



# CABINET

4 November 2020

A meeting of the CABINET will be held on Thursday, 12th November, 2020, 6.00 pm  
in Online Meeting

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## 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 Executive (Overview and Scrutiny Committee or by the Council)**

**6 Budget Consultation 2021/22 (Pages 7 - 76)**

*(Report of the Leader of the Council)*

**7 Tamworth Borough Council Grant Schemes (Pages 77 - 88)**

*(Report of the Portfolio Holder, Environment and Culture)*

**8 Housing Strategy 2021-23 (Pages 89 - 148)**

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**

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**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](mailto: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.  
Councillor Dr S People is also invited to sit and speak at this meeting.



## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 22nd OCTOBER 2020**

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

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Rob Barnes (Executive Director Communities), Anna Miller (Assistant Director – Growth & Regeneration), Tina Mustafa (Assistant Director Neighbourhoods), Eleanor Overton (Head of Planning), Tracey Pointon (Legal Admin & Democratic Services Manager), Jodie Small (Legal, Democratic and Corporate Support Assistant) and Adam Deakin (Technical Infrastructure Engineer)

Guest Councillors Dr. Councillor S People  
Councillor T Jay  
Councillor R Ford

### **36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence

### **37 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 were approved and signed as a correct record.

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

### **38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **39 QUESTION TIME:**

None

**40 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OR BY THE COUNCIL)**

Councillor T Jay Chair of Corporate Scrutiny Committee updated Cabinet and made a recommendation following consideration of matters by the Scrutiny Committee on the Update on Potential Legal Actions from the Executive Director, Organisation.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet

note that the Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered this item and that it recommended to Cabinet that the Leader of the Council be involved in any decisions in respect of any legal proceedings, in addition to the relevant Portfolio Holders.

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

Councillor R Ford Chair of Health and Wellbeing Committee updated Cabinet and made a recommendation following consideration of matters by the Health & Wellbeing Committee related to the Housing Strategy Report

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet

Agreed that the proposed actions contained within the draft Housing Strategy be endorsed and could go on to become the final strategy with the amendment that Stoneydelph and Glascote are included as areas where funding/support should be focussed as they contain areas which have historically had high deprivation;

*(Moved by Councillor M Cook and seconded by Councillor J Oates)*

**41 THE COUNCILS RECOVERY & RESET PLAN ARISING FROM COVID-19**

Report of the Leader of the Council to consider the Councils Recovery & Reset Plan Arising from Covid-19 to reflect on the Council's emergency response to the pandemic, noting the continuation of key front-line services, to outline the Council's proposed approach to recovery and reset in response to the pandemic, to share the Programme structure, including governance and scrutiny arrangements as well as describing the approach, methodology and resourcing and detail the programme structure and headline key projects with initial scoping of key work-streams

**RESOLVED** That Cabinet

1. Approved the proposed Recovery and Reset framework detailed in the report and presented in annex one and four.
2. Acknowledged the Council's continuation of critical services, arising from the pandemic, noting the detail captured in section 7.1 & 7.2 and further illustrated at annex three;
3. Established with the Leader, members of Cabinet and Scrutiny Chairs, a Recovery and Reset meeting to monitor, scrutinise and support the delivery of the programme with formal recommendations back to Cabinet on progress. Draft terms of reference are set out at annex two and
4. Noted that the Recovery and Reset Programme has been shared with the Council's Trade Union Liaison Group (TULG) and this will now be a standing agenda item to ensure transparency with the service review process and projects identified.

*(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor J Oates)*

#### **42 TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO WHITE PAPER: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Regulatory & Community Safety to seek Cabinet approval to submit the draft consultation response to the Government consultation on Planning white paper: planning for the future as the response of Tamworth Borough Council and acknowledge that the White Paper creates uncertainty in setting out the timescale for the delivery of a new local plan. To further seek a Cabinet resolution to submit evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee inquiry with responsibility for the final wording to be delegated to the Assistant Director – Growth and Regeneration.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet

1. Approved the submission of the consultation response set out in Appendix A as the response of Tamworth Borough Council;
2. Acknowledged that the proposals within the White Paper will delay the delivery of a new local plan and also the preparation of a Local Development Scheme which sets out the timetable.
3. Resolved to submit evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee inquiry and delegate responsibility for the wording of that response to the Assistant Director – Growth and Regeneration

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

Councillor S Doyle would like to thank the Planning Team for the time and effort put into this consultation

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Leader

DRAFT

THURSDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2020

## REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

## BUDGET CONSULTATION 2021/22

**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 2021/22 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 60% of respondents,
- To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity - seen as important by 81% of respondents,
- To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities - seen as important by 65% of respondents,
- To create a new and developing vision for the continued evolution of Tamworth, including a town centre fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century - seen as important by 86% of respondents.

## **Organisation priorities**

Support was also evident for the four priorities which come under the heading organisation.

- To be financially stable - seen as important by 76% of respondents,
- To ensure our employees have the right skills and culture to help our residents, visitors and businesses- seen as important by 69% of respondents,
- To ensure our service delivery is consistent, clear and focussed - seen as important by 67% of respondents,
- To ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge - seen as important by 71% 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 13 major cost areas. Respondents most wanted to see maintained level of spend on 'refuse collection and recycling' (72%).

Two areas where respondents wanted to see more spend were 'improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth (50%) and 'tackling anti-social behaviour' (46%).

Respondents wanted to see less spend in the following areas 'improved access to information/customer services (45%); Arts, Assembly Room and Events (39%) and business support and advice (38%).

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. 56% of respondents would support increased charges for this. Conversely, decreasing charges for 'car parking' would be a popular move. More than three quarters of respondents (78%) said that they would like to see these decreased.

The largest proportion of residents (35%) would prefer the second lowest level of Council Tax increase (a 1.99% increase). The lowest level of increase (a 0.55% increase) was the second most popular option; 32% 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.

## **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no equalities implications arising from this report



## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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

## **REPORT AUTHOR**

Linda Ram and John Day

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Budget Consultation 2021/22 – Full report

Appendix 2: Budget Consultation 2021/22 – Respondents comments

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## **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

These groups were also asked to give their views on the vision and corporate priorities, as well as their views on how the council can capitalise on the positives in the voluntary sector response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing restrictions in the use of Marmion House.

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 2021/22 budget was open from 4<sup>th</sup> September until 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020 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 and online business news publications such as the Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, a prominent feature on the Tamworth Borough Council website and through several social media posts including on Tamworth Borough Council Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn and Tamworth Enterprise Centre Facebook.

This year, paid advertising on Facebook was tried, spending £30 on a seven-day campaign. This resulted in a reach of 3,656 and 62 link clicks.

It was also shared through business Facebook groups such as Tamworth is Open and Tamworth Business to Business, as well as being emailed to our database of more than 800 businesses.

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.

More than 200 members of Tamworth Borough Council's Citizens Panel received a direct e-mail encouraging their participation.

## **Responses**

A total of 121 responses were received to the consultation and these consisted of:

- 101 residents
- 8 businesses
- 12 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 vision**

The Council's '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:

*'Very good and I agree with the statement,'*

*'This a good vision...and hope that it can continue'*

*'I would like to see reference made to the wellbeing of its people',*

*'Could also mention putting the local environment at the heart of everything'.*

### **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:

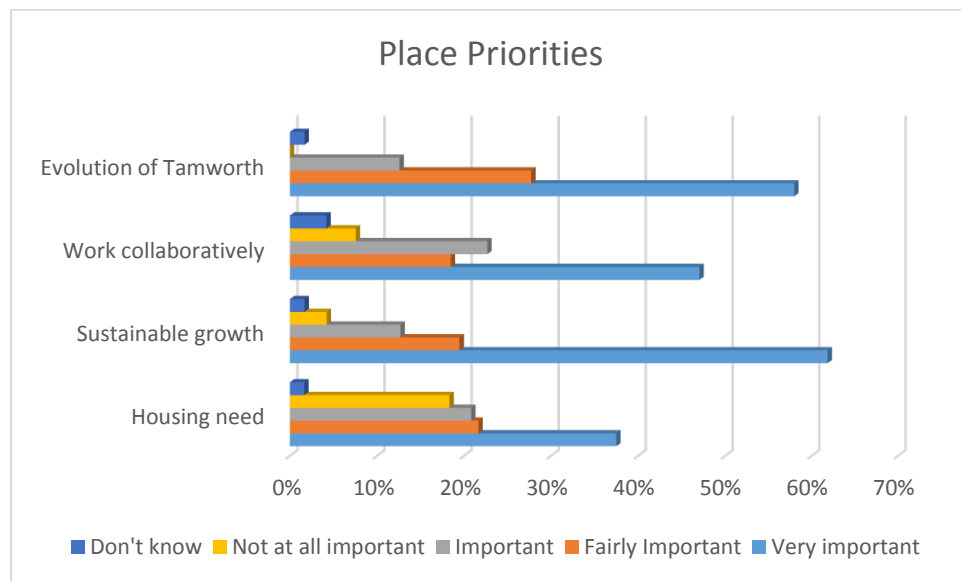
- To meet housing needs through a variety of approaches and interventions,
- To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity,
- To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities,
- To create a new and developing vision for the continued evolution of Tamworth, including a town centre fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

All priorities were given a high importance rating by over 60 % of respondents.

The most important priority was 'To create a new and developing vision for the continued evolution of Tamworth, including a town centre fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century'; 86 % gave this a high rating.

Considered least important was 'to meet housing needs through a variety of approaches and interventions'. However, 60 % of respondents gave this a high rating.

Respondents' views are shown in the figure below



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

Seen as important by 60% of respondents.

Comments received included:

*'Having a safe and good quality home is fundamental to health and wellbeing as well as being a major influence on education and employment prospects',*

*'Homes for single and elderly people, and especially Council housing should be a priority, please',*

*'Use empty properties for housing',*

*'Too many houses already for the infrastructure, services and facilities we have',*

*'You are allowing far too many high priced housing'*

*'Prevention of homeless should always be the first intervention'*

**To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity,**

Seen as important by 81% of respondents

Comments received included:

*'Bringing more jobs to the area must remain a priority',*

*'Housing is one aspect of prosperity many others such as education, health, emergency services, recreation & care homes should be integrated and a unified plan produced',*

*'Whilst there is a need to ensure economic prosperity the infrastructure needs to be there to support it',*

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

Seen as important by 65% of respondents.

Comments received included:

*'Partnership and collaboration is always essential and agree should be at the heart of the council's approach to communities',*

*'There is a lot that the council cannot undertake itself, because the skills lie elsewhere, but the volunteer section who support the community need financial and advisory support to do so',*

*'the council needs to ensure that partnership working doesn't become an end in itself and should regularly check that positive results are being achieved which are proportionate to the resources and efforts put in by the partner agencies',*

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

Respondents felt this was the most important priority under 'people and place' (86 % of respondents).

Comments received included:

*'The days of the traditional town centre and shopping precinct is over and one of the best ways to preserve the best of what we have left is to move people in',*

*'Need a radical re think of our town centre and not just build more shops that will stay empty. Shopping has changed and the centre needs to be a space*

*that draws people in via other means such as leisure and culture creating footfall and a sense of community’,*

*‘This has to be a priority to bring businesses and money to Tamworth’*

## Organisation priorities

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

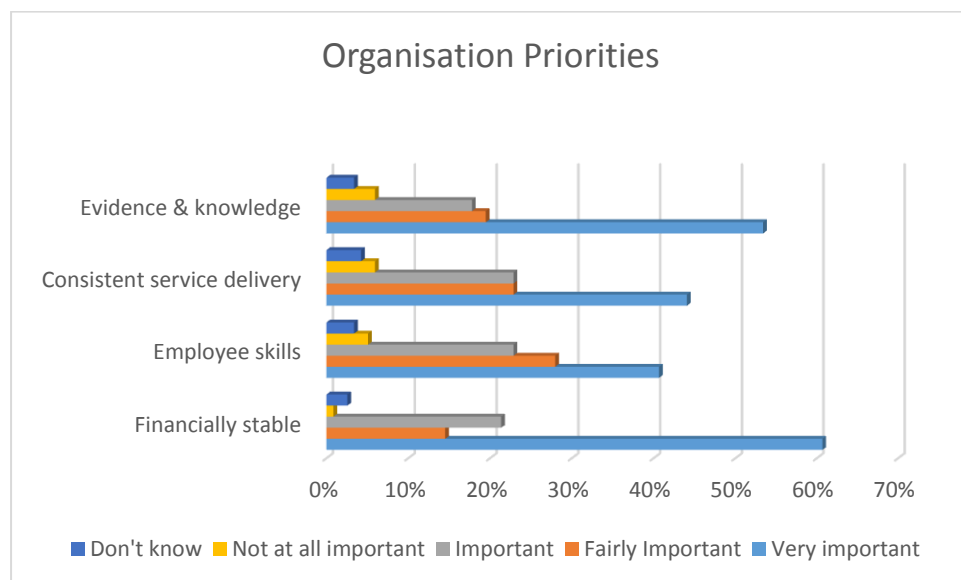
- To be financially stable,
- To ensure our employees have the right skills and culture to help our residents, visitors and businesses,
- To ensure our service delivery is consistent, clear and focussed,
- To ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge.

All priorities were given a high importance rating by 67% or over of respondents.

The most important priority was ‘to be financially stable’, 76% gave this a high rating.

Considered least important was ‘to ensure our service delivery is consistent, clear and focussed’. However, 67% of respondents gave this a high rating.

Respondent’s views are shown in the figure below



**To be financially stable,**

This was seen as the most important priority under 'organisation' by 76% of respondents.

Comments received included:

*'Residents need to be kept informed of the difficult financial choices that are required as a result of Covid. Unfortunately it is not reasonable to expect the Council to be able to provide the usual level of services without additional funding'*

*'Need to live within means and therefore need to look at new ways of increasing revenue'*

*'Vitaly important that the books are balanced and you don't spend more than you can afford'*

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

Seen as important by 69% of respondents.

Comments received included:

*'People and their skills and development are important; however, ultimately it is outcomes that matter',*

*'Training for staff and elected members is vital. Also experienced staff should be valued. Their knowledge shouldn't be underestimated',*

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

Seen as important by 67% of respondents.

Comments received included:

*'Think this should also include maximising digital opportunities so residents can do more online',*

*'What matters is the quality of services',*

*'What is being wasted currently owing to a lack of / poor promotion of standards of service? It is helpful for people to know what to expect, what services can be provided and what can't be provided'*



## To ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge.

Seen as important by 72% of respondents.

Comments received included:

*'Information and knowledge about the local community is key to knowing what services/organisations are needed in the locality',*

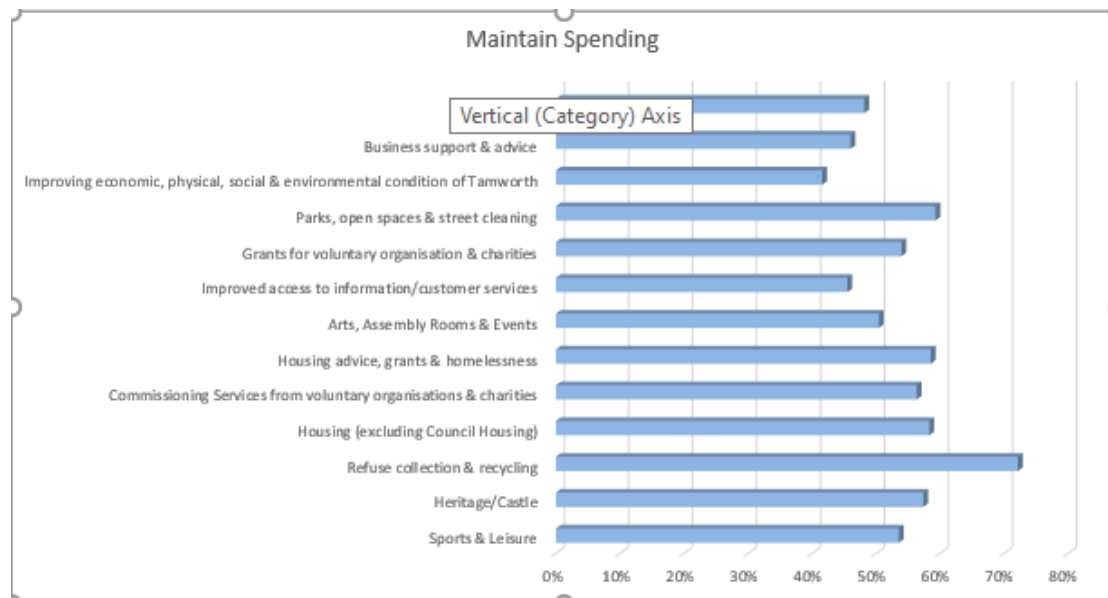
*'Evidence is key to good decision making'*

## Spending on services

Respondents were provided with planned spend on major cost areas for 2020/21 and were asked whether they felt the Council should increase, decrease or keep spending the same.

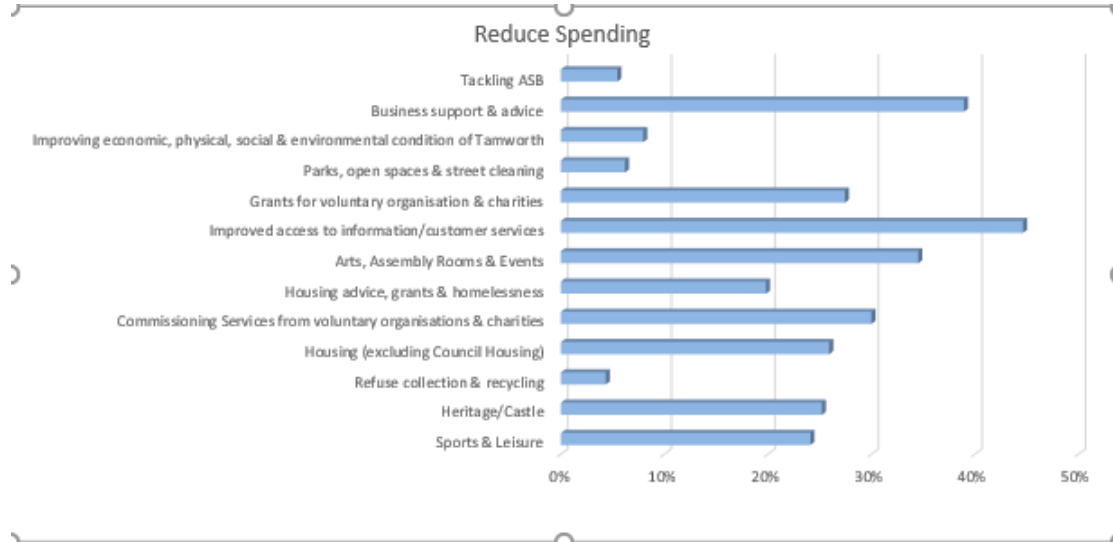
### Maintain levels of spending

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 13 major cost areas. Respondents most wanted to see maintained level of spend on 'refuse collection and recycling' (72%).



## Reduce levels of spending

Respondents wanted to see less spend in the following areas 'improved access to information/customer services (45%) and business support and advice (39%).



## Increase levels of spending

Two areas where respondents wanted to see more spend were 'improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth (50%) and 'tackling anti-social behaviour' (46%).



## Comments on spending

Comments received included:

*'It will be very difficult for the council budget to fulfil its commitments without there being an increase through the various ways revenue is obtained',*

*'Times will be tough, I don't envy the decisions you may be forced to make',*

*'Keep within budget, try to secure more value for money'*

*'I think that radical cuts should be made in line with support from local residents. Inform every household you are going to take drastic and severe cuts, sensible people will accept and the most vulnerable can be shadowed and concentrated on*

## 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.

Respondents wanted to see less spend in the following areas 'business support and advice' (45%); Arts, Assembly Room and Events (39%) and 'improved access to information/customer services' (38%).

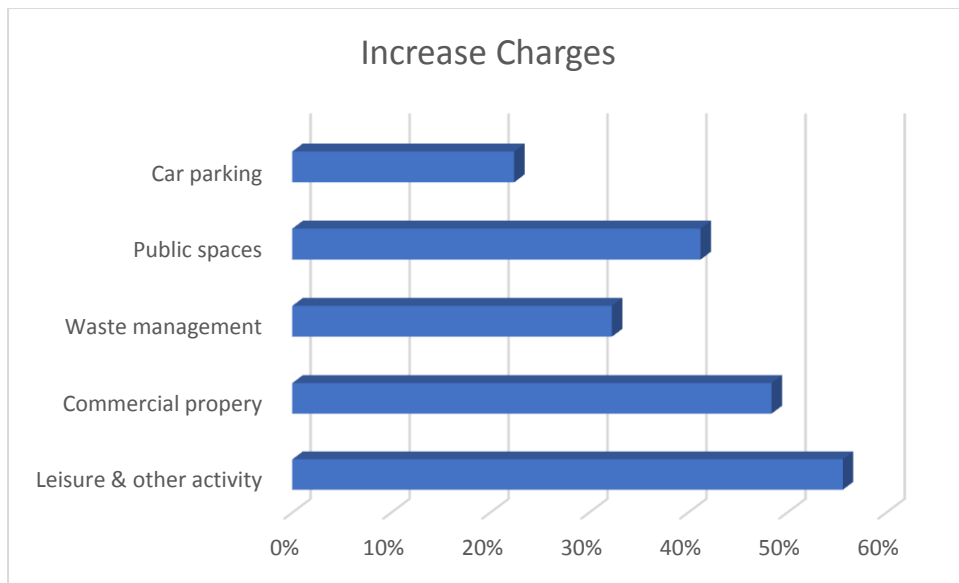


## Fees and charges

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

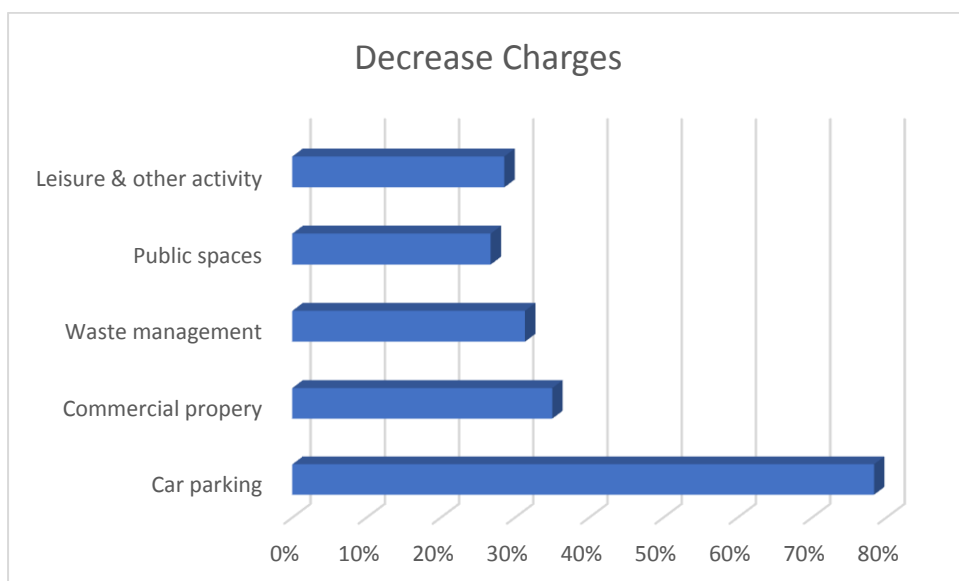
### Increase charges

It was most common for respondents to see the need to increase public charges for leisure and other activities (56%) and commercial property (48%).



### Decrease charges

Respondents were most likely to say that they would like to see decreased charges for car parking (78%) and was by far the most popular choice.



## Comments on savings and charges

Comments received included:

*'Work from smaller premises, or home where possible'*

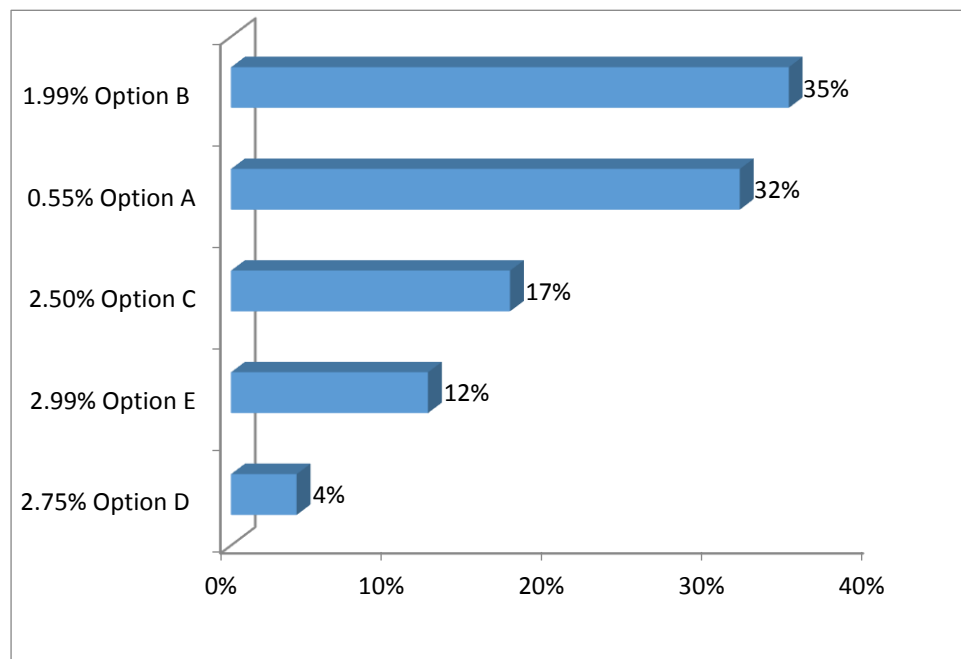
*'Councillors - we don't need 30 of them'*

*'Staff and councillor costs'*

## Acceptable level of Council Tax increase

Residents were asked what they would consider to be an acceptable Council Tax increase for the 2021/22 budget.

The largest proportion of residents (35%) would prefer the second lowest level of Council Tax increase (a 1.99% increase). The lowest level of increase (a 0.55% increase) was the second most popular option; 32% of residents chose this option.



## Ongoing restrictions in the use of Marmion House and the delivery of services by digital means.

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, Marmion House has been closed to the public. There were mixed views on these restrictions.

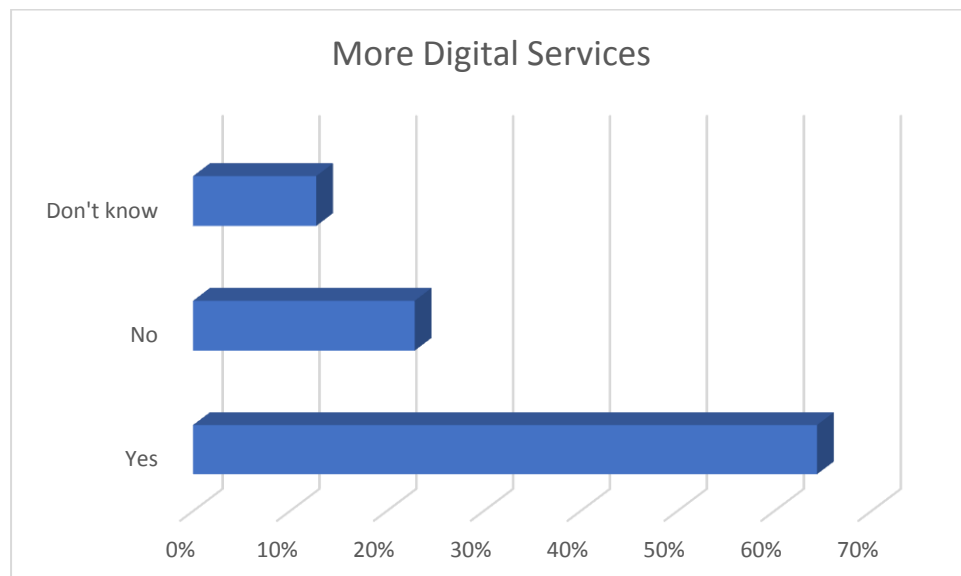
*'If the same service can be achieved by staff working from home then perhaps Marmion House can be used differently'*

*"Having a limited team on the front desk is better than No Team at all"*

*'People working at Marmion House should be able to work from home when not required to be in the office'*

*'I think that access to Marmion House and the opportunity to communicate with staff in person is vital. Those who lack confidence with digital forms of communication and those who may be in distress because of personal issues need to talk through their issues and problems face to face and experience the empathy and reassurance that only live interaction can offer'.*

When asked would you like to see more services delivered digitally via telephone, webchat or the internet, 64% of respondents indicated that they would.



## **Investing in communities and capitalising on the positives in the voluntary sector response**

Ultimately the greatest and most lasting impact of the pandemic will be experienced by the most vulnerable in our society. However, the positives include the considerable community effort which has been made to support vulnerable people, close working by the Council in support of the voluntary sector and of numerous acts of kindness and neighbourliness by individuals. Respondents were asked whether the Council should continue to consider new ways to invest in communities and capitalise on the positives in the voluntary sector response.

Comments received included:

*'I think the Council and the voluntary sector should work hand in hand to deliver services to our vulnerable residents, who need comfort, practical help and the sense of someone knowledgeable working alongside them. The vulnerable need to feel cherished and important members of society',*

*'Voluntary Services are important and very necessary, investing with these services can be more rewarding, but Training is also important to make them work effectively'*

*'The council cannot do everything and community organisations are a key part of service delivery and often have better access to harder to reach communities',*

*'I think voluntary sector is key. I've seen the work the CiC has done through the pandemic and would love to see more projects',*

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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,
- The ongoing restrictions in the use of Marmion House,
- How the Council can capitalise on the positives in the voluntary sector response to the pandemic

And the profile of respondents to the residents survey.

### Comments about the revised vision

*Short and to the point with no ambiguity*

*It's nice and simple statement, but could do with some aspirational future looking statement. What is says currently, is kind of what I'd expect the council to be doing as business as usual anyway,*

*You should try living up to your vision. You've failed miserably up to now,*

*Don't forget areas away from central Tamworth,*

*Invest and revamp the town centre. Move away from just shops and become more innovative,*

*Let's hope that it is put into practise,*

*Nice platitudes! You don't put the views of residents first when you approve massive housing developments against our wishes - but not against the wishes of the members of the planning panel that had to declare an interest,*

*Agree,*

*Better links between Ventura Park and the town centre need to be developed and implemented,*

*Private Landlords need to be challenged or encouraged to lower rates to have premises occupied to boost footfall and economy you take much revenue from car parks if there's no reason to visit this is lost it needs to be priority,*

*We haven't seen a lot of difference over the last 5 years the town centre is a disgrace,*

*And rid it of drug dealers/junkies,*

*More shops needed in town centre,*

*Words are fine, but its actions that count, particularly in times of conflict and incompetent government,*

*Agree,*

*Tamworth has a fantastic Castle and really needs to sell itself more,*

*The Town always tries to win 'Tamworth in Bloom', but seems to neglect the other boroughs around the town, these are areas of priority too. Having More free to use toilets in the town centre, we have to rely on Ankerside and when the Pandemic hit, we were without any toilets in the Town Centre. There used to be toilets under the Old Town Hall, they were removed. Then 2 new lots of toilets were specially built, but again knocked down when people refused to pay for entry. Parks are not always maintained as often as they should nor Trees cut back (especially near the Library and near to the Bus Station on Victoria Road) Roads - Why can't we have a local team the can operate locally to repair roads much more quickly?? Drain Servicing - This used to be done a lot more regularly, but now we have to put up with Flooding for months before the County will deal with the problem.*

*Like many others I am proud to be a Tammy and I want people who visit our town to see that. The waste that is strewn along the A5 from the M42 junctions to the A38 does not give that impression. Please take note,*

*The revitalisation of the town centre should be the main objective of the council over the next few years. This needs to be carried out with the realisation that there are at the moment too many shop units. The provision of more town centre accommodation and eateries is what is needed. But this new build needs to be of a much higher architectural standard than those built from the 60s onwards,*

*Think it's the right vision,*

*Agre,*

*Very good,*

*if this is the case I suggest we stop any more house building with immediate effect as that will drain the towns resources even more and concentrate of providing services for the residents already here who cannot get a hospital, doctors or dental appointment, drive on safe roads, or live in a clean safe environment,*

*Sometimes that does not come across,*

*I hope there is strong support for Mental Health services,*

*Sound vision,*

*The problem is that we are forgotten by Staffordshire County Council and don't seem to get the support from them that would help with this vision,*

*I think everywhere needs more security cameras as crime seems to be on the increase,*

*Vision agreed,*

*It sounds like a nice vision,*

*You could add "the environment and all living species" to take everything into consideration, without them Tamworth's people won't have a future,*

*Agree,*

*Agree,*

*Rubbish - local politics prevail - elected members only interested in remaining within the money pit gravy train,*

*No problem with vision,*

*Stating the obvious but it should be putting the people and businesses at the heart of everything we do. Tamworth is a place so I'd assume you'd be putting those who live, work or visit at the centre. Plus heritage too,*

*That's just words, a meaningless slogan! Actions speak louder than words,*

*Great start,*

*With COVID creating a situation where lots more people are/or would like to cycle more as a means of transport. I would like to see more resources allocated to providing proper cycling infrastructure for the town and surrounding areas. By this I mean proper segregated cycle ways, not just painted lines, but proper physical barriers to separate road traffic from vulnerable cyclists. More provision for parking cycles in the town centre and other shopping locations is needed too. Many studies have shown that where people can walk or cycle safely to shops the local economy benefits greatly. Increased use of active transport has many benefits for the health and wellbeing of the local population too,*

*How about answering messages then that I have been messaging you since March about trees behind my house that is blocking all sunlight in garden have not been cut for 29 years so are so tall they dangerous are blocking public footpaths and I hear nothing when I phone I'm told to put it on portal which I have done several times and get no response so please tell me how me and my neighbours are at the heart of everything you do,*

*Does not seem to be happening,*

*This is quite an insular statement. We are a multi-cultural town and need to play our part outside of our post code,*

*I haven't heard anything about your vision,*

*Yes you should serve the needs of Tamworth. This should also include trying to extend our border particularly to the north so that Tamworth itself benefits from new council tax paying houses rather than Lichfield. This would benefit the council finances greatly,*

*Totally agree,*

*Spot on,*

*The people and the local economy are synonymous with Tamworth,*

*I think that putting much clearer marked bike paths around would be helpful for the people of Tamworth - many of the ones that are there are very faintly and sporadically marked meaning that pedestrians are often walking across them,*

*It's alright to have this vision, but will you actually adhere to it? Past experience has shown that you are influenced by outside interests,*

*Town centre does not feel like the heart of anything, shops are rubbish and does not encourage its people or visitors to our town,*

*Reopen the youth centres for young people to socialise properly. use community centres for group gatherings (i.e. - disabled groups and drop in centres) open the magistrate courts, so local crimes and issues can be sorted in a local setting without having to travel too far for both defendants and lawyers alike. Open the police station clean the weeds away from the roads and make Tamworth and its boroughs cleaner and tidier. let's sort the pot holes in the roads, once and for all. it's currently a joke how this is being done... why can't we have a local team instead of having to go to Stafford all the time to get these problems done? drop the price of business rates, so more shops can be open in the town centre instead of having so many empty venues,*

*Not clear how you would measure if this was achieved? What about the ambitions for the town?*

*Sounds good but won't happen, the council like wasting money and have only destroyed the town centre.*

*How is that measured?*

*Not true*

*An excellent vision.*

*Should also be protecting and sustaining the local environment.*

*Agree totally.*

*Very good and I agree with the statement*

*It seems to me your vision is to turn Tamworth into a sprawling mass of housing estates and industrial units without any thought for quality of life.*

*It's reasonable, but a statement of the obvious.*

*First ensuring that residents and businesses share the same priorities.*

*I would like to see reference made to "the wellbeing of its people". Followed by the local economy. A sound economy is obviously needed to provide the requirements necessary to provide good welfare to the people but how we treat members of our community is vital to show that Tamworth is a good caring place where people want to invest in job opportunities and come to live and work.*

*This a good vision...and hope that it can continue.*

*To be true to your statement*

*It feels like a meaningless statement, you should be doing that anyway, otherwise you have no right to be the council. Do you want growth, to highlight heritage, improve communities and business, and support people? What makes Tamworth unique? How can you measure this, vision should look forward and be something measurable?*

*Great, though personally I'd add something like "make Tamworth a destination for people who choose shopping, tourism, and entertainment"*

*In principal I agree, but as I walk around the town its plain to see the neglect that is showing itself in massive areas. The town is dying on its feet, businesses are struggling for customers and then you charge them to park. I think the major part of bringing people into the town is encouraging them to visit our attractions, and allow them free parking for few hours so they have time to explore what shops we have and start spending money in them. Even the banks are now finding it hard to get customers into the doors. Some are better at it than others but, I predict that we will lose at least 2 of the big players if the lack of customers into the town continues.*

*The Vision should be on the appearance to others, so this means much more cleaning & maintenance of the town but also the industrial estates & residential, the lack of maintenance & cleaning, prior to the Covid disruption is not good enough, gimmicks like the Britain in bloom & other gimmicks like that are not good enough as it spends too much in a small area, not the town as a whole*

*Hopeful words*

*Nothing to add*

*This vision works with our own vision, it would be good to see ideas from the small grass roots charities explored fully regardless of the outcome for the idea.*

*Tamworth Council is very prepared to think outside the box and support Charities such a Samaritans. Without their support our Branch would not be visible in the locality.*

*Agreed*

*Could also mention putting "the local environment" at the heart of everything?*

*I think the Tamworth people should come first i.e. 'to put Tamworth people and the local economy at the heart of everything we do'*

## Comments about people and place priorities

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

*There's a need for new housing, but I worry most new houses are being bought up by new arrivals in Tamworth. When I see 4 bed houses going for over £400,000 I'm thinking - people from Tamworth won't be buying those. It's arrivals from places like Sutton Coldfield and Solihull or London. Whilst there's smaller houses available - the salary to income ratio means that people are buying less and less share of their house over longer periods. A possible solution is instead of just allowing developers to buy land and build, can the council make land available for locals to self-build, similar to I believe what was done in Chandlers Drive and Carnoustie in the 70 & 80s.*

*Homes for single and elderly people, and especially Council housing should be a priority, please.*

*It should not be at a cost to the environment*

*Stop approving so much house building - it's not needed*

*Build social housing and affordable starter homes*

*Use empty properties for housing*

*We need to maintain what we have at the moment not let it run down*

*Careful not to create ghettos*

*It doesn't matter if you have family in the area everyone needs a roof over their heads more affordable properties should be available*

*Continued approval of plans to build housing on land at high risk of flooding is a disgrace. No matter what the shortage of adequate housing, building on flood plains is unacceptable. The creation of measures to protect such houses invariably just moves the problem downstream. Any house building MUST be accompanied with adequate infrastructure: drainage and water supply, GP surgeries, green areas and cycle paths, primary schools, etc. If infrastructure can't be supplied, don't build the houses.*

*Agree*

*Sorry I have worked very hard to buy a nice house in a nice area. I do not appreciate the sick lame and lazy being given priority*

*Getting empty properties ready for use much quicker might help and checking that the right people are in the right housing. There are some people that neglect their (Council) houses and neighbours that own their own houses have to suffer from these people, yet the Council seem to always side with their tenants' and not the residents that have made the effort to purchase their own houses. Insisting that tenants abide by their tenant's agreements (Too Many Don't) especially those with too many pets.*

*Provision of accommodation very important but consideration needs to be given to the design. Cramming as many housing units into a space leads to parking problems and possibility that the housing will become slums.*

*Affordable housing is fine. But more investment in the town is needed to attract people to spend money*

*Too many houses already for the infrastructure, services and facilities we have. If we can't afford to maintain those what is the point of building even more houses to put everything under more pressure? You should means test council and social housing on a yearly basis so those who need it get it rather than those people who have it staying there for life when they no longer need to and then passing the rent book to their children. People who can afford to move out should and those whose children have left home and have spare space should move to smaller council properties.*

*You are allowing far too many high priced housing...it should be 75% affordable which is needed. And you should make sure what the developers say they are going to do is actually done i.e...hedge on Coton Lane removed and not replaced and that all persons involvement in such projects is not allowed as this looks unlawful*

*Tamworth is using all available space to increase the housing within the borough. Lichfield is using space on the boundaries to increase housing. The combined effect is to produce an uncoordinated unbalanced collection of houses that are not suitable for current requirements and have not relevance to the future. The current planning procedures are broken beyond belief and future changes will make them worse.*

*Supporting private renters is important through landlord rating scheme or support against no fault evictions. Also need more 1/2 bed starter homes rather than the 4/5 bed high cost options.*

*Ensure any private house building incorporates at least 25% affordable housing.*

*There is a very strong feeling in the community that the homeless and rough sleepers in the town are growing. Many people feel that ex-service people from the Army, Navy, Air force, police or other services, should be offered priority housing over and before non UK residents and immigrants.*

*Create sustainable houses that will still be liveable even with higher temperatures, ideally with Passivhaus standards so the habitants will have smaller energy fees.*

*All housing should be of a good standard whether private or rental. End any homelessness*

*Housing needs should also consider the pressure on green spaces and the effect on habitat along with the provision of infrastructure. In the past, provision has not taken enough or any regard to these areas (possibly because of government guidelines). These areas are crucial to creating a community and not merely a housing estate. Tamworth should be a place where people want to live and thrive because care has been given to natural green space and access as well as facilities.*

*I think an effective housing policy has benefits through all other aspects from health to crime and punishment*

*Housing need to be fit for purpose. We need less social housing and bigger properties. Social houses should be there for those who need them. Everyone else needs to work for it.*

*It's just not relevant to me*

*When building new housing developments adequate consideration should be given to building in safe cycling infrastructure to encourage people out of their cars for short journeys. This would lead to an increase overall general fitness and mental wellbeing for everyone concerned.*

*I live in a private house what you doing for us*

*Use council houses better. All bedrooms should be used. Council houses should only be available whilst children up to 21 still leave there. There are properties still empty in Tamworth why? Publish the amount of money you spend on hotel accommodation and make it available to local people to offer accommodation.*

*There are too many houses already in Tamworth, and now there are new houses being built on the borders, which is causing more traffic, more stress on the over stretched Tamworth as it is. How about you do up some of the houses that are left empty.*

*Council should do as much as possible to involve the private sector and appreciate their risks as much as the tenants. Helping them with the issues of non-payment of rent particularly from housing benefit might get more to accept tenants on benefits.*

*There is limited space to build in Tamworth so how can you build more houses without the other infrastructure to go with it more houses equals more congestion get the roads sorted travel round Tamworth is a joke too many traffic lights adding to the problem*

*A home is everything and its crucial the housing needs of people in Tamworth must be met.*

*Please prioritise local residents*

*Too many people abusing the system*

*This only really applies to people in council houses and not people with private houses. maybe checking the tenants of those people in council houses, to make sure they are not treating the properties like dustbins should be a priority and even when the neighbours repeatedly complain about the state of the house and the rubbish left outside, nothing is ever done about it. Where are your priorities now????? makes my blood boil.*

*Would be good if council had a list of recommended maintenance, builders and handyman for tenants to use.*



*Utilising green field space and having the leading group of councillors involved with developers is not a great way to go about it. Brown field sites or town centre redevelopment has to be looked at.*

*What plans are in place for elderly people to support them moving to more suitable accommodation?*

*Buy to let Landlords seeking to buy the affordable housing stock should be discouraged to enable first time buyers to get onto the property ladder.*

*No one should have to be homeless in 2020 and beyond*

*I have lived in Tamworth for 61 years and have seen it turn from a pleasant market town into a "knock it down and build it out of concrete" disaster.*

*Individuals should have access to good affordable housing. Currently not all people do in Tamworth.*

*Prevention of homeless should always be the first intervention.*

*With the rise of the need for more single person accommodation and ever increasing elderly population it is not only very important to get this right. There will be considerable impact of cv19 on the private rental market and I think we have reached a point where homelessness, which is way too high already may increase considerably.*

*There are currently too many housing estates in Tamworth, your "approaches and interventions" hopefully don't include more rabbit warren estates or building on greenbelt land. How about converting existing buildings like Fazeley Mill and the old police station into affordable flats and apartments?*

*Pressure should be put on Lichfield to stop putting their housing stock on the Tamworth boundaries, which forces Tamworth to deal with the population increase whilst Lichfield gets the income from council tax.*

*Housing needs are being met on the outskirts of the town, not by TBC but by our neighbour Lichfield DC who appear to be dumping their housing on our borders. Whilst any development will need an investment in infrastructure and facilities, I feel we will not be needing the amount of housing we were once told was necessary.*

*Dealing with housing, "in house" not through outsourcing would be better for the residence & puts control back in the council*

*Don't build on the surrounding green belt. There must be another way*

*If people can have hope and responsibility, the foundation of a home can give this to some, everyone deserves the opportunity to improve their lives. Foundations, a home create a stable and safe environment to a standard that all should live in, in an ideal world.*

*A very important priority, people need a safe environment to live in order to thrive*

*Many children live in poverty in Tamworth because of lack of education around priorities for spending their income, it isn't always the quality or suitability of the accommodation but the way people live in it and treat it, voluntary sector could provide a support service to educate people on cleaning routines, simple maintenance, gardening, rubbish removal etc. which if they owned their property they would have to do these things themselves. Some people need to take a pride in where they live which would have a knock on effect for any children living in the property and the community they live in, it would also cut costs to other services including social services.*

*People who are not housed and who become homeless are a priority. Samaritans get a high rate of calls from people who are extremely distressed and suicidal because they and their family are homeless.*

*The current pandemic has shown us that those who live in poor accommodation, or under stress that they will be evicted when they lose their income, or living with the stress of homelessness and poverty - these are the one who are most likely to die or have a poor outcome when hit by the disease. Clean, safe housing should be the number one priority next to health and social care for the sick and needy.*

*Having a safe and good quality home is fundamental to health and wellbeing as well as being a major influence on education and employment prospects. The majority of Tamworth residents are able to take responsibility for securing and managing their own accommodation and don't need local authority intervention, but for those who can't, the council's role is vitally important. 2 particularly vulnerable groups come to mind, a) people who are homeless or are at risk of losing their homes and b) people who are elderly and may need adaptations within their own property or to be able to move to somewhere more appropriate. As life expectancy increases, there will be greater need and demand for the latter so the council should prepare for this as much as possible and encourage the building of lifetime homes*

*I believe you can't move forward without a safe personal base. However poor you are you should have a safe base*

## **To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity**

*As someone with Green electric supply, driving an EV and part time veggie, sustainability is a key issue. I'm not aware of much in the way of sustainability projects run by the council - other than a waste collection that has been a benchmark to others. Maybe I haven't looked hard, or maybe the message isn't getting through, but a flagship programme to drive green growth in the Post Covid era, would be something that could benefit residents. Not necessarily a high spending project, but something that gets individuals, groups and business together to say "what can we do here?"*

*You need to safeguard existing now and bring in new employment in this Covid era*

*Looking forward to what will likely be an ugly town redevelopment.*

*Continue to canvass opinion residents and successful business infrastructure needs to accompany housing doctor's hospital but also leisure and tourism*

*More business should be in the town and not retail parks*

*The council should support HS2, but be aware of its potential impact on services from Tamworth station. We should lead on calls for better train services, esp. to Birmingham, through the franchise system, but also through electrification of the Birmingham to Derby line.*

*Where new housing is to be allowed should be a significant factor looking at the current infrastructure and whether it can cope with increased demand or whether adjustments need to be made i.e. better road crossing, traffic management, sufficient amenities or shops and primary schools*

*Housing needs must be backed up with suitable infrastructure and TBC need to make sure house builders fulfil this.*

*I do not agree with the constant new building of houses in the surrounding areas of Tamworth. You are building far too many houses but not increasing schools Doctors Hospitals Dentists etc.*

*Need affordable housing not expensive out of most people's range*

*Bringing more jobs to the area must remain a priority. The Council MUST encourage more growth instead of often blocking people that are trying to bring more business to the Town Centre. This has been blocked for too many years and it's the people of Tamworth that then miss out from the opportunities.*

*There are too many warehouses being built that do not create many jobs for people. The infrastructure cannot cope, this needs to be addressed.*

*From the recent evidence of approved development the council has failed to provide in advance the necessary infrastructure such as roads etc. to cope with the large amount of housing growth. This is especially true to the north of the town where a northern ring road is necessary to prevent pressure in the Ashby Rd/ Upper Gungate corridor.*

*More investment required in town centre. Need more local business. Think Mosley in Birmingham, Tamworth can be that independent, quirky town where people will travel to go out, shop etc.*

*The council is not managing growth at all. Far too many industrial units sitting empty they should be used before building new units or offices that then sit empty. The town is an eyesore from all sides now. Most people who were brought up in the town no longer wish to live here and are moving out. We have become a satellite town of Birmingham and have lost our identity. Only the newer people who are used to an even more built up area are happy living here but it won't be long before we become the same as the areas they left*

*Far too much industrial units being built when loads lie empty...make developers use existing sites until they are full before allowing building on other sites which in turn lie empty*

*Housing is one aspect of prosperity many others such as education, health, emergency services, recreation & care homes should be integrated and a unified plan produced.*

*Tamworth needs to be more positively portrayed*

*Whilst there is a need to ensure economic prosperity the infrastructure needs to be there to support it - it seems that more and more houses are being built but there is a lack of schools, medical services (particularly a hospital) and the road infrastructure is certainly not sufficient to support the growth.*

*Building on flood-plain is crazy and irresponsible and is a "quick fix" that stores up problems for later. Whilst development is important, let it be sympathetic to the environment and leaves the residents with some green spaces, wildlife areas and no increase in traffic queues.*

*Very unhappy at the detrimental impact of HS2 for little gain. This will blight Tamworth.*

*There are different estimates of how fast the UK should reduce greenhouse gas emissions if it's to do its fair share in combating climate breakdown, ranging from 7% to over 25% per year. Researchers at the Tyndall Centre have published a detailed carbon report for every local authority and say that Tamworth should reduce its emissions by at least 13% per year. There are only 4 government-funded eco-heating systems in Tamworth, yet the UK needs to fit around 1 million per year. Fitting 1,177 eco-heating systems every year would be a fair share for Tamworth. In Tamworth only 6% of people commute by public transport, 2% cycle, and 9% walk. In the best performing similar local authority area, the proportions are 22%, 12% and 18% respectively. Much more is possible. Research shows that 24% of commuter journeys in Tamworth could be by bike (assuming good cycling infrastructure, such as segregated cycle ways and the uptake of E-bikes).*

*About the increased housing, please choose contractors that take the impact on the environment seriously (we had enough greenwashing these past years, we don't need words we need actions): work with materials as local as possible, hire workers*

*from the area to create jobs, respect strong standards like the Passivhaus one, leave as many wild area as possible to protect the biodiversity etc.*

*I can understand that money runs everything in the world but the amount of new housing is really impinging on Tamworth's infrastructure, schools, and doctors. Tamworth is now becoming very built up, and with Lichfield building right up to our boundaries as well so much pressure on all our resources. As a Tamworth resident I am feeling very pushed out*

*This touches on what has been said with regard to housing and seems lacking in the past.*

*Clearly it's been shown that prosperous areas also benefit from enhance life expectancy and lower crime so a strong economic strategy will be if it the whole community*

*Growth and particularly supporting infrastructure need to be planned and managed*

*Economic activity is the most important you need to focus on. If people have good jobs the areas that cost the most are not needed.*

*I think too many mistakes are made, along with too many decisions made for the wrong reasons (or bank handlers!)*

*Not happening in my opinion.*

*Should benefit all citizens*

*You are ruining a lovely town and surrounding areas by building un-necessary houses, and causing more traffic queues, and over-crowding.*

*New housing needs to be on Tamworth's terms and part of an overall plan to improve infrastructure. Therefore need to remove the situation where Lichfield dump housing allocations on our borders with no regard to infrastructure*

*Getting other local authorities to help financially with local amenities and services when they build on our borders and receive all the Council Tax but none of the liabilities.*

*Economic prosperity is a must for all who work so more workplaces then this may lead to higher wages more money for working people to spend*

*We have nothing without a strong local economy.*

*It is important that any increase in housing (whether by Tamworth or Lichfield on the outskirts of our area) should have ample support by way of health - GPs etc. and schools.*

*It's now fairly obvious that increased house building has happened, but the infrastructure remains the same, this has led to chaos on our roads and increased travelling times with resultant costs and pollution. You cannot plan for hundreds of houses without roads, schools, doctors, etc.?*

*Bring people into the town is a priority, but making them pay over the odds for parking drives many people away. Looking around the country, many places are seeing that parking is a priority and they have reduced the parking charges (£1 for the day) or free parking to encourage more people to the town centres. This is something that Tamworth Council should be looking at too. How can you grow a town if people don't use it??*

*Agree and think this should be linked to the vision*

*Needs to be a focus on town centre not just expanding venture. We will now be left with an empty John Lewis there. The centre of town needs to be livened up anchor side should be regenerated to get more people visit*

*Need to revive town centre and stop builders putting up warehouses that are left empty. Should put a clause in contract if they don't have tenant that provides jobs for locals within 12 months they pay a fee.*

*You need to make sure you don't become a suburb of Birmingham. Road access is a priority especially at the north of Tamworth. Another route over the rivers would make difference.*

*Protecting the environment is extremely important. Tamworth has lots of parkland and this has been a wonderful resource for the community during the pandemic.*

*Not sure the environment is being protected sufficiently with all the development taking place.*

*Small High Street traders (particularly shops) should be encouraged with incentives to set up in a manner to trade on the internet to reduce their dependency on passing street trade.*

*Whilst it is important to have new industry and jobs, plus increased housing and residents, there is already a huge strain on schools, health provision and the roads. These need to be improved to cope with increased residents*

*The council appears to me to allow businesses to build anywhere and everywhere with little regard for local residents.*

*A decent aspiration, but after a decade of cuts to local authorities and the social and economic impact of Covid very difficult to achieve.*

*The location of Tamworth benefits hugely from the new industrial developments around M42, J10 and this should be widely promoted. Ventura Park is a huge success, bringing people into Tamworth. Perhaps the town centre is never going to be sustainable in its current form.*

*House building alone is not the answer and any further building should be done in complete cooperation with neighbouring authorities. It is not acceptable to build new properties on land that will increase demand on the service of a neighbouring authority. Is there a master plan? I think not. Everyone, even if they live in a densely populated area are entitled to have some green space and clean air around them. To ensure a happy balance we need to work out what we can be turned into*

*accommodation before expanding into green belt. There are masses of empty offices and shops at this time. Although apartments and flats may not command such a high rate income, neither do buildings that stand empty for years. We are running about 20 years behind in providing this type of accommodation which is much in demand from the young. The days of the traditional town centre and shopping precinct is over and one of the best ways to preserve the best of what we have left is to move people in.*

*The key point here is the balance between environment and development. We can't lose sight of Tamworth's heritage, history and green belt, for the sake of profits to be made of building houses, with consideration of what the infrastructure of the town can handle.*

*Pressure should be put on Lichfield to stop putting their housing stock on the Tamworth boundaries, which forces Tamworth to deal with the population increase whilst Lichfield gets the income from council tax - if the growth is there, it should be owned by Tamworth Council as custodians.*

*More facilities to attract people on the fringes of the town would make an enormous difference. I think building a ring road around the outskirts, (as in the local plan), would bring massive benefits and reduce traffic levels around the town. The improvement in environment would be massive. Looking at the town as it is today, I think that there is little opportunity to expand the town much more without major redevelopment.*

*there is so much residential growth planned, it can only be accepted if the council puts in the road infrastructure also services / facilities your taking the fees from the builders so they need to be spent in the correct manner, also invest ready for the council tax to come in for the new properties,*

*Concentrate on improving what is here already. The town centre needs to attract young people in the day time to spend. I'm only in my mid-thirties and hate going in to the town. The rents and rates are too high for small businesses to survive, but small business is what will attract people*

*The infrastructure should not impact on rural areas. It should also be considerate to the highways and the additional footfall/traffic in the area if roads cannot be adapted to take the strain. Additional shops and schools need to be factored in as well.*

*Housing is a priority, but there is too much building on Lichfield District Authority land that residents will then need to access Tamworth's infrastructure, thus overloading it*

*The growth needs to be carefully managed, to many new homes will result in the infrastructure, Doctors, Dentists, Roads , shops etc. being unable to cope with demand and then the quality of life of the area is affected .*

*The previous can only happen with a strong economy.*

*Economic prosperity and high levels of employment are clearly important to ensure that residents can afford a reasonable standard of living, make choices and avoid*

*poverty. The council can help to do this at strategic level but the business community also has an important role to play in providing good quality jobs*

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

*I think the key problems can't be solved by government alone, but individuals, companies and 3rd sector working in partnership with government.*

*Not enough police on the streets to stop the congregations of anti-social people in the town*

*Tell us what this means in practice*

*More platitudes.*

*We use too many contractors to work in the town the contracts are too long and the work of poor quality*

*This sounds like an opportunity to give council services (and money) to councillors' mates. Transparency, 100% transparency without hiding behind "commercial sensitivity" is essential.*

*Agree*

*Sadly you pay no attention to the wishes of the community unless it happens to be General Elections*

*This makes you wonder why the youth centre doesn't operate as it used to (too much red tape) Youth and community centres around the towns boroughs need fixing up and become open again (i noticed the community centre on the Leyfields was in disrepair) and i know that disabled clubs used to operate there, but for a number of years now, they sadly have not.... why?? I would also like to mention the police station - why is it still closed to the public?*

*You say "a well-earned reputation". Who with? This is a very vague statement and one that everyone can agree with but lacks specifics. What does it mean and who do you do cooperate with and for what?*

*Far too many disputes in neighbourhoods regarding inconsiderate parking, untidy gardens, drug use, litter...councils need to start clamping down on it all...more visual inspections needed*

*It is important to not use private companies who are out to make a profit and not have the vulnerable at the heart of what they do.*

*It is important to work collaboratively with other agencies but it needs to be an efficient collaboration and not one that creates more bureaucracy and red tape and, inevitably, costs more.*



*Please explain what work you have done to date to encourage the development of purposeful and meaningful partnerships to protect vulnerable people and enhance neighbourhoods? There does not feel any public knowledge or awareness of such partnerships.*

*Particularly looking after the vulnerable*

*Consultation should be with more locally involved people rather than outside bodies even SCC seems to have very little understanding of the nature of Tamworth.*

*An approach that brings the community with you via consultation has more chance of succeeding*

*Not enough being done to prevent car crime.*

*Talking is one thing. Action is required that it transparent to all. All senior/ executive level TBC meetings should be broadcast live on local radio. Local surveys should be the norm*

*I've yet to see any development from the council, all they do is waste money.*

*Not clear what you are saying here. Sounds vague. I am happy to use private organisations to assist in delivering council services but not where councillors have a vested interest in those organisations*

*So the teen shelters enhance the neighbourhood I think not they are usually full of pit smoking louts who then go round trying to break into cars nearby to feed their habit pull them down now*

*Hence the reason I mentioned reopening Youth Centres and Community Centres Again.*

*The contractor's the council use never communicate with tenants about what they are doing. When contacted council for assistance they too have no idea what is going on*

*Agree with the approach set out, would like to see examples of this.*

*Voluntary groups for parks and recreation to be encouraged*

*Laudable but challenging.*

*More "in person" residents and business consultations, when Covid allows.*

*Partnership and collaboration is always essential and agree should be at the heart of the council's approach to communities.*

*This sounds like a load of waffle with no real focus or direction in how to achieve this. But pleased to see projection of the vulnerable however that may be.*

*A number of years ago refuse was joined with Lichfield. The council should look at more opportunities for a) trading the services of the council out to other authorities or companies - i.e. you do not provide a service to business for refuse. Millions of*

pounds is going out of the borough to the likes of Biffa. b) Joining up with other authorities to cost share a service like refuse.

*But a few floral traffic islands is not the way forward.*

*I am not an advocate of outsourcing if a company can make a profit by working for the council, why does the council not have the ability to do their job*

*Don't know how you are doing this*

*Agencies and voluntary organisations support what is on offer, although I do not believe they are still fully recognised and fully supported locally and get side tracked for larger organisations from out of the area.*

*Work with vulnerable people is a priority to bring them out of this vulnerable status*

*Home-Start has been in Tamworth for over 20 years, we continue to see collaborative work between all sectors, especially in the current crisis, everyone pulling together for the benefit of the town as a whole.*

*Tamworth Council have introduced Samaritans to various organisations whom we now have partnerships with.*

*There is a lot that the council cannot undertake itself, because the skills lie elsewhere, but the volunteer section who support the community need financial and advisory support to do so, which the council is well placed to provide. Tamworth B.C. has a good track record, but needs to press central Government to restore the funding to local governments that has been taken away over the years, even though the needs of the community have increased.*

*Partnership working is to be encouraged, especially when resources are limited or reducing and need is growing. However, the council needs to ensure that partnership working doesn't become an end in itself and should regularly check that positive results are being achieved which are proportionate to the resources and efforts put in by the partner agencies. Partnership sounds nice and something good but it needs to make a real difference. What about the involvement of residents themselves? The priority talks about 'delivering positive outcomes for residents' - how about 'with residents'. A priority around motivating residents to take a proactive role in caring for their community and each other would be a good one; Covid has prompted many residents to get more involved and reach out within their neighbourhoods and communities. How can the council keep this spirit of co-operation going?*

## **To create a new and developing vision for the continued evolution of Tamworth, including a town centre fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

*I think it's a difficult task to try and plan the town centre. Maybe focusing on it more as a leisure destination and reusing some commercial space as residential would be a better approach, I would love to see the church square developed into a cafe culture zone similar to French market places - with outside eating and give more variety of international restaurants than we have currently. I'd love to see Middle Eastern, African, far eastern culture represented as well as the current Indian and Chinese. With the right kind of encouragement, and a long term plan it could really be a pull into the town from across the midlands. If you combine static restaurants with mobile catering events with live music as we've seen a few of already, it may grow into something akin to what I've seen at Digbeth dining club.*

*You've got a historic town with magnificent attractions. But the town is filthy and the provision of toilets is deplorable. Shame on you*

*Stop car parking charges to encourage people to use the town centre*

*More platitudes but please keep the traditional character of the town centre - the people do not want any glass hung on steel rubbish.*

*Do not spend millions on very expensive retail premises. Think about it, shopping has changed*

*This is imperative housing economy etc. all evolves from a thriving town centre younger visionaries needed look at other models Lichfield / Ashby etc. need to think outside box not just about parking charges these surveys meetings are excellent way to canvas wider spectrum of ideas*

*We have heard this for a few years now we need action not words the Assembly Rooms are fine but out on the road is a disgrace .we need a proper bus station not old smelly busses sitting on the side of the road spread around the town centre*

*The shops in Gungate should never have been demolished*

*I think that Tamworth should enhance its historical importance, such as it being former capital of Mercia, its heritage, such as the Castle, the Peel connection, etc.*

*We need a golf course. I'm not aware that Tamworth council had an old vision for the town. Any vision, needs publicising, and not just on an obscure website. Similarly, what plans for Gungate? The Gungate precinct was demolished at least 10 years ago. A bit of action is needed not another vision.*

*Its true shopping in the high street is significantly down so more needs to be made of venues for eating drinking and entertainment in the town centre*

*Need a radical re think of our town centre and not just build more shops that will stay empty. Shopping has changed and the centre needs to be a space that draws people in via other means such a leisure and culture creating footfall and a sense of community. There is a lot of talk but very little action.*

*Sadly too many councillors have vested interests in new builds. Too many houses not enough infrastructure*

*High streets are going to change more and more we will all have to accept that and try to find a new way for them to exist not just places for retail*

*The cost of running a Business in the Town Centre (mainly because of Business Rates) makes businesses stay out of the town. Making the Town Centre more desirable and offering bigger and better opportunities must be a priority. Why don't we have more restaurants and a wider variety of shops???*

*The old Coop site Ninian Way has been derelict for too long. It needs to be redeveloped without further delay.*

*Stop using in words like "offer". Use ordinary English! I'm afraid that I see no evidence so far that the Council is "well placed to lead the development" from past projects. The Gungate area is crucial for our future town centre. Get this wrong and it will be labelled as great a disaster as the 1960s architecture such as Middle Entry and Home Bargains. The new build's architecture needs to be of the highest quality not utilitarian and cheap looking.*

*Yes. This has to be a priority to bring businesses and money to Tamworth.*

*Less charity shops. Let closed shops, to be rented out at a reasonable price for a set time.*

*The town centre is finished if you must build houses maybe that's the best place for them now. It's dull, dreary, dirty, provides nothing really, car parks are a disgrace and too expensive. Only time I visit is for doctors and dentists or if I have to go to the bank because the app or online banking won't allow me to do something. I would use the assembly rooms. I won't go to restaurants or pubs I don't feel safe at night in the town as the behaviour and language is disgusting. The library no longer really offers much choice the old library was better in my childhood days for choice and ambience.*

*Clean up the town centre. Encourage decent shops and get rid of all the tat and phone shops. Look at places like Shipton on Stour and see how they do it! Reduce or eliminate all parking charges. Make use of the river for leisure such as punting or boating like Stratford. If the council hadn't desecrated the town in the 60,s it would now be tourist spot like Stratford!*

*There are too few variety of shops in the town centre, with banks reducing hours or closing branches there are less and less reasons to go into town centres when you can get everything you need out of town without paying parking*

*To develop the town centre a long term plan is required. Many choices are available. Housing, Retail, Tourism are some that could be chosen. But it is vital that any long term plans include constant consultations with the people of Tamworth.*

*The town centre is an embarrassment which is such a pity given its historical importance. Please make the town centre more of a cultural leisure site. Encourage more antiques centres, quality markets (flowers/crafts/art) and restaurants etc. to*

*capitalise on the tourism pull of the castle. The cheap nasty shops bring in a certain crowd and often the centre feels chavvy and threatening. We should be competing with the likes of Lichfield and Stratford upon Avon where people purposefully go the centre.*

*Work with Staffordshire County Council to lower rates for small business so that the Town Centre can offer what Ventura can't*

*Tamworth could be a lovely market town if you followed the format of similar places that seem to be doing it right with independent shops, restaurants and cafes etc. The problem with Tamworth is that there are too many empty shops, too many shops of a similar type (e.g. phone shops) and there is really not much to come into the town centre for. The Castle Grounds area is lovely but the town centre is a complete contrast and does not encourage people to shop there.*

*The potential has in recent years not been fully grasped by the Council. Any plans for regeneration depends on real funding availability post Covid. The Town Centre overall is shabby.*

*The town centre is the beating heart of the town and unfortunately most of the active business has been stripped out of the town centre shops and migrated to Ventura Park. Councils should seriously consider dropping the business rates, not just for the first 6 months, but forever. Particularly for smaller family type businesses and slightly increase them for the national companies like Wilkinson's, Home Bargains, Costa coffee etc. The bigger companies should subsidise the smaller independents, which would encourage more people into town and everyone's profits will rise. Also parking should be free for two hours in everyday, for people to call in, do some banking and grab some lunch.*

*the rent is too high for small/independent shops to exist*

*I think the town centre definitely needs revamping but not at the cost of tearing down the buildings that have character and history making it another heartless town centre. We should be using our heritage and fantastic location (centre of the country, two converging rivers, Mercian history, castle, castle grounds etc.) as a to 'build' on. If the new ideas are sympathetic and sit well alongside what we already have we could become a stand-alone place where people want to visit instead of a town centre that looks like any other. And once it's gone, it's gone*

*The whole heart of this town is a heritage asset which has been given a low priority in the past. This should not be preserved in aspic but should be respected and utilized to take the town forward to invite a new audience while providing innovative ways of interpretation. Technology offers ways forward that we may not understand but which future generations will. Tamworth has areas which are quite green but the centre with the exception of the Castle grounds is lacking. The Assembly Rooms development and outside area is the exception. More could be made to enhance the area by the Church. Re-generation does not always need to mean taking down and re-building that is an error from the past. We need to learn from it.*

*The town centre is key however I don't feel we can return to the commercial centre it once was we need to develop the centre for the modern era*

*Town centre needs replanning carefully for regeneration*

*Agree 100%. The town centre is important for visitors and businesses.*

*Council planning has killed the town centre*

*We need to make the town a place to dwell in, enjoy live music events, theatre, a good family offer and enjoy the heritage. We need to play on these strengths. Events are huge for the town and further investment/support needs to be provided to ensure that Tamworth town centre continues to be a place that tourists and local communities want to visit and celebrate community pride.*

*More residential properties by converting empty premises.*

*We love Tamworth town centre and are concerned that visitors may decline due to shops closing. I'm sure more people would visit if there was more free parking.*

*Use Lichfield as a benchmark. This is a quality visiting experience just 4 miles away. We seem to be on race to the bottom*

*The council are ruining Tamworth. Yet they don't upkeep the roads, some of the major roads are appalling, and some of the side roads are just as bad. My road hasn't been resurfaced and I've lived there 12 years, it's an awful surface. You are not thinking of the people, just your pockets.*

*Fewer shops needed. More accommodation and leisure in town to replace it*

*The town is dying and needs to be revitalised, we all agree. Bringing back some of the properties to a residential use and expanding on the café culture hopefully will increase footfall and in turn entice unique businesses back to the town centre. Use Church Square for traditional entertainment and live music on a regular basis. Bring back battle of the bands etc. etc.*

*The town centre is a joke rubbish shops it needs redevelopment*

*It's important to realise the town centre needs to change dramatically and quickly. I hardly visit it as it is dying on its feet. It needs less retail and more other uses and homes.*

*Any plans must be realistic and sustainable*

*I think you would have more footfall in the town centre if parking was free - otherwise people will visit Ventura instead, where parking does not need to be paid for.*

*I hope the community is thought of not just the council's bank balance*

*Add to this, extra days where we have 'Special Market Days' midweek and more Activities and Events in the Castle Grounds and we'd be on to a Winner.*

*For decades the council has no idea how to regenerate the town centre, the market is dire with hardly any stalls. How much money & time wasted has been spent on all these statements which the council change regularly costing more money*

*This is where bringing residents back to the Town Centre needs to start. No more retail, and creation of a dedicated market square rather than down the town centre*

*Great change is needed*

*The town centre is in need of regeneration, perhaps with more restaurants, cafes, accommodation when the current outbreak situation is resolved.*

*Tamworth's long history could be marketed strongly to enhance more tourism.*

*I think this needs to happen and not just spoke about, councils should work with landlords to ensure their premises/buildings are looking good outside, we should encourage more food/drink outlets along Colehill to attract more people into the town, not just in the day but in the night, as a manager of a business we spent £500k to update our venue, so the council needs to look at a plan to encourage more*

*The town centre needs to encourage more shops to open or small businesses that can employ people. Smaller individual businesses should be encouraged with discounted parking and public transport for Tamworth residents*

*I fear the horse has already bolted. However, support for small sustainable businesses in the town centre would be positive.*

*The future of the town centre was very difficult before Covid but now on line retail has boomed, it may be time for some painful decisions. Residential, tourist and hospitality rather than a shopping hub.*

*The development of town centres needs to reflect the age in which we live while preserving our heritage and traditions.*

*What is your real vision for the high street how can you fill the empty shops? A high street fully of solely independent business all born and bred in Tamworth? Leave the retail giants out and set rents at a reasonable rate so the little guys can fill the shops and give a unique high street of talented Tamworth businesses. What can business sell that you can't get online? Why not bring the traditional market to the empty retail shops. Cheap rent and full shops, is better than empty shops and no rent. A real 21st century usp.*

*However, the council should be very careful to take a wide and balanced view of the situation. Please don't just listen to 'place management' companies and 'business improvement district' agencies. There are a lot of very wide ranging solutions out there, which are perhaps more fitting to Tamworth. We've voted on a BID once, it would be very wrong just to keep bringing this back to steam roller it through just because the council was influenced to. There's a lot of anti BID sentiment across the country at present, not least because it is a basic tax on the businesses. There's been a lot of BIDs wound up / ended. There's a lot of other options, for instance Bury St Edmunds has successfully done a 'no cost BID' to replace its BID. Similarly, the 'discount / loyalty' card keeps being pushed by certain vociferous individuals. But it's*

*not gaining traction - why? There's not a desire for it, it doesn't fit all businesses and it costs the business owner to be part of it as well as discount*

*You only need to walk around the main streets to be able to realise, the town as it is , is not fit for any future resource. It's been raped of its old buildings bar a few and we are left with half empty shops and offices that attract no one.*

*many councils are not helping the town centre by preventing access, restricting parking, so you need to CLEAN the town, the many unoccupied properties need to be freshened up & promoted for rental, help with independent rental, encourage property owners to give realistic rental values, allow traffic and parking,*

*You need to engage with young people on it though, what do the late teenagers and young adults want? What's popular in Birmingham City centre?*

*Tamworth town centre is depressing to go around, rates and rent in the town centre still command a high price, but the footfall does not. The Council could look into ways to create a more thriving environment, with the amenities it offers. The Castle and some surrounding areas are our treasure, which seems to get overlooked.*

*Tamworth town centre needs to have a combination of people living there and independent businesses to create interest*

*However the costs, rates etc. need to be careful monitored we are already losing some prestigious retailers from the area and the centre of town is in danger of becoming a ghost town*

*From observation, there has been a noticeable increase in town centre footfall since the easing of lockdown compared to pre-Covid-19. This is particularly so on market days, and to the bargain food and household retail outlets. This has probably been fuelled by those who now work from home and not commuting into Birmingham and other larger areas, so have adjusted their shopping habits. As many of those businesses who put their workers to work from home are abandoning their city centre offices and encouraging permanent home working, there could be a need in the town for small office hubs to provide shared space for those who need an alternative workspace to the kitchen table, and would prefer to meet other people during the working day. The business/creative area in the town centre could be developed with this in mind.*

*I don't think it's clear that the town centre is 'an important resource for the town as a whole', please clarify why the Council thinks it's important.*



## Comments about organisation priorities

### To be financially stable

*Are the council allowed to get involved in profit making enterprises or are they limited in their scope to monitor and control? I'm unaware. But what would potentially be feasible is a community energy project. Identify the opportunities (there's massive space in the flood planes for a combines solar and low drop water power scheme, using the old mill site, but would be low output. However combined with battery storage and selling energy only in the peak period many renewable schemes are now starting to become viable as "dispatchable power". Basically the grid is notified of what capacity is available and this is release at a set time.*

*You've failed*

*Not sure I believe this. The failed Icelandic bank investments (where did that cash go when you got it back)? The 'Olympic sized swimming pool' that never emerged, then was sold for a quid. The failed running of the golf course and subsequent sale for housing, even after saying it would never be housing. Need I go on?*

*Do not look at raising revenue from extortionate business rates and rents*

*Where is the money from the sale of the golf course, why has this not been put to good use Ankerside needs better shops with a better atmosphere someone with a bit of drive is needed*

*If these "commercial approaches" are to sell off assets like the golf course and sports centre, then you need to re-focus. Are you planning to sell the newly renovated Assembly Rooms? The council has shown a distinct lack of imagination when it comes to generating new sources of revenue.*

*DON'T make Taxes too much for Business, encourage business to prosper. Parking Charges are Too Expensive. Make it £1 for the Day and more people from out of town will be encouraged to visit. We have so much to offer, but make it so Undesirable when Parking Tickets are placed on cars for Bonfire Night and Special Events. Do the opposite, make it free parking for those occasions and people Make it so people will want to return and make Tamworth the Pride of the Midlands, as it used to be the Capital of Mercia. will return..... The Money will follow for both the Council and the Businesses in the town. We ALL Prosper.*

*Surely what has been written above should be nothing new but what any council should have done all along?*

*You would probably save money if you didn't tender out services to companies who clearly aren't qualified to do the jobs. Services were far superior when trained council staff were employed*

*Get rid of one councillors in each ward why do we need 3 anyway*

*Money could be saved in certain areas...fly tipping...put camera traps on Clearing up after travellers...immediate action needs taking as soon as they appear More emphasis on giving fines for littering, dog mess etc. which are on the increase*

*Put a cap on what councillors can claim in expenses and ensure any unnecessary expenditure is stopped*

*Need to live within means and therefore need to look at new ways of increasing revenue*

*Vitaly important that the books are balanced and you don't spend more than you can afford - TBC and SCC should remember that the money they get in from the taxpayer is not there to be wasted and they should be working hard to get the best value for money on behalf of the taxpayer.*

*Have they?*

*Fully agree the need to harness all potential sources of funding. Why are you stating adoption of commercial approaches now, surely these have been in place all along?*

*Spend less money on flowers and more on tree planting*

*It is important but a fine balance between money and preserving Tamworth as Tamworth. It's very easy when money is everything to lose sight of what's important. Please don't make Tamworth into a 'Blackpool' place so that it draws in people to extract money from them but then leaving nowhere for people who live in Tamworth. An example: Planters used to be a garden centre for buying garden items, now it's become more of a restaurant, play area that also sells gardening things on the side. It's thriving and making good money but its original criteria has changed. Please don't make Tamworth a place where visitors are more desirable than the locals*

*Especially in the light of Covid you cannot move forward without being financially stable.*

*I expect you to do this every day. Keep making those decisions that are best for everyone.*

*There is no real transparency of spend or governance. You are unaccountable. Your proven track record should be scored by 1,000 local residents not a self-award.*

*Get rid of the overpaid people, and spend the money on more useful things, like police, or making the town and surrounding area's look better. There are so many over grown areas and the grass gets mowed but its left on the top of the grass to blow all around the area.*

*Nothing wrong with joint ventures.*

*How can the council be a trusted custodian when several million pounds were lost in a foreign bank crash the council needs trimming and the staff need to be more productive?*

*In order to deliver the services we need but keep council tax increases limited.*

*It is important but not to the detriment of community groups that funding has been removed from.*

*Why has it taken radical changes from central government to make the Council to see this is something that should have been looked at Years Ago?*

*Stop wasting money on statements & changes that cost more money. You can also save money by stop sending out rent statements with all the other information that's put in*

*Plans have to be sustainable.*

*I trust this is a statement of the blessed obvious. It is what the Council is obliged to do.*

*Residents need to be kept informed of the difficult financial choices that are required as a result of Covid. Unfortunately it is not reasonable to expect the Council to be able to provide the usual level of services without additional funding.*

*Obviously funding has to be managed and revenue used effectively but sometimes a little investment without any immediate return is useful. Keeping our streets clean, managing green spaces and plants are expensive but sets a standard of "This Town Cares" clearing graffiti as swiftly as possible sets a standard. It is good that residents do litter picks but where I live, human excrement has been left in the alleyway for two weeks now. I don't expect litter pickers to take this on board. Small prizes and rewards for people who keep their garden or pavements tidy and litter free would be good rather than continued threat of prosecution. I only live within five minutes of town but it is quite apparent where town cleaning ends. Commercial approached yes, but investment in a couple of employees to become our street environment advisors, carer would make some parts of this town better places to live.*

*You need to listen to the commercial world in Tamworth and think like a businesses to be able to be financially stable. What assets do you have and are you making the most of them?*

*I have stated elsewhere about trading your services. Take the commercial refuse business away by doing it better and cheaper. We have fantastic gardeners producing amazing displays. Do other towns want to buy from Tamworth? Do pubs etc. want to buy from TBC rather than their pub supplier?*

*If you mean selling off the council assets, I think enough has been done already. Every business needs assets to be able to borrow and survive. If you have none then you are bankrupt. You have to run the council as a business, I fail to see any other way it can survive.*

*Remove red tape, encourage council staff to become active, not complacent in all there business proactive, not complacent, Ban Offshore investments which have failed for Tamworth in the past, only invest in Tamworth, not elsewhere*

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

*As well as councils providing the mandatory training, I would expect individuals to keep themselves up to date too. Potentially this is a signposting activity for the council - with an internal wiki where staff can link to relevant training and knowledge available for free. With the wealth of internet training now available it's not necessary to go on a £2500 5 day course when a few hours self-study for £20 on udemy can achieve the same results.*

*The town doesn't need the huge number of staff hiding away in your Marmion House ivory tower. Especially the overpaid, lady Corporate Management Team. Put more lower paid staff out on the streets keeping the town looking pristine*

*Local authority staff always bear the brunt of cuts from an employee perspective. Restructure and prioritise*

*Councillors /staff need to be forward thinking not old fashioned and at least live and socialised in the town!*

*Fine words that don't mean a lot to normal residents. We see work men doing a poor job "we're contractors we've only been told to do this no more nothing to do with us" "the standard answer*

*Most info is available on line*

*Nobody listens to the public the council need to speak to people in the town centre and see what they want not everyone can drive*

*Training provides the right skills and this can come from both the Private and Public Sectors. Yes, it is Important, but doesn't necessarily need to be a Priority for the Council.*

*One cannot disagree with this. Now ensure that the correct training is available.*

*Technology is changing at an incredible rate but not everyone is changing with it. Elected Members and all members of staff should have a training plan and be encouraged to develop their skills in any way possible. It should also be made clear that service delivery is shaped to those not having electronic skills resources knowledge or interest.*

*Work with other councils and not employ expensive training companies*

*It is such a shame that these skills are not met with easy access for residents. For example, why are the offices not set up to accept payments from residents? I don't know of any successful companies that don't like to receive payments in a form that is convenient to its' customers.*

*Skills can be bought in, or brought in through partnerships, to supplement and replace employees where appropriate.*

*I would have expected this to be happening anyway*

*Skills are important but so is local knowledge. Employees need to have an up to date knowledge of the local areas. Council officers and members in the past would walk areas to gain greater understanding. I acknowledge that pressures on a modern council are diverse and ever changing but you cannot develop or go forward by merely looking at a map or reading a progressive report.*

*Elected members are anyone who is popular at the time and to many people you get what you give. Staff wise you need to make sure you have the right people to do the job they should do and get rid of those who don't have the right capability.*

*Regarding visitors/tourists, I don't think enough is made of the beautiful historic assets that we still have left to offer. Much more could be done to promote this aspect of the town.*

*Justify their existence. The private sector is suffering and the public sector should follow suit. Details of all salary, benefits and terms and conditions including pension commitments should be published. Prove you are getting more efficient year on year*

*The counsellors are a waste of time, pure money grabbing!!!*

*Getting the right person in the correct role is of paramount importance in any business.*

*I would prefer more shared services with other councils and commissioning services from the private sector.*

*Perhaps some members of your team should take note of this statement you've given and listen to people from the community when they ask for support or help with. There are some of your staff that dismiss certain enquiries without even looking into the enquiry. That must stop.*

*I highly doubt anyone in the council has all the information when I have spoken to someone they knew nothing about what I was contacting them. They couldn't even refer me to someone that could help*

*At present some council staff do not have all the relevant knowledge and it is very frustrating when you need to access a resource and you keep being redirected from one department to another.*

*People and their skills and development are important; however, ultimately it is outcomes that matter.*

*Training for staff and elected members is vital. Also experienced staff should be valued. Their knowledge shouldn't be underestimated.*

*This is important, and you need to make sure the community is clear on the roles you have and who to speak to regarding the issues. At the moment I see the council as a faceless entity and not a welcoming place to get the information or action needed.*

*As I have said elsewhere, get a rounded view. Don't be blinkered to one particular solution because one specialist told you it was a good idea. Take a view of all sides so you do indeed have the right skills, culture and knowledge of all solutions.*

*Employees are the lifeblood of any business ... Mostly, yours always seem to be busy and carrying out their jobs well and conscientiously. But as with any government body, there will be parts that are ineffective and wasteful. This needs to be stopped.*

*I have struggled with Tamworth council staff not being trained or experience in there industry, you either train them yourself or employ experienced staff, lack of interest & complacency is unacceptable*

*The staff are the key element of the Council, local companies could support the staff in Employee Assisted Programmes, again this is offered out of town, and therefore not supporting local companies.*

*I think the front line staff, especially at the Councils 'Front window' should reflect the Councils Views on respect for the public in general and people in need in particular*

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

*Fine words but meaningless and unspecific*

*Better customer service*

*Who comes up with these statements??? Does the Council understand their own Mandate??? It's all well saying these things, but you have to deliver what you say and so far I don't believe that you have done what you've stated here.*

*The increased availability of services on line should be a priority.*

*Having information to the standards of service that residents can expect is completely different from actually delivering it - you can promise all sorts of things but if you don't deliver then there is no point as it is all just soundbites!*

*I thought council tax covered all residents on a cost sharing basis. Is it an intention to introduce "menu" type charges so we only pay for resources we use as individuals? I have to pay for many services I don't use so why should I pay for garden waste removal?*

*I have not looked to access the information, however if I did, I am sure it would be readily available and clear to understand.*

*To gain trust transparency is essential*

*This area is how the public because confident in the council.*

*You should be aiming for this as a norm anyway*

*You should be doing this as standard. Where is the vision!*

*Be accountable and take internal when you are not. Again 1,000 residents should tell you this.*

*This is a farce, we don't get rubbish/waste collected over stupid petty things, yet all the waste goes to the same place.*

*Get others to deliver services on your behalf who are specialists and customer focused.*

*The council don't reply very quickly to the e-mail provided for enquiries - would it be better to provide different addresses for relevant departments?*

*Think this should also include maximising digital opportunities so residents can do more online*

*This is needed*

*What matters is the quality of services.*

*Small "bites" of useful information could be included with regular mail shots - council tax, electoral etc.*

*I've always found the council employees most helpful, but I'm fairly articulate and well educated and not homeless.*

*Absolute waffle. Where are you having these standards of service? Online? On social Media? On the phone? Where will these standards be listed so the public know if you're achieving them? Help reduce waste demand? What does this mean? That enquiries made by the public are wasteful? Standards of service are great and staff should all work to the same standards, but what about actually getting stuff done as a higher priority?*

*Create and publish an operating model covering all of the council's activities. Create a bronze silver gold standard. Publish where you are on the grade and the plan to get to / sustain gold.*

*To date I can see your services are still not back up to speed. This needs to be addressed quickly as majority of people need to access facilities and not everyone in the town has a mobile phone or access to the internet. Open your offices.*

*Too much talking & not enough action is the worst failure with the current administration*

*Don't know how you are doing this*

*Clear information which is easily understood will save money in the long term*

*Also need to support the staff who sometimes get unfair criticism because they follow the rules, thinking around housing.*

*Essential.*

*What is being wasted currently owing to a lack of / poor promotion of standards of service? It is helpful for people to know what to expect, what services can be*

*provided and what can't be provided, how quickly and where they can channel complaints.... but avoid making an industry of setting standards! Keep to a small number of simple standards that can be measured and reported on. Not too many otherwise the process of monitoring them will become too onerous and nobody will look at them anyway!*

### **To ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge**

*IT would be nice if this was easier to find. I've read some of the council meeting minutes, but it's not really in an accessible format. It may worth seeing if there's technology available that can break this into a database format. I'm aware of a project in Taiwan where citizens volunteers to digitise and catalogue some 20,000 pages of unstructured data. But think that was a national effort not local government,*

*I was once told by one of your Corporate Directors that the CMT first decides what it wants to do and only looks for evidence to support their choices*

*Please place the wishes of residents first when it comes to decision making.*

*Surveys council meetings important to canvas opinion but at the meetings found councillors closed off to certain suggestions and criticisms. Don't make statistics fit what council wants ask what public want first see if it's viable. Need to engage younger residents and successful business owners. Regularly volunteered for panel only been sent 1 questionnaire. Open meeting debates excellent.*

*Why don't you ask the people on the street what they want to see? Take to the street don't sit round a table listen more to the people like the idea for a bus station I've heard this numerous times*

*When using feedback and customer comments to drive decision making you risk bias towards the views of the moaners, the vocal, and the connected. The council employs experts. Provided that checks are made to ensure that these experts are truly independent and expert in their field, then these people/employees/organisations should be the key driver for decision making.*

*This needs to be accepted at ALL Levels in order to make this work. Too often this breaks down because of people within the Council believing that this doesn't apply to them. Those people will need rooting out and replacing/demoting because of their actions, where encouraging those that make a difference (as any good business would do)*

*In order to do this you need sufficiently qualified staff to undertake this task so that is available to council officers and elected councillors.*

*All very well but do you actually act on the feedback given e.g. housing, development, litter, and roads? People are up in arms about all of these yet seem to be completely ignored. Especially on the housing applications it seems council members are behind most of those in some form or another.*

*All information should be made available to anyone.*



*Important providing you actually act on the information - no point in countless reports being produced that say absolutely nothing or that tell you something that you already know and the average person on the street could use their common sense to tell you.*

*Good providing you use factual and unbiased information*

*This is good. I would rather the Council uses the evidence to improve the ecology, environment & sustainability of the Tamworth area and at the moment Friends of the Earth says Tamworth should aim to have 50% of people commuting by public transport, cycling, and walking by 2030 and currently we only have 17% which is pretty poor and more needs to be done! Currently Tamworth produces 11,563 MWh renewable energy per year. The best similar local authority areas produce 70,356 MWh. Reaching this level is a minimum target to be achieved rapidly, and all local authorities should look to do much more.*

*It makes sense to talk to many sectors*

*The public need to think that their feedback is of value and after consultation they should receive an update or acknowledgement. It is too easy to ignore people and shows disregard if acknowledgement is slow or not given whether it be by phone, mail etc...*

*Again stating the obvious. It's what you are paid to do.*

*I think this is not being done, too many personal interests from council members*

*Make sure that the decision have the experience, ability and impartiality to make the right decision for Tamworth as a whole.*

*Ask the public their honest opinions instead of making the decisions by the fat cats who want to get richer*

*No point swimming against the tide.*

*If the planning of roads and other features around Tamworth are anything to go by with regard to decision making then you need to start again from scratch*

*Evidence based decision making is key.*

*Again, I have answered this in a Previous Question. However, you still don't seem to listen about many things, unless it's in the Councils Interest and not from the Customers point of view.*

*Of course well informed decision making is a priority. Why would it otherwise be?*

*Unfortunately only the interested or those who are prone to moan will give feedback. It would be interested to see what you get from street surveys or house to house surveys. If this is affordable.*

*Just do it. Evidence is fine and you must get a staggering amount of feedback, but seriously stats and facts and evidence is only useful if you actually act on it and*

*make changes. Don't prioritise getting more evidence, feedback and data, act on what you already have!*

*Very very important! As I said for a different answer, don't follow the BID route because place management specialists tell you to. It really got my goat that at an early business owners engagement session there were so many people from out of the town telling us Lichfield BID does x, Birmingham does y, Chamber does z you must do the same. No, let's strike our own path, find our own way, and make our own choice of solutions that are best for our town. Create a town centre business owners group which does not have their voice diluted by people from miles out of town - why is buzzard valley and the people from Appleby Magna and Polesworth involved with the town centre? Why are landlords of flats involved just because they are a 'business owner'? It stifles voices, stifles debate - and steamrollers us in the wrong directions. .*

*Not to do this would reckless, surely?*

*Again, too much red tape & not enough proactive action,*

*We have been approached in the past to gain intelligence from harder to reach groups, we will happily continue to support with this.*

*Information and knowledge about the local community is key to knowing what services/organisations are needed in the locality.*

*Essential.*

*Evidence is key to good decision making*

## **Comments on planned level of spending**

*Money is always an issue. Leisure, heritage and arts is always a difficult one to get right. Should it be charged to the users of the service, or should it be made free so more people benefit. The answer is somewhere in the middle - where possibly residents get a discount, whereas outside visitors pay full price. With concessions for those on low incomes and benefits. Those that can pay, do, and those who haven't contributed through their council tax pay more. I'd love to see matched funding made possible to local charities working to tackle local issues, where if people are willing to donate, either in cash or in time, the council can contribute more. This would be a stronger call to volunteers to give their time. Hours donated could be matched by financial support, either from local funds, or national funds but with backing from the council. Any chance for the council to raise additional revenue from commercial activities should be investigated, and worked on with partners.*

*You'll do whatever you please, like it or not*

*Can we have a police force back please?*

*Council should constantly refer to local business and support local where possible by saving money wherever it can are you using local business for all services? How much of council spend on facilities at Marmion House for example is kept in Tamworth? Must tackle private landlords. Must not shy away from criticism. Please continue to canvas opinions do much more of this. There are so many young dynamic business owners and residents talk to them, it's not just about parking charges everyone seems to be obsessed with!!*

*This comment is more or less the same as the question above, I would love Tamworth to prosper, and I'm sorry to say it would take an awful lot of money.*

*Now is not a time for cutbacks. Your focus should be on increasing sources of income so that spending can be increased.*

*Don't feel any monies should be reduced at this time*

*It will be very difficult for the council budget to fulfil its commitments without there being an increase through the various ways revenue is obtained*

*More use of the Castle Grounds for Special Events and Seasonal Markets can also bring more revenue to the Town. This is often overlooked. The Car Park on Lower Gungate should come back to the Council and Not the NCP. Buildings that are closed (The Old Electricity Showrooms / Silk Kite) need to be reopened with something like a Chinese Buffet Restaurant, which the town is desperate to have. Regenerating the Town Centre must remain a priority and making use of the facilities on a daily basis a must. We have the 'Marquee' by the Church, which has never seen its full potential used, as too with the Band Stand, the Castle, Library, Youth Centres and most parks*

*Don't burden the tax payer with additional costs. There is already a problem with finances for people with children.*

*The planned level of spending is no longer appropriate. The new normal must change very rapidly as facts result in different requirements almost on a daily basis.*

*Mental health and support for the elderly needs to be a priority. Less reliance on privatising services and using local support leaders to guide decision making could help.*

*You need to ensure you are getting value for money and not wasting it. I have a household budget that I have to adhere to and this should be no different. People are losing their jobs; those lucky enough to be in work are not getting pay rises so I do not think that council tax should increase for the next financial year as it will place even more of a burden on every household. My council tax bill goes up significantly every year and is my biggest household expense - I spend less on food!! However, I do not see any improvements in services being made. I would be very much against a rise and think both TBC and SCC should keep the level the same (although I know that TBC does not get the full amount). All councils should consider carefully the money they are spending and whether it is absolutely necessary.*

*Spend less on flowers*

*I'm not qualified and it's impossible to comment only seeing a few random figures*

*Times will be tough, I don't envy the decisions you may be forced to make.*

*Can you spend less on Councillors? Not sure why we need 30 of them!?*

*The town's MP buys a home in London and receives an allowance for living there. He buys at a favourable interest rate and refurbishes at our expense. At the same time his property goes up in value. When he votes out he walks away with profit from the sale and a large pension pot. TBC should buy 1 house in London for our MP to use year after year. We receive the benefit of the house value going up and regular monthly rental from the Government. All refurbishment work should be carried out by Tamworth contractors. When the House of Commons is closed the house can be used to host disadvantaged people's visits to London.*

*Get rid of the overpaid useless councillors and get some real people in there who aren't there to line their own pockets.*

*The council should look at reducing the amount of managers or executives to save money not reduce frontline staff*

*Keep within budget, try to secure more value for money*

*More bike paths (or existing bike paths clearly marked) would be helpful.*

*I think that radical cuts should be made in line with support from local residents. Inform every household you are going to take drastic and severe cuts, sensible people will accept (except of course our narrow minded councillors) and the most vulnerable can be shadowed and concentrated on, these are difficult times and need difficult decisions i.e. lockdowns, shut pubs restaurants, advise major shops to limit sales of essentials! This should prevent panic. Introduce some local by-laws to*

*control the small element of society who don't care about anybody. Encourage local schools to stop stalling and get on with our kids' education*

*More Toilets, Bins and Seating need to be in the Town. Opening the Peel Hospital as a 24 Hour A&E should also be made a Priority. Having Extra Market Days (we are after all a Market Town)*

*Would like to have seen more specific information about any savings proposed to comment on.*

*It is difficult to see how your level of spending could be improved.*

*I don't envy anyone having to make spending decisions related to public services. However Austerity is still having considerable impact on the poorest and I would urge a little reckless investment. There is no better way than putting people first if we expect them to put something back into their communities. Spending isn't always reckless.*

*The only fair route to me is to increase council tax as at least that is spread across the residents generally equally.*

*All good*

*I am disgusted to see that you're planning to spend £934,000 to 'improve access to information/customer services'. You're planning on spending nearly a million pounds to improve... what?? Update the website? That should cost a few thousand. £7000-£8000 at most. Improve social media, well you post the same thing over and over again, so employ someone to sort this out = £16,000 pa. Employ someone else to create an auto bot or develop standard automated responses to emails. What the heck are you spending the rest on??*

*Make Tamworth a destination for all.*

*All I would say is please, please, please, spend the money in the right places, not on vanity projects that we have seen in the past.*

*You are getting so much extra from the new developments, the community needs to see this being used, not invested outside Tamworth, Tamworth used to own so much, which they have sold off & invested the money outside Tamworth, so here books look good but you have lost your income. Build & invest in Tamworth & start getting an income again from the community,*

*I wouldn't like the job of balancing this budget but maybe thought could be given to ideas from the voluntary sector around recycling and re use of unwanted furniture i.e. the way it is done in North Warwickshire.*

*Residents who are housed and bringing in their own income are happier and more content. They in turn will support activities in their community. Their home/family life is improved and children living in these homes will only benefit both emotionally and socially.*

*The problem is the size of the pot: can the townsfolk afford a rise in local taxation? How much is central government going increase/decrease local government grants for supplying legally required services? A planning and accountancy headache.*

*Can the council consider initiatives to reduce packaging so that (eventually) the amount of refuse to be collected reduces?*

*I'd like more spending on vulnerable people even if that means an increase in Council tax. Our work highlights how needy some families are, often this need is hidden. We know of families who cannot afford even the basics such as loo rolls, nappies and shampoo*

*I think the voluntary sector needs additional support in order to continue to provide support to vulnerable individuals*

## **Comments on savings and charges**

*Staff and councillor costs.*

*I think dropping car parking charges and passing on to commercial property rates should be given as an option to business owners. Would there be increased footfall and sales? Maybe try it for a year to get actual data! Also look to make more revenue from the public spaces and building by inviting companies to tender new ideas on how to use them. The recent outdoor cinema looked like a success - but I hadn't seen it advertised.*

*We don't need 30 Councillors who grew residents view for and wouldn't recognize. We don't need the bloated Corporate Management Team with all their Deputies and Assistants. We don't need Marmion House*

*Don't use bin bags for dog bins or small litter bins. Just have a facility to empty the bin straight into a suitable receptacle. Introduce fines for parking on pavements*

*Work from Smaller premises, or home where possible.*

*I think the council is too heavily focused on the Britain in bloom. Residents want areas to be well kept and nice but digging up and disposing of annuals that are still in flower is such a waste. How about getting some perennial shrubs that could be kept tidy and trimmed back instead of keep replacing everything. I'm not sure many residents care about the Britain in bloom contest but it seems to be a major focus of the council when there are things that could really do with a cash injection such as youth/teen services*

*Councillor's salaries. Grants to charitable organisations.*

*Council management salaries*

*Car parking needs to be relevant e.g. Passes subsidised for regular elderly shoppers but can charge more for station workers will /can pay more, buy back property commercial landlords making a profit and so many empty buildings making no money for town. Market is a waste more street vendors bringing more interest in,*

*hospitality brings in money. Business charities should be employed not just given grants- use local! Recycling what do we pay for constantly not taken away take it sort it you will in the end anyway!! Waste of time! Do not waste money How much is spent on unnecessary staff and admin at Marmion House?*

*Use less contractors employ local people in full time work and manage them properly get control of good workmanship not half a job that has to be done many times over costing us pots of money*

*Housing developments can be approved "subject to a contribution to infrastructure requirements". Get more from developers!*

*Back room staff. Britain in bloom. I like a nice flower but the amount spent and the value is very low.*

*Street Wardens, they never seem to do their jobs anyway. Drop the price of Parking and reduce the amount of Traffic Wardens. Look at the amount of staff that are used and does their role really matter (Especially the amount of Managers or Heads of Department) can they be merged to be more effective??*

*Yes employ people yourself who can work to a high trained standard instead of contracting work out to people who clearly don't have the qualifications to do the job (roads/maintenance/gardening)*

*As stated get rid of 33% of all the councillors. You may as well have two doing nothing as 3*

*Reduce the amount of managers / paid officials at the council...most other company have reduced management numbers to save money this is never suggested on your lists of where the council can save money*

*Cap Councillors expenses, reducing waste in each department. Reduce the use of private consultation services.*

*I am sure there are many - don't waste money on unnecessary consultants! Consider closing down Marmion House and having smaller premises if more of your staff are working from home or do not require a base.*

*Probably not changing the flower beds in the castle grounds so often?*

*Yes, I am sure that there are not many areas where the council gets value for money. E.g. how much of recycled waste actually gets recycled?*

*None identified,*

*Tamworth in Bloom could be wound right back. You could charge for the St Georges day and the Fireworks £1 for residents £3 for non-residents or on the door.*

*Start charging the parking in Ventura, leave more wild plants and flowers, and stop mowing so much especially when the weather is dry and the grass is yellow (or buy a sheep to do the work: it's ecological, children will be happy to pay it a visit, it makes less noise than a lawnmower, and you can move it around Tamworth when there is a new area in need of mowing)*

*Councillors - we don't need 30 of them.*

*Stop changing the flowers at the castle every few weeks! Stop overpaying people that don't do anything. Get more cost effective suppliers that aren't bank handers to friends*

*Find out which residents are happy to be contacted by email/telephone only and therefore not by post. Reduce duplications*

*Cutting back on some of the minor floral displays. The boxes along Tame Drive for example. I often see these have either been pillaged for the flowers they contained or just plants pulled out or strewn around for the sake of it.*

*Reduce the number of employees. Increase the standard working hours to 40/48. Reduce holidays to 25 days plus Bank Holidays. Reduce pension contributions. Reduce all expenses. Close down needless office space. Walk the talk*

*Always about charging the public more money, so you can pay the fat cats a bigger chunk, put the money back into the town and the public*

*Reduce the management areas of the council*

*Commissioning services, shared services, more efficiency and value for money. I am not sure why somewhere the size of Tamworth has to have a separate council. In fact could the whole of Staffordshire become unitary?*

*I am no financial expert - but some way of charging less for car parking and commercial property in the town centre would perhaps help in its regeneration.*

*By checking on the current service you are paying for. I.e. bins have been removed from the two gates/ park farm area therefore encouraging people to litter. Extra money spent on littering and did you know they had been removed? Are people claiming the same hours for emptying bins?*

*Look at different department to see if savings can be made. Expenses?*

*Difficult to suggest without more specific information. Use of technology should achieve some administration costs.*

*Greater penalty charges for anti-social behaviour could be an option. And on the spot speeding fines on the highways and ring road around Tamworth.*

*Putting the council building and library into one building, adding services that will attract people and make some money,*

*Take an honest and candid review of staff and members' structures and costs.*

*Get rid of the large council offices. If you spend money on consultancy fees think very carefully how you could use the skill of your own work force.*

*Look at all activity, ask is it duplicated. If it is, drop it. Tackling ASB - it's the police's job. Put pressure on the commissioner to do what they should be doing. Housing advice - there's hundreds of charities doing this. Signpost people to them. There must be lots more examples.*



*There are a lot of empty offices and shops in the town... reduce the rents to make them more attractive to new enterprise.*

*proactively encourage new business to make use of empty premises if they are owned or not owned by the council, occupied buildings means income to the town, rent( if owned by the council) rates, associated productivity & spending in the community*

*No need for a partnerships post or non-essential roles ASB is really low so no need for any other input*

## **Comments on the ongoing restrictions in the use of Marmion House**

*It should be reopen.*

*If services are accessible by phone or email then I think maintaining social distancing is still important given the recent jump in cases.*

*Shame on you for pushing the agenda to get the town open and working again while failing to do so yourselves. Marmion House has so many floors empty and vacant that TBC simply doesn't need it and can't afford it. If townspeople can't access the building and meet your staff freely, and as you're unlikely to meet us face to face after Covid, you should get out of the building*

*It has been proven staff can work from home. Sell Marmion House and relocate to small premises and provide essential front line staff from there*

*The restrictions are extremely inconvenient, and you should be able to put in place safeguards to ensure you can have a physical presence in Marmion House*

*As long as efficiency is maintained, that is ok but I do not believe that is the case*

*Marmion house large building to run is it full all the time? Can other rooms be rented to other business /charities if working from home decreased amount of space needed?*

*Personally don't use it so it doesn't affect me*

*Unaware of any restrictions, other than COVID*

*I'm not affected by the restrictions. I've never, in 25 years as a Tamworth resident, been in Marmion House. That said, working from home, as part of the new norm, should only be as a drive towards improved work life balance for employees. It should not be seen as an opportunity for cost cutting. Restricting the use of Marmion House should not, in any way, limit the access to services for residents and businesses that prefer or need face to face communication.*

*Unable to comment as have not had cause to look into this*

*I think that access to Marmion House and the opportunity to communicate with staff in person is vital. Those who lack confidence with digital forms of communication and those who may be in distress because of personal issues need to talk through their issues and problems face to face and experience the empathy and reassurance that only live interaction can offer.*

*I have never had a need to go into Marmion house and the only time I have been in is to see my mum who used to work on the front desk! I believe most services can be accessed on line and think the space should be used for business or services such as the police.*

*If the same service can be achieved by staff working from home then perhaps Marmion House can be used differently*

*Having a limited team on the front desk is better than No Team at all. Often this is the first port of call for problems that are noticed for the town. Pointing some people in the right direction for other amenities they may need to access for some people is imperative to help their needs, otherwise it might have an adverse effect on their Mental Health, which is something that many people could do without.*

*At the moment it is almost impossible to report anything to any individual department vandalism, fly tipping anti-social behaviour etc.*

*I think you should let as many people as want to, to work from home for as long as they want. Thus saving on office space and money.*

*You should do what the scientists say.*

*Don't use it so doesn't bother me at all.*

*Sell it off and do it all online!*

*I haven't had to use or contact Marmion House*

*Working from home should be examined as a priority Changes to Marmion House may result in savings.*

*Many people need the face to face contact when possible*

*Need a focal point ASAP. Not everyone has internet competency or ability.*

*I don't think I have actually set foot in there for at least 10 years, probably more. If you are not actually using the building and more staff are working from home can you not move to smaller premises to save money? Whilst I assume that some residents will want or need to visit in person, most people access information online or through social media so you don't really need a fancy big office.*

*As most things can be done online now, I personally haven't been affected by the restriction in the use of Marmion House.*

*Yes, everybody needs to be kept safe and it can make no difference to the levels of service we usually enjoy.*

*No comment*

*The whole world has changed and most people from various backgrounds and demographics have figured out the ways of communicating digitally via phone, laptops and tablets. Also more working from home reduces expenses costs and cuts down CO2 emissions from heating and lighting Marmion House as well as Transport CO2*

*If people can work away from the office in a way that is both productive and helpful to them I think it's a good idea. Cuts down transport (pollution), people's time travelling around. I can also see that some people would rather get into the office. If you can get to a point where there is space availability could that space not be used by volunteers e.g., CAB, Samaritans, Tamworth tourist centre so create a type of public hub????? It could go towards helping charities etc.*

*Restrictions are understandable. The main thing is making sure everyone understands how to access help if they need it.*

*There is probably an under spend against each area but the effect of Covid 19 may not put you in a position to make changes. All areas require funding. We are living through a challenging and changing time when we need to seriously look at change towards creating a better society and community for future generations which will affect working practices.*

*Never needed to go into Marmion House so not noticed. (Not sure why it's so huge??) Prefer to use online chat anyway.*

*I want 24/7 access when I need it. An office block is not important. Save costs by working from home, be available for longer hours.*

*People working at Marmion House should be able to work from home when not required to be in the office, for example to take turn receiving visitors in reception.*

*I rarely visit Marmion House so cannot comment on this.*

*Can't speak to everyone it all done by portal so no interaction at all just away of ignoring paying customers speak to reception who are rude when I told them a tree may fall in my garden and kill one of my kids was I then to put that on the portal if it happens rather than talk to someone she said yes*

*Never visit.*

*If it saves money and keeps people safe it should continue, as long as standards do not fall.*

*Who has determined that the council has done well? Please publish what you have done per department over the cold autumn and winter Marmion House should be open to rough sleepers*

*The current climate has proved in many ways that services can be delivered without the infrastructure of large buildings being manned constantly. Working from home could ensure better work life balance for many people. Plus cut the cost of keeping large buildings opened.*

*Pointless commenting on this survey as the council do what they please regardless of what the public want. Parks, open spaces & street cleaning, this is a joke seriously!!*

*Council should consider sub-letting part of the building and selling more old buildings*

*Where appropriate home working seems to be effective and could reduce the space required by the Council to be efficient. Letting more office space to local business will provide income while reducing overheads.*

*If there are people who can work from home and be as or if not more productive then why do you need Marion house?*

*Close it, mainly work from home. It's an expensive eyesore and looks so old fashioned. Save the money and put it towards digital and shared services.*

*Unfortunately the more vulnerable do not always have access to modern technology and are not good at using the telephone, therefore some form of face to face assistance is necessary.*

*The situation is only there to help everyone and no other alternative is foreseeable until the problems are resolved.*

*Covid 19, will continue to impact for many months more, we must all accept whatever measures the council put in place to protect its citizens*

*Marmion House needs to reopen again with screens in place as they have done in Supermarkets. This can then encourage people to start using the Customer Services again. I often call in to bring information and potential hazards to the attention of the Council or County.*

*Continue with restrictions to keep staff & community safe*

*I try never to go to Marmion house before all this as find staff unhelpful & tend to look down their nose at you.*

*I don't need to access Marmion House but recognise some people will do. Online, telephone access is good for me.*

*It is difficult to see how central Government and Local Government can respond in any other way than to constantly follow the movement of the Covid-19 virus from bad to worse or otherwise. Governments have to be completely flexible and it is not helpful for opposition political parties to carp and criticise unless of course they can come up with workable sound alternatives .A World War 11 mentality should dominate.*

*With the restrictions and less use of the building, could you look at sub-letting offices, space or add other things into it, library add in there, cutting the cost of the library, adding in a social area, with elderly, parent groups*

*Income could be generated by selling or renting space*

*Generally speaking I would think that most people rarely contact the Council regarding its services. However, when they do there should be readily available means of contacting and communicating with Council officials and members - including, as necessary, face to face contact.*

*Whilst most interactions can be via phone or email, there will always be a need /wish for face to face app, particularly for sensitive issues.*

*Do we need Marmion House? Would make great apartments" sure you could save a lot by moving into the town centre building. Old Electric show room? Magistrates court, Police station or one of the large shops. An enquiry desk might be possible by appoint only system. People could put in a card or make a phone appointment if they need help with forms etc., especially those who don't have a computer*

*Not used much. But think sets bad example that you are trying to show town/business are open...yet the Council building is not....perhaps the Council should "lead by example!"*

*To be encouraged to return to work, help boost the economy*

*As long as we can get the information we need in a timely fashion, we don't care how or where it is delivered from*

*There was a golden opportunity to keep a police station in the town centre - how can all of the personnel from the old station fit in the fire station? They should have moved into Marmion House. We've lost that now and lost the focus on policing. Work with other public bodies to fill up Marmion House by sharing space - bringing in income for the council. Use Marmion House space as a one stop shop for people. If you're funding a group to work in a property in the town, such as the mental health house that was by the castle, then get them into Marmion where you don't need to fund the building. If they choose not to, they lose funding.*

*I understand the need to keep staff safe, but your offices should be back open by now and you should have already put screens and sanitation areas in place to allow access into what is in effect, a public building*

*Staff flexibility is required by all staff & companies to cope with any business requirements, cutting red tape & bullshit is needed*

*Employees need interaction with their colleagues to ensure that the correct interpretation is being put on their messages it is too easy to miss the intention of meaning in written communication especially texts and e-mails*

*People not buildings provide good services.*

*think this pandemic illustrates that fixed assets and building are not required in this digital age. And whilst people have been re deployed into other roles to support the pandemic....what's happening about their substantive posts. Obviously not needed. I think the local authority should look at this seriously as a possible saving and redistribute funding into community resources or grants*

*There will always be those who cannot access digital services, so some minimum face to face time and personnel should be available for local government advice and payment services - perhaps delivered by the volunteer sector.*

*No views as not affected by this*

*I'm not aware of the reasons why Marmion House is closed. Other staff are back at workplaces with appropriate Distancing and Other preventive measures, can't the Council do the same?*

## **Comments on how the Council can capitalise on the positives in the voluntary sector response to the pandemic**

*Potentially, but it should be separate from the council and run by different people.*

*I think the council must consider producing a residents magazine every quarter or so. I work with many councils up and down the country and many do this as a way of communication to all business and residents. They use door to door delivery and availability in Supermarkets in their boroughs to ensure all residents and business get a copy. These are normally self-funding via advertising in the magazine so does not impact on existing budgets. A great way of communication with the residents of Tamworth as not all have access to the internet nor go looking for information on changes, events, useful telephone numbers etc. etc. I have copies of other similar community magazines if you would like a copy.*

*I think voluntary sector is key. I've seen the work the CiC has done through the pandemic and would love to see more projects. When I've got a bit more time I'd like to start some activities myself. Having free labour, is a bonus but the council can help with providing capital grants and advice, and maybe a good governance handbook for how to run finances - an common issue in voluntary orgs.*

*Yes, definitely. You've allowed the voluntary sector to wither and die during Austerity. It's time to revive and rebuild it*

*Of course they should always be looking at innovation*

*The way to improve the investment in our communities is going to be more money, not sure where the extra monies would come from, cut expenditures from other organisations.*

*The council should encourage and facilitate voluntary work by individuals and by groups. But it should not look to the voluntary sector to undertake tasks that are the responsibility (whether legally or through custom and practice) of the council.*

*Yes the council should consider what effect the pandemic has had in how its services have been delivered and if it feels any current ways are better then it should change to continue working that way*

*I think the Council and the voluntary sector should work hand in hand to deliver services to our vulnerable residents, who need comfort, practical help and the sense of someone knowledgeable working alongside them. The vulnerable need to feel cherished and important members of society.*

*It has been individual communities more than the council that has made the difference in the pandemic but if the council can further help it has to be a good thing*

*Voluntary Services are important and very necessary, investing with these services can be more rewarding, but Training is also important to make them work effectively. Drop in Centres might also be a good way forward and in prominent places (such as Ankerside and local Community Centres), but it is Very Important that they are Advertised to make them work effectively.*

Yes!

*The voluntary sector are usually closest to those in need of services and therefore can react quicker than a local authority.*

*Face to face and human comment is so important*

*The council should grab the offer of the voluntary services. Help and develop there in site and knowledge to the problems they care about.*

*You could involve more people in the decision making process across a wider spectrum of society to get new ideas.*

Yes

*It is impossible to see the outcome of the pandemic but the need for fundamental change is obvious. Elected members should be consulting citizens to decide what services can be provided within council budgets.*

*Supporting local help groups, food banks etc. should be a priority. We need to get back to the "community spirit" that was so great when I first moved here many years ago.*

*I'm not sure what TBC has actually done through the pandemic as I have not seen anything that says they are helping with communities etc. - I think any assistance provided through the pandemic has been done by volunteers working together.*

*Yes, vulnerable people should always get help and support.*

*All neighbourhoods should have a community house run by volunteers for all ages so we could meet. It could be a place with a "repair cafe" to share knowledge about repairing objects from your house or a bike, a place where teenagers could spend time with their friends or find a small job to help the community and be more involved in it, a place with an objects library where you can give tools you don't use and others can borrow them.*

*Absolutely, I think for things to improve with the environment meaning both pollution etc. and anti-social behaviour it all starts at grass roots. If you can build a better society then people will care more about each other and the environment too.*

*Yes. The council cannot do everything and community organisations are a key part of service delivery and often have better access to harder to reach communities.*

*Ways should be found to encourage and strengthen community involvement. Residents Associations in the past played a positive role but all community groups need an authoritative figure or liaison officer.*

*In an ideal world, yes but at the present time money needs to be channelled into education, health and environment.*

*Yes. But the tax payer isn't there to subsidise too many do gooders!!*

*Absolutely. And so well put*



*Definitely.*

*Use all of your own employees first. People that earn money should give back the most first. Volunteers should be rewarded for their time and kindness including free car parking and reduced council taxes.*

*The voluntary services will need as much help as possible going forward. By continuing to invest in these organisations the council will indeed show their compassion and support.*

*I use to volunteer, but not anymore, as the big wigs, sit there and expect the work to be done by volunteers for free, whilst they get a nice fat pay check.*

*The voluntary sector is invaluable and quietly gets on with its role in the main effectively. This in turn gives many people a purpose in life while helping others a kind of occupational therapy.*

*The voluntary sector do a great job because they are volunteers the council should leave alone*

*Yes, homeless and older isolated residents.*

*The Council need to continue to consider new ways to invest in communities to capitalise on the positives in the voluntary sector response - it has been vital over the past few months.*

*As an elderly resident I have never been made aware of any help which may be available to me!*

*The local communities will continue to be supported by neighbours and volunteers, the council must not use this crisis as an opportunity to implement draconian measures or practices i.e. cycle lanes and restrictions to traffic that will impact our economy*

*Throughout the pandemic so far, I know I and a number of other people that I know have been helping neighbours and vulnerable people that we know. This isn't the norm', but it is being done by a lot of people, bring the better side of people to the front. What we don't want is to see more Suicides and Mental Health issues getting worse, which is doing at the moment (which is why this pandemic needs to come to an end more quickly) The lack of Police and Street Wardens in the town has been unbelievable and very poor, yet putting a parking ticket on a car has been on the rise. It seems to me that money is the key and the people that live in Tamworth are just numbers and not cared about. If what you're saying are priorities is right, things must and need to change quickly.*

*Yes I think community involvement improves relationship with council & you know what's important in the area.*

*There is insufficient support for people in the community who are 80 plus have limited mobility no major health issues and have no transport and no local relatives. They appear to fall through the support network.*

*Agree need to build upon the work with local community groups to sustain this into the future.*

*Any new ideas that are sustainable within financial limitations should be thoroughly investigated.*

*That would be a great idea capitalising on skills and knowledge of volunteers*

*Optimise the use of existing resources in this area.*

*Help the voluntary sector to access funding streams then allow them to operate as they see fit, within agreed parameters.*

*New ways to invest and work are always welcome but not at the cost of a public face of the council. We are not robots yet!*

*I don't really know what you have done to support these individual acts of kindness, if you say your financial support is limited I guess all you can offer is a pat on the back? Most of these projects have been self-funded to my knowledge.*

*It shouldn't be giving for giving's sake, it needs to be sustainable and create a real difference.*

*It's been a difficult time for sure. We have all had to adapt and go forward with new business plans, and different regimes to keep both our staff and customers safe. We have never closed... We have been through it all wondering if any will survive, or if we will have a job left after this all dies away. One thing that I do see, is that the business's that have closed, are now struggling to reopen. I predict we will lose 50% of these.*

*Again, cutting red tape & assisting the communities support without duplication or barriers,*

*I do believe the council should invest in local community voluntary organisations and work closely with these agencies and develop stronger partnerships with what is already on offer.*

*More investment is definitely required as the voluntary sector play a vital role in delivering services that have been axed due to financial cuts*

*The voluntary sector can support residents to live a healthy, financially stable and happy life not only by the direct support they provide but also by offering volunteering opportunities. Volunteering supports people to build confidence and skills and strengthen local communities. There is more opportunities for councils to learn through voluntary support as it acts as an impartial party.*

*Tamworth is actually a very caring and supportive place. Just look at all the volunteers who helped at the homeless shelter during the winter, the generosity of people during (last years) Carnival and the foodbanks and distribution of food during lockdown.*

*I think the positives and new approach should be continued as I believe as a whole the town has reached more vulnerable people during this time.*

*Yes I would agree that the council should continue to consider new ways to invest and capitalise on the positives in the voluntary sector.*

*I think aspects of the council should be disbanded as not of value, partnerships for example should be the private and voluntary sector business*

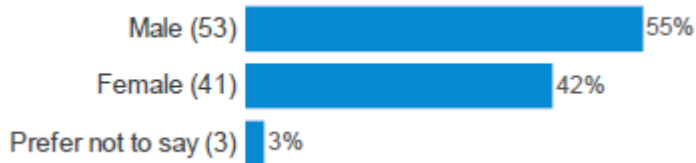
*As a voluntary provider of activities, together with other similar groups, our need is for a Covid-19 free or cheap clean space to meet in. We have been told that we are unlikely to get back into our free community room provided by the Staffordshire Fire Service until 2021. In the meantime we have set up Zoom activities (supported financially by the Covid-19 Emergency Fund). These have drawn in a majority of our previous group users, mainly Tamworth based, but we have picked up a small number from across the area and further afield. These have been isolating individuals who had a pressing need to meet up with others to keep them from further mental stress, and found us over the internet. This last group has become smaller as the participants have returned to their work or studies. Unfortunately, being on Zoom has been, and still is, a barrier to several long-term regulars who don't feel able to cope with the technical aspects of going online & have declined to join.*

*Definitely yes*

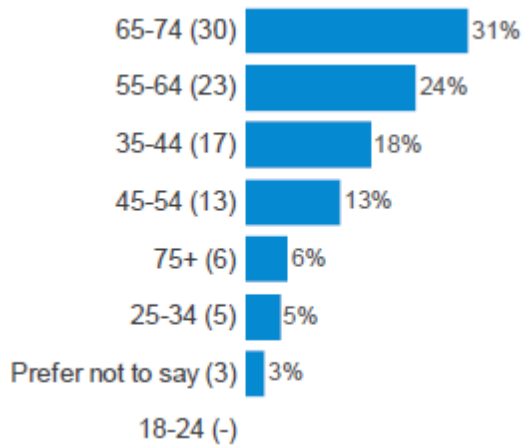
*Yes, I do feel the Council should capitalise on the considerable goodwill which has been created during the pandemic. Maybe by consulting with individuals/ organisations who have helped during the pandemic.*

## Profile of respondents to the Residents Survey

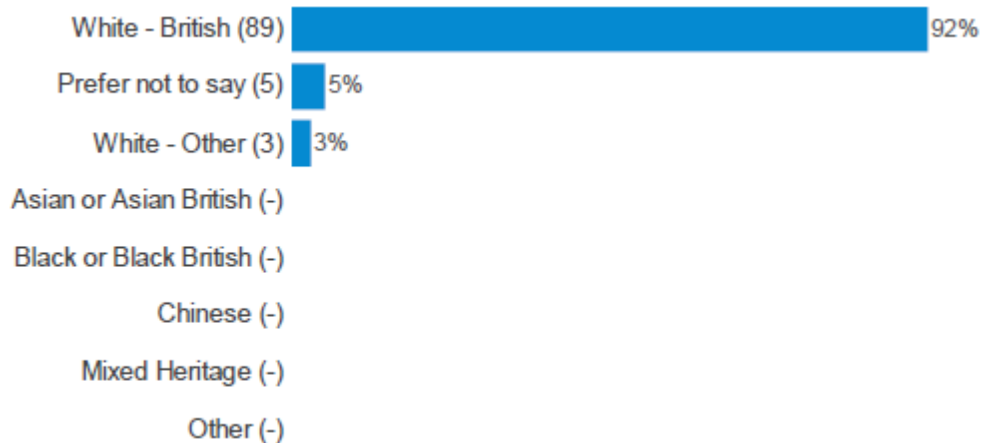
### Gender



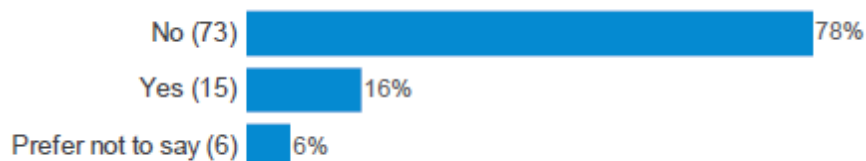
### Age



### Ethnicity



### Disability



**+CABINET**

**THURSDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE  
TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL GRANTS PROCESS**

**EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

**PURPOSE**

To review current Tamworth Borough Council grant funding to community, arts, sports, small businesses, not for profit and voluntary organisations

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- **The award of Tamworth Borough Council Arts, Sports, Voluntary and business grants in their current format and criteria are suspended**
- **A single Community grants budget is adopted for application by Community Groups/ individuals across all areas with new criteria aligned to Council priorities**
- **Award of grants at this time is delegated to the Portfolio Holder Environment and Culture/Portfolio Holder Heritage and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Director Housing and Communities**
- **That £6,200 is made immediately available for community grant awards in Quarter 3 and 4 2020/21**
- **Tamworth Business grants be suspended until January 2021 with a grant budget of £15,000 to run until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021.**
- **A complete review of the operation of all grants is considered by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 in light of the Covid pandemic**
- **All grants awarded should demonstrate value for money and value to the people of Tamworth and have specific outcomes that can be recorded.**
- **An additional saving of £16,390 for 2020/21 is approved (all grants) above the £16,000 already identified in Quarter 1 2020/21**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Due to the ongoing response work to the Covid-19 pandemic and issue of emergency grant funding, it has not been possible to determine Tamworth Borough Council grant applications under the original criteria.

As a result of the work of the VCSE sector several external grant funding schemes have been available to assist community groups at this time, including the award of the £100,000 National Lottery funding which, through the work of anchor organisations in Tamworth is supporting groups directly affected by the pandemic.

Tamworth Borough Council currently operates 4 individual grant schemes for community organisations and a Small Business Start Up Grant with an annual combined budget maximum of **£53,590** as follows:-

GRANT	Budget Code	Max Budget	Award criteria
<p><b>Arts Grants</b></p> <p>Projects which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a community emphasis</li> <li>• Encourage wider interest and opportunities for involvement arts activities.</li> <li>• Offers something distinctive to Tamworth's arts provision and will represent a development of existing practice for the people involved.</li> </ul>	<b>GX0609 34537</b>	<p><b>£5,000</b></p> <p><b>before Q1</b></p> <p><b>£5,000</b></p> <p><b>saving</b></p> <p><b>projected</b></p>	<p><b>Maximum £500</b></p> <p><b>(more in exceptional circumstance)</b></p>
<p><b>Sports Grants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaches/Education</li> <li>• Sports Clubs</li> <li>• Talent Support</li> </ul>	<b>GY0801 34537</b>	<b>£16,390</b>	<p>A maximum rate of 50% and not exceeding £300. Applications will be considered for a minimum course cost of £100.</p> <p>A maximum of £5000.</p> <p><b>A maximum rate of 50%</b></p> <p>The following maximum grants will be awarded:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County level - £300</li> <li>• Regional level - £500</li> <li>• National level - £1000</li> </ul>

<b>Voluntary organisations</b> <b>Small grants</b> Grants which aim to encourage groups to develop in Tamworth and to support the vision and corporate priorities of Tamworth Borough Council.	<b>GS1002 31551</b>	<b>£12,200</b>  <b>Before Q1</b> <b>£6,000</b> <b>saving</b> <b>projected</b>	<b>Maximum £500</b>
<b>Start Up Business Grants</b> This financial support addresses the current funding gap faced by start-up businesses and is available for completely new ventures and those which have been trading for less than three years.	<b>GS1002 57025</b> <b>(until March 2023)</b> <b>(GS0402 34537)</b>	<b>£20,000</b>  <b>Before Q1</b> <b>£5,000</b> <b>saving</b> <b>projected</b>	Grants of between £500 and £1,000 for Start-up business grants This will remain as a separate grant funding stream to provide ongoing effective support to help promote new small business start-ups, self-employment and entrepreneurship in Tamworth
<b>TOTAL FUND</b>		<b>£53,590</b>	

All grants are now considered by Cabinet on a quarterly basis following officer recommendation and under criteria which at this time cannot be linked to the effect of Covid-19 and does not fully reflect the corporate priorities of Tamworth Borough Council.

In the last 5 years all grants have been underspent and are now subject to budgetary and process review. Details attached as Appendix 1.

As a result of the pandemic, Quarter 1 savings of £11,000 for 2020/21 have already been identified and removed from the budget lines as follows:

- Arts Grants - £5,000
- Voluntary Grants - £6,000

### **Start-Up Business Grants**

These grants will also be subject to review to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the business community.

As a result of the pandemic, Quarter 1 savings of £5,000 for 2020/21 have already been identified and removed from the budget lines,

### **Festive Grants**

The Council also provide a £3000 Festive grants funding stream which is allocated to Ward members each year - £100 each to promote Christmas activities for vulnerable

people. This fund has been combined with additional funding this year to provide Councillor Community Grants as a response to Covid-19 and is outside the scope of this report.

## **2020/21 Grant Budgets**

As the country moves into a transitional phase in the recovery from the pandemic and to provide a more efficient and seamless approach to Tamworth Council grant funding, it is proposed that the current separate **Arts, Sport and Voluntary** grants (see background information) are removed with immediate effect and **combined under the Partnerships budget** (through internal virement) to provide a more flexible approach to grant funding and to ensure that the overarching criteria reflects the Corporate vision and priorities as follows:-

- **To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities**
  - To assist community recovery and resilience from the Covid-19 pandemic
  - To help tackle the causes of inequality in our communities
  - To help develop and safeguard our environment and open spaces
  - To increase opportunities to participate in arts, heritage and sports activities
  - Increase volunteering and civic pride
  - Help tackle causes and effects of poverty and financial hardship
  - Consider outstanding individuals or groups who by achievement in arts, culture or sports support and promote Tamworth as a place
  - Promotes and develops community cohesion

All grants should continue to demonstrate value for money and value to the people of Tamworth and have specific outcomes that can be recorded.

Grants will be awarded to community, not for profit organisations or for identified not for profit projects, individuals (subject to due consideration) and voluntary groups operating in Tamworth or who operate for the benefit of the communities of Tamworth

Grants will not be given for: -

- Work and projects of a party-political nature
- Travel and subsistence costs
- Guarantee against organisational loss
- Work and projects which are contrary to the Tamworth Borough Council Diversity and Equality policy
- Projects operated on a commercial or for-profit basis.
- Faith groups applying for grants should ensure that the activities they are offering are open to people from all faiths.



- The funding of organisations, projects or events which promote or condone extremist ideology, activities or terrorism.

Maximum grant award levels will be retained and considered by Cabinet as per current process.

The Partnerships Team in conjunction with Support Staffordshire will continue to advise and support community organisations to identify ongoing and suitable funding opportunities.

**The current available funding will be £6,200 (Balance of current Voluntary Grants process after Q1 savings) until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 for use by Community groups with application forms being immediately available.**

Quarter 3 grants will be awarded by 31<sup>st</sup> December and Quarter 4 by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

### **Delegation**

It is proposed that to allow some greater flexibility that with effect from the 27<sup>th</sup> October the award of all grants will be delegated for award each quarter in conjunction with the Executive Director Housing and Communities as follows:-

- Community grants – Portfolio Holder Environment and Culture
- Business grants (from January 2021) – Portfolio Holder Heritage and Regeneration

**The underspend to date from the remaining Sports Grants of £16,390 will be offered as an additional in year saving**

It is also proposed that the Tamworth Business grants be suspended until the same time with a grant budget of £15,000 to run until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021.

The underspend £5,000 from the Business grants has already been removed as a Q1 saving

### **2021/2022 Proposals**

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is further proposed that combined grant funding budget and process for grant funding is reviewed with options for Councillors to consider by March 2021

Options to be considered as follows:-

- Retain the current grants budgets, new criteria and process recognising the ongoing budget pressures
- Cease to provide grant funding streams
- Reduce the current grant budgets year in year

- Investigate other options to more effectively and efficiently deliver Tamworth grant funding to provide sustainability for the communities of Tamworth

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Suspend all grant activity until April 2021

No change to current grant criteria and process for Quarter 3 and 4 2021

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Proposals provide a more streamline and efficient delivery of Tamworth Borough Council grants within existing staffing resource

Financial implications are outlined within the report.

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

Risks will be managed by using clear and transparent criteria for award of grant funding and award subject to evaluation and report to Cabinet at a later date

## **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has been completed.

All grant awards are made subject to compliance with the Tamworth Borough Council Diversity and Equality Policy

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Sustainability considerations are included within the report proposals

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Current External Funding Opportunities**

At the current time, the Partnerships team will continue to promote other opportunities in Tamworth for groups to apply for COVID-19 related grants:-

Support Staffordshire

<https://www.supportstaffordshire.org.uk/covid-19-support/covid19-funding> including one specific to Tamworth as a result of a successful National Lottery award

Staffordshire County Council COVID-19 Support Fund:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Coronavirus/I-can-help/COVID-19-Support-Fund/COVID-19-support-fund.aspx>

Staffordshire Community Foundation is also offering emergency funding, groups can call on 01785 339546 to check eligibility and the link to the on-line application is below:

<https://staffsfoundation.org.uk/grants/covid-19-emergency-grants/>

### **Voluntary Organisations**

The Grants to Voluntary Organisations Scheme aims to encourage groups to develop in Tamworth and to support the vision and corporate priorities of Tamworth Borough Council.

**A maximum award of £500** per application is allowed, although figures exceeding this amount will be considered in exceptional circumstances. In particular, the committee will look favourably upon those proposals which heavily demonstrate one or both of the following priorities.

- To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities  
Helping the local economy to grow in a way which benefits our residents and businesses, helping to build resilient communities. Helping tackle the causes of inequality to increase opportunities for all residents and businesses.  
Helping protect, nurture and celebrate our local heritage, developing and safeguarding our environment and open spaces.
- To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity  
Helping tackle causes and effects of poverty and financial hardship, increasing all residents' resilience and access to information, engaging with our residents to promote community involvement and civic pride. Supporting the development of Tamworth now, and in the future

Grants will be prioritised to groups providing services or activities that contribute to Tamworth Borough Council's vision and corporate priorities, as listed above.

- Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they are contributing towards the development of the voluntary sector in Tamworth.
- Applicants should have a bank account with at least two signatories.
- Applicants should be properly constituted or working towards adopting a constitution. (A copy of the constitution or draft will be required)
- Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they are providing a benefit to the community in Tamworth and are non-profit making organisations with charitable aims.
- Projects supporting healthy lifestyles that include healthy eating and physical activity will be welcome.
- Faith groups applying for grants should ensure that the activities they are offering are open to people from all faiths.

- Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they operate an equal opportunities policy and that when working with children, appropriate child protection policies and procedures are in place.

## **ARTS GRANTS**

Consideration will be given to any planned arts activity that complies with the stated **Arts Policy** of the council and represents good value for money for the people of Tamworth.

**A maximum award of £500** per application is allowed although figures exceeding this amount will be considered in exceptional circumstances\*. In particular, the committee will look favourably upon those proposals that demonstrate one or more of the following qualities:

- a) Community emphasis – the project should substantially involve or have special relevance to the people of Tamworth and should have a social, artistic and/or economic benefit to the borough.
- b) Increased access and participation – the project will encourage wider interest and opportunities for involvement arts activities.
- c) Originality and creativity – the project will offer something distinctive to Tamworth’s arts provision and will represent a development of existing practice for the people involved.

.A grant can be awarded towards the costs of materials, equipment, instruments, productions, training courses or tuition costs.

Grants will not be given for:-

- Work and projects of a party political nature
- Travel and subsistence costs
- Guarantee against loss
- Work and projects which discriminate against ethnicity, race, gender or religion
- Projects operated on a commercial or for profit basis.
- The funding of organisations, projects or events which promote or condone extremist ideology, activities or terrorism.

## **Application notes and criteria**

Tamworth Borough Council Communities, Planning & Partnerships

Applications are encouraged from new applicants. Not more than one application from the same source will be considered in any 12 month period.

Note: Activities or promotions where the Community Arts Officer is acting as the facilitator and advisor to a group but does not form part of the Council's identified programme can qualify for assistance.

The Committee's decision will be final. However, unsuccessful applicants will be able to resubmit for future consideration.

The Committee may defer a decision pending further information and they may set conditions and provisos.

## **SPORTS GRANTS**

### **Coaches/Education**

Purpose of the Grant

To assist in the development of coaches and officials by enabling them to improve their qualifications and experience.

Criteria

To qualify for grant aid, individuals must apply through their club.

As well as the general criteria which apply to all grant applications, organisations applying for coach/official education grants must meet the following criteria:

- The course for which the individual is applying for grant aid must be for a sport/activity recognised by Sport England and/or the Governing Body of the respective sport.
- Each grant application will be considered on its own merits. Grants will normally be awarded to a maximum rate of 50% and not exceeding £300. Applications will be considered for a minimum course cost of £100.
- Applicants/clubs/other sources must be able to contribute at least 50% of the cost of the proposed course.
- Applicants must be actively involved in providing opportunities and supporting the development of their sport within the Borough of Tamworth.

### **Sports Club Grants**

To increase the availability of sporting opportunities by:

- Assisting existing organisations to develop their sports programmes.
- Encouraging the establishment of new sports groups/clubs/sections.
- Encourage Club Mark.

General Criteria

As well as the general criteria which apply to all grant applications, organisations applying for a development grant must meet the following criteria:

Applicant organisations must provide opportunities that will benefit residents of Tamworth and will normally be located within the Borough boundary. Statutory or public funded organisations are not eligible.

Grants will be made towards the costs of developing a new club or a new activity and only made towards the costs of projects that are developmental.

Clubs and organisations will only be eligible to apply once in a financial year.

Applications **MUST** be received before the project starts.

Applicants should seek to obtain a letter of endorsement from their local governing body (where applicable)/local school or partner organisation(s), in respect of their proposed project before the application for aid is submitted.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate clearly how their project contributes toward the development of sport in Tamworth and the benefits it will bring to Tamworth residents.

Where applicable, applicants must provide their most recent audited accounts to include a balance sheet and an income expenditure statement.

High priority to clubs seeking Club Mark Accreditation.

Specific criteria

- Grants will normally be awarded up to a maximum of £5000.
- Whilst there is no requirement for match funding, contributions from applicants or partner organisations will be encouraged.
- Applicants should demonstrate the level of support in kind that they are committing to the project (for example in voluntary coaching hours), and any financial contributions from you/other sources.

## **TALENT SUPPORT**

Purpose of Funding

To recognise individual talented sports performers in Tamworth and encourage them to develop to their full potential.

The Talent Support fund can be used to assist with:

- Essential items of equipment/clothing required to compete and train;
- Cost of travel for training and competitions;
- Cost of facility hire for training;
- Coaching costs (but not a coach's salary);

- Club subscription costs

#### Criteria

Funding is only available to those individuals who perform in a sport that is recognised and approved by Sport England

Applicant must be a permanent resident within the Borough boundary. In normal circumstances this will have been for a period of at least two years;

Applications to the fund will not normally be accepted from/on behalf of children under 8 years of age (as of the date of application);

Grants will normally be awarded to a **maximum rate of 50%**

The following maximum grants will be awarded:-

- County level - £300
- Regional level - £500
- National level - £1000

Only one grant application will be approved per applicant per financial year;

Applicants must enclose written support from their Coach/Club/Development squad manager indicating the applicant's current performance level and prospects for the next 12 months. This person must also sign section 4 on the form to verify the amount of support being given;

High Priority will be given to individuals who represent their sport at the Regional level and who are not currently receiving financial support from other sources;

Successful applications will be expected to provide agreed levels of acknowledgement and where appropriate display the Tamworth CSN logo at the event or competition.

#### **FESTIVE GRANTS**

The Festive Grants scheme aims to relieve social isolation and promote social inclusion at the festive period. The grant can support an event, scheme, special project that brings residents together or supports isolated residents during the Christmas period.

**A maximum of £300** will be available to spend in each of the ten wards in the borough.

If a ward is undersubscribed funds may be redistributed to other wards.

**Grants are determined by Scheme of Delegation**

The Festive Grant will be available to voluntary and community organisations providing activities to relieve social isolation during the festive period. Applicants should be properly constituted and a copy of the constitution will be required. Applicants should have a bank account with at least two signatories.

Faith groups applying for grants should ensure that the activities they are offering are open to people from all faiths.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they operate an equal opportunities policy and that when working with children, or adults at risk of abuse or neglect a safeguarding policy is in place.

Applications to Ward Councillors

### **Start Up Business Grants**

To receive these grants, individuals will be required to meet some basic criteria. This includes attending the Enterprise for Success programme, an European regional Development Fund programme, which provides 12 hours over a 2 day workshop (pre-start) or 6-12 hours (post-start) of one-to-one advice and support. This will be delivered either from the Tamworth Enterprise Centre or virtually through providers contracted providers Blue Orchid. The Enterprise for Success programme ensures individuals and businesses have the right skills they need to run their business and results in the creation of a business plan. The Jan 2021 business grant round is intended to have a specific focus on people who have been made redundant as a direct result of the pandemic and are subsequently starting up a business.

### **REPORT AUTHOR**

Jo Sands – Assistant Director Partnerships

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

### **APPENDICES**



THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2020

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS****HOUSING STRATEGY 2020-2025****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

N/A

**PURPOSE**

To consider adoption of the draft Tamworth Borough Council Housing Strategy 2020-2025

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

1. The contents and proposed actions contained within the consultation final draft Housing Strategy are adopted for publication
2. Amendments recommended by the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October are included within the strategy.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Further to discussion at the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny meeting on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October, the Committee endorsed the draft Housing Strategy for recommendation approval by Cabinet with the following amendments:

- That Glascote and Stonydelph Wards be specifically included in the Strategy as priority wards

The Committee recognised that a Housing Strategy, whilst not statutory, will provide and action plan following consultation with relevant Council colleagues and other stakeholders to provide a One Council approach an opportunity to assess the current housing situation across all tenures in the local area, both in terms of quantity and quality, looks at and forecasts future need and thinks about how we may meet these needs.

It interprets national policy priorities into a local context, sitting alongside and complementing other crucial strategies and policies.

These include but are not limited to:

- The Local Plan
- The Homelessness strategy
- Community safety plans.

It will give us a direction to work towards and goals to monitor progress against.

The plans include an achievable range of priorities and actions. The key headlines are detailed below:

- Development of 250 new homes per year to meet the needs of the existing population and those attracted to the area for work, either locally or in easy commuting distance
- Providing a range of new homes to reflect need and aspiration including maximising the delivery of affordable and social housing
- Ensuring all new homes are built to a standard which reflects the move towards zero carbon and future proofs them against the climate crisis
- Ensure new housing is incorporated into the regeneration of the town centre
- Improving conditions in the private sector
- Improving tenancy sustainment rates
- Providing a wider range of options for older people and for younger people.

Many of these headline priorities are already being delivered through current work being undertaken. This strategy enables us to build this work on and develop more positive outcomes for the people of Tamworth.

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

A Housing Strategy is not statutory and there is no obligation to produce one. It was, however, considered to be an important overarching strategy to inform housing needs in Tamworth.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

This strategy will be delivered within the existing budgets and business plans.

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

Although there is no statutory requirement to publish a Housing Strategy currently, not doing so could mean that we fail to address / focus on other issues which could leave us open to legal, financial and reputational challenge – for example the Council can be held accountable to for not building sufficient numbers of housing.

The Council need to be able to demonstrate that we are contributing to achieving goals set by national legislation for example achieving zero carbon emissions by 2050.

We need to ensure we continue to deliver and improve on those areas of work where there are statutory duties upon us for example dealing with poor conditions in the private rental sector, HMO Licencing.

## **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The Strategy will encompass and benefit all sectors of the local community.

It will bring positive outcomes around health and wellbeing to the more vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the Community.

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

- The strategy has significant positive implications for sustainability locally.
- By providing sufficient good quality housing it will contribute to stable resilient communities.
- Communities where people do not wish to keep moving from or have to because of there being no suitable affordable accommodation.
- Homes built to better and more energy efficient standards, or even retrofitted, will stand the test of time.
- It will encourage healthy and sustainable positive economic outcomes.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The last Housing and Health Strategy covered the period 2010- 2015. HQN were procured to assist with this new Housing Strategy which will guide what we do between 2020- 2025.

The production of it has been somewhat delayed, not least due to Covid19, but there is sufficient flexibility within it to accommodate impacts of Covid19.

There is no longer a statutory duty upon Local Authorities to produce a Housing Strategy however it affords the Council a clear direction of travel and priorities for all areas of housing activity and is vital for number of reasons.

These reasons include:

- informing our role in increasing housing supply,
- place shaping,
- promoting the role of housing in the creation of safe, thriving and sustainable communities
- supporting economic growth.

There is still a duty to produce homelessness and rough sleeping strategy which is linked to and forms part of the actions plans in relation to this overarching strategy

## **REPORT AUTHOR**

Jo Sands, Assistant Director Partnerships  
Sue Phipps, Strategic Housing Manager

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Draft Final Housing Strategy

Appendix 2 - Evidence Base

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

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## **Tamworth Borough Council Housing Strategy 2020 – 2025**

Tamworth Borough Council has devised this a new housing strategy to provide a clear direction of travel and priorities for the housing service. The strategy has been devised with the input of a wide range of local stakeholders and will be implemented working in partnership with them.

The strategy encompasses all housing activity, from delivery of new homes, improving conditions in private sector properties to the stock that the Council owns and manages. It is both informed by and underpins our corporate strategy: it will help to prevent homelessness and help people to access suitable housing; it will support the building of resilient communities and help tackle the causes and effects of poverty; it will ensure increased access to information. The strategy also sets out how we will make effective use of our resources to ensure the maximum impact.

The focus of the strategy is on helping the economy and future development of Tamworth. Housing is a key component in our economic development strategy and our work to improve Tamworth town centre. Tamworth's location attracts a number of people who want to work locally and commute to nearby urban centres; appropriate attractive housing is essential to ensure economic vibrancy. Housing for local people is also key - we want to retain and harness the skills of our existing population.

The strategy has been devised against the background of the Corona virus pandemic, an unprecedented time. The virus will impact in a number of ways, some of which we can predict but many that we can't. The strategy is, therefore, flexible to cope with an uncertain future.

Cllr Michelle Cook

Portfolio Holder Neighbourhoods

## Overview of evidence base

This strategy has been developed with support from HQN who have produced a detailed evidence base, which is available as a separate document. The evidence base was completed prior to the Corona virus pandemic which will have some impact on the housing market, economic growth and employment.

Some key findings from the evidence base include:

- Tamworth has a high employment rate with growth predicted in a number of sectors across the region, including Tamworth
- 250 new homes a year are needed to meet the needs of the existing and predicted population and to support forecasted economic growth; because of a lack of sites in the area some of these will be delivered outside the Borough
- There is demand for more affordable homes; the Local Plan will deliver at least 40 new affordable homes each year, the majority for rent
- House prices in Tamworth are slightly higher than in Staffordshire as a whole but remain considerably below the averages for England and Wales; affordability ratios (house prices to income) are also better in Tamworth than the averages for England (it is recognised that there are other barriers to home ownership such as deposit and stability on income)
- Over the past ten years house prices in Tamworth have risen at a faster rate than the regional or national rates
- Rental growth in Tamworth has broadly followed the pattern for England as a whole and for the West Midlands
- There is limited appetite for Low Cost Home Ownership products from current households but there may be more of an appetite from newly forming households and those moving into the area

## Our priorities

- 1. Enable the provision of sufficient new homes to meet the needs of the existing population and those attracted to the area for work; ensure a range of provision to reflect both need and aspiration**
  - Deliver average of 177 new homes per year in the Borough, in line with the Local Plan; at least 40 of these to be affordable
  - Ensure a range of provision to reflect both need and aspiration
  - Ensure housing plays a key role in the regeneration of Tamworth town centre
  - Maximise the delivery of affordable and social housing through all available funding options

**2. Make best use of existing housing and related assets**

- Improve conditions in the private sector
- Deliver the landlord business plan and asset management strategy
- Ensure best use of stock in the social rented sector; increase options for older and younger people
- Continue to tackle empty homes; consider options for creating homes in other empty or under-utilised spaces

**3. Ensure housing plays a key role in delivering Tamworth's response to climate change**

- Ensure all new homes emphasise energy efficiency and the use of new renewable energy
- Work with homeowners and private sector landlords to encourage retrofitting to reduce carbon emissions and promote use of renewable energies

**4. Ensure that everyone who lives or works in Tamworth has access to appropriate housing that promotes their well-being**

- Provide appropriate information on housing options and choices
- Reduce homelessness, its causes and consequences
- Increase tenancy sustainment rates, particularly in the private rented sector
- Focus targeted intervention on areas with the highest levels of deprivation



## Action Plan Years 1 & 2 (2020 -22)

Delivery of the new Housing Strategy has to be seen within the context of a number of other corporate activities, including the review of elements of the Local Plan and the Council's response to climate change. The short-term impact of Corona virus means that some of these planned actions are unlikely to be completed during the current financial year; the plan has been developed for delivery between now and April 2022. The plan is ambitious and takes forward most of the priorities set out above, but it is also deliverable. Corona virus has also had a significant impact on the Council's resources. The plan is mindful of this; some elements will require additional resources and it is recognised that a business case will need to be made for these elements at the appropriate time.

<b>Enable the provision of sufficient new homes to meet the needs of the existing population and those attracted to the area for work; ensure a range of provision to reflect both need and aspiration</b>	<b>The key focus for years 1 &amp; 2 should be on understanding existing capacity to deliver new affordable and social homes and whether this capacity needs to be increased</b>
Deliver average of 177 new homes within the Borough per year in line with the Local Plan; at least 40 of these to be affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure appropriate joint working arrangements are in place to monitor delivery particularly of affordable new homes; ensure housing team are alerted to new applications or pre-app discussions on new schemes where affordable housing should be delivered in line with existing policy .</li> </ul>
Ensure a range of provision to reflect both need and aspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No additional action required</li> </ul>
Ensure housing plays a key role in the regeneration of Tamworth town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold initial discussions to get under the skin of current proposals and understand contribution housing can make; ensure 20% of new homes are affordable; ensure flats above shops and retail to housing conversion is considered as appropriate</li> </ul>
Maximise the delivery of affordable and social housing through all available funding options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With planning colleagues, agree appropriate 'package' of smaller sites for development of affordable and social homes; consider whether should be linked to requirement to tackle empty homes; test RP appetite</li> <li>• Ensure next iteration of HRA business plan brings clarity on capacity for new development and acquisitions – this will need to consider whether a higher level of investment is required to meet challenges of climate change as well as appropriate levels of borrowing</li> <li>• By March 2021 have agreed in principle whether Council and existing RPs have sufficient development capacity to deliver required new homes and tackle empty properties and have explored innovative funding mechanisms to increase capacity if required.</li> </ul>

<b>Make best use of existing housing and related assets</b>	<p><b>For years 1 &amp; 2, there should be two key areas of focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Agreeing priority actions for improving stock to meet the challenges of climate change and sources of potential funding; and</b></li> <li>• <b>Reducing barriers to accessing private renting for households at risk of becoming homeless</b></li> </ul>
Improve conditions in the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work proactively with landlords and homeowners to agree appropriate ways to improve stock to meet challenges of climate change; promote understanding of what is needed, and potential funding sources including Green Homes Deal</li> <li>• Recommission and raise profile of HEAT project</li> <li>• Focus funding/support for a range of appropriate interventions around areas with highest levels of deprivation i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Belgrave</li> <li>○ Bolehall</li> <li>○ Castle</li> <li>○ Glascote</li> <li>○ Mercian</li> <li>○ Spital</li> <li>○ Stonydelph</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Proactively monitor changes in number and type of HMOs, particularly any 'fall out' from Birmingham decision</li> </ul>
Review landlord business plan and asset management strategy to ensure meet climate change commitments; explore more innovative funding options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver actions already included in plan and strategy</li> <li>• Review in light of Council's commitment to tackling climate change</li> <li>• Explore innovative funding options including potential role for existing council-owned company alongside other options</li> </ul>
Ensure best use of stock in the social rented sector; increase options for older and younger people across all sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to review options for creating more accommodation (including shared accommodation) for younger people especially care leavers (also likely to be a priority in homelessness strategy)</li> <li>• Ensure tailored housing options approach for Older People covers appropriate choices for those in social housing</li> </ul>
Continue to tackle empty homes; consider options for creating homes in other empty or under-utilised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore use of acquisitions budget for purchase of empty homes</li> <li>• Explore capacity and appetite of RPs to tackle empty homes, including bringing in external</li> </ul>

spaces	funding
<b>Ensure housing plays a key role in delivering Tamworth's response to climate change</b>	<b>Years 1 &amp; 2 focus is on understanding implications and priority actions to be taken forward in later years</b>
Ensure all new homes emphasise energy efficiency and the use of new renewable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree broad headings for changes to Tamworth Housing Standards in light of recent decision to declare climate emergency; agree if any or all of these can be taken forward under current Local Plan and if so, how to progress (probably through revised SPD). If changes are required to Local Plan agree timescale for these</li> <li>• Work with developers and builders to begin to explore options for non-carbon-based heating systems (may be merit in trying to do this regionally or sub-regionally?)</li> </ul>
Work with homeowners and private sector landlords to encourage retrofitting to reduce carbon emissions and promote use of renewable energies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Already covered above</li> </ul>
<b>Ensure that everyone who lives or works in Tamworth has access to appropriate housing that promotes their well-being</b>	<b>Many of these actions will be part of strategy for preventing homelessness and rough sleeping; to avoid duplication I have suggested priority for housing strategy year 1 should be on tenancy sustainment and related issues</b>
Provide appropriate information on housing options and choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen partnership working with CAB to include regular meetings and a joint approach to complex cases</li> <li>• Work with CAB to extend offer to include tailored advice to private sector tenants</li> <li>• Develop housing options package for older people in collaboration with CAB; explore trusted contractor approach as part of this</li> </ul>
Reduce homelessness, its causes and consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete and implement preventing homelessness and rough sleeping strategy</li> <li>• Carry out review of temporary accommodation, including private sector leasing scheme</li> <li>• Build on response to Corona virus which enabled end to rough sleeping to ensure this is sustained in the future</li> </ul>
Increase tenancy sustainment rates, particularly in the private rented sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate 'A First Home' project impact on sustainment rates and explore options for further funding.</li> <li>• Explore funding options for provision of support for those with complex needs (may be led by housing solutions?)</li> </ul>

Focus targeted intervention on areas with the highest levels of deprivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Already covered above</li></ul>
Ensure appropriate advice and funding is available to support older people to live independently in appropriate accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop tailored advice for older people setting out range of options to improve existing accommodation or move to appropriate alternative accommodation</li><li>• Explore potential for funding grants and loans for older people moving towards approach set out in appendix one</li></ul>

FINAL DRAFT

**APPENDIX ONE – DRAFT STATEMENT ON HOUSING OPTIONS FOR OLDER PEOPLE**

The statement below sets out the potential options available to older people to either improve their existing home or to move to appropriate alternative accommodation. The Council does not currently have funding to support these options but will explore possible options as part of delivering this strategy.

<b>Cost of works £</b>	<b>Eligible for Disabled Facilities Grant? (DFG)</b>	<b>Funding options for those on eligible benefit</b>	<b>Funding options for those not on eligible benefit</b>
Under 500	N	Council Grant	C&R handyperson service (will have to pay) or Trusted Contractor scheme
500 to 2,000	Y	DFG Poss top up council grant for any non-eligible works (up to £1,000) Council loan (£1,000+)	DFG (means tested) Council loan (means tested) Commercial loan (may be secured)
500 to 2,000	N	Council loan	Council loan (means tested) Commercial loan (may be secured)
2,000 to 10,000	Y	DFG Poss top-up council loan for any non-eligible works	DFG (means tested) Secured council loan (means tested) Secured commercial loan
2,000 to 10,000	N	Secured council loan	Secured council loan (means tested) Secured commercial loan
10,000 to 30,000	Y	Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible DFG Poss top-up council loan for any non-eligible works	Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible DFG (means tested) Council loan up to max amount (means tested and possibly secured) Secured commercial loan Equity release
10,000 to 30,000	N	Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible Commercial loan with guarantee from Council	Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible Secured commercial loan Equity release

30,000+	Y	Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible DFG up to £30,000 Council loan up to max amount (means tested and possibly secured)	Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible DFG up to £30,000 (means tested) Council loan up to max amount (means tested and possibly secured) Secured commercial loan Equity release
30,000+	N	Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible	Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible Secured commercial loan Equity release

### Notes

Council Grant	Only available for certain works (e.g. Cat 1 hazards); those on an eligible benefit (or means tested but that's a lot more work) up to max £500 - 1,000
C&R handyman service	Explore options for self-funded service with Millbrook – recharged services for basic adaptations/repairs
Trusted contractor scheme	In addition to or instead of above – may be able to carry out wider range of repairs but likely to be at slightly higher cost
Council loan (£1,000+)	Under £5,000 decide whether or not to secure against property on individual basis; over £5,000 would be secured. Loan is no interest and repayable when property sold. Means tested for those not on an eligible benefit (or could restrict to those on eligible benefits but this would be restrictive).  After a few years the scheme should be largely self-funding, with repayments coming back into the pot. Experience elsewhere suggests default rates are low, even on unsecured loans
Commercial loan (may be secured)	Citizen's Advice would be able to advise on this and may even be willing to put arrangements in place to refer people to specific organisations (subject to Financial Services Act regulations)
Commercial loan with guarantee from Council	Many households on eligible benefits would find it difficult to secure a loan otherwise. Only for non-DFG eligible works which are still Cat 1 hazards and up to max £30,000
Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible	In all cases where required works will cost more than £10,000, whether eligible for DFG or not (though there is a statutory obligation to pay the DFG). Options depend on current tenure; can support people to find alternative accommodation in private rented sector and home ownership. May need OT out to view prospective properties to

	ensure will meet access needs.
Equity release	Equity release schemes are straightforward and offer a real alternative where cost is above £10,000 and household don't want to move or alternative accommodation is not available. Age UK, Saga and Which all have information about equity release on their websites

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# Housing strategy – evidence base

Tamworth Borough Council

SEPTEMBER 2020

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## 1 Introduction

Tamworth Borough Council is developing a new housing strategy which is to provide a clear direction of travel and priorities for the housing service. The strategy will cover all housing activity, from delivery of new homes to improving conditions in private sector properties to the stock that the Council owns and manages. The strategy is being developed with support from HQN who have produced this evidence base.

This evidence base was largely drawn up before the coronavirus lockdown; it is also focused on what has already happened. Whilst the strategy must be based on the evidence, it also needs to take into account the impact of the virus, which will be significant in the short, medium and longer term. In Tamworth, a key role for the housing strategy is to support our ambitions for economic growth; the ambitions remain but the economic outlook is now less certain. The housing strategy aims for everyone to have access to decent, affordable accommodation, but there will be continuing challenges to prevent homelessness as the lockdown is eased. There is also good news: while rough sleeping has not been a huge issue in Tamworth, managing coronavirus has shown that it is possible to get rough sleepers off the streets and into accommodation. Responding to the virus has also mobilised more positive partnerships and we can build on this going forward.

Below are some key themes from the evidence base which will be taken forward into the new strategy.

## 2 Key themes for new strategy

- Development of 250 new homes per year to meet the needs of the existing population and those attracted to the area for work, either locally or in easy commuting distance
- Providing a range of new homes to reflect need and aspiration, particularly affordable homes
- Ensuring all new homes are built to a standard which reflects the move towards zero carbon and future proofs them against the climate crisis
- Ensure new housing is incorporated into the regeneration of the town centre
- Improving conditions in the private sector
- Improving tenancy sustainment rates
- Providing a wider range of options for older people and for younger people.

## 3 National policy context

The housing strategy sits within the context of both national and local strategies and policies. There is no longer a National Housing Strategy for England or a requirement for local authorities to have a housing strategy, although the latter is still recognised as good practice.

### **3.1. National Planning Policy Framework**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the key framework within which planning policy and housing strategies have to be developed. The NPPF was revised in February 2019. It must be taken into account in the preparation of a development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Tamworth's local plan was adopted in 2016, prior to the revision of the framework. A housing and economic needs assessment was carried out in 2019 and will inform a review of the local plan in due course.

### **3.2. Other relevant national policies**

Local authorities are no longer required to have a housing strategy, although many local authorities feel it is a useful way of setting out priorities for themselves and for partner organisations.

There is still a statutory requirement to have a policy for preventing and tackling homelessness and rough sleeping; in Tamworth a new strategy is currently being developed. The two policies should complement and support each other, with the housing strategy addressing the wider issues to ensure a balanced housing market. This evidence base highlights emerging priorities for the new preventing homelessness and rough sleeping strategy and should not need to be revised when the new homelessness strategy is agreed. Some minor amendments to the housing strategy delivery plan may be needed; the plan is of course a live document which will change to reflect changes in the external environment.

## **4 Regional policy context**

### **4.1. Community safety**

A comprehensive community safety strategic assessment was undertaken for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent in 2019. From this a community safety partnership plan 2020-2023 was developed for Tamworth; more information on this and the implications for the housing strategy are included below.

There is also a Staffordshire community safety agreement (2017 – 2020) which identifies the priorities for Staffordshire as a whole. Tamworth is piloting a place-based approach, developing mechanisms to identify vulnerable children and families at the earliest opportunity. The housing strategy will focus on a number of key areas and could support the place-based approach through tackling fuel poverty and poor housing conditions.

#### **4.2. Health and wellbeing**

There is a health and wellbeing board for Staffordshire which is responsible for the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for the area. The clinical commissioning group (health service) sits on the health and wellbeing board.

#### **4.3. Local enterprise partnership (LEP)**

The role of the LEP is to create jobs, grow the economy and improve the quality of life across the area. Tamworth currently sits in two LEPs, Greater Birmingham and Solihull, and Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire.

The Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP focuses on a number of key targets including:

- Creating more jobs in the private sector
- Increasing gross value added, ie, the value generated in production of goods and services
- Decrease unemployment
- Increase the percentage of the working age population with NVQ3+
- Increase productivity rates
- Be the leading core city LEP for quality of life.

This LEP commissioned a report on town ecosystems as part of its work to create thriving towns and local centres. It provides key economic, labour market, population and property/high street metrics for ten towns including Tamworth. More information on the report is included below.

The Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire LEP has similar priorities, eg:

- Create 50,000 more jobs between 2011 and 2021 (already exceeded target)
- Grow gross value added by 50% over the same period (up to March 2020 was at 18% so below target)
- Increase the percentage of the working age population with NVQ4+
- Increase the number of new businesses.

#### **4.4. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service**

The focus is on proactive prevention with the aim of reducing preventable deaths to zero. The number of fire-related casualties fell to its lowest levels in a decade in 2017; there has been a slight rise since then.

### **5 Local policy context**

#### **5.1. Key points from Tamworth data pack (produced by Staffordshire Observatory) and JSNA 2018**

- 18% of Tamworth residents live within the most deprived national quintile
- Tamworth has a higher than average proportion of children living in households where there are no adults in employment
- GCSE attainment is lower than the England average. There are differences within the area, ie, 18% in Belgrave to 42% in Mercian ward
- Tamworth has a higher than average proportion of children absent or excluded from school
- Around 30% of residents are estimated to be financially stressed (nationally 28%)
- Average house price (£170,000) is more than 6.8 times the average gross salary (£25,098)
- The proportion of older people living in income deprived households is significantly higher than the national average
- Proportion of people claiming disability benefits is higher than national average
- Around one in ten households is living in fuel poverty
- 12% of residents provide unpaid care (10% nationally)
- Infant mortality rates are high
- Rates of teenage pregnancy are high
- There is a recognised need to improve the percentage of vulnerable adults who live in stable and appropriate accommodation
- Wards with highest levels of need (measured by families and communities facing multiple issues and areas where there is a risk of young people experiencing poor outcomes) include:
  - Belgrave
  - Bolehall
  - Castle



- Glascote
- Mercian
- Spital
- Stoneydelph.
- As with many areas, there are issues around social isolation for older people.

## **5.2. The community safety partnership plan for Tamworth**

The plan is updated annually. Key priorities are:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Vulnerable persons and contextual safeguarding (including drugs)
- Public place violence and disorder
- Domestic abuse
- County lines

A number of these are significant for the housing strategy, which will reflect the need to protect vulnerable households. Appropriate housing can also help to manage anti-social behaviour.

The partnership has adopted a core set of principles:

- Prevention wherever possible
- Early intervention
- Targeting prolific offenders
- Targeting resources to hotspot areas
- Supporting victims
- Increasing public confidence.

The partnership plan highlights some significant achievements under each of the key priorities, including those relating to housing, such as provision of a night shelter for homeless people and Staffordshire FARS safe and well checks on vulnerable people. There is a Staffordshire wide service for victims of domestic abuse. Tamworth has seen a slight reduction in reported domestic abuse to the end of October 2019. Anyone can become a victim of domestic abuse, but the figures show that most victims are aged under 30 and female.

The partnership plan highlights those wards with the most demand-led incidences of different types where thematic activities will be focused.

There are daily vulnerability meetings for immediate problem solving of high-risk incidents; these are supplemented by weekly meetings of the Tamworth vulnerability partnership to manage and co-ordinate high risk cases involving vulnerable individuals. There are also weekly community safety and risk meetings to take a partnership approach to ASB management and enforcement. The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) meets weekly for high risk domestic abuse cases and community safety staff attend weekly police threat and grip meetings.

Relevant partners confirmed in consultation the value of these meetings and the exchange of information across services. The meetings can be very short but the regularity offers opportunities to respond to issues at the earliest possible stage. A wide range of partners can attend the meetings including key council officers, the police and fire services, County Council social services and local support teams, community mental health teams, Staffordshire Victims gateway, integrated offender management and registered providers.

The community safety partnership benefited from locality deal funding of £64,000 for 2020/21

High numbers of residents in Tamworth say that they feel safe (90% in daylight and 80% after dark).

The partnership plan includes an action plan.

### **5.3. Corporate plan**

The Council has adopted a corporate plan for 2019 – 2022. The vision is to ‘put Tamworth, its people and the local economy at the heart of everything we do’. This is underpinned by statements of purpose, ie:

- Help tackle causes and effects of poverty and financial hardship
- Increase all residents resilience and access to information
- Engage with residents to promote community involvement and civic pride
- Support the development of Tamworth now and in the future
- Help the local economy to grow in a way which benefits our residents and businesses
- Utilise Council resources effectively
- Help tackle the causes of inequality and increase opportunities for all residents and businesses
- Help protect, nurture and celebrate our local heritage

- Help prevent homelessness and help people access suitable housing
- Help build resilient communities
- Help develop and safeguard our environment and open spaces.

The housing strategy will both underpin and be informed by all of these statements. It will need to deliver on preventing homelessness and helping people to access suitable housing, but will also support the building of resilient communities, helping tackle causes and effects of poverty, increase access to information and help the economy and future development of Tamworth. It will also need to demonstrate making effective use of the Council's resources.

#### **5.4. Other strategies**

As noted above, the housing strategy will be supported by a new preventing homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. In contrast to national data, between 2010 and 2018, local statistics generally reflect an improving or constant picture. The Council has responded positively and effectively to the Homelessness Reduction Act including a revised allocations policy and processes. The Council has also revamped the housing solutions team, introduced personal housing plans and increased collaboration with a range of public and third sector agencies.

The two major immediate reasons for homelessness reflect the national pattern, ie:

- Potential or actual loss of private rented accommodation; and
- The unwillingness of families to continue to provide a home.

Key emerging issues that will need to be addressed in the homelessness strategy include:

- Multiple exclusion homelessness, ie, people with more than one support need/complex needs such as mental health issues and drug addiction
- A revolving door of homelessness where the tenancy is not sustained – or people move from prison to homelessness or intersperse periods of rough sleeping with sofa-surfing
- Military veterans experiencing or facing homelessness and rough sleeping
- The consequences of other local authorities in the region placing families with a multiplicity of issues in a range of 'temporary accommodation' in Tamworth
- Reviewing provision of temporary accommodation, in particular the private sector leasing scheme

The Council is also looking at the potential for sharing staffing and other resources with other statutory and voluntary sector agencies to maximise their impact.

Tamworth had in place a strategy to tackle conditions in the private sector but this has now been subsumed within the housing strategy.

## **6 Housing and economic development need assessment**

### **6.1. Overview**

A Housing and Economic Development Need Assessment (HEDNA) was prepared by GL Hearn consultants and published in September 2019. The outcomes from the HEDNA will inform a review of the local plan. The HEDNA was carried out in accordance with the standard methodology required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updated in 2019. It is therefore a robust and defensible assessment of the housing needs for Tamworth, although this has yet to be tested through a local plan examination.

It should be noted that these figures have not been amended to reflect the impact of coronavirus, much of which is still unknown. In particular, the housing need figures are influenced by the level of domestic migration. It may be the migration into the Tamworth area increases following the coronavirus as people from nearby urban conurbations seek a move which combines good employment opportunities with a good quality of life. However, it is likely that the UK will be affected by a level of economic recession and this could depress inwards migration, particularly in the short to medium term.

### **6.2. Population and employment**

The population of Tamworth in 2017 was 76,500. 2016 household projections put the number of households at 32,158, with an average household size of 2.37. From 1981, Tamworth experienced a higher than average population growth, up until 2016 when it slowed and began to reduce. This population increase is despite significant numbers of out-migration – people leaving the area for other areas within the UK. Out-migration numbers have increased since 2009 (with a slight drop in 2015). Population growth has largely been fuelled by higher levels of positive natural change, ie, there have been more births than deaths, resulting in an increased population. There has also been some international in-migration, although this dropped in 2017, possibly due to the Brexit effect.

The age profile of the population is not that different to both the West Midlands and the England profiles, though Tamworth has a slightly higher number of young people aged five to ten (reflecting the higher birth rate noted above). Population projections to 2036 show growth only in the older age group – those aged over 65, with a particularly large increase in the over 80s. A significant decline is projected in those aged under 35, which may have a knock on effect on the ability to recruit into the workforce without additional housing and population growth.

Around 63% of the population are of working age (2017 figures). 83% of these are economically active, ie, working or looking for work. This is higher than the West Midlands figure of 77%. Both employment and unemployment rates in Tamworth are higher than the West Midlands average – this is possible because more people are economically active.

Of those who are working, a high percentage are in associate professor and technical roles (14%), administrative and secretarial roles (13%) and professional occupations (13%). Other roles include caring, leisure and other service occupations, sales and customer services. There are also significant numbers in elementary occupations, ie, physical work including manufacturing, assembly and transport (14%).

Gross value added (GVA) measures the value of goods and services produced in an area. In Tamworth, GVA increased steadily from the early 90s up until 2008 when it dropped, matching national trends. From 2013 to 2017, GVA rose steeply, dropping off a little in 2017. Transportation and storage, and the wholesale and retail sectors showed particularly strong growth. Manufacturing, construction and real estate were also strong sectors during this period.

The forecast GVA for Tamworth is lower than has been achieved in recent years (0.8% compared to 2.9% between 1997 – 2017). This reflects a variety of international, national, regional and local factors. Manufacturing and wholesale/retail sectors are projected to reduce considerably. Modest growth is projected in the arts and entertainment, admin and support and professional services sectors.

The LEP are predicting growth in a number of sectors across the region, these are not specific to Tamworth. They include advanced manufacturing and engineering, especially around transport technologies, disruptive and emerging technologies, and opportunities arising from HS2. The 2019 Business Data Analysis also highlights the manufacturing and logistics sectors. Overall, however, the HEDNA concludes that Tamworth is probably facing reduced employment options in the longer term.

### **6.3. Housing need**

Using the 2014-based national household growth projections, the HEDNA identifies a baseline figure of 1,218 additional households in Tamworth over the ten-year period 2019 – 2029; or 122 per annum. This figure is then adjusted for affordability, using an affordability ratio published by ONS. For Tamworth, the ratio is 7.71, giving an adjustment factor of 0.23. This increases the number of new homes required to 150 per annum. There is an argument that the household growth projections are based on historic data which does not take into account the suppression of household growth caused by lack of affordable housing. There is no adjustment for this in the housing need figures in the HEDNA.

The current local plan is based on delivery of 250 new homes per year. While above the evidenced need, this level of delivery would facilitate inwards migration of working age

households. It could also lead to increased outwards commuting. The HEDNA concludes 250 homes a year would meet the additional housing need to support forecasted economic growth.

The local plan shows 177 homes per year being delivered within Tamworth’s boundaries with the remaining homes being delivered in other local authority areas.

#### 6.4. Housing market information – general

The information and tables below are taken from the HEDNA (with updated information where available). Data sources are shown for all tables.

*Table 1: House prices 2018*

Geography	Median	Mean	Lower quartile
Lichfield	£236,973	£300,650	£172,500
Tamworth	£187,500	£217,857	£147,000
HMA	£212,236	£259,253	£159,750
Staffordshire	£184,950	£242,927	£135,000
West Midlands	£185,000	£268,217	£135,000
England and Wales	£230,000	£347,892	£145,000

Source: Land Registry 2018

In 2018, median and lower quartile house prices in Tamworth were slightly higher than in Staffordshire as a whole, but the mean house price was lower. The median price was similar to the median price in the West Midlands, but the mean house price was considerably lower, while the lower quartile price was higher. There is a similar mixed picture in relation to average prices across the West Midlands. Prices in Tamworth are considerably below the averages for England and Wales, except for lower quartile which is slightly above. This suggests that the range of property types and the variables between different areas in Tamworth are not as great as in other areas of England.

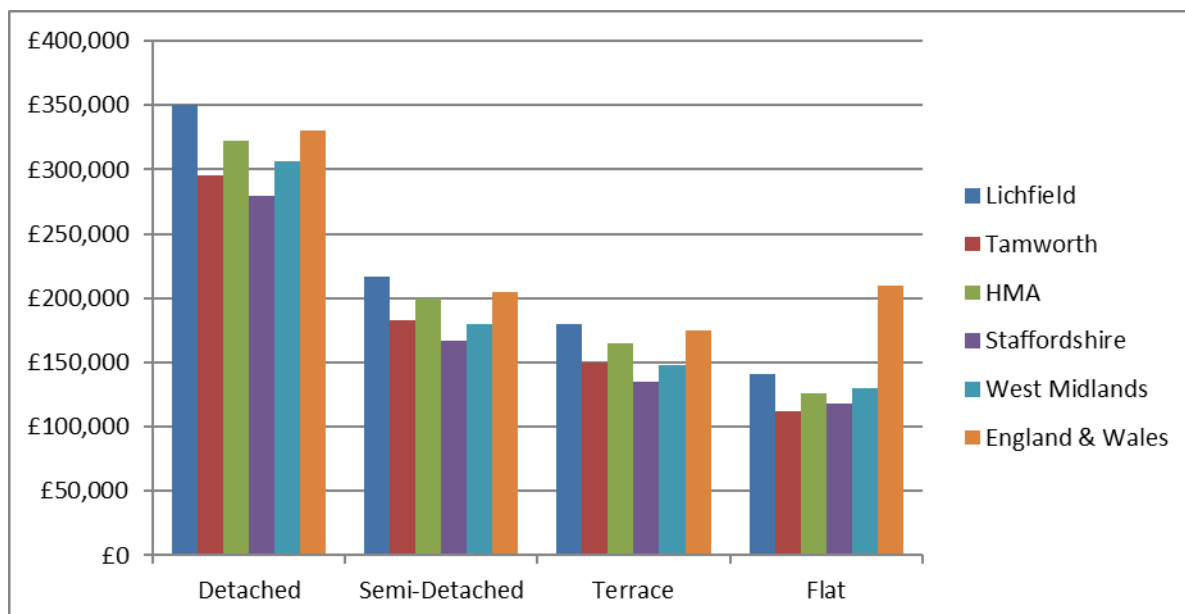
Over the past ten years house prices in Tamworth have risen at a faster rate than the regional or national rates. In the last year, prices have reduced by 6.8%, a greater reduction than in the HMA area or England as a whole.

*Table 2: House price growth 1998 – 2018*

	2018	1-year change	5-year annual change %	10-year annual change %	15-year annual change %	20-year annual change %
Lichfield	£236,973	-3.0%	3.7%	2.7%	3.9%	6.6%
Tamworth	£187,500	-6.8%	5.3%	3.3%	4.1%	6.4%
HMA	£212,236	-4.7%	4.4%	2.9%	3.9%	6.5%
Staffordshire	£184,950	-7.0%	3.9%	2.5%	4.0%	6.3%
West Midlands	£185,000	-5.4%	3.9%	2.8%	3.9%	6.3%
England	£230,000	-2.2%	3.4%	2.9%	3.9%	6.6%

Source: ONS Median house price by local authority district

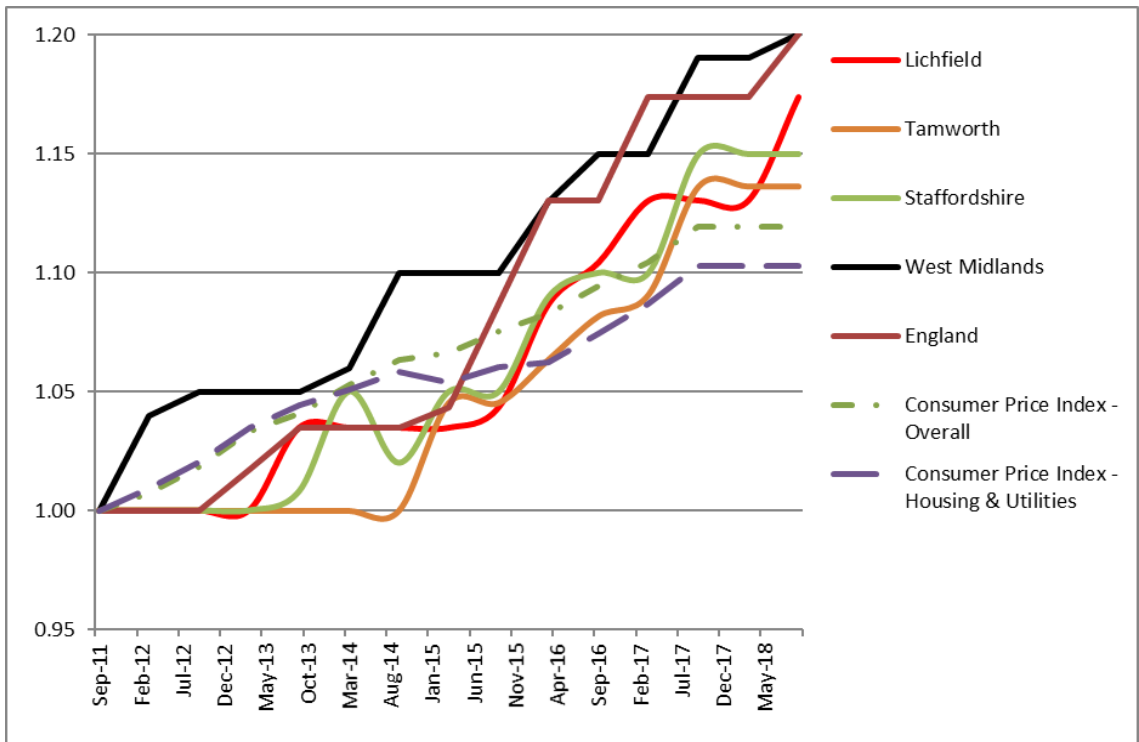
Figure 1: Median house price by type 2018



Source: Land Registry 2018

Figure 1 shows a fairly consistent picture of house prices for different types of property. For those looking for properties within commuting distance of some of the major areas of employment (eg, Birmingham), this makes buying in Tamworth an attractive proposition.

Figure 2: Rental growth residential properties (indexed to 2011)

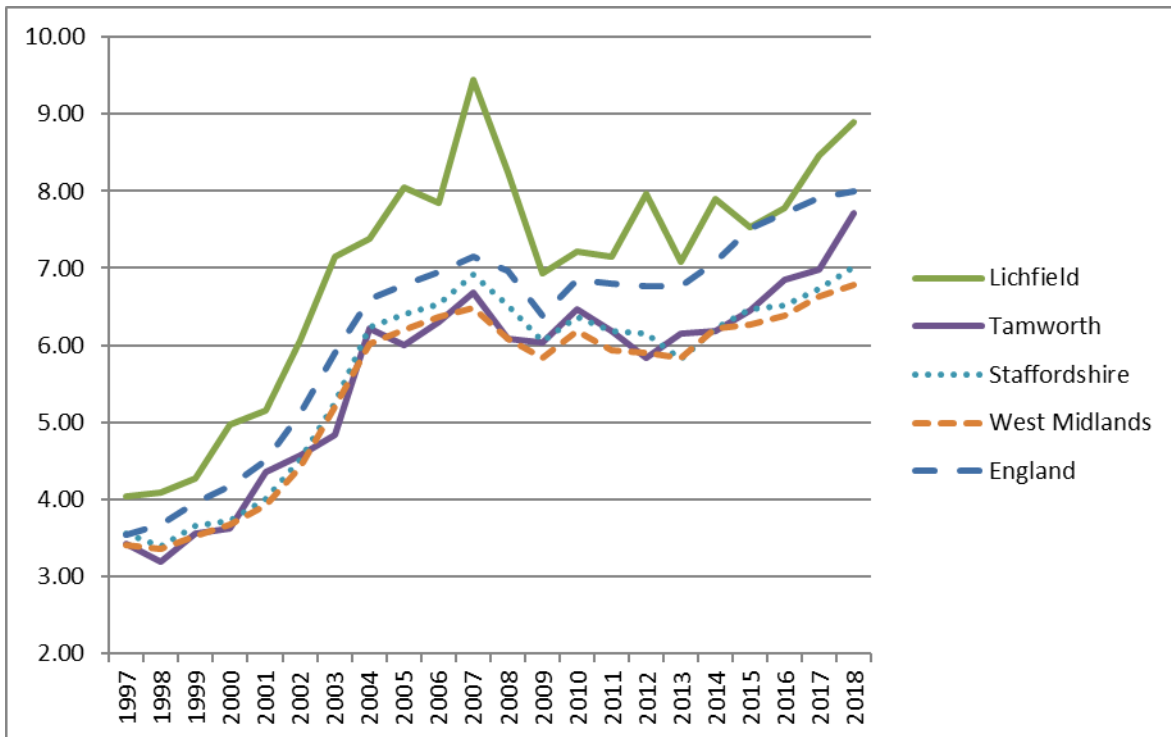


Source: VOA 2017

Figure 2 shows that rental growth in Tamworth has broadly followed the pattern for England as a whole and for the West Midlands, but has been more muted growth than the Staffordshire average, at 14%. The West Midlands had experienced the highest rental growth until 2016 when overall growth in England began to outpace the region.



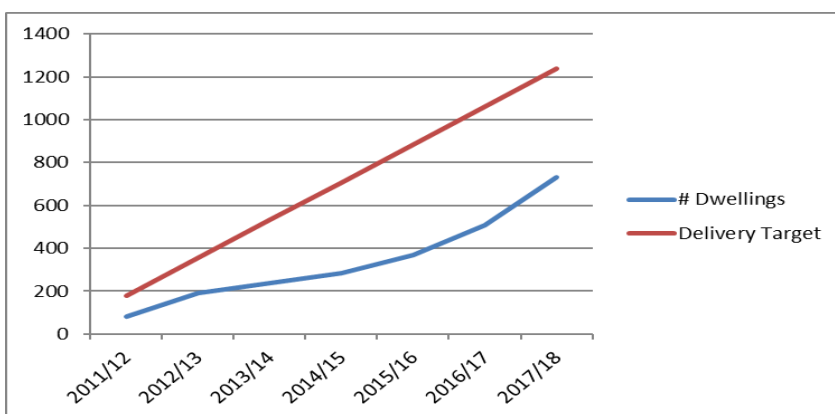
Figure 3: Affordability ratio – median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings, 1997 – 2018



Source HEDNA 2019

Figure 3 shows that affordability ratios in Tamworth have been better than England’s averages and have generally tracked average ratios for the West Midlands, although in the last four years properties in Tamworth have become less affordable when compared to the West Midlands average.

Figure 4: Tamworth Borough Council cumulative net completions 2011-18



Source: Council Monitoring Data

Cumulative housing delivery has failed to keep up with the projected delivery targets. Since a drop in housing completions from 2014 to 2016, progress has been made to close the gap. As of 2018/19, Tamworth had completed 74% of its cumulative housing delivery

target. Officers are confident that the current delivery pipeline and projected completions will close the gap during the local plan period.

*Table 3: Tamworth Borough Council cumulative net completions 2011-19*

Year	# Dwellings	Delivery target	Dwellings delivered/target
2011/12	80	177	45%
2012/13	190	354	54%
2013/14	238	531	45%
2014/15	286	708	40%
2015/16	369	885	42%
2016/17	508	1,062	48%
2017/18	732	1,239	59%
2018/19	1,049	1,416	74%

Source: Council Monitoring Data

Land Registry and Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data is used to establish lower quartile prices and rents – using a lower quartile figure is consistent with planning practice guidance and reflects the entry-level point into the market.

Data from the Land Registry for the year to September 2018 shows in full estimated lower quartile property prices by dwelling type. This is taken as a proxy for entry level costs for home purchases. The data shows entry-level costs to buy in Tamworth: the lower quartile cost to buy a flat is £95,000 up to £242,000 for a detached home. Across dwelling types, the cost is £146,000.

*Table 4: Lower quartile cost of housing to buy – year to September 2018*

	Tamworth
Flat/maisonette	£95,000
Terraced	£126,000
Semi-detached	£158,000

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<b>Detached</b>	£242,000
<b>All dwellings</b>	£146,000

Source: Land Registry

The same analysis can be undertaken for properties of different sizes. The table below shows that entry-level costs to buy in Tamworth are estimated to start from about £80,000 for one-bedroom homes rising to over £241,000 for a four bedroom.

*Table 5: Lower quartile cost of housing to buy – year to September 2018 – by size (estimated)*

	<b>Tamworth</b>
<b>One bedroom</b>	£80,000
<b>Two bedrooms</b>	£116,000
<b>Three bedrooms</b>	£160,000
<b>Four bedrooms</b>	£241,000
<b>All dwellings</b>	£146,000

Source: Land Registry

A similar analysis has been carried out for private rents using VOA data – this covers a 12month period to September 2018. For rental data, information about dwelling sizes is provided by number of bedrooms (rather than types); the analysis shows an average lower quartile cost (across all dwelling sizes) of £570 per month in Tamworth.

*Table 6: Lower quartile market rents, year to September 2018*

	<b>Monthly rent</b>
<b>Room only</b>	£325
<b>One bedroom</b>	£475
<b>Two bedrooms</b>	£575
<b>Three bedrooms</b>	£650
<b>Four bedrooms</b>	£813
<b>All properties</b>	£570

Source: Valuation Office Agency

A household is considered able to afford market rented housing in cases where the rent payable would constitute no more than a particular percentage of gross income. The choice of an appropriate threshold is an important aspect of the analysis. Previous MHCLG guidance (of 2007) suggested that 25% of income is a reasonable start point but also notes that a different figure could be used. Analysis of current letting practice suggests that letting agents typically work on a multiple of 40%. Government policy (through Housing Benefit payment thresholds) would also suggest a figure of 40%+ (depending on household characteristics).

These approaches only use income to determine how many households can afford that rent, it is not used to determine affordability. It is the most widely used approach and is considered robust, although a household on a higher income could in theory afford to spend a much higher percentage of income on rent and still be left with enough on which to live.

Rent levels in Tamworth are somewhat higher in comparison to those seen nationally (a lower quartile rent of £500 per month across England). This would suggest that a proportion of income to be spent on housing would be at around the middle of the range. The HEDNA assumes 29% of income can be spent on rent; for home ownership a 10% deposit and four times income multiple have been used.

*Table 7: Estimated household income (2018)*

	Mean	Median	Lower quartile
<b>Tamworth</b>	£40,800	£31,100	£18,000

Source: Derived from a range of sources, see next para

Data about total household income has been based on ONS modelled income estimates, with additional data from the English Housing Survey (EHS) being used to provide information about the distribution of incomes.

*Table 8: Estimated number of households living in unsuitable housing*

Category of 'need'	Nos
Households in overcrowded housing	874
Concealed/homeless households	344

Existing affordable housing tenants in need	137
Households from other tenures in need	621
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,976</b>

Source: CLG Live Tables, Census (2011) and G L Hearn's data modelling

*Table 9: Estimated annual level of affordable housing need (2016-2036) (Social/affordable rented)*

	<b>Nos</b>
Current need (annual figure)	27
Newly forming households	250
Existing households falling into need	95
Total Gross Need	372
Re-let Supply	201
Net Need	170

Source: Census (2011)/CoRe/Projection Modelling and affordability analysis

Table 9 above is taken from the HEDNA and shows a net need for 170 new homes per annum for social/affordable rented. Social/affordable rented housing is defined in the NPPF Annex 2 as housing provided for those whose needs are not met by the market. Rent is set in accordance with relevant government policy and is generally at least 20% below market equivalent rents. Housing is provided by a Registered Provider (except for Build to Rent schemes where this is not a requirement). The housing will remain at an affordable price for future eligible households.

170 new homes per annum is higher than overall need based on the standard method and would be two-thirds of the total new housing being delivered which is unlikely to be viable. The Council seeks 20% affordable housing as onsite provision on all developments.

Table 9 shows households who cannot afford to purchase or rent in the market. In addition, there may also be a role for low cost home ownership, which would be pitched at households with an income between £23,600 and £32,850. Table 10 below is also taken from G L Hearn's modelling and shows a limited appetite for LCHO products from current households. There is more of an appetite from newly forming households. LCHO products are also likely to be of interest to those moving to Tamworth to take up employment. The modelling is based on income which does not necessarily represent the true picture, as there are other barriers to home ownership, such as the deposit and stamp duty, and the

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availability of mortgages particularly for those on temporary, fixed term of zero hours contracts.

*Table 10: Estimated gross need for affordable home ownership – per annum*

	Tamworth
Current need	5
Newly forming households	85
Existing households falling into need	15
Total Gross Need	105

Source: Census (2011)/Projection Modelling and affordability analysis

The HEDNA also examines supply to convert gross need into net need and suggests that the need for affordable home ownership can largely be met through existing supply of cheaper accommodation both to rent and to buy. This conclusion needs to be treated with some caution. As noted above there are entry barriers to home ownership which may prevent people buying, even where their income could sustain the mortgage. In addition, the current market is skewed by the availability and popularity of the Help to Buy scheme. The Help to Buy scheme enables someone to purchase with only a 5% deposit, rather than the 10 – 15% which is usually required. Around one quarter of all new-build purchases nationally have been supported through the Help to Buy scheme to date. The scheme has been extended to 2023.

Overall, this would suggest little demand for low cost home ownership over the period of this strategy. The HEDNA suggests that 10% of housing provided should be affordable home ownership, and that the remainder of affordable homes be a mixture of social and affordable rental products.

In February 2020 the government issued a consultation paper on ‘*the design and delivery of First Homes*’, a proposed new LCHO scheme. These would be properties for market sale discounted by 30%. The intention is that First Homes will be delivered by developers as part of their planning obligations (S106). For Tamworth, this raises concerns about the impact of this scheme on other contributions developers are required to make, and the potential reduction in the number of affordable rented properties provided through S106. Given the limited demand for LCHO schemes in Tamworth, First Homes is likely to attract more buyers from outside the area.

*Table 11: Number of bedrooms by tenure compared to West Midlands and England*

	Tamworth	West Midlands	England
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<b>Owner-occupied</b>	One bedroom	2%	2%	4%
	Two bedrooms	17%	20%	23%
	Three bedrooms	57%	54%	48%
	Four+ bedrooms	24%	24%	25%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Social rented</b>	One bedroom	27%	29%	31%
	Two bedrooms	30%	34%	34%
	Three bedrooms	39%	33%	31%
	Four+ bedrooms	4%	4%	4%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
		<b>Tamworth</b>	<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>England</b>
<b>Private rented</b>	One bedroom	16%	18%	23%
	Two bedrooms	38%	37%	39%
	Three bedrooms	38%	36%	28%
	Four+ bedrooms	8%	10%	10%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Census 2011

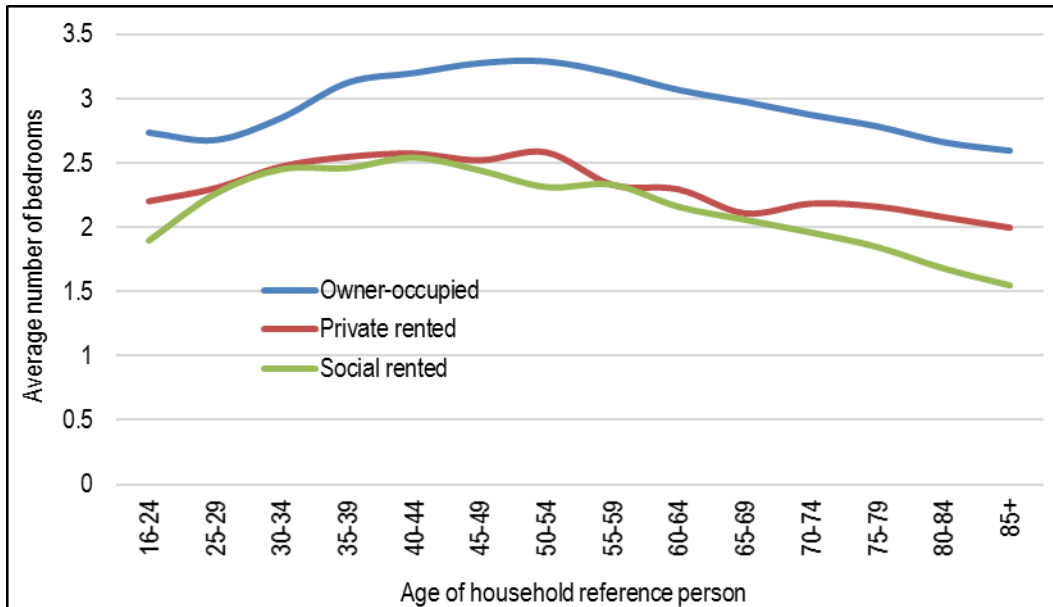
Table 11 above shows that Tamworth has a smaller proportion of one bedroom properties across all tenures when compared to the West Midlands and England as a whole. Tamworth has a higher proportion of three bed properties across all tenures.

Figure 5 below shows that Tamworth follows the expected national pattern where people start their housing 'career' in a smaller property, move to a larger property over time, and

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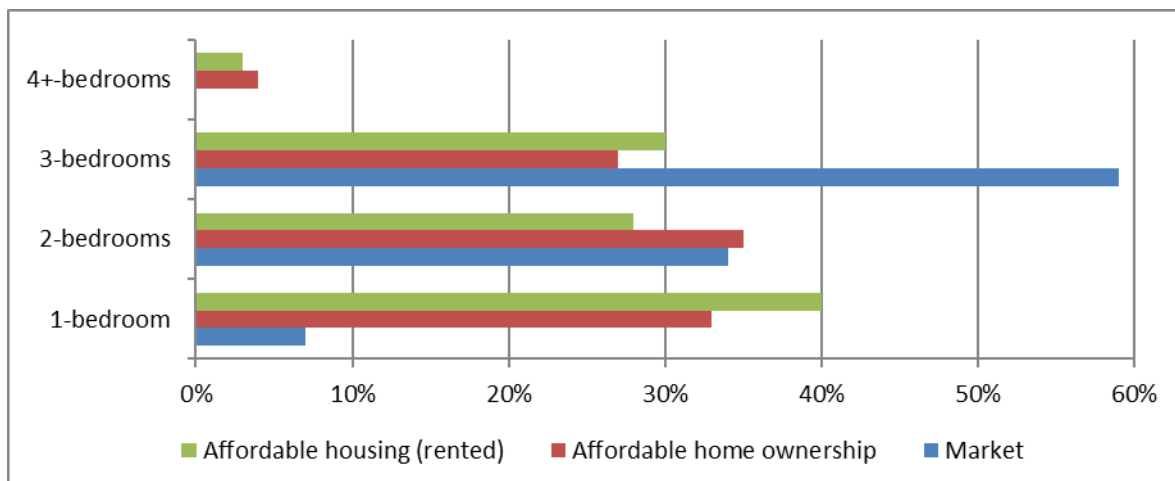
then end their life in a smaller property again. This holds true regardless of tenure, although the pattern is more marked in social housing (which is generally allocated by the number of bedrooms a household is deemed to need).

Figure 5: Average bedrooms by age and tenure



Source: HEDNA 2019

Figure 6: Size of housing required 2016 to 2036



Source: HEDNA 2019

Figure six above shows the mix of bed size needed for different tenures. There is less of an appetite in market sector housing for one-bed properties, as people tend to purchase a larger property than they would be deemed to need at that point in time. The overwhelming need in the market is for three-bed properties.



For affordable and social rent housing, turnover rates tend to be highest in the smaller size properties. There may also be some reluctance on the part of some RPs to build one-bed homes which may be considered harder to let and manage. There is therefore an element of subjectivity in these figures.

*Table 12: Size of housing required adjusted for turnover, etc*

	One bedroom	Two bedrooms	Three bedrooms	Four+ bedrooms
<b>Market</b>	5-10%	30-35%	50-60%	1-10%
<b>Affordable home ownership</b>	10-20%	35-45%	30-40%	5-15%
<b>Affordable housing (rented)</b>	30-40%	15-25%	35-40%	5-10%

Source: HEDNA 2019

## 7 Housing register and allocations

The analysis below is based on the current housing register. A new allocations policy is being implemented which restricts access to the register to those with a defined housing need and it is likely that numbers on the register will fall sharply. It must be emphasised that this reflects the change in policy and not a change in levels of housing need. The decision to restrict the register to only those with an evidenced housing need will allow the register to be more proactively managed and will ensure those with the highest levels of need are able to access housing. It also prevents the situation where those who may never be housed are required to bid for properties. However, there will be many people who consider themselves to have a housing need but who do not fit the revised criteria.

The numbers on the housing register have already fallen slightly year-on-year as shown in table 13. This does not indicate reduced demand for social housing. Some of those who would want to access social housing will not be eligible to join the register (home-owners, or those with previous arrears or anti-social behaviour) and others may decide that they are unlikely to be offered anything. Applicants who are not considered to have a housing need were previously being placed in the lowest band but warned that the likelihood of an offer was very low.

*Table 13: Number of households on the housing register*

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
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1,727	1,625	1,598	1,500	1,372
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Source: CORE data

Table 14 below shows the average weekly rents in Tamworth for stock owned by the local authority and for stock owned by RPs. It is noticeable that rents have not increased over the last five years, not surprising given that social housing landlords have been required to reduce rents over the period.

*Table 14: Average weekly rents £*

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Local authority	79.84	79.46	80.78	79.71	81.00
RPs	85.18	88.18	90.22	89.31	89.83

Source: CORE data. N.B. local authority rents are average over the year, RP rents a snapshot at year end

Unfortunately, CORE data on the employment status of households is no longer collected. National data shows that nearly half of new tenants going into affordable rented housing are working. The figure for social rented is slightly lower, at 37%.

## 8 Housing stock condition

Tamworth commissioned a detailed stock condition report from the BRE which was published in 2017. The report uses secondary data sources including the 2012 English House Condition Survey and OS data. These inform a robust model which maps key indicators for the housing stock.

Overall, the survey shows that private sector stock in Tamworth is generally in better condition than the averages for England, with the exception of falls<sup>1</sup> and fuel poverty. On all indicators, Tamworth stock is in better condition than the averages for the West Midlands.

At the time of the survey, there were 31,763 dwellings in Tamworth, 72% owner-occupied, 10% privately rented and 13% social housing. Government data for England in March 2018 gives us 63% of properties were owner-occupied, 20% privately rented and 17% were social housing. Tamworth has a higher number of owner-occupied properties and significantly lower percentage of privately rented properties. The proportion of social housing in Tamworth is slightly lower than for England as a whole. As in England,

<sup>1</sup> The Housing Health and Safety Rating System assesses the risk of someone falling in a property because of the property condition or layout

Tamworth has seen significant growth in the private rented sector, from 3% of all stock in 2001 to 12% in 2011.

The Tamworth stock condition survey showed that 14% of all private sector dwellings had category one hazards (defined under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, category one hazards present a serious and immediate risk to health and safety and the Council has to take action when a category one hazard is identified). This equates to 3,526 properties. In the private rented sector, 17% (531 properties) had category one hazards. The highest concentration of properties with any category hazards were in Bolehall, Spital and Belgrave wards. These wards also scored the highest for excess cold. Bolehall, Spital and Castle wards scored the highest for fuel poverty.

In England, around one-third of households in fuel poverty include a person with a longterm limiting illness or disability; 10% include someone over 75.

The total cost of mitigating all category one hazards in the private sector in Tamworth was estimated at £9.9m.

The average SimpleSAP ratings for private sector properties in Tamworth is 60, which is better than both the England (57) and West Midlands (56) averages.

4.7% of private sector dwellings and 5.9% of private rented dwellings are estimated to have an EPC below band E. Legislation requires all PRS properties to be at a minimum of band E by April 2018.

## 9 Council-owned stock

The Council has housing stock, owning around 4,250 homes.

The current 30-year HRA business plan was agreed in September 2018; this will be revised during 2020/21 following a new stock condition survey. The key priorities in the business plan are:

- New social/affordable housing
- Town centre regeneration
- Meeting Tamworth Decent Homes Standard
- Developing place-based approach to neighbourhood management
- Reviewing and delivering services
- Developing tailored housing solutions for different groups
- Collaborative and partnership investment tailored to improve neighbourhood solutions

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- Benchmarking with best in class.

As with other council landlords, Tamworth's business plan is under increased pressure: reduced income due to restrictions in rent increases and higher-than expected sales under Right to Buy coupled with higher than predicted costs in some areas. Despite this, much has already been achieved: investment to bring all properties up to the current Tamworth Decent Homes standard, investment in garage sites, acquisition of stock (largely ex-council properties) and two major regeneration schemes. It is clear however that the Council cannot deliver large-scale new social/affordable rented housing through the HRA and will need to explore more innovative funding mechanisms. There is some borrowing headroom on the HRA, potentially up to £5m or higher.

The business plan includes considerable investment to increase thermal comfort but does not fully reflect the changes that will be needed to meet the challenges of climate change. In light of the Council's recent declaration of a climate emergency it is likely that the Council will need to invest additional funding to move away from carbon-based heating systems. However, the more money that is spent on the existing stock, the less money is available to invest in new homes. This gives additional urgency to the need to explore innovative funding mechanisms.

## 10 Empty homes

Over 200 long term empty homes in private ownership have been identified in Tamworth and work carried out to persuade owners to bring properties back into use. The Council does not currently have funding to offer financial incentives to owners to bring empty homes back into use, but there is a pilot scheme in operation to purchase empty homes and bring them back into use. Currently this is largely targeted at ex-council properties but other properties can be considered if they meet key criteria (one or two-bedroom, likely to be in high demand for rent).

There are also options to work with a partner Registered Provider, or a community group where appropriate, which could potentially open up other funding routes.

## 11 Role of the private rented sector

As with many local authorities, the private rented sector plays an increasingly important role in meeting housing need. Once seen as more of a 'stepping stone' into other tenures it has now become long-term accommodation for families with children and older people.

Nationally, it has been estimated that a quarter of new tenancies are for households with children, while there has been a 40% increase over the last decade in the number of families with children living in the private rented sector. Similarly, the number of older people living in the sector has increased to over 10% and this is forecast to grow by

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twothirds over the next two decades. We do not have equivalent figures for Tamworth but experience suggests similar trends are happening locally.

These trends bring challenges: approximately a third of older people nationally feel that their private rented property is not suitable for their needs eg steep stairs, non-level access and high heating costs. Over a third of older private renters are living below the poverty threshold.

In the national survey, 80% of families with children in private rented accommodation have experienced problems with the quality of their homes eg ineffective / expensive heating systems, rodent infestation and damp/mould. Nearly 40% would like a longer tenancy for increased stability particularly in relation to childcare and schooling.

The Council has a range of powers in relation to the private rented sector, including building regulations, environment health, fire safety, housing, planning and trading standards. Tamworth has a proactive approach to the private rented sector, working with landlords to improve both physical and management standards. However, there are no powers to control rent levels or length of tenancy.

The Council has a strong foundation of working with the private rented sector on which to build. Reduced government funding has restricted the opportunity to pay grants to landlords to improve accommodation, although there are initiatives in place to secure affordable warmth. In collaboration with Marches Energy Agency the Council revised its 'help to heat flexible eligibility' policy in summer 2019<sup>2</sup>. Eligibility criteria for private rented properties include EPC F, G or unrated properties where households are considered to be fuel poor and / or low income and vulnerable to the cold. This links to the broader Home Energy Advice Tamworth (HEAT) scheme. Nationally, there is evidence that implementing this policy is challenging because of the attitudes of some landlords and also the level of disruption for tenants (especially older households) when the work is carried out, but the Council is monitoring this closely.

The strategy will focus on proactive ways to continue to promote physical and management standards in the private rented sector, with a focus on the needs of families with children and older people; work will also be focused on neighbourhoods with higher levels of deprivation and poor stock conditions. The Council will also continue to work with landlords to prevent homelessness from the private rented sector wherever possible – the ending of a private rented sector tenancy is one of the main causes of homelessness in Tamworth.

The private rented housing market has a sub-regional dimension: some landlords have properties in a number of local authority areas, while tenants may search for suitable accommodation across a wide geographical area. The policies of other councils may

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<sup>2</sup> This is linked to the ECO (energy company obligation) system to help low income and vulnerable households in the private sector who live in cold and unhealthy homes and whose fuel bills are likely to result in higher household debt and / or worsening health.

impact on Tamworth, for example the recent decision by Birmingham City Council to require planning permission to convert family houses to small HMOS (houses in multiple occupation) could encourage some landlords to look for opportunities in Tamworth. The Council can only be aware of such decisions as they arise and seek to monitor any impact.

The government has for some time been keen to see more institutional investment in new rented accommodation (ie build to rent). Areas such as London have seen some investment from eg pension funds and some local authorities have actively sought such investment. The size of scheme required means it is unlikely that Tamworth could attract such investment on its own, although there may be scope for a regional or sub-regional programme. While such accommodation would be at market rents and may not be affordable to those on lower incomes these properties would meet a need, particularly for those moving to the area to take up employment.

## 12 Tamworth climate change

Tamworth Council has recently declared a climate emergency. The housing strategy must support the Council's aspiration to move to net zero greenhouse gas emissions. More work will be needed to determine the best way of achieving this, and in the early years of the housing strategy delivery plan the focus will be on framing the debate with partners and stakeholders and identifying actions.

These are likely to include:

- Discussions with developers and builders to reduce the carbon footprint of new homes, including non-carbon heating sources
- Work with homeowners and private landlords to encourage retro-fitting private sector stock and moves to non-carbon heating sources
- The Council developing a strategy to replace carbon heating sources in its own stock and undertake other retro-fitting measures as appropriate.

Across the UK, providing heating and hot water in homes makes up 25% of total energy use, and 15% of total greenhouse gas emissions. The average home emits 2.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide each year. Given that new homes make up a relatively small proportion of total stock, the biggest challenge will be retro-fitting existing homes, particularly those built before 1974, when energy and insulation standards were not as good.

Responding to the climate change emergency involves consideration of a wide range of impacts, from increased flood risk and water shortages to heat-related illness.

Tamworth Council has already been successful in accessing funding to support households to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. In July this year the government announced £2bn funding under the Green Homes Grant scheme; this

provides homeowners and landlords with funding towards a range of energy improvements including insulation, heat pumps and solar thermal, double or triple glazing, energy efficient doors, heating controls and appliance thermostats. The scheme will pay for up to two-thirds of the cost (up to a maximum contribution of around £5,000); for low income households could reclaim 100% of the cost up to a £10,000 maximum. The housing strategy will include steps to promote the scheme locally and encourage uptake of the grants.

### 13 Town ecosystems report

This work was commissioned by the LEP and includes a study of Tamworth town. It is based on secondary data (mainly ONS data), a survey of 80 local businesses (89% return) and an objective retail review carried out from the perspective of customers. Workshops were also held with local authority officers and other stakeholders.

Of particular note is the number of part-time jobs in Tamworth town centre – there are as many part-time as full-time jobs. The number of businesses operating in the town centre had grown by 18% since 2013, half that of the average for the LEP area (36%) and significantly lower than the average for the West Midlands (24%). The business density for Tamworth (businesses per 10,000 population) was also lower than the average for the LEP area and the West Midlands.

Opportunities identified in the Tamworth Future High Streets Fund bid include:

- Transport accessibility (two bus stations, train station connected to major north/south and cross-country routes, proximity to motorways)
- Increasing footfall
- Introducing new town centre uses
- Reducing retail floor space
- Linking key heritage assets.

Challenges include:

- Poor perceptions from residents with high levels of ASB and alcohol-related crimes
- Majority of retail lies on town boundary with declining number of national retailers in the centre
- Rising number of vacant properties and poorly maintained commercial buildings
- Lack of evening leisure is limiting new or different investment
- Footfall in the town centre has declined considerably.



In 2018, 23% of people in the Tamworth district area had no qualifications, compared to 21% for the LEP area and for the West Midlands as a whole, and 18% for the UK. 19% had the highest level of qualifications (NVQ4+), compared to the UK average of 39%. For the LEP area, this figure was 34% and for the West Midlands, 33%. In consultation, many partners expressed concern about low levels of IT literacy, general literacy and numeracy amongst a significant percentage of the population.

Tamworth has a net commuting outflow of 7,800; main commuting destinations include North Warwickshire, Birmingham and Lichfield. In terms of inward commuting, the highest numbers come from the Tamworth area but outside the town centre. Other areas which are a significant source of inwards commuting to Tamworth include North Warwickshire, Birmingham and Lichfield.

There are pockets of deprivation in the town centre and surrounding areas, and in the South East of the Council area.

Whilst 50% of retailers in Tamworth town centre are satisfied with the performance of their business, 49% are pessimistic about the future – 67% are dissatisfied with the performance of the town. They would like to see more larger shops and more variety of shops, an improved regular market and more events. Suggestions for improving the public realm include more toilets, improved pavements, improved security and more seating.

Market yields on property in Tamworth town centre were 7.5% (measured Q2 2019). Yields have steadily declined since 2013. Market rents are amongst the lowest in the LEP area. Over 14% of the primary shopping area is vacant, a figure which is rising.

Priorities identified in the report are:

- Re-invigorate retail in the town centre through experimentation: short-term tenancies, pop-ups, markets, etc
- Redevelop the historic quarter surrounding the castle to pull in visitors and entice them into the town centre
- Increase the level of housing and office space within the centre
- Work with public transport providers to extend provision particularly into the evening.

There are brownfield sites with potential for housing in and around the town centre, but developers consider these to be high risk with a low return and there is little appetite to develop them.

Although there are currently only a small number of residential properties within the town centre area, there are almost 600 properties in the surrounding area. Many of these are one and two-bed flats in high-rise blocks, owned by the Council. Three quarters are

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allocated to over 50s. These include a higher number of households who don't own a car, higher numbers of unplanned hospital admissions, many households including someone over 65 with a limiting long-term illness, high levels of deprivation and high numbers of households in financial stress.

Town centre redevelopment is one of four key strategic priorities in the Council's corporate plan. The redevelopment of the Enterprise Quarter (£6.3m) is almost complete and funded through the LEP, TBC capital, Staffs CC capital and the Heritage Lottery Fund. This has delivered an Enterprise Centre, restaurant, refurbishment, an extension of the theatre and improved public realm.

Master planning of the Gungate site is now underway.

## **14 Tenancy sustainment**

Tenancy sustainment rates are not uniformly collected for either the social housing or private rented sectors. Some social housing landlords did express concern about tenancy sustainment rates particularly for new tenants; there has been some pre-tenancy training in place but its impact has not been fully evaluated.

For example, the Homestart Tamworth CAN A First Home project has been running during the past year but is due to end in March 2020. The scheme is aimed at those getting ready to take up their first tenancy, who may be considered to be more vulnerable to tenancy failure. This includes those who have been homeless. The course covers understanding your responsibilities under the tenancy agreement as well as practical issues in running a household, and financial management

Over the year, the scheme has worked with 45 households, with 40 completing the course. Half of these have needed support with understanding Universal Credit. 11 households have benefited from starter packs ranging from beds and bedding to white goods to school uniforms and children's shoes. Some have received vouchers for the food bank and access to fresh fruit and vegetables through partner supermarkets.

Funding for this scheme is due to end shortly; the scheme should be evaluated and if it is found to have had a positive impact on tenancy sustainment rates further funding options should be explored so that it can be continued. Other options should also be explored, which could be linked to social housing allocations, and work to prevent homelessness. For example, the Council already works with Citizens Advice and could build on this with a strengthened service for both private sector tenants and for older people across all tenures looking at their housing options.

## 15 Needs of particular groups

### *Attracting in-migration to fuel economic growth*

As noted above, domestic migration may be affected in the short and medium term by the impact of coronavirus.

The Town Ecosystems report highlights a relatively high level of commuting outflow from Tamworth; main commuting destinations include North Warwickshire, Birmingham and Lichfield. Tamworth enjoys good transport connections (both road and rail) and there is scope to continue to attract more people to live in the area through the town centre redevelopment and also schemes outside the centre. The housing offer will need to focus on family homes (range of sizes and types) as well as accommodation for single people.

### *Gypsies and travellers*

An assessment of the accommodation needs for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople has recently been carried out (joint assessment with North Warwickshire and Lichfield Councils). The assessment shows no current or future needs in Tamworth during the period to 2036. There are currently no sites in the Tamworth area.

### *Older people and those with a long term physical disability*

In total, there will be a need for an additional 1,187 homes with either support or care included in Tamworth by 2036. This is a significant uplift in demand linked to the ageing population.

*Table 15: Older person housing requirements – 2016 to 2036*

		Housing demand per 1,000 75+	Current supply	2016 demand	Current shortfall/ (surplus)	Additional demand to 2036	Shortfall/ (surplus) by 2036
<b>Housing with support</b>	Rented	57	451	314	(-137)	272	135
	Leasehold	77	94	425	331	367	698
<b>Housing with care</b>	Rented	24	117	133	16	115	131
	Leasehold	24	25	133	108	115	223
<b>Care bed spaces</b>		104	118	460	650	190	753

*Source: Derived from demographic projections and Housing LIN/HOPSR/EAC*

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*Table 16: Estimated change in population with long term physical disability (LTHPD) (2016-2036)*

Population with LTHPD		Change (2016-36)	% change from 2016
2016	2036		
12,553	17,742	5,189	41.3%

*Source: Derived from demographic modelling and Census (2011)*

Table 16 above shows a significant predicted increase in the number of people living with a physical disability. Table 17 overleaf shows the tenures of people with LTHPD – it should be noted that the data is for the population living in households rather than households. The analysis clearly shows that people with a LTHPD are more likely to live in social rented housing and are also more likely to be outright owners (this will be linked to the age profile of the population with a disability). Although this data is now quite old, the tenure pattern is unlikely to have changed significantly.

*Table 17: Change in tenure for people with LTPD 2001-11*

	2001 households	2011 households	Change	% change
Owns outright	7,098	8,790	1,692	24%
Owns mortgage/loan with	14,395	12,943	-1,452	-10%
Social rented	6,234	6,108	-126	-2%
Private rented	1,007	3,157	2,150	214%
Other	646	319	-327	-51%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,380</b>	<b>31,317</b>	<b>1,937</b>	<b>7%</b>

*Source: 2001 and 2011 Census*

The housing strategy must ensure that older people are supported to make good choices about their housing which provide some futureproofing. There is much evidence nationally

that the older you get the more disruptive and difficult a move is likely to be. A strengthened relationship with Citizens Advice could ensure that older people have access to independent advice about the range of options available.

The increase in the numbers of older people and those with a physical disability will put more pressure on the Disabled Facilities Grant; although largely funded by central government the council retains the statutory duty for delivering these. There are also areas of discretion around DFG's including funding of any required work which cannot be met through the DFG and funding work above the maximum limit. Some councils offer grants and loans for smaller work where it is felt that the full assessment process for a DFG is disproportionate.

Many older people also live in homes which need repair work but struggle to organise this, either because of lack of money or anxiety about getting the work done to a reasonable standard and cost.

The housing strategy will include an action to develop a new approach which encompasses a range of funding options available to older people depending on the nature and extent of the work required.

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# Tamworth Borough Council

# Community Impact Assessment

Part 1 – Details		
What Policy/ Procedure/ Strategy/Project/Service is being assessed?	This is a new housing strategy for Tamworth. It focuses on the delivery of new housing, making best use of existing housing, ensuring that housing plays a key role in meeting Tamworth's response to climate change and that everyone who lives or works in Tamworth has access to appropriate housing that promotes their well-being	
Date Conducted	October 2020	
Name of Lead Officer and Service Area	Sue Phipps, Strategic Housing Manager	
Commissioning Team (if applicable)		
Director Responsible for project/service area	Jo Sands, Assistant Director Partnerships	
Who are the main stakeholders	People in housing need, private and social tenants and landlords, developers, advice agencies, other statutory bodies eg Police/FARS	
Describe what consultation has been undertaken. Who was involved and what was the outcome	Workshops were held with a range of private and social landlords, advice agencies and other statutory bodies. The strategy was discussed the TBC Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in October 2020 The priorities for the new strategy were widely supported	
Outline the wider research that has taken place (E.G. commissioners, partners, other providers etc)	The housing strategy draws on existing research, including the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment which was commissioned by the Council and published in September 2019. The strategy also reflects existing plans such as the Council's Corporate Plan and Community Safety Partnership Plan	
What are you assessing? Indicate with an 'x' which applies	A decision to review or change a service	<input type="checkbox"/>
	A Strategy/Policy/Procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	A function, service or project	<input type="checkbox"/>
What kind of assessment is it? Indicate with an 'x' which applies	New	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Existing	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Being reviewed	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Being reviewed as a result of budget constraints / End of Contract	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Part 2 – Summary of Assessment

Give a summary of your proposal and set out the aims/ objectives/ purposes/ and outcomes of the area you are impact assessing.

The strategy is wide-ranging. As noted above it focuses on increasing the supply of new homes, making best use of existing properties, ensuring that housing plays a key role in Tamworth's response to climate change and ensuring that everyone who lives or works in Tamworth has access to appropriate housing that promotes their well-being

Who will be affected and how?

A decent and affordable home is a fundamental factor in securing employment, economic well-being and good health. The aims of the housing strategy are to ensure that everyone who lives and works in Tamworth has access to appropriate housing to achieve this. Every household in Tamworth could be affected, but the most impact will be on those who live in properties which are in a poor state of repair, or whose housing is insecure. Increasing the supply of new homes will reduce the pressure on overcrowded households, and help ensure that older people have access to housing which is tailored to their needs

The evidence base underpinning the strategy looks at the specific needs of particular groups including those moving to Tamworth to take up employment, gypsies and travellers, older people and those with a long-term physical disability

Are there any other functions, policies or services linked to this impact assessment?

Yes  No

If you answered 'Yes', please indicate what they are?

A new strategy for preventing and tackling homelessness and rough sleeping is being developed alongside the housing strategy. Key findings have already been included. A separate impact assessment is being carried out for the homelessness strategy.

The Tamworth Local Plan

## Part 3 – Impact on the Community

Thinking about each of the Areas below, does or could the Policy function, or service have a direct impact on them?



Impact Area	Yes	No	Reason (provide brief explanation )
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Strategy will increase the supply of housing which is appropriate for older people; also aims to improve existing housing particularly to meet needs of older population. The HEDNA found that over 1,000 new homes will be needed (to 2036) with support or care included.</p> <p>Strategy sets out commitment to develop a tailored housing options service for older people</p> <p>Strategy also sets out commitment to increase the housing options available to younger people, particularly care leavers</p>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy will increase the supply of housing for those with a physical disability; also aims to improve existing housing including meeting the needs of those with a physical disability and/or long-term limiting illness
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	It is recognised that those undergoing gender reassignment need stable and secure accommodation which is one of the aims of the strategy
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Gypsy/Travelling Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The recent assessment of needs for this group shows no current or future needs during the lifetime of this strategy
Those with Caring/Dependent responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Those having an offending past	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any specific needs will be picked up in the homelessness prevention strategy
Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Vulnerable Adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any specific needs will be picked up in the homelessness prevention strategy
Families	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing the supply of new homes could offer more opportunities for families to secure a decent home
Those who are homeless	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing the supply of new homes could help to prevent homelessness and provide opportunities for those

			who become homeless
Those on low income	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A proportion of the new homes delivered will be affordable to those on low incomes  Work to improve existing properties will be focused on areas of deprivation
Those with Drug or Alcohol problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any specific needs will be picked up in the homelessness prevention strategy
Those with Mental Health issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any specific needs will be picked up in the homelessness prevention strategy
Those with Physical Health issues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	See comments under disability above. Other physical health issues such as respiratory problems could be helped by improvements to existing properties
Other (Please Detail)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing the supply of new homes could offer opportunities for overcrowded households to secure more appropriate accommodation

#### Part 4 – Risk Assessment

From evidence given from previous question, please detail what measures or changes will be put in place to mitigate adverse implications

Impact Area	Details of the Impact	Action to reduce risk
All	Failure to implement actions	Ongoing assessment and business plans

## Part 5 - Action Plan and Review

Detail in the plan below, actions that you have identified in your CIA, which will eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations.

If you are unable to eliminate or reduce negative impact on any of the impact areas, you should explain why

Impact (positive or negative) identified	Action	Person(s) responsible	Target date	Required outcome

Date of Review (If applicable) .....

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