



CABINET

7 March 2018

A meeting of the CABINET will be held on Thursday, 15th March, 2018, 6.00 pm in Committee Room 1, Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, B79 7BZ

A G E N D A

NON CONFIDENTIAL

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 8)

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

None

6 Corporate Plan 2017 - 2020 (2018 Update) (Pages 9 - 18)

(Report of the Leader of the Council)

7 Fees and Charges - Development Management (Pages 19 - 26)

(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration)

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a long horizontal line that tapers to a point on the right.

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 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, and M Thurgood.



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 22nd FEBRUARY 2018

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

The following officers were present: John Wheatley (Executive Director Corporate Services), Rob Barnes (Executive Director Communities), Andrew Barratt (Chief Operating Officer), Stefan Garner (Director of Finance), Michael Buckland (Head of Revenues) and Matthew Fletcher (Economic Development Officer)

108 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no Apologies for Absence.

109 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor M Thurgood)

110 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

111 QUESTION TIME:

None.

112 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

None.

113 CORPORATE VISION, PRIORITIES PLAN, BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2018/19

The report of The Leader of the Council proposed the **Vision Statement, Priority Themes, Corporate Priorities and Outcomes** and their inclusion in the **Corporate Plan and Support Service Plan**.

□ the recommendation package of budget proposals to enable the Council to agree the:

- General Fund (GF) Revenue Budget and Council Tax for 2018/19;
 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2018/19;
 - 3 Year General Fund Capital Programme (2018/21);
 - 5 Year HRA Capital Programme (2018/23);
 - 3 Year General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (2018/21);
- and
- 5 Year HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (2018/23).

□ Compliance with the requirement of the Council's Treasury Management Policy in reporting to Council the proposed strategy for the forthcoming year and the Local Government Act 2003 with the reporting of the Prudential Indicators.

RESOLVED: The Committee moved all recommendations within the report.

1. the Vision Statement, Priority Themes, Corporate Priorities and Outcomes for 2018/19.
2. the proposed revisions to Service Revenue Budgets (Policy Changes).
3. the sum of £80,065 be applied from Council Tax Collection Fund surpluses in reducing the Council Tax demand in 2018/19.
4. the sum of £222,336 be applied to Business Rates Collection Fund deficits in 2018/19.
5. that on 30th November 2017, the Cabinet calculated the Council Tax Base 2018/19 for the whole Council area as 21,438 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]
6. that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2018/19 is £3,681,977.
7. the following amounts as calculated for the year 2018/19 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

- a. £53,144,554 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act (Outgoings excluding internal GF Recharges).
 - b. £49,462,577 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act (Income excluding internal GF Recharges);
 - c. £3,681,977 being the amount by which the aggregate at 7(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 7(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31A(4) of the Act);
 - d. £171.75 being the amount at 7(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (at 5 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.
8. the Council Tax level for the Borough Council for 2018/19 of £171.75 (an increase of £5.00 (3.0%) on the 2017/18 level of £166.75) at Band D.
 9. an aggregate Council Tax (comprising the respective demands of the Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority) of £1,648.36 at Band D for 2018/19 be noted (£1,562.01 in 2017/18).
 10. the Council Tax levels at each band for 2018/19.
 11. the sum of £3,077,541 be transferred from General Fund Revenue Balances in 2018/19.
 12. the Summary General Fund Revenue Budget for 2018/19.
 13. the Provisional Budgets for 2018/19 to 2020/21, summarised at Appendix G, as the basis for future planning.
 14. minimum level for balances of £500k to be held for each of the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, General Capital Fund and Housing Capital Fund.
 15. Cabinet be authorised to release funding from the General Contingency budget and that the release of funding for Specific Contingency items be delegated to the Corporate Management Team in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
 16. proposed HRA Expenditure level of £15,912,710 for 2018/19.
 17. rents for Council House Tenants in General Accommodation for 2018/19 be set at an average of £85.85 (2017/18 £86.72),

- over a 48 week rent year (including the required 1% reduction)
18. rents for Council House Tenants due for 52 weeks in 2018/19 be collected over 48 weeks.
 19. the HRA deficit of £3,805,820 be financed through a transfer from Housing Revenue Account Balances in 2018/19.
 20. the proposed 3 year General Fund Capital Programme of £17.749m.
 21. the proposed 5 year Housing Capital Programme of £41.940m.
 22. to delegate authority to Cabinet to approve/add new capital schemes to the capital programme where grant funding is received or there is no net additional cost to the Council.
 23. the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, the Treasury Management Policy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy and Annual Investment Statement 2018/19.
 24. the Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Limits for 2018/19 to 2019/20.
 25. adoption of the Treasury Management Practices contained within ANNEX 8.
 26. the detailed criteria of the Investment Strategy 2018/19 contained in the Treasury Management Strategy within ANNEX 4.
 27. the adoption of the revised CIPFA Prudential code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (Prudential Code) and Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (Treasury Management Code).
 28. endorse the action taken (under the MIFID II regulations) to opt up to professional status, so that we may continue to use the full range of investments.
 29. to endorse the approach taken in the selection of Property Funds and approve investment in those property funds, making use of both primary and secondary markets as appropriate, at the discretion of the Executive Director Corporate Services and Director of Finance.

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

114 WRITE OFFS 01/04/17 - 31/12/17

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance proposed that Members endorse the amount of debt written off for the period 01 April 2017 to 31 December 2017.

RESOLVED: The Committee endorsed the amount of debt written off for the period 01 April 2017 to 31 December 2017.

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

115 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That members of the press and public be now excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

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

116 TAMWORTH ENTERPRISE CENTRE BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLAN

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration was considered.

RESOLVED: The Committee:-

1. Endorsed the 4 year business plan as detailed and appended.
2. Endorsed the budget forecast outlined in the business plan.
3. Noted the variance between current base budget and expected outturn and endorse the actions detailed in the report to mitigate the impact.

(Moved by Councillor S Claymore and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

117 TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL GRANT TO SAMARITANS UPDATE AND FUTURE AWARD

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Wellbeing was considered.

RESOLVED: The Committee:-

1. Authorised officers to waive financial regulations and issue a grant to Tamworth Samaritans to the value of **£7,000 for the** year April 2018 to March 2019.
2. Delegated authority to the Executive Director of Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities to manage the grant including any variations during the term of the grant.

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

118 COUNCIL HOUSING REPAIRS DELIVERY OPTIONS

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services was considered.

RESOLVED: The Committee:

1. Acknowledged the debate undertaken by Corporate Scrutiny in relation to discussing the options on 31st January 2018; noting that they support the recommendations being presented in the report.
2. Endorsed an extension to the Wates Living Space contract from 31st March 2019 until 31st March 2020, on existing terms, allowing for further exploration of opportunities identified with the setting up of either an in-house contractor or procuring a long-term managed contract.
3. Recognised the commercial opportunities contained within Arks independent report into the future delivery options for the repairs and investment service.
4. Delegated authority to the Executive Director of Communities, in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Housing and Executive Director of Corporate Services to agree a detailed project and resourcing plan that enables a final decision to be taken on the financial and commercial viability of an in-house contractor by calendar year end (December 2018) when compared to traditional procurement of longer term managed contract.
5. Agreed the principle work-streams identified within the report, which includes the commissioning of an up-to-date stock

condition survey that will allow, as far as practically possible, the Council to test all the financial assumptions made to make a final decision on the future repairs and investment delivery vehicle for its council owned stock.

6. Requested a Temporary Reserve for £150k be created from current underspends on the Housing Repairs Account to meet the costs of the workstream identified in the report.

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

Leader

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THURSDAY, 15 MARCH 2018

**REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
CORPORATE PLAN 2017 - 2020 (2018 UPDATE)**

EXEMPT INFORMATION

Not applicable

PURPOSE

To provide Cabinet Members with an update of the Council's Corporate Plan for the period to 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet approves the Corporate Plan update.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2017 Cabinet adopted the Council's Corporate Plan for the period 2017 to 2020. The focus of that document was upon how the Council will use its Corporate Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy and agreed priorities and objectives to achieve its ambition to shift from a surviving organisation with efficiency as the key driver to that of a thriving organisation with long term sustainability as the ultimate aim.

It is both prudent and good practise to provide key stakeholders with the assurance that this organisation has a vision, clear priorities that are supported by ambitious but achievable objectives for our people, place and organisation.

This Corporate Plan update spans the remainder of the current Corporate Plan period to 2020 and is set out at Appendix A. Subject to Members' approval it will be posted on the Council's internet site for access on demand.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not applicable

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

There are no legal or risk implications directly arising from this report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications directly arising from this report

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Council has complied with recognised best practise and produced a Corporate Plan annually since 2008.

REPORT AUTHOR

John Day

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Corporate Plan 2017 - 2020

APPENDICES

Corporate Plan 2017 – 2020 (Update 2018)

TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2017-2020 UPDATE 2018



1 VISION: One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed - Open for business since the 7th century AD

LIVING A QUALITY
LIFE IN TAMWORTH

GROWING STRONG
TOGETHER IN TAMWORTH

DELIVERING QUALITY
SERVICES IN TAMWORTH

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WELCOME

Welcome to Tamworth Borough Council's Corporate Plan update for the years 2018 to 2020.

The document outlines what we want to achieve in the remaining years of the 2017 - 2020 Corporate Plan.

The vision for our place and our communities to be 'perfectly placed' in order to take full advantage of every opportunity that leads to Tamworth being a 'better' place and its people having 'better' lives or the Council being a 'better' organisation continues to be relevant.

Many of the challenges faced by the Council in recent years have had direct consequences for all three themes: People, Place and Organisation and these three thematic priorities, established in 2016, will continue to remain the focus of our plans, actions and resources for the remainder of the plan period to 2020.

The Council continues to be faced with significant financial demands from Central Government following new legislation in areas such as Homelessness, Data Protection (the new General Data Protection Regulations - GDPR), planning and transparency – as well as substantial reductions in Government grant support.

Additional demands for services like benefits and housing arising from these austere times have been included where possible but this is dependent on the length and depth of the austerity measures.

There is also a high degree of uncertainty arising from the work progressing with regard to business rates retention and the associated impact on the Council's business rates income and associated baseline and tariff levels; it has recently been announced that Councils will be able to retain 75% of business rates collected from 2020/21 rather than 100% as previously planned. In addition, the Government is also consulting on a review of the distribution methodology, the 'Fair Funding Review' as well as the planned Business Rates Reset, when a proportion of the growth in business rates achieved since 2013/14 will be redistributed, both of which will also take effect from 2020/21. There is a high risk that this will have a significant effect on the Council's funding level from 2020/21.

The medium term financial planning process is being challenged by Government austerity measures as well as continued uncertainty. The accomplishment of a balanced three year Medium Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund is a major achievement as the Council, like others, has planned to deliver its budget process in light of unprecedented adverse economic conditions with a great deal of uncertainty over future investment and income levels such as car parking, land charges and corporate property rents.

The Council is responding to these challenges by considering the opportunities to grow our income. We are ambitious with our commercial view and will continue to work hard to identify income streams that enable us to continue to meet the needs of our residents.

Supporting vulnerable people remains a focus and, in particular, ensuring that those facing difficulties in relation to financial hardship and housing are prioritised. Adopting a 'Place Based Approach', initially within the Community Safety Partnership, has shown a joined approach that can



Andrew Barratt
Chief Operating Officer



Daniel Cook
Leader of the Council

deliver improved outcomes for vulnerable people and neighbourhoods so we will continue to develop collaborative working arrangements and seek to facilitate the availability of early help for residents including continued targeted investment in the third sector.

In excess of £6million is being invested in our strategic assets within the town; the Tamworth Enterprise Centre, which acts as an incubation unit for 15 businesses, recently opened and we are pressing on with the ambitious refurbishment and extension to the Assembly Rooms, which will reopen to the public in 2019. These projects are supported by a combination of Heritage lottery funding, Staffordshire County Council grant, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Local Enterprise Partnership grant, and the Council's own funding.

Our major heritage offer at Tamworth Castle will also receive a much needed facelift with the benefit of a further Heritage Lottery grant where the upper floor will receive approximately £750,000 worth of refurbishment works which will ensure we can protect our most popular heritage for future generations to continue to enjoy.

Page 13 Growth and housing are essential to our future viability, however we remain committed to ensure this is managed growth with the necessary infrastructure provided to support this growth. The environment is very precious to us, given we are a largely urban authority, and plans have commenced to define how the new community woodland area on the former golf course site will look, so this large area of open space can become the latest in our network of green spaces and nature reserves that Tamworth has developed over the last few years.

Promoting the right blend of skills available to our businesses is high on the Council's agenda, accepting that we can only influence this rather than be a direct provider. Our continued participation in this agenda will be achieved via such forums as the West Midlands Combined Authority and the two Local Enterprise Partnerships of which we are members.

A fundamental review of senior management will provide us with the opportunity to significantly reduce management costs to create a management structure that is flexible and focussed to meet future needs. In addition, we will be developing our operating model to further strengthen our service delivery and strategic approaches. In particular we will further reinforce our use of knowledge and evidence in decision making, ensuring that we are clear in our service offer and accountable to residents.

We continue to invest in our teams, transform our processes and ensure our technology infrastructure is fit for purpose. A number of opportunities to improve customer access to information and services as well as our engagement with our citizens and the way in which we manage our data and information have been identified.

Our energy will remain on focusing our resources on supporting our people and our place in 'Living a quality life in Tamworth' and 'Growing stronger together in Tamworth' by 'Delivering quality services in Tamworth'. This will take us closer to our vision of 'One Tamworth, perfectly placed'.

Andrew Barratt, Chief Operating Officer
Daniel Cook, Leader of the Council

Political Arrangements

The Council currently has 30 members (20 Conservative, 7 Labour, 2 Independents and 1 UKIP) representing its ten wards.

The Council's Cabinet is made up of: The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holders for:

- ▶ Assets & Finance
- ▶ Regeneration
- ▶ Communities & Wellbeing
- ▶ Housing Services
- ▶ Environment & Culture

There are three scrutiny committees, a number of regulatory committees and some ancillary committees.



ORGANISATION



1 VISION: One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed - Open for business since the 7th century AD

3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

LIVING A QUALITY LIFE IN TAMWORTH

GROWING STRONG TOGETHER IN TAMWORTH

DELIVERING QUALITY SERVICES IN TAMWORTH

18 AMBITIONS TO 2020

- 1 More people will live longer, healthier lives
- 2 Fewer children will be obese and run the risk of heart disease and diabetes
- 3 People will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour
- 4 The built and natural environments will be conserved to the highest possible standards
- 5 More people will be living independent lives with access to facilities
- 6 There will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialist services
- 7 More businesses will locate and succeed in Tamworth
- 8 People will have access to a full range of quality housing options
- 9 Local infrastructure and connectivity will support an active workforce and help grow the economy
- 10 The Council will be recognised as both business friendly and businesslike in the way it facilitates and operates
- 11 Tamworth town centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer
- 12 Tamworth will mean 'a great place to live' not simply a place with more houses.
- 13 The Council will have a Commercial Investment Strategy and an associated trading arm designed to invest in assets/other means of sustainable income generation
- 14 Customer satisfaction levels will be maintained above 90%
- 15 Access to all Council services will be improved
- 16 The Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff
- 17 We will save you time and money by doing business with you online
- 18 Fewer customers will have to visit the Council offices to resolve their issues



KEY PROJECTS BY 2020

- Maintaining and managing the environment within Tamworth
- Delivery of the Community Safety Partnership
- Delivery of an effective regulatory service
- Growth and Regeneration in Tamworth
- Tinkers Green and Kerria regeneration
- Garage sites redevelopments
- New repairs contract
- Business rates retention
- Commercial opportunities in business decision-making
- Heritage, leisure and events
- Organisational well-being
- Digital customer services
- Corporate knowledge hub
- New General Data Protection Regulations
- Office 365
- Self-service

6 CORE PURPOSES OUR FUNCTIONS & DELIVERY MECHANISMS

Provide the democratic leadership and high ethical and professional standards necessary to support the communities of Tamworth

Work with our communities and agencies to address the priority issues facing the borough and its communities

Offer a range of services and advice focused upon the needs of our communities ensuring that those in greatest need are supported and protected

Work together to support individuals and communities to improve their lives

To work hard to understand the needs of our communities and support growth, cohesion and pride

To ensure the values and actions of the organisation are founded on fairness, equality and honesty

THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

JOHN WHEATLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (CORPORATE SERVICES)

The budget setting process has faced significant constraints in Government funding in recent years - over 50% in real terms since 2010. The four year Local Government Finance Settlement confirmed that austerity measures are to continue with Revenue Support Grant (RSG) all but eradicated for most Councils by 2020 - and suggests that the key challenges the Council is currently addressing are likely to become greater.



The Council has adopted a route-map designed to position the Council so it could be perfectly placed to take advantage of every opportunity it either created or identified.

'From Surviving To Thriving' set out a number of opportunities based upon the principle that by focusing upon the growth of the economy, both the 'people' and the 'place' would benefit. The Council remains committed to promoting and stimulating economic growth and regeneration; meeting our housing needs; creating a vibrant town centre economy and protecting those most vulnerable in our communities. To this end, we pledge to explore and invest in viable and sustainable methods of generating income and moving towards financial independence.

The Council also continues to be faced with significant financial demands from Central Government following new legislation in areas such as Homelessness, Data Protection (the new General Data Protection Regulations - GDPR), planning and transparency - as well as substantial reductions in Government grant support.

There is also a high degree of uncertainty arising from the work progressing with regard to business rates retention (and the associated impact on the Council's business rates income and associated baseline and tariff levels) - it has recently been announced that Councils will be able to retain 75% of business rates collected from 2020/21 rather than 100% as previously planned. In addition, the Government is also consulting on a review of the distribution methodology, the 'Fair Funding Review' as well as the planned Business Rates Reset (when a proportion of the growth in business rates achieved since 2013/14 will be redistributed) - both of which will also take effect from 2020/21. There is a high risk that this will have a significant effect on the Council's funding level from 2020/21.

The key risks are:

- ▶ Impact of uncertain economic conditions, following the decision to leave the EU - there is a higher level of uncertainty than in previous budget setting processes.
- ▶ Achievement of the anticipated growth in business rates income - in line with the assumed baseline and tariff levels set.
- ▶ Uncertainty over the work progressing with regard to business rates retention.
- ▶ Delivery of the planned Commercial Investment Strategy actions and associated improved investment returns of 4% p.a. arising from the investment of £24m from the capital receipt due to be received over the period 2016 - 2018 from the sale of the former golf course (to support the MTFS in the long term)
- ▶ Achievement of anticipated growth in new homes within the borough and the associated dependency on the New Homes Bonus income to address/reduce the funding shortfall for the General Fund; and

- ▶ Challenge to continue to achieve high collection rates for council tax, business rates and housing rents - in light of further austerity, economic conditions and uncertainty.

Work is continuing on a number of actions to address the financial position in future years:

- ▶ Delivering Quality Services project - the demand management approach to shift demand to more efficient methods of service delivery - online and automation (Interactive Voice Response). A savings target of £100k p.a. has already been included within the MTFS together with reduced CRM costs of £62k p.a. from 2019/20.
- ▶ Recruitment freeze - where possible, temporary twelve month appointments are now only being made; there is a robust challenge/re-justification process in place for all vacant posts with a requirement to investigate alternative options including restructuring to fill vacancies/looking at what we can stop doing.
- ▶ Spend freeze - Managers have previously been required to restrict/limit spending to essential spend only (there was a £1.6m underspend in 2016/17 - although the majority was windfall income, c. £0.57m was lower level underspend). Savings of over £150k p.a. have been included within the proposals.
- ▶ Alternative investment options arising from the Commercial Investment Strategy (as well as the Treasury Management Investment Strategy, including any prudential borrowing opportunities) to generate improved returns of c. 5% p.a. (plus asset growth) including:
 - ▶ Set up of trading company to develop new income streams
 - ▶ Local investment options - Lower Gungate/Solway Close development including the potential to drawdown funding from the Local Growth Fund/Local Enterprise Partnerships (GBS and Staffordshire)
 - ▶ Investments in a Diversified Property Fund
- ▶ Review of reserves/creation of fund for transformation costs (if needed), and
- ▶ Targeted Savings - to identify potential areas for review in future years.

Council, on 27th February 2018, approved a three year Medium Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund with a Council Tax increase within the Government referendum limits - in order to continue to deliver those services essential to the local community. Challenging savings targets have been included which need to be achieved over the next three years. However, in the longer term, the Council faces ongoing grant reductions and income uncertainties which mean that substantial additional savings and additional income will need to be made into the future to deliver a balanced budget in the longer term.

With regard to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), a five year MTFS was approved by Council, despite significant funding reductions over the four years from 2016/17, given the Government requirement for Councils to reduce social housing rents by 1% per annum, including significant investment in regeneration projects to meet future housing needs and sustain the HRA in the longer term. Following HRA self financing, the majority of the capital funding is made through revenue contributions.

The headline figures for 2018/19 are:

- ▶ A General Fund total cost of services of £10,270,210 an increase of £646,970 (6.7%) compared to 2017/18
- ▶ The Band D Council Tax set at £171.75, an increase of £5 (3.0% - less than £0.10 per week) on the level from 2017/18 of £166.75
- ▶ A General Fund Capital Programme of £17.749m for three years
- ▶ A Housing Revenue Account (HRA) expenditure level of £15,912,710 for 2018/19 (excluding interest & similar charges)
- ▶ An average rent of £85.85 (in line with the Government's requirement to reduce rents by 1% p.a. from 2016/17 for four years), which represents a reduction of £0.87 (on the current average rent of £86.72) and equates to £79.25 on an annualised 52 week basis
- ▶ A Housing Capital Programme of £41.940m (including c.£17.9m relating to the regeneration projects) for five years.

The accomplishment of a balanced three year Medium Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund is a major achievement as the Council, like others, has planned to deliver its budget process in light of unprecedented adverse economic conditions with a great deal of uncertainty over future investment and income levels such as car parking, land charges and corporate property rents.

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SUMMARY ACCOUNTS 2017/18

Due to the earlier publication of this combined document the draft summary accounts for 2017/18 are not yet available. As soon as they are (approximately end of June 2018) they will be posted on the Council's website: www.tamworth.gov.uk

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Annual Governance Statement is a statutory document published following a review of the effectiveness of the Authority's system of internal control. It explains the governance framework (systems and processes, culture and values) that the Authority has in place, and includes an action plan to address any significant governance issues identified.

Due to the earlier publication of this combined document, the annual governance statement for 2017/18 is not yet available. The Annual Governance Statement is published with the Annual Statement of Accounts and will be available later in the year.

Shown below, under the headings People, Place and Organisation, are some of our achievements in 2017/18. All that has been achieved is not included but we have identified those achievements which we feel will be of most community interest due to their impact and benefits.

PEOPLE

- ▶ Tamworth became the 200th area to be granted Dementia Friendly Community status by the Alzheimer's Society,
- ▶ The Sports Development team worked with sports clubs and organisations to offer a varied programme of events over the summer in 'Playscheme 2017',
- ▶ A new and modern play area, incorporating new play equipment, was opened in Belgrave next to the recently installed outdoor gym,
- ▶ 'Active Tamworth' continued its programme of activities to increase participation rates in physical activity,
- ▶ To promote safety and crime prevention, the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership carried out various campaigns including 'Spooks & Sparklers' and 'Summerwatch'.

PLACE

- ▶ A new Small Business Grants scheme was launched to help promote new small business start-ups, self-employment and entrepreneurship in Tamworth,
- ▶ The opening of the Tamworth Enterprise Centre in the renamed Philip Dix House marked the completion of the first building project in the £6.1 million Enterprise Quarter scheme,
- ▶ A £365,000 grant was awarded from Arts Council England to support the redevelopment of Tamworth Assembly Rooms,
- ▶ A £499,000 grant was awarded from the Heritage Lottery Fund to provide an interactive and family friendly gallery at Tamworth Castle,
- ▶ Tamworth Castle won silver in both the Small Visitor Attraction of the Year and Best Tourism Experience for its Santa Event categories of this year's Enjoy Staffordshire Tourism Awards,
- ▶ Tamworth won gold in the Heart of England in Bloom competition for the eighth year running,
- ▶ Thousands of visitors were attracted to the town for events including: St George's Day, Outdoor Cinema, Fireworks Evening, Outdoor Cinema, Heritage Open Day, Christmas Lights Switch On and We Love Tamworth,
- ▶ A new Council housing repairs and investment contractor was appointed,
- ▶ A developer was appointed as part of the Tinkers Green and Kerria housing regeneration project that will result in the building of 141 new Council owned homes,
- ▶ Phase one of the 'Garage Sites' redevelopment was completed ahead of schedule and has provided 19 units of accommodation across the borough.

ORGANISATION

- ▶ The enablement of self-service for customers took another step forward with the design of a specification for a customer portal and commencement of an exercise for its procurement,
- ▶ 67 self-serve processes now available for customers,
- ▶ The number of face to face enquiries reduced to 6,000,
- ▶ As part of the 'Tamworth Listens' initiative, the fifth annual 'Question Time' event was held giving residents the opportunity to quiz elected representatives from the Borough Council, County Council and Police.

TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PLAN 2017-2020

UPDATE 2018

CONTACT US

To provide feedback specifically on the form and content of this Annual Review and Corporate Plan, email john-day@tamworth.gov.uk.

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THURSDAY, 15 MARCH 2018

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR REGENERATION**FEES AND CHARGES – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

PURPOSE

To seek member approval to an increase in fees for High Hedge Complaints and Pre Application enquiries, and the introduction of a fee for naming and numbering of new developments and planning applications where permitted development rights have been removed or an Article 4 Direction imposed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the revised fee of £350 for processing High Hedge Complaints to be charged from the 1st April 2018 is approved.
2. That the revised fee for pre application enquiries of £1,000 for large scale major proposals, £750 for medium scale major proposals, £250 for small scale major proposals and £125 for minor proposals to be charged from the 1st April 2018 is approved.
3. That the introduction of a charge for naming and numbering of new developments as set out in the report to be charged from the 1st April 2018 is approved
4. That the introduction of a charge for planning applications where permitted development rights have been removed or an Article 4 Direction imposed as set out in the report to be charged from the 1st April 2018 is approved

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year service areas are required to evaluate the status of each fee and charge to identify if it is set at full cost recovery, part subsidised or subsidised. This information can then be used to evaluate the options to adjust the fee and charge within the framework of the Policy and in consultation with Cabinet as appropriate.

Financial regulations state that the setting and reviewing of fees, charges and other income sources must be authorised in accordance with the detail set out in the Constitution and the Scheme of Delegation, under the General Delegations of Powers and Duties to Authorised Officers, which states:

In consultation with the Executive Director Corporate Services and where necessary the Portfolio Holder, to set, unless the charge requires Cabinet approval, rent, fees, charges and other income levels unless any changes:-

- Exceed inflation by more than 3% and/or
- Involve a change in policy; or
- Potentially have significant political implications.

Proposals are being recommended which would result in fees and charges that exceed inflation by more than 3% and in the case of naming and numbering, would result in a

change in policy. Set out below are a set of proposals for planning fees and charges for the forthcoming financial year

High Hedges complaints

When the High Hedges Complaints legislation was first introduced in 2006 there was only limited understanding of the number and complexity of applications that might be received and as a consequence it was a matter of providing a “best guess” of what might be involved. Tamworth proceeded on the basis that the processing of a complaint would take a similar time to that expended on dealing with a householder planning application i.e. 4 hours, and set the fee at £212.

Experience has shown that since the introduction of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, that allowed High Hedge complaints to be made, the Borough Council has received 11 complaint applications, 2 off which ended up at appeal. In reality the time taken to assess high hedge complaints is well in excess of that originally estimated and as a consequence it is considered that a review of the fees charged is warranted. A review of current charges being made by other authorities indicates that the average fee is just under £345 in England and £320 in Wales and the majority of councils offer no concessions.

It is recommended that the fee charged by the Borough Council should be increased and a fee of £350, which is comparable with the national average be introduced. It is not recommended that any concessions be granted.

If the recommendation was accepted this would result in an additional £300 per annum

Pre application fees

Pre-application discussions on planning applications can be hugely beneficial, as both the prospective developer and the Borough Council have a better understanding of the opportunities and constraints which may impact on the development. Adopting a positive attitude towards early engagement means applications can be dealt with more quickly, with a more certain outcome and development is generally a better quality.

Although the Borough Council has always responded to pre application enquiries it is only during the last few years that the processes have been formalised and a fee introduced for some enquiries. This change to our working processes has reaped benefits, with involvement of non-statutory and statutory bodies at an early stage, and an opportunity for members to have a say on major developments prior to formal consideration through the planning process.

The charges introduced in 2012 relate only to the more significant type of developments and are being charged on the basis that they reflect the likely time input and number of staff involved. The current charges are

Large scale major	Small scale major	Minor
£500	£250	£100

- Large scale major (30 plus dwellings or 3000 square metres plus commercial where this has been identified, otherwise this relates to site areas greater than 1.5ha (residential) or greater than 3 ha (non-residential))
- Small scale major (10 - 29 Dwellings or 1000 – 3000 square metres commercial)

- Minor (1-9 Dwellings or 250 – 1000 square metres commercial where this has been identified, otherwise this relates to site areas greater than 0.5ha (residential) or greater than 1 ha (non-residential) and will include changes of use).

Since the start of 2015 a detailed record has been kept of all pre application enquiries received which show that 288 submissions have been made in a 31 month period, an average of just over 9 enquiries per month. Whilst a significant number of these enquiries have related to small developments, e.g. single dwellings and house extension and did not attract a fee, there were also some very large developments that required significant input by officers. At the outset it was not expected that full fee recovery would be achieved, but nonetheless an income of circa £5000 per annum was budgeted for. This target has been achieved and exceeded over the last 2 years.

Experience, since the introduction of the formalised arrangements, shows that the pre application service is appreciated by developers so long as a consistent and high standard service is provided. Furthermore the Borough Council has benefited by having the opportunity to influence development before ideas are fixed. Consequently it is considered that the practice of offering pre application advice has to be continued.

The continued provision of a pre application advice is dependent on having the resources available to provide an efficient and effective service that can deliver a response in a timely manner. However, this work must be undertaken by the Development Management Team at the same time as processing formal planning applications in accordance with its statutory duty.

The payment of a fee for pre application advice could help to secure additional resources to support the Development Management function.

A review of the working practices of other local planning authorities shows a wide variation in the way that pre-application matters are dealt with. Some authorities do not offer pre application advice, some offer the service but do not charge and some secure full cost recovery.

Having introduced a nominal charge in 2012 it is considered that a review of charges is due, but we should not lose the clear benefits that have been established in recent years. Consequently it is recommended that there should be a refinement of what the Council currently offers rather than wholesale changes.

It is recommended that the current practice of offering free advice for household extensions, commercial developments of less than 250 square metres, developments which would not require a planning application fee should be discontinued, but advice on developments which would not require a planning application fee e.g. Listed Building Consent and Tree Preservation Orders should continue.

Insofar as other developments are concerned it is recommended that the following charges be applied from 1st April 2018

Large scale major	Medium scale major	Small scale major	Minor	Householder
£1000	£750	£250	£125	£50

- Large scale major (50 plus dwellings or 5000 square metres plus commercial where this has been identified, otherwise this relates to site areas greater than 2ha (residential) or greater than 5 ha (non-residential))

- Medium scale major (30 - 49 plus dwellings or 3000 – 4999 square metres plus commercial where this has been identified, otherwise this relates to site areas greater than 1ha but less than 2 ha (residential) or greater than 2 ha but less than 5 ha (non-residential))
- Small scale major (10 - 29 Dwellings or 1000 – 2999 square metres commercial where this has been identified, otherwise this relates to site areas greater than 0.5ha but less than 1 ha (residential) or greater than 1 ha but less than 2 ha (non-residential))
- Minor (1-9 Dwellings or 0 – 999 square metres commercial where this has been identified, otherwise this relates to site areas no more than 0.5ha (residential) or 1 ha (non-residential) and changes of use).
- House extensions –any domestic extension, but excluding residential annex which will be treated as minor developments

If the recommendation was accepted this would result in approximately £3000 additional income per annum

Naming and numbering

The Borough Council have never charged for naming and numbering of new development, although the resource input by members of the Development Management Team, particularly the Planning Support Officer, is significant. Large scale developments, in particular, require many hours work identifying acceptable names, and assigning numbers to properties in a meaningful and logical sequence. The naming and numbering of new properties, including re-naming and numbering when developers change their proposals, also requires co-ordination with the Post Office and other public bodies which can be a lengthy process.

In addition to large scale new developments the Council has responsibility for naming small scale developments e.g. infill developments, conversion of single dwellings to flats and renaming existing properties which follow similar procedures and has resource implications.

Naming and numbering also impacts on new and existing commercial premises which have to have a unique address that is fully recognised by all.

Nearby authorities who charge for naming and numbering do so at the following rates

Lichfield

New build

Single residential/commercial property	£150
Each additional residential or commercial property	£50
Change of development layout after notification	£50 per plot

Existing properties/developments

Addition or change of property name	£50
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Stafford Borough

New build

2-5 residential or commercial properties	£400
6-25 residential or commercial properties	£205 per phase plus £17.50 per plot
25+ residential or commercial properties	£400 per phase plus £12.30 per plot

Changes to layout after notification £32 per plot affected

Existing properties/developments

Adding or changing house or building name	£67.50
Rename of street where requested by residents	£400 plus £23.75 per property
House or building renumbering (inc. sub division)	£268
Conversion of single dwelling into multiple addresses	£400

North Warwickshire

New build

New developments – up to 10 plots	£120
New developments (additional per plot above 10 plots)	£15
Amend a development layout after confirmation	£30 per plot
Naming of street	£120

Existing properties/developments

Rename/renumber property	£60
Building conversions	£60
Adding a name to a numbered property	£60

A comparison of the fees, that would be sought using typical ranging from small to large developments, shows that the methodology adopted by Stafford is complex and can be influenced by how the developer sub-divides the site. It is recommended that a simpler approach adopted by Lichfield and North Warwickshire should be adopted in Tamworth. The suggested arrangement for Tamworth is as follows

New build

Single residential/commercial property	£150
Each additional residential or commercial property (e.g. 5 houses would result in £150 + 4 x £15 = £210)	£15 per plot
Change of development layout after notification	£25 per plot

Existing properties/developments

Addition or change of property name	£50
Building conversions (includes subdivision into flats)	£25 per unit created

If the recommendation was accepted this would result in approximately £3500 additional income per annum

Removal of permitted development rights or Article 4 directions

Regulation 5(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 provides for a planning application fee to be charged by local planning authorities for applications necessary because a permitted development right has been removed. The right may have been removed either through an Article 4 direction or through a condition imposed on a planning permission.

In the past it has not been possible to charge for applications arising from the removal of permitted development, or as a consequence of the imposition of an Article 4 Direction. This situation has changed since the new regulations came into force on 17th January 2018.

A snapshot of how many applications were submitted without the need for a fee was carried out for 2015, which is considered to be a representative year.

Out of a total of 474 applications submitted, 26 were not accompanied by a fee. Of these 26

(20.3%) of applications were submitted as a consequence of permitted development rights having been removed, or due to article 4 direction, 28 (21.9%) were prior notification applications, 43 (33.6%) were applications for works to protected trees, 14 (10.9%) related to listed buildings, 12 (9.4%) were resubmissions, 4 (3.1%) were County Matters and 1 (0.8%) related to development involving disabled facilities

It is recommended that a fee of £50 is introduced to cover the cost of processing applications for those applications required as a consequence of “permitted development” rights being removed, or where Article 4 directions apply.

For 2015 this would have resulted in an additional income to the authority of £1300

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Option 1 | Retain fees and charges for High Hedge complaints and Pre-application enquiries at current levels and introduce no charging for naming and numbering, or “permitted development” applications |
| Option 2 | Retain fees and charges for High Hedge complaints and Pre-application enquiries at current levels and introduce charging for naming and numbering, but not for “permitted development” applications |
| Option 3 | Increase fees and charges for High Hedge complaints and Pre-application enquiries at current levels and introduce no charging for naming and numbering, or “permitted development” applications |
| Option 4 | Increase fees and charges for High Hedge complaints and Pre-application enquiries at current levels and introduce charging for naming and numbering, but not for “permitted development” applications |
| Option 5 | Increase fees and charges for High Hedge complaints and Pre-application enquiries at current levels and introduce charging for naming and numbering, and for “permitted development” applications |

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

If all of the increases, as detailed in this report, are approved it should generate overall somewhere in the region of £8k of additional income for the authority each year.

High Hedges legislation

Currently the number of high hedge applications received by the authority is not high, but experience has shown that when applications are received officer input can be spread over a significant period of time. The time spent on assessing high hedges complaints exceeds that estimated when the legislation was first introduced, and a correction in the fees is required to align the cost with current experience and try to achieve full cost recovery. However, it is considered that the fee should not be set at a level that would prevent members of the public from making high hedge complaints, on cost grounds, and therefore an element of subsidy could be considered. The resultant fee should therefore fall within the “fair charging policy”. In this respect this report sets out what other authorities, who provide the same service, charge and it is considered that an increase in the charge from £212 to £350 is fully justified.

The High hedges complaint procedure is a statutory function so there is no potential for the authority to decline the application, and given the number of applications received outsourcing is not a realistic option

Pre application fees

Charges for pre application enquiries were introduced in 2012. These discretionary charges were set at a level that would encourage developers to talk to officers at an early stage, but not so high as to deter them from doing so. Officers, and members of the Planning Committee, have recognised the importance of pre application enquiries with early input

ensuring that formal applications are “right first time”, with all necessary information submitted, and areas of conflict resolved before commitments are made to costly and time consuming work being undertaken. This has positive benefits to the planning service when formal applications are made, as the level of work undertaken to resolve problems can be significantly reduced. Speculative applications, with little prospect of support from the local planning authority, can also be identified and avoided.

It is considered that the fees proposed represents a “fair charging” option, taking into account the current levels being charged and charges made by other local planning authorities that provide similar services

Naming and numbering

Charging for naming and numbering is a discretionary option available to the authority, and historically no charge has been made. Recent experience, particularly aligned to naming and numbering of large residential developments has shown that many hours can be taken naming and numbering new developments, and sometimes the naming and numbering has to be re-visited as developers change their proposals with amendments to layouts and house numbers or types.

Consideration has been given to charges made by neighbouring authorities that currently make charges, and the proposals set out above provide what is considered to be a “fair charge”.

Removal of “permitted development” rights via a condition attached to a planning permission or removal of “permitted development” rights via the introduction of an Article 4 direction

Historically the government has not allowed fees to be charged for these types of applications, on the basis that the local authority is removing a right that the majority of individuals/businesses would normally enjoy. However there is recognition in the recent legislation that there is a cost associated with processing such applications and this could be borne by the person carrying out the development.

The amount of administration involved in processing this type of application is similar to a normal planning applications, but inevitably the complexity of the development does not require the same level of input by a qualified planning officer, more commonly being dealt with by more junior members of staff, Consequently it is considered that any charge should be set at a “fair” level. At this moment in time, given the very recent introduction of the legislation, there is no data available regarding what levels of charge might be set by neighbouring authorities.

The fee levels have been deliberately set at an affordable level, so that applicants will not seek to avoid making applications, which may in turn impact on the authority’s enforcement service.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

Legal authority is given to charging for the services as set out in the Background Information listed below

If fees and charges are not introduced in accordance with recommendations the level of service offered to the public will be reduced and developments may not be produced to the desired quality level. This in turn would impact on the reputation of the Council

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

All planning decisions should have sustainability at their heart. In the absence of properly funded resources to support the Development Management function poor advice will result leading to poor planning outcomes and less sustainable forms of development.

High Hedges

Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 ('the Act) and the High Hedges (Appeals) (England) Regulations 2005

Pre-application enquiries

Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003

Naming and numbering

Section 64 and 65 of The Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847

Section 21 of The Public Health Act 1907

Section 17, 18 and 19 of The Public Health Act 1925

The Local Government Act 2003 (Section 93)

REPORT AUTHOR

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

None