted and tailored homeless intervention to minimise time in temporary accommodation.

A basic furniture pack will be provided dependant on assessed individual needs which may typically include floor coverings and white goods. Officers will also explore charitable services to support applicants with household furnishing items at part of this scheme.

## **How will these properties be managed?**

The Housing Solutions Manager / Team Leader will request the use of a property to the Landlord Housing Options team, detailing the type and size of the property required, and any other specific location needed, accompanied with the standard applicant(s) individual risk assessment for the provision of temporary accommodation.

Based on the current demand it is anticipated that the properties that will be required are likely to 1 or 2 beds, although it is accepted that where the families of applicants exceed this need, efforts will be made to identify suitable larger properties. The impact of removing these 5 general needs properties from an average void churn of 226 properties each year is likely to be negligible – less than 3%. There is no anticipated void or rent loss as the same approach will be used for repairing the void.

It is expected each individual property will be used for 3 months to assist the homeless process with occupants then either moving on to permanent, supported, private landlord, or other accommodation. The non-secure tenancy could be either be renewed or ended at that stage, depending on the occupant's housing situation. Please see Appendix 1 for a process guide.

## **What tenancies will be used?**

The occupants will sign non-secure tenancy agreements see Appendix 2 to ensure risks around difficulties ending the temporary arrangements are minimised.

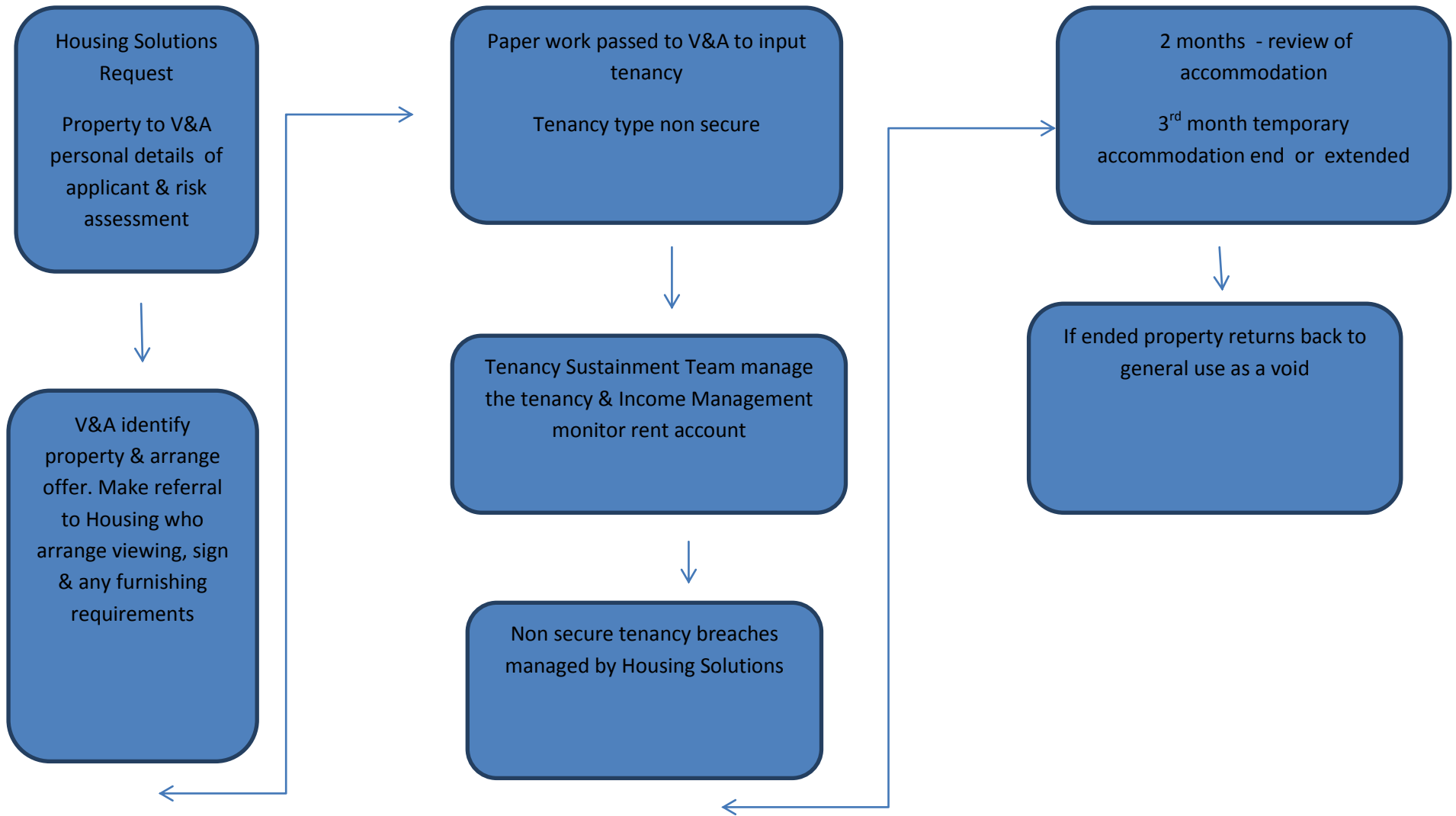
#### **Timetable for implementation**

Nov/Dec 2017	Cabinet approval 2/11/17
Jan/Feb 2018	Finalise Non-Secure Agreement with legal department
Jan/Feb 18	Briefing & training housing teams on new pilot scheme / necessary training
Mar/April 2018	Launch new temporary accommodation pilot scheme
March/April 2019	Review of this 12 month pilot scheme  Report back to Cabinet July 2019 with details of the impact assessment arising from the 12 month pilot

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Appendix 1 Procedural Guide



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# Your Tenancy Agreement

This tenancy agreement gives you a non-secure temporary tenancy with Tamworth Borough Council. It sets out your rights and responsibilities as a tenant of Tamworth Borough Council.

This Tenancy agreement is made ..... day of .....

between Tamworth Borough Council and the tenant(s)

Name of tenant(s)	Date of Birth	National Insurance No.	Preferred Language for Communication
-------------------	---------------	------------------------	---

1

2

3

4

Particulars of your Tenancy Agreement

The tenancy is a weekly periodic non-secure temporary tenancy

The address of the property rented to you in this agreement is.....

The tenancy commences with effect from.....

The weekly rent due is:

1. Basic rent £

2. Services charges (if any) £....

**Total weekly rent £....**



**Contact Details**

**Telephone number landline/mobile:**

**Please give details of who to contact in an emergency:**

**Details of people who will be living with you (excluding tenant(s)):**

<b>Name of other Occupant(s)</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>National Insurance No.</b>	<b>Relationship</b>
----------------------------------	----------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------

**Photograph of the tenant or tenants:**

**Number and type of pet or pets:**

**This tenancy agreement makes you a tenant of Tamworth Borough Council.**

**By signing this agreement you are agreeing to a legally binding contract. You are therefore agreeing to comply with the conditions set out in this document. If there are joint tenants, each tenant must keep to the terms of this agreement. If you break the contract by breaching one or more of the conditions, legal action may be taken by the Council. The legal action may include re-possession action, (eviction proceedings) or obtaining an injunction to require you to comply with the tenancy conditions.**

**This tenancy is granted under paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 Housing Act 1985 pursuant to the Council's functions contained in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 and is not a secure tenancy. You are being granted this tenancy because you have made a homeless application to the Council in relation to which a decision has not yet been made but it appears to the Council that you may be homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need.**

**Tamworth Borough Council will consult with you in writing on any proposed changes to the terms and conditions of this tenancy in accordance with Section 103 of the Housing Act 1985. This does not apply to the annual increase in rent and services charges mentioned in Section 3.1 of this agreement.**

You will be in breach of your tenancy conditions if you or someone acting on your behalf knowingly or recklessly makes a false statement or give incorrect information which leads to the granting of this tenancy. If we discover this is the case we may bring proceedings to end your tenancy and recover possession of the property.

When it is necessary to serve you with any notice and /or court proceedings, the notice will be served either by delivering it to you by hand, leaving it at the property or by sending it by post to the property. A notice delivered by any one of these methods will be effective either on the day that it was delivered to you, left at your home or the second working day after posting.

Tenancy data will be provided to the Audit Commission for National Fraud Initiatives and will be used for cross-system and cross Authority comparison for the prevention and detection of fraud.

Any notice sent by you to Tamworth Borough Council may be sent by post or delivered to:-

Tamworth Borough Council, Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, B79 7BZ

This notice is given to comply with Section 48(1) Landlord and Tenant Act 1987.

**Tenant(s) Signature**

(1).....

(2).....

(3).....

(4).....

**Signed on behalf of Tamworth Borough Council**

.....

# 1. Our Obligations

1.1 We will give you possession of the property at the commencement of the tenancy.

1.2 We will not interfere with your right to possession of your property provided you fulfil all of your obligations under this agreement.

1.3 We will not interrupt or interfere with your right peacefully to occupy the property except where:-

- access is required to inspect the condition of the premises or to carry out repairs or other works to the premises or adjoining property; or
- a court has given the Council possession by ending the tenancy.
- a Court has issued a warrant to access your property to carry out a gas inspection or to stop damage to another property(s)

1.4 We will:

1.4.1 Keep the structure and the exterior of the premises in repair.

The structure and exterior includes:

- Drains, gutters, sewers, and external pipes (except where the drains and sewers are the responsibility of a water company, when defects will be reported to that company);
- The roof;
- Outside walls, outside doors, windows, windowsills, window frames,
- Chimney's chimney stacks and annual service of solid fuel systems and flues but NOT including sweeping;
- Any adaptations that have been carried out as a result of an Occupational Therapist referral whilst you have been residing at the property.

1.4.2 We will keep in repair any installations provided by the Council for space heating, water heating, sanitation, and for the supply of water, gas and electricity.

Installations include:

- Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes and water pipes,
- Electric wiring including sockets, light fittings and switches,
- Water heaters, fireplaces, fitted fires and central heating installations and gas pipes,
- Shared door entry systems.

1.5 We will take care to keep the common entrances, halls, stairways, lifts, passageways, rubbish chutes, rubbish rooms and all other common areas including the electrical lighting in repair.

1.6 If your property requires major works as defined by a Repairs Officer you may have to be moved into alternative temporary accommodation in order for the necessary works to be completed. Under normal circumstances you will be able to return to the property when the work has been completed.

1.7 We will carry out annual inspections of gas appliances and flues.

### 1.8 Consultation

We will consult with you about housing management matters that are likely to affect you and we will take your comments into account before we make any decision.

### 1.9 Provision of Information

#### 1.9.1 We will

- publish a summary of the rules for deciding priority in allocating housing
- publish an annual report detailing landlord performance

## 2. Your Rights

2.1 You have the right to live in this property. We can end your tenancy at any time by serving you with a Notice to Quit

2.2 You have the right to see information that we hold about you in connection with this tenancy or your homeless application. We may charge you a reasonable fee for providing copies of these details.

2.3 You must not assign (transfer) or sub-let the whole or part of your property and only those persons named in this agreement have the right to live with you.

# 3. Your Responsibilities

## 3.1 Rent and Other charges

3.1.1 You must pay your weekly rent on Monday each week for that week.

3.1.2 We operate a 48 week rent year which allows for four free weeks unless you are behind with your rent and have rent arrears. If you have rent arrears you will need to continue to make payments during the rent free weeks.

3.1.3 If there is more than 1 tenant, you are all jointly and separately responsible for all the rent and any rent arrears, up to a maximum of 4 joint tenants. This means that if one joint tenant leaves we can recover the rent and any arrears from the tenant left in the property. We can also recover the rent and any arrears from the tenant who has left.

### Changing Your Rent

3.1.4 We can change the rent at any time. We will inform you in writing at least four weeks before we change the rent.



3.1.5 Your rent will be set in accordance with the rent formula set out in the guidance by central government or by guidance set by any other authorised body and will be subject to full Council approval as part of the budget setting process.

#### Service Charges

3.1.6 Where we provide you with services these are set out on page 1 of this Tenancy Agreement. You must pay the service charge as part of the Weekly Payments.

3.1.7 You will be consulted separately on an annual basis in relation to the setting and recovering of these charges.

3.1.8 We may, after consulting tenants affected, increase, add to, remove, reduce or vary the service provided or introduce new services. Any such changes may affect the amount of service charge you pay. Notice of any change in the amounts charged for services will be in accordance with this Clause

3.1.9. A list of those service charges that are currently provided is attached at Schedule 1 of this Agreement. Please note that additional services that we provide to you may be added to the list. Likewise, services that we no longer provide can be taken away from the list.

3.1.9 Your service charge is fixed. This means every year, we will use the previous years costs to calculate the cost of services to you for the next year beginning on the first Monday in April. That will be the service charge we will ask you to pay.

3.1.10 We may vary your service charge to increase it or decrease it to take effect on the first Monday in April each year giving you at least one month's notice in writing. We will give you a summary of what is included in your service charge for the current period.

#### Support Services (If this applies)

3.1.11 If we provide you with support services, (indicated by the support charge in the Tenancy Agreement) these services may include:

- support from the Supported Housing Team
- support from an Independent Living Manager or equivalent

3.1.12 At the start of your tenancy you agree to accept the level of support services made available to you in order to ensure you can achieve the necessary standard of independence. The level of services we provide may change from time to time, depending on your needs and risk assessments and / or as agreed through consultation with you and other tenants on your scheme or estate. You would still be responsible for the charges (including rent, service charges and other charges) irrespective of your access to them.

3.1.13 We will vary the support charge by increasing or decreasing it at the same time as your rent by giving you one month's notice in writing in advance. If there is at any time a change in support services provided, we will give you one month's notice.

#### Arrears

3.1.14 If you fail to pay your rent you will be in breach of this Tenancy Agreement and you will be served with a Notice to Quit which will end your tenancy.

3.1.15 A Notice to Quit (NTQ) will be treated as being received by you if it has been handed to you, put through the letter box or posted on the door.

3.1.16 Once the NTQ has expired and if you have not left your property we will commence possession proceedings for you to be evicted. We will charge you for taking you to court.

3.1.17 If you leave your present home and don't move into another Council property and there is credit left on your rent account and you have no other debt with the Council we will refund the credit to you. If you owe a debt to the Council the credit will be used to offset the debt.

## 3.2 Repairs and Improvements

### Tenant's obligations

3.2.1 You must take care of the property and report any faults or defects to us immediately. Failure to do so will result in you being recharged for any damage as a result of wilful neglect or negligence.

3.2.2 You are responsible for repairing, renewing, or replacing any items that are damaged by you, your friends and relatives, or any other person living in or visiting the property, including children. If you cannot do this then the council reserves the right to do the repair and recharge you fully for the works undertaken.

You are responsible for the following:-

- Replacing internal catches on doors, windows and cupboards
- Internal glazing – we will do all exterior glazing but you may be recharged if this is as a result of wilful damage or neglect
- Internal decorating
- Internal fittings including skirting boards, toilet seats, sink and bath plugs and chains, bath and sink sealant, curtain rails and pelmets
- Plumbing for washing machines and dishwashers (where not previously supplied by the Council)
- Floor coverings including carpets, laminate flooring and ceramic tiles
- Letter boxes and plates
- Replacing tap washers for dripping taps or unblocking sinks
- Toilet seats
- Replacing light bulbs and fluorescent tubes
- Lock changes, and charges for replacing lost keys/fobs or wilful damage and neglect
- Your own equipment such as TV aerials, aerial points, satellite dishes, domestic appliances and garden water points
- Repairs and/or removal of garden sheds
- Garden landscaping including paths (including front, rear and sides)

- Fences and/or walls (unless bordering a recognisable hazard, i.e. rail track, waterway open spaces, etc)
- Sweeping chimneys
- Infestations such as mice, wasp nests, bed bugs, cockroaches
- External drying areas, i.e. washing lines, except communal

You must also:-

- Keep external air bricks and internal vents free of any obstruction (blocking vents could cause problems with gas appliances )
- If you live in a flat or maisonette keep communal areas (including communal halls, staircases, landings, lifts, balconies, passageways and surrounding areas of any flats)

in a tidy condition, free from rubbish, personal belongings and any other obstructions.

- If you live in a maisonette or flat ensure that you clean and sweep the landing/balcony in front of your door and report any blocked surface drains immediately.
- Burn only approved smokeless solid fuels for your appliances if your home has solid fuel heating
- Take responsible steps to prevent water pipes being damaged by frost
- Report any repairs we are responsible for to the Repairs Reporting Contract Centre as soon as you become aware of a problem.
- Report repairs such as blocked drains, water leaks, structural defects and problems with water, gas, electricity and fire appliances immediately

#### Alterations and Improvements

3.2.3 You must not make any alterations or adaptations to the property.

#### Taking care of your home

3.2.4 You must allow the Council's employees or contractors access at all reasonable hours of the day to inspect the condition of the premises or to carry out repairs and other works to the premises or adjoining property. We will normally give you 24 hours' notice but immediate access may be required in an emergency and we will charge you for the cost of entering the property if you try to prevent us from entering or do not cooperate with our request.

3.2.5 If you refuse access we will apply for an injunction or other legal remedy to allow access to your home so that we can comply with our landlord responsibilities.

3.2.6 If you fail to allow access for an annual gas service at your home we will apply to the court for a warrant to enter your home to carry out a gas service. If we have had to apply for a warrant to gain access to carry out a gas service your gas system will be fitted with an intermittent device that will eventually cut your gas off if you fail to have the next gas service in 12 months' time. Any costs relating to the execution of the warrant will be recharged to you.

3.2.7 You will be responsible for all repairs and replacements to your property which are needed because of deliberate damage, negligence or careless damage caused by you, your households, pets, or visitors to your home.

3.2.8 If you are responsible for a repair or replacement we will send you a written notice requiring you to carry out the repair in a reasonable time and to a reasonable standard. If you do not do the work, or if your repairs are not to a reasonable standard, we may carry out the work and charge you the cost reasonably incurred by us. In an emergency, we may carry out the work without prior notice and charge you reasonable costs for the work carried out.

3.2.9 You must not damage, deface or put graffiti on any part of your property, the estate or block where your property is, on any property belonging to us, or on any adjoining owner's property and if asked, you must pay for the cost of repairing, cleaning and putting the damage right.

3.2.10 You must comply with local regulations or agreements applying to the block or estate where your property is. We may make local regulations after consultation with affected tenants, and change them from time to time, also after consultation.

### Insurance

We will insure the structure of your property but not the contents.

You are strongly advised to obtain your own insurance to protect you against accidents, damage, vandalism or theft.

### 3.3 Using Your Home

3.3.1 You must use your property as your only or principal home.

3.3.2 You must not use your property (including any garage or garden) for any trade or business without permission. You must also obtain any necessary planning permission and other consents (such as Building Regulation Consent) before asking for our written permission.

3.3.3 You must not display any sign or notice at your property.

3.3.4 Permission will normally be given for a business to be run from your property unless it is likely to cause a nuisance to other residents. We will normally refuse permission for the following kinds of business:-

- Car repair and maintenance
- Printing businesses
- Any business involving the use of hydraulic equipment
- Industrial sewing machines
- Controlled substances or chemicals
- Noisy manufacturing process
- Shops, wholesale businesses or any businesses where customers would have to visit your home

- Any business that would mean more than your own personal vehicle being parked outside the property, for example a taxi or vehicle hire company.

3.3.5 If you intend to be away from your property for more than 28 days at any one time you must tell us in advance of your departure and when you expect to return so that we know you have not moved out or abandoned your property. You are still responsible for making rent payments and ensuring the conditions of this agreement are kept whilst you are away.

### 3.4 Animals, Pets, Birds, Fish and Insects

3.4.1 You must not keep a dog or dogs at your property. This includes any dog that might be visiting your property unless:-

- You have a separate entrance and a private garden
- You need a dog for hearing, sight or other disability assistance.

3.4.2 In properties with a separate entrance and private garden two dogs or cats can be kept without our permission. Other domestic pets, such as rabbits, hamsters, mice, gerbils, guinea pigs or caged birds or fish may be kept safely as long as they do not cause nuisance to neighbours and as long as they are kept securely in appropriate cages or other containers. Permission will be required in writing to keep any other animal you consider to be a pet at the property.

3.4.3 You are not allowed to keep, livestock such as horses, cattle, donkeys, goats, pigs, geese ducks and chickens, at the property.

3.4.4 Any animals and pets that you keep at your property, or that visit your property, must not cause damage to your property and/or nuisance or annoyance to your neighbours and or their lawful visitors.

3.4.5 You must not allow any animals or pets to annoy, frighten or cause a nuisance to anyone in the local area (including our employees, councillors or contractors).

3.4.6 If any animal or pet that you keep at your property or that visits your property causes a nuisance in breach of paragraph 3.4.4 above or annoys, frightens or causes a nuisance in a local area in breach of 3.4.5 above, we may take legal action against you forcing you to remove such animals or pets. We may also ask a Court to make a possession order.

3.4.7 Permission may be given to keep certain “exotic animals or pets” such as small lizards and snakes. In each case though written permission will be required and this permission may be withdrawn if there are problems of nuisance or if the exotic animal or pet is a danger to other people living in the area. We will ask to see evidence that you hold the necessary licence to keep exotic animals and may require an independent assessment in relation to its care by recognised bodies, e.g. RSPCA

### 3.5 Gardens

3.5.1 All gardens should be kept neat and tidy, including cutting the lawn, pruning trees within the boundary and trimming hedges.

3.5.2 Trees must not be removed without the prior consent of the Council.

3.5.3 Climbing plants and vegetation should be kept under control and not be allowed to grow up the walls of your or adjoining properties and any sheds, fences or outbuildings higher than 2m (6ft) and in any event not above the height of the ground floor window.

3.5.4 You must not put up any structures such as sheds, lean-to conservatories, garages, greenhouses or pigeon lofts anywhere on the premises without written permission.

3.5.5 You must not store rubbish, furniture, or other appliances in your garden or in shared gardens and drying areas.

### 3.6 Vehicles

3.6.1 You, your friends and relatives and any other person living or visiting the property (including children) must not do the following:

3.6.2 Park any vehicle on the property unless the property has a garage, parking space or drive with access to a dropped kerb.

3.6.3 Park any motor home, caravan, boat or business vehicle that has a commercial licence, on the property or in a communal parking area without our permission

3.6.4 Repair or modify any vehicle at the property, other than one that belongs to you. If we see you repairing a vehicle, we will ask you to prove you own the vehicle.

3.6.5 Park any vehicle including caravans and motorhomes that is untaxed, dangerous or is not roadworthy on any land belonging to us, including communal parking areas. If you do, we may take legal action forcing you to remove the vehicle and charge you with the cost. We will give you 24 hours, notice. You will be able to keep such vehicles within the boundary of your property provided that they do not cause a nuisance or hazard.

3.6.6 Keep motorcycles or any other motorised vehicle in shared areas of flats, maisonettes or sheltered schemes.

3.6.7 Permission will only be allowed to keep a disabled persons scooter in a shared area of a sheltered scheme if you have been allocated a designated parking bay by us.

3.6.8 Keep motorcycles or other petrol driven vehicles in the property.

3.6.9 Double park vehicles or park vehicles in a way that causes an obstruction to other road users, including emergency services' vehicles.

3.6.10 Park on any grass verges, other landscaped areas or use estate car parks for any other purpose other than parking.

### 3.7 Anti - Social Behaviour

3.7.1 You are responsible for the behaviour of all the people, including children, who live in the property. The behaviour of people living with you can affect your tenancy whether you are aware of their behaviour or not.

3.7.2 You, your friends and relatives and any other person visiting you (including children) must not do the following :-

3.7.3 Do anything that causes or is likely to cause a nuisance to anyone in the area.

3.7.4 Harass anyone in the local area because of their race, nationality, sex, sexuality, religion or disability.

3.7.5 Use the property for any criminal, immoral or illegal purpose, including selling or using drugs, or storing or handling stolen goods.

3.7.6 Harass or threaten to harass or use violence towards our employees, councillors, contractors or anyone engaging in a lawful activity in your property or the locality of your property.

3.7.7 Use or threaten to use violence to anyone living in the property, or in the locality of your property.

Property owned by the Council includes but is not limited to:-

- Garages
- Gates
- Fencing
- Wheeled bins
- Grit bins
- Signs
- Lights
- Roads and foot surfaces
- Play areas and equipment
- Bus shelters
- Walls
- Drying areas, Sheds
- Garden area, plants and shrubs

Anti-social behaviour includes but is not limited to:-

- Using or threatening to use violence
- Racism/racist behaviour or language
- Playing loud music
- Playing a musical instrument so loud it causes a nuisance, disturbance or annoyance
- Banging and slamming doors

- Damaging property belonging to the Council
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Playing ball games close to properties and garages
- Skateboarding and cycling on footpaths
- Dumping rubbish
- Dogs barking
- Criminal activities in properties
- Spraying or writing graffiti
- Domestic violence
- Throwing things out of windows
- Throwing stones
- Dealing in pornography
- Not keeping your animals or pets under control
- Breaking shared security for example allowing strangers to get into the block
- Not looking after your children properly
- Shouting verbal obscenities
- Operating machinery
- Dismantling and repairing motor vehicles
- Damaging or threatening to damage another person's home or possessions
- Setting off fireworks in a public place
- Building or lighting bonfires on council property without the express permission of the Council
- Use of air rifles or pellet guns contrary to any licence provisions
- Insulting or threatening letters, text or electronic communication
- Spitting in the street
- False or malicious complaints

You should refer to the Landlord Anti Social Behaviour Policy for our statement and procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour. We want residents to be able to enjoy living in their home and in the community. We recognise that people have different lifestyles and that peoples standards of behaviour and expectations vary. We will attempt to ensure however, that the actions of a minority of



tenants do not make the lives of the majority of our tenants a misery and we will therefore take action against tenants who we believe are acting anti-socially. This may include possession action that could lead to your eviction. You and any joint tenants are responsible for your behaviour, the behaviour of your children and anyone else living with you or visiting you whilst they are in your property (including shared areas such as landings, stairways, gardens, footpaths and parking areas). The local area includes the area around your property, shopping areas, community buildings and all other facilities and estates of Tamworth Borough Council. Where necessary we will also use non-legal remedies such as mediation, acceptable behaviour contracts, informal conciliation.

If the above does not work and we have evidence that you, your friends and relatives and any other person visiting you (including children) have been causing anti-social behaviour we will assess the situation and use any legal means available to abate the behaviour that is reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances. More details of the action we take is set out in the Landlords Service Anti- Social Behaviour Policy.

### 3.8 Health and Safety

You must take all reasonable steps to prevent damage to your home by, fire, frost, the bursting of pipes or the blocking of drains.

You, your friends and relatives and any other person living in or visiting the property (including children) must not do the following:-

3.8.1 Use portable oil, paraffin or gas heaters in your home. Store inflammable materials or gas cylinders in the property or in the Garden

3.8.2 Store any items on communal balconies or in communal areas.

3.8.3 Store any vehicles or appliances that are powered by petrol, diesel, or paraffin in shared areas except lawn mowers and garden strimmers.

3.8.4 Interfere with any equipment for putting out fires in the property or in shared areas.

3.8.5 Remove batteries or otherwise disable smoke or carbon monoxide alarms in the property.

3.8.6 Do anything in the property which could cause danger to anyone in the property or the local area.

3.8.7 Throw anything through the windows of your property or from a balcony.

3.8.8 Place anything on a window ledge or balcony which could be a danger to anyone living in your home or local area.

3.8.9 Shake mats or carpets from the windows or balconies.

3.8.10 Leave any syringes (used or unused) in an area where people in the local area may come into contact with them. Dispose of syringes safely.

3.8.11 Let anyone you don't know into shared areas.

3.8.12 Delay telling your Housing Officer about any damage to your home.

3.8.13 Charge batteries for any powered vehicle in communal areas of flats, maisonettes or sheltered housing schemes.

3.8.14 Smoking is prohibited in all communal areas or council owned vehicles.

### 3.9 Hygiene

You, your friends and relatives and any other person living in or visiting the property (including children) must do the following:

3.9.1 Keep the property and gardens free from rats, mice and other pests.

3.9.2 Keep the property clean and tidy. If you don't, we will charge you for any work we need to do because of this, such as removing rubbish.

3.9.3 Keep all shared areas, including stairways, halls and landings, clean and tidy. You must not leave any personal belongings or rubbish in these areas. We will remove anything you leave in the area and charge for the work.

3.9.4 Keep all shared areas free from obstructions.

3.9.5 Contact the repairs contractor immediately should any drain including surface drains get blocked.

3.9.6 As part of the health agenda the landlord will give information on smoking cessation, nutrition and healthy living by signposting to other agencies and literature

### 3.10 Ending Your Tenancy

When you move out of the property (whether you are moving to another one of our properties or not), you must do the following:

3.10.1 Give us 4 weeks' written notice ending on a Sunday that you are leaving the property except when you are transferring to another one of our properties.

3.10.2 Give us vacant possession and all the keys to the property by midday on the Monday after your notice ends. If you do not give us all of the keys to the property we will charge you one weeks' full rent and the cost of replacing the keys and changing the locks of the property.

3.10.3 If you are a joint tenant, the whole tenancy will end if either party ends the tenancy. We will decide whether to create a new tenancy for the tenant that is left. You do not have an automatic right to continue to live in the property if one joint tenant ends the tenancy.

3.10.4 Pay all rent and other charges up to the end of your tenancy.

3.10.5 Remove all personal furniture and personal belongings from the property. We will dispose of any items you leave behind in the property and may charge you for the work.

3.10.6 Remove all rubbish from inside and outside the property and any other outbuilding.

3.10.7 Replace or repair any items that belong to us.

3.10.8 Leave the property clean and tidy. We will charge you if we have to clean the property.

3.10.9 Report all repairs that are needed at the property.

3.10.10 Allow our employees and contractors to enter the property at a reasonable time to inspect it before you move out.

3.10.11 Give us your new address.

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THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2017

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING SERVICES****THE COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

N/A

**PURPOSE**

To update Cabinet on the Council's strategic approach to the supply of temporary accommodation and the work already completed following a review of the authority's emergency accommodation. To place this work in the broader context of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HR Act) and the Council's Homelessness Prevention Strategy. Additionally, the report requests Cabinet approval to set up an Emergency Accommodation Register for the procurement of bed and breakfast accommodation, to approve amendments to the Council's Temporary Accommodation Policy ensuring that it complies with new legislative requirements and a new Former Tenant Arrears Policy for temporary accommodation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That Cabinet approves the development of an Emergency Accommodation Register of emergency accommodation providers.**

**That Cabinet approve changes to the Temporary Accommodation Policy.**

**That Cabinet approves a Former Tenant Arrears Policy.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

As part of its overall strategic approach to housing and homelessness prevention, the Council has developed a plan to continually improve its approach to temporary accommodation that incorporates Private Sector Leased properties and shorter term in emergency accommodation such as Bed and Breakfast.

It is important to note that this on-going work should be developed in the context of new legislative requirements that the Council will be required to implement as of April 2018. The Homelessness Reduction Bill received Royal Assent on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017 and is now an Act of Parliament.

The new Homeless Reduction Act (HR Act) represents the biggest change to homelessness legislation since the introduction of the Housing Act in 1996 and amends part VII of this Act. Under the new legislation there is more emphasis on prevention activity with authorities having new legal duties to provide meaningful support to everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness, regardless of whether they are in priority need or 'intentionally homeless', as long as they are eligible.

Under the new legislation each homelessness application will require extensive casework to either prevent a household from becoming homeless or, if they are homeless, to relieve their homelessness. It is anticipated that this new approach will place additional demand on the Housing Solutions Service and require new and innovative ways of working to ensure the new legislative requirements are implemented as intended and homelessness is prevented in Tamworth.

Recent trends have seen an increase in usage of emergency accommodation. The increased demand was in part due to the decant at Tinkers Green and Kerria and a lack of move on accommodation for those in Temporary Accommodation. Numbers in temporary accommodation have decreased now the decant is complete. An increase in new affordable housing supply via the garage site re-development programme and new build acquisitions has also contributed to this decrease. However, as alluded to above, demand on the Housing Solutions Service is expected to increase with the implementation of the HR Act by an estimated 50% (based on evidence from the implementation of similar legislation in Wales and modelling work done both nationally and locally).

Given this anticipated increase in demand, the Council has identified a need to improve standards, diversify the supply of temporary accommodation to limit the use of costly and unsuitable emergency accommodation. To achieve this the Council is proposing the development of an Emergency Accommodation Register, amendments to the existing Temporary Accommodation Policy and the approval of a Former Tenant arrears Policy that will ensure the Council meets its statutory obligations as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended in 2002).

The approach to Temporary Accommodation, should demand increase as anticipated would be to further increase the number of Private Sector Leasing scheme properties required, but to support this the Council is also developing a spot purchase model (as detailed in a complementary report on this agenda) to utilise Council accommodation to back up the PSL should the need arise at times of increased demand.

**OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

**Development of an Emergency Accommodation Register**

Options	Benefits	Risks
Do nothing	Current providers continue to provide emergency accommodation	Challenge from providers the authority does not use  Standards fall below those required by the Council  Not adhering to procurement rules
Implement Emergency Accommodation Register via an open tender process	All providers can access system and minimises the risk of challenge to the authority  Emergency Accommodation used subject to routine checks to ensure standards are in line with the authorities Houses in Multiple Occupation policy  Adherence to procurement	Providers fail to join and the authority has no or limited accommodation available to it

	guidelines as agreed with Procurement Team	
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### Temporary Accommodation Policy

Options	Benefits	Risks
Do nothing	There are no tangible benefits to the council in not having a TA policy	<p>Legal challenge arising from recent case law applied to out of borough placements</p> <p>No clear approach how the Council places people in TA</p> <p>Council not compliant with case law</p> <p>TA not meeting required standards</p> <p>Weak approach to TA reflected in Gold Standard assessment process and failure to meet set challenges</p>
Update policy	<p>Clear approach in place to placement in TA</p> <p>Risk of legal challenge reduces</p> <p>Compliant with relevant legislation</p> <p>Clarity provided for officers and customers re: approach to TA</p> <p>Provides a framework that supports anticipated proposed legislative change</p> <p>Improved standards in TA</p> <p>Assist in achieving Gold Standard</p>	<p>Lack of suitable TA available to meet increasing demand</p> <p>Increased workload for Private Sector Housing Team</p> <p>TA does not meet required standards and providers don't co-operate to rectify</p>

### Agree a Former Tenant Arrears Policy

Options	Benefits	Risks
Do nothing	There are no benefits to having no policy in place	Council has no approach to former tenant arrears in temporary accommodation

		Arrears increase The cost of TA is not transparent
Implement Policy	Council has robust policy approach to collection of its former tenant arrears from Temporary Accommodation  Arrears are minimised  Council can report more accurately on costs	Potential for Policy to be challenged

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Emergency Accommodation Register**

There are no direct financial implications associated with the introduction of this Emergency Accommodation Register, other than expenditure on Bed and Breakfast which is contained within existing budgets. By asking for fixed prices in the tender this may allow for some savings. However demand is expected to increase by around 50% with the introduction of the HR Act in April 2018 so any savings will be offset against this potential increase in demand.

### **Temporary Accommodation Policy**

There are no direct financial costs to the implementation of this policy

### **Former Tenant Arrears Policy**

There are no direct financial costs to the implementation of this policy, however by introducing this, the authority will have robust policy and procedures for the collection of arrears. There will be no associated costs to this as it will be done on a percentage recovery basis.

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

Homelessness, its prevention and Part VII duties are one of the Councils Statutory functions and failure to ensure that the Council has an adequate supply of temporary accommodation which is of a good standard and ensuring the authority does not breach its targets on families and 16/17 year olds could result in the Authority facing significant legal challenge in the form of Judicial Reviews and s202 reviews

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Council has for many years taken a prevention approach to tackling homelessness seeking to offer support to households in meeting their own housing needs wherever possible. The proposals within this report offer an opportunity for the Council to continually improve its homelessness prevention services in line with the requirements as set out in the HR Act and reduce the risk of legal challenge.



The vision, priorities, objectives and actions contained in the Homelessness Prevention Strategy will contribute towards meeting legislative requirements, targets and priorities set at national level as well as taking into account local evidence. They also feed into a number of corporate aims, objectives and strategies as well as those of many of the partner agencies involved in delivering housing and related services in the Borough

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Council is currently reviewing its strategic approach to housing and wellbeing through the development of an over-arching plan. This is supported by number of key documents, one of which is the Homelessness Prevention Strategy. This sets out the Council's priorities in relation to the prevention of homelessness set out Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002).

As part of the Council's obligations under this act, the Council has a legal duty to provide accommodation to homeless people in certain circumstances. This legal duty will continue upon implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act in April 2018.

The HR Act represents the biggest change to homelessness legislation since the introduction of the Housing Act in 1996 and amends part VII of this Act. Under the new legislation there is more emphasis on prevention activity with authorities having new legal duties to provide meaningful support to everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness, regardless of whether they are in priority need or 'intentionally homeless', as long as they are eligible.

Under the new legislation each homelessness application will require extensive casework to either prevent a household from becoming homeless or, if they are homeless, to relieve their homelessness.

To support the delivery of the Homeless Prevention Strategy and assist in meeting the legislative requirements as set out in the HR Act, the Council has developed a plan for more effective use of temporary accommodation that ensures it meets its statutory duties. Government guidance advises that Bed and Breakfast accommodation should only be used in an emergency and in some circumstances only for limited periods of time. To ensure statutory compliance and reduce the use of costly and often unsuitable emergency accommodation the Councils plan sets out to increase the availability of good quality affordable temporary accommodation. The plan is consistent with the Councils overall strategic approach. The plan has been developed to be flexible to meet fluctuations in demand for this type of accommodation.

Recent trends have seen an increase in usage of emergency accommodation. The increased demand was in part due to the decant at Tinkers Green and Kerria and a lack of move on accommodation for those in Temporary Accommodation. Numbers in temporary accommodation have decreased now the decant is complete. An increase in new affordable housing supply new build accommodation via the garage site re-development programme and new build acquisitions has also contributed to this decrease. However, with the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018 demand on the Housing Solutions Service is expected to increase by an estimated 50% (based on evidence from the implementation of similar legislation in Wales and modelling work done both nationally and locally). Given this expected increase in demand there is also an anticipated increase in demand for temporary accommodation.

When the Council has recourse to utilise Emergency Accommodation, it will need to ensure that all emergency accommodation used is of a decent standard, and that people are moved on in a timely fashion into more suitable self-contained accommodation which also reduces the risk of legal challenge to the authority.

The approach to Temporary Accommodation should demand increase as anticipated would be to further increase the number of PSL properties required, but to support this the Council

is also developing a spot purchase model to utilise Council accommodation to back up the PSL at times of increased demand.

B&B will therefore be viewed as being emergency accommodation and the intention is to use this only for very limited periods of time with move on into PSLs and at times of increased demand utilising Council stock on a spot purchase basis. A separate report which considers this model is also being considered for approval on this agenda.

A key aim of the strategic approach to housing is to ensure that standards within the private sector are improved and maintained. This includes emergency accommodation and those properties used for temporary accommodation. To ensure standards within the emergency accommodation used by the Council to fulfil its statutory function, a need has been identified to develop a register of providers offering emergency accommodation.

It was identified that to use a traditional framework method would not be suitable, as this would not allow the flexibility required due to the provision of emergency accommodation being a statutory requirement. This included the sometimes onerous requirements placed on those who may provide the accommodation having to go through a tender process, which may be a barrier to them tendering, thus leaving the authority with no emergency accommodation.

Therefore, to ensure flexibility within the framework and to maximise those providers interested in joining, it is proposed that the authority develops an Emergency Accommodation Register, which is a flexible way of working, which allows for suppliers who meet the tender criteria to be added to list at any time. This allows the Council greater opportunity beyond traditional approaches to procurement.

In addition to this, case law from the Supreme Court (*Nzolameso v Westminster*, 2015) set out that all Councils should have a temporary accommodation policy which circumstances out of area accommodation may be utilised. Cabinet approved Tamworth's Temporary Accommodation Policy in March 2017 and this is being brought back as this has now been amended (as attached at **Appendix A**) to reflect the anticipated changes expected via the implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act in 2018.

To further support the strategic approach to temporary accommodation, the development of the Emergency Accommodation Register and the amendments to the Temporary Accommodation Policy, approval is being requested from Cabinet to implement an Emergency Accommodation, Arrears and Former Tenant Arrears Policy has been produced and this is attached as **Appendix B**. This will give the authority an open, transparent and robust approach to the collection and write offs of former tenant arrears.

## **REPORT AUTHOR**

Claire Keeling  
Housing Solutions Manager

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A:** Temporary Accommodation Policy

**Appendix B:** Emergency Accommodation, Arrears and Former Tenant Arrears Policy



Tamworth Borough Council  
Strategic Housing Service  
Housing Solutions  
Temporary Accommodation Policy

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION POLICY

Document Status:

Originator: Claire Keeling

Updated: October 2017

Owner: Rob Barnes

Version: 0.1

Date: January 2017

**Approved by:**

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### **Document Location**

This document is held by Tamworth Borough Council and the document owner is the Corporate Director of Communities, Partnerships and Housing

Printed documents may be obsolete. An electronic copy will be available on Tamworth Borough Councils Intranet. Please check for current version before using.

### **Revision History**

<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Version Control</b>	<b>Summary of changes</b>
October 2017	3	

### **Document Review Plans**

This document is subject to a scheduled annual review. Updates shall be made in accordance with business requirements and changes and will be with agreement with the document owner.

### **Distribution**

The document will be available on the Intranet and the website.

## Contents

- 1. Introduction and Background**
- 2. Legal Framework**
- 3. Context**
- 4. Types of Temporary Accommodation**
- 5. Suitability and affordability of accommodation**
- 6. Accommodation offers and refusals**
- 7. Ending of Temporary Accommodation**
- 8. Policy Review**
- 9. Monitoring the Policy**
- 10. Complaints and Compliments**
- 11. More Information**

## **1. Introduction and Background**

This Policy sets out how Tamworth Borough Council will meet its responsibilities to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness in Tamworth. The policy meets relevant aims set out in the Tamworth Homeless Prevention Strategy 2016 – 2020.

## **2. Legal Framework**

The Council has a statutory duty to assist households presenting as homeless where they are eligible for assistance and in priority need. This policy relates to the placement of homeless households into temporary accommodation under Section 188 of the Housing Act 1996 Pt VII, as amended and longer term temporary accommodation placements under s.193 where a main housing duty for households has been accepted. Temporary accommodation is for an interim period and households once assessed will be moved on to permanent accommodation in the social or private rented sector.

Additionally Case Law, specifically *Nzolameso v Westminster* (2015) set out that Local Authorities must produce a policy which sets out how it will procure accommodation for households who are homeless in its district. This is Tamworth Borough Councils Policy.

## **3. Context**

When households have been accepted as homeless or are owed a homelessness duty, or in some cases when their homeless application is being investigated the household is expected to be housed temporarily. Temporary accommodation is an umbrella term for a wide variety of accommodation which can be accessed by households and may include bed and breakfast accommodation (B&B), a Private Sector Leasing Scheme (PSL), designated housing stock or guardianship schemes. (This list is not exhaustive)

In all of these types of accommodation, it is only meant to be temporary, which is for a limited amount of time, until the household either locates their own housing in the private sector or is offered a suitable offer in permanent accommodation if homeless duty has been accepted by the local authority.

In accordance with the law and homelessness legislation, including the homelessness Code of Guidance, so far as reasonably practical, Tamworth Borough Council will seek to accommodate homeless households within Tamworth and will always consider the suitability of accommodation taking into account the circumstance of the individual. However due to a range of factors including the economic down turn, changes to the private sector rented market and the impact of welfare reform, it is increasingly difficult to acquire suitable accommodation within the borough. Therefore, where temporary accommodation cannot be secured within the locality, out of borough accommodation will be sourced, to enable placements to be made to fulfil the Council's housing obligations. The Council keeps its temporary accommodation continually under review, and where a household is placed outside of the Borough the Council will seek to return them to the Borough at the earliest opportunity to do so.

#### **4. Types Temporary Accommodation**

The Council uses a variety of accommodation to temporarily house those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The accommodation includes but is not limited to the following:

Bed and Breakfast – Although there is a target to abolish the use of B&B accommodation as a form of temporary housing it is still utilised by the Council in emergencies. Tamworth Borough Council uses a number of local providers. There are costs attached to B&B which can be paid through housing benefit or a contribution from the household and there may be additional service charges that will need to be paid. Households may face eviction from temporary accommodation if charges are not paid and the Council can choose then to end its duty to house the homeless household.



Private Sector Leasing Scheme – The PSL scheme offers temporary accommodation for families or individuals in a private dwelling which is managed by the council on behalf of a private landlord. Those housed in the PSL scheme can pay rent either via housing benefit or if they are working from their earnings. The PSL property is only temporary and the family or individual with support from the council will be encouraged to move on to suitable permanent accommodation when it becomes available and if a duty to accommodate has been accepted.

Hostel Accommodation – For homeless applicants with low or no priority need an out of area hostel placement may be offered. Even though the applicant has been placed out of area the duty to relieve still remains with the Council and the Housing Solutions Service to support those placed out of area to continue to engage with Tamworth Borough Council and to access housing within the borough, either in the social or private rented sector.

#### **5. Suitability and Affordability of Accommodation**

Tamworth Borough Council will endeavour to house households in suitable temporary accommodation. The Council sets a number of standards for different types of temporary accommodation which will be assessed periodically by the Councils Private Sector Housing Team, or when a new provider applies to join the dynamic purchasing system. The temporary accommodation standards are available by contacting the Private Sector Housing Service.

**Use of Bed and Breakfast Accommodation (B&B)** - Wherever possible, the Council will limit the use of B&B accommodation placements for 16/17 year olds, families with dependent children, pregnant women and those with ill health. Where no other suitable accommodation exists and such placements are necessary, the Council will endeavour to move such households to more suitable accommodation within six weeks. The Councils approach is to utilise B&B in an emergency and move households on into private sector leased properties and in times of high demand where these may not be readily

available the Housing Solutions Service will consider other options which may include using its own stock.

When offering longer term temporary accommodation, the Council will consider the suitability of the offer taking account of all relevant factors including the size and location of the property and the individual circumstances of the household.

**Location** – Tamworth Borough Council will do all it can to accommodate families and individuals within the borough. It is unlikely that families who are homeless and have priority need will be placed outside the area into another district, unless at the request of the family, and with assistance from the Housing Solutions Service. On occasion single people who are homeless with no priority need may be encouraged to access direct access hostels accommodation in other areas. However Tamworth Borough Council retains the responsibility to that household and will work with the applicant via the personal housing plan to ensure a move back to Tamworth.

**Affordability** – The Council will give due consideration to the affordability of any offer made, taking into account the homeless household's entire income including any welfare state benefits, the cost of additional travel to and from the applicants normal place of work, the cost of additional travel to and from children's school or educational institute and the cost of additional travel to access medical services for ongoing treatment or aftercare. Families can be referred to Tamworth Advice Centre (An independent service provided by East Staffs Citizens Advice Bureau) for further guidance and advice if this is deemed appropriate. Where service charges are applied, all households will be expected to pay the fee weekly and where households are working then they will be expected to pay an affordable contribution to costs. This is to ensure that the accommodation is affordable to the household and where Bed and Breakfast is utilised, cost is not a deterrent to households.

**General Health Factors** – The Council will consider health factors, such as ability to climb stairs, care and support provided by other statutory agencies or

the need to access any specialist medical services. The Council will determine whether the medical condition itself makes certain accommodation offered unsuitable. For example problems such as depression, asthma, diabetes and / or back pain may not make a property unsuitable, as the problem may persist in any type of accommodation.

## **6. Accommodation Offers and Refusals**

### **6.1 Offers and refusals under Section 188**

Once a household has been assessed and it has been recognised by the Housing Solutions Service that there is a duty to accommodate temporarily in emergency accommodation the Council will make one suitable offer of interim accommodation. There is no obligation upon the Council to enable applicants to view the accommodation prior to acceptance. If an applicant refuses an offer of accommodation and the Council does not accept the reasons for refusal, and considers that the offer is suitable, the Council's duty will cease and the applicant may not be offered further temporary accommodation and may be required to make their own arrangements.

There is no right of review against the suitability of accommodation offered to applicants, although the applicant can apply for judicial review through the courts, if challenging the suitability of the offer.

### **6.2 Offers and refusals under Section 193**

Where customers are accepted for a main housing duty under Section 193 of the Housing Act, longer term suitable temporary accommodation will be provided. The Council will make one offer of suitable accommodation. Where the Council have accepted a main housing duty and have made a suitable offer of accommodation, there is a right to request a review of the suitability of accommodation.

In such circumstances applicants will be encouraged to accept the offer of accommodation whilst a review of the suitability of the offer of accommodation

is being considered. Where applicants refuse to take up the offer of accommodation whilst a review is underway, the current accommodation may only remain available at the discretion of the Housing Solutions Manager.

## **7. Ending of Temporary Accommodation**

### **7.1 Discharge of Section 188 [Interim] accommodation duty**

Where the Council decides that the applicant/s housed temporarily under section 188, are not owed a main housing duty or that they have breached the licence condition, they will be asked to leave the interim accommodation following warnings and accommodation may be ended with immediate effect, subject to individual circumstances and dependent on the reasons.

### **7.2 Discharge of Section 193 accommodation duty**

The Council shall cease to be subject to the duty under section 193 [6] of the Housing Act, if the applicant:

- Ceases to be eligible for assistance
- Becomes homeless intentionally from the accommodation made available for his occupation
- Accepts an offer of accommodation under Part VI [allocation of housing]
- Accepts an offer of an assured tenancy (other than an assured short hold tenancy) from a private sector landlord
- Voluntarily ceases to occupy as their principle home, the accommodation made available for occupation
- Having been informed of the possible consequences of refusal and of his right to request a review of the suitability of accommodation, refuses a final offer
- Where the Council decides that their duty has ceased as described above, the applicants housed under Section 193, will be asked to leave the accommodation usually within 28 days or earlier subject to individual circumstances.

Two warnings will be issued before the Council ceases its s193 duty and accommodation may be ended with immediate effect, subject to individual circumstances and dependent on the reasons.

## **8. Policy Review**

This document will be subject to ongoing review to reflect any changes in Legislation or operational need, but must be reviewed at least every 12 months. Minor changes can be agreed by the Director of Communities, Partnerships and Housing. Where there are significant changes, or changes to legislation then this will require the appropriate governance.

## **9. Monitoring the Policy**

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are any changes to legislation that may impact on the policy and its delivery

## **10. Complaints and Compliments**

Tamworth Borough Council operates a policy known as Tell Us so everyone can be clear about how to compliment, comment and complain about services provided by the Council and what will happen to those comments once they are received. A copy of this policy can be found here:

[http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/misc\\_docs/Tell\\_Us\\_policy.DOC](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/misc_docs/Tell_Us_policy.DOC)

## **12. More Information**

If you would like further information about this policy please contact Tamworth Borough Councils Housing Solutions Service

In writing:

Marmion House,

Lichfield Street,

Tamworth,

Staffordshire,

B79 7BZ

452

By telephone:

01827 709709

Email:

[Housingsolutions@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:Housingsolutions@tamworth.gov.uk)



Strategic Housing Service

Emergency Accommodation

Arrears and Former Tenant Arrears Policy

TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORMER TENANT ARREARS POLICY

1. Introduction
2. Aim of the Procedure
3. The Former Tenant recovery team
4. How to action Former Tenant arrears
5. Procedure
6. Referring case for write off
7. Re-instated cases
8. Review
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## **Introduction**

Tamworth Borough Council will actively manage tenants who reside in emergency accommodation provided by the Authority when discharging its homeless functions. However when a resident leaves Emergency Accommodation provided under s188 or s193 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002) and moves into long term settled accommodation, leaving a debt on their rent account, the debt they owe Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) becomes 'Former Tenant Arrears'.

This policy sets out how the Council will deal with these debts. It is Tamworth Borough Council's intention to minimise former tenant arrears from emergency accommodation through the effective management of handling of current arrears, however, a certain amount of former tenant arrears will inevitably accumulate.

Tamworth Borough Council will investigate the reasons for any arrears and where possible will take the necessary action to use an enforcement agency for any amount £30 or over to recover the debt. It is important to be seen by residents that all debts will be pursued; this sends out a clear message that the authority takes a firm approach to the collection of debts.

This policy applies to all former residents of emergency accommodation provided by Tamworth Borough Council in response to its statutory duties under s188 and s193 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002) and sits alongside Tamworth Borough Councils procedures for the collection of former tenant arrears from Council managed properties where the tenant leaves owing rent arrears or other related debts to the Council.

## **Aims of the Policy**

All residents have a responsibility to pay rent due, in full, during the time spent in emergency accommodation.

The purpose of this policy is to give clear guidance on how former tenant arrears will be dealt with, and to ensure a consistency of approach across the organisation. This in turn will promote a prompt, robust and effective approach to minimising former tenant arrears, instigating action at the earliest possible stage in order to maximise collection.

## **How to action Former tenant arrears**

### **Notice of Offer**

Within two working days of notification of an offer of accommodation (Council, private sector or nomination to registered provider or a nomination to a private sector leased property), the Housing Solutions Advisors will inform the tenant in writing that all rent arrears and associated charges, rechargeable repairs and all debts should be cleared prior to leaving the emergency accommodation.

If there is no formal response to this letter, issues such as rent arrears, repayment arrangements, and forwarding address can be discussed at the pre-termination visit, which the Housing Solutions Officer conducts with the tenant.

The tenant should sign a document to accept any rent arrears outstanding at that time and state their preferred option of repayment. It is the responsibility of the Housing Solutions Officer to ensure a clear rent account is achieved prior to the termination of the accommodation. Where the rent account is clear a letter will be issued with a rent statement to this effect advising the customer that their account is clear and that there are no arrears outstanding.

If there are any credits on the account and there are no arrears then this credit will be placed against any Council Rent Account if the customer is offered a Council Property.

The Housing Solutions Officer should record all of the information received on the Orchard System and all hard copies should be scanned and kept on the relevant file. The information should include the termination form, notes of any agreements made regarding the arrears and their repayments, and a forwarding address. Where the Council is unable to obtain a forwarding address it will use a credit reference agency to find this.

Tamworth Borough Council may use all the tools available to pursue former tenant arrears including Small Claims Court and associated enforcement, Department of Work and Pensions arrears direct payments, tracing agencies, enforcing money judgements and recovering all associated costs.

The Council will accept a minimum weekly payment of the sum that could be collected via direct payments from the Department of Work and Pensions, currently £3.70 per week as an acceptable method of repaying debt via instalments. However, this is the minimum amount for those on Job Seekers Allowance or Income support, in addition, all circumstances need to be taken into account and recorded on Orchard. In exceptional cases with supporting documentation, we may accept a lower repayment amount. Where a customer is working an assessment may be made to determine what is affordable to repay to the authority.

## **Procedure**

The authority will not chase emergency accommodation debts of under £30 due to this being uneconomical.

The former tenant debt recovery process starts when a client's period of occupation has ended and they have left the emergency accommodation.

The stages below provide an outline of the recovery process with further detail as shown in the flow chart. .

From termination of tenancy:

4 weeks after the tenancy has ended a check should be made on the account to ensure that all housing benefit has been paid in full and a forwarding address is available. Where there is no forwarding address the Council may use a credit reference agency to find an address.

Where there are outstanding arrears of £30+ then a letter should be sent advising of the debt and asking the customer to contact the authority to make arrangements to repay the debt.

8 weeks after the tenancy has finished if there has been no response or repayment agreement made following the first letter then a second arrears letter should be sent and an appointment made for the customer to visit the Council Offices to discuss the outstanding arrears. At the

appointment the customer will be offered a referral to the councils preferred Money Advice Service for support and assistance with any debts and to assist them in managing their financial affairs.

The account will then be checked again after 12 weeks, and if there has been no response to previous letters and the customer has failed to attend appointments or engage with the authority then the account will be monitored on a 6 monthly basis and contact made advising of the debt and asking the customer to contact the Authority and make arrangements for the repayment of any debt.

The officer will then attempt to visit the customer at home if the address is known to discuss the arrears

The officer will then attempt to make contact via phone three times

If no response from letters, and applicant still resides at forwarding address, forward debt to an Enforcement / Debt Collection Agency for recovery.

If response received from client, a repayment agreement should be made.

Set up the agreement with client, (sign)

Monitor on a monthly basis to ensure payments are being made.

### **Credit Balances**

At the point of termination, the Housing Solutions Advisor will need to check the accounts. Where a credit balance exists we will conduct a system check for related accounts in arrears (e.g. emergency accommodation provision to emergency accommodation provision), if any account is found a transfer will be completed immediately (checks with other departments will not be required).

If there is a credit on the account and there is no related accounts then checks will be made first with Estate Management to determine if there are any rent arrears outstanding and then any other debt to the Council (Council Tax, Housing Benefit). We will then write to the former tenant explaining our intention to offset the credit against the debt.

If no accounts are found, the credit will be refunded to the former tenant directly. If a credit remains outstanding within a period of 18 months with no forwarding address known, the balance will be referred for a write-off (see paragraph 7)

### **Disputes**

If any part of the debt is disputed, the correct balance should be verified before any further action is taken. The former tenant or their nominated representative will receive a letter of explanation.

Housing Benefit Issues – liaise with the relevant department in order to substantiate the former tenant balance. All disputes should be resolved and tenants notified in writing within 10 working days.

## **Unable to Trace**

If the balance remains outstanding and exceeds £30.00 (or one weeks rent), the account will be referred to a Debt Collection Agency (once this is confirmed). If the balance is below £30.00 the account may be referred for write off using criteria 'All Recovery Action Exhausted'.

## **Referring case for 'Write Off'**

Write offs will be actioned in accordance with the Housing Solutions Service Write off Procedure and in line with the following criteria:

### **Tenant Declared Bankrupt**

Official documentation must be received and kept on file, copy to be supplied with write off request.

### **Debt Relief Order**

When the twelve month moratorium period has passed arrange for the sum(s) in the sub account(s) to be written off as the Council cannot pursue these sums any further. (see separate procedure on Debt Relief Orders)

### **Outstanding Credit**

On an account and the current address for former tenant is not known/unable to trace. The credit will remain on the system for a period of 18 months.

### **Unable To Trace**

No forwarding address can be traced for a period of 18 months. All traces have been completed in accordance with the procedure document.

### **Uneconomic To Pursue**

The debt is below £30.00 and is uneconomical to pursue.

### **All Recovery Action Has Been Exhausted**

Incorporating cases returned by the Debt Collection Agency which are unable to trace/collect or when it is uneconomic to pursue through legal recourse. All relevant recovery procedures have been completed without success and the likelihood of further recovery is considered negligible.

### **Special Cases**

Where there is a special reason for the debt to be written off, then a declaration form should be completed by a nominated representative and held on file.

### **Statute Barred**

The debt is six or more years old and the circumstances are such that it is inappropriate to seek leave of the court to enforce the debt.

### **Re-instated Cases**

Circumstances may occur which lead to a fresh opportunity to recover debt previously written off. Written confirmation of the debt will be sought from the debtor and a payment arrangement agreed. However, the debt will not be re-instated into the system (written on) until payments under the agreed arrangement have been made to a level where the Housing Solutions Service is satisfied that they are sustainable. It will then be the responsibility of the Housing Solutions Officer to re-instate the debt.

### **Review**

As a general rule, the policy should be reviewed every 2 years unless legislation is introduced to warrant an earlier review, next review is due November 2019.



THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2017

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR REGENERATION AND PORTFOLIO  
HOLDER HOUSING SERVICES****PURCHASE OF NEW BUILD PROPERTIES UNDER THE COUNCIL'S ACQUISITIONS  
POLICY****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

N/A

**PURPOSE**

To update Cabinet on the progress of new affordable housing delivery in Tamworth. To agree appropriate financial arrangements are in place to enable the purchase of 8 units of new build housing from Waterloo Housing Group for use as Council owned and managed accommodation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**It is recommended that £750,000 be transferred from available budget intended for regeneration and new build activity to the acquisitions budget. This is to enable the purchase of 8 residential units for housing from Waterloo Housing Group in line with the Council's Acquisitions Policy.**

**Furthermore, it is recommended that the Chief Operating Officer and Solicitor to the Council are delegated authority to enter into a contract with Waterloo Housing Group for the purchase of the 8 No dwellings as proposed above.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Tamworth Borough Council has for a number of years been committed to increasing the number of affordable rented homes available for the use of residents. This programme has included the re-development of some garage sites, creating 19 new Council homes and the acquisition of 14 affordable dwellings on two sites from developers. This approach to date has represented value for money and provided an additional option to increase the supply of new affordable housing directly owned and managed by the Council.

A further opportunity has now been identified to purchase an additional 8 dwellings from Waterloo Housing Group at their new build site in Dosthill. In order for this transaction to be successfully completed, it will be necessary to agree the virement of £750,000 from the garage re-development programme budget into the acquisitions programme. This represents excellent value for money and will enable the continuation of the supply of new build Council accommodation going forward. This is especially important whilst the Council reviews the potential for additional garage sites to be redeveloped. It should however be noted that in this instance, Right To Buy (RTB) receipts cannot be utilised to contribute to the purchase of these properties due to Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) grant having been secured to subsidise the cost of the new homes constructed on the site.

The Council is also currently reviewing further opportunities on sites in Tamworth where it may be viable for the Council to acquire additional new build residential units directly from developers. If these opportunities become a realistic proposition then further funds will be required from the garage re-development budget to be utilised in conjunction with available RTB receipts. Further reports to Cabinet will be forthcoming to agree the appropriate use of resources for these purposes.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The options below have been considered and have gone to inform the recommendations made in this report:

Options Considered	Benefits	Risks
<p><b>Option 1:</b> The Council does not proceed with the purchase of the 8 units at Dosthill</p>	<p>Resources conserved for re-development of garage sites for affordable housing to meet specific needs</p> <p>Affordable housing units retained by WHG with TBC having nomination rights to these units</p>	<p>Review of garage site re-development on-going and opportunity lost</p> <p>Opportunity to strengthen TBC asset base with new units of accommodation lost</p> <p>Limited opportunities to purchase new build and potential competition from RPs on larger sites</p> <p>Rental income lost over lifetime of the units</p>
<p><b>Option 2:</b> Council proceed with the purchase of the 8 units</p>	<p>Effective use of resources to ensure timely outcome whilst garage site review on-going</p> <p>Units available within short time frame to meet local need</p> <p>TBC property portfolio enhanced with new build units</p> <p>TBC full management control of new properties</p> <p>Rental income contributes to HRA / TBC financial stability</p> <p>Partnership with HCA and WHG strengthened and further opportunities explored</p>	<p>New properties may be lost under Right To Buy</p> <p>Diverting resources away from garage site re-development decreases opportunities to build to meet specific need not delivered by the market (e.g. fully adapted bungalows)</p> <p>Strategically, affordable units in Tamworth potentially lost as resources for new build being diverted to purchase units that will remain affordable with associated nomination rights if no purchase is undertaken</p>

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The total capital costs (land, works and on costs) of the 8 residential units at Dosthill is £980,000. However, £237,000 of HCA grant was secured to support the delivery of these homes. Consequently, the cost to the Council to purchase 8 houses will be £743,000 (The request to vire £750,000 takes into account any additional costs incurred although none are currently assumed by WHG).

At an average cost of £93,750 per unit this makes the purchase of the 8 houses good value for money and adds new build homes to the Council's stock with all of the financial benefits this brings over the lifetime of the property. This is especially beneficial over the first 10 years as it is assumed that there will be minimal repairs and investment requirements given these properties are new build units.

As a HCA grant has been utilised to subsidise the capital cost of the development, the Council cannot utilise RTB 1 for 1 receipts to assist in the purchase of these units as this would contravene DCLG / HCA guidance relating to the use of these funds where grant has



been applied.

Subsequently, it is proposed that the resources required to complete the purchase should be released from the existing garage re-development budget into the acquisitions budget. There is currently £3,969,764 available within the re-development budget. As the garage re-development programme is currently under review, no further funds for that purpose will be required in the current financial year.

Given this position, utilising the required £750,000 to purchase these units in Dosthill, in excess of £3m remains in the budget for the most appropriate use – be that garage site redevelopment or the acquisition of further s106 units.

### **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

The Council has previously completed the acquisition of new build, affordable accommodation from developers on 2 sites in Tamworth. To achieve this, the Council has utilised the services of local solicitors who specialise in property transactions. Learning from those previous acquisitions will be taken into account and the services of fully qualified legal support should help to ensure all legal risks are minimised.

Additionally, the Council has a good working relationship with Waterloo Housing Group and the 2 organisations have worked successfully together over a number of years to deliver both new homes and bring back empty properties into use as affordable accommodation. Internal legal colleagues from both organisations and the use of external support have previously minimised risk to both parties.

Waterloo Housing Group are also subject to the HCA's regulatory frameworks and this relationship and the utilisation of grant on this scheme will necessitate reporting back and seeking to minimise risk where HCA grant has been applied.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are significant beneficial implications of proceeding with the purchase of the 8 units as follows:

1. The excellent quality, new affordable housing acquired will contribute to healthier outcomes and quality lives.
2. The new homes will contribute to a sustainable community environment.
3. The acquisitions will provide suitable housing for households in need and assist in preventing homelessness in line with new legislative requirements.
4. The new homes will support the delivery of Corporate objectives especially "Living a quality life in Tamworth."

The provision of additional new affordable homes will also support strategic housing priorities as set out in the "Strategic Approach to Housing and Wellbeing" and the delivery of housing plans and strategies that will support that approach. A further report to members detailing the strategic approach to housing in Tamworth will be forthcoming in the New Year.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Prior to the commencement of the development of 19 new units of Council accommodation on former garage sites, a successful programme of re-development was undertaken with partner Registered Providers (RPs) delivering 54 units of affordable housing between 2011 and 2015 across 14 Council owned garage sites.

In November 2015 Cabinet approved the development of a further tranche of garage sites for new Council owned affordable housing. To date, the re-development programme has been successfully delivered within budget and to agreed timescales. 19 new Council homes, partly funded through the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) grant programme, are now at completion stage and are in the process of being handed over to the Council. The 19 new Council homes and the 54 Housing Association properties have contributed not only to

meeting housing need and preventing homelessness but have also improved the wider environment, made good use of Council owned land / under-used assets, assisted in tackling ASB and eliminating locations previously blighted by such activity and delivered property types to meet specific housing requirements (e.g. fully adapted bungalows) that are not usually provided by the market.

The delivery of the new Housing Association and Council owned homes has gone to meet the need locally for affordable accommodation and is consistent with emerging national policy initiatives that recognise the failings of the housing market and the need to increase the supply of genuinely affordable homes to meet the needs of those who cannot access the private rented sector or owner occupation.

In addition to the aforementioned new build homes on former garage sites; the Council has recently acquired 14 units of affordable housing on two sites from developers where there was no interest from RPs to purchase these properties. This is largely as a result of RPs changing their business models resulting in them concentrating their activities on larger sites.

This has subsequently provided an opportunity for the Council to assume the role of an RP in negotiations with developers to secure affordable s106 units on smaller sites. This is a new area of business for the Council but learning from the first 2 transactions has resulted in a wider appreciation of the workings of the local housing market and built internal capacity to deal with all aspects of this process from formulating an offer (based on methods deployed by RPs) to agreeing specifications and handover arrangements with developers.

This has represented a value for money, additional option to increase the supply of new affordable housing directly owned and managed by the Council and has complemented the increased in supply via the garage site re-development programme.

A further opportunity has now been identified to purchase 8 units of affordable housing from Waterloo Housing Group at their site in Dosthill. The 8 units consist of:

- 5X 2 bed 4 person house for Affordable Rented Housing
- 3X 3 bed 5 person house for Affordable Rented Housing

These unit types are consistent with those required to meet housing need in Tamworth. Waterloo Housing Group will retain the 5 units of new Shared Ownership accommodation being developed on the site. The build at Dosthill has been undertaken by the same developer who has constructed the 19 Council homes on the former garage sites. As on the garage sites units, the properties at Dosthill have been constructed to a high standard and in reality can be viewed as an addendum to the garage site re-development programme, increasing the number of new, high quality Council homes delivered from 19 to 27.

In order for this transaction to be successfully completed, it will be necessary to agree the virement of £750,000 from the garage re-development programme budget into the acquisitions programme. This again represents excellent value for money and given that the garage site re-development programme is currently under review, will enable the continuation of the supply of new build Council accommodation whilst the review is completed.

Additionally, further opportunities are being pursued on sites in Tamworth where it may be viable for the Council to acquire additional units of new build accommodation directly from developers. One of these may secure a further 7 new properties to be incorporated into the Council's housing stock although in other cases new additions may not be possible due to prohibiting factors such as leasehold arrangements that are in place.

If further identified opportunities become a realistic proposition then further funds will be required from the garage re-development budget to be utilised in conjunction with available RTB receipts (where no HCA grant has been applied). Should these business opportunities materialise then further reports to Cabinet will be forthcoming to agree the appropriate use of

resources for these purposes.

**REPORT AUTHOR**

Steve Pointon

Head of Strategic Housing

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**APPENDICES**

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