

ANNUAL REVIEW 2014/15 & CORPORATE PLAN 2015/16

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Tamworth
Borough Council

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WELCOME

WELCOME TO TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 2014/15 AND CORPORATE PLAN FOR THE YEAR 2015/16. LIKE PREVIOUS YEARS, WE HAVE COMBINED THE TWO DOCUMENTS TO MAKE THE INFORMATION EASIER TO USE AND UNDERSTAND. THE DOCUMENT SETS OUT WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE IN THE COMING YEAR AND WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED LAST YEAR.

Tamworth
Borough Council

FOREWORD

FROM THE LEADER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL



Anthony E. Goodwin
Chief Executive



Cllr Daniel Cook
Leader of the Council

“The Challenge and the journey continues”

In our Foreword in last year's Annual Report, we made reference to the scale of the challenge to local government brought about by a disproportionate scale of funding reductions. As you will now all be aware, announcements within this year's Autumn Statement clearly indicate that the challenge will continue for some years to come.

Again, as with last year, we anticipated this and as a consequence of prudent forecasting, analysis and budget management, the Council is well placed to present a balanced budget for the next three years. While this is a situation that is “better than most”, this year we have witnessed some tangible consequences of **rising demand** coinciding with **reducing resources**. The Leadership and senior management are acutely aware of the impact of this ever changing landscape upon our staff, our service standards and scope and of course, on the public.

And yet, once again, the collective commitment to the organisation and its ultimate purpose – serving our local communities, has resulted in another outstanding year of

achievement that has built upon that of the previous two years, resulting in Tamworth Borough Council being recognised as a ‘top quartile’ performer. If we were still subjected to the former “comprehensive assessment” regime, we wouldn't have three or four stars... we would have a constellation! This is attributable to our employees, our partners and all politicians working together on challenging and complex issues.

It is with enormous pride that we can confirm that our overall performance has improved upon that reported in the Peer Review. So, what next? As the heading suggests, **the “challenges” and the “journey” continue.**

While there is some evidence of economic growth and improvement, the fact remains that financial constraints will remain for a number of years. For Tamworth Borough Council, this will manifest as a significant budget shortfall in 2017/18 and so, as with previous years, we need to plan for this now. The achievement of efficiencies now means that the challenge in three years time is less significant.

The work to achieve efficiencies in line with the **Sustainability Strategy** has enabled us to sustain a good standard and range of services to 2017/2018; however, it is now clear that simply pursuing this strategy alone will not be sufficient to meet the shortfall... it will help and consequently we will continue to explore every opportunity within the strategy.

The achievement of financial efficiencies, service reductions etc will have a limited impact upon the challenge of **reduced resources**. Therefore, our focus must and will shift to **managing demand**. Taking control of demand is a tried and tested operating model that will not only assist us to reduce the gap between **increased demand and reduced supply**, but it wrestles back greater control of our own destiny.

This will require courage and change; not just in relation to how we work, but also in the accountability, behaviours and relationships with our residents and communities. This will require a level of trust and understanding across the organisation, the partnership landscape and our communities.

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“
if you want to move fast; go alone.
if you want to move far; go together!”

Our focus remains: – **Growth & Regeneration** are key and therefore the delivery of the **Creative Quarter; Tinkers Green & Kerria; the former Golf Course development and the Town Centre** are major building blocks in the renewal of this great 'place' – Tamworth.

Creating **Healthier & Safer** communities is of equal significance – the evolution of integrated commissioning at a locality level will enable resources to be targeted on those in greatest need. At the same time, commissioning outcomes and services that “prevent” future calls upon services and resources both as a Council and a partner will be pivotal to our approach to **Demand Management**.

To achieve all of this we will work together, as the empowered, high performing organisation we are. We will work with communities, partners and politicians and together we will secure a better **“place”** for all our residents. An ancient saying from the African Maasai tribe is, in our view, an appropriate way to close:

“If you want to move fast; go alone.
If you want to move far; go together!”

Anthony E. Goodwin
Chief Executive

Cllr Daniel Cook
Leader of the Council

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Tamworth Borough Council is located in the south east corner of Staffordshire. The district covers 11.91 square miles, is the smallest of the seven Staffordshire districts and has a population of 77,200.

Our headquarters is at Marmion House in Tamworth where most of our staff are based.

We provide a range of services to residents, businesses and visitors. These include waste collection and recycling, collection of council tax and business rates, local council

tax discount, housing, support for the homeless, parks and open spaces, planning and building control, street cleaning, promoting economic growth and regeneration, environmental health, leisure services, community safety and election administration.

Our 2015/16 corporate strategy gives us direction and focus. It sets out our vision 'One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed' and two strategic priorities 'to aspire and prosper in Tamworth' and 'to be healthier and safer in Tamworth'. These priorities are underpinned by specific objectives.



VISION AND CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Our Vision: One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed

Corporate Priorities

1. "To Aspire and Prosper in Tamworth"

To create and sustain a thriving local economy and make Tamworth a more aspirational and competitive place to do business.

How will we do this?

By working collaboratively with partners, we will:

- ◆ Raise the aspiration and attainment levels of young people
- ◆ Create opportunities for business growth through developing and using skills and talent
- ◆ Promote private sector growth and create quality employment locally
- ◆ Brand and market "Tamworth" as a great place to "live life to the full"
- ◆ Create the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to support the achievement of this primary outcome.

2. "To be Healthier and Safer in Tamworth"

To create a safe environment in which local people reach their full potential and live longer, healthier lives.

How do we do this?

By working collaboratively with partners, we will:

- ◆ Address the causes of poor health in children and young people
- ◆ Improve the health and wellbeing of older people by supporting them to live active, independent lives
- ◆ Reduce the harm and wider consequences of alcohol abuse on individuals, families and society
- ◆ Implement 'Total Place' solutions to tackling crime and ASB in designated localities
- ◆ Develop innovative early interventions to tackle youth crime and ASB, and
- ◆ Create an integral approach to protecting those most vulnerable in our local communities.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER STATEMENTS



Cllr Robert Pritchard
Deputy Leader
of the Council

PORTFOLIO: OPERATIONS AND ASSETS

Tamworth Borough Council has had a very good year. We have risen to the financial challenges facing local government well.

Many councils across the country are cutting frontline services and support to vulnerable residents. Thanks to our hard work over many years, we have protected our frontline services. We have still had to make difficult decisions like closing the golf course, but essential services like street cleaning, outdoor events, our historic castle and many other services are still being protected.

In order to ensure this continues, we will review every service at the council to ensure maximum efficiency. We will squeeze every penny of value we can from each service. For example, we will trial cashless parking, offering better flexibility for car park users and lower running costs.

The redevelopment of our website completely in-house has been a success and saved many thousands of pounds. We are placing more resources and making as many services accessible online as possible.

Marmion House will be used as a key income asset with office spaces available for rent and we are talking to local charities

and other public sector bodies about relocating into our vacant space. This brings more public services to our front reception, making life easier for local residents.

We will also be pushing our other assets and see the development of business incubation units in other council buildings.

There is also record investment in Tamworth with £5.5 million being invested in the Enterprise Quarter and investment in the pedestrian routes in town. Employment is at its lowest level for decades, with fewer than 300 people on Jobseekers Allowance. We have a strong local economy that is growing.

Finally, we will work with other councils to share more services. We have shared many back office functions with Lichfield District council and are in discussion with other councils. This will allow us to share costs, helping reduce pressure on council budgets and protecting important services.

We have a lot to be proud of at Tamworth Borough Council and a lot to look forward too.



Cllr Steve Claymore

PORTFOLIO: ECONOMY & EDUCATION

I view the last 12 months as something of a watershed. How important changes, new ideas, challenges and opportunities all made around how economic growth is best achieved and delivered are now proving to be working successfully and coming to fruition.

With our own Economic Development and Enterprise team working hard and in line with their 'here to help and open for business' philosophy, they continue to engage with and support our existing local businesses to grow and to encourage new enterprises into the area.

As part of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) we have seen jobs and productivity rising here in the West Midlands faster than the UK average. In January this year, the GBSLEP signed the £357m Greater Birmingham and Solihull 'Growth Deal'; this secures £357m of Government funding, as well as a further £80m from partners and the private sector. This will create up to 19,000 new jobs, the building of 6,000 new homes and help 7,600 people to improve their skills, which in turn will increase employment opportunities for the area. It will also allow investment into improving the transport network, allow stalled economic sites to be unlocked and help boost the overall skills provision across the whole Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area.

The local economy in Tamworth has again this year seen a massive improvement; unemployment down to just 0.6%, (fewer than 300 people claiming Jobseekers Allowance). This is

the lowest unemployment figure for more than 20 years and has seen Tamworth achieve the greatest unemployment percentage drop over the last three years than anywhere else in the UK. Last year's jobs fair held in Tamworth saw almost twice the amount of jobs on offer than actual job applicants.

Our LEP objectives are, to create a net increase of more than 100,000 private sector jobs by 2020, increase Gross Value Added (GVA) by over £8 billion over the same period, boost indigenous and inward investment, achieve global leadership in key sectors and build a world class workforce.

With the creation of these jobs however, there remains another vital factor of ensuring we have an available skilled workforce to fill them. With 75% of business reporting that they are unable to fill vacancies due to lack of skills, it is imperative that we continue with all our initiatives to overcome this.

Last October, the refurbished Torc Vocational Centre opened and is now the Torc Professional and Technical Centre. A £2m investment into the site from the County Council and through the Stoke-On-Trent & Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership allowed advanced engineering courses to be offered.

With schools having increasing autonomy and Councils having limited powers, it is essential that we maintain a key role by developing a culture of collaboration and co-operation with our education providers. We will continue to do this through the Education and Skills Board for Tamworth.

The LEP 'Skills for Growth' action plan, which is based on detailed analysis of local labour markets and skills need, will see the recruitment of local industry champions for growth sectors and education. These champions will lead on the requirements for change and the delivery of skills for growth compact committing employers, colleges and schools to build a best in class skills service to correctly link pupils and learners with real world job opportunities.

Economic growth comes hand in hand with land requirements for commercial and residential sites and this has been compounded by the lack of build prior to and during the recession years. To this end our Tamworth Local Plan sets out how best we can achieve our requirements and, after considerable work and consultation, our Local Plan is now starting the process of examination by the planning inspectorate.

Our Strategic Housing Service is continuing with a programme of exciting town-wide developments and schemes:

- ◆ Regeneration of Tinkers Green and Kerria estates is progressing to project timeline. Extensive consultation was undertaken on preferred option master plans for each site and an outline planning application is to be submitted in late February,
- ◆ Redevelopment of garage sites; 43 units of new affordable housing delivered in Coton Green / Leyfields areas of the town in partnership with Waterloo Housing Group and Bromford Housing Group,
- ◆ A further three sites have been granted planning permission with start on site anticipated for March to deliver a further 12 units of affordable housing,
- ◆ Work is underway to develop additional sites that will be utilised to deliver a programme of new build council homes,
- ◆ Belgrave gas project; major project completed to schedule in October to install mains gas supply to homes in Belgrave,
- ◆ Bringing empty properties back into use; activity has continued in partnership with Waterloo Housing including

bringing three empty flats in the town centre back into use as affordable housing,

- ◆ Tamworth Homelessness Education Programme (THEP) has been recognised nationally by homelessness charity Shelter as best practice.

I was delighted to be invited to attend the handover of several of the new-built homes on the old garage sites, not only to see the very high-quality design and build of these properties but also how well they blend into, complement and uplift the surrounding areas. It remains our ambition to see the same high quality and impact for the development of the Kerria and Tinkers Green sites; affordable housing that not only this Council can be proud of, but housing that is sustainable and which our tenants can be proud to call home.

Our plans for the regeneration of the town centre was recently given a massive boost with announcement that we have been awarded £2.9m from the Government's Single Local Growth Fund towards the development of the Enterprise Quarter. I look forward to seeing this strategic town centre regeneration work, conserve and financially protect Tamworth Assembly Rooms for generations to come, create the much-needed wider public realm enhancements, allow the offer of incubation business premises to stimulate commerce within the town centre and act as a catalyst for further town centre regeneration in the future.

We will also see the continuation of a major part of the Gateways project starting within the next few weeks, with the public realm work over Ladybridge and along Fazeley Road. This is an integral part of the project, linking the town centre with Ventura Retail Park.

Achievements within Economic Development and Strategic Housing have been considerable this past year and these achievements will now allow us to continue delivering and sustaining this growth through this year and in the future.



Cllr Steven Doyle

PORTFOLIO: COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The portfolio for Communities and Public Health is wide ranging, covering a number of key areas.

Part of the portfolio includes safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. This is of upmost importance to me and the team that work in this area, working with all agencies like the Police and Social Services to minimise the risk and any potential threats there may be to the most vulnerable members of society.

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Under community safety there are a number of aspects; safer and stronger communities and crime and anti-social behaviour reduction. This involves the use of community wardens, CCTV and working with partners and residents to help reduce the level of crime in our community, not just make it safer but make people feel safer about where they live – dealing with the fear of crime.

The Tamworth Borough Community Safety Profile for 2014 shows that there is a continued reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour, however these reductions are increasingly hard to maintain and further improvements will need community support.

Ensuring that Tamworth is represented at the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner’s Panel is an important part of understanding the future of policing in Staffordshire and even more so in Tamworth. In the coming months we can look forward to the introduction of police cadets to Tamworth which have proved successful in other areas of Staffordshire.

The community development aspect of the portfolio provides the focus on improving the lifestyles of residents through initiatives and funding to promote healthier lifestyles and, in turn, healthier communities. This involves developing the community around us and encouraging individuals to become involved with projects like the nature reserves conservation.

Housing and Health runs the ‘Healthy Tamworth’ initiative. Last year, £78,000 was devolved from Public Health Staffordshire to Tamworth Borough Council to commission ‘Healthy Tamworth’ projects based on local priority needs.

The portfolio has provided funding to local arts projects, sports and voluntary groups through the provision of grants and advice. Over the last 12 months, considerable sums have been awarded to individuals and groups covering a range of projects that have helped people of all ages.

The Licensing, Environmental Health and the Street Scene teams continue to have a proactive manner supporting and carrying out many of the day to day functions across the town, delivering a highly efficient service that is flexible and customer focused.

They continue to be a prime example of what is possible through co-operation and imagination and instil the pride of Tamworth Borough Council. They work hard to meet the demands of a busy community.

Work at the cemeteries provides positive examples of volunteers making valued contributions to their local communities with the cooperation of Tamworth Borough Council and Street Scene teams. The restoration of the Amington War Memorial by local volunteers through Heritage Lottery funding has restored the memorial in time for the centenary of the start of WWI and The Friends of Wilnecote continue to open and close the gates at Wilnecote Cemetery.

The Council continues to promote services for young and old alike and is constantly looking to find new ways to fund those services in difficult times.





Cllr Michelle Thurgood

PORTFOLIO: HOUSING & WASTE MANAGEMENT

The year 2014 to Tamworth Borough Council was one of 'business as usual', albeit in a climate of financial challenges and changes.

It was my first year as a Portfolio Holder and I personally got to experience the commitment, dedication and adaptability of so many of our employees in delivering and exceeding expectations.

Protecting vulnerable residents and ensuring people get appropriate support is at the heart of our strategy. In 2014, we have moved quickly to protect those affected by external changes and are doing all we can to maintain these services going forward.

For those affected by the withdrawal of Supporting People funding we are:

- ◆ Reviewing our own services in a measured way to ensure the continued delivery of services (including Sheltered Housing);
- ◆ Supporting residents affected by the changes, including helping 13 households with mental health problems find suitable alternative accommodation within Tamworth.

We have also successfully responded to the challenges of Welfare Benefit reform by supporting residents to make the transition to the new system. Rent arrears collection for the Council's Housing Service is 99.4% compared to top quartile nationally of 98.8%.

We have made changes within our Supported and Strategic Housing teams to ensure that resources are aligned with our priorities. This has enabled the teams to adapt to changing circumstances and provide the best support possible to our residents.

Tamworth, like most towns and cities, has a long waiting list for social housing. Therefore, we have implemented a new Housing Allocations Policy, following consultation with applicants and partners. This ensures that social housing is allocated to those who have the greatest need. This will be supported by our commitment to acquire new properties going forward. I also look forward to working with my colleagues on progressing the redevelopment of Kerria and Tinkers Green, providing accommodation which is fit for 21st century living.

We have a high standard for our council properties and expect that private sector landlords adopt the same standard too. Therefore, we have and will prosecute private sector landlords who have failed to properly maintain their properties.

Working with external partners is an essential and beneficial part of our work. The Joint Waste Management Service between Tamworth and Lichfield continues to deliver an excellent service to our residents. One identified change was the removal of food waste from green bins, which will save Tamworth residents in excess of £378,000 by 2017.

We have also worked with Bright Futures to provide support to households with complex needs and HEAT to provide residents access to high quality advice about energy efficiency.

We continue to invest in our assets, including more than £1m in environmental works including:

- ◆ refurbishment of garage sites and sheltered housing communal gardens, and
- ◆ providing gas supply and new heating systems to residents in Belgrave.

Finally, for the last five years we have become used to hearing the news that the Tamworth In Bloom team had won a Gold Award for the 'Heart of England' Category and 2014 was no different. However, in the National Finals, Tamworth as a first time entrant won a Silver Gilt. Not only did the team exceed all expectations, they truly made the town look fantastic!

I look forward to 2015 being another year to continue delivering our service priorities, protecting our residents, adapting to unknown challenges and striving to exceed our customers' expectations.



WHAT WE WILL DO IN 2015/16

“To Aspire and Prosper in Tamworth”

Key projects

- ◆ Continuation of the regeneration of Tinkers Green and Kerria will include the agreement of the developer procurement methodology, the appointment of consultants to support the bidding process and the appointment of developers,
- ◆ The commencement, in April 2015, of the development of new affordable housing on the second tranche of former garage sites in Hockley, Glascote and Gillway will result in 12 units of accommodation,
- ◆ Following the award of £2.95m from the Single Local Growth Fund, work on the establishment of the Creative Quarter will include further external funding bids, application for appropriate planning permissions, the award of the contract to carry out the works and the commencement of those works in early 2016.
- ◆ Agreement on the affordable housing development programme for Tamworth,
- ◆ Continuing work on the Local Plan will see its submission, examination and adoption,
- ◆ Improving the ‘green’ environment. In particular, the achievement of the following:
 - ◆ Town Wall gaining designation as a Local Nature Reserve subject to land registration constraints,
 - ◆ Achieving a gold award in the ‘Heart of England in Bloom’ competition.
 - ◆ The waste collection service delivering its planned financial efficiency throughout the year, and still maintaining a recycling rate above 50%.

“To be Healthier and Safer in Tamworth”

Key projects

- ◆ Ensuring that all regulatory functions provided by the Council are delivered in a transparent, consistent and fair manner to promote public safety and to minimise the burden to businesses resulting in the following:
 - ◆ All planned food and health and safety inspections completed,
 - ◆ Air Quality improved,
 - ◆ All licensing applications processed in a timely fashion, with any appeals dealt with in a professional manner,
 - ◆ A reduction in workplace accident investigations,
 - ◆ Statutory nuisance investigations/actions completed within acceptable timescales.
- ◆ The ‘Healthy Tamworth’ project will focus on key themes including housing and health and the development of a better understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of local people.
- ◆ To support older people, the remodeled sheltered housing review will be implemented by April 2016,
- ◆ £550k funding provided by the Tamworth Strategic Partnership to private, public and voluntary sector groups to fund projects over the next two years to improve wellbeing for Tamworth residents in these areas,
 - ◆ Living Well, for projects which promote healthy living,
 - ◆ Community Empowerment, for projects which engage with and empower communities to take control,
 - ◆ Increasing Aspiration, for projects which make positive changes through raising aspiration,
 - ◆ Early interventions for vulnerable groups, including homelessness prevention, drug and alcohol projects, help for older people to remain independent and reoffending reduction programmes



“Approachable, Accountable and Visible”

Value for money and accountability will underpin the delivery of all corporate priorities. Working with others, the Council will deliver services that are well-governed, ethical, effective, efficient and economically viable.

Key projects

- ◆ The newly-developed Customer Services Strategy will see a corporate focus on the further development of the Customer Service Centre in order to bring about transformation from the customers' perspective including customer services that offer value for money, are accessible, digital by default and designed to meet customer needs,
- ◆ Undertake both Parliamentary and Local Elections
- ◆ The first steps of an electoral review will include an examination of current arrangements and alteration to achieve the best operating model for Tamworth Borough Council,
- ◆ Further develop an organisational development strategy that supports the transformational change of Tamworth Borough Council,
- ◆ The corporate change programme will support the next phase of the agile working project through:
 - ◆ The implementation of corporate telephony,
 - ◆ The implementation of a corporate desktop environment,
 - ◆ The corporate roll-out of electronic document and records management (EDRM),
 - ◆ The continued development of the customer relationship management system (CRM),
 - ◆ Delivery of services digitally by default (i.e. via website, email and telephone),
 - ◆ Digitisation of data.



LEADERSHIP & RESOURCES

Political Arrangements

The council currently has 30 members (16 Conservative, 12 Labour, 1 UKIP and 1 Independent) representing its ten wards.

The Council's Cabinet is made up of:

- ◆ The Leader of the Council
- ◆ Portfolio Holders for:
 - ◆ Operations & Assets
 - ◆ Economy & Education
 - ◆ Housing & Waste Management
 - ◆ Communities & Public Health

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



ORGANISATION



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John Wheatley
Executive Director
(Resources)

THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The 2015/16 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) ensures that appropriate resources are focused on the single vision and strategic priorities.

'One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed' and the strategic priorities are clear by stating what we are aiming to achieve, how we will do it and the resources we will use to support these. The Council has been proactive in the design and implementation of innovative and effective measures for driving efficiency and reducing costs within the MTFS.

The Council's Executive Management Team has recognised that Members will need to focus on strategic decisions relating to high-level financial issues, given the need to identify substantial savings following the constraints in public spending (grant reductions of more than 45% since 2010/11 and indications from the 2014 Autumn Statement that austerity measures will continue, with indications that further grant reductions for District Councils will be as severe as they have been since 2010/11).

The Council holds sufficient funds in reserves and balances to allow it to plan its approach to budget setting, and Cabinet, on 22nd August 2013, endorsed the document 'Planning for a Sustainable Future' as the overarching strategy for meeting the challenges forecast for the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and a series of workstreams designed to deliver savings and efficiencies designed to tackle the forecast

deficit long before it becomes a reality. This includes exploring new and innovative ideas and to be more commercial in our approach to business.

Potential savings arising from the Sustainability Plan workstreams have been identified during the Budget & Medium Term Planning Process and included within the latest forecasts

At their meeting on 19th February 2015, Cabinet approved a proactive approach to the other major challenge, that of ever increasing demand. By adopting the guiding principles, tools, techniques and transformational approaches, the Council can set about managing demand and thereby have greater control and the ability to align or target "supply" to managed "demand" and therefore costs within the MTFS into the future.

The primary change will see a shift away from trying to sustain a full suite of services at high standards with in excess of 45% budget reductions to understanding the needs of our customers and working with them to co-design how we meet those demands.

At their meeting on 24th February 2015, Council approved a three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund with Council Tax increases lower than the Government referendum limits – in order to continue to deliver those services essential to the Local Community. Challenging savings targets have been included which need to be achieved over

the next three years. However, in the longer term, the Council faces on-going grant reductions and income uncertainties which mean that substantial additional savings will need to be made into the future to deliver a balanced budget in the longer term.

Capital spending for the General Fund is extremely limited by resource constraints – each project is robustly challenged through a business case, return on investment assessment.

With regard to the Housing Revenue Account, a five-year MTFS was approved by Council, including significant investment in regeneration projects to meet future housing needs and sustain the HRA in the longer term. Following HRA self-financing, the majority of the capital funding is made through revenue contributions.

The headline figures for 2015/16 are:

- ◆ A General Fund total cost of services of £8,463,640 a reduction of 7.3% compared to 2014/15;
- ◆ A transfer of £145,682 from General Fund balances;
- ◆ The Band D Council Tax would be set at £158.60, an increase of £3.10 (1.99% - £0.06 per week) on the level from 2014/15 of £155.50;
- ◆ A General Fund Capital Programme of £6.9m for three years;
- ◆ A Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Expenditure level of £15,388,430 for 2015/16 (excluding interest & similar charges);
- ◆ A transfer of £3,072,360 from HRA balances;
- ◆ An average rent of £88.30 (based on CPI plus 1% plus £2, capped at formula rent, over a 48 week rent year), which represents an increase of £1.70 (1.96% on the current average rent of £86.60) - this is above the Government's Guidance on rent increases, of CPI plus 1%, and equates to £81.51 on an annualised 52 week basis;
- ◆ A Housing Capital Programme of £54.1m (including c.£30.87m relating to the Regeneration Projects) for 5 years.

The delivery of a balanced Medium Term Financial Strategy (three years for the General Fund & five years for the HRA) is a major achievement and shows we are in a good position – better than most. Like many others, our budget planning process had to be carried out in light of ongoing unprecedented adverse economic conditions. This included a great deal of uncertainty over future investment and income levels. It is also facing increased financial demands from central government for service improvements in areas such as local democracy and transparency – as well as substantial reductions in Government grant support in the future.

An important part of our budget process is identifying areas of our work where we can make savings by reviewing the way we deliver services to make them more efficient.

In addition, the future economic prosperity of the Borough will also rely on increased housing provision, as in the future under the current funding arrangements, financial resilience is strongly linked to future growth in council tax and business rates income. Opportunities for identifying, promoting and supporting economic growth are actively being pursued.



CELEBRATING SUCCESSES 2014/15 – A QUICK LOOK BACK

APRIL-JUNE

St George's Day celebrations in the Castle Grounds,

£170k awarded to Tamworth organisations to provide vital services to residents and businesses across the borough,

£68k funding provided by the Healthy Tamworth Initiative.



JULY-SEPTEMBER

Gold award for the fifth year running in the Heart of England in Bloom competition,
 Second outdoor cinema in the Castle Grounds,
 'We Love Tamworth' event in the Castle Grounds,
 Changes to bin collection saving £400k pa,
 National charity Shelter gave a Tamworth Borough Council homelessness education programme its seal of approval.



OCTOBER-DECEMBER

Castle Grounds Fireworks Event,
 43 new affordable homes completed in Leyfields,
 Assembly Rooms celebrated its 125th birthday,
 Second Tamworth Listens Question Time Event,
 Christmas lights switch-on in St Editha's Square,
 Tamworth Castle awarded Full Accreditation status by Arts Council England,
 Tamworth Information Centre awarded gold at the Staffordshire Excellence in Tourism Awards.



JANUARY-MARCH

£2.95m grant awarded to regenerate Tamworth town centre with the development of a new creative quarter,
 'I am Tamworth' art project launched,
 Master plan proposals for Tinkers Green & Kerria approved by Cabinet.



WHAT WE DID IN 2014/15

Shown below, against our objectives, are some of our achievements in 2014/15. All that has been achieved is not included but we have identified those achievements which we feel will be of most community interest due to their impact and benefits.

“To Aspire and Prosper in Tamworth”

Raise the aspiration and attainment levels of young people

- ◆ Through the **Education and Skills Board** for Tamworth continued to develop a culture of collaboration and co-operation with our education providers,
- ◆ The **Supported Housing scheme** assisted 20 families (18-25 year olds) in achieving key life skills around budgeting, healthy eating and steps into work,
- ◆ Successful intergenerational **‘Cook ‘n’ Eat’** schemes with young people working alongside older people on budgeting and preparing healthy and nutritional meals resulted in NVQs in hygiene,
- ◆ The **‘Rent First’** campaign involved educating local primary school children on the importance of budgeting and financial management and included their involvement in designing publicity literature for the campaign,
- ◆ Investment from the councils repairs contractor(s) in **apprenticeship and work skilling schemes** resulted in nationally accredited qualifications,
- ◆ The Mayor held tours of the **Town Hall** with schools and young persons groups to enlighten them on the history of the town.
- ◆ The **Tamworth Homeless Education Programme** (THEP) which, through schools and colleges, raises awareness of homelessness and its prevention for young people and provides advice on budgeting was given a seal of approval by the national charity Shelter

Brand and market “Tamworth” as a great place to “live life to the full”

- ◆ The Castle Grounds hosted the popular **St George’s Day** celebrations attracting more than 8,000 visitors,
- ◆ More than 28,000 visitors attended the **Castle Grounds Firework Display**,
- ◆ More than 9,000 people saw the **Christmas lights switch-on** in St Editha’s Square,
- ◆ **Heritage Open day** attracted 8,000 visitors,
- ◆ **‘We Love Tamworth’** event in the Castle Grounds attracted 9,500 visitors,
- ◆ The **Tamworth Information Centre** was awarded gold for the second year running in the Visitor Information Provider category at the Staffordshire Excellence in Tourism Award
- ◆ Tamworth achieved a gold award for the fifth year running in the **Heart of England in Bloom competition**. Tamworth also competed in the national In Bloom campaign and was awarded silver gilt,
- ◆ **Tamworth Castle** was awarded Full Accreditation status by Arts Council England,
- ◆ **‘I am Tamworth’** 12-month art project launched to encourage people of all ages to attend arts events and take part in creative activities such as dance, drama, visual arts, music and writing.

Create the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to support the achievement of this primary outcome

- ◆ The demolition of under used garages and subsequent redevelopment resulted in the completion of **43 affordable units of accommodation** in the Leyfields and Coton Green areas involving more than £5m inward investment,
- ◆ The **‘Empty Homes’** HCA funded scheme resulted in three empty flats in the town centre being brought back into use as affordable housing,
- ◆ Master plan proposals for **Tinkers Green and Kerria** regeneration were completed and will result in the provision of 152 new homes,,
- ◆ Held extensive consultation on the **Local Plan** and other potential housing sites,
- ◆ Work commenced on the first phase in the **Gateways Project** with the route between Ladybridge and Ventura Park being improved with footpath and cycleway resurfacing, installation of new benches, bins, signposts, interpretation boards and lighting,
- ◆ The £5.5m project to regenerate Tamworth town centre with the development of a new **Creative Quarter** by 2017 based around and including key assets like the Assembly Rooms, the Library, Carnegie and Philip Dix centres was boosted by the award of £2.95m in grant funding from the Single Local Growth Fund,
- ◆ Changes to **organic waste collection** introduced that will achieve savings of £400k per annum,

Create opportunities for business growth through developing and using skills and talent and promote private sector growth and create quality employment locally

- ◆ **Tamworth’s Town Team** - which supports small local businesses and helps them to grow and develop was highly commended in the ‘Best All-Round Small Business Friendliness’ category at an event run by the Federation of Small Businesses Staffordshire and West Midlands Region,
- ◆ In support of the Small Business Initiative, **free car parking** was made available in all of Tamworth Borough Council’s car parks on two Saturdays leading up to Christmas,
- ◆ The **Think Local 4 Business show** was held for the 11th consecutive year. This attracted many delegates, 30 exhibitors and provided free seminars on business advice.



“To be Healthier and Safer in Tamworth”

Improve the health and wellbeing of older people by supporting them to live active, independent lives

- ◆ Under the **Healthy Tamworth initiative**, £68,000 of funding was provided by Public Health Staffordshire and Tamworth Borough Council to five voluntary and community sector groups for projects which improve health outcomes for residents of Tamworth,
- ◆ The **Hospital to Home** scheme developed in partnership with Brighter Futures targeted support to households with multiple needs to access the services they required.

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Implement ‘Total Place’ solutions to tackling crime and ASB in designated localities and develop innovative early interventions to tackle youth crime and ASB

- ◆ A **community safety day** held by the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership to give vital help, advice and information to Tamworth residents attracted more than 200 visitors,
- ◆ £85k awarded to the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership by the Police and Crime Commissioner for the following:
 - ◆ **Pathway Project**, an early intervention service tackling domestic abuse
 - ◆ **T3**, an outreach service for young people using drugs and alcohol,
 - ◆ a project to tackle **anti-social behaviour** caused by the misuse of motorbikes, mopeds and cycles on footpaths and public open spaces,

Create an integral approach to protecting those most vulnerable in our local communities

- ◆ By the end of December, more than £19,000 was shared among 32 organisations and charities from the **Voluntary and Community Grants, Arts Grants and Sports Grants** schemes to help them develop and provide services for the residents of Tamworth,
- ◆ Tamworth has led the way in the **Building Resilient Families and Communities initiative** (Troubled Families). Progress here has given other local authorities the confidence and belief to engage more fully in the process,
- ◆ New **Housing Allocations** policy implemented ensuring the allocation of housing to those in greatest need,
- ◆ After its launch in January 2014, **The Healthy Tamworth Project** undertook a pledge campaign which saw more than 200 members of the public signing up to do one thing that would improve their health and wellbeing.

Address the causes of poor health in children and young people

- ◆ New equipment was installed at the play area in the **Castle Grounds**,
- ◆ Tamworth Borough Council's **Home Energy Advice Tamworth (HEAT)** scheme offered Tamworth residents the chance to get their lofts and cavity walls insulated – completely free of charge,
- ◆ The Council's Sports Development team joined forces with the charity **'Kids Run Free'** putting on organised running events for children,
- ◆ The **'Keeping Safe'** project, funded by Tamworth Borough Council and Staffordshire Public Health Team, was introduced to empower young people with the knowledge and skills to combat child sexual exploitation and encourage positive relationships,

Reduce the harm and wider consequences of alcohol abuse on individuals, families and society

- ◆ **Operation Safer Nights Plus** saw staff from organisations - including Tamworth Borough Council, police, fire service, domestic abuse groups and drug & alcohol counselling services - patrolling the streets of Tamworth town centre to inform and educate revellers about how to stay safe, while at the same time supporting the town's night-time economy by making Tamworth a much safer place to be at night,
- ◆ Around 500 people attended a drop-in event to promote **'It's Never Ok'**; a Tamworth Community Safety Partnership initiative to tackle domestic abuse.

“Approachable, Accountable and Visible”

Value for money and accountability underpinned the delivery of all corporate priorities. Working with others, the Council will deliver services that are well-governed, ethical, effective, efficient and economically viable.

- ◆ As part of the Tamworth Listens initiative, a second **Question Time event** was held at the Assembly Rooms attracting 100 residents. This gave residents the opportunity to ask a panel of public sector representatives questions about regeneration and growth, health and community safety issues,
- ◆ The **Annual State of Tamworth Debate** was held,
- ◆ Reduced the **Cabinet structure** to a maximum of five members,
- ◆ Developed a **customer portal and app** to make accessing services easier for our customers,
- ◆ Implemented Individual **Electoral Registration**,
- ◆ Generated financial savings and improved capacity through the **Legal Spend Review**.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STATE OF TAMWORTH DEBATE

At the State of Tamworth Debate in November 2014, the following recommendations were made:

- ◆ That the Scrutiny Committees meet to discuss the report before this Council and decide if any issues are calling out for review by scrutiny given that statistics within the report,
- ◆ That the Leader and the Chief Executive Officer meet to create a report to Cabinet defining where we need to take this Council, what sort of Council do we need to be going forward to ensure the vulnerable are the priority and share it with all Councillors.

SUMMARY ACCOUNTS 2014/15

Due to the early publication of this combined document the draft summary accounts for 2014/15 are not yet available. As soon as they are (approximately end of June 2015) they will be posted on the Council's website.

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

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

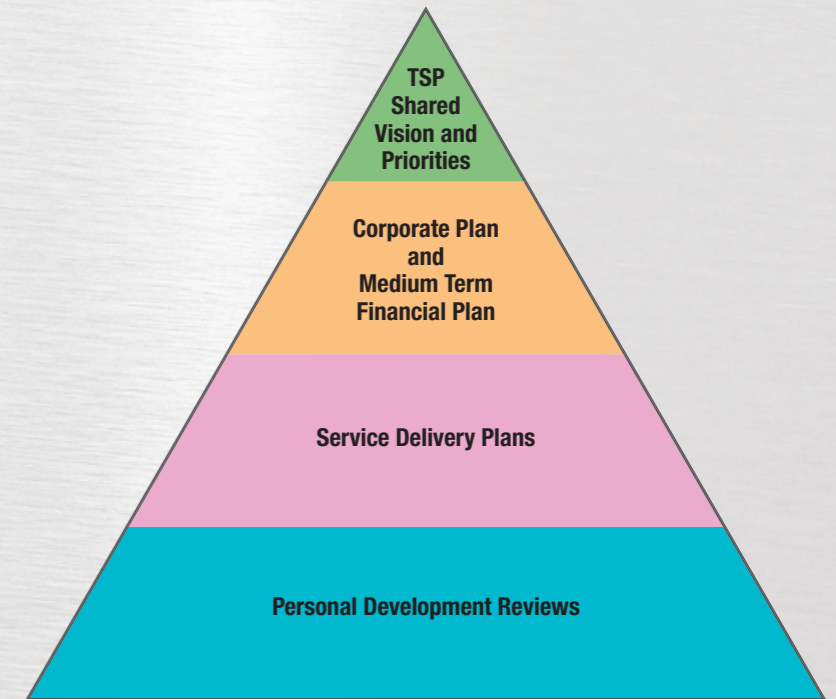
Due to the early publication of this combined document, the annual governance statement for 2014/15 is not yet available. The Annual Governance Statement is published with the Annual Statement of Accounts and will be available later in the year.

CORPORATE PLANNING PROCESS

The corporate planning process forms a fundamental part of the successful management of the Council. Our corporate planning framework sits within a wider planning hierarchy that has the Tamworth Strategic Partnership shared vision and priorities at the top. The Council's corporate plan and medium term financial strategy focuses on how the Council will deliver its contribution to these while the service delivery

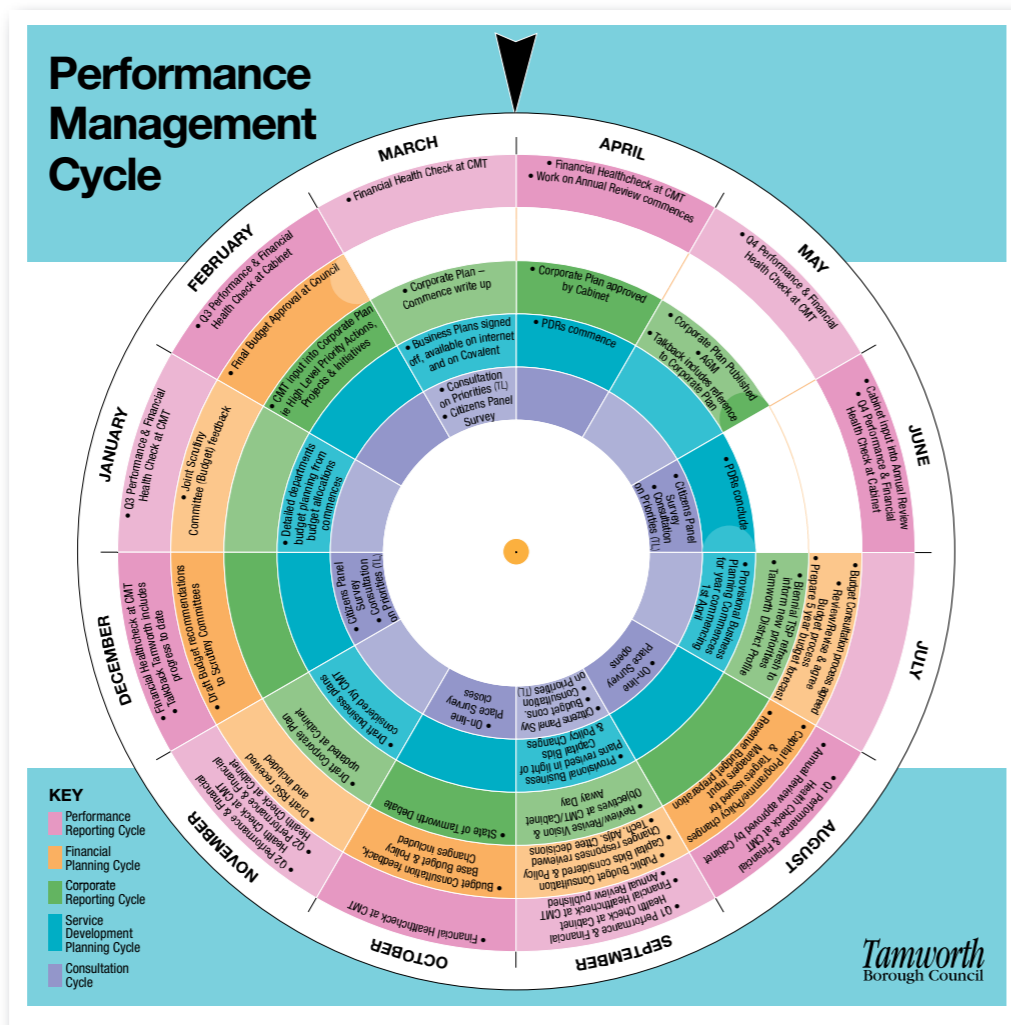
plans show how the services will also contribute. Below this are the personal developments plans for each employee. The links between the plans form the "golden thread" that ensures everyone in the organisation is working towards the same goals and that the priorities will be achieved.

CORPORATE PLANNING PYRAMID



PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Performance management is a process not an event. It operates as a continuous cycle. All elements of Tamworth Borough Council's performance management framework are built around the annual performance cycle as shown in this diagram.



HOW WE WILL ASSURE WHAT WE DO

Performance Scorecard

Tamworth Borough Council balances its attention across its priorities. Summary performance of service activities and projects is indicated by the status of business and service plan actions, indicators and identified risks.

Performance Monitoring & Reporting Arrangements

The Performance Scorecard is monitored by:

- ◆ Individual officers and members assigned to or with a particular interest in an action, indicator or risk,
- ◆ Corporate and Directorate Management Teams,
- ◆ Cabinet,
- ◆ Scrutiny Committees.

A link to our current and past performance is available on the council's website: www.tamworth.gov.uk/performance



CONTACT US

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

For more information about Tamworth Borough Council, visit our website at www.tamworth.gov.uk

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Tamworth
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