



CABINET

30 October 2019

A meeting of the CABINET will be held on Thursday, 7th November, 2019, 6.00 pm in Committee Room 1, Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, B79 7BZ

A G E N D A

NON CONFIDENTIAL

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 3 - 6)

3 Declarations of Interest

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

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

4 Question Time:

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

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

6 Budget Consultation 2020/21 (Pages 7 - 50)

(Report of the Leader of the Council)

Yours faithfully

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

Chief Executive

Access arrangements

If you have any particular access requirements when attending the meeting, please contact Democratic Services on 01827 709267 or e-mail democratic-services@tamworth.gov.uk. We can then endeavour to ensure that any particular requirements you may have are catered for.

Filming of Meetings

The public part of this meeting may be filmed and broadcast. Please refer to the Council's Protocol on Filming, Videoing, Photography and Audio Recording at Council meetings which can be found [here](#) for further information.

The Protocol requires that no members of the public are to be deliberately filmed. Where possible, an area in the meeting room will be set aside for videoing, this is normally from the front of the public gallery. This aims to allow filming to be carried out whilst minimising the risk of the public being accidentally filmed.

If a member of the public is particularly concerned about accidental filming, please consider the location of any cameras when selecting a seat.

FAQs

For further information about the Council's Committee arrangements please see the FAQ page [here](#)

To Councillors: D Cook, R Pritchard, J Chesworth, M Cook, S Doyle and J Oates.



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CABINET
HELD ON 17th OCTOBER 2019**

PRESENT: Councillors R Pritchard (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), J Chesworth, M Cook and S Doyle

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Stefan Garner (Executive Director Finance) and Matthew Fletcher (Head of Economic Development and Regeneration)

Apologies received from: Councillor(s) D Cook and J Oates

16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th September 2019 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor J Chesworth and seconded by Councillor M Cook)

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

18 QUESTION TIME:

No Questions received

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

The Chair of Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee attended Cabinet to present his report in respect of Public Service Registers.

RESOLVED That

Tamworth Borough Council would utilise its social media profiles and other means i.e. correspondence to encourage those who were eligible, or those who know people who were eligible, to sign up for Public Service Registers across all sectors.

(Moved by Councillor J Chesworth and seconded by Councillor M Cook)

20 BUSINESS RATES POOLING 2020/21

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance considered the options for the operation of a Business Rate pool with other Local Authorities from April 2020, arising from the deferral of the planned reform of the Business Rates Retention scheme

RESOLVED That Cabinet

- a) Approved the principle of the Staffordshire pool remaining in place for 2020/21;
- b) Delegated approval for the Executive Director Finance (Section 151 Officer), in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, to agree, in conjunction with the other authorities of the proposed pool, the detail of the 2020/21 application.

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

21 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)

22 FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND

The Portfolio Holder for Heritage and Growth provided an update to Cabinet on progress against the Future High Streets Fund project to date and sought endorsement of relevant actions needed to meet key project milestones

RESOLVED That;

1. Cabinet acknowledged grant funding due from Government up to the value of £150,000.

2. Cabinet approved the creation of additional budget under account GS0402 32050 of £150,000 based on grant income from Government, to be ring fenced solely for the use of the Future High Streets Fund project in financial year 2019/2020 and any underspend be retained for use in financial year 2020/2021.
3. Authority was given to procure and appoint such specialists as is deemed necessary to produce a fully compliant business case.
4. Cabinet endorsed changes to the Economic Development and Regeneration business plan priorities
5. Cabinet endorsed all activity undertaken to date
6. Cabinet endorsed the outline scope of the Business Case projects and acknowledged this may change during the project.
7. Cabinet endorsed future activity.

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

Leader

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THURSDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

BUDGET CONSULTATION 2020/21

EXEMPT INFORMATION

None.

PURPOSE

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Cabinet endorse the report,
2. Cabinet take account of the findings, along with other sources of information, when setting the 2020/21 Budget.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**The vision**

The general consensus from respondents was very much in support of the revised vision 'To put Tamworth, its people and the local economy at the heart of everything we do' and this was reflected in respondents' comments.

People and place priorities

Support was also evident for the four priorities which come under the heading people and place.

- To meet housing needs through a variety of approaches and interventions – seen as important by 71% of respondents,
- To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity - seen as important by 89% of respondents,
- To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities - seen as important by 81% of respondents,
- To create a new and developing vision for the continued evolution of Tamworth, including a town centre fit for the 21st century - seen as important by 80% of respondents.

Organisation priorities

Support was also evident for the four priorities which come under the heading people and place.

- To be financially stable - seen as important by 87% of respondents,
- To ensure our employees have the right skills and culture to help our residents, visitors and businesses- seen as important by 77% of respondents,
- To ensure our service delivery is consistent, clear and focussed - seen as important by 70% of respondents,
- To ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge - seen as important by 76% of respondents.

Spend on services

It was most common for respondents to say they would prefer that current levels of spend remained the same; this was the case in 9 of the 12 major cost areas. Respondents most wanted to see maintained level of spend on 'sports and leisure services' (62%).

The three areas where respondents wanted to see more spend were 'improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth' (50%), 'parks, open spaces and street cleansing' (48%) and 'tackling anti-social behaviour' (47%).

Spending less was generally respondents' second most common response. Around a third of respondents wanted to see less spend in the following areas 'improved access to information/customer services' (33%), 'business support and advice' (32%) and 'grants for voluntary organisations' (31%).

If the Council were to consider changes to the charges it places upon its services, increasing charges for 'leisure and other activities' would be met with least resistance. 58% of respondents would support increased charges for this. Conversely, decreasing charges for 'car parking' would be a popular move. Two thirds of respondents (67%) said that they would like to see these decreased.

The largest proportion of residents (46%) would prefer the lowest level of Council Tax increase (a 0.57% increase). The second lowest level of increase (a 1.99% increase) was the second most popular option; 28% of residents chose this option.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications arising from this report.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

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

Whilst it is recognised that the number of responders are low this consultation process should not be used in isolation. Other research and data collected from consultation processes such as Tamworth Listens and Tamworth What's Next provide more qualitative data.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report. Given the low number of responses the Council will next year, expand its approach to consultations across the authority to ensure increased participation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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

REPORT AUTHOR

John Day

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

Budget Consultation 2020/21 – Full report.

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Budget Consultation Report 2020/21

Introduction

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

Residents, businesses and the voluntary sector are always an important part of this process. Therefore, this year as in previous years, these groups were invited to share their views on these priorities for the forthcoming financial year. This year, these groups were also asked to give their views on the revised vision and corporate priorities.

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

The report presents the analysis of the combined results from all three respondent groups.

Methodology

The consultation for the 2020/21 budget ran from 18th July to 27th September 2019 and three key groups were encouraged to share their views through paper and online surveys.

All three surveys were promoted via a range of communication channels including press releases in the local newspaper, a prominent feature on the Tamworth Borough Council website and through social media including Tamworth Borough Council Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, Tamworth Enterprise Centre Facebook. Hard copies of all three surveys were made available at the Marmion House reception.

Councillors were e-mailed the resident's survey and encouraged to share with their constituents.

The voluntary sector survey was put on the Support Staffordshire website and sent to the Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services for sharing amongst their members. Hard copies of this survey were also made available at the Tamworth CIC café.

The business survey was promoted by the Economic Development team, the Tamworth Enterprise Centre and posted on Tamworth Enterprise Centre Facebook page. Hard copies of the survey were also made available at the 'Tamworth...what's next?' sessions.

Members of Tamworth Borough Council's Citizens Panel received a direct e-mail encouraging their participation.

Responses

A total of 84 responses were received to the consultation and these consisted of:

- 73 residents
- 6 businesses
- 5 community and voluntary organisations.

For the purpose of analysis, responses from all three groups have been combined. Some caution must be applied when interpreting the results due to the low level of participation.

Views on the revised vision

The Council's revised vision is 'To put Tamworth, its people and the local economy at the heart of everything we do'.

Respondents were supportive of the revised vision and this was reflected in the comments received:

"It is a good statement and I would wholeheartedly agree with it, I would personally prefer for it just to say first!"

"Spot on, especially our local economy as this generates the wealth for our public services"

"I totally agree with the statement of vision but would put the Tamworth people before Tamworth town. To be fair all three points are interactive and one vision will not work without the other"

"Sounds like a good vision if the council remains true to it".

Views on the corporate priorities

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the importance of the priorities under the headings of 'People and place' and 'Organisation'. They were asked to say how important each priority was to them and also invited to make comment on each of those priorities.

People and place priorities

Respondents were asked to rate in terms of importance and give their views on the four priorities under this heading:

- To meet housing needs through a variety of approaches and interventions,
- To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity,

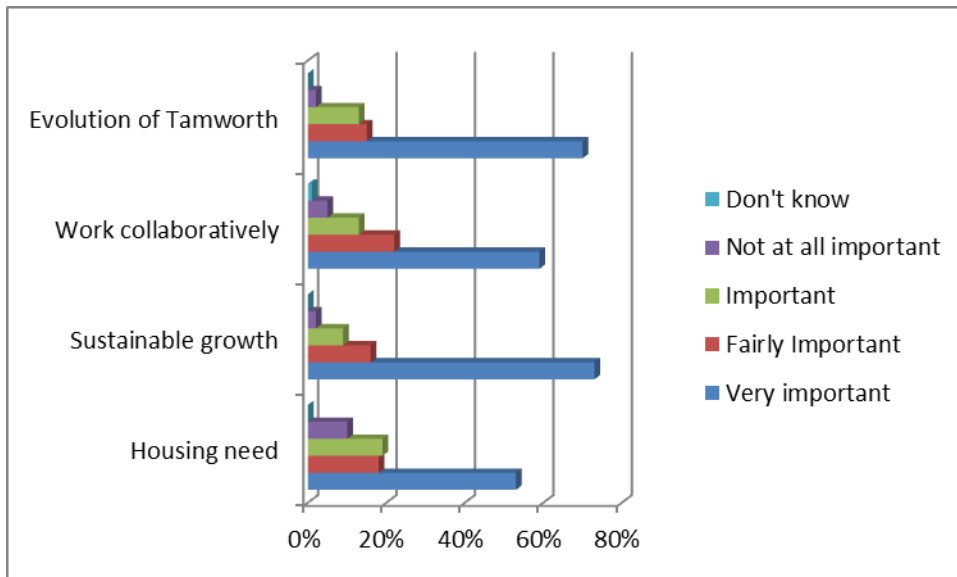
- To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities,
- To create a new and developing vision for the continued evolution of Tamworth, including a town centre fit for the 21st century.

All priorities were given a high importance rating by over 70% of respondents.

The most important priority was ‘to facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity’; 89% gave this a high rating.

Considered least important was ‘to meet housing needs through a variety of approaches and interventions’. However, 71% of respondents gave this a high rating.

Respondent’s views are documented in the figure below



To meet housing needs through a variety of approaches and interventions,

Seen as important by 71% of respondents.

Respondents identified empty homes, social house building and infrastructure as important issues.

“It is obviously important everyone has a place they can call home, I would like to see more being done about empty homes and places that could maybe used for housing”.

“You need to concentrate on building social housing”

“Housing is very important but do we really need large estates with expensive houses taking up the countryside. Is the whole infrastructure looked at before planning permission is given? I think most of this housing goes to people

outside Tamworth. Growth is great as long as we have the school places, doctor surgeries etc. and the right road structures.”

To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity,

Respondents felt this was the most important priority under 'people and place' (89% of respondents).

“It is great that the Borough backs local businesses. The Business Hub in Corporation Street has been very successful in supporting new business”,

“Economic prosperity is the life blood for Tamworth we need the prosperity to grow”,

“Our local economy generates our wealth. Tamworth is in an ideal location to attract businesses and people”,

“This needs doing before new houses”

“Sustainability is important and needs to be tied with economic growth but not at the expense of the wider environment of Tamworth. With HS2 creating a barrier around two thirds of the town it is essential connectivity is maintained and where possible enhanced”

To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities,

Seen as important by 81% of respondents.

“Certainly working together with other agencies and sectors can be a very positive approach in terms of efficiencies and cost saving. However, I don't have any awareness of the collaborations you mention - what are they, what benefits have been achieved?”

“Partnerships are needed to be more all-encompassing, i.e. Police, social, welfare, community group initiatives etc. all working together without one dictating”,

“All groups should be treated equally, with the council willing to work with any groups that help them with their aims”

To create a new and developing vision for the continued evolution of Tamworth, including a town centre fit for the 21st century

Seen as important by 80% of respondents.

This priority attracted the most comments which focussed on regenerating the town centre with a wider variety of niche shops, restaurants and new housing schemes.

“Tamworth is a fantastic town, the nucleus is there and needs to be built on, and the council can encourage this and should lead from the front, and work with anyone willing to help”,

“I believe the council need to look to increase residential and business space in the town and reduce retail since it is in decline. Need to enhance evening economy”,

“Excellent recommendation and suggestions came from the public meetings recently held in the Council chamber and chaired by the Leader. Their implementation should be a priority”,

“Yes the funding for the town centre is very important. Better car parking facilities and lower prices would help”,

“Tamworth town centre looks tired and dated. It needs to reduce its retail sector as people now shop at the retail parks or online. The centre needs to incorporate more housing and places for people to gather, relax, exercise and socialise”

“To boost the local economy more emphasis needs to be placed on the town centre which has been neglected ever since the first units opened on Ventura Park. Connecting the two areas is key to achieving a rebalance. Perhaps with Ventura being the main shopping space and the town centre being the main social area”.

Organisation priorities

Respondents were asked to rate in terms of importance and give their views on the four priorities under this heading:

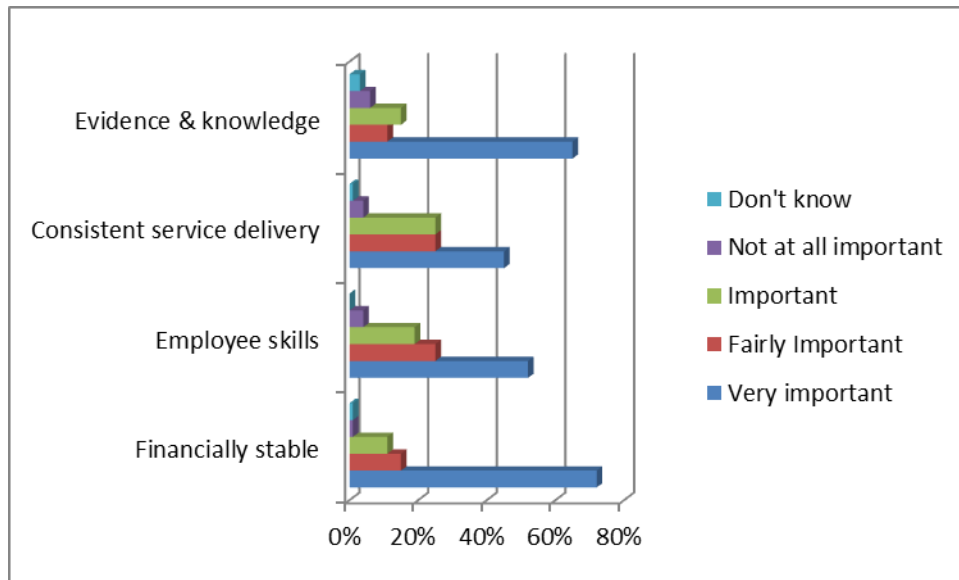
- To be financially stable,
- To ensure our employees have the right skills and culture to help our residents, visitors and businesses,
- To ensure our service delivery is consistent, clear and focussed,
- To ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge.

All priorities were given a high importance rating by 70% or over of respondents.

The most important priority was 'to be financially stable', 87% gave this a high rating.

Considered least important was 'to ensure our service delivery is consistent, clear and focussed'. However, 70% of respondents gave this a high rating.

Respondent's views are documented in the figure below



To be financially stable,

This was seen as the most important priority under 'organisation' by 87% of respondents.

“Very important as without financial stability, everything else within your plans will be difficult to achieve”

“I'd rather see an increase in Council tax than cuts to services - as long as you are providing value for money and don't waste money”

“But it includes a reality check on local taxation. It is not simply about investing our nest egg for the best return it's about ensuring we have the regular income to provide the services we want at the standards we expect. We cannot cut our way to a better town, we must be honest with the electorate, if necessary holding a local referendum to challenge the national governments definition of what we should spend locally. This is a local issue, let's decide it locally”

To ensure our employees have the right skills and culture to help our residents, visitors and businesses,

Seen as important by 77% of respondents.

"It is good to see training has been improved in this area, it must also be ensured as well as training people have the right equipment to do the job, it needs to be up to date, work and be fit for purpose",

"This is important but mustn't be prioritised over other services. Money spent should be gauged very carefully against the potential return. Employing the right people is the first step",

"I would think this goes without saying - every business regardless of whether public or private sector should ensure that its staff are qualified, have the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake their role".

To ensure our service delivery is consistent, clear and focussed,

Seen as important by 70% of respondents.

"Communication is key",

"This is a good ambition and the council deserves credit for this",

"I have found that Tamworth is pretty good already when they see people need help and information. Yes there are times when you think you need to grab a hammer and chisel to get an answer but as indicated clear standards and measuring/monitoring from the top should be great",

"Everyone can "talk the talk". Residents are sceptical and need convincing that actions will follow on".

To ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge.

Seen as important by 76% of respondents.

Comments on this priority identified the need to take the views of people into account in making decisions

"I attend open Council meetings. I have my say. Please listen to the people who live/work here",

"The current issue is that the views of the next generation and the millennial's are not being considered, the decision makers throughout the council are institutionalised and therefore don't see the town or its needs from a 'modern' perspective. The old school of thought needs to be replaced by the voice if the people living and owning businesses in Tamworth that are current, or that are

employed and adding value through tax contributions and spend back into local market”,

“I believe to ask the residents there opinions as well as utilising any data or statistics will help the council come to a better informed decision”.

“Complex issues need to be disseminated in a clear to understand but not patronising way”.

Spending on services

Respondents were provided with planned spend on major cost areas for 2019/20 and were asked whether they felt the Council should increase, decrease or keep spending the same.

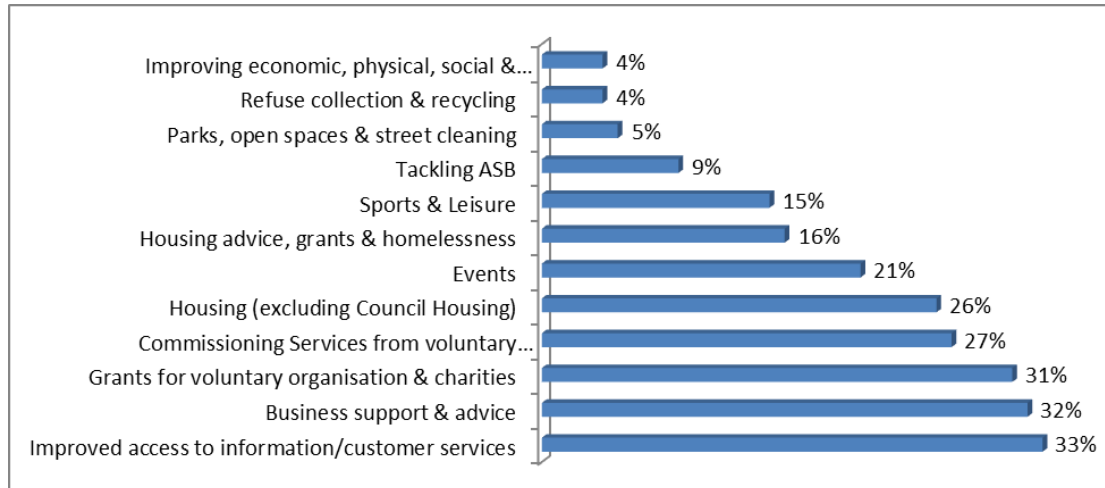
Maintain levels of spending

Respondents said they would prefer that current levels of spend remained the same in 9 of the 12 major cost areas. Respondents most wanted to see maintained level of spend on ‘sports and leisure services’ (62%), closely followed by ‘refuse collection & recycling (60%).



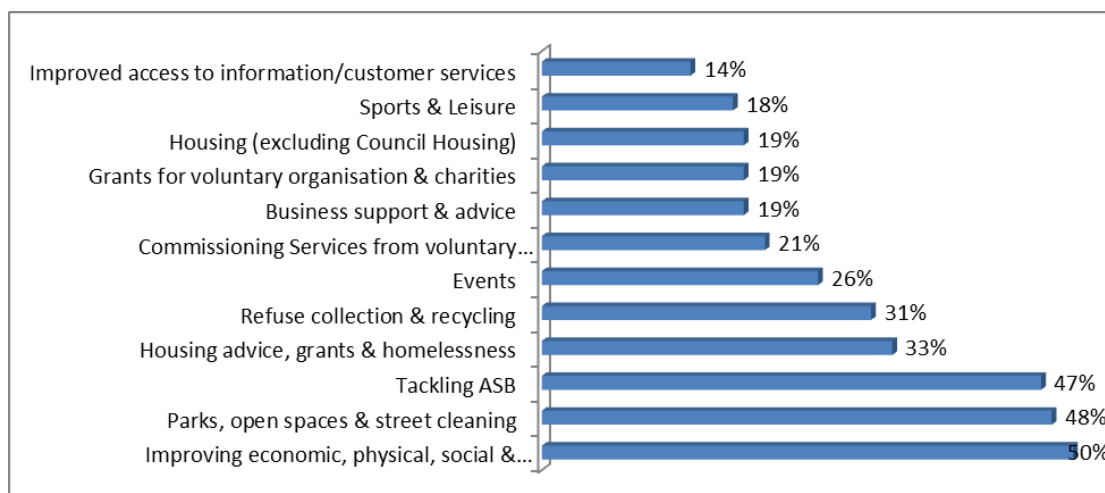
Reduce levels of spending

Respondents did not strongly feel that spending should be reduced in any of the twelve areas. The three areas where it was felt spending could be reduced were 'improved access to customer services' (33%), 'business support and advice' (32%) and 'grants for voluntary organisations and charities' (31%).



Increase levels of spending

The three areas where respondents wanted to see more spend were 'improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth' (50%), 'parks, open spaces and street cleansing' (48%) and 'tackling anti-social behaviour' (47%).



Comments on spending

One theme that was evident in some comments was that some of the Council's free events should attract a minimal fee

"Tamworth Borough Council is on the whole well run that is clear to see. I believe with events such as the fireworks either a voluntary collection should be taken or people charged a small fee. This could then be ploughed back into events and they would cost less",

"I was dismayed to learn that although the St George's day event cost thousands no one was charged admittance. Even a nominal fee of £1 would have done",

"Have donation buckets at the amazing free events so that those who can afford it can pay a little to help offset the cost",

Another theme in comments was that of more community involvement to reduce costs

"People should be encouraged to get involved in community initiatives, maybe having litter champions, green space champions etc. There are many people willing to help which could again save money",

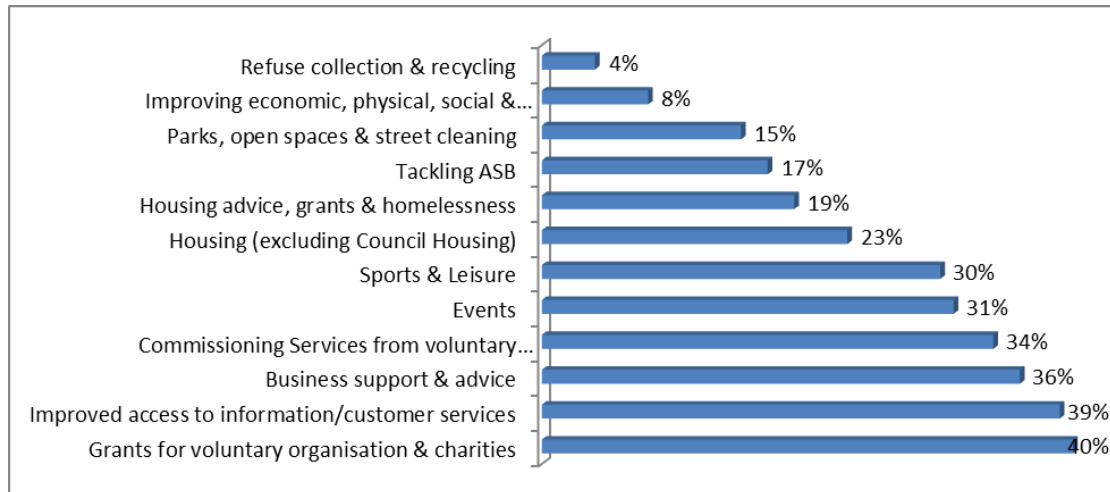
"It is important that residents should be made properly informed of their own responsibilities, especially regarding waste and their necessity to adhere to cleanliness within the community and recycling expectations",

"Prevention is better than cure. More money should be put into educational and information awareness of things that prevent situations from occurring".

Savings and reducing costs

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

It was most common for respondents to say that they would like to see savings or reduced costs in the following areas: 'grants for voluntary organisations and charities' (40%), 'improved access to information/customer services' (39%) and 'business support and advice' (36%).

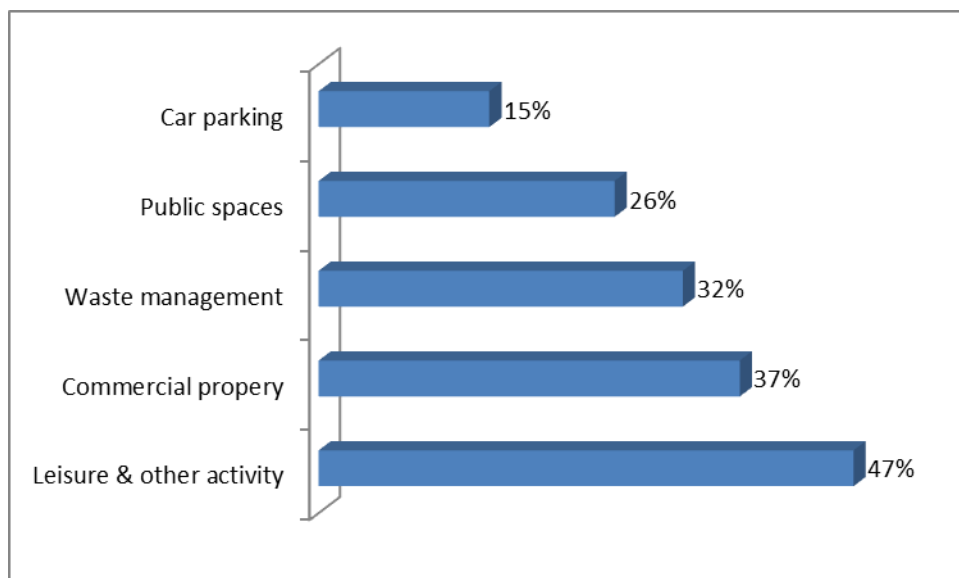


Fees and charges

Respondents were asked in which two areas they would increase charges and in which two areas they would decrease charges

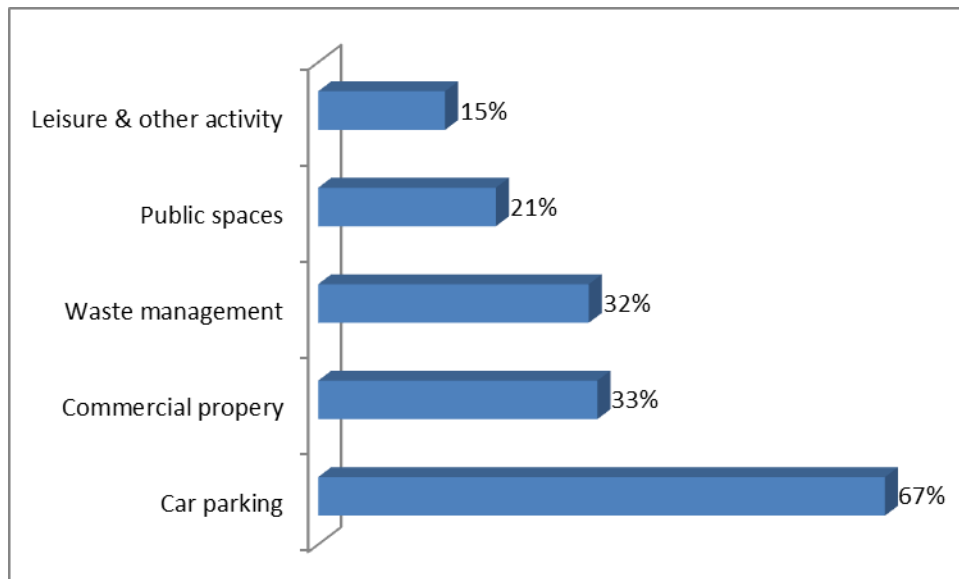
Increase charges

It was most common for respondents to see the need to increase public charges for leisure and other activities (47%), commercial property (37%) or waste management (32%).



Decrease charges

Respondents were most likely to say that they would like to see decreased charges for car parking (67%) and was by far the most popular choice.



Comments on savings and charges

Respondents offered a number of suggestions on how the Council could save money.

Reducing the number of councillors was offered as a suggestion by some respondents

“Members allowances, costs of the mayor, high paid officers, reducing the number of elections”,

“Reduce the number of councillors by a third”

Some respondents questioned the money spent on Britain in Bloom

“No more Britain in bloom flowers”

“Get rid of free events, fireworks etc. and stop spending in flowers immediately”

“The flowers and displays around the town are very nice but at what cost to other facilities?”

Other suggestions centred on Council office accommodation

“Moving to smaller council buildings”,

“Rental space for business at Marmion House”,

“Reducing staffing levels across the organisation or smaller premises. Look at reducing council assets which is what other councils are doing”

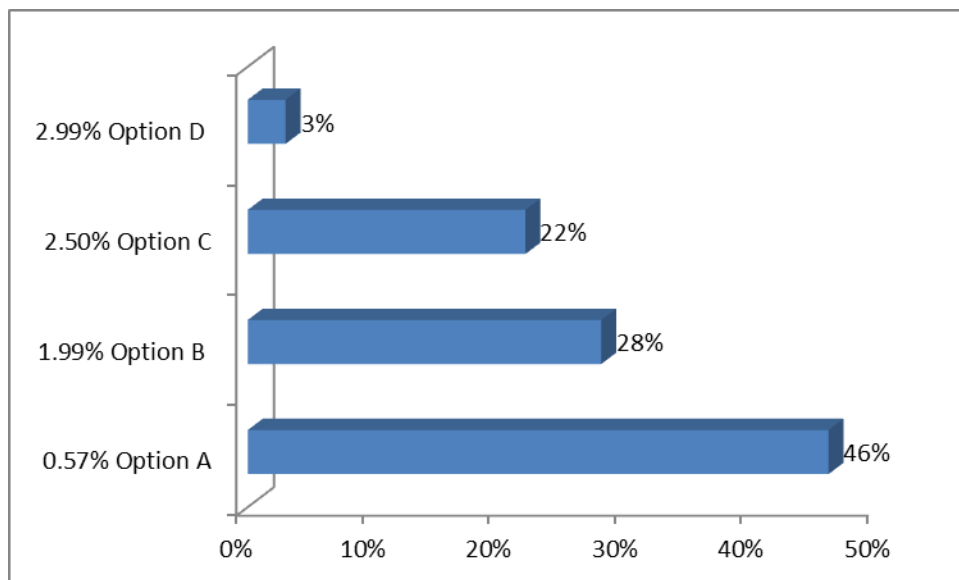
One respondent did feel that savings could not be made without further costs

“Not without making further cuts to essential services. I think the authority is as lean as it currently can be”

Acceptable level of Council Tax increase

Residents were asked what they would consider to be an acceptable Council Tax increase for the 2020/21 budget.

The largest proportion of residents would prefer the lowest level of increase offered with 46% selecting option A (0.57% increase).



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Respondent's comments

This section of the report includes all respondents comments received on:

- The revised vision,
- People and place priorities,
- Organisation priorities,
- Spending
- Savings and charges

Comments about the revised vision

It is a good statement and I would wholeheartedly agree with it, I would personally prefer for it just to say first!

I think the vision is to mirror that of Lichfield. The town is so vibrant and a joy to walk around. We have so much more to offer but unfortunately the 70's feel to the drab old concrete brings it down. Embrace what they have done and find the right people to bring poor Tamworth in line with their much better neighbours.

Your vision should be to provide social housing and not spend money on festivals and flowers.

It's time you included "Our Environment" as a priority. Residents across the town contrast your commitment to "Tamworth in Bloom" with the disgraceful state of many of the footpaths and subways, also countless leaves from the trees in autumn that clog the gutters and drainage system that lead to flooding.

Please support local businesses, especially those just starting. I appreciate some items like rent will be outside your jurisdiction. BUT could more help be given to individuals to encourage them to 'trade'? Also, better bus services. Frequent service but they stop at 5.30 (?) on Sunday!

To put the people of Tamworth and its environment at the heart of everything in a sustainable and economic way.

We would agree with the revised vision.

The world is bigger than Tamworth and we need to play our part in that- help the wider environment -help people and the environment to be healthy.

You have not done up to now.

That is as it should be. Bring business opportunity and skills training into the borough.

Having born & bred & lived here all my life (49 years)...I can honestly say that the Council's vision does not reflect looking after the people. Tamworth in

Bloom is wonderful but I see many alleyways, walkways, paths & roads full of weeds. Money needs to be ploughed into mental health; it's now at its highest & increasing. A disabled swing just like the one in Beacon Park would be well benefited.

What about the environment?

No comment as a good vision statement which should cover everything. Totally agree.

A good Vision.

Not sure what (if any) comments I have made. However may I re-iterate... encourage local businesses.

Spot on, especially our local economy as this generates the wealth for our public services.

Please attempt to keep all areas of approach to Tamworth free of litter and rubbish we Tammy's are not responsible.

Sounds perfect.

Shame do not adhere to the vision statement!!!

I think this is excellent.

Sounds like a good vision if the council remains true to it.

Great idea

I totally agree with the statement of vision but would put the Tamworth people before Tamworth town. To be fair all three points are interactive and one vision will now work without the other.

The Ethelfleda statue was fantastic, if we can find more funding for art projects that would be great. I think a 'Gibbs & Canning statue on the Glascote Road roundabout would be brilliant to continue our celebration of town heritage.

Need to look after people of Tamworth instead of walking around to catch buses to go to Birmingham and trains to Burton; need a Bus Station not car park.

Comments about people and place priorities

To meet housing needs through a variety of approaches and interventions

It is obviously important everyone has a place they can call home, I would like to see more being done about empty homes and places that could maybe be used for housing.

I think you need to look at your infrastructure first. Not enough school places, traffic already at breaking point. Out of town shopping centres bursting at the seams. Lichfield housing killing the town at no detriment to them. Building right on the border pushing all traffic through the town. But council tax going to them.

You need to concentrate on building social housing.

Affordable Housing is not truly affordable. We need Council Housing.

People are encouraged to 'downsize' when children have left home, but no-one considers where they will go. (i.e. more 1/2 bedroom accommodation). Also, the unoccupied properties don't seem to be filled quickly.

Over many years this policy has never worked by council staff & elected members. So policy is absolutely rubbish.

In any new build or refurbishment projects we believe that adequate tree planting and green spaces is provided to mitigate carbon emissions from the additional housing and the increased population. We think that this should be part of the Council's planning policy on all applications.

Be a bit more innovative and provide self-build plots with support like Graven Hill in Oxfordshire. Build and support people to build passive houses. More choices temporary houses instead of the boring boxes being delivered.

Providing accommodation needs to go hand in hand with sufficient employment, training and educational opportunities. Also access to GP's lists. I don't believe that we can consider housing need in isolation.

The market cannot provide social housing efficiently as evidenced by homelessness and housing waiting lists. While housing is a basic human need, we must find a balance between state/council intervention and personal responsibility. I feel this balance is too far removed from state/council intervention and we must do more, even if this costs more in tax.

I am particularly concerned that residents on benefits find it more difficult to rent a decent house.

The priority should be given to eco-friendly building and co-housing scheme that could make housing more affordable.

Look to house UK nationals and ex services before others.

The number of years that someone has lived in Tamworth should be a high consideration when allocating housing.

The level of community housing is far too low and in recent new-builds around 10% or so in Tamworth. The price of new-builds is too high anyway and new council built and run houses have not been mentioned in any planning I have seen so far. Press for 40% community builds in future building applications.

I can and do see housing needs and fully support creating neighbourhoods that can thrive. Given that Tamworth has a high population density, being the second only to Stoke on Trent, it would be good to know more about approaches and interventions.

So long as priority is given to Tamworth people and building of any new housing is spread around the town and not concentrated in one place as is being done in the north of town currently.

Many families would like to downsize (family commitments permitting). Are you enabling them to do so? How many families are unable to give 3/4 bedroom homes to others because of lack of accommodation available?

Housing is essential as long as it meets the range of local needs, is affordable and safe. I would place housing as a top priority.

Infrastructure needs to be in place before any more homes. Chaos with traffic and schools and hospitals at this moment in time. Town centre is also in disrepair.

We need to improve the road network urgently in and around Tamworth before any further housing is considered. No point waiting for HS2 let's grab the nettle now.

More housing in the borough is a necessity, but not at the expense of local infrastructure. Neighbouring councils are increasing the pressure on local amenities to the detriment of the people of Tamworth and impacting on the road networks. No more so than at Junction 10 of the M42 where North Warks seems intent on building a Magna Park style warehouse city.

But not at the expense of carving up green fields & green belt with inferior rubbish boxes. There are plenty brown field sites & void sites that can be utilised for housing the morons coming into the area.

*Although not currently important for me personally I appreciate that there are many less fortunate than me. I support doing as much as possible to help everyone have a safe and secure home or place to stay
Housing is very important but do we really need large estates with expensive houses taking up the countryside. Is the whole infrastructure looked at before*

planning permission is given? I think most of this housing goes to people outside Tamworth. Growth is great as long as we have the school places, doctor surgeries etc. and the right road structures.

If the people are not happy or engaged, nothing else will work. I feel that greater priority is needed on social/affordable housing on brownfield areas to offset too many transport needs.

Having a stable home & finances is a priority for all constituents.

Tamworth Borough Council must strive to support all Tamworthians, regardless of gender and must look at HMOs, hostels and bring housing stock back into direct control.

To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity

I think by allowing more expensive houses to be built, as you are, this frees up cheaper housing so also frees up housing chains. Tamworth is well placed to be both a commuter town (London, Birmingham, Derby, Stoke), and a hub for logistics, you already embrace this, so more of the same. More of the 1 hour 16 minute train to Manchester would be good, as we would then be connected to 4 major cities within 1.5 hours.

Good luck with this. Have you seen the town centre lately?

Where is the hospital promised? (We have a "Clinic" called Sir Robert Peel.) Where are the schools? What happened to the Bus station? (Ever tried to direct a visitor from one bus terminus to another?)

Never worked - far higher population of non-residential Tamworthians than employment & economic opportunities available. Another rubbish policy never being achieved.

Growth whilst respecting the environment, sustainably.

Key = sustainability. We need to do more than protect our environment we need to actively improve it. I like the flowers for In Bloom - but I would much prefer you to invest in planting, replacing and maintaining trees. Our whole street has trees that are damaged / old age / have been removed - time to invest in some new ones and work with highways rather than playing County Council v Borough Council!.

Good transport links enable those without their own transport to access job opportunities. These transport links need to meet the demand for round the clock shift working, not just conventional office hours.

But must sit alongside education and personal responsibility for your own success. How do we improve ambition and drive in our town alongside simply providing jobs. Education, education, education... ps. I'm not a teacher/involved in education.

I am concerned that large new estates have the necessary facilities and that extra traffic does not block existing roads.

To grow in a finished world is something impossible but creating value within a territory can be done: use local resources (raw materials...) and local employment to build something new, encourage people to buy local product (why don't we have a farm market in the town centre?). Public transport is also a way of creating new jobs as well as reducing the pollution.

Our environment is very important shame you do not think of our wild life when building on green belt areas.

Must ensure infrastructure is in place to manage the additional demands...roads, schools etc.

Stop allowing Lichfield DC from building on land in Tamworth!!! Cotton Lane!!

See very little attention to increased infrastructure.

Investment in roads, schools and healthcare services is also needed.

This is extremely important as without a good vibrant local economy, everything and everyone suffers.

The Cabinet structure of the council does not lend itself to the flow of fresh ideas. It merely entrenches 'cronyism' in many areas. Not replying to correspondence in a meaningful way, issuing contracts to private concerns for work that should be done in-house. I know of at least one councillor that feels left out of the decision making process due to the Cabinet structure.

I agree it should be managed efficiently.

The issue of sustainable growth is very important if Tamworth and Staffordshire are to value and nurture its tremendous natural assets. The West Midlands (Greater Birmingham) has a role to play in prosperity and I hope likewise appreciates the role Tamworth with its land limitations, play in taking Housing from this region. I do feel that in 21st century a new dynamic for growth and transportation around Staffordshire as a whole of East Midlands we being more closely should not be ignored, opportunities could even be bigger.

Again so long as it is not concentrated in one area of town.

Economic prosperity is the life blood for Tamworth we need the prosperity to grow.

Our local economy generates our wealth. Tamworth is in an ideal location to attract businesses and people.

This needs doing before new houses.

Sustainability is important and needs to be tied with economic growth but not at the expense of the wider environment of Tamworth. With HS2 creating a barrier around two thirds of the town it is essential connectivity is maintained and where possible enhanced.

Not at the expense of ruing existing higher quality housing already in existence.

I support increases in housing as this brings in more residents and prosperity to the town. However our current infrastructure for health care, education and roads can't cope with the increased numbers. House builders need to be made to support more doctors, schools, better roads in return for the planning permission. If people are going to live here they need to do and play here too to support the whole community.

It is important but serious consideration needs to be given to ensure that the infrastructure is robust enough to support it. Currently all the roads around and into Tamworth are congested during the main rush hour. In addition, the actual condition of the roads is appalling and extra traffic is not going to improve the situation. In terms of additional housing etc., there needs to be sufficient schools, doctors, facilities etc.

If the people are not happy or engaged, nothing else will work. I feel that greater priority is needed on social/affordable housing on brownfield areas to offset too many transport needs. Emphasis on environmental concerns such as road use, pollution control etc.

It is great that the Borough backs local businesses. The Business Hub in Corporation Street has been very successful in supporting new business.

Certain areas away from the town centre need revamping like local shopping areas. Masefield Drive and St Marys Way are two that come to mind. Regeneration of the outside public areas.

The balance between growth and protecting our borders to ensure we do not overgrow our capabilities is a difficult line to tread and must be managed sympathetically by protecting the green belt.

Bring people into town instead of going to Ventura. The Castle Grounds is very nice but Glascote Heath not at all; pot holes everywhere - why do we pay road tax?

To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities

All groups should be treated equally, with the council willing to work with any groups that help them with their aims.

This just sounds as though it is privatising what the council should be doing direct. Payments by results. Costly consulting profit hunting private companies giving poor value for money.

We need to rejuvenate the town and make it desirable for visitors.

Demolition/refurbishment of abandoned/no-longer-used community buildings/centres and use the space productively - e.g. housing, green areas, social areas.

About time. You are neglecting the poor people within our community.

No police station. Robert Peel hospital services less and less every year. Having to travel greater distances to hospital. An increasingly elderly population struggling to cope with the above?

Should there be a need for homeless people to sleep or 'bed down' in town? With all the empty properties you have!

Policy never worked. Rubbish, Rubbish, Elected members only interested in feathering their own nest for business opportunities or attendance allowances.

Supporting people to actively volunteer in and support their community is the only way we are going to cope as a country with an ageing population. Isolation in your own home is a big killer! We need to get people out and people supporting each other.

As far as enhancing neighbourhoods is concerned, the grounds maintenance teams do sterling work and I believe we need to maintain or increase investment in these services. Also a zero tolerance approach to litter and graffiti.

Civic pride enhances personal pride which in itself drives ambition. We should be proud to live in Tamworth and proud of our education system.

Care of vulnerable people should be a top priority.

Doesn't seem to be happening currently.

You do not care about the elderly.

Mental health is increasing not just in adults but children too. CAMHS cannot cope!

There should be no partnerships and outside agencies within the TBC running of the town; it must be done in-house by TBC staff. This will create jobs that will only answer to TBC and if done sensibly will cut costs. It is these people that you employ that will give you the feedback that you crave as they are on the 'front-line'.

Agree with the approach. I just wonder if thinking a bit more 'out of the box' might work in trying to attract more Government funding. I apologise if my thinking is a bit radical but we do need better funding.

The Council needs to commission and enable, its default should not be provision. On that basis it should transfer its housing stock to a housing association and customer services to private companies.

Important to take into account of existing residents who suffer from the influx of tenants who come & go in rented accommodation without no thought and/or consideration to long established owner occupiers who have developed excellent environments within really good pleasurable communities.

Everyone had the right to feel safe. However this can't just apply to vulnerable people. Whilst safety for them is important the remainder of our residents need to feel safe in their homes, their neighbourhoods and in town.

Certainly working together with other agencies and sectors can be a very positive approach in terms of efficiencies and cost saving. However, I don't have any awareness of the collaborations you mention - what are they, what benefits have been achieved?

Partnerships are needed to be more all- encompassing i.e. Police, social, welfare, community group initiatives etc. all working together without one dictating.

Works on the town flats to improve safety and presentation is great. If residents receive support for community groups and housing facilities that's always a winner in my eyes.

To create a new and developing vision for the continued evolution of Tamworth

Tamworth is a fantastic town, the nucleus is there and needs to be built on, and the council can encourage this and should lead from the front, and work with anyone willing to help.

I believe the council need to look to increase residential and business space in the town and reduce retail since it is in decline. Need to enhance evening economy.

Sadly the town is all but dead, prams mobility scooter and down and outs. Nothing but home bargains and phone or card shop or 3. Not to mention at the last count 7 Turkish barbers..... Mirror Lichfield embrace the castle and castle grounds and we could get close!!

To embrace both the commuter town and the logistics hub people need to want to live here. I think this is extremely important to the prosperity of Tamworth.

The rent in the town needs to be more sustainable to allow people to afford to move in and create independent businesses that are not charity or phone shops. We need nice restaurants, independent coffee shops and more activities in the town like food festivals and craft markets.

Find out what people want from the town centre/what would encourage them to use it.

So why don't you stop out of town expansion then?

Is that our Tamworth town or the smaller version of multicultural Birmingham? I recently went into town for the first time in a few months (pointless unless want phone, cards or second hand) I was completely shocked how much multicultural so called integration has taken over our town. I'm born & bred Tammy but very much felt like the outsider, and for the first time ever Tamworth didn't feel like home! Unfortunately, we don't seem to have a say and feeling this is only the start of what's to come. Tamworth town is no longer the once loved town was, certainly isn't a people town or community anymore.

This has been a priority for 2 decades. When are you actually going to achieve it?

Gungate area was earmarked for development, but did funding fall through? Bus station? Toilets?

Respect for the environment the inclusion of green spaces is a must.

We believe that the market should continue to trade in the main street as it is at the moment and not be moved elsewhere. Moving it would take the life out of the town centre.

The best way to increase people using the Town Centre is to stop charging for parking (one of the reasons people go to Ventura instead) - also you could run some sort of shuttle bus - or town road train to join Ventura and the centre and the castle and everything it offers - or you could provide 'Boris bikes' between the two (and other key location).

Excellent recommendation and suggestions came from the public meetings recently held in the Council chamber and chaired by the Leader. Their implementation should be a priority.

Why is it taking so long? Gungate has been an issue since 2007, Assembly rooms is 32 months into a 14 month project Tamworth is being overtaken by events... you're too slow to act and even slower to implement.

Empty shops need to be utilised to make the town centre attractive to visitors. Support should be given to businesses that are struggling to survive. The space vacated by Drucker's would be an ideal community hub.

What's not helping the town centre right now is having a big commercial area with a free parking... because people don't want to pay and don't want to use a bike either. Also, renting a business in the town centre is too expensive for an independent, and that's really sad because independent businesses are the best (they actually create more value in the local area than big brands).

Invest in our existing historical buildings to help them serve the borough.

Stop allowing rent increases then!! All parking fees should be reduced.

The Council has been supposedly developing the town centre for a number of years but very little actually seems to have been done.

We need a vibrant town centre with local business at the heart of this to encourage visitors to Tamworth. Given the History of Tamworth we can promote the town further as a visitor destination but we do need to improve the town centre.

To increase development, more people, with cash to spend, must be encouraged to enter the town centre. A central bus station back in Corporation Street would be ideal (with toilet facilities). A small reduction in the provision of disabled parking and free parking in more areas of the town. Official parking for bikes and powered two wheel vehicles in a central location, perhaps behind Barclays bank and other odd corners. It must be obvious that we used to have all this but it was replaced by the Tamworth Enterprise building; its practical use escapes me for the moment, also an expensive, disruptive and late building in the library area.

Yes the funding for the town centre is very important. Better car parking facilities and lower prices would help.

This is and should be something we can do. We have the space and have a good place in our "ownership". We have some good hard working teams in Tamworth, lets get on with it - love and care delivered.

The town centre has been dead for some years and needs serious vision to kick-start it; it needs more parking and flagship store chain and more interesting shops.

The town centre used to be vibrant with lots of independent traders. It has become quite depressing since Ventura was opened. We need more stores in the town.

We need less hairdressers and charity shops and more local up and coming new businesses. We also needed lower business rates to entice new ideas and opportunities.

I was under the impression that the Gungate area was staying as Car parking!

The bus service is abysmal as regards the time table ending at 5.30pm on Sundays and hourly in the evening. Good luck trying to get visitors to attend Assembly Rooms!

This must not be at expense of our heritage. More attention needs to be made to our historic buildings and how they are treated. The blatant destruction or covering up of some of our best heritage features needs to stop. Council officials need to tour town and report any planning infringements and stop them.

In my opinion you should stop parking fees in and around the town; this will encourage the people of Tamworth to come into the town.

The town centre is the shop window and needs to be revitalised.

Tamworth town centre looks tired and dated. It needs to reduce its retail sector as people now shop at the retail parks or online. The centre needs to incorporate more housing and places for people to gather, relax, exercise and socialise.

There is NO sign of any progress in the town centre it is very run down and grotty.

Do something about rubbish then.

I am of the opinion that the most important factor is to end the complete pedestrianisation of the area to enable people to have more movement throughout the whole area. Apart from market days the lack of people in the

centre is detrimental both to businesses and the public perception of Tamworth as a town worth visiting.

To boost the local economy more emphasis needs to be placed on the town centre which has been neglected ever since the first units opened on Ventura Park. Connecting the two areas is key to achieving a rebalance. Perhaps with Ventura being the main shopping space and the town centre being the main social area.

Impossible to achieve this vision with most retail properties being occupied by solicitors, estate agents, charities & inferior retail outlets such as 'pound shops'.

The town centre needs to be a place that people want to go to. If more people go there rather than Ventura then shops can come back. Admittedly they will be different and be smaller, individual shops as the town centre can't compete with big shops but unless we can encourage people to go to the town centre by making them feel safe and having things to do the town centre will die.

Tamworth generally is a very nice town centre, particularly with the added attraction of the Castle and the grounds etc. I like to support local businesses and would much prefer to shop locally. Unfortunately the lack of choice in the town centre means that I do have to travel to Birmingham or Solihull for a better shopping experience. I think the Council should look at other market towns that are doing well, e.g. Lichfield, Ludlow etc. and follow their example. Encourage more individual businesses to trade, farmers markets etc. Where shops are empty (not Council owned) can you consider imposing some form of penalty on the landlords to encourage them to lower their rents etc. to encourage more businesses/retail to come into the centre?

Regeneration is fine if it is done with more emphasis on local shops employing the needs of the local people not trying to attract national or multi-national chains etc. Smaller shops would release the upper storeys as potential housing on an affordable basis.

Its great Tamworth has the support from central government High Street Fund. The Castle Grounds gardens are the jewel in the crown.

Other towns are creating urban villages by building houses in the middle of the town. Tamworth Borough Council should consider the benefits of this for our wonderful town.

More shops instead of going out of town centre. Sick of charity shops, food shops, special shops. We need something like Primark and B&M in the town not on Ventura.

Comments about organisation priorities

To be financially stable

Blame the Tories if money is tight!

Do we really need 30 councillors and a massively expensive Corporate Team to achieve this? Tamworth isn't big enough to justify it in time of uncertain future.

I am still disgusted that money (a lot!) was spent on the 'white elephant' (or 3 ring circus as I call it) that spoils the view of the Church. Needless waste. Market traders have their own canopies. Has it been used at all?

No real vision expounded Rubbish.

...but I'd rather see an increase in Council tax than cuts to services - as long as you are providing value for money and don't waste money.

Important to maintain the good reputation that Tamworth has for good financial governance. More publicity about the financial "wins".

But it includes a reality check on local taxation. It is not simply about investing our nest egg for the best return it's about ensuring we have the regularly income to provide the services we want at the standards we expect. We cannot cut our way to a better town, we must be honest with the electorate, if necessary holding a local referendum (like in Surrey) to challenge the national governments definition of we should spend locally. This is a local issue, let's decide it locally.

You invested money which you lost.

Stop final salary pensions. That would save us all money.

Very important as without financial stability, everything else within your plans will be difficult to achieve.

The council has said that "it has a proven track record as a trusted custodian of public finances". This is utter rubbish. Massive spending around the Assembly Rooms, paving the footpath along Ladybridge, chopping down trees and leaving them to rot, building the Tamworth Enterprise building, knocking down toilets etc. You have wasted too much money on non-essentials and you have the brass neck to ask for help and guidance to make savings.

It has already been said what a waste, a complete and utter waste of money that was spent on the "3 ring Circus" that stands outside our beautiful church. Who voted for that? Not us.

What can I say we need to financially be viable.

Seek value for money in everything you do, work more effectively. Having recently moved here the overly bureaucratic and paper based process of Council Tax registration was costly and inefficient, you must do better by allowing everything to be done online!

We should use the golf course money to maintain what we have already, why do we let Tamworth look so run down, trees and bushes overhanging roads and pathways litter build ups an eyesore When we have heavy rain roads flood.some drains have build-up of rubbish that's been there for years including town centre, it's no good saying every other drain working is ok, it's not. All the drains need to work.

What has happened to the financial gain from the sale of the golf club land? As this was gifted to the people of Tamworth

Making sure all residents pay their liability whether general rates, housing rents & varies income due to the local authority. Positive debt recovery for all income due to the local authority.

This is of high importance but should be used as an excuse to keep putting council tax up.

Please bear in mind that the money you are using is taxpayers - any risky ventures (such as investing in Icelandic banks) should not be an option at all. I do think there are huge inefficiencies in the public sector and the Council should be getting the best value for money from its service providers. It is not always the case that "cheapest is best" but all options should be considered and evaluated.

It's a shame about central government cuts, a Council needs money to run. It goes without saying that this is top priority.

I would pay for green bin but why should I? I only put your tree leaves in bin.

To ensure our employees have the right skills and culture to help our residents, visitors and businesses

It is good to see training has been improved in this area, it must also be ensured as well as training people have the right equipment to do the job, it needs to be up to date, work and be fit for purpose.

Need more experts in their field from arts to business.

It like many councils and civil servants everything is done at a cost, cheap labour brings about throw away jobs.... you need to attract forward thinking skilled people willing to take risks.

The money spent here is on schemes that don't have the outcome that they set out to achieve. We need to spend money to create jobs and then work with business owners on employment and schemes on getting the unemployed employed. Rather than spending the money on Council staff training.

They don't care about the people they serve. They are in it for themselves and no one else.

Again, a massive Corporate Team that doesn't actually live in Tamworth and never steps outside Marmion House. How is this justifiable?

I trust the people elected have my best interests at heart. I can only rely on promises that Tamworth will be the Historic town (ancient capital of Mercia) that visitors want to visit.

Council staff reflects unprofessional operational attitudes.

Training needs to be relevant and focused. Staff are usually aware of which courses would be beneficial but sometimes a culture of fear within organisations prevent frank and honest feedback.

Never seen an elected or non- elected candidate in my area ever!

Reduce your staff numbers by transferring housing and other services elsewhere and focus on strategy and commissioning.

Strongly agree but you never check the work done which is very shoddy at times, example Tamworth Amington road recovered 1 year ago, now as bad as it was. Many repairs carried out after chip and dusting atrocious job a total waste of money bad workmanship.

The local authority is seriously lacking in time served & experienced professionals in all the disciplines required to operate effective services to the area.

This is important but mustn't be prioritised over other services. Money spent should be gauged very carefully against the potential return. Employing the right people is the first step.

I would think this goes without saying - every business regardless of whether public or private sector should ensure that its staff are qualified, have the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake their role.

I believe every taxpayer wants to see more frontline staff. Streetscene do a fantastic job. If we can make room in the budget for more road sweepers and street cleaners this will motivate residents to keep tidy and take more pride in their town. If areas and estates are kept clean they are going to be better respected and appreciated.

Cannot fault staff on the front of house; they are very helpful and pleasant.

To ensure our service delivery is consistent, clear and focussed

Communication is key.

Well you currently don't bother.

You've deliberately made it nearly impossible to contact TBC by phone or email. Shame on you.

Many times we have been advised of the new opening of the Assembly Rooms (complete with toilets, cafe and Information Centre). Is this going ahead in October? The updating of the 'finger signs' have been promised, that would help. Also, if notices are displayed stating 'No alcohol allowed', why aren't the rules enforced.

Service delivery is Rubbish - either passed on to outside sources or totally non-existent.

Everyone can "talk the talk". Residents are sceptical and need convincing that actions will follow on.

Green bins charge - disgraceful!

This is a good ambition and the council deserves credit for this. In the question 14 preamble, the words sound like 'jam tomorrow' hype wrapped up in weasel words that carry little actual meaning. You talk of 'right tools' but many of these 'tools' have been let go during a services privatisation process. A £35 bin charge on what was a free service proves you are out of touch. Reducing the OAP bus pass availability etc.....

I have found that Tamworth is pretty good already when they see people need help and information. Yes there are times when you think you need to grab a hammer and chisel to get an answer but as indicated clear standards and measuring/monitoring from the top should be great.

Comments which I've e-mailed to the Council (can Street scene please clear footpaths!) have been met with silence.

This can be obtained elsewhere, focus on the basics like bins and Council Tax.

This is a good statement a pity no one believes a word of it.

This is nearly always seriously lacking in many areas of services to be delivered effectively to the residents of the local authority area.

I and other residents would like some of the trees down, never get any trees looked after only in town.

To ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge

The current issue is that the views of the next generation and the millennial's are not being considered, the decision makers throughout the council are institutionalised and therefore don't see the town or its needs from a 'modern' perspective. The old school of thought needs to be replaced by the voice of the people living and owning businesses in Tamworth that are current, or that are employed and adding value through tax contributions and spend back into local market. The people found at Coffee 18 or those working at businesses such as on the tools should be the types of people that should have an input back into the town centre rejuvenation.

We have heard all this before but nothing changes.

Do you honestly believe you are doing this? You're fooling yourselves but not fooling residents.

I attend open Council meetings. I have my say. Please listen to the people who live/work here.

The evidence clearly indicates these policies have failed miserably when compared with other authorities and areas of the country.

Complex issues need to be disseminated in a clear to understand but not patronising way.

I am unsure on how and when you counsel Tamworth residents on issues, however, I believe to ask the residents their opinions as well as utilising any data or statistics will help the council come to a better informed decision.

How many people within TBC collate and analyse this information and what is done with it? Any evidence/knowledge given to the people of Tamworth must be free from hype and self-praise. The language must be in short, plain in meaning and not like that used in this document.

I am not uneducated. I have a certain amount of reasonable intelligence but I can't understand the forms.

You know us and our priorities by now. These also come from our elected members so just get on with the basics and don't focus on these costly and futile distractions.

Sorry it all words again very little notice taken or follow up to check whether a good idea or job has been carried out.

Stop chopping down trees with TPO's then.

Rubbish, Rubbish, Rubbish most of local authorities personnel lack experience & life skills to be effective in performing their respective duties in a professional & effective manner.

But too much time can be spent analysing statistical information - sometimes you just need to open your eyes and see what is going on around you and use some common sense. In addition, if you have the right people in the jobs then their experience and knowledge can be invaluable rather than faffing around with pages of reports that say nothing at all.

I know that social media, e-mail, internet etc. are growing trends but there are people who do not have access to these. If evidence, opinion is wanted you must contact all the people.

Comments on spending

Tamworth Borough Council is on the whole well run that is clear to see. I believe with events such as the fireworks either a voluntary collection should be taken or people charged a small fee (though that would be harder). This could then be ploughed back into events and they would cost less. People should be encouraged to get involved in community initiatives, maybe having litter champions, green space champions etc., there are many people willing to help which could again save money. I think sometimes too many grants are given out and the council should provide those services in house, and some businesses which are already doing well don't always need the extra help.

Don't spend any more money on flowers. Very nice but would rather spend on tangible benefits.

Prevention is better than cure. More money should be put into educational and information awareness of things that prevent situations from occurring. E.g. people should be told not to drop litter and know there are fines so we don't have to waste time and money picking it up.

Stop spending money on free events and flowers!!!

You will collate our responses and use them to justify your own wishes. Just as you've always done.

I was dismayed to learn that although the St George's day event (a HUGE success) cost thousands(?) no one was charged admittance. Even a nominal fee of £1 would have done.

Levels of Council spending have never met with the real demands of the population.

Doesn't mention income. Don't know enough about service to make informed choice. Need to digitalise more services and get more income - instead of spending on In Bloom do sustainability Mable planting and get local people involved. Stop chasing awards!

If we need more money to does this then increase the council tax.

Paying council tax is a joke I have seen nothing been done in my local area.

Green bin charge abolish it. Help CAMHS & CAB & other charity organisations - they are vital. More CCTV - anti-social behaviour is on the increase. Stop allowing Lichfield Council from building.

Outer areas of Tamworth need to have more attention. Tamworth in bloom is lovely but it seems to be detrimental to the rest of Tamworth. Unfortunately you can't please all the people all the time. I appreciate that rises to council tax will increase income for the council bit there are so many people they

struggle to pay it now never mind with an increase. There seems to a general consensus that the council wastes a lot of money and I think a lot of that comes from peoples priorities being different. I.e. those with disabilities of course want better facilities. People with children want more activities to keep children occupied; most people want to see kids causing trouble off the streets, better care for our elderly and homeless, better access to services. Everything is a fight to get help. More housing is great but we need amenities to go with it doctors, schools etc. Personally I think it will be hard to cut spending levels without causing hardship somewhere.

Re the charities, whilst I accept funding from the council is which is important, however, there are other ways to increase funding streams.

I will not give guidance to you in this submission on cuts/spending when you have millions in the bank from the dubious sale of Tamworth's public golf course. This council is not a friend of the people of Tamworth but a friend of the people running Tamworth.

Please can we see a more physical presence of 'Community officers' in the Town centre? Several notices to the effect of "No drinking allowed" are ignored. Do you want the town to be a no go area?

Costs could be saved by reducing mowing of roadside verges to one meter from the kerb only. As per government guidelines. This would enable the growth of Native wild flowers, to the benefit of our dwindling populations of bees and butterflies.

if you are commissioning services from voluntary and charities why does that cost money?

Stop doing things the private sector can do, concentrate on the basics and transfer your housing stock to a housing association so they can borrow more to invest in new and exciting homes.

Reduce the number of councillors per ward.

It is important that residents should be made properly informed of their own responsibilities, especially regarding waste and their necessity to adhere to cleanliness within the community and recycling expectations.

It is becoming necessary to accept that if we need more we have to pay more. Residents can't get something for nothing.

Maybe reviewing senior staffing structures should be included. Keep increasing council tax is not an option for residents with people becoming homeless and accessing food banks.

I think some of these categories need to be broken down further or an explanation of what exactly the money is spent on. E.g. I don't think any more

money is needed for parks and open spaces. Most of them look great, but I do think more money needs to be spent on street cleaning.

Commissioning services from voluntary organisations and charities - what is this, what are the benefits? Improved access to information/customer services - this seems to be a large amount; surely once the basic structure for the information is there (presumably the majority is online) then the costs must reduce year on year as it is a case of maintenance/updating.

I think the tax collecting Council owe it to its residents that grounds maintenance, street cleaning and refuse collection, all frontline services, are properly funded. As the town grows bigger more resources are needed. It's grassroots for the residents attitude and believe in the town and its Council. What you are doing at Kerria and Tinkers Green is brilliant work. If people respect the place they live it drives down spending on tackling anti-social behaviour, vandalism, flytipping etc.

Parks and open spaces could include more input from voluntary groups and organisations.

Comments on savings and charges

Member's allowances, costs of the mayor, high paid officers, reducing the number of elections, letting a private company or trust run the assembly rooms and/or castle. Moving to smaller council buildings.

No more Britain in bloom flowers. Rental space for business at Marmion House.

Reduce the number of councillors. We don't need 30. Are you able to charge owners of empty properties (especially town centre business ones) more to get them to sort them out and encourage use? I hate to say it but get more services online to reduce the number of physical customer facing staff required. Have donation buckets at the amazing free events so that those who can afford it can pay a little to help offset the cost.

Most probably within your own departments, reduce waste within the council through tighter control of budgets, leasing vehicles i.e. the mayors

Get rid of free events, fireworks etc. and stop spending in flowers immediately.

Could there be a community initiative for public spaces? I feel I need more information about the above options as would be unwise to apply a catch all to raising prices of commercial property for example as we need more in the town centre and likewise more free parking in the town centre is likely to encourage more people to park and therefore bring in business? Unless you increase the town centre parking and run a free shuttle from the free out of town car parks to the town centre to encourage more people into the town centre? Also in the area where I live in the town centre I think it would be beneficial to have improved public spaces perhaps with play equipment for children. I think this would improve the sense of community and may even have an impact on anti-social behaviour in a positive way could some sort of fundraising system could be put in place to enable residents to make this happen?

Cut the Corporate Team and Elected Councillors to an appropriate number for the size of the town and the problems it faces.

Negotiate the sale of the Castle and its surrounding environment to the National Trust so people will have to pay for attendance.

In Bloom.

Not without making further cuts to essential services. I think the authority is as "lean" as it currently can be.

*Increase the council tax... stop hiding behind the government in Westminster
Reduce the number of councillors by 1/3.*

Don't give people housing or benefits that don't deserve it. Too many benefits cheats.

Stop final salary pensions.

There are probably lots of areas to save money but it would probably be in the detail rather than just picking an area of spending.

Management costs, employing outside agencies and consultancy fees, associated with less use of paper and more use of common sense; there is plenty of sense out there if you look. The flowers and displays around the town are very nice but at what cost to other facilities? The encroachment of Lichfield buildings onto Tamworth borders will place a great burden on Tamworth facilities with no financial gain to Tamworth. I suggest that TBC take over there encroaching properties to within our borders; just look what Solihull did when it took over chunks of Birmingham.

Not having street lights on all night in some residential areas.

In respect of cars and vehicles the Authority could consider looking at their ability to raise fines from vehicles which are stationary and parked with their engine running - very common hereabouts. They could press with other Authorities for QVT to enable legislation and allow Authorities to keep the fines and use as income. Better than car parking increases, and might therein with 'Air Pollution' issues.

On St. George's Day, it was free to attend (the wonderful) show in the Castle grounds. Why not a small charge? Thousands attended. The charity stalls had to pay.

Transfer housing to a housing association. Stop providing services or events and focus on commissioning and strategy.

The contractors cutting grass and the tree management is not being checked and is poor quality We need street cleaning every day of the year not once a month.

Reduce expenses paid to councillors and reduce the overall number of councillors

Catching and fining fly tippers.

I believe we just have to accept Council tax rises.

Reducing staffing levels across the organisation or smaller premises. Look at reducing council assets which is what other councils are doing.

I know that councils get charged an arm and a leg for all sorts of services that have to be tendered for. Your procurement processes needs looking at. I don't

believe there's any room for negotiation to really get the best deal like there is in the real world.

I don't think you should decrease charges in any of the areas as you have to allow for a certain amount of inflation/cost increases. However, bearing in mind the low rates of interest, annual salary increases etc. then I don't think it is fair to be increasing council tax by significant amounts. I am sure there are many areas where the Council could make savings - however without seeing your accounts it is impossible to highlight those inefficiencies.

I appreciate that car parking is 10% of income. However, you will never revive the town centre until you make it free of charge. Atherstone town centre is bustling with life. Possibly with Gungate car park and police courts buildings build a big leisure complex with the golf course money and aim for long term investment to make profit. If the Council is going to be self-sufficient in a few years time we need new sources of income; swimming pool, gym, fishing lakes etc. Once the older generation have gone in the next decade the town centre really will be a ghost town. Why go to Tamworth and risk car parking tickets and fines; people don't want the hassle. Until you unpick the car parking charges from the budget the town will continue to deteriorate.

Utilities - get solar panels/wind turbines on all Council buildings. Look at hydro wheels on our rivers to enhance and use natural/renewable energy better.