



# CABINET

18 July 2012

**A Meeting of the CABINET will be held on Wednesday, 25th July, 2012, 6.00 pm in Committee Room 1 Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth**

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## A G E N D A

### NON CONFIDENTIAL

**1 Apologies for Absence**

**2 Corporate Update**

Title: Executive Consultation on Council Tax Support and reforms with Request for Endorsement by Members

Presenter: Karen Taylor (Head of Benefits) and  
Michael Buckland (Head of Revenues)

**3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 6)**

**4 Declarations of Interest**

*To receive any declarations of Members' interests (personal and/or personal and prejudicial) in any matters which are to be considered at this meeting.*

*When Members are declaring a personal interest or personal and prejudicial 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 personal and prejudicial interest in respect of which they do not have a dispensation.*

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

None

- 6 Grants To Voluntary Organisations (Small Grants Scheme)/Local Arts Grant Scheme** (Pages 7 - 12)  
(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Core Services & Assets)
- 7 Re-Development Of Tranches 2 And 3 Garage Sites** (Pages 13 - 28)  
(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Portfolio Holder for Core Services and Assets)
- 8 Tamworth Homelessness Education Programme** (Pages 29 - 42)  
(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing)
- 9 The Impact of Welfare Benefit Reform on Tenants** (Pages 43 - 70)  
(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing)
- 10 Safeguarding Update** (Pages 71 - 74)  
(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing)
- 11 Tamworth Assembly Rooms Development Phase** (Pages 75 - 84)  
(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Enterprise)

Yours faithfully



**Chief Executive**

*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, L Bates, S Claymore, S Doyle, M Greatorex and J Oates



## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 13th JUNE 2012**

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Cook (Chair), Councillors R Pritchard, L Bates, S Claymore, S Doyle, M Greatorex and J Oates

The following officers were present: John Wheatley (Executive Director Corporate), Rob Barnes (Director - Housing and Health), Stefan Garner (Director of Finance), Robert Mitchell (Director - Communities, Planning and Partnerships), Fleur Fernando (Partnership Support and Development Manager), Steve Pointon (Housing Strategy Manager) and Karen Taylor (Head of Benefits)

### **14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Anthony Goodwin (Chief Executive).

### **15 CORPORATE UPDATE**

The Director Communities, Planning and Partnership gave a presentation on the Town Centre.

### **16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 May 2012 were approved and signed as a correct record.

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

### **17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

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

None

**19 QUARTER 4 2011/12 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Report of the Leader of the Council providing Cabinet with a performance and financial health-check was considered.

**RESOLVED** That Cabinet endorse the contents of the report  
*(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor R Pritchard)*

**20 SCHEME OF DELEGATION DECISIONS REPORT**

The contents of the report were recorded.

**RESOLVED** That Cabinet endorse the contents of the report  
*(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor S Claymore)*

**21 CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT 2011/12**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Core Services and Assets advising members on the final outturn of the Authority's Capital Programme for 2011/12 (subject to audit confirmation) and seeking formal approval to re-profile specific budget into 2012/13 was considered

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1 Cabinet endorsed the final outturn position of the 2011/12 capital programme, and;
- 2 Cabinet approved the re-profiling of the budget into the Authority's Capital Programme 2012/13 (total £1.489m).  
*(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor M Greatorex)*

**22 LANDLORD SERVICES - END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2011/12**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing setting out the arrangements in place to meet the requirements of The Landlord Regulatory Framework as revised under the Localism Act 2011 placing a greater emphasis on local control and a requirement for Tenants to influence, shape and scrutinise services was considered.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1 Cabinet endorsed the key achievements of the Council's Landlord Service during 2011/12;
- 2 Cabinet agreed that an Annual Report be produced in

- accordance with the Landlord Co-regulatory Framework, established under the Localism Act 2011, and;
- 3 Cabinet delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Housing to agree the final publication following an independent and free assessment by the tenant advisory service.

*(Moved by Councillor M Greatorex and seconded by Councillor R Pritchard)*

## **23 TENANCY STRATEGY**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder of Housing seeking approval of the Council's Tenancy Strategy responding to the requirement under the Localism Act 2011 for local authorities to prepare and publish a Tenancy Strategy by 15 January 2013 and taking into consideration the Council's current Homelessness Strategy was considered.

**RESOLVED** That the Tenancy Strategy be approved  
*(Moved by Councillor M Greatorex and seconded by Councillor R Pritchard)*

## **24 TOWN CENTRE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Enterprise asking Cabinet to consider the emerging Tamworth Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document for consultation purposes was considered.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1 The Tamworth Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document be approved for consultation purposes over two discrete periods prior to adoption by Cabinet, and;
- 2 The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Enterprise be delegated to approve the final version of the materials prior to consultation.

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

## **25 VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMISSIONING CYCLE 2**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Enterprise seeking approval to amend and update the existing Commissioning Framework

moving towards joined up commissioning in Tamworth, support to amend the existing Voluntary Sector Commissioning Board to support a wider Public Sector Commissioning Framework and to build on current commissioning practice and momentum, leading the way in Tamworth in joined up commissioning was considered.

**RESOLVED**

That:

- 1 Cabinet endorsed the proposal that the Voluntary and Community Sector (CVS) and Tamworth Strategic Partnership (TSP) Commissioning Frameworks are combined and become the Tamworth Public Sector Commissioning Framework;
- 2 Cabinet endorsed the proposal that the current VCS Commissioning Board becomes a Public Sector Commissioning Board and has clear links to the TSP Board;
- 3 Members support and engage in the consultation period and ensure that the Public Sector Commissioning Framework is fit for purpose for Tamworth, and;
- 4 A further paper with the results from the consultation, changes and recommendations be presented to Cabinet in Autumn 2012.

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

**EXCLUSION OF 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 1 and 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**26 SNOWDOME SWIM AND FITNESS CONTRACT RENEWAL**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Enterprise seeking approval for the renewal of the contract between Tamworth Borough Council and SnowDome Swim and Fitness, for the provision of public swimming at the SnowDome pool and seeking approval to make a one off contribution as part of the contract towards the upgrading of the swimming changing rooms was considered

**RESOLVED**

That:

- 1 Cabinet endorsed the contract and authorised the Chief Executive to sign the contract on behalf of the Council, and;
- 2 Cabinet authorised the Director for Communities Planning and Partnership to process the one off payment as stated

in the agreement.

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

**27 STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S COMMISSIONING OF FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT AND WELFARE BENEFITS ADVICE SERVICE TO DISTRICT COUNCILS**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Core Services and Assets seeking Member approval for, and endorsement of, the decision made by Staffordshire County Council on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2012, to commission all Staffordshire Local Authority Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit teams to provide Fairer Charging Financial Assessments and Welfare Benefits Advice at a local level on their behalf, initially from April 2013 – March 2016 was considered.

**RESOLVED** That Cabinet accepted and endorsed the commissioning of Financial Assessment and Welfare Benefits Advice for the Tamworth area to Tamworth Borough Council's Benefits Team from April 2013.  
*(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor S Claymore)*

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Leader

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25<sup>th</sup> July 2012**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR  
CORE SERVICES & ASSETS****Grants To Voluntary Organisations (Small Grants Scheme)/Local Arts Grant  
Scheme****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

**PURPOSE**

To inform Members of the Small Grants, Arts Grants and Sport Grants awards made during 2011/12

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Cabinet endorses the outturn of the Cabinet (Grants) Sub-Committee**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Tamworth Borough Council operates a number of small grant schemes designed to encourage community and voluntary groups to develop in Tamworth and to support the delivery of the Councils vision and corporate priorities,

Tamworth Borough Council has three small grant schemes 1) Grants to Voluntary and Community Groups, 2) Arts Grants and 3) Sports Grants.

Applications are therefore invited from any group or individuals living within the Borough of Tamworth who require financial support to pursue services/ activities.

The Cabinet Grants Sub-Committee meets on a quarterly basis to consider grant applications from Voluntary Organisations and Local Arts. This report is to provide Members with details of awards made during 2011/12.

**RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

This report accords with the funding framework endorsed by the Cabinet in July 2005..

The grant awards have been met from the 2011/12 Grants to Voluntary Organisations and Local Arts Grants budgets and retained funds.

There are no staffing, community/performance planning, sustainable development, community safety, equal opportunities or human rights implications arising from this report.

## LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

There are no associated risks arising directly from the report.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### UPDATE ON GRANTS AWARDED TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS 2011/2012

During the period 1st April 2011 - 31st March 2012 a budget of £8,700.00 was allocated and a retained fund of £9,365.55 giving a total budget available of £18,066.55 with £12,194.00 awards being granted to the groups listed in Appendix 1

### UPDATE ON GRANTS AWARDED LOCAL ARTS 2011/2012

During the period 1st April 2011 - 31st March 2012 a budget of £2,460.00 was allocated and a retained fund of £1,913.00 giving a total budget available of £4,373.00 with £4,000.90 awards being granted to the groups listed in Appendix 2

### UPDATE ON GRANTS AWARDED SPORTS 2011/12

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 a budget of £22,390 was allocated. The Sports Grants did not come to sub-committee until September 2012 and listed below are the awards granted to the groups listed in Appendix 3

## REPORT AUTHOR

Karen Clancy

## LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers: -	Voluntary & Community Organisations Application Forms
	Local Arts Grants Application Forms

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

<u>Name of Group</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>	<u>Detail</u>
Peel Road Runners	£500	Equipment – Printed PVC Banner and event shelter/changing tent
Staffordshire Regiment Museum	£1000	Running Costs - £500.00 emergency repair work to world war one trench system. Equipment - £500.00 New tentage and blank ammunition
Tamworth Breast is Best Support (Tamworth BIBS)	£1000	Running costs – Mobile Phone £500.00 Equipment – Breastfeeding friendly guide leaflets - £500.00
Pennymoor Association Trust	£500	Summer community activities
Amington Band	£500	Towards purchasing a set of 4 Tuba Mutes

The Charity of Thomas Guy, Tamworth Almshouses	£500	Towards purchase of a Greenhouse
Tamworth Stroke Patients & Their Carers Group	£500	Venue Hire, promotion materials, transport & subsidised day trip
Tame CFR	£645	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Behavioural Training, Advanced Driver Training (2 days), Advanced Driving Test, & Blue Light Training.
Tamworth District Scouts	£500	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> The Gang Show production
Fired Up Theatre	£400	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Running Costs associated with the production of The Wall project
Pastorm (Mark Lorenzo)	£190	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Printing costs for 20/25 ring bound books
1 <sup>st</sup> Glascote Scouts	£500	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Costs of 4 day Camp at Beaudesert (at no cost to scouts, beavers, cubs)
Pennymoor Youth Club CIC	£383	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> A Digital Camera, Staff Uniform (8 staff), ID Badges (6 staff) health & hygiene level 2 Training (4 staff)
Lichfield & District Live at Home	£200	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Running Costs associated with continuance of the service provided in Fazeley
Town Wall Conservation Group	£426	<b><u>Towards Equipment:</u></b> Hire of a rotavator/cultivator, petrol, hedging shrubs & Bat detectors.
Step Forward Stroke Group	£300	<b><u>Towards Equipment:</u></b> Portable PA System and Carry Case for all equipment
Foodbank	£500	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Running Costs
Amington Friendship Club	£500	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Running Costs
Dance Yourself Fit	£500	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Running Costs
Tameside Wildlife Conservation Group	£500	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Equipment – New gate
Park Farm Social Group	£500	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Coach hire for day trips
Friends of the Castle	£450	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Equipment – Exhibition Stands
Coton Green pre-school nursery	£350	<b><u>Towards:</u></b> Equipment – climber/slide for the playground
Tamworth Heritage Trust	£500	<b><u>Towards Equipment:</u></b> brochures for Heritage weekend
Talking Newspaper	£350	<b><u>Towards Equipment:</u></b> Running Costs
<b>TOTAL AWARD 2010/11</b>	<b>£12,194.00</b>	

**NB: It was also agreed to move £2000 into the Tamworth Forever Fund.**

Therefore a total of **£14,194.00** was allocated from the 2011/12 budget and retained fund.

Leaving **£3872.55** in the retained fund with the 2011/12 budget allocation fully spent.

## Appendix 2

<u>Name of Group</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>	<u>Detail</u>
Pennymoor Youth Centre	£465	"P" Factor Production (£140 Artist Fees, £65 Production Costs, £120 materials and £140 prize monies)
Tamworth & District Music Festival	£500	A New Website
Amington Band	£500	Towards the costs of the Christmas Concert production at the Assembly Rooms
Fired Up Theatre	£500	<b>towards:</b> costs associated with the production of The Wall project at Tamworth Assembly Rooms
Tamworth District Scouts	£500	<b>towards:</b> costs associated with The Gang Show production
Tamworth Arts Club	£500	<b>towards:</b> costs of accompanists for the Musical Theatre Competition
Sharon Fox	£270.40	<b>towards:</b> venue hire Assembly Rooms for variety show
Tamworth Male Voice Choir	£265.50	<b>towards:</b> equipment – display board
Tamworth Ladies Choir	£500	<b>towards:</b> equipment – new speakers
<b>TOTAL AWARD 2011/12</b>	<b>£4,000.90</b>	

Therefore a total of **£4,000.90** was allocated from the 2011/12 budget

Leaving **£372.10** to be added to the retained fund.

## Appendix 3

<u>Name of Group</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>	<u>Detail</u>
Gate Gallop	£1000	Club Award towards Medals
Richard Winfield	£182.50	Coaching Award (Athletics)
Ryan Hatton	£800	Individual Talent Award - Boxing
M O'Brien	£500	Individual Talent Award - BMX
S Lawton	£300	Individual Talent Award - Athletics
M Kellyman	£300	Individual Talent Award - Athletics

C Long	£500	Individual Talent Award - Golf
Tamworth Amateur Boxing Club	£390	Coaching Award
Stand Up Paddle Board	£500	Coaching Award
Unicorns	£260	Club Award – Swimming Gala
Stand Up Paddle Board	£2012	Club Award - Set Up Costs
Awarded Q3 and Q4 via sub-committee	<b>£6744.50</b>	

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25<sup>th</sup> July 2012**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER QUALITY FOR HOUSING AND PORTFOLIO  
HOLDER CORE SERVICES AND ASSETS****Re-Development of Tranches 2 and 3 Garage Sites****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

**PURPOSE**

To provide members with an update on progress concerning the disposal of 26 Council owned garage sites identified in **Appendix A** for the purpose of developing affordable housing. This activity is consistent with previous Cabinet decisions to disinvest in sites that are uneconomical to retain and utilise these for redevelopment purposes where this is a practical option.

Following a previous report to Cabinet in September 2011, significant progress has been made in taking forward the first 10 Tranche 1 sites for re-development (listed within **Appendix B**). All sites have now been vacated and cleared. Parking issues around the proposed developments had been highlighted as a major concern by residents. The production of a Parking Strategy that highlighted key issues and proposed solutions provided a means by which to address those issues. All garage tenants were offered a priority move to an alternative site. In addition, vulnerable tenants were identified and officers visited each of these to seek to resolve any particular issues that had arisen.

Planning applications regarding these sites are likely to be submitted in late summer of this year. Legal work to dispose of these sites to Registered Provider partners is about to commence. A final decision relating to the disposal of these sites will be made jointly by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Portfolio Holder for Core Services and Assets as per the authority delegated by Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2011.

The purpose of this report is also to seek member approval to proceed with the 16 sites identified in Tranche's 2 and 3 to take forward for the purposes of re-development for affordable housing. It is proposed a similar approach will be adopted as applied to the 10 Tranche 1 sites. A detailed programme of site evaluation, feasibility assessments and consultation will again be required to determine which sites will go forward for re-development and require a final decision in respect to the disposal of land. Where sites are identified that are not appropriate for re-development, alternative uses for those sites will be explored. The site at Colborne Road is currently also being investigated in terms of being utilised to increase the number of allotments that are adjacent to the garages on this site. As with the Tranche 1 sites, the process will incorporate the potential to develop specialist housing provision for older people and vulnerable residents. Initial Tranche 2 and 3 site visits have been undertaken and feedback on these is attached at **Appendix C**.

As highlighted in previous reports to members, the development of affordable housing on these sites will enable the Council to deliver against priorities identified in the Local Delivery Plan as approved by Cabinet in June 2011. Additionally this action will support the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and those identified in the Local Plan 2006-28 and Healthier Housing Strategy.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ✓ **That Cabinet notes progress made to date regarding the disposal of garage sites to partner Registered Providers (RPs) to develop affordable housing**
- ✓ **That Cabinet approve the commencement of work in relation to sites identified in Tranches 2 and 3**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Cabinet has previously agreed to the disposal of 26 Council owned garage sites for the purpose of developing affordable housing. The first 10 of these sites have been progressed in partnership with Bromford Housing Group and Waterloo Housing Group. It is anticipated that these sites will progress to the planning application stage in the late summer of this year. It is intended the remaining 16 sites in the programme will then be taken forward following a similar process in the autumn.

Taking forward Council owned garage sites to develop affordable housing will make a cost effective and positive contribution to meeting housing need in Tamworth. Additionally, wider issues concerning improving health outcomes, environmental improvement and economic regeneration will be addressed.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

In September 2011, Cabinet received a report that set out the estimated value of the 26 sites earmarked for development and it was noted that under current pooling rules if any of these sites were sold on the open market the Council would only receive a proportion of the receipt. The report also set out the intention to make the land available at zero cost to Registered Provider partners for the purpose of providing affordable housing and providing that the Council is given full nomination rights, this would be included in the capital allowance and therefore classed as exempt from the pooling requirement. It was further noted that whilst this would represent a notional loss of the Capital value of the land for the Council, this would be offset by the ensuing community benefits and identified value for money considerations.

As with the 10 sites taken forward in Tranche 1, the 16 sites under consideration within Tranche's 2 and 3 have been identified as sites for disinvestment due to under-use, high void levels and maintenance issues. There will be a loss of income; however the majority of the rental loss from these sites has already been built into existing budgets.

As also highlighted in the September 2011 report to Cabinet, taking forward the 16 sites within Tranche's 2 and 3 will increase the supply of affordable housing to meet identified need and will assist in preventing of homelessness and provide local people with a long term housing solution that will also encourage positive health and wellbeing outcomes. The Registered Providers will grant 100% nomination rights in return for the investment of land. Additionally the report drew attention to how the development of additional affordable housing would potentially save the Council having to identify and expend additional resources to prevent homelessness. It was also noted that the use of the garage sites to develop affordable housing is likely to generate considerable inward investment into Tamworth in the form of Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Grant and direct investment from Registered Provider partners.

Any new housing developed on these sites would attract New Homes Bonus with an additional enhancement of £350 included for each dwelling built as they would be affordable homes.

As was noted in the previous report to members, the financial implications highlighted above are dependent on successful development of the garage sites for affordable housing. As with the Tranche 1 sites, there are a number of key pieces of work which will need to be undertaken with regard to the Tranche 2 and 3 sites that will impact on this including site investigation and consultation.



## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

Following the same process as applied to the Tranche 1 sites, as the viability to develop each of the identified sites within Tranches 2 and 3 is taken forward following approval to dispose, partner Registered Providers will meet all legal costs arising from this activity at no cost to the Council.

Again, financial risks associated with Tranche 2 and 3 sites will be accommodated by partner Registered Providers with the Council supporting applications for HCA grant and other sources of funding to support delivery. A key risk to the delivery of affordable housing on these sites will be the availability of funding.

Any risks identified with regard to the concerns of those residents who might be directly affected by any development activity will be identified and incorporated into consultation that will be undertaken regarding Tranche 2 and 3 sites. Lessons learned from the consultation process relating to the Tranche 1 sites will be incorporated into the process to address resident concerns.

As noted in the September 2011 report to Cabinet, risks to the Council should disposal / development not go ahead are increased levels of void garages on these sites with associated problems of ASB, deterioration of the environment, loss of inward investment and partner support to deliver affordable housing and environmental improvement and additional pressure on the existing housing stock.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are inevitable benefits of delivering affordable housing on the identified garage sites, namely:

1. contributing to healthier outcomes
2. economic regeneration of deteriorating open spaces
3. efficiency savings in relation to revenue and maintenance costs associated with managing difficult to let and problem garage sites
4. compliments overall garage strategy that deals with disinvestment, retention and proposals for future change of use (report to follow)

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.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In February 2011 Cabinet approved a commitment to the development of Affordable Housing on underused garage sites and requested that an initial assessment of site suitability be conducted with Registered Provider (RP's) partners. This work was completed and a schedule of 26 sites was prepared and is attached at **Appendix A**. Cabinet subsequently agreed to the disposal of 26 garage sites for the purpose of developing affordable housing in September 2011.

Significant progress has been made in taking forward the first 10 Tranche 1 sites for re-development with the Council's Registered Providers partners for this project (Bromford Housing Group and Waterloo Housing Group) taking forward 5 sites each for development (listed within **Appendix B**).

All sites have now been vacated and cleared. Parking issues around the proposed developments had been highlighted as a major concern by residents. The production of a Parking Strategy that highlighted key issues and proposed solutions provided a means by

which to address those issues. All garage tenants were offered a priority move to an alternative site. In addition, vulnerable tenants were identified and officers visited each of these to seek to resolve any particular issues that had arisen.

Planning applications regarding these sites are likely to be submitted in late summer of this year. Legal work to dispose of these sites to Registered Provider partners is about to commence. A final decision relating to the disposal of these sites will be made jointly by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Assets as per the authority delegated by Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2011.

It is intended that once the Tranche 1 sites have been taken forward to the planning application stage, work will commence in earnest regarding the 16 sites identified in Tranche's 2 and 3. The project group has taken the decision to progress Tranches 2 and 3 simultaneously as the potential number of units for development on these sites will be broadly equivalent to those that will be delivered via Tranche 1 (approximately 40 units will be developed in Tranche 1 with a further 44 potential units being developed in Tranche's 2 and 3; 84 in total across all 3 Tranches. Final numbers developed will be dependent on agreed designs and scheme layouts submitted for planning approval regarding Tranche 1 sites. Similarly, numbers in Tranche's 2 and 3 will ultimately be determined once the number of sites to go forward for development is known and on final scheme designs for those sites that are taken forward for development).

It is proposed a similar approach will be adopted as applied to the 10 Tranche 1 sites. The Council will continue to work with Bromford Housing Group and Waterloo Housing Group and their jointly appointed architects to take the 16 site forward. A detailed programme of site evaluation, feasibility assessments and consultation will again be required to determine which sites will go forward for re-development and require a final decision in respect to the disposal of land. Where sites are identified that are not appropriate for re-development, alternative uses for those sites will be explored. The site at Colborne Road is currently also being investigated in terms of being utilised to increase the number of allotments that are adjacent to the garages on this site.

Ward members and other key stakeholders will be involved in the above process. As with the Tranche 1 sites, the process will incorporate the potential to develop specialist housing provision for older people and vulnerable residents. Initial Tranche 2 and 3 site visits have been undertaken and feedback on these is attached at **Appendix C**. Some constraints to development have already been identified (e.g. restricted access to some of the sites may prevent development taking place) but initial evaluation of the sites suggests delivery of affordable housing on many of these sites will be achievable.

Additionally, should development take place on these sites as planned, this will make a valuable contribution to increasing the supply of affordable housing for local people and contribute to the wider priorities and outcomes identified by the Tamworth Strategic Partnership and within the Council's Healthier Housing Strategy.

## **REPORT AUTHOR**

Steve Pointon, Head of Housing and Health Strategy

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **APPENDICES**

- A. Development Sites Schedule
- B. Tranche 1 Garage Sites
- C. Initial Site Surveys Tranches 2 and 3

## Appendix A. Development Site Schedule

Site No.	District	Road	Development Potential		Risks/Constraints	Notes & Approximate site valuation
			Number	Type		
426	Coton Green	Shelley Drive	3	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Footpath Status</li> <li>Overlooking</li> </ul>	£15,000
632	Coton Green	Kipling Rise/Keats Close	5	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to electric sub station</li> <li>Turning head</li> </ul>	£100,000
641	Coton Green	Bloomfield Way x 2 A B	2 0	2B4P Houses 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(B) Not practical for development</li> </ul>	£34,250
639	Coton Green	Fontenaye Road	2	2B3P Bungalows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overlooking/separation distance</li> </ul>	
429	Leyfields	Thackeray Drive	3	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing 4-storey maisonettes</li> <li>Drying/garden area</li> <li>Sub-station</li> </ul>	Potential site includes garages, car parking and drying areas. £9,250
431	Leyfields	Thackeray Drive	3	2B3P Bungalows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Yard to shops</li> <li>Overlooking from sheltered housing</li> <li>Overlooking to existing bungalows</li> </ul>	£500
428	Leyfields	Thackeray Drive/ Masfield Drive	3 2 4	2B3P Bungalows 2B3P Flats 1B2P Flats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prominent corner 4 storey maisonettes</li> </ul>	£9,250

Site No.	District	Road	Development Potential		Risks/Constraints	Notes
			Number	Type		
434	Leyfields	Masefield Drive/ Burns Road	0	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open space – not for development</li> </ul>	To be retained
439	Leyfields	Tennyson Avenue	4	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise from railway</li> </ul>	Near station – very good access to town. £16,500
625	Leyfields	Milton Avenue	3	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited narrow access</li> </ul>	£10,000
419	Gillway	Hawthorne Avenue	4 or 4	2B3P Bungalows  2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General needs prohibited by very limited access</li> <li>Sloping site</li> </ul>	Consider for supported housing use/bungalows. General family may not be acceptable. £52,500
422	Gillway	Chestnut Avenue	2 or 2	2B3P Bungalows  2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrow site at front</li> <li>Multiple access to rear - Queensway</li> </ul>	Consider extending allotments/bungalows £15,500
423	Gillway	Chestnut Avenue	4 or 4	2B4P Houses  2B3P Bungalows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor access visibility</li> <li>Significant level change</li> <li>Existing garage s/e corner/access</li> <li>Public right of way?</li> </ul>	Challenging for development. £68,500
633	Gillway	Cherry Tree Walk	4	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public right of way?</li> </ul>	£72,000
634	Gillway	Hilltop Avenue	4	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing rights of access to garages</li> </ul>	£72,000

Site No.	District	Road	Development Potential Risks/Constraints		Risks/ Constraints	Notes
			Number	Type		
468	Colbourne Road	Colbourne Road	3 or 4	2B4P Houses 2B4P Slim Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining access to allotment gardens</li> </ul>	£37,500
457	Kettlebrook	Broadsmeath	0	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing open space not appropriate for development</li> </ul>	Extend car parking and provide some planting.
458	Kettlebrook	Broadsmeath	3	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing rear access path/security</li> </ul>	£11,700
459	Kettlebrook	Broadsmeath	2	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining access to rear of Nos. 42/50</li> </ul>	Car parking/adopted highway. £9,150
460	Kettlebrook	Broadsmeath	0	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing open space not appropriate for development</li> </ul>	
635	Kettlebrook	Stonepit	0	635 (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End of cul-de-sac need to be retained</li> </ul>	Unlikely for development
636	Kettlebrook	Stonepit	0	636 (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing electric sub-station making development impossible without major cost</li> </ul>	Subject to route of Cables and loss of parking
640	Kettlebrook	Lower Park	1	2B4P House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only parking available</li> </ul>	Unlikely for development £10,000

Site No.	District	Road	Development Potential		Risks/Constraints	Notes
			Number	Type		
449	Ferrers Road	Ferrers Road	2 or 3	2B3P Bungalows 2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level changes/overlooking</li> <li>Existing access to 2 No. private garages?</li> </ul>	Access drive to be reviewed £12,250  If existing garages access retained- difficult to develop £20,000
637	Ferrers Road	Ferrers Road	2	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No vehicular access</li> </ul>	Courtyard parking to flats – through arch? £19,750
453	Glascote	Chapelon	2 4	2B4P Houses 1B2P Flats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing tree</li> <li>Overlooking/separation distance</li> </ul>	Opportunity for 2 No. 2B4P Disabled Bungalows with car ports. £12,750
473	Glascote	Kilbye Close	0	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking/hammerhead</li> </ul>	Demolish garages as car parking
622	Glascote	Dunedin	0	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing access to private garages</li> <li>Right of way – footpath status. Large extension to church</li> </ul>	Unsuitable for development Sell to church
638	Glascote North	Neville Street	0	-		

Site No.	District	Road	Development Potential		Risks/Constraints	Notes
			Number	Type		
474	Wilnecote	Castle Road/ Beauchamp Road	0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open space to be retained</li> </ul>	
475	Wilnecote	Beauchamp Road	2	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining access to garage on southern boundary</li> <li>Very narrow site</li> </ul>	£30,000
476	Wilnecote	Arden Road	3	2B3P Slim Bungalows		Development potential questionable. £14,500
642	Wilnecote North	Waveney	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Too small to develop</li> </ul>	
643	Wilnecote North	Thurne	2	2B4P Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing access retained</li> </ul>	£30,000
						£682,850

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## Appendix B: Tranche 1 Sites (Coton Green and Leyfields)

Listed below are the 10 sites included in Tranche 1 of the garage sites project to deliver additional affordable housing in Tamworth.

The 10 sites will be developed by the Council's Registered Provider partners (Bromford Housing Group (BHG) and Waterloo Housing Group (WHG)).

Area	Site Details	Registered Provider
Coton Green	Shelley Road	WHA
	Keats Close / Kipling Rise	WHA
	Bloomfield Way	WHA
	Fontenaye Road	WHA
Leyfields	Thackeray Drive – Site 1	BHG
	Thackeray Drive – Site 2	BHG
	Thackeray Drive/Masefield Drive	WHA
	Masefield Drive	BHG
	Tennyson Avenue	BHG
	Milton Avenue	BHG

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## Appendix C: Initial Site Surveys Tranche 2 and 3 Sites

1.	<p><b>Cherry Tree Walk (633)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian link between Cherry Tree Walk and Cedar Road</li> <li>• Highway access off Cherry Tree Walk</li> <li>• Potentially look to take an access road around the site perimeter</li> <li>• Continue the building line off Cherry Tree Walk</li> <li>• Existing shops have access to rear</li> </ul>
2.	<p><b>Hawthorne Avenue (419)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good development opportunity, restricted by narrow site access</li> <li>• Level changes exist</li> <li>• Outlook to the south over cemetery</li> <li>• Possible comment supported housing use</li> </ul>
3.	<p><b>Hilltop Avenue (634)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricted site access</li> <li>• Two sites appear to be out of the site area, located within private garden curtilage; however, included within the site boundary- check if required</li> </ul>
4.	<p><b>Chestnut Avenue (422)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access appears okay</li> <li>• Number of vehicular accesses along the western boundary</li> <li>• Allotments to the north- eastern boundary</li> <li>• Level changes evident</li> <li>• Bungalow options, use of the WTA thin bungalow</li> </ul>
5.	<p><b>Chestnut Avenue (423)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good access</li> <li>• Electricity sub- station present on site, access required- to be maintained</li> <li>• Level changes, quite large falls throughout</li> <li>• Evidence of a motor home in one of the rear gardens- likely removable fencing panels to obtain access, rights of access unknown- further investigation required</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>Colbourne Road (468)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely tight access</li> <li>• Allotments located at the northern end of the site- accessibility issues to be questioned to the allotments</li> </ul>

7.	<p><b>Broadsmeath (458)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site split between garages and open parking</li> <li>• Evidence of frequent use of parking bays, potential tenant issues regarding loss of parking provision</li> <li>• Plenty of rear garden access around the site- to be maintained</li> </ul>
8.	<p><b>Broadsmeath (459)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developable opportunities continuing the existing build line (rear access apparent)</li> </ul>
9.	<p><b>Lower Park, Kettlebrook (640)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site developable by continuing build line; however, there appears to be limitations to providing car parking provision</li> <li>• Possibility of inclusion of rear parking in back gardens but this will limit the amount of private garden amenity</li> </ul>
10.	<p><b>Thurne (643)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public open space behind trees</li> <li>• Check the relationship of the existing dwellings in respect of fronts and backs- difficult site to develop</li> <li>• Possibility of road adoption- check with local authority</li> </ul>
11.	<p><b>Beauchamp Road (475)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further checks required to decide whether to include within programme</li> <li>• Garage located within private garden curtilage at the end of the site- garages appear in good condition</li> </ul>
12.	<p><b>Arden Close (476)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thin bungalow option</li> <li>• Check 45 degree code</li> <li>• Check rear unit- gable end overlooks site</li> </ul>
13.	<p><b>Chapelon (454)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good developable opportunities continuing the build line along Chapelon with back gardens facing Nos. 15-17</li> <li>• Allow for side entry access to existing units</li> </ul>
14.	<p><b>Chapelon (453)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly back to back development opportunities; however, on-street parking for units facing Silver Link Road frontages- possibly 4 units</li> </ul>

<b>15.</b>	<b>Ferrers Road (637)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potential development opportunities</li><li>• Rights of access apparent to 3 units around the southern and western boundaries- rights of access to be investigated and determined</li></ul>
<b>16.</b>	<b>Ferrers Road (449)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potential development opportunities- possibly 4 units facing the east</li><li>• Plenty of lamp posts in/ around the site- possible congregation for anti- social behaviour</li></ul>

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DATE OF COMMITTEE

25 July 2012

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING****TITLE OF REPORT****Tamworth Homelessness Education Project****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the revised Tamworth Homelessness Education Project (THEP). This is a key prevention tool used to support homelessness prevention activity.

The THEP has been in place since 2003/04 and is funded by Tamworth Borough Council via its homelessness grant with the aim of preventing homelessness amongst young adults and educating those that do become homeless on who to approach for advice and what assistance may be offered.

Due to changes in education system within Tamworth it has become increasingly difficult to gain access to the schools. To ensure the continued success and further development of the programme it has now been fully revised to broaden the projects remit and make it more adaptable for use with a range of audiences. The programme will continue to be delivered in local schools but in developing a flexible approach it is intended the THEP will continue to be developed in such a way as to enable delivery of the programme to a range of partners where homelessness for young people may be an issue.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ✓ **That Cabinet approves the use of the revised Tamworth Homelessness Education Programme as a key prevention tool to support homelessness prevention activity.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Homelessness Education Programme was originally launched in 2003 and was delivered by Cornerstone Housing Association. However, following a multi-agency review of the programme in 2009 the decision was taken to bring the programme "in house" and a Homelessness Education Officer was employed to develop and deliver the programme. As the review of the programme had involved a number of partner agencies that were active members of the Turnaround Project, it was also decided at this time to integrate the delivery of the Homelessness Education Programme into that scheme. The Homelessness Education Officer began delivering a refreshed programme to all of the educational establishments that were working with the Turnaround Project. This involved delivering sessions to year 6 and year 10 pupils in local schools. This approach proved successful but it became increasingly difficult to

gain access to schools.

In order to address this problem and enhance the profile of the THEP, a decision was taken at the start of 2012 to carry out a comprehensive review of the programme with the aim of getting it accredited by Staffordshire Education as a recognised resource to support the Personal, Social and Economic education (PSHE) curriculum in schools. Additionally, the revised scheme incorporates a more flexible range of resources to allow better joined up working with partners, to address both housing and health issues raised within Tamworth Borough Councils Healthier Housing Strategy and to allow for the remit of the Education Programme to be wider to enable it to be delivered to a range of audiences in addition to work carried out in schools.

Further details of the programme for delivery in schools are attached as **Appendix A**. At the time of writing further amendments are being made to the branding of the programme at the request of the Education Authority. Once these amendments have been completed and agreed it is expected the THEP will become an accredited scheme and plans for the forthcoming academic year can be developed and finalised.

### **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

In May 2012, Cabinet approved the use of Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Preventing Homelessness Grant to support the delivery of key homelessness prevention projects. Appendix A of that report (attached here for information at **Appendix B**) gave details of the proposed spend during the period 2012-15 regarding a range of initiatives. The THEP was included as a key project for delivery utilising DCLG homelessness funding.

£15K per annum over the period to 2014 was allocated and agreed to fund the Homelessness Education Officer post. An additional £15K was set aside and agreed to enable the further development of the programme over the forthcoming 2 years. £6.6K of this funding for scheme development was received as a result of a joint bid for funding with other Staffordshire Authorities and must be utilised exclusively to develop homelessness education activity in local schools.

Preventing Homelessness Grant is not ring fenced but is clearly allocated by Central Government for the purpose of preventing homelessness.

Funding to support the development of the THEP will be reviewed at the beginning of the next financial year (2013-14). As highlighted above, an assumption has been made that DCLG Preventing Homelessness Grant may not be made available in the future. Should this be the case, alternative methods of supporting the continuation of THEP will need to be in place. Exploration of alternative funding sources for the scheme are currently being investigated.

However, it should be noted that work and initiatives such as the THEP to prevent homelessness will remain a key priority for the Council. The Government have acknowledged that tackling homelessness will be a demanding task over the coming years due to the ongoing economic uncertainty. Homelessness acceptances, both nationally and locally, are increasing and difficulties with meeting housing costs continue to affect many local people, including young people, a position that could be exacerbated by further cuts to Housing Benefit in 2013.

### **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**



A key risk would be to not continue to deliver the THEP as this may lead to an increased number of young people becoming homeless in Tamworth over the coming years. This would place an increased financial burden on the Council at a time it can least afford this. Consequently, effective use of the DCLG funding will be required to further develop the Council's approach to prevention and enable appropriate responses to increases in demand on services generated by welfare reform, continued economic problems or the availability of housing to meet need in the Borough. The revised THEP has been devised to allow more effective joined up working with key partners to further develop the Councils preventative approach to homelessness.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The THEP was identified as a key Homelessness Prevention Project in the report to Cabinet in May 2012 relating to the Preventing Homelessness Grant spend plan. The prevention of homelessness and other associated outcomes will contribute towards the delivery of key priorities identified by the Tamworth Strategic Partnership and within the Council's Healthier Housing Strategy and refreshed Homelessness Strategy

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Education Programme has been in place since 2003/04 and is funded by Tamworth Borough Council through its homelessness grant. It was set up initially with the aim of preventing homelessness amongst young adults and educating those that do become homeless on who to approach for advice and assistance. The programme was at this time offered to all high schools across the Borough as well as the college.

When the scheme was initiated it was delivered by Tamworth Cornerstone Housing Association. However, following a full review undertaken by the Housing Strategy Team and partners during 2009, the decision was taken to adopt a new approach to the programme during the academic year 2009/10.

This review resulted in the programme being re-designed to make the programme more flexible and wide ranging. The decision was made for Tamworth Borough Council to employ a Homelessness Education Officer who would work in partnership with the Turnaround Team to deliver a refreshed Education Programme.

Due to a number of factors including changes to academy status of many of the schools within Tamworth, a further, more comprehensive review of the programme was undertaken by the Housing Strategy Team in the early part of 2012. The review looked at the aims of the programme, what was being delivered, the approach to joined up working and how the programme could be improved.

The review has resulted in the Programme being completely revised with new aims and a wider scope to allow improved joined up working. The THEP was then presented to the Education Transformation Team from Staffordshire County Council in May 2012 for Accreditation. At the time of writing some final amendments are being made following the positive feedback and recommendations received. Once these have been taken into account it is expected the programme will be accredited as a resource for schools to support their Personal, Social and Economic education (PSHE) Curriculum.

It is anticipated accreditation of the programme will help address the difficulty of gaining access to schools as the County will then promote the resource to schools as a tool that will enhance and support their PSHE work. Alongside this there has been more proactive work to engage with the PSHE leads in the schools including attending the PSHE leads meeting and as a result of this being invited to present the THEP to them at their next bi-annual meeting in November.

In addition to being accredited for use in schools the Programme has been developed to allow it to be more flexible, thus providing opportunities to work more closely with other partners such as Health and Probation. The Housing Strategy Team has undertaken early discussions with the National Offender Management Service around the potential for the delivery of a pilot project for Prisoners. Additionally, discussions are underway with Health colleagues to explore how the THEP might be utilised to contribute to key projects such as teenage pregnancy and other health improvement projects.

#### **REPORT AUTHOR**

**Steve Pointon, Head of Housing and Health Strategy**

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

#### **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A:** What is the THEP?

**Appendix B:** Proposed use of Homelessness Prevention Funding 2012-15

## Appendix A

### What is the Tamworth Homelessness Education Programme – THEP?



The Tamworth Homelessness Education Programme is a specially designed series of sessions and resources which aim to

- Raise awareness of Homelessness
- Consider how it might feel to be without a home
- Challenge stereotypes of Homelessness
- Prevent young people in the Borough from leaving home in an unplanned way
- Identify where Homelessness is a risk that the young person knows the services that can be accessed or advice and support

The Homelessness Education Programme is also a key prevention tool used by Tamworth Borough Council to prevent homelessness.

The programme aims to visit all schools within the Borough delivering sessions to children and young people, complementing and contributing to their PSHE education. By experiencing a session this gives the children and young people an awareness of the subject matter, explores their thoughts and feelings about how it might feel to have no home, challenges stereotypes of homelessness and equips them with the knowledge of what to do and who they could approach if they ever found themselves in a position where they were either threatened with homelessness or found themselves homeless.

The programme consists of a toolkit of sessions aimed at different age groups. All of the sessions are very interactive and engage the children and young people in discussion, debate and a range of activities.

The sessions all address the National Curriculum and have session plans which clearly set out the learning aims and objectives and what it is hoped the children and young people will learn from participating in the session. Knowledge about the subject is assessed at the beginning and end of the sessions to determine if the learning aims and objectives of the session have been achieved.

#### Pre –school/Reception and Year 1

During this session the children are read a story about a Highland Cow called Hamish who visits his friends and because of his untidiness they ask him to leave and this makes Hamish homeless in the snow. The friends then don't like it that they have put Hamish outside so work together to find a solution and build Hamish a new home.



The session aims to explore how they might feel if they were Hamish and did not have home and how working with others problems can be solved to give a positive outcome.

The children are given some THEP character colouring book and pencils to take home and colour with parents. This contains a note to parents to advise them that their child has taken part in a session and also contact details for advice agencies should the family be facing any of the issues raised during the session.



This session meets the following PSHE Key Concepts for KS1

- 1 a,b,c,d
- 2 a,b,c,d,e,g
- 4 a,b,d
- 5 a,b,c,e,g

and meets the aims and objectives by getting the children to think about how it might feel not to have a home and that help is available.

### Years 5/6

This session considers what a home is, what homelessness is and challenges stereotypes of being homeless. It is delivered in the form of a PowerPoint and group work where the children are given a series of THEP Characters in different scenarios, questions to answer in small groups and then a class discussion about what each of the scenarios has in common.

The children will be given a resource booklet with activities in to take home and work through with parents. Again this will have a note to parents and signposts to external agencies that may be able to assist where the family may be facing Homelessness.

This session meets the following PSHE Key Concepts for KS2

- 1 a
- 2 a,b,e,f,h
- 4 a,e,g
- 5 e,g,h

And meets the following aims and objectives of the programme, raising awareness of Homelessness, challenging stereotypes of Homelessness, preventing young people in the Borough from leaving home in an unplanned way and highlighting where homelessness is a risk that the young person knows the services that can be accessed or advice and support

### Years 9/10/11 and 6<sup>th</sup> form

There are a series of sessions for this age group that tackle a number of issues and these can be delivered as an assembly, stand



alone individual one off sessions, all of the sessions over a day or spread across a number of weeks.



### Assembly sessions

The assembly session asks for volunteers and each volunteer takes on a role. A number of scenarios are given and it is up to the young people to determine what the outcome of the scenario is.

This session meets the following PSHE Key Concepts for KS4:

- 1.4 a, c
- 2.1 d
- 2.3 b,c,e
- 3 d,g,h
- 4 c,d,e,f,h

The other sessions focus on single issues:

“Laying in the Gutter looking at the stars” is a session about rough sleeping and challenging the stereotypes of homelessness and which agencies might be approached if the young person is threatened with or finds themselves faced with homelessness.

The session begins with a discussion about what homelessness means to the young people. A DVD is then shown (although on occasion a peer educator may attend sessions with the Homelessness Education Officer) illustrating that being homeless does not always mean sleeping rough to demonstrate the point that sleeping rough is only one form of homelessness.

This is followed by the “Ruck Sack” exercise – during which the young people are given a ruck sack graphic, cards with different items on and a THEP Character scenario sheet. They are then asked to consider which agencies might be able to help them if they found themselves in that situation and what they would need to put in their ruck sack to assist the agency.

This session meets the following PSHE Key Concepts for KS4:

- 2.2 c,d
- 4 a,b,c,d,e,h

“It’s all about the Money” is a budgeting exercise which aims to make the young people think about the costs that they may incur if they were to live independently. This is delivered via a quiz, and a session in which THEP Character budgeting scenarios are given and the young people work in small groups to answer the questions.



This session meets the following PSHE Key Concepts for KS4:

4 a, b, c, d, e, f, h



“Moving on Up” is a session that looks at what Supported Housing is and the reality of living independently in Supported Housing, challenging some of the stereotypes and illustrating what the young people could expect should they move to this type of accommodation.

This session meets the following PSHE Key Concepts for KS4:

1.4 b

2.1 a, e

2.2 b, c, d

3 g

4 a, b, c, d, e

“The Grass ain’t always Greener” This session thinks about the reasons why young people might leave home and uses a DVD (Or the peer educator) to show where young people have left home and successfully gone back. There is a choice based activity where one of the THEP characters leaves and the choices made by the young people determine the characters actions but the end result is always that the character returns home. Finally the session looks at what agencies and services could help the young people should they find themselves in a situation where they are either threatened with homelessness or find themselves homeless.

This session meets the following PSHE Key Concepts for KS4:

2.3 a

3 g

4 a, b, c, d, e, h

For all of the KS4 sessions the young people will take home a THEP memory stick with the session delivered to them loaded on it to show to their parents to discuss the session and additionally a useful “Z” Card that lists agencies that may be able to provide support to prevent homelessness should a young person find themselves in this situation and to share with their family.

All of these sessions meet the all of the aims and objectives of the Education Programme.

### Post session

Whenever a session is delivered there will be communication that goes home to the parents to advise them that their child has participated in this session and advice and information on agencies that may be able to assist should the family require any support.



If you would like to discuss the THEP further, would like information or would like us to come and deliver a session then please contact the Homelessness Education Officer at Tamworth Borough Council on 01827 709217 or email [thep@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:thep@tamworth.gov.uk)

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<b>PROPOSED PROJECT / AREA OF SPEND</b>	<b>2012/13 YEAR 1 COST</b>	<b>2013/14 YEAR 2 COST</b>	<b>2014/15 YEAR 3 COST (assuming no grant beyond 2013/14)</b>	<b>PROJECT DETAIL</b>
Crash pad / Nightstop	£15K	£5K	£5K	Provision of short term emergency accommodation & support for young people
IT Orchard module	£20K (but may be met from IT budget)	£5K	£5K	To ensure integration of databases to underpin service development and planning
Social Lettings Agency	£30K	£12K (Using existing Homes For Homeless budget)	£12K (Using existing Homes For Homeless budget)	Scheme to enable the Council to discharge homelessness duty into the private sector, offer wider housing choice & directly manage previously empty homes and homes acquired via enforcement action
CAB Debt Advice Service	£20K (April 12 – March 13)	£10K (April 13 to Sept 13)		Service commissioned as per Cabinet report June 2011 to provide debt advice to residents
Provision of training for partners	£5K	£5K		Training sessions delivered that are beneficial to the Council & partners to encourage joint working, shared resources etc.
Repossession Prevention Fund	£17,862	£17,862		To fund the payment of interest free loans of between £1k and £5k to pay mortgage or rent arrears to prevent homelessness
Spend to Save	£10K	£10K		To fund interest free loans up to £500 to meet the objective of preventing homelessness for 6 months or more
Sanctuary Scheme	£15K	£15K	£15K	For measures to be installed in the homes of Domestic Abuse victims to allow them to remain in their own homes where safe to do so
THEP (Education officer post)	£15K	£15K		Officer to deliver the Tamworth Homelessness Education Project in schools

THEP scheme development (includes £6.6K pot for schools activity)	£10K	£5K		To review develop and improve the current THEP project
Winter Relief / Rough Sleepers provision	£5K	£5K	£5K	The provision of services for those who may require assistance when sleeping rough
PSL Scheme	£10K	£10K		To cover costs of the council managing properties leased from private landlords to house homeless people
Bond Scheme	£10K	£10K		Scheme that offers a paper bond to a private sector landlord where a tenant is able to sustain a private sector tenancy but may not have the deposit
Tenancy Strategy (Fixed Term Tenancies support & termination)	£5K	£5K		To provide support to those who may require advice and assistance when a fixed term tenancy comes to an end and is not reissued
Health specific initiatives incorporated into Healthier Housing Strategy delivery	£7,138	£7,138	£15K	For the development of projects related to health identified as a result of the implementation of the Healthier Housing Strategy
Support for partners (to support service delivery / continuity on loss of funding etc.)	£5K	£5K		Emergency funding to assist partners or extend contracts if the situation arises.
DWP Housing Benefit Reforms Transitional Funding Project	£8,407			Funding recently made available that can be utilised to prevent homelessness, enable negotiations with landlords, support people who need to move or provide appropriate money advice. Funds reserved in order to fully develop the most appropriate manner in which to utilise these additional resources in Tamworth
Implementation of best practice / government initiatives following review of strategy	£52,404	£52K	£25K	To put in place new initiatives for Strategic Housing as a result of direction from Central Government or from the identification of best practice
<b>Total Projected Spend</b>	<b>£260,811</b>	<b>£182K</b>	<b>£70K</b>	<b>£512,811</b>

Budget (above plan assumes no further grant funding beyond 13/14)

**Total Available budget = £512,811**

11/12 Homelessness Grant identified resources C/F	£136,014
11/12 Mortgage Rescue	£35,724
11/12 Young Persons Homelessness Education in Schools	£6,666
12/13 HB Reforms Transitional Funding	£8,407
12/13 Homelessness Grant	£163,000
13/14 Homelessness Grant	£163,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£512,811</b>

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25<sup>th</sup> July 2012**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING****THE IMPACT OF WELFARE BENEFIT REFORM ON TENANTS'****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

N/A

**PURPOSE**

To set out the challenges and opportunities arising from the Welfare Reform Act 2012 following the receipt of Royal assent in March.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:-

1. Acknowledge the impact arising from the key legislative changes, as set out at **Annex 1 as set out in the** Member Presentation delivered at the end of May 2012
2. Increase investment in the Third sector to £10,000 in order to facilitate the improvement of debt management services and sensible lending solutions.
3. Endorse the principles used to access funding available through the "homelessness prevention grant " as set out in the report, delegating authority to the Portfolio Holder to agree the final details of a scheme.
4. Support the increase in income management staff, subject to the usual Appointments and Staffing Committees arrangements
5. Endorse the investigation into the introduction of electronic means to pay rent using the rent app, mobile payment methods as part of the corporate change management programme
6. Support the development of a Social Enterprise Partnership with Mears to develop a skills academy, delegating authority to the Portfolio Holder of Housing to agree the detail
7. Agree the action plan **attached as Annex 3** which sets out the next steps in relation to the wider partnership opportunities around the LEP and the banking sector to help tackle financial exclusion and worklessness.
8. To receive a further report in the Summer of 2013 detailing the initial impact of the changes & to set out final preparations for Universal Credit in October 2013

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 puts into law many of the proposals set out in the 2010 white paper *Universal Credit: Welfare that Works*. It aims to bring about a simplification of the benefit system in order to improve incentives to work. It also works towards the Government's aim of cutting the welfare bill by £18 billion by the time of the comprehensive spending review in 2015.

Cabinet supported a range of recommendations in January 2011 as part of the preparation for this reform, including a move to a 48-wk rent year as well as introducing quarterly incentive payments of £250.

The proposals recommended directly contribute to Tamworth's strategic priorities as outlined in the Corporate Plan (2012/13):-

Raise the aspiration and attainment levels of young people	The development of a Social Enterprise Partnership with Mears will deliver a local skills academy providing a range of accredited construction and service related qualifications. Opportunities will also exist for apprenticeships and long-term employment
Create Opportunities for Business Growth through developing and using skills and talent	Continued investment in the third sector, using the council's commissioning framework to establish service level arrangements with local organisations will help facilitate and develop debt management solutions to people facing economic hardship
Promote private sector growth and create quality employment locally	The action plan is focused on maximising opportunities through the LEP and with the banking sector to establish clear partnerships that enable customers to access basic financial products, such as jam jar accounts
Create an integral approach to protecting those most vulnerable in our local communities	Landlord Services are working on the development of a cross-cutting corporate debt strategy that seeks to impact on economic well being and deal with debt prioritisation, tenancy and community sustainment and how partner services are integral to having a positive outcome on economic regeneration

Central to Welfare Reform is the introduction of Universal Credit in October 2013, which is a single benefit replacing a range of other benefits.<sup>1</sup> It will be payable to those in and out of work on a monthly basis. Alongside this the Government intend to introduce a benefit cap from April 2013 as well as implement reductions for those deemed to be under-occupying. It should be noted the changes affect those of workable age at this stage.

Over the last twelve months officers have held numerous briefings and information sessions. A copy of the presentation detailing the above changes was shared with councillors in May and has been used for wider stakeholder briefings since. The

<sup>1</sup> Universal Credit replaces Income Support, income-based job seekers allowance, income-related employment and support allowance, housing benefit, child tax credit and working tax credit.

impact assessment on tenants is detailed in the presentation but can be summarised as follows:-

<b>Change</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Impact to Tenants</b>
Increase in Non-Dependant Charges	Increases started in 2011/12 and continue until 2012/13	120 tenants affected, with 80% of those experiencing rent arrears
Benefit Cap	April 2013	5 tenants affected with benefit reductions ranging from £1pw to £52pw
Reduction in Benefit for under-occupation "bedroom tax"	April 2013	521 tenants likely to be affected with over half likely to want to move
Universal Credit	October 2013	1771 (workable age) on either partial and/or full housing benefit so will be affected
<i>Total</i>		<i>2317 out of 4508 tenants affected (c53%)</i>

The Tenant Consultative Group (TCG) has debated the changes from the outset and support the proposals contained within the report. They have asked Cabinet to give consideration to incentivising direct debit payments, such as extra rent free weeks. But based on cabinet's decision last year to introduce incentives for a clear rent account, it seems a better approach to assess the impact and success of that scheme before investigating the business case behind extending incentive arrangements. The TCG are also keen that Cabinet recognise that the proposals are aimed at ensuring rental income is maximised in order to fully realise wider ambitions in the HRA business plan around regeneration and development of affordable housing, which is already accepted as part of the councils Local Plan.

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are significant financial implications arising from the Welfare Benefit Act 2012. Like many other organisations, officers' are predicting a rise in rent arrears as people struggle to cope with benefit reductions. From Tamworth's impact assessment it is likely that the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan will reflect an increase in the bad debt provision. From the presentation, attached at annex one, members will note that this could result in arrears trebling over the next three years from £335,807 (2011/12) to in excess of a £1m in 2015/16.

From benchmarking and peer assessment it is felt the following measures will seek to limit this increase. The financial impact of the recommendations are summarised as follows:-

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Financial Implication</b>
Increase investment in the third sector from £5,000 currently to £10,000	The additional £5000 will need to be met from existing budgets
Access the Homelessness Prevention Fund 2013/14 onwards	Members are asked to endorse the principles set out in the report. Landlord Services will then work with the strategic commissioners to access the

	Homelessness Grant where possible
2 additional income management staff	Provision has already been made through the budget setting process as a policy change and is subject to further reports to Appointments & Staffing Committee
Costings for electronic equipment for rent payments	The Corporate Change Management Programme is already focused on improving the IT infrastructure to support agile working. It is anticipated that this will be funded through corresponding savings as this work-stream is progressed
Support the development of a Social Enterprise Partnership	Mears are prepared to meet the initial start up costs and further details will be reported to the Portfolio Holder as the business case is progressed

## LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

The Welfare Reform proposals have attracted widespread debate. Implementation is not without its challenges. The council will have to manage the reputational risk as people's benefits are reduced and/or capped from April 2013. The communication plan attached at annex **two** is about ensuring that customers are well informed and have access to clear and concise information, allowing them to prepare for the changes.

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Sustainability of communities' is intrinsic to achieving the Council's vision of "one Tamworth – Perfectly placed". The measures contained within the report are aimed at preparing for significant government reform and ensuring the council as a landlord directs its resources to achieving corporate priorities.

## MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

### Third Sector Commissioning

Landlord Services already invest £5,000 per annum into the credit union. On the basis that nearly half of all council tenants' will be affected there is a need to ensure support continues to be available to support:-

- ✓ Debt management services
- ✓ Sensible borrowing solutions
- ✓ 'jam jar' and/or basic rent accounts
- ✓ Suitable payment methods such as direct debit

The service level agreement facilitated through the third sector commissioning framework has been a success with over 180 loans being provided to tenants and significant take up in relation to savings. Landlord services are currently reviewing this specification to extend the support required to customers and will look to invest this extra money using the commissioning framework as a vehicle to support the third sector and more widely its customers.

It is likely that investment and support will increase as the service specification is



developed for partners.

### Use of a Homelessness Prevention Grant

Members should be aware that the council currently offers financial support through its Discretionary Housing Payments (administered by the Benefits Team) and the Repossession Prevention Fund (administered by the Housing Advice Team).

In May 2012, Cabinet approved the use of Department of Communities and Local Government *Preventing Homelessness Grant* allocated to the Council to support homelessness prevention activity to 2015. Over the next three years there are funds available for best practice initiatives that target homelessness prevention. With Tamworth's strategic commissioners it is recognised that, subject to Cabinet, endorsing the principles below, an element of this funding could be used to sustain tenants' in their own home, that would otherwise face eviction. Officers' estimate that the costs to the Council, per household for an eviction equate to c£2,000, a property move c£2,500 and a homelessness case up to c£8,000. Where a short term solution offers value for money preventing these costs arising then a scheme could be targeted using this fund.

The principles include:-

- ✓ Allowing customers to remain in their own home, where for a short period of time (no longer than 12weeks), a financial buffer would avoid eviction and or move on
- ✓ Financial assistance where households are actively and positively working with us to secure alternative and smaller accommodation, but through limited supply, are unable to do so in the short term
- ✓ Where tenants would ordinarily fulfil the criteria for DHP but funding is unavailable.

Full details of the scheme will be agreed with the Portfolio Holder and Director of Housing & Health before implementation.

### Staffing & Resources

There is no spare capacity across Landlord Services given the ambitions of the HRA Business Plan. The corporate change programme has provided the opportunity to review resources and the work around agile working ensures that landlord services are maximising the available capacity of staff and current systems. Even with the re-alignment of duties, automating processes and working in different and smarter ways, there is still a need for additional resource. Without this resource then there is insufficient capacity to progress actions.

During the 2012/13 budget setting process, additional funding was approved to support service improvements. A report is currently being prepared for Appointments and Staffing to consider in the Summer. Cabinet are reminded that there will be significant tasks ahead in relation to:-

- ✓ Rent collection as a result of universal credit being paid directly to the customer and not to the landlord
- ✓ Detailed process mapping to understand vulnerability and tailor made support opportunities
- ✓ Homelessness prevention and work with agencies, via TAMCAN, and partners

- to ensure early intervention is successful and sustain tenancies
- ✓ Establishment of the Social Enterprise Partnership to contribute to the local employment offer
- ✓ Managing the impact of court closures and increased travelling and time spent at courts in Staffordshire
- ✓ Ensuring staff are equipped with the necessary skills, training and materials to respond to the reforms outlined.

### Extending Payment Methods

There has been widespread publicity, through social media and in the professional press, of the inevitable challenges that will arise with universal credit being paid direct to the customer. Organisations have already started to develop smart solutions around rent apps, mobile phone payments (e.g. Barclay's pingit) and door stop payments to ensure income is maximised. The corporate change programme is focused on the IT infrastructure to support agile and improved ways of working and it is recommended that cabinet support this development of mobile payment devices as an extension to that work.

### Social Enterprise Partnership (SEP)– Mears

Mears, as the council's new repairs contractor, are keen to develop a Social Enterprise Partnership aimed at investing in local skills and knowledge. As a contract promise they propose the development of an Academy within Tamworth that will see DIY, construction and service qualifications offered, leading to apprenticeship and/or promoting individual careers choices. Mears have agreed to meet all start up costs. It is therefore recommended that the detail of the SEP with Mears is delegated to the Portfolio Holder of Housing and the Director of Housing & Health to finalise. If the principle is supported then discussions will involve the Local Education Authority and other relevant partners, such as the local College.

### Next Steps

The action plan set out at **annex three**, highlights the key milestones going forward in relation to communications and management planning. Given the significant impact of these proposals it is recommended that a further report is presented to Cabinet, during the Summer of 2013, that reports the initial impact and outlines further detailed plans as the final preparations for Universal Credit (October 2013), are made.

### **REPORT AUTHOR**

Tina Mustafa – Head of Landlord Services ext 467

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

## **APPENDICES**

Annex one – Presentation 24/5/12 to Members

Annex two – Communication Headlines

Annex three – Action Plan with the wider Corporate Project Team

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# Impact of Welfare Benefit Reform on Tenants

## Member Seminar

Tina Mustafa – Head of Landlord Services  
Thursday 24th May 2012



# Where shall we start?

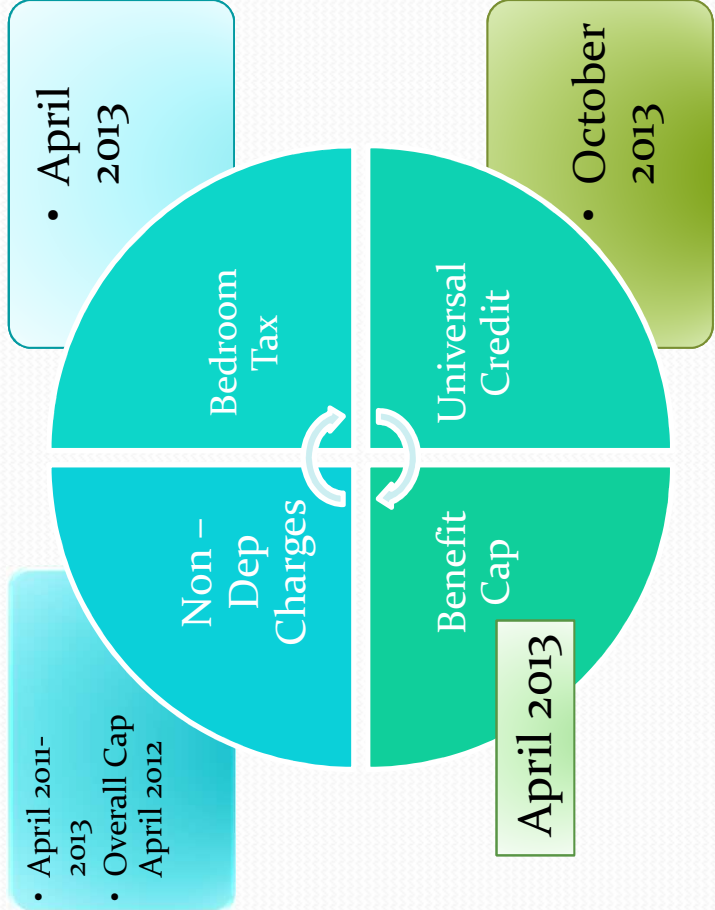
- What's changing? A short Re-cap
- Why?
- So What?
- We have asked the Audience and phoned a friend?
- We do have a plan!
- We know we can't do this alone

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# Summary of Changes

## Social Rented Sector



## other welfare benefits

- LHA Reforms – caps
- Benefits by CPI not RPI
- DLA replaced with PIP
- Social Fund Replaced
- Localised Council Tax Benefit
  - abolition of national scheme; 10% cut in overall expenditure; protection to pensioners

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# Why?

“Welfare Revolution”  
Lord Freud, Minister for  
Welfare Reform, 30.4.12

“Managing rising costs, delivering fairness, increasing employment, this means transforming what we do and will prevent UK being dragged into further fiscal crisis”, Andrew Parfitt, Head of Housing, DWP, 30.4.12

“subsidised housing is the choice for many, particularly those who experience insecurity in other aspects of their lives, but evidence show that this helps tenants maintain independence and self sufficiency”, Paul Downie, Deputy Director CLG

“our problem and our solution”, RT  
HON Eric Pickles, 15.6.2011

“A Perfect Storm!”, CEO  
Peabody Trust

“Works & Pensions is the largest budget, more than entire NHS spending and twice education. HB bill is £18b. Em Budget 2010 / spending review meant trade off with education, health to achieve savings to avoid fiscal crisis – welfare lost!” CIH  
March 2012



## Principal!

- Managing fiscal deficit
- Administration simpler and fairer
- Incentive to Work – ensuring work pays
- Protecting most vulnerable by targeting resources
- Promoting independence and creating a level playing field across tenure
- A safety net not a generational comfort blanket
- Fairness to the taxpayer

## Reality!

- Devil in the Detail – still outstanding questions around what's a bedroom?  
What does vulnerable mean?
- Transitional Arrangements and timetable is challenging
- Getting digital !
- Affordability and real reductions for people
- Strategic Housing Impact on allocations
- Income will be threatened

# Non – Dependant Increases

<b>Income</b>	>£124	£183	£238	£316	£394	>£394
<b>2010/11</b>	7.40	17.00	23.35	38.20	43.50	47.75
<b>2011/12</b>	9.40	21.55	29.60	48.45	55.20	60.60
<b>2012/2013</b>	11.45	26.25	36.10	59.05	67.25	73.85
<b>Loss per week from 2011/12 to 2012/13</b>	2.05	4.70	6.50	10.60	12.05	13.25
<b>Over all loss from 2010</b>	4.05	9.25	12.75	20.85	23.75	25.50







# Impact – Non Dep Increases

- Non- dep charges increased by 27% 2011/12 with loss in benefit from c£2pr week to £13pw, 2012/13 losses will be between c£4pw - £25pw
- 120 tenants affected by the increase
- At end of 2011, 80% in arrears – 83 Notices & 6 court cases – costing around £20k in administrative costs
- Fraud implications? Have they gone?
- 10% out of H/B as a result of £73.85 highest charge
- Rent Arrears at year end up by £94k - c£40k attributable to non-dep charges not being paid
- Arrears up from 1.5% in 2010/11 to 2% in 2011/12

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# Impact – Benefit Cap

- £500 for families and £350 singles
- Cap includes JSA, IS, ESA, Housing Benefit, Child benefit and child tax credit. Excludes pensioners, war widows & those in receipt of disability benefits at the moment
- April 2013-Oct 2013 (or until migration) cap is HB only
- DWP, last few days, written to 42 Affected in Tamworth, 20 council tenants – payment reductions of £2 –£382 (£120 max) reduction to tenants
- Under-estimated @ Dec 2011?
- Until Universal Credit in 2013 Landlord will continue to get HB direct
- DWP advised customers to contact housing advice teams
- Home visits being organised to offer money management advise
- 20 council tenants – all with 3 or more children – direct impact on child poverty and healthy outcomes
- Exemptions – 0845 helpline
- If all 20 lose benefit – c£75k

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# Impact – ‘Bedroom Tax’

- Working age households only
- When are you a pensioner? Current 60+ protected, from 2013 based on NI
- Rent reduced if under- occupying - 14% for 1 bed and 25% for 2 beds
- Profile indicates that 521 council tenants (15%) are under-occupying (81 in 4 beds; 280 in 3beds, 160 in 2 beds)
- Assume 67% on Housing benefit – average loss of between £1pw & £20pw
- Financial Impact 521 x £15 x 52 weeks - £406k! Arrears or collections costs or both!

- Shelter – argue people will try and stay and pay, turning to other borrowing to fund shortfall
- Or
- Could take in lodgers – non dep impact
- Or
- Arrears Increase
- Or
- Statutory Housing Impact as people turn up requesting moves – we expect ½ to do this (around 200)
- Or
- Buy – RTB £75k maximum discount  
(26 applications since Jan 2012, 5 on average a month! NB !! in HRA Business Plan predicted)

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# Impact - Universal Credit

- 4508 council tenants – 67% partial / full HB (3017 on housing benefit, 1491 working)
- Income £17m (dwelling rents) – currently collect £7m / £10m comes direct
- From October paid direct to those of workable age (3017 – 56% / 1771 working and 44% / 1402 pensionable). Will have to physically collect double of what we're used to – £14m
- Slow migration – areas unknown – 2013-2017
- Direct payments allowed for vulnerability / arrears – still to be defined and clarified – assumed around 10% based on 7 wks arrears (251 cases) and 250 on vulnerable data base
- Paid Monthly & in arrears - impact around educating on budgeting and money management
- Could tackle under-claiming as a single benefit – so automatic take up and real time adjustments
- Collection costs will increase – estimate over £50k per annum (based on 48p x 1771 x 52 wk allpay transaction costs plus £1 per card)
- HRA business plan predicts increase of bad debt provision of £120k for 2012/13, but then 20% year on year
- Administered by DWP, online and automated – face to face discouraged. Mosaic Data reporting – 25% tenants are on-line, profile to be developed

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# Arrears – Guess work based on

no-one paying!

20% Increase in arrears 2012-2015 as per the HRA Business Plan	Benefit lost due to Non dependent	Benefit lost due to Under occupation and/or	Benefit lost due to	Benefit lost due to	Benefit lost due to
2010/2011 £239,487					
2011/2012 £287k					
2012/13 £402k					
Bad debt provision of £120,000 built in					
2014 £482k	£48,000	£406,000	£75,000	£406,000	c£936k
2015 £578k	£48,000	£406,000	-	£406,000	c£1m+

Right to Buys c£4k PA per property loss in revenue

Universal Credit – Impact difficult to quantify

**Actual**  
**£335,807**

c£ 1/2 m

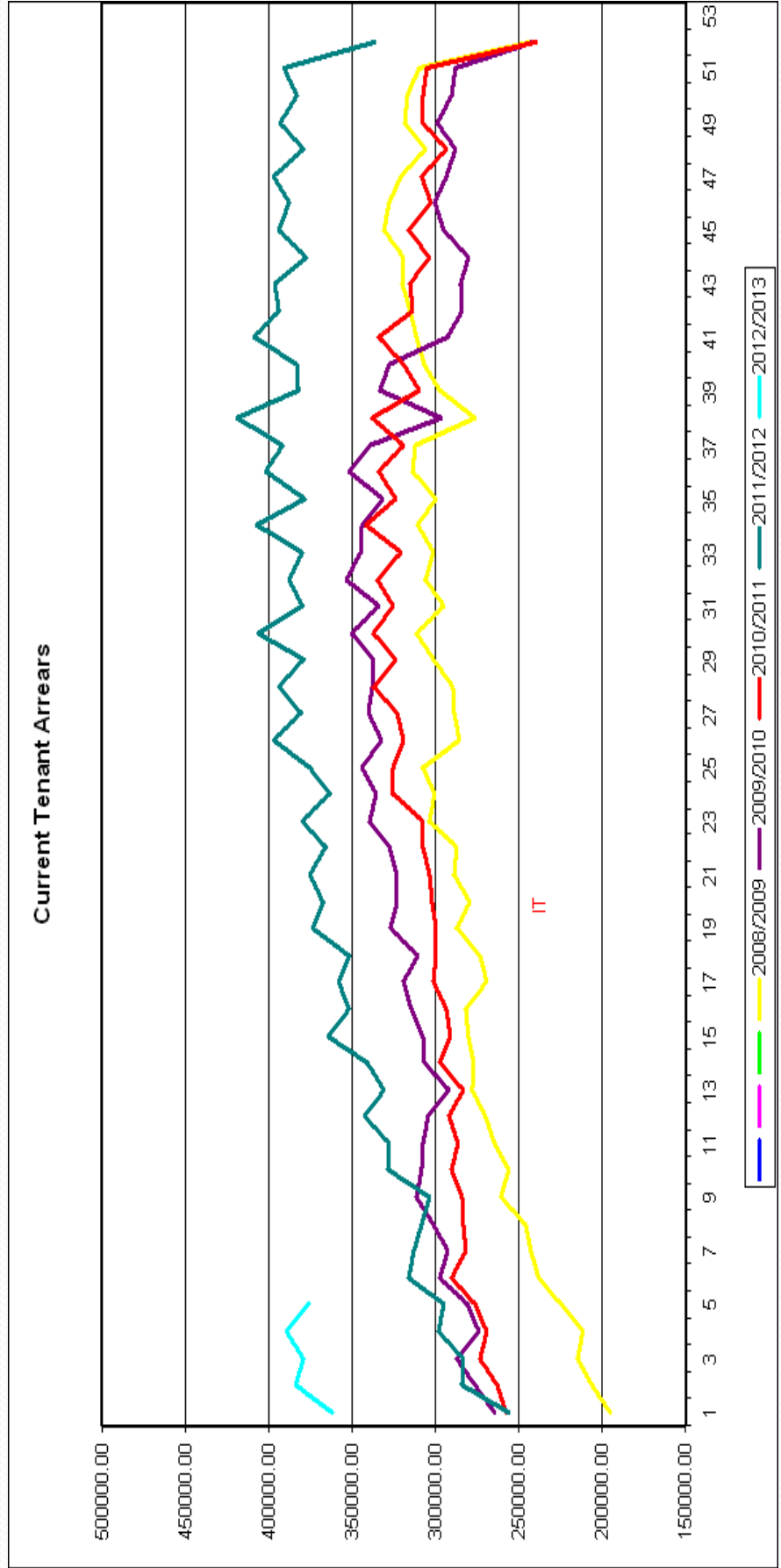
(assumes loss of H/B on all 20 cases affected)

c£936k

c£1m+

One Tamworth – Perfectly Placed to deliver!

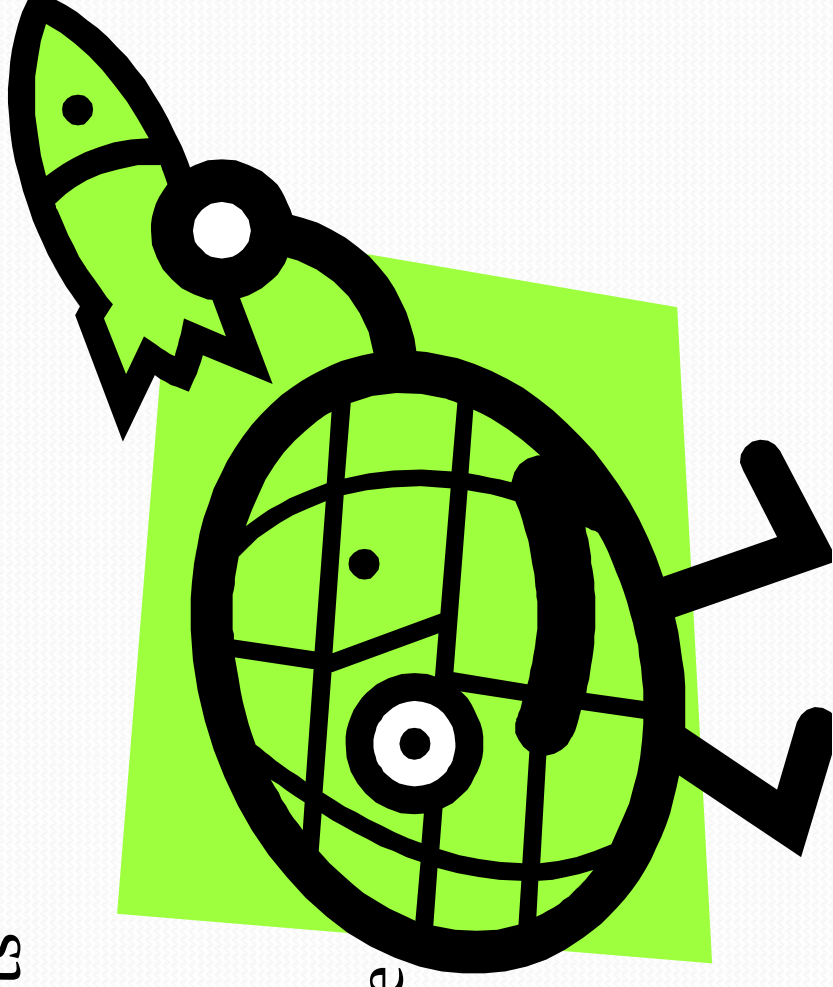
# Performance over the last 4 years!





# Asking the Audience

- Demonstration Projects
- Front Facing Pilots
- Benchmarking Clubs
- Damage limitation rather than solving the problem



# What we are already doing?

- Core Strategy & Healthier Housing Strategy – framework for maximising housing options across all sectors (targets based on demand)
- HRA business plan assumes an element of bad debt provision – this will have to increase year on year
- Landlord Organisational Change Proposals – stage 2 to build internal capacity
- Cabinet report last April 2011 – started to plan 48wk / rent incentive / investment in credit union. Further report planned July.
- Internal review of allocations policy ongoing
- Corporate project established to finalise cross tenure Impact Assessment – refocus on Corporate Debt Strategy – we need resources to support (1 of 25 projects)
- Training & Seminars started for all stakeholders
- Developing Communications Countdown
- Target resources – HRA investment (£30k) & Discretionary Housing Allowance (£28K) – Homeless Prevention Fund (£60k)
- Currently risk assessing vulnerable tenants
- Seeking Clarification on what's a bedroom? What is vulnerable?



# Working Together - Opportunities

- Refreshed housing approach to Corporate Change Programme and lean reviews across all work streams – links to agile working (i.e. Income teams)
- Must build capacity & infrastructure in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector – role of banks, credit union (jam jar accounts)
- Role of LEP in relation to public / private solutions to economic regeneration – job and skill creation
- Social Enterprise Opportunities to build on tackling worklessness'
- Promote digital inclusion and invest
- Consider radical door stop challenges – not cash but payments on door step, card readers, Barclays ping it, distraint, warrant, bailiffs / enforcement agents, etc (costs might outweigh debt)
- **Re-provision of affordable housing is key – Core Strategic requirements! 50% social rent; 25% affordable and 25% intermediate!**
- **HRA business plan ambitions around re-providing council homes, developing and funding affordable housing development and developing an acquisitions policy will mitigate the risk**

## Next Steps

- Governance & Preparing Stakeholders - Member Seminar Thursday 24/5; Cabinet Report July 2012; Tenant Consultative Group & Stakeholder Events
- Wider Corporate Social Responsibility – fundamental to our strategic priorities
- Transformation and Change Management – IT infrastructure; digital inclusion and data mapping
- Third Sector Commissioning – Social Enterprise
- Economic Regeneration more important than ever – links to Corporate Debt Strategy

## Annex 2

### Communications Planning on Welfare Reform

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Key Stakeholders</b>
Jan 2011	Tenants Consultative Group(TCG) presentation	Tenants
Jan 2011	Cabinet report	Cabinet Members
13 March 2012 TCG	Presentation	Tenants
March 2012	Welfare reform Article Open House	All Secure Tenants
March 2012	Leaflet to accompany all new offers	New tenants
March 2012 ongoing	Advice to tenants at Visits from Housing officers	Tenants in Arrears or any tenant who contacts or is visited on a housing matter
May 2012	Count down to Change leaflet included in quarterly rent statements	All Secure Tenants
24 May 2012	Member briefing	Members
June 2012	Contacted those likely to be affected by the benefit cap with tailored support plans	Tenants
26 June 2012	TBC Staff briefings	Staff
12 July 2012	Briefing To Customer Services staff	Staff
July 2012	Cabinet Report to set out proposals	Members
August 2012	Stakeholder briefings	CAB, Homestart, Police, Credit Union Voluntary Sector Social Services
August 2012	Count down to Change leaflet included in quarterly rent statements	All Secure Tenants
Summer 2012	Briefings for tenants at the locality hubs	Tenants and Residents
Summer 2012	Telephone campaign with 521 likely to be affected by the under	Tenants

	occupation rules and an assessment of move on	
November 2012	Count down to Change leaflet included in quarterly rent statements	All Secure Tenants
December 2012	Dedicated web Page up and running linked to social media	All Customers
December 2012	Include information as part of the Christmas rent Campaign	Secure Tenants
December 2012	Article in Open House	All Secure Tenants
January 2013 & then as required	Notice on Plasma screens	All Customers
February 2013	Count down to Change leaflet included in quarterly rent statements	All Secure Tenants
February 2013	Information with rent increase	All Secure Tenants
June 2013	Count down to Change leaflet included in quarterly rent statements	All Secure Tenants
June 2013	Article in Open House	All Secure tenants
Summer 2013	Cabinet to report impact assessment and final preparations for Universal Credit	Members
September 2013	Count down to Change leaflet included in quarterly rent statements	All secure Tenants

## Annex Three

### Welfare Benefit Reform Headlines

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time table</b>	<b>Lead</b>
As detailed in Annex two	See communications Plan	Sue Philp, Natalie Missenden, Jane Eason
Business case for Landlord Restructure – phase 2 including 2x income maximisation officers	Staffing and Appointments August 2012	Tina Mustafa
Corporate change programme - IT, infrastructure and data requirements to be mapped, including mobile payment devices, i.e. Rent App	To be completed By April 2013	Nicki Burton, Sue Philp
Third sector Commissioning of financial support services	To be completed by April 2014	Sue Philp Fleur Fernando Karen Clancy
Develop a Scheme around the homelessness prevention grant to offer financial assistance in value for money circumstances	To be completed by December 2012	Rachel Ashford, Sue Philp
Social Enterprise Partnership – Business case and launch	To be completed by April 2013/14	Mears, Sue Philp
Focus activity with the LEP & banking sector in relation to the development of basic financial products, i.e. jam jar accounts	June 2013	Rob Mitchell, Sue Philp
Economic regeneration with links to Corporate Debt Strategy	To be completed by April 2014	Wider Leadership team Project Group (Tina Mustafa, Karen Taylor, Mike Buckland)
Profiling of Customers	Ongoing	All Housing Staff
Risk Assessing Vulnerable tenants	To be completed by April 2013	Income maximisation Officer
Consider other payment methods	To be completed by April 2013	Income maximisation Officer

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25<sup>th</sup> July 2012**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing****SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS UPDATE****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the report is to update Members on the number and type of initial safeguarding concerns that the council received between April 2011 and March 2012. The report will also inform members of the current position in relation to our Policy regarding safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

**RECOMMENDATIONS****That Members:**

- 1. Endorse the proposal to delay (until the autumn of 2012) the scheduled review of our current Safeguarding policy in order to benefit from the national guidance due to be published in summer 2012.**
- 2. Promote attendance by Tamworth Borough Councillors at all future Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult awareness training.**

**Executive Summary**

Tamworth Borough Council has both a legal and moral duty to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm. The Children's Acts 1989 and 2004 along with the associated statutory guidance set out our legal responsibilities for protecting children. As part of our ongoing commitment to these responsibilities the Council will revise the existing Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy in line with the recently revised Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance from the government. The current policy was approved in March 2011 and is not deemed to be out of date. Therefore it is prudent to await the national revisions before amending our local policies. The implementation of our existing policy is currently subject to an internal audit inspection as part of our commitment to testing its effectiveness; the findings from the internal audit will also inform any revisions to our safeguarding policy. In addition to this officers also undertake an annual review of our Section 11 responsibilities under the Children's Act.

**RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. The cost of training and materials will be met from existing budgets.

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

There are no immediate legal/risk implications arising from this report; however the Council has a statutory duty under the Children's Act 1989 and 2004 to ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Tamworth Borough Council has a duty to recognise and report any issues that we detect via our contact with customers, visitors and via our partners that identify potential issues of safety, welfare or vulnerability of an individual.

The Council's policy on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, and the associated training, contains information for staff on how to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond appropriately. The policy and associated training details the procedure on how to report concerns. Concerns are reported by staff on the online reporting form accessed via the Intranet. This information is then recorded on the Customer Recording Management system (CRM). All actions that have been taken in regards to the safeguarding concerns are logged on the system. The CRM system is used widely by various teams. It is also evident that other agencies are advising us of safeguarding issues and these are also being incorporated onto our recording and reporting system. Staff without access to the intranet can use a paper version of the form or phone safeguarding officers for support.

The current online reporting form used by staff will be revised to comply more fully with the County-wide multi agency referral form. Should timescales coincide this will be done to match the introduction of the Council's new Customer Records Management system. The Council's Safeguarding requirements have been built into the specification for the new corporate CRM system.

Between 1 April 2011 until 31 March 2012, 58 initial concerns were reported and logged onto the Council's CRM system. Of the 58 initial concerns 34 were concerns regarding children and the remaining 24 were concerns relating to vulnerable adults. There has been a small decrease in the number of concerns received when compared with the figures from April 2010 - March 2011 where 61 concerns were recorded.

In summary the reports are telling us that –

1. Teams using the CRM to report their initial concerns are – Housing Services (Estate Management, Housing Advice, Cleaning and Caretaking Services, Income Management), CCTV, Street Wardens, Housing Benefits and

Customer Services.

2. Geographically we have received reports that relate to the following areas - Town centre (shopping centre & homeless) (6), Town Centre (residential) (7), Amington (4), Glascoate (8), Dosthill (1), Fazeley (1), Bolehall (1) Leyfields (1), Belgrave (3), Kettlebrook (4), Coton Green (4), Stonydelph (13), Hockley (4), and (1) for Lichfield.
3. Those we have concerns for age between approximately 6 months old to 85 years old.
4. Reports have come in from a variety of sources, staff witnessing issues, neighbours reporting issues, staff hearing concerns when talking to customers over the phone
5. There are significant implications for the Housing Service, with the exception of a few reports – most appear to relate to those in Council accommodation and some are in need of Council assistance in finding accommodation/housing advice.
6. Reports range from verbal abuse to serious sexual abuse to financial abuse.
7. Some reports relate to multiple types of suspected abuse, with this there appears to be a link with substance abuse & sexual abuse.
8. There are several reports linked to alcohol related incidents.
9. It would also appear that most incidents take place at home or very near to the home of the person we have concerns for.
10. All incidents were reported to the Police, Staffordshire County Council Children's Social Care Services First Response Team, or another appropriate agency.

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is a demanding area of work. The Council is currently involved in an adult protection investigation as a result of the death of a vulnerable adult in Tamworth. The Council requested the investigation to take place; key learning points from the investigation will be disseminated to all agencies involved in the case when they become available. Council officers have reported their concerns regarding adults in need of support but who don't meet current social work thresholds to the County Council.

Delivery of refresher safeguarding awareness training to all appropriate staff is underway and sessions will continue to run throughout the year. A session for members is scheduled to take place on the evening of the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2012. Delivery of training to other district council staff and members and voluntary sector organisations is also undertaken by the council's Children & Families Safeguarding Officer.

A draft domestic violence policy is currently being produced by the Community Safety Partnership and will be circulated for consultation in autumn 2012. The Domestic Violence policy will complement our existing safeguarding policy and provide staff with additional information about domestic abuse and how to recognise and respond to any concerns they may have.

Working in partnership with the police we are currently in the process of co-ordinating the delivery of multi-agency training in relation to domestic violence to appropriate staff members. Also in conjunction with the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board sub-groups we are exploring ways to deliver education to practitioners, young people and the wider community around sexual exploitation.

**REPORT AUTHOR**

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**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

*Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010 DCSF)*  
*Statutory Guidance Under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004*  
*The Laming Report 2009, The Protection of Children in England*  
*Tamworth Borough Council Cabinet Report 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011*

## REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

### TAMWORTH ASSEMBLY ROOMS “DEVELOPMENT PHASE”

#### EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

#### PURPOSE

To update members on the Tamworth Assembly Rooms Development Project and seek permission and agreement on the “Development Phase” timeline and actions.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members accept the £88,200 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) round one grant and endorse the use of £50,000 TBC capital (from the £400k) budget to enable further feasibility work as part of the Development Phase
2. Members endorse the actions contained in the Development Phase timetable attached at appendix one
3. That Members approve the procurement of Architectural support (including survey works) and the procurement of a project manager.
4. That Members note that a further report detailing the proposal for a second round Heritage Lottery Grant will be brought to Cabinet prior to submission in December 2012 (estimated).

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council is currently assessing the feasibility of developing the Tamworth Assembly Rooms. The potential to redevelop Tamworth Assembly Rooms is linked to a wider aspiration to create a Cultural Quarter next to Tamworth Assembly Rooms. The Tamworth Assembly Rooms project can progress independently of the Cultural Quarter as it is not dependant on it. However the two projects are complimentary and reinforce each other. The proposals to develop Tamworth Assembly Rooms will improve the building both modernizing it yet protecting its charm and local significance to the community. The next stage in the project is to commission external support to develop detailed designs, project milestones and financial costs. This information will inform future Council decisions in relation to the projects viability and inform the bids to the Heritage Lottery and Arts Council.

Tamworth Assembly Rooms has recently been successful in its round one bid to Heritage Lottery. The HLF have awarded a development grant of £88,200.

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

### Development phase budget

Heritage Lottery Grant funding	£88,200
Tamworth Borough Council Match	£50,000
Volunteer Time	£28,000
Total	£166,200

### Development Phases expenditure

Project Cost	Cost	HLF	Funding Source	
			TBC	Volunteer Time
Project Manager	13,500	13,500		
Access Officer	6,000		6,000	
Architect	43,000	30,000	13,000	
M & E Consultant	13,500	13,500		
Structural Engineer	10,125	10,125		
Acoustic Consultant	7,500		7,500	
CDM Coordinator	2,025	2,025		
Other Specialists	4,000		4,000	
Volunteer Training and Support	4,000		4,000	
Volunteer Time	28,000			28,000
Surveys	15,000	10,000	5,000	
Consultation Costs	5,000	2,500	2,500	
Statutory Charges	7,000	4,000	3,000	
Contingency	2,000	1,000	1,000	
Marketing Activities	2,000		2,000	
Project Activities	3,550	1,550	2,000	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>166,200</b>	<b>88,200</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>28,000</b>
<b>Funding Amount</b>	<b>166,200</b>	<b>88,200</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>28,000</b>

### Assembly Rooms Re-development Budget (estimated)

The Council is expected and has budgeted for this project to cost £2.5 million, however it is important to note that the development phase may change this. Further reports will be submitted to Cabinet to ensure that progress is monitored.

## LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

A risk assessment is attached to this report. It is Important to recognise that the project will evolve as more feasibility work is done and this will affect timescales and finances. Cabinet will be made aware of all major funding and building issues.

Legal issues- The project will follow procurement and financial regulations and ensure appropriate legal agreements are in place.

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The project is designed to support the future sustainability of the Assembly Rooms and sustainability issues will be factored into any contracts and materials used in the redevelopment.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **Why develop the Assembly rooms?**

Over its lifetime the building has seen many changes both in its purpose and building structure. The building is now starting to look tired and become more and more difficult to use for a range of purposes. Access to the building is confusing often giving the impression the building is closed. The building as a whole is in constant need of repair with a range of original features already lost or starting to become damaged. In addition the weather over the last few years has taken its toll on the building with damp issues and plumbing becoming an issue. Tamworth Assembly Rooms is in need of significant capital investment to prevent further decline which if not halted will slowly start to impact on visitor numbers.

The development project was stimulated by a public consultation through the Citizens panel scheme that highlighted issues with the building. Leading on from this focus groups further outlined what needed to happen to improve the facilities. In 2011 a feasibility study was commissioned to explore possible developments to improve and protect the building. This report has lead Tamworth Borough Council to make a commitment to explore this further and has sourced external funding from the HLF to support a formal development and planning stage.

The overall project aims to stimulate not only the Tamworth Assembly Rooms but the town centre as whole. It is believed that the cultural quarter and the Tamworth Assembly Rooms projects will create a new town centre offer. Alongside the physical changes the project will also facilitate a better service that will stimulate the creative industries growth for the area. At all stages users and the public will have an active say in how the building will be developed and used in the future.

### **Stages and elements of the project**

Due to the scale of the project, it is split in to three stages. The primary concern is to protect the current building and deal with the structural and damp issues. This work will be done with the Heritage Lottery Fund who will support the restoration and protection of elements of the building. We have received a development grant from HLF to undertake the first stages of this work and to develop a stage two application. It is important to note that this funding is still competitive and may not result in a full grant award.

The second stage will work in partnership with Arts Council England (this funding is still yet to be confirmed) which will develop new facilities and improve the current internal infrastructure of the building.

The third stage is linked to the wider cultural quarter which is a joint project between TBC and Staffordshire County Council.

It is important to highlight that Arts Council England and Heritage lottery will only fund specific work. £30,000 of the development money is to be used to match fund the Heritage Lottery bid with the remaining £20,000 being used to support the bid with

staffing consultation and additional non heritage related fees.

### **Project Governance**

A project group of Officers has been established under the Arts and Events Manager and draws on the expertise of different departments from within the Borough Council and also support from the County Council. The project groups remit also includes the development of the Cultural Quarter. The project group will report via the Community Leisure Manager and Director of Communities Planning and Partnerships to the Corporate Management Team and via the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Enterprise to Cabinet and Council.

### **Development phase actions summary**

Recruit an access officer funded for 6 months using the Development budget.  
Approval for this recruitment will be sought via existing human resource process.

Procurement of Architectural services for RIBA stages C-G which will include submitting planning permission. Contact to be awarded in August/September 2012

Procure project management Contact to be awarded in August/September 2012

### **Consultation and planning**

Public Consultation to begin the end of August continuing through to October. Public Consultation will take place through a range of sessions and means. It will include a further citizens panel, a local businesses questionnaire and venue open days to show what we are planning on changing and why.

Planning Permission to be submitted in late October/ early November 2012.

### **Volunteer Board and local Fundraising**

The project will include a development board made of volunteers with particular expertise. They will be tasked with developing additional funding for the project and using their expertise to support the development project. Informal discussions have already taken place with potential members. They will be linked in to the internal development team.

### **General background**

Tamworth Assembly Rooms in Corporation Street was erected by public subscription in 1889 at the cost of £5,500. The building work was undertaken to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887. Whilst under construction, in a cavity underneath the foundation stone, were deposited newspapers and four coins of the Jubilee year. The heavy looking building, claimed by its designer, to be in the style of the Italian Renaissance, consists of a hall 90 feet by 40 feet, which with the gallery over the entrance lobby was capable of seating 850 people when originally opened. Of course, this was long before the current fire and health and safety regulations came into being and its current capacity is around 350. The building was officially opened on 8th October 1889 by Mr. Philip Muntz who was Member of Parliament for Tamworth.

### **REPORT AUTHOR**

Elanor Thompson Arts and Events Manager



## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Previous reports

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Development Phase Plan

Appendix 2 Risk Assessment

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## RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Organisation / department / function / project; Tamworth Assembly Rooms Development Project \_\_\_\_\_

Business Objective: \_\_\_ Building and Service Development \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by: \_\_\_Elanor Thompson \_\_\_\_\_ Date completed: \_\_\_10/072012 \_\_\_\_\_

No	Risk (Threat/Opportunity to achievement of business objective)	Assessment of Risk [As it is now]			Risk Treatment Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk [With control measures implemented]			Responsible	Timescale/ Review Frequency
		Impact (Severity) [I]	Likelihood (Probability) [L]	Risk Score [xL]		Impact (Severity) [I]	Likelihood (Probability) [L]	Residual Risk Score		
	External Funding	H	M	M	Ensure regular meetings with external funders. Ensure paperwork correct and present. Follow all guidelines and regulations.	M	M	M	Elanor Thompson	Every Two Months
	Internal Funding	H	L	M	Ensure financial guidance is followed and outlined cash flow is adhered to. Seek advice on financial issues from accountancy team.	H	L	M	Elanor Thompson	Every Two Months
	Planning Permission	H	M	M	Ensure planners are consulted throughout Ensure English Heritage Consulted throughout. Ensure all rules and regulations are met.	H	L	L	Elanor Thompson	Every Two Months
	Timescales	H	M	M	Ensure timescales are as obtainable as possible. Ensure correct resources allocated to meet timescales. Ensure Planning is effective. Outline contractual time scales to all contractors, with penalties if missed.	H	L	L	Elanor Thompson	Every Two Months

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