

TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2017-2020



1 VISION: One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed - Open for business since the 7th century AD

LIVING A QUALITY
LIFE IN TAMWORTH

GROWING STRONG
TOGETHER IN TAMWORTH

DELIVERING QUALITY
SERVICES IN TAMWORTH

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WELCOME

Welcome to Tamworth Borough Council's Corporate Plan update for the years 2017 - 2020. The document sets out what we want to achieve in the coming years.

Our vision for a place and a community that is 'perfectly placed' to take full advantage of every opportunity that leads to Tamworth being a 'better' place or its people having 'better' lives or the Council being a 'better' organisation has never been more relevant that it is right now.

Many of the challenges faced by the Council in recent years have had direct consequences for all three: People, Place and Organisation. It will come as no surprise therefore that the three thematic priorities established in 2016 will remain the focus of our attention for this plan period - 2017 to 2020.

While the majority of these challenges are likely to remain - reduced funding; increased demand; less capacity; challenges facing our partners - they are balanced by the fact that this Council's commitment and determination to succeed remains, as does the resilience and professionalism of the entire workforce. Tamworth Borough Council is one small but classic example of why Local Government and its partners are the only Government department to achieve the efficiency targets set by the Treasury since 2008.

What has changed is our attitude to the situation and our desire and ambition to improve it. Last year, the Council adopted a route-map designed to position the Council so it could be Perfectly Placed to take advantage of every opportunity it either created or located.

'From Surviving To Thriving' set out a number of opportunities based upon the principle that by focusing upon the growth of the economy, both the 'people' and the 'place' would benefit. The Council remains committed to promoting and stimulating economic growth and regeneration; meet our housing needs; creating a vibrant town centre economy and protecting those most vulnerable in our communities.

To this end, we pledge to explore and invest in viable and sustainable methods of generating income and moving towards financial independence.

Furthermore, we pride ourselves in the award-winning services provided by the Council and we will continue to maintain and support the provision of a safe, attractive and welcoming environment for everyone.

To this end, this plan seeks to set out the route by which we intend to achieve these ambitious outcomes for no other reason that it is what our 'people' and our 'place' expects of our organisation.



Anthony E. Goodwin
Chief Executive



Daniel Cook
Leader of the Council

INTRODUCTION

The borough of Tamworth is located in the south east corner of Staffordshire. With a long and proud history with a bustling market town at its heart, it now has very clear ambitions for a prosperous and sustainable future.

Built upon its proximity to Britain's second city, its links to the region and access and connectivity nationally provides Tamworth with an economic geography that has led to a growing economy, low levels of unemployment and high levels of investor confidence not seen for almost a decade.

As the local administrative authority, Tamworth Borough Council is quite rightly proud of its strategic role as a 'place shaper' and of the contributions it has made to provide, support and enable individuals, communities and businesses to thrive and achieve their full potential.



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The foundations supporting these sustained successes can be attributed to strong political and executive leadership, having a detailed understanding of the issues and challenges facing our 'people' and 'place' and, more importantly, the plans, policies and resources with which to resolve them. The process by which the Council sets out its plans for dealing with these priorities and providing the resources and funding necessary forms the basis of the Corporate Plan & Medium Term Financial Strategy produced and reviewed annually.

It is this tried and tested approach that has enabled this Council to navigate its way through the recession, extended periods of austerity and the uncertainties and complexities brought about by 'devolution', elected Mayors, Combined Authorities et al. With many of the challenges of previous years still facing the Council and the uncertainties surrounding issues such as Brexit, NNDR retention, the future of the NHS and care services, our local clarity of vision and purpose has never been so important.

This plan provides the Council, its public, partners and politicians with a concise, strategic document setting out in clear and simple terms the Council's Vision, Values and Ambitions. It will clearly explain what the most important issues and challenges are and what we and our public and partners plan on doing to address them and how we will use our resources to do so.

Using economic regeneration and managed growth as the primary means of shifting from surviving to thriving, we will continue the work of our predecessors from history by promoting all that is great about our people and our place. Tamworth has been open for business since the 7th century A.D... and it still is!

AMBITIONS

The Council's vision is for Tamworth to be 'perfectly placed' to take full advantage of any/all opportunities to grow and sustain its economy for the benefit of 'people' and 'place'. This plan sets out our ambitions and what we plan to achieve across the period 2017 to 2020 in order to meet those ambitions. It underlines our commitment to investment and investing in the development of the borough, using the incomes generated to sustain essential services delivered to an agreed and consistent standard.

More than ever, we recognise that our financial capacity will be less than in previous years which means that we will need to maintain our approach to innovation, collaboration and transformation. So not only will the Council seek investment from businesses and developers, but the Council itself will explore viable and sustainable investment opportunities using all returns to support public services.

The tables at pages 10 to 15 set out how, under each thematic priority, we plan to deliver gains or stated ambitions in order to progress against each priority.

These are not simply words or the ambitions of politicians seeking to win votes these are the services, standards and outcomes that our public aspire to and expect of the Council. It is through the Corporate Plan that these aspirations and expectations will be achieved. The scale, scope and timescale relating to these outcomes presents the Council with a challenging yet achievable task over the forthcoming years

In saying this, it is important to note that while the 'Plan' focuses upon delivering against the three Thematic Priorities, the Council must also ensure that the wide range of day-to-day operational and support services continue to be delivered to a consistent and efficient standard. In doing so, it demonstrates how 'Delivering Quality Services' both connects and underpins the thematic priorities for 'Place' and 'People'.

Throughout the 'Plan' period, the Council's ongoing programme of Service Reviews, continuous improvement and whole system reviews will continue in line with the adopted Sustainability Strategy.

Services continue to be delivered through a mix of 'Direct' provision, contracted and/or commissioned services, joint/shared services and partnerships. Our aim to scrutinise and improve the way we plan, do and review will remain throughout the period of this plan

So, between 2017 and 2020, the Council will work with its public, peers and partners in order to:

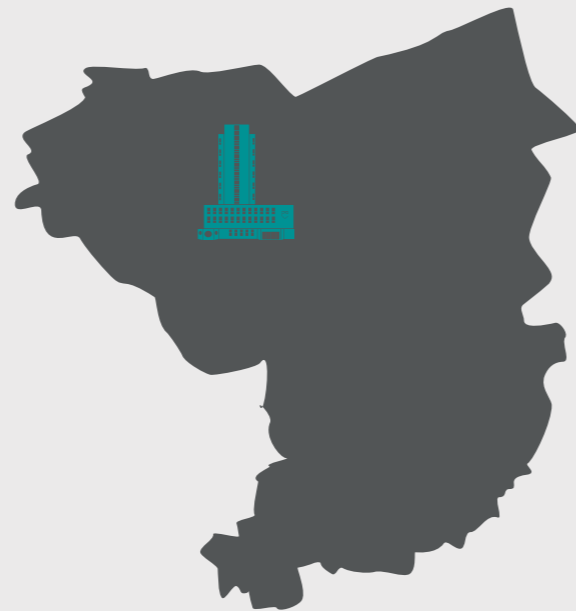
- ▶ Sustain essential services at agreed standards for those in greatest need,
- ▶ Deliver a programme of projects, planned initiatives and work streams designed to achieve outcomes against the Thematic Priorities,
- ▶ Adopt a commercial approach to growth and investment designed to generate a sustainable income to support,
- ▶ Continue its excellent performance in financial planning, management and investment. By being 'Risk Aware' rather than 'Risk Averse', the Council will consider all opportunities to improve and/or sustain services.

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, homelessness support, parks and open spaces, planning and building control, street cleaning, promoting economic growth and regeneration, environmental health, leisure services, community safety and election administration.



SNAPSHOT OF OUR SERVICES

13,894 tonnes of waste RECYCLED
48.8% of household waste

7 LOCAL NATURE RESERVES

446 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

505 TAXI licences granted

355 INSPECTIONS of restaurants

97.6% COUNCIL TAX collected
£30.3million

£25,000 arts, sports & small GRANTS shared among 35 organisations

£18.9million RENT COLLECTED from Council properties

6,475 claims for Housing Benefit & Council Tax support

1,595 people on the HOUSING REGISTER

41,625 VISITORS to Tamworth Castle

73,149 people attended OUTDOOR EVENTS

62 HOUSEHOLDS PREVENTED FROM BECOMING HOMELESS

Maintain 4,376 Council properties

1,039,083 hits on our WEBSITE

58,118 individuals on the ELECTORAL ROLL

17,496 visits to MARMION HOUSE

These fact and figures are taken from 2015/16 and give a good indication of what we help to deliver in a year.

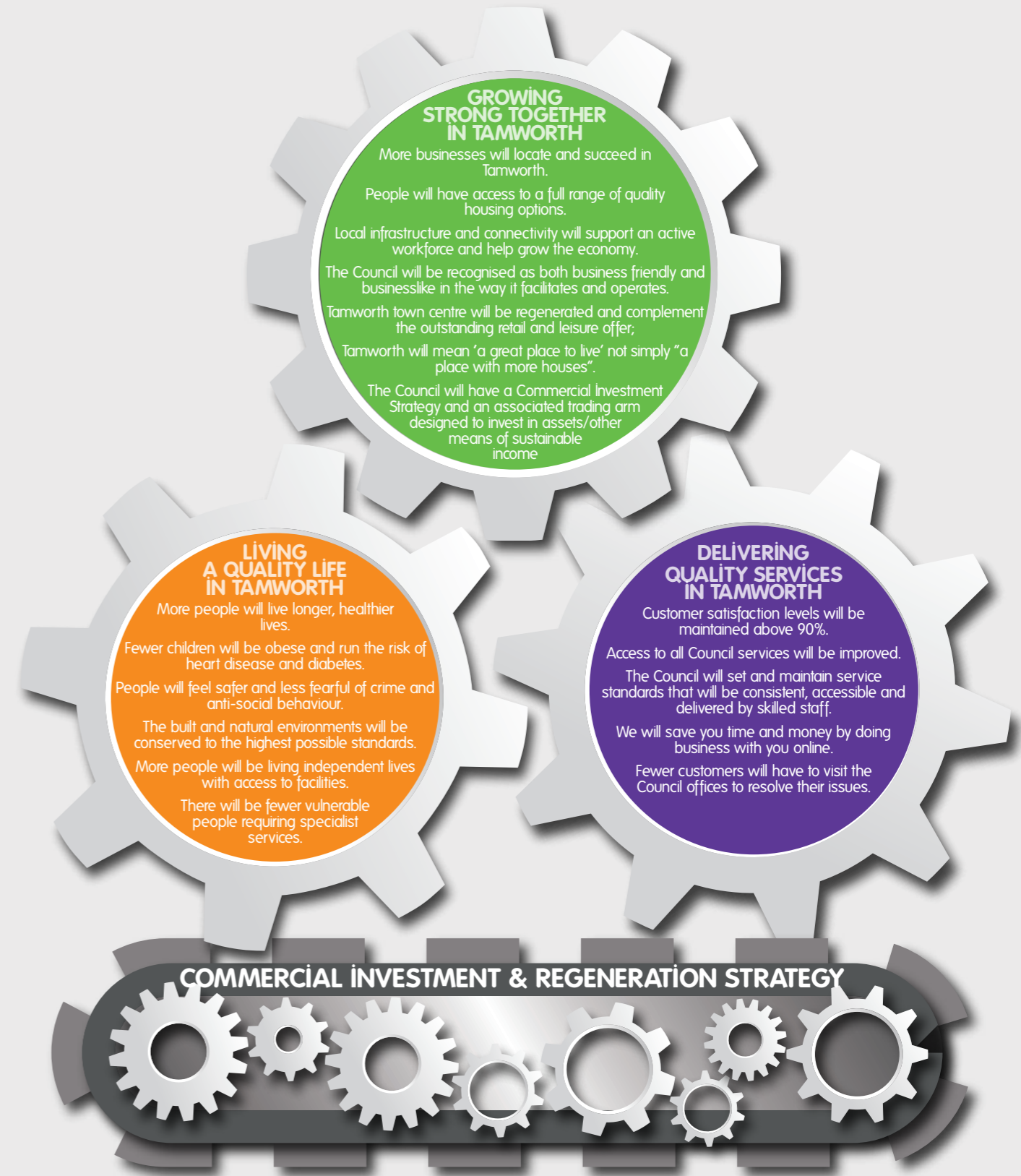


BACKGROUND

As with previous years, the Corporate Plan has been compiled and developed with contributions, views and opinions from local residents, businesses, partners from all sectors and politicians. When combined with a range of data sets, customer insight and information, it provides a robust and trustworthy evidence base against which this plan has been produced.

While progress against the three thematic priorities adopted by the council last year has been considerable, the outcome from this year's review of evidence clearly indicates that these priorities are still at the forefront of our plans and ambitions for 'people', 'place' and 'organisation'. As a result, the three thematic priorities will again form the basis of the Council's strategic framework and specific ambitions. It is these specific ambitions that serve to place the thematic priorities into context by setting out the Council's expectations for the plan period.

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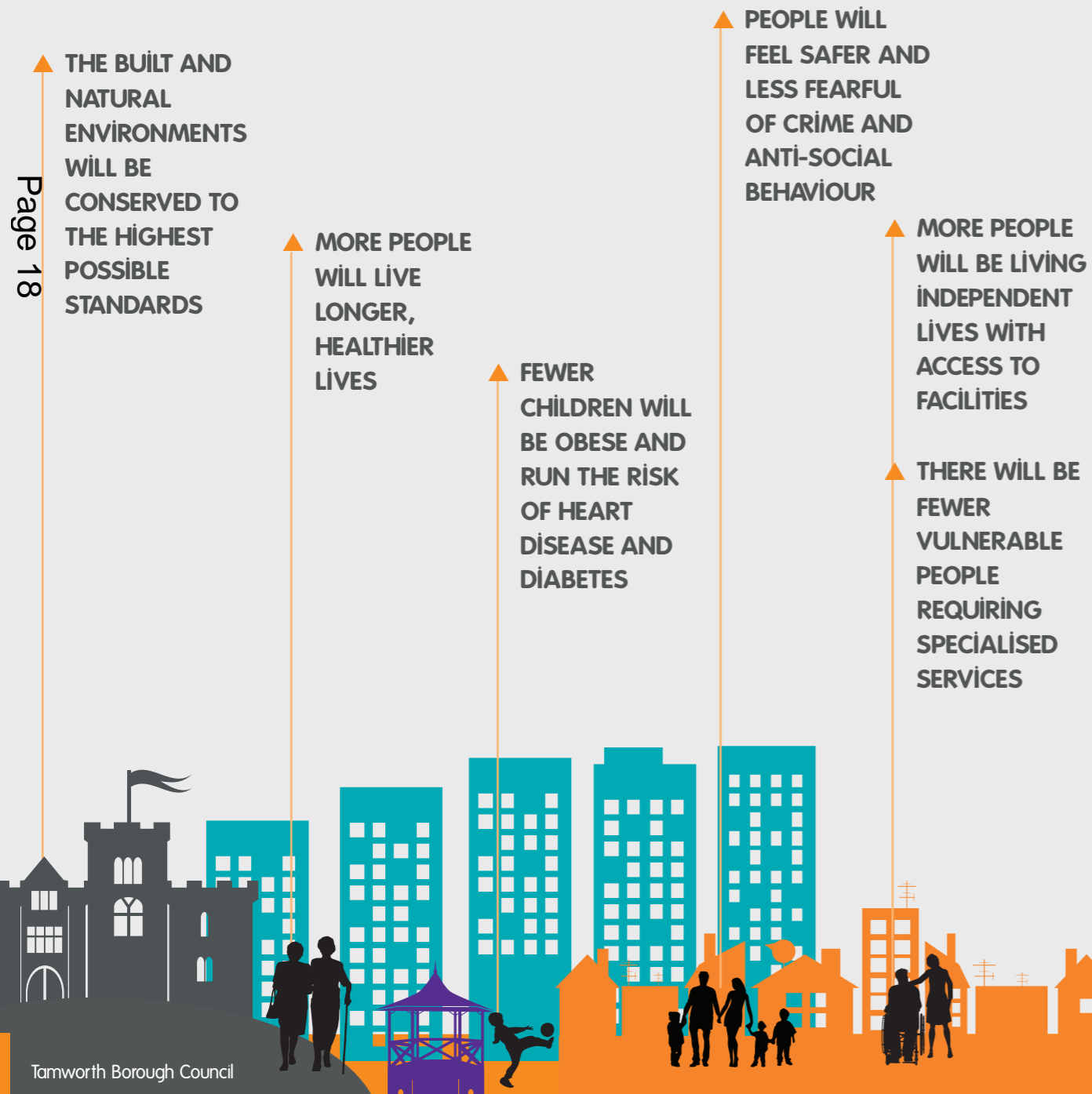


THEMATIC PRIORITY 1: LIVING A QUALITY LIFE IN TAMWORTH

Why is this important?

The Council believes that everyone should have the opportunity to live a quality life. In order to enable this, it will work with its public, partners and stakeholders to ensure that the following ambitions are met.

Our ambitions:



How we'll know if we are realising these ambitions.

PROJECTS

- ▶ Maintaining and managing the environment within Tamworth
 - ▶ Delivery of the Community Safety Partnership
 - ▶ Delivery of an effective regulatory service

Deliverables (What we will do)

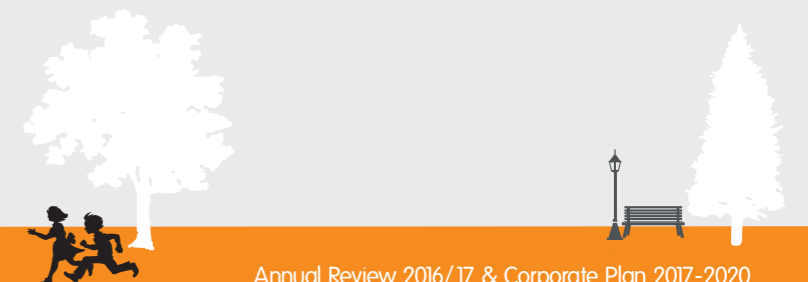
- ▶ Deliver the Local Plan
- ▶ Adopt the Community Safety Action Plan
- ▶ Maintain and manage Local Nature Reserves and sports pitches
- ▶ Provide high-quality open spaces
- ▶ Maintain watercourses and drainage systems
- ▶ Maintain play areas and install new play facilities
- ▶ Street cleansing
- ▶ Support businesses to comply with legislation
- ▶ Food business inspections
- ▶ Taxi, gambling & premise licensing
- ▶ Development control service

Measures

- ▶ Development against Local Plan requirements
- ▶ Community Safety Assessment
- ▶ Levels of street cleanliness
- ▶ Gold standard in Tamworth in Bloom
- ▶ Business satisfaction with regulation services
- ▶ Hygiene ratings for food establishments
- ▶ Number of one and two star food premises
- ▶ Development control matters delivered to support the Local Plan

Supporting plans (Where more information can be found)

- ▶ Community Safety Action Plan
- ▶ Local Plan
- ▶ Indoor & Outdoor Sports Strategy
- ▶ Statement of Licensing Policy
- ▶ Taxi Policy
- ▶ Gambling Policy

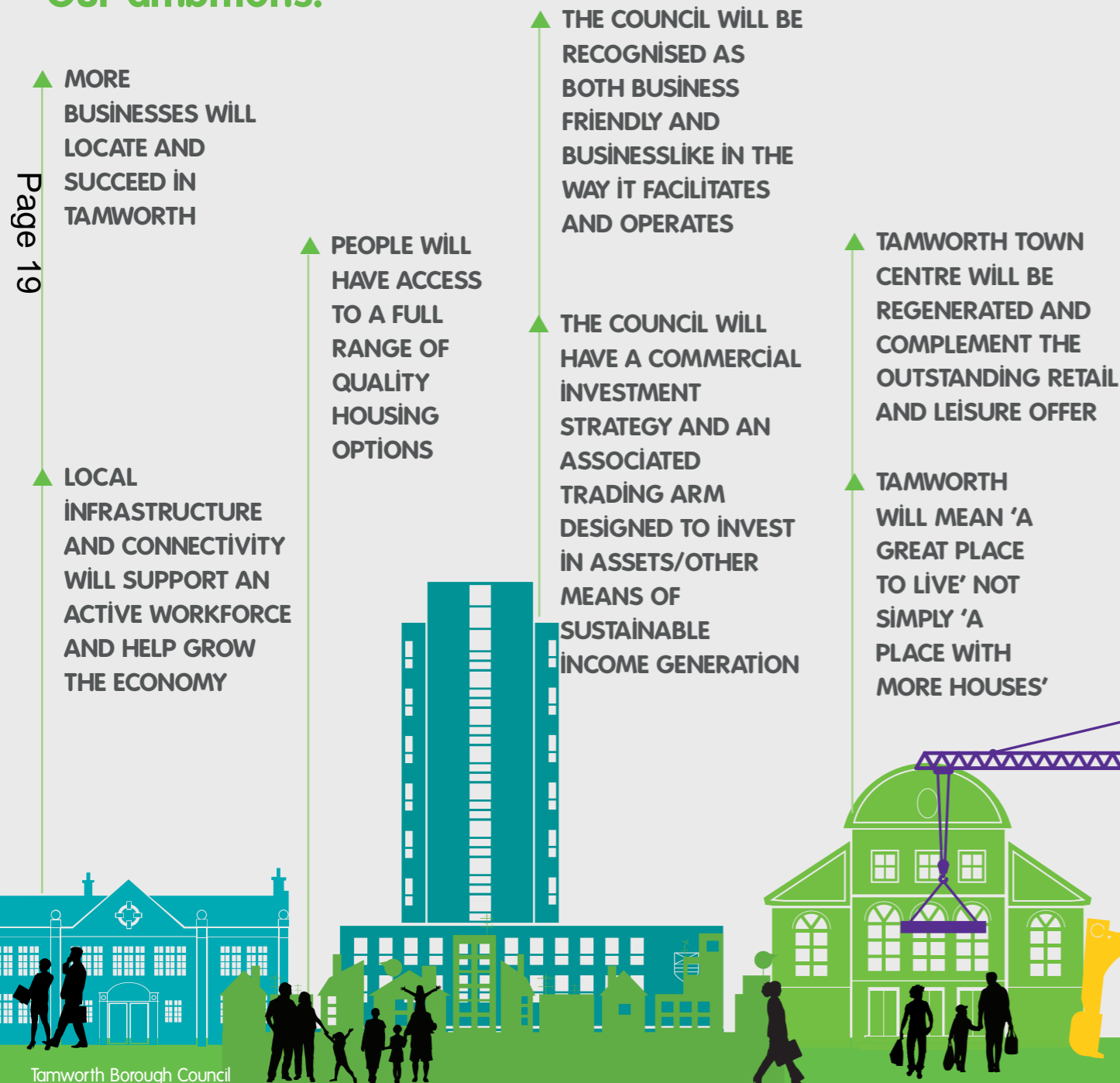


THEMATIC PRIORITY 2: GROWING STRONG TOGETHER IN TAMWORTH

Why is this important?

The Council believes that the managed growth of the local economy based upon sustainable business growth, better skilled jobs, a vibrant town centre, high-quality retail and leisure offers and local, regional and national connectivity will help make Tamworth an acknowledged 'Great place to live, work and raise a family'. To achieve this, the Council will seek to ensure that the following ambitions are met:

Our ambitions:



How we'll know if we are realising these ambitions.

PROJECTS

- ▶ Growth and regeneration in Tamworth
- ▶ Tinkers Green and Kerria regeneration
 - ▶ Garage sites redevelopments
 - ▶ New repairs contract
- ▶ Preparation for collection of the Business Improvement District (BID) levy
 - ▶ Business rates retention
- ▶ Commercial opportunities in business decision making
 - ▶ Heritage, leisure and events

Deliverables (What we will do)	Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Enterprise Quarter regeneration ▶ Facilitate regeneration of Gungate ▶ Deliver the Gateways project ▶ Produce a Town Centre strategy ▶ Adopt an Inward Investment Strategy ▶ Engage with West Midlands Combined Authority & Local Enterprise Partnerships ▶ Build new affordable homes at Tinkers Green Kerria and on former garage sites ▶ Deliver a responsive repairs service ▶ Implement software to collect BID levy ▶ Produce options appraisals, business cases & review opportunities for setting up Local Authority Trading Companies ▶ Deliver an outdoor events programme ▶ Maintain heritage venues & open them to the public ▶ Submit Heritage Lottery bid for Tamworth Castle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Business success and growth ▶ Footfall in town centre ▶ Business rate collection ▶ Rateable value of commercial buildings ▶ Compelling investable inward investment propositions ▶ Number of new council homes built and allocated to those in need ▶ Tenant satisfaction with new homes and neighbourhood ▶ Satisfaction with repairs service ▶ Repairs contract performance indicators ▶ Council housing stock condition data ▶ BID levy collection levels ▶ Income generated through adopted commercial approach ▶ Rate of return on identified projects in excess of 5% ▶ Attendance at events ▶ Customer satisfaction with events and venues

Supporting plans (Where more information can be found)

- ▶ Commercial Investment & Regeneration Strategy
- ▶ Local Plan
- ▶ Inward Investment Strategy
- ▶ Town Centre Strategy
- ▶ Housing Strategy
- ▶ Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

THEMATIC PRIORITY 3: DELIVERING QUALITY SERVICES IN TAMWORTH

Why is this important?

Despite the unprecedented cuts in government funding and an extended period of austerity, the Council has sought to maintain a full suite of services. It accepts that changes in service scopes and standards have had an impact however; it remains committed to protecting those most vulnerable in our communities. In order to sustain this commitment, the Council embarked upon the largest and most complex transformation plan in its history. Consequently, the Council is now in a position to ensure that the following ambitions are met:

Our ambitions:

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▲ FEWER CUSTOMERS WILL HAVE TO VISIT THE COUNCIL OFFICES TO RESOLVE THEIR ISSUES

▲ THE COUNCIL WILL SET AND MAINTAIN SERVICE STANDARDS THAT WILL BE CONSISTENT, ACCESSIBLE AND DELIVERED BY SKILLED STAFF

▲ ACCESS TO ALL COUNCIL SERVICES WILL BE IMPROVED

▲ WE WILL SAVE YOU TIME AND MONEY BY DOING BUSINESS WITH YOU ONLINE

▲ CUSTOMER SATISFACTION LEVELS WILL BE MAINTAINED ABOVE 90%

How we'll know if we are realising these ambitions.

PROJECTS

- ▶ Organisational well-being
- ▶ Digital customer services
- ▶ Corporate knowledge hub
- ▶ New General Data Protection Regulations
 - ▶ Office 365
 - ▶ Self-service

Deliverables (What we will do)

- ▶ Produce a Workforce Development Plan
- ▶ Undertake a staff attitude survey
- ▶ Organisational transformation
- ▶ Produce a training and skills matrix
- ▶ Make more council services available online
- ▶ Establish a corporate repository for customer/organisational/data/intelligence
- ▶ Processes and procedures for compliance with data legislation
- ▶ Implementation of Office 365
- ▶ Technology to support self-service

Measures

- ▶ Attendance levels
- ▶ Efficiency savings from organisational transformation
- ▶ Number of council services available online
- ▶ Customer satisfaction with services
- ▶ 'Tell us' & Ombudsman complaints
- ▶ Numbers of customers visiting council offices
- ▶ Number of data breaches
- ▶ Complaints upheld by the Information Commissioner's Office
- ▶ Percentage of organisation using Office 365

Supporting plans (Where more information can be found)

- ▶ Time to Change action plan
- ▶ Workforce Development plan
- ▶ Customer Services & Access strategy
- ▶ Delivering Quality Services
- ▶ Unified Community Offer



PORTFOLIO HOLDER STATEMENTS

PORTFOLIO: ASSETS & FINANCE

CLLR ROBERT PRITCHARD DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL



Our journey of change and improvement continues.

We have risen to the financial challenges facing local government well and again have a balanced three year budget that protects frontline services for the public.

Yet again the Council has responded well to the austere financial challenges facing local government. The Council has strong financial management which has helped to ensure continued delivery of frontline services without the need for major service reductions – and the achievement of a balanced Medium Term Financial Strategy.

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At a time when many councils across the country are cutting frontline services and support to vulnerable residents, thanks to the hard work of our benefits team, over many years, we have continued to protect vulnerable people in our community who are in greatest need through housing and benefit support. We have also improved access to online claims for our customers and account information. The Benefits team will continue to improve the services they provide to those in need.

In order to ensure this continues, we will continue to review every service at the council to ensure maximum efficiency. We will also continue to develop the Commercial Investment and Regeneration Strategy with the aim to deliver financial sustainability for the Council in the future through investigation and development of additional income through alternative investment options to generate improved income returns, as well as asset growth.

During the year, the Council's external auditors have confirmed that the Council had prepared a very good set of accounts and that the authority has a track record for delivering budgeted savings and our longer-term financial planning includes a policy on the level of reserves required for sound financial standing. They have also said that the Finance Team are in a good place to achieve the earlier preparation of the accounts in future in line with the statutory requirement to inform the public earlier.

Going forward, the preparation and provision of high-quality financial management information will assist in the enabling and informing the decision making process of the Council.

The Council's Revenues Team have continued their excellent performance with collection rates for the 2015/16 and 2016/17 financial year exceeding the outturn for 2014/15 and the targets set which meant additional income of nearly £400k for the Council and its preceptors – to assist in financing the balanced Medium Term Financial Strategy ensuring continued frontline service provision. Once again the team have performed to very high standards and have been proactively increasing business rates income - to get results like this while under pressure from the challenges in the economy is exemplary.

The Council is now greatly dependent on locally-collected business rates and council tax income to ensure the continued delivery of frontline services. As such, the council has to maximise its income – the Revenues team will continue to set challenging targets to ensure improved income recovery levels to fund services.

We continue to maximise and promote our assets to become income generators, increasing the occupation of Marmion House with many parts rented out to other public services being a prime example. This increases the number of public services we have available via our front reception, making life easier for local residents. We have also continued to sweat our other assets where possible, such as land and buildings to help create new businesses and homes in Tamworth, all of which help the Council to achieve its corporate priorities.

We continue to improve the working environment and the promotion of the agile working culture that makes use of remote access to technology, facilitates business continuity and allows the Council to make better use of its office space.

We have temporarily relocated the Tamworth Information Centre to Marmion House while we develop the Philip Dix Centre into a Business Enterprise Unit which will allow start-up business the opportunity to access office/meeting facilities

We continue to update our infrastructure in line with the requirements of the PSN Code of Connection which has included;

- ▶ Server Upgrades
- ▶ Mobile Device Management
- ▶ End Point Security
- ▶ Roll out of Microsoft 365 is at pilot stage with two service areas testing and results being collated into case studies to assist with corporate rollout. 75% of organisation trained with reference guides developed for Infozone.

Preparation is underway for new Data Protection Regulations which come into force May 2018 and continued activity to ensure we fulfil obligations under other legislation (DP Act, FOI Act, Data Transparency Act and Civil Contingencies Act).

A project management framework is now being used corporately to ensure minimisation of resources and reduced duplication of efforts.

This year we will develop corporate values that will be integral to all that we do and say and will ensure that Tamworth Borough Council remains a modern Council. In addition, by effective financial planning we have complied with the National Living Wage, the Apprenticeship Levy and continue to consult effectively with recognised Trade Unions.

The biggest organisational transformational project undertaken by the council is well underway; 'Delivering Quality Services'. This project has facilitated the redesign of services using customer demand information and intelligence and aims to influence the customer to self-serve by making use of online facilities 'Click and Connect' which are available 24/7, thus increasing the customer access to Council services. By achieving this channel shift we will continue to make savings but with the objective of maintaining customer service levels. Work is underway to enable and support 'collect once, use many times' philosophy for customer data and this year we aim to bring together a range of data/intelligence from a number of different sources/partners so that we can use the information to intervene and prevent demand and shape services from the customers point of view.

To date we have seen:

- ▶ A reduction of almost 30,000 telephone calls into the Customer Services Centre
- ▶ A reduction in customer face-to-face enquiries
- ▶ A reduction in call handling time
- ▶ The launch of the new Web Chat facility
- ▶ Further development of MyStaffs app
- ▶ Improvements to the Benefit application process

Going forward, we will work hard to ensure more and more of our services are 'digital by default' so that more of our customers can self-serve a wider range of council services at a time and from a place that suits them. At the same time we will ensure those most vulnerable in our community can still access our services in the way that suits their individual needs.

We will continue to engage partners, community groups, third sector organisations and all the individuals working to make Tamworth a better place, supporting and assisting these groups where we can. We will also work with these partners to build a new memorial for the Staffordshire Regiment.

Last year the Election Team ran successful PCC, European and Local Elections all at the same time and this year we will be supporting the County Council in running their election.

Legal Services has supplied support council-wide and will continue to do so and help the Council to transform and adapt in the coming year, in demanding times legal challenges become more likely and Legal Services will ensure that the Council is able to meet those challenges successfully.

The Council has a good track record in making robust decisions and Democratic Services will continue to provide the support required to ensure this continues going forward, while at the same time ensuring those decisions are effectively scrutinised.

Finally, this year the Council had a cross-party Mayor and the Civic Office supported him in making his term a success and will ensure that the next Mayor is both supported and promoted in Tamworth.

CLLR STEPHEN DOYLE



The Community Safety Partnership continues to deliver a high level of confidence within the community, particularly those who are the most vulnerable in our society.

In line with key priorities of the agencies, which comprise the community safety partnership, there is a strong theme of seeking to protect the most vulnerable within our communities, including trying to identify hidden harm that may exist so that the partnership can better support those most in need.

To this end, the partnership is currently reviewing its priorities to ensure its actions and interventions provide value within the community, and hence tackling the causation of anti-social behaviour, domestic violence and early intervention work will still be key themes that the partnership will focus on during the forthcoming year.

A further challenge facing the partnership is the fact that despite successes such as a reduction in anti-social behaviours and overall crime locally, the community's poor perception of crime and safety remains high. The Partnership will be investigating a range of options for rectifying the situation and ultimately bringing perception into line with reality.

The Council's community wardens and CCTV service play an important role in the partnership and they continue to engage with residents, particularly the younger members of the community on issues such as internet safety and anti-social behaviour. The CCTV service also operates a 24/7 monitoring service at strategic locations around the town and borough, helping to increase public confidence.

Regrettably, over the past twelve months, following the withdrawal of funding from the County Council, services commissioned as part of the Locality Commissioning programme have been decommissioned; these services aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. The Council has worked with providers to offer support in obtaining alternative funding for services or ensuring the managed withdrawal of services with the minimum impact on clients. The Council has successfully retendered its debt and generalist advice services and the arrangements will commence in April.

The Council has also worked closely with Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) colleagues to review the proposals contained in the NHS Sustainability and Transformation plans with the aim to ensure the continued delivery of effective health care for residents. Linked to this have been ongoing discussions regarding the future of the Sir Robert Peel Community Hospital and the Council will continue to work with the CCG to support the sustainability of this important facility.

A review is currently underway regarding Community Development Services delivered by the Council. The review is aimed to ensure that these services deliver outcomes for local people in the most cost effective way.

PORTFOLIO: REGENERATION

CLLR STEVE CLAYMORE



I am delighted to be able to say that work on Tamworth's Enterprise Quarter has now commenced with the opening of the new 'Tamworth Enterprise Centre' due in spring 2017. Not only will this provide a well-needed business incubation centre but the entire project is also delivering a £6.1 million pound regeneration scheme into the heart of Tamworth.

The first phase of the Gateways Project over Ladybridge was completed last year, with phase two works by the railway station now well underway. This will ensure the gateway from the railway station into the town is opened up and clearly delineated.

After considerable work and consultation, Council adopted our Local Plan which will allow us to control the necessary growth and development required within Tamworth. This Local Plan covers the period from 2006 to 2031 consequently, all development carried out within the last ten years contribute to our total requirement.

Our non-constituent membership of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has proved to be a wise move, and I am sure will reap benefit in the long term. The philosophy of a combined authority is quite simply that local authorities work together to move powers and money from Whitehall to the local combined authority area. Then its locally-elected politicians, who know their areas best, will make decisions and spend money for the benefit of their own region. The WMCA devolution deal will see £40 million per year over 30 years to unlock an overall investment of £8 billion and could create up to half a million jobs.

Being part of the WMCA does not mean we relinquish any of our sovereignty in Tamworth, all councils will continue to deliver their own services and retain their individual identities, but we will have the pooled resources to work together on bigger issues such as economic growth, skills, transport, mental health and productivity.

Over the past few years we have seen how, by working in partnership with both the Greater Birmingham and Solihull and the Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnerships, our unemployment figures drop to an all-time low, along with millions of pounds worth of investment coming into Tamworth and the wider Local Enterprise Partnership area. The Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership's initial Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) gave a commitment to create 100,000 new jobs by 2020, and already this stands at more than 85,000.

Along with job creation also come the requirements for skills to fill these jobs and we continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure we deliver enough of the required skills and at the right time. This has to be a medium to long-term investment and commitment by all concerned. This is especially highlighted around the delivery of HS2, where the recently approved college will provide apprenticeship training in the brand new skills required to maintain and run high-speed rail.

Our local economic team continue to work, support and engage with local businesses and we are working with our local business to consider the creation of a Business Improvement District should there be a positive vote later in the year.

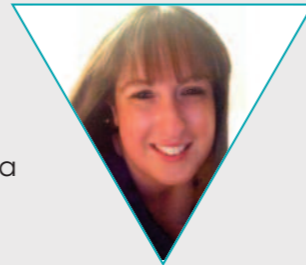
Over the past year, the regeneration of the Tinkers Green and Kerria areas has progressed successfully. This has included the continued re-housing of existing residents which is nearing completion. Demolition of maisonettes will commence shortly and an ongoing procurement process for a developer will be completed in March 2017. Once completed, this project will deliver around 146 new homes for rent to be allocated to households from the housing register. The Council has also made use of right to buy receipts to seek to increase the number of council homes available to rent. So far this year, the Council has exchanged contracts on 19 properties. These much needed homes will be provided to households who need them including those affected by homelessness and overcrowding.

We have seen many achievements over the past year and the start of the delivery phase of other important projects and I look forward seeing these all through to completion and the benefits these will bring to Tamworth.



PORTFOLIO: HOUSING SERVICES

CLLR MICHELLE THURGOOD



The past year has been extremely challenging for the Council in its role both as a landlord of 4,361 properties and as a Strategic Housing authority.

Demand for Social Housing continues to grow and at the same time the loss of Council homes through the Right to Buy has reduced the number of homes available to let through the Council's Finding a Home Scheme.

As a means of mitigating against this, the Council has sought to increase the number of Council homes available over the last 12 months. This has included the acquisition of 19 homes on the open market. In addition the Council progressed its plans to build new homes on its garage sites with an initial tranche of 19 new Council homes set for completion in the coming year. Further tranches will follow.

Page 24 In order to ensure that the Council provides the best possible services to those impacted by homelessness within the borough, the Council is committed to meeting the very high standards set by the Government through its 'Gold Standard'. This process will test the standards of the services provided against nationally agreed standards and build on the council's existing approach to seek to prevent homelessness wherever possible.

The last 12 months has seen the Council achieve national and independent accreditation for both its income and estate management services. Part of which sees the implementation and the introduction of service charges for many services which tenants receive resulting increased income of over £720,000 for reinvestment in Council services. We also embedded our new services for Sheltered Housing tenants following the withdrawal of Supporting People funding during 2015.

The Council also successfully appointed a new repairs contractor through a process of competitive tendering. The new contractor, Wates, will take over the delivery of repairs and investment services to Council homes in the new year. Wates have a very good reputation and are committed to working with us to deliver the very best services for tenants.

PORTFOLIO: ENVIRONMENT & CULTURE

CLLR JOY GOODALL



The waste collection service continues to provide a quality service that delivers value for money and meets the challenging recycling targets set out. Of particular note was the replacement of the aged vehicle fleet with new more environmentally efficient vehicles, all of which are fitted with state-of-the-art in-cab technology to ensure service data is able to be sent to and from the crews.

The service is subject to many cost pressures and this will mean tough and challenging decisions will have to be made during the course of next year.

The Licensing and Environmental Health team continue to work hard and protect us, working with businesses to ensure a high standard of food safety, taxi licensing, and delivering their regulatory responsibility. They ensure a fair approach to regulation, and encourage our businesses to work within regulation.

The Street Scene team continue to provide a valuable service and work in 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. The team, with the local community and friends of groups, have again achieved a gold award in the Heart of England in Bloom awards for the seventh time.

Of particular note is the 'Wild about Tamworth' project which goes from strength to strength encouraging all of the community groups which help to maintain our seven local nature reserves to become active and focused on ensuring their managements plans are successfully delivered year on year.

The outdoor events programme has been an overwhelming success, even considering the sometimes challenging weather, with record-breaking attendance to the fireworks night and sell-out performances for the open air cinema events to name a couple.

Our heritage venues continue to offer experiences of Tamworth past, and I am looking forward to later in the year when we will find out if we have been successful in a Heritage Lottery bid to enhance the visitor experience at the castle.



Political Arrangements

The council currently has 30 members (20 Conservative, 7 Labour and 3 UKIP) representing its ten wards.

The Council's Cabinet is made up of:

- ▶ The Leader of the Council

Portfolio Holders for:

- ▶ Assets & Finance
- ▶ Regeneration,
- ▶ Communities & Wellbeing,
- ▶ Housing Services,
- ▶ Environment & Culture.

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



The 2017/18 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) ensures that appropriate resources are focused on the Vision Statement, Priority Themes, Corporate Priorities and Outcomes. The Council has been proactive in the design and implementation of innovative and effective measures for driving efficiency and reducing cost within the MTFS.



The budget-setting process has faced significant constraints in Government funding in recent years - more than 50% in real terms since 2010. The four-year Local Government Finance Settlement confirmed in February 2016 that austerity measures are to continue with Revenue Support Grant (RSG) all but eradicated for most Councils by 2020 - and suggests that the key challenges that the Council is currently addressing are likely to become greater

In an attempt to provide a clear 'route map' for the transition from surviving to thriving, the Council has designed and adopted a series of strategic plans, policies and processes. 'From Surviving to Thriving' set out a number of opportunities based upon the principle that by focusing upon the growth of the economy, both the 'people' and the 'place' would benefit. The Council remains committed to promoting and stimulating economic growth and regeneration; meeting our housing needs; creating a vibrant town centre economy and protecting those most vulnerable in our communities. To this end, we pledge to explore and invest in viable and sustainable methods of generating income and moving towards financial independence.

The foundations supporting these sustained successes can be attributed to strong political and executive leadership, having a detailed understanding of the issues and challenges facing our 'people' and 'place' and, more importantly, the plans, policies and resources with which to resolve them. The process by which the Council sets out its plans for dealing with these priorities and providing the resources and funding necessary forms the basis of the Corporate Plan & Medium Term Financial Strategy produced and reviewed annually.

It is this tried and tested approach that has enabled this Council to navigate its way through the recession, extended periods of austerity and the uncertainties and complexities brought about by 'devolution', elected Mayors, Combined Authorities et al. With many of the challenges of previous years still facing the Council and the uncertainties surrounding issues such as Brexit NDR retention, the future of the NHS and Care Services, our local clarity of vision and purpose has never been so important.

However, there also remains a high degree of uncertainty arising from the most significant changes in Local Government funding for a generation arising from the Business Rates Retention System, changes in support for Council Tax and technical reforms to Council Tax - as well as other changes arising from the Government's Welfare Reform Agenda.

ORGANISATION

Corporate Management Team

Chief Executive
Tony Goodwin

Executive Director
(Corporate Services)
John Wheatley

Corporate Director
(Communities, Partnerships & Housing)
Rob Barnes

Corporate Director
(Growth, Assets & Environment)
Andrew Barratt

Director
(Transformation & Corporate Performance)
Anica Goodwin

Director
(Finance)
Stefan Garner

Director
(Technology & Corporate Programmes)
Nicki Burton

Solicitor to the Council
Jane Hackett

The key risks are:

- ▶ The impact of uncertain economic conditions, following the decision to leave the EU – there is a higher level of uncertainty than in previous budget setting processes. It is suggested that, given the uncertainty, there should be no knee jerk reactions – with a clear plan to focus on balancing the next three years’ budget position for the General Fund (five years for the HRA);
- ▶ Achievement of the anticipated growth in business rates income – in line with the assumed baseline and tariff levels set;
- ▶ Uncertainty remains over the work progressing on the system for Councils to keep 100% of the business rates collected by 2020 (and the associated impact on the Council’s business rates income and associated baseline and tariff levels);
- ▶ Delivery of the planned Commercial Investment and Regeneration Strategy actions and associated improved investment returns of 5% p.a. arising from the investment of £24m from the capital receipt due to be received over the period 2016 – 2018 from the sale of the former golf course (to support the MTFs in the long term);
- ▶ Work is continuing on a number of actions to address the longer-term financial position;
- ▶ Achievement of anticipated growth in new homes within the Borough and the associated dependency on the New Homes Bonus income to address / reduce the funding shortfall for the General Fund;
- ▶ Challenge to continue to achieve high collection rates for council tax, business rates and housing rents – in light of further austerity, economic conditions and uncertainty; and
- ▶ Accurate forecasting, strong leadership and an innovative, risk aware approach have resulted in the organisation being able, in the main, to sustain a full suite of essential services albeit not without implications for the public, local politicians and the entire workforce.

Significantly, this is as much a testament to the skills and commitment of our workforce and our partners’ collaboration as it is to the actions and decisions of the Joint Executive Management Team. This period, considered one of the most challenging in post-war times, coincided with the Council recording one of its most successful periods of achievement in terms of Customer Satisfaction; measured performance; project delivery and financial management.

What makes these achievements ‘special’ is that they were delivered in parallel with the largest and most complex Transformation programme which in itself, resulted in multi-million pound efficiencies.

Efficiency Statement - Sustainability Strategy

In an attempt to provide a clear ‘route map’ for the transition from surviving to thriving, the Council has designed and adopted a series of strategic plans, policies and processes. Cabinet, on 22nd August 2013, endorsed the overarching document ‘Planning for a Sustainable Future’ as the strategy for meeting the challenges forecast for the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which, through the achievement of targets and outcomes associated with the work streams, enabled the organisation to generate significant efficiencies without there being any large-scale impact upon the delivery of essential services.

The Sustainability Strategy delivered more than just ‘big ticket’ efficiencies; it brought about changes to working models, cultures and processes – Agile Working; Demand Management; Joint Working; Shared Services; Locality Delivery/ Commissioning all contributed to our journey.

The adoption of ‘Demand Management’ as the primary operating model and the targeting of resources via locality-based commissioning and delivery has enabled greater effectiveness in service delivery as evidenced by customer satisfaction, award-winning services and of course, the management of the Council’s finances.

Through its implementation, the Council will have far greater control upon the alignment of services or ‘supply’ to the increased needs and expectations of the public or ‘demand’.

Key to this will be the application of existing and new technology to capture, collate and analyse customer insight, intelligence and data so as to understand not just the ‘need’ but the cause, behaviours or decisions creating the need. Then by the application of locality-based commissioning for example, it can commission services that either intervene or prevent future need, thereby reducing demand. The report entitled ‘Creating Opportunities from an Uncertain Future’ is available to all Members and is available to the public.

This approach will change the organisation and how it works; will require Members to take difficult decisions and adhere to them; will involve managed risks and will sustain essential services critical in supporting the most vulnerable in our communities at a time when demand is increasing and resources reducing.

Work is continuing on a number of actions to address the financial position in future years:

- ▶ Delivering Quality Services project – the demand management approach to shift demand to more efficient methods of service delivery – online and automation (Interactive Voice Response). A savings target of £100k p.a. has already been included, together with reduced CRM costs of £62k p.a. from 2019/20;
- ▶ Recruitment freeze – temporary 12-month appointments are now only being made; there is a robust challenge / re-justification process in place for all vacant posts with a requirement to investigate alternative options including restructuring to fill vacancies / looking at what we can stop doing. This means we have the opportunity to increase the vacancy allowance from 5% to 7.5% over the next five years – c. £45k p.a. year on year for the General Fund (£14k p.a. – HRA);



- ▶ Spend freeze – Managers have previously been required to restrict / limit spending to essential spend only (there was a £2m underspend in 2015/16 – although the majority was windfall income, c. £0.75m was lower level underspend);
- ▶ Alternative investment options arising from the Commercial Investment and Regeneration Strategy (as well as the Treasury Management Investment Strategy, including any prudential borrowing opportunities) to generate improved returns of c. 5% p.a. (plus asset growth) including:
- ▶ Set up of trading company to develop new income streams;
 - ▶ Local investment options – Lower Gungate / Solway Close development including the potential to drawdown funding from the Local Growth Fund / Local Enterprise Partnerships (GBS and Staffordshire);
 - ▶ Investments in a Diversified Property Fund;
 - ▶ Investments in a Diversified Investment Vehicle (property, shares etc.);

Note: these would be subject to a robust check and Challenge business case and represent long-term investments of between 5 – 10 years (minimum) in order to make the necessary returns (after set-up costs).

- ▶ Review of reserves / creation of fund for transformation costs (if needed), and
- ▶ Targeted Savings – Members to identify potential areas for review in future years.

Council, on 21st February 2017, approved a three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund with a Council Tax increase within 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 and additional income will need to be made into the future to deliver a balanced budget in the longer term.

Capital spending for the General Fund is 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, despite significant funding reductions over the four years from 2016/17, given the Government requirement for Councils to reduce social housing rents by 1% per annum, 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 2017/18 are:

- ▶ A General Fund total cost of services of £9,623,240 an increase of £1,163,420 (13.8%) compared to 2016/17;
- ▶ A transfer of £1,454,266 from General Fund balances;
- ▶ A Band D Council Tax set at £166.75, an increase of £5 (3.09% - less than £0.10 per week) on the level from 2016/17 of £161.75;
- ▶ A General Fund Capital Programme of £5.765m for three years;
- ▶ A Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Expenditure level of £15,178,750 for 2017/18 (excluding interest & similar charges);
- ▶ A transfer of £359,990 from HRA balances;
- ▶ An average rent of £85.29 (in line with the Government's requirement to reduce rents by 1% p.a. for the next four years), which represents a reduction of £0.86 (1% on the current average rent of £87.38) and equates to £78.73 on an annualised 52 week basis;
- ▶ A Housing Capital Programme of £50.557m (including c.£31.4m relating to the Regeneration Projects) for five years.

There are a number of key challenges affecting the medium-term financial planning process which add a high level of uncertainty to budget projections.

The delivery of a balanced Medium Term Financial Strategy (three years for the General Fund and 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.



WHAT WE DID IN 2016/17

Shown below, under the headings **People, Place and Organisation**, are some of our achievements in 2016/17. 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.

PEOPLE

- ▶ Prevent Strategy adopted with training for all staff,
- ▶ A successful Food Standards Agency audit demonstrated our food hygiene team are delivering quality inspections to businesses in Tamworth,
- ▶ Use of the new legislation under the Crime and Police Act enabling the use of Community Protection Notices and Public Space Protection Orders, to resolve several high-profile enforcement cases successfully,
- ▶ The Community Safety Partnership has implemented improved and more robust processes and meetings to address vulnerability and anti-social behaviour concerns using risk assessments and a partnership problem solving approach,
- ▶ Partner organisations relocated to Marmion House including the Citizens Advice Bureau and Clinical Commissioning Group,
- ▶ Successful and prompt tendering of the council dwellings repair contract.

PLACE

- ▶ Planning application approved for the former golf course phase 1 and groundworks underway on site,
- ▶ Tenants at Tinkers Green and Kerria regeneration sites rehoused and competitive tendering process neared completion with the imminent appointment of a developer,
- ▶ Planning permission obtained for the development of affordable homes on disused garage sites,
- ▶ Enterprise Quarter works on site, with the Tamworth Enterprise Centre due to be operational in spring 2017 and confirmation of successful Local Growth Fund funding for the project,
- ▶ Tamworth won gold at this year's Heart of England in Bloom competition for the seventh year running,
- ▶ Successful retendering for the replacement of the Council's vehicle fleet that will bring a substantial saving to the authority, and provide fit for purpose and environmentally-friendly vehicles,
- ▶ Adoption of the Commercial Investment and Regeneration strategy to make best use of council assets,
- ▶ Broad Meadow adopted as Tamworth's seventh and last local nature reserve,
- ▶ Tamworth Castle received two awards; the prestigious Sandford Award for the third year running and gold in the Best Small Visitor Attraction in Staffordshire.

ORGANISATION

- ▶ The 'Delivering Quality Services' project has resulted in these efficiencies:
 - ▶ A reduction of 30,000 telephone calls into the Customer Services Centre,
 - ▶ Customer face-to-face enquiries reduced to 16,000,
 - ▶ Reduced call handling times by routing calls through to the payment line,
 - ▶ 500 customers now using the Web Chat facility.
- ▶ Achieved an exceptionally high level of accuracy with regard to Housing Benefits Subsidy Grant 2015 /16,
- ▶ Delivered another year of Internal Managed Audit service to Lichfield District Council,
- ▶ Delivered an effective internal review function in compliance with S151 requirement and governance arrangements,
- ▶ Integrated the role and functionality of Corporate Fraud Officer within the audit process
- ▶ Early preparation of the draft accounts for 2015/16 and an unqualified opinion from our external auditors,
- ▶ Revenue collection rates generated an additional £400k in income,
- ▶ Prepared a balanced three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy,
- ▶ Held separate Local and Police and Crime Commissioner and EU Referendum with turnouts of 32% and 74% respectively,
- ▶ 39% of people have used the automated services offered by phone, online and SMS text to register to vote.



Due to the earlier publication of this combined document the draft summary accounts for 2016/17 are not yet available. As soon as they are (approximately end of June 2017) 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 earlier publication of this combined document, the annual governance statement for 2016/17 is not yet available. The Annual Governance Statement is published with the Annual Statement of Accounts and will be available later in the year.

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

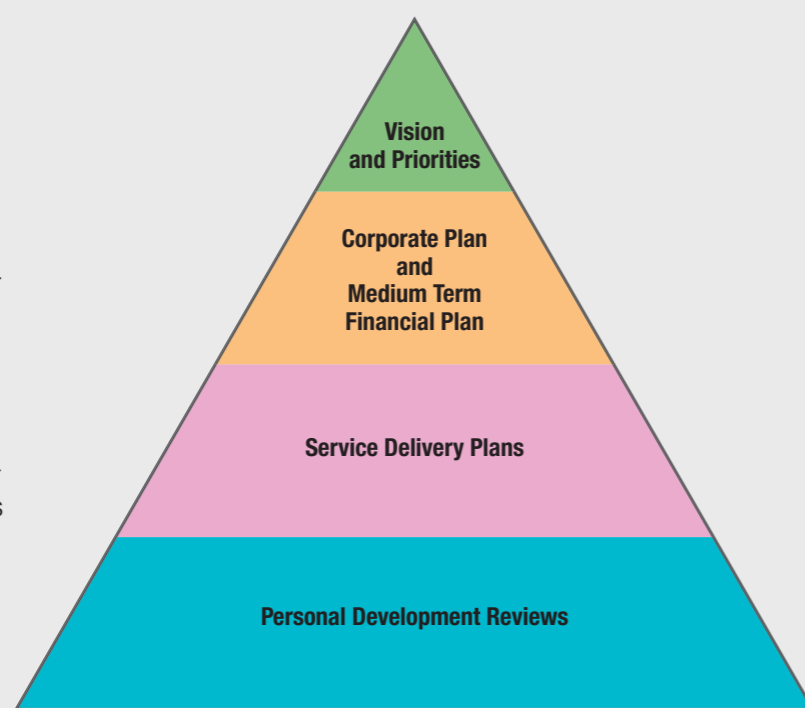
The Performance Scorecard is monitored by:

- ▶ 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:
<http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/performance>

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 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 development 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.



Corporate Planning Pyramid



APPENDIX A

CORPORATE PLAN SUMMARY 2017-2020

1 VISION: One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed - Open for business since the 7th century AD

3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

LIVING A QUALITY LIFE IN TAMWORTH

GROWING STRONG TOGETHER IN TAMWORTH

DELIVERING QUALITY SERVICES IN TAMWORTH

18 AMBITIONS TO 2020

- 1 More people will live longer, healthier lives
- 2 Fewer children will be obese and run the risk of heart disease and diabetes
- 3 People will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour
- 4 The built and natural environments will be conserved to the highest possible standards
- 5 More people will be living independent lives with access to facilities
- 6 There will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialist services
- 7 More businesses will locate and succeed in Tamworth
- 8 People will have access to a full range of quality housing options
- 9 Local infrastructure and connectivity will support an active workforce and help grow the economy
- 10 The Council will be recognised as both business friendly and businesslike in the way it facilitates and operates
- 11 Tamworth town centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer
- 12 Tamworth will mean 'a great place to live' not simply 'a place with more houses'.
- 13 The Council will have a Commercial Investment Strategy and an associated trading arm designed to invest in assets/other means of sustainable income generation
- 14 Customer satisfaction levels will be maintained above 90%
- 15 Access to all Council services will be improved
- 16 The Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff
- 17 We will save you time and money by doing business with you online
- 18 Fewer customers will have to visit the Council offices to resolve their issues



17 KEY PROJECTS BY 2020

- 1 Maintaining and managing the environment within Tamworth
- 2 Delivery of the Community Safety Partnership
- 3 Delivery of an effective regulatory service
- 4 Growth and Regeneration in Tamworth
- 5 Tinkers Green and Kerria regeneration
- 6 Garage sites redevelopments
- 7 New repairs contract
- 8 Preparation for collection of the Business Improvement District (BID) levy
- 9 Business rates retention
- 10 Commercial opportunities in business decision-making
- 11 Heritage, leisure and events
- 12 Organisational well-being
- 13 Digital customer services
- 14 Corporate knowledge hub
- 15 New General Data Protection Regulations
- 16 Office 365
- 17 Self-service

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6 CORE PURPOSES OUR FUNCTIONS & DELIVERY MECHANISMS

Provide the democratic leadership and high ethical and professional standards necessary to support the communities of Tamworth

Work with our communities and agencies to address the priority issues facing the borough and its communities

Offer a range of services and advice focused upon the needs of our communities ensuring that those in greatest need are supported and protected

Work together to support individuals and communities to improve their lives

To work hard to understand the needs of our communities and support growth, cohesion and pride

To ensure the values and actions of the organisation are founded on fairness, equality and honesty

APPENDIX B DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

APPENDIX C OTHER PUBLICATIONS WE PRODUCE

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...do it online

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YOUR 2017/18
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Openhouse
Housing Services

IN THIS ISSUE

- INCOME MANAGEMENT
- ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR
- REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES
- ESTATE INSPECTIONS
- SINGLE GLAZED WINDOWS
- KEEP OUR TREES IN TAMWORTH
- HOME ENERGY ADVICE
- JOB CLUBS

INCOME MANAGEMENT ACCREDITATION

Tamworth Borough Council's Landlord Service Income Team has successfully attained the Housing Quality Network's accreditation for Income Management following an assessment of the service.

The assessors recognised that we are providing a high quality service to our customers. During the assessment, some of our services were reviewed and demonstrated the added value staff provide when dealing with customers in financial difficulty. Our staff have also interviewed and recommended how well we work together.

The team is now working on a three year service improvement plan to ensure our services are continually improved. Measurements for the first year include:

- Reviewing our priority procedures
- Taking payment at the sign-up of a tenancy
- More focus on former tenant arrears
- With the reduction in funding to support some of our partners, alternative support mechanisms are being considered.

We are very proud to receive the accreditation and are looking forward to the implementation of the plan.

Tamworth Borough Council

SEASON PROGRAMME
April - Sept 2017

www.tamworthartsandevents.co.uk 01827 709618

TAMWORTH
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2016

Tamworth Borough Council - Landlord Services

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

Tamworth Borough Council



TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2017-2020

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: www.tamworth.gov.uk

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