

TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2017-2020 UPDATE 2018



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

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	3
LEADERSHIP AND RESOURCES	5
POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS	5
ORGANISATION	5
CORPORATE PLAN SUMMARY UPDATE 2018	6
MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY	8
SUMMARY ACCOUNTS 2017/18	10
ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT	10
WHAT WE DID 2017/18	11

WELCOME

Welcome to Tamworth Borough Council's Corporate Plan update for the years 2018 to 2020.

The document outlines what we want to achieve in the remaining years of the 2017 - 2020 Corporate Plan.

The vision for our place and our communities to be 'perfectly placed' in order to take full advantage of every opportunity that leads to Tamworth being a 'better' place and its people having 'better' lives or the Council being a 'better' organisation continues to be relevant.

Many of the challenges faced by the Council in recent years have had direct consequences for all three themes: People, Place and Organisation and these three thematic priorities, established in 2016, will continue to remain the focus of our plans, actions and resources for the remainder of the plan period to 2020.

The Council continues to be faced with significant financial demands from Central Government following new legislation in areas such as Homelessness, Data Protection (the new General Data Protection Regulations - GDPR), planning and transparency - as well as substantial reductions in Government grant support.

Additional demands for services like benefits and housing arising from these austere times have been included where possible but this is dependent on the length and depth of the austerity measures.

There is also a high degree of uncertainty arising from the work progressing with regard to business rates retention and the associated impact on the Council's business rates income and associated baseline and tariff levels; it has recently been announced that Councils will be able to retain 75% of business rates collected from 2020/21 rather than 100% as previously planned. In addition, the Government is also consulting on a review of the distribution methodology, the 'Fair Funding Review' as well as the planned Business Rates Reset, when a proportion of the growth in business rates achieved since 2013/14 will be redistributed, both of which will also take effect from 2020/21. There is a high risk that this will have a significant effect on the Council's funding level from 2020/21.

The medium term financial planning process is being challenged by the Government's continuing efforts to get the country free of the national deficit to ensure services for future generations can be financed, this leaves us continued uncertainty locally. The accomplishment of a balanced three year Medium Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund is a major achievement as the Council, like others, has planned to deliver its budget process in light of unprecedented adverse economic conditions with a great deal of uncertainty over future investment and income levels such as car parking, land charges and corporate property rents.

The Council is responding to these challenges by considering the opportunities to grow our income. We are ambitious with our commercial view and will continue to work hard to identify income streams that enable us to continue to meet the needs of our residents.

Supporting vulnerable people remains a focus and, in particular, ensuring that those facing difficulties in relation to financial hardship and housing are prioritised. Adopting a 'Place Based Approach', initially within the Community Safety Partnership, has shown a joined approach that can deliver improved



Andrew Barratt
Chief Operating Officer



Daniel Cook
Leader of the Council

outcomes for vulnerable people and neighbourhoods so we will continue to develop collaborative working arrangements and seek to facilitate the availability of early help for residents including continued targeted investment in the third sector.

In excess of £6million is being invested in our strategic assets within the town; the Tamworth Enterprise Centre, which acts as an incubation unit for 15 businesses, recently opened and we are pressing on with the ambitious refurbishment and extension to the Assembly Rooms, which will reopen to the public in 2019. These projects are supported by a combination of Heritage lottery funding, Staffordshire County Council grant, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Local Enterprise Partnership grant, and the Council's own funding.

Our major heritage offer at Tamworth Castle will also receive a much needed facelift with the benefit of a further Heritage Lottery grant where the upper floor will receive approximately £750,000 worth of refurbishment works which will ensure we can protect our most popular heritage for future generations to continue to enjoy.

Page 5 Growth and housing are essential to our future viability, however we remain committed to ensure this is managed growth with the necessary infrastructure provided to support this growth. The environment is very precious to us, given we are a largely urban authority, and plans have commenced to define how the new community woodland area on the former golf course site will look, so this large area of open space can become the latest in our network of green spaces and nature reserves that Tamworth has developed over the last few years.

Promoting the right blend of skills available to our businesses is high on the Council's agenda, accepting that we can only influence this rather than be a direct provider. Our continued participation in this agenda will be achieved via such forums as the West Midlands Combined Authority and the two Local Enterprise Partnerships of which we are members.

A fundamental review of senior management will provide us with the opportunity to significantly reduce management costs to create a management structure that is flexible and focussed to meet future needs. In addition, we will be developing our operating model to further strengthen our service delivery and strategic approaches. In particular we will further reinforce our use of knowledge and evidence in decision making, ensuring that we are clear in our service offer and accountable to residents.

We continue to invest in our teams, transform our processes and ensure our technology infrastructure is fit for purpose. A number of opportunities to improve customer access to information and services as well as our engagement with our citizens and the way in which we manage our data and information have been identified.

Our energy will remain on focusing our resources on supporting our people and our place in 'Living a quality life in Tamworth' and 'Growing stronger together in Tamworth' by 'Delivering quality services in Tamworth'. This will take us closer to our vision of 'One Tamworth, perfectly placed'.

Andrew Barratt, Chief Operating Officer
Daniel Cook, Leader of the Council

Political Arrangements

The Council currently has 30 members (20 Conservative, 7 Labour, 2 Independents and 1 UKIP) representing its ten wards.

The Council's Cabinet is made up of: The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holders for:

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

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



ORGANISATION



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



KEY PROJECTS BY 2020

- Maintaining and managing the environment within Tamworth
- Delivery of the Community Safety Partnership
- Delivery of an effective regulatory service
- Growth and Regeneration in Tamworth
- Tinkers Green and Kerria regeneration
- Garage sites redevelopments
- New repairs contract
- Business rates retention
- Commercial opportunities in business decision-making
- Heritage, leisure and events
- Organisational well-being
- Digital customer services
- Corporate knowledge hub
- New General Data Protection Regulations
- Office 365
- Self-service

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

THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

JOHN WHEATLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (CORPORATE SERVICES)

The budget setting process has faced significant constraints in Government funding in recent years - over 50% in real terms since 2010. The four year Local Government Finance Settlement confirmed 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 the Council is currently addressing are likely to become greater.



The Council has 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 identified.

'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 Council also continues to be faced with significant financial demands from Central Government following new legislation in areas such as Homelessness, Data Protection (the new General Data Protection Regulations - GDPR), planning and transparency - as well as substantial reductions in Government grant support.

There is also a high degree of uncertainty arising from the work progressing with regard to business rates retention (and the associated impact on the Council's business rates income and associated baseline and tariff levels) - it has recently been announced that Councils will be able to retain 75% of business rates collected from 2020/21 rather than 100% as previously planned. In addition, the Government is also consulting on a review of the distribution methodology, the 'Fair Funding Review' as well as the planned Business Rates Reset (when a proportion of the growth in business rates achieved since 2013/14 will be redistributed) - both of which will also take effect from 2020/21. There is a high risk that this will have a significant effect on the Council's funding level from 2020/21.

The key risks are:

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Achievement of the anticipated growth in business rates income - in line with the assumed baseline and tariff levels set.
- ▶ Uncertainty over the work progressing with regard to business rates retention.
- ▶ Delivery of the planned Commercial Investment Strategy actions and associated improved investment returns of 4% 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)
- ▶ 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; and

- ▶ 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.

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 within the MTFS together with reduced CRM costs of £62k p.a. from 2019/20.
- ▶ Recruitment freeze - where possible, temporary twelve 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.
- ▶ Spend freeze - Managers have previously been required to restrict/limit spending to essential spend only (there was a £1.6m underspend in 2016/17 - although the majority was windfall income, c. £0.57m was lower level underspend). Savings of over £150k p.a. have been included within the proposals.
- ▶ Alternative investment options arising from the Commercial Investment 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
- ▶ Review of reserves/creation of fund for transformation costs (if needed), and
- ▶ Targeted Savings - to identify potential areas for review in future years.

Council, on 27th February 2018, 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 ongoing 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.

With regard to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), 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 2018/19 are:

- ▶ A General Fund total cost of services of £10,270,210 an increase of £646,970 (6.7%) compared to 2017/18
- ▶ The Band D Council Tax set at £171.75, an increase of £5 (3.0% - less than £0.10 per week) on the level from 2017/18 of £166.75
- ▶ A General Fund Capital Programme of £17.749m for three years
- ▶ A Housing Revenue Account (HRA) expenditure level of £15,912,710 for 2018/19 (excluding interest & similar charges)
- ▶ An average rent of £85.85 (in line with the Government's requirement to reduce rents by 1% p.a. from 2016/17 for four years), which represents a reduction of £0.87 (on the current average rent of £86.72) and equates to £79.25 on an annualised 52 week basis
- ▶ A Housing Capital Programme of £41.940m (including c.£17.9m relating to the regeneration projects) for five years.

The accomplishment of a balanced three year Medium Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund is a major achievement as the Council, like others, has planned to deliver its budget process in light of unprecedented adverse economic conditions with a great deal of uncertainty over future investment and income levels such as car parking, land charges and corporate property rents.

Page 8

SUMMARY ACCOUNTS 2017/18

Due to the earlier publication of this combined document the draft summary accounts for 2017/18 are not yet available. As soon as they are (approximately end of June 2018) they will be posted on the Council's website: www.tamworth.gov.uk

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 2017/18 is not yet available. The Annual Governance Statement is published with the Annual Statement of Accounts and will be available later in the year.

Shown below, under the headings People, Place and Organisation, are some of our achievements in 2017/18. 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

- ▶ Tamworth became the 200th area to be granted Dementia Friendly Community status by the Alzheimer's Society,
- ▶ The Sports Development team worked with sports clubs and organisations to offer a varied programme of events over the summer in 'Playscheme 2017',
- ▶ A new and modern play area, incorporating new play equipment, was opened in Belgrave next to the recently installed outdoor gym,
- ▶ 'Active Tamworth' continued its programme of activities to increase participation rates in physical activity,
- ▶ To promote safety and crime prevention, the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership carried out various campaigns including 'Spooks & Sparklers' and 'Summerwatch'.

PLACE

- ▶ A new Small Business Grants scheme was launched to help promote new small business start-ups, self-employment and entrepreneurship in Tamworth,
- ▶ The opening of the Tamworth Enterprise Centre in the renamed Philip Dix House marked the completion of the first building project in the £6.1 million Enterprise Quarter scheme,
- ▶ A £365,000 grant was awarded from Arts Council England to support the redevelopment of Tamworth Assembly Rooms,
- ▶ A £499,000 grant was awarded from the Heritage Lottery Fund to provide an interactive and family friendly gallery at Tamworth Castle,
- ▶ Tamworth Castle won silver in both the Small Visitor Attraction of the Year and Best Tourism Experience for its Santa Event categories of this year's Enjoy Staffordshire Tourism Awards,
- ▶ Tamworth won gold in the Heart of England in Bloom competition for the eighth year running,
- ▶ Thousands of visitors were attracted to the town for events including: St George's Day, Outdoor Cinema, Fireworks Evening, Outdoor Cinema, Heritage Open Day, Christmas Lights Switch On and We Love Tamworth,
- ▶ A new Council housing repairs and investment contractor was appointed,
- ▶ A developer was appointed as part of the Tinkers Green and Kerria housing regeneration project that will result in the building of 141 new Council owned homes,
- ▶ Phase one of the 'Garage Sites' redevelopment was completed ahead of schedule and has provided 19 units of accommodation across the borough.

ORGANISATION

- ▶ The enablement of self-service for customers took another step forward with the design of a specification for a customer portal and commencement of an exercise for its procurement,
- ▶ 67 self-serve processes now available for customers,
- ▶ The number of face to face enquiries reduced to 6,000,
- ▶ As part of the 'Tamworth Listens' initiative, the fifth annual 'Question Time' event was held giving residents the opportunity to quiz elected representatives from the Borough Council, County Council and Police.

TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PLAN 2017-2020

UPDATE 2018

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

Tamworth Borough Council
Marmion House
Lichfield Street
Tamworth
B79 7BZ

Email – enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk

Designed and produced by

Tamworth Borough Council,
Marmion House,
Lichfield Street,
Tamworth,
Staffordshire
B79 7BZ

Tel: 01827 709709

Email: enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk

Website: www.tamworth.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank