Borough of Tamworth

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# HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 October 2020

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee will be held in **Online Meeting on Tuesday, 20th October, 2020 at 6.00 pm.** Members of the Committee are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

**Chief Executive**

## A G E N D A

### NON CONFIDENTIAL

1 **Apologies for Absence**

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 14)

3 **Declarations of Interest**

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

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

**4 Update from the Chair**

**5 Clinical Commissioning Groups Update on the impact of COVID-19 and on winter preparedness**

*To receive an update from representatives of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Groups*

**6 University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust Update**

*To receive an update from a representative of the University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust*

**7 Consideration of Draft Housing Strategy** (Pages 15 - 66)

*(Report of the Executive Director, Communities)*

**8 Consideration of the Homelessness Strategy**

*(Consideration following the Report of and presentation from the Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods and the Head of Homelessness and Housing Solutions at the meeting of this Committee on 24 September 2020)*

**9 Update on health related matters considered by Staffordshire County Council** (Pages 67 - 68)

*(To receive the Healthy Staffordshire Digest for the meeting held on 14th September 2020 and an update from County Councillor T Clements)*

**10 Update on Working Group for Young People**

*To receive an update from the Vice-Chair*

**11 Forward Plan**

*Please see the link to the Forward Plan:*

*http://democracy.tamworth.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=120&RD=0&bcr=1*

**12** **Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Work Plan** (Pages 69 - 70)

*To consider items for the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Plan*

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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. We can then endeavour to ensure that any particular requirements you may have are catered for.*

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*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: R Ford, P Brindley, D Box, J Faulkner, M J Greatorex, M Oates, S Peaple, S Pritchard, R Rogers and County Councillor T Clements

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# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
# HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
## HELD ON 24th SEPTEMBER 2020

PRESENT: Councillor R Ford (Chair), Councillors P Brindley, J Faulkner, M J Greatorex, M Oates, S Peaple and R Rogers

CABINET Councillor John Chesworth
Councillor Michelle Cook
Councillor Jeremy Oates

The following officers were present: Joanne Sands (Assistant Director Partnerships), Tina Mustafa (Assistant Director Neighbourhoods), Sarah Finnegan (Head of Homelessness & Housing Solutions), Sarah McGrandle (Assistant Director Operations and Leisure), Anna Miller (Assistant Director – Growth & Regeneration), Rob Holder (Business Support Coordinator), Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer) and Jodie Small (Legal, Democratic and Corporate Support Assistant)

Apologies received from: Councillor(s) D Box and County Councillor T Clements

**11 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 14th July 2020 were approved as a true record.

*(Moved by Councillor R Rogers and seconded by Councillor S Peaple)*

**12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor S Peaple declared a non-pecuniary interest as a trustee of Heart of Tamworth in agenda item 7.

**13 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed Councillor M Oates as a new member of the Committee and thanked the retiring member, Councillor R Kingstone.

The Chair reported that he had presented this Committee's recommendations to Cabinet on 30th July 2020 on the Council Response to COVID-19 – Vulnerable People and that Cabinet had RESOLVED that a joint letter from all the Leaders of each political group and the Chief Executive be issued to thank all anchor organisations involved in the response to COVID-19 in the Borough.

**14 UPDATE ON HEALTH RELATED MATTERS CONSIDERED BY STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Chair reported that two Digests from Staffordshire County Council's Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee meetings were issued with the agenda and a further Digest had been circulated to members which covered the business of the 14th September 2020 meeting and which would be appended to the minutes of this meeting.

The Chair reported that at its 14th September meeting the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee received an update on the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and Winter preparedness plans from Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), the County Council and various local NHS hospital trusts. The Chair reported that this committee would be receiving an update from representatives of the local CCGs and the Derby & Burton Hospital Trust at its October meeting with a similar focus.

**15 IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE OF COVID-19**

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder, Councillor J Chesworth, Mr Phil Pusey, Chief Executive, SCVYS and Ms Jo Sands, the Assistant Director Partnerships to the meeting for this item, which would provide members with an overview of the voluntary organisations involvement in Staffordshire in the provision of youth services and the impact of COVID-19 on young people.

The Chief Executive of SCVYS explained that SCVYS was a specialist youth and children's sector infrastructure support provider in part funded by Staffordshire County Council. It aimed to:

- support other organisations to build their capacity;
- represent those organisations at strategic partnership level
- support governance arrangements;
- provide information, guidance and support.

It was reported that SCVYS had grown over the past 9 years in terms of the organisations it represented, its volunteer and paid workforce and in terms of the number of participants reached.

At the start of COVID-19, SCVYS continued with its normal activities, including working with partners, issuing publications and continuing with research, as well as working with the county council to identify any additional activities. Rather than delivering a centralised response to COVID-19, SCVYS continued to work with organisations to represent, provide support and signpost information in areas such as teenage mental health self-care packages, supporting digital delivery, supporting safe re-opening of youth services.

The Chief Executive, SCVYS, reported that in terms of the impact on young people of COVID-19 many of the issues remained the same as before.  From a young person's perspective they want somewhere safe, warm and dry to go, something fun and positive to do, and someone to talk to if needed.  Pre-COVID-19 issues identified for young people included:

- mental health,
- education and employment,
- early years intervention, and
- inactivity and obesity

During COVID-19 some issues for some young people had improved and some worsened depending on circumstances, although in terms of education and employment the impact of COVID-19 on young people was disproportionately adverse.  Furthermore there was evidence of some inequality with some groups being disproportionately impacted.

The Committee's attention was brought to recent research undertaken and the recommendations from the National Youth Agency (NYA) Take the Temperature survey which identified the need for:

- Clear and ongoing public health messages specific to young people
- Keeping services for young people open
- Mobilising youth workers as critical workers

Furthermore members were reminded that there was a current local consultation open which was seeking local young people's views on what the issues and challenges were for them post COVID-19, and could be used to inform the commissioning of local services.  It was highlighted that research had shown that young people do not always feel part of their local community and that they do not have a real voice or influence to bring about change.

The Committee sought and received clarification in the following areas:

- Whether the voices of youth leaders could be fed into the current local consultation.  The Chief Executive, CSVYS, agreed to seek clarification on that and confirm.
- What the Chief Executive's, SCVYS view of local priorities for young people would be if further funding was available. He reported that he would look to set up a representative group of young people to seek their views as to priorities and then to consider ways to listen and devolve power to them.
- Whether there may be a disconnect in the Council's understanding of youth culture locally, and methods to get more in touch.  The Chief Executive, SCVYS confirmed that in general this Council was community focussed and supportive, and that the challenge could be in terms of hearing more youth voices who do not easily engage with surveys and do not speak out.

The Committee considered that there would be merit in forming a working group to focus on this and agreed that the following members would initially form the group and bring their proposed aims and objectives to the next committee meeting in October:

- Councillor P Brindley
- Councillor S Peaple
- Councillor M Greatorex

Both the Assistant Director Partnerships and the Chief Executive SCVYS agreed to participate as necessary and to provide support.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Mr Pusey, the Chief Executive, SCVYS, for his attendance and the informative presentation, as well as the Portfolio Holder, Councillor J Chesworth and the Assistant Director Partnerships, Ms Jo Sands for their attendance and participation, who then left the meeting.

**16 HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING PLANNING**

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Councillor M Cook, the Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods, Ms T Mustafa and the Head of Homelessness and Housing Solutions, Ms S Finnegan to the meeting.

The Chair reported that a report on the Council Response to COVID-19 had been circulated with the agenda and that the attendees would update the members on homelessness; specifically on:

- Response during COVID - 19 to homelessness
- Challenges arising from government legislation &/or guidance ending around furlough scheme and ban on evictions
- Range of housing solutions

The Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods reported that:

- As part of the overall context, the Government's homelessness vision was to half rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2024/25;
- At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic the Government announced its "Everyone In" scheme, which aimed to move rough sleepers into settled accommodation;
- Government funding to councils was allocated based on the rough sleeping count in November 2019, which included £1600 being allocated to Tamworth, additional funding of around £13000 was also received from Staffordshire County Council;

The Head of Homelessness and Housing Solutions updated the Committee on:

- how the council had housed put in place measures to house rough sleepers following the announcement of the Government's Everyone In scheme and ensured that those who utilised the night shelter were offered a bed and a pathway into more settled accommodation, which utilised some additional temporary accommodation units. This was managed in a remote way.
- The delivery of the Allocations Policy to programme in June 2020.
- Strategies to encourage the sustaining of private tenancies between landlords and tenants.

- The Prevention, Intervention and Recovery process implemented and which will be supported through the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- The process followed and next steps for approval of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which was aligned with Tamworth's vision of "Tamworth, its people and economy at the heart of everything we do". The proposed key priorities to support homeless prevention in Tamworth were highlighted to the Committee and the feedback of the Committee was sought. The five proposed priorities were:
    - Prevention and early intervention through working with partners and stakeholders;
    - Develop rapid pathways for rough sleepers;
    - Improve the supply of and access to affordable and supported housing;
    - Offer a high quality and innovative service to homeless households and those threatened with homelessness;
    - Improve health and well-being aspirations.

The Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods highlighted that an informal consultation had taken place around a year ago, and that a further targeted update to that consultation would be undertaken shortly, before the strategy was presented to Cabinet for approval in December 2020 with proposed implementation thereafter.

The Committee sought and received the following clarifications:

- Whether the Government target of 2025 was now out of date? The Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods reported that the "Everyone In" scheme had relied on hotel accommodation being available for those presenting as rough sleeping and clearly as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and this could not be sustained as hotels and/or B&Bs go back to their usual service offer. Also explaining that the provision of accommodation was only part of the solution and that the causes of homelessness also needed to be understood and support mechanisms put in place which was part of the work already commissioned around the evidence base and draft Homelessness and rough sleeping strategy set for Cabinet in December 2020.
- Concern with the timescales set out for the strategy and the extent of the consultation already undertaken and still to be done. The Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods reported that whilst the work following the initial consultation in September 2019 had been paused due to COVID-19, there would be opportunities to engage with the voluntary sector further, including with the Heart of Tamworth, who had supported the winter shelter in 2019/20. Furthermore, COVID-19 meant that current Government guidance prohibits shared air space night shelters and therefore unless this position changes would impact on the night shelter. However, there remained a role for listening and befriending services to continue and the Assistant Director Neighbourhoods welcomed discussions with partners on how this support could continue to support those likely to be socially isolated.

Members of the Committee thanked and congratulated the Officers involved for their work during the pandemic to ensure that all rough sleepers were accommodated into settled accommodation.

The Chair suggested to members that whilst the recommendation for the Committee to note and endorse the contents of the report could be progressed, the request for observations on the homelessness and rough sleeping strategy should be further considered, with the appropriate recommendations from this Committee to Cabinet being considered at the next Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 20th October 2020.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee noted and endorsed the contents of the report and actions taken.

*(Moved by Councillor R Ford and seconded by Councillor S Peaple)*

## 17 REOPENING HIGH STREETS SAFELY FUND

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Heritage and Regeneration, Councillor J Oates, the Assistant Director, Growth and Regeneration, Ms A Miller, the Assistant Director, Operations and Leisure, Ms S McGrandle and the Business Support Coordinator, Mr R Holder to the meeting.

The Assistant Director, Growth and Regeneration reported that the Government had made available a fund to councils to establish safe trading practices in the high street. Tamworth Borough Council had received access to up to £67,455 just a few weeks before the non-essential shops were allowed to start re-opening. The funding was provided by the European Regional Development Fund and was aimed at the high street and neighbourhood local shops.

The Assistant Director, Growth and Regeneration introduced the Business Support Coordinator who took the Committee through the circulated presentation. The Business Support Coordinator highlighted to the Committee that:

- The Town Safe project had four key strands which focussed on a highly visible presence by the team to support business and public confidence
- The project was temporary with enough funding until the end by October 2020
- A Shop Safe team was created with team members seconded from within the council, who visibly engaged and communicated with business and the public
- Action plans for the pre-recovery and recovery phase were developed, a tender had been issued to support developing the transformation phase
- A five step guidelines to safer working together was implemented, with 272 businesses in the town centre and 143 businesses across the neighbourhood having been visited and briefed by the team
- Signage to remind shoppers of social distancing requirements was out early, before non-essential shops re-opened on 15th June 2020 and tailored to Tamworth with the shield yourself like a saxon theme
- In the main feedback had been really positive
- The development of the Council’s knowledge of the business community, and increased engagement had forged positive relationships

- The Shop Safe team had no enforcement powers and relied on building relationships with business community as well as the environmental health team and local police
- The footfall within the town centre remained around half or pre-COVID-19 levels, with a focus on transactional activity, and less social activity, including less browsing

The Assistant Director, Operations and Leisure provided an update on the reopening of sports provision, in particular the Anker Valley football pitches. Since 4 July 2020 the focus had been on re-opening facilities and undertaking risk assessments. One key difference at the facilities was reported to be the access to the building which was currently limited to the use of the toilet provision only with a one way system. Junior football had recommenced with limited spectators and staggered start times. Adult football was recommencing on 27th September with no spectators. Hand sanitisation stations had been installed and all facilities were under constant review. All outlying grass pitches were also open for use.

**Resolved** that the meeting be extended beyond 8.30pm following a motion under schedule 1 Rule 9.1.13 of the Constitution.

*(Moved by Councillor R Ford and seconded by Councillor S Peaple)*

The Committee welcomed the update and congratulated the team on the work done.

The Portfolio Holder Heritage and Growth thanked the Committee for inviting himself and Officers to attend the meeting, and thanked the Officers for their significant work at a very busy time.

## 18 FORWARD PLAN

The Chair reported that the only item identified from the Forward Plan for consideration by the Committee at this time was the Housing Strategy which had been added to this Committee's work plan for consideration at the meeting on 20th October 2020.

## 19 HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY WORK PLAN

The Committee discussed the work plan and the number of items for consideration at the October 2020 meeting. It was noted that two additional items had been added during this meeting for inclusion:

- Young People working group - aims and objectives; and
- consideration of recommendations on homelessness and rough sleeping strategy

The Committee updated the Work Plan as follows:

**Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Work Plan**

| Work Plan 2020 - 2021 | |
|---|---|
| **DATE** | **SUBJECT** |
| **Each meeting** | Update on Staffordshire County Council matters |
| **Ongoing** | Together We're Better / STP - brief update post close of initial consultation (end date of initial consultation is 25 August 2019) |
| **Ongoing** | Working group updates |
| **20th October 2020** | Recommendations to Cabinet on Homelessness Strategy |
| **20th October 2020** | Representative from the following to attend:<br>• Derby & Burton Hospital Trust – update on merger |
| **20th October 2020** | Impact of COVID-19 on overall health treatments / issues (CCG representative to attend) |
| **20th October 2020** | Housing Strategy |
| **20th October 2020** | Update from Working Group on Young People (PB, SP & MG) |
| **8th December 2020** | Safeguarding update (1) (Councillor Doyle to attend and Officers) |
| **8th December 2020** | Food vulnerability and Healthy Eating |
| **8th December 2020 / ongoing** | Children's wellbeing, including education and mental health issues / anxiety |
| **TBC** | Physical wellbeing |
| **TBC** | Mental wellbeing – to cover mental health issues in Tamworth as well as loneliness and partnerships |
| **TBC** | The Green Agenda, including Air Quality review |
| **TBC** | Discharge to Assess and End of Life Care |
| **TBC** | Barriers to accessing GP Services in relation to residents with additional needs / Centralisation of some GP Services |
| **TBC 2021** | Update on Young People – SCYVS representative to be invited |

| **Upcoming Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Meetings** |
|---|
| • 20th October 2020<br>• 8th December 2020<br>• 26th January 2021<br>• 24th February 2021 |

| **Upcoming Relevant County Council Meetings** |
|---|
| **Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee**<br>• 26th October 2020<br>• 30th November 2020<br>• 1st February 2021<br>• 16th March 2021 |

Chair

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HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2020

REPORT OF THE Executive Director, Communities

# CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY

**EXEMPT INFORMATION**
None

**PURPOSE**

To share the Draft Housing Strategy and provide an opportunity for inclusion of the Scrutiny Committees views and comments prior to submission to the Council's Cabinet for final approval.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

1. The contents and proposed actions contained within the draft Housing Strategy are endorsed and can go onto become the final strategy.
2. That it is approved that we are able to take the completed Housing Strategy to Cabinet for approval.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

There is no longer a statutory duty upon Local Authorities to produce a Housing Strategy. ( unlike the duty to produce homelessness and rough sleeping one) However producing one 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 and supporting economic growth.

It is 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 forcasts 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 and Community safety plans. It will give us a direction to work towards and goals to monitor progress against.

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 we feel there is sufficient flexibility within it to accommodate impacts of Covid19.

It contains 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, 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.

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

**RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

**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 challenge; legally, financially and reputational. E.g. As an Authority we can be held accountable to for not building sufficient numbers of housing.
We need to be able to demonstrate we are willing to play our part in achieving goals set by national legislation e.g. 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 e.g. 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**.**

**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.

**REPORT AUTHOR : Rob Barnes**

**APPENDICES**

A) Evidence base
B) Draft Strategy

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# Housing strategy – evidence base

## Tamworth Borough Council

**SEPTEMBER 2020**

## Contents

**Section** **Page number**

St Maurice’s Road, York, YO31 7JA

## 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



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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.



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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.



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### *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



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- 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.



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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



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- 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



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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.



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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



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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*



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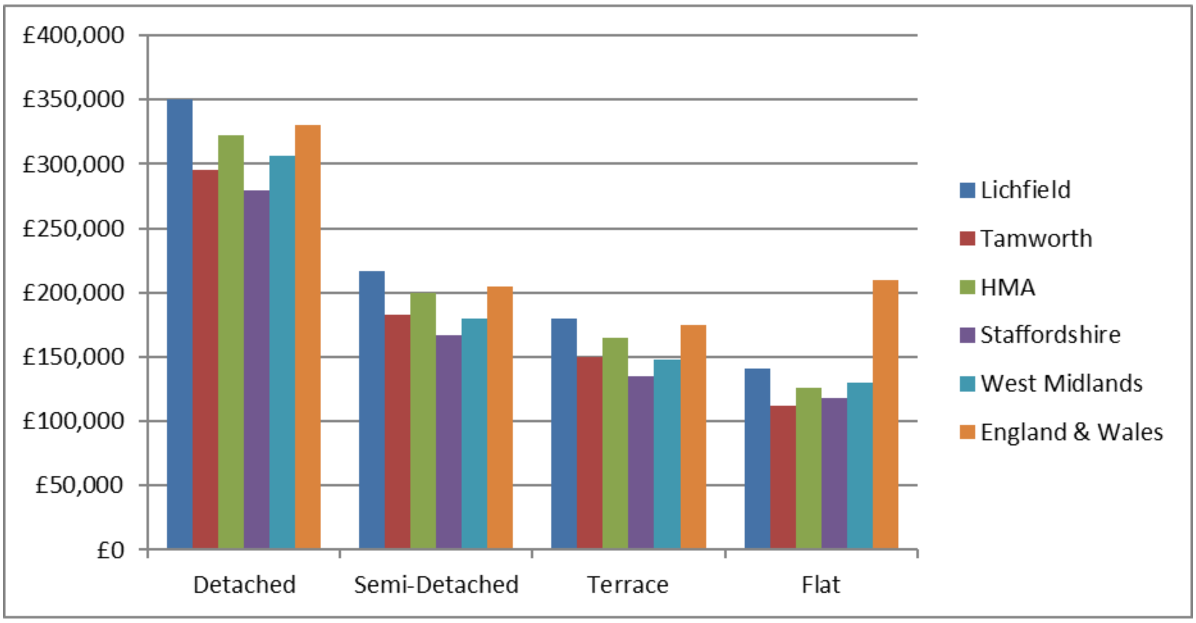
| | 2018 | 1-year change | 5-year annual change % | 10-year annual change % | 15-year annual change % | 20-year annual change % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lichfield | £236,973 | -3.0% | 3.7% | 2.7% | 3.9% | 6.6% |
| Tamworth | £187,500 | -6.8% | 5.3% | 3.3% | 4.1% | 6.4% |
| HMA | £212,236 | -4.7% | 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.



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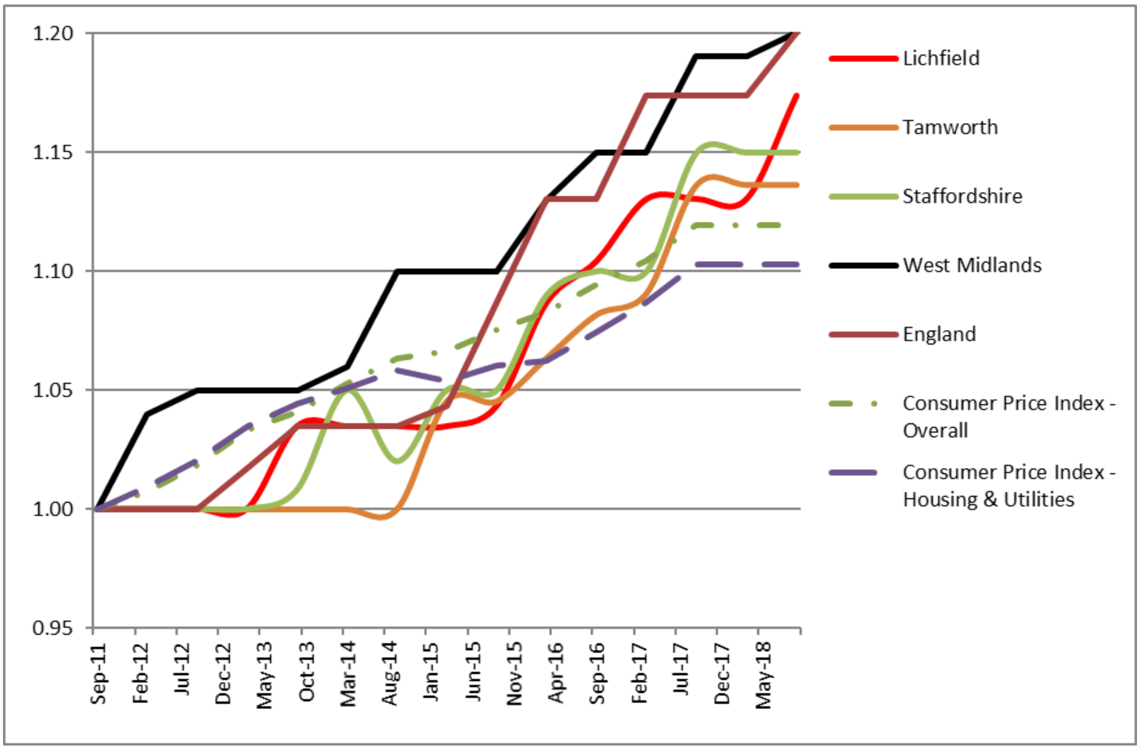
*Figure 2: Rental growth residential properties (indexed to 2011)*




*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.



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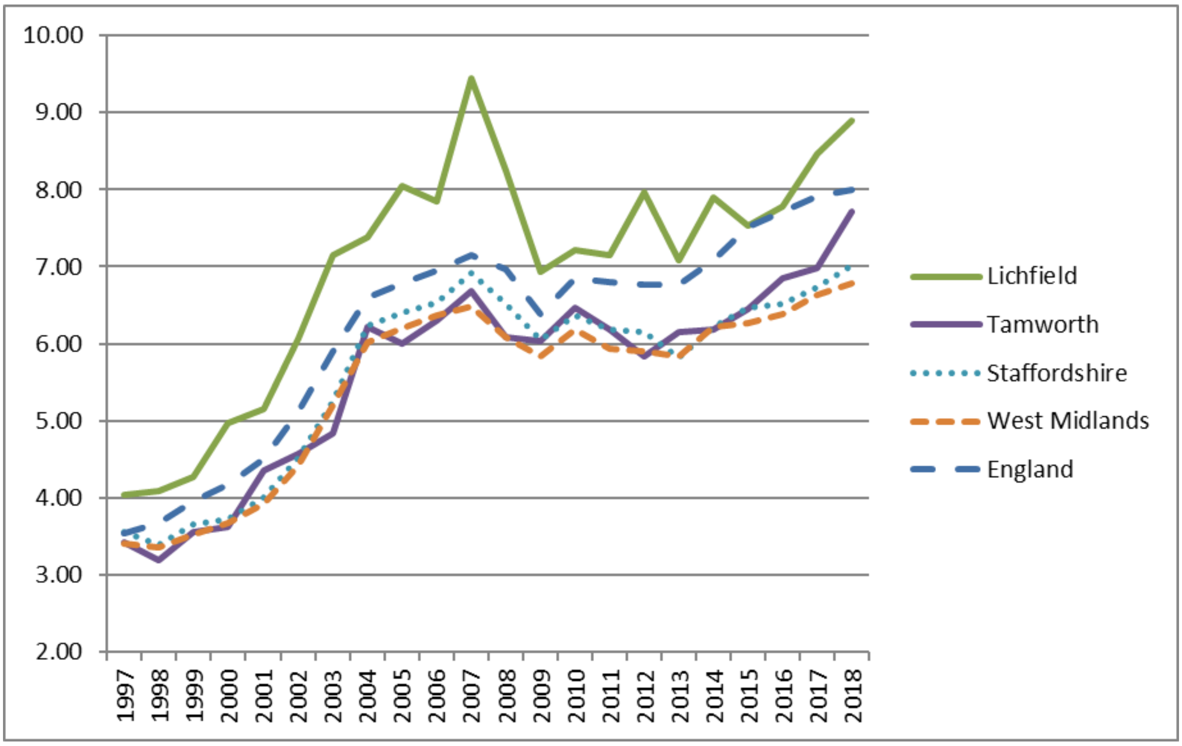
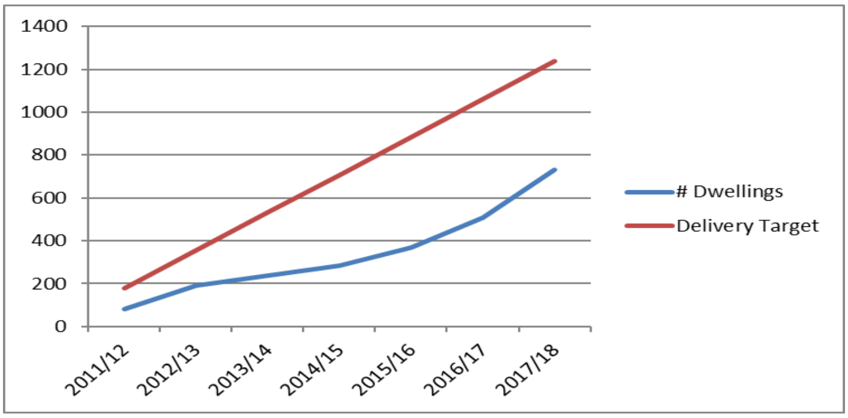
*Figure 3: Affordability ratio – median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings, 1997 – 2018*




*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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| | |
|---|---|
| **Detached** | £242,000 |
| **All dwellings** | £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)*

| | Tamworth |
|---|---|
| **One bedroom** | £80,000 |
| **Two bedrooms** | £116,000 |
| **Three bedrooms** | £160,000 |
| **Four bedrooms** | £241,000 |
| **All dwellings** | £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*

| | Monthly rent |
|---|---|
| **Room only** | £325 |
| **One bedroom** | £475 |
| **Two bedrooms** | £575 |
| **Three bedrooms** | £650 |
| **Four bedrooms** | £813 |
| **All properties** | £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 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Tamworth** | £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 |



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| | |
|---|---|
| Existing affordable housing tenants in need | 137 |
| Households from other tenures in need | 621 |
| **Total** | 1,976 |

*Source: CLG Live Tables, Census (2011) and G L Hearns data modelling*

*Table 9: Estimated annual level of affordable housing need (2016-2036) (Social/affordable rented)*

| | **Nos** |
|---|---|
| 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 Hearns 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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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Owner-occupied** | One bedroom | 2% | 2% | 4% |
| | Two bedrooms | 17% | 20% | 23% |
| | Three bedrooms | 57% | 54% | 48% |
| | Four+ bedrooms | 24% | 24% | 25% |
| | **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |
| **Social rented** | One bedroom | 27% | 29% | 31% |
| | Two bedrooms | 30% | 34% | 34% |
| | Three bedrooms | 39% | 33% | 31% |
| | Four+ bedrooms | 4% | 4% | 4% |
| | **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |
| | | **Tamworth** | **West Midlands** | **England** |
| **Private rented** | One bedroom | 16% | 18% | 23% |
| | Two bedrooms | 38% | 37% | 39% |
| | Three bedrooms | 38% | 36% | 28% |
| | Four+ bedrooms | 8% | 10% | 10% |
| | **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |

*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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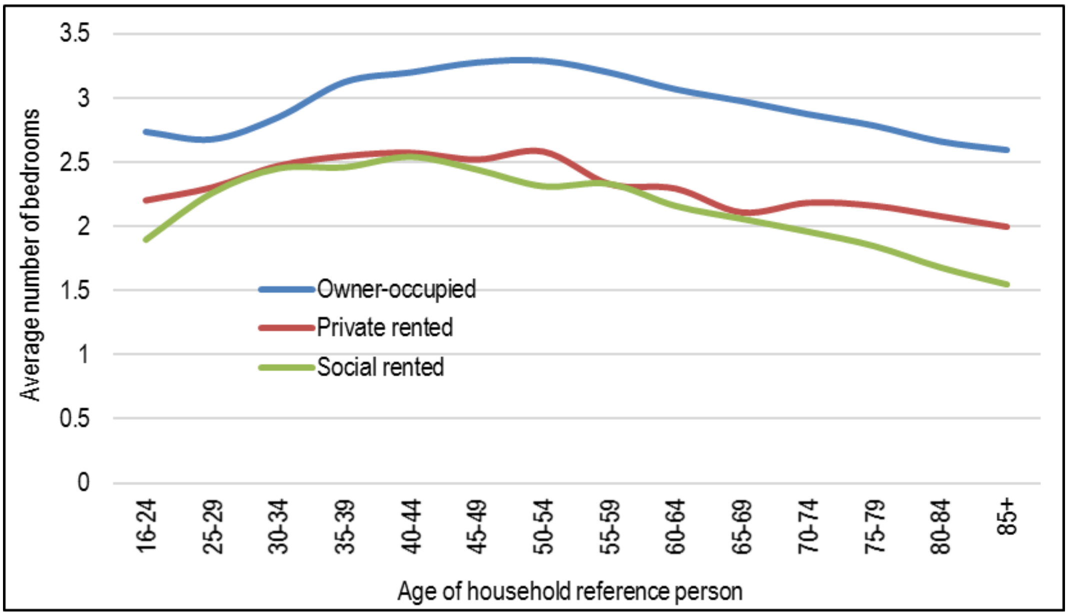
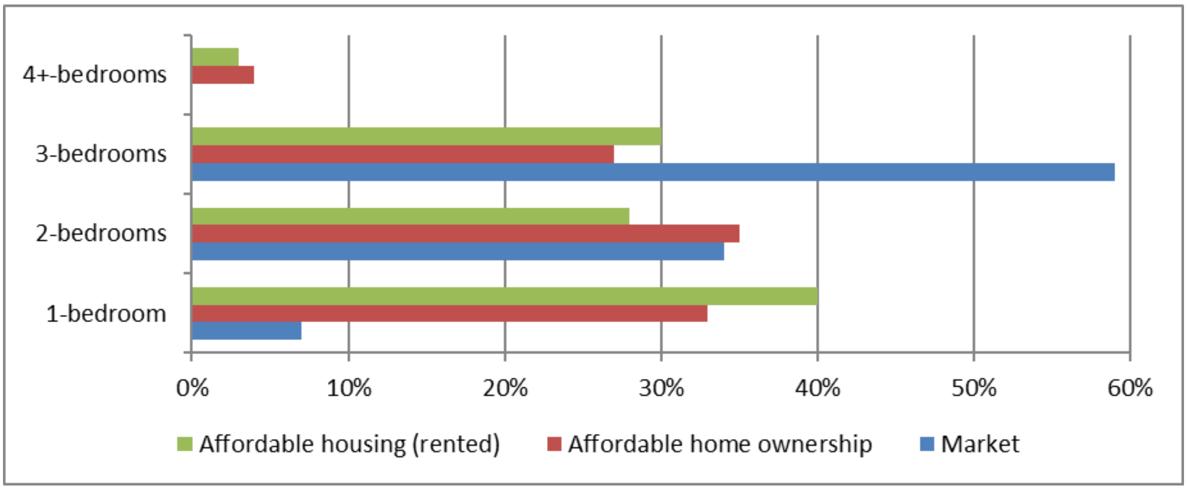
then end their life in a smaller property again. This holds true regardless of tenure, although the pattern is more marked in social housing (which is generally allocated by the number of bedrooms a household is deemed to need).

*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 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Market** | 5-10% | 30-35% | 50-60% | 1-10% |
| **Affordable home ownership** | 10-20% | 35-45% | 30-40% | 5-15% |
| **Affordable housing (rented)** | 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 |

*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[1] 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 significantly lower number of owner-occupied properties and double the percentage of privately rented properties. The proportion of social housing in Tamworth is slightly higher than for England as a whole. As in England,

[1] The Housing Health and Safety Rating System assesses the risk of someone falling in a property because of the property condition or layout



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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 of 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 excouncil 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[2]. 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

[2] 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.



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accommodation across a wide geographical area. The policies of other councils may 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



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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.



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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



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one and two-bed flats in high-rise blocks, owned by the Council. Three quarters are 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.



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## 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 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Housing with support** | Rented | 57 | 451 | 314 | (-137) | 272 | 135 |
| | Leasehold | 77 | 94 | 425 | 331 | 367 | 698 |
| **Housing with care** | Rented | 24 | 117 | 133 | 16 | 115 | 131 |
| | Leasehold | 24 | 25 | 133 | 108 | 115 | 223 |
| **Care bed spaces** | | 104 | 118 | 460 | 650 | 190 | 753 |



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*Source: Derived from demographic projections and Housing LIN/HOPSR/EAC*

*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 with mortgage/loan | 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% |
| **Total** | **29,380** | **31,617** | **2,237** | **8%** |

*Source: 2001 and 2011 Census*



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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 housing strategy v3**

**Foreword/introduction (think you'll want something in the name of relevant Cabinet Member so treat this as a starting point)**

Tamworth Borough Council is developing a new housing strategy to provide a clear direction of travel and priorities for the housing service. The strategy covers all housing activity, from delivery of new homes to 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.

This is a consultation version of the strategy. Early consultation has already been carried out with key partners and stakeholders but we want everyone to have the opportunity to express their views and influence the final version. The strategy is being developed 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 will therefore need to be flexible to cope with an uncertain future.

**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 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.

| **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** | **The key focus for years 1 & 2 should be on understanding existing capacity to deliver new affordable homes and whether this capacity needs to be increased** |
|---|---|
| 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 | • 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 |
| Ensure a range of provision to reflect both need and aspiration | • No additional action required |
| Ensure housing plays a key role in the regeneration of Tamworth town centre | • 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 |
| Maximise the delivery of affordable housing through all available funding options | • With planning colleagues, agree appropriate 'package' of smaller sites for development of affordable homes; consider whether should be linked to requirement to tackle empty homes; test RP appetite<br>• 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<br>• 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. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Make best use of existing housing and related assets** | **For years 1 & 2, there should be two key areas of focus:**<br>• **Agreeing priority actions for improving stock to meet the challenges of climate change and sources of potential funding; and**<br>• **Reducing barriers to accessing private renting for households at risk of becoming homeless** |
| Improve conditions in the private sector | • 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<br>• Recommission and raise profile of HEAT project<br>• Focus funding/support around areas with highest levels of deprivation ie<br>    ○ Belgrave<br>    ○ Bolehall<br>    ○ Castle<br>    ○ Spital<br>• Proactively monitor changes in number and type of HMOs, particularly any 'fall out' from Birmingham decision |
| Review landlord business plan and asset management strategy to ensure meet climate change commitments; explore more innovative funding options | • Deliver actions already included in plan and strategy<br>• Review in light of Council's commitment to tackling climate change<br>• Explore innovative funding options including potential role for existing council-owned company alongside other options |
| Ensure best use of stock in the social rented sector; increase options for older and younger people across all sectors | • 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)<br>• Ensure tailored housing options approach for Older People covers appropriate choices for those in social housing |
| Continue to tackle empty homes; consider options for creating homes in other empty or under-utilised spaces | • Explore use of acquisitions budget for purchase of empty homes<br>• Explore capacity and appetite of RPs to tackle empty homes, including bringing in external funding |
| **Ensure housing plays a key role in delivering Tamworth's response to climate change** | **Years 1 & 2 focus is on understanding implications and priority actions to be taken forward in later years** |
| Ensure all new homes emphasise energy efficiency | • Agree broad headings for changes to Tamworth Housing Standards in light of recent |

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| and the use of new renewable energy | 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<br>• 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?) |
| Work with homeowners and private sector landlords to encourage retrofitting to reduce carbon emissions and promote use of renewable energies | • Already covered above |
| **Ensure that everyone who lives or works in Tamworth has access to appropriate housing that promotes their well-being** | **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** |
| Provide appropriate information on housing options and choices | • Strengthen partnership working with CAB to include regular meetings and a joint approach to complex cases<br>• Work with CAB to extend offer to include tailored advice to private sector tenants<br>• Develop housing options package for older people in collaboration with CAB; explore trusted contractor approach as part of this |
| Reduce homelessness, its causes and consequences | • Complete and implement preventing homelessness and rough sleeping strategy<br>• Carry out review of temporary accommodation, including private sector leasing scheme<br>• Build on response to Corona virus which enabled end to rough sleeping to ensure this is sustained in the future |
| Increase tenancy sustainment rates, particularly in the private rented sector | • Evaluate 'A First Home' project impact on sustainment rates and explore options for further funding.<br>• Explore funding options for provision of support for those with complex needs (may be led by housing solutions?) |
| Focus targeted intervention on areas with the highest levels of deprivation | • Already covered above |
| Ensure appropriate advice and funding is available to support older people to live independently in appropriate accommodation | • Develop tailored advice for older people setting out range of options to improve existing accommodation or move to appropriate alternative accommodation<br>• Explore potential for funding grants and loans for older people moving towards approach |

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| | set out in appendix one |

**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.

| Cost of works £ | Eligible for Disabled Facilities Grant? (DFG) | Funding options for those on eligible benefit | Funding options for those not on eligible benefit |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under 500 | N | Council Grant | C&R handyperson service (will have to pay) or Trusted Contractor scheme |
| 500 to 2,000 | Y | DFG<br>Poss top up council grant for any non-eligible works (up to £1,000)<br>Council loan (£1,000+) | DFG (means tested)<br>Council loan (means tested)<br>Commercial loan (may be secured) |
| 500 to 2,000 | N | Council loan | Council loan (means tested)<br>Commercial loan (may be secured) |
| 2,000 to 10,000 | Y | DFG<br>Poss top-up council loan for any non-eligible works | DFG (means tested)<br>Secured council loan (means tested)<br>Secured commercial loan |
| 2,000 to 10,000 | N | Secured council loan | Secured council loan (means tested)<br>Secured commercial loan |
| 10,000 to 30,000 | Y | Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible<br>DFG<br>Poss top-up council loan for any non-eligible works | Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible<br>DFG (means tested)<br>Council loan up to max amount (means tested and possibly secured)<br>Secured commercial loan<br>Equity release |
| 10,000 to 30,000 | N | Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible<br>Commercial loan with guarantee from Council | Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible<br>Secured commercial loan<br>Equity release |

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| 30,000+ | Y | Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible<br>DFG up to £30,000<br>Council loan up to max amount (means tested and possibly secured) | Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible<br>DFG up to £30,000 (means tested)<br>Council loan up to max amount (means tested and possibly secured)<br>Secured commercial loan<br>Equity release |
| 30,000+ | N | Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible | Explore options to move to different accommodation where possible<br>Secured commercial loan<br>Equity release |



**Notes**

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| Council Grant | Only available for certain works (eg 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 handyperson 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).<br><br>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 |

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| | 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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**Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee – Monday 14 September 2020**
**District/Borough Digest**

Under the Health Scrutiny Code of Joint Working with District and Borough Councils, Authorities have undertaken to keep relevant Partners informed of their consideration of health matters having regard to the general working principle of co-operation and the need to ensure a co-ordinated Staffordshire approach. Therefore, the following is a summary of the business transacted at the meeting of the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee held on Monday 14 September 2020 - link to Agenda and reports pack:

http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=871&MId=11770&Ver=4

| **Agenda Item** | **District(s)/Borough(s)** |
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| The Committee received a joint presentation/report from (i) Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs); (ii) University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust; (iii) University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust and; (iv) Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and (v) County Council regarding the impact of the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic and their Winter Plans for the 2020/21 season.<br><br>Members were provided with a PowerPoint presentation, in advance of the meeting, setting out detailed information on Health and Care's Winter Plans including:- (i) Phase Three National Restoration and Recovery Priorities; (ii) Restoration and Recovery: Waiting Lists Update; (iii) Assumptions this Winter informed by data relating to Accident and Emergency Attendances, Primary Care Appointments, NHS 111 Analysis; (iv) Areas of Focus; (v) Mental Health; (vi) Planning for Covis-19 Surges; (vii) Communications and Engagement; (viii) Risks and Mitigations; (viii) National Discharge Service: Policy and operating Model; (ix) Discharge Pathways – System Success; (x) additional submitted Trust specific information.<br><br>Following a brief oral instruction from Staffordshire CCGs Accountable Officer, Members scrutinised and held the Trusts/organisations to account over the scope, timeliness and details of their Plans, asking questions and seeking clarification where necessary. They were encouraged by the extent of the preparations which had been made notwithstanding existing system pressures during the year and continued uncertainty surrounding the course of the Pandemic. They learned that Health and Care's focus would be to restore services previously stood down or curtailed whilst ensuring patients/service users remained safe. In addition, measures were being implemented to maintain capacity in primary and secondary care whilst endeavouring to manage demand by keeping people well through eg implementation of the extended national flu vaccination programme and preparing for a Covid-19 vaccine to become available. However, the Committee noted the various challenges which were likely to continue over the winter period, including recruitment of Doctors to General Practice, waiting times for certain elective procedures and the adverse effects of the outbreak on mental health in the general population. In response to requests for assistance, the Committee stated their willingness to work jointly with system Partners, particularly in area of communication and engagement, as necessary, for the benefit of residents in the County. | All Districts and Boroughs |

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| **NHS Hearing Aid Provision In Staffordshire**<br><br>The Committee received an update report from Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCGs) Accountable Officer regarding NHS hearing aid provision in Staffordshire. This followed reconfiguration of the existing service for people with mild age-related hearing loss by North Staffordshire CCG and subsequent County-wide review by all CCGs following publication of the findings of a Cochran review in 2017 and change in guidance from The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Initial consultation and engagement with stakeholders regarding future hearing aid provision had taken place between January and March 2020 as part of the Difficult Decisions programme's Listening Exercise. However, formal consultation had been postponed owing to the Covid-19 Pandemic and the need to support frontline services and adhere to social distancing requirements. Whilst the CCGs could not give an indication, at this stage, when the work would resume, they undertook to recommence it as soon as it was safe to do so.<br><br>In response to a request, the CCGs Accountable Officer undertook to share the information received during the above-mentioned listening exercise, together with details of cost savings achieved from the revised policy, with the Committee, in the interim. | |

Their next meeting will be held on Monday 26 October 2020 at 10.00 am Virtual/on-line.

**Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Work Plan**

| **Work Plan 2020 - 2021** | |
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| **DATE** | **SUBJECT** |
| **Each meeting** | Update on Staffordshire County Council matters |
| **Ongoing** | Together We're Better / STP - brief update post close of initial consultation (end date of initial consultation is 25 August 2019) |
| **Ongoing** | Working group updates |
| **20th October 2020** | Recommendations to Cabinet on Homelessness Strategy |
| **20th October 2020** | Representative from the following to attend:<br>• Derby & Burton Hospital Trust – update on merger |
| **20th October 2020** | Impact of COVID-19 on overall health treatments / issues (CCG representative to attend) |
| **20th October 2020** | Housing Strategy |
| **20th October 2020** | Update from Working Group on Young People (PB, SP & MG) |
| **8th December 2020** | Safeguarding update (1) (Councillor Doyle to attend and Officers) |
| **8th December 2020 / ongoing** | Children's wellbeing, including education and mental health issues / anxiety |
| **TBC** | Food vulnerability and Healthy Eating |
| **TBC** | Physical wellbeing |
| **TBC** | Mental wellbeing – to cover mental health issues in Tamworth as well as loneliness and partnerships |
| **TBC** | The Green Agenda, including Air Quality review |
| **TBC** | Discharge to Assess and End of Life Care |
| **TBC** | Barriers to accessing GP Services in relation to residents with additional needs / Centralisation of some GP Services |
| **TBC 2021** | Update on Young People – SCYVS representative to be invited |

| Upcoming Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Meetings |
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| • 20th October 2020<br>• 8th December 2020<br>• 26th January 2021<br>• 24th February 2021 |

| Upcoming Relevant County Council Meetings |
| --- |
| **Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee**<br>• 26th October 2020<br>• 30th November 2020<br>• 1st February 2021<br>• 16th March 2021 |