



State of Tamworth Debate

22nd March 2018

Introduction

The report look at progress made against the strategic priorities;

- Living a quality life in Tamworth,
- Growing stronger together in Tamworth,
- Delivering quality services in Tamworth.

It highlights achievements and issues backed up by performance information and public opinion gained through our consultation activities, where available.

This approach is intended to encourage debate in the Council Chamber on those things important in Tamworth.

Appendices are attached

Appendix 2	Tamworth Borough Locality Profile 2018
Appendix 3	Tamworth Health Profile 2017

Living a quality life in Tamworth

To support this strategic priority, Tamworth Borough Council works towards these ambitions;

- More people will live longer, healthier lives,
- Fewer children will be obese and run the risk of heart disease and diabetes,
- People will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour,
- The built and natural environments will be conserved to the highest possible standards,
- More people will be living independent lives with access to facilities,
- There will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialist services.

More people will live longer, healthier lives

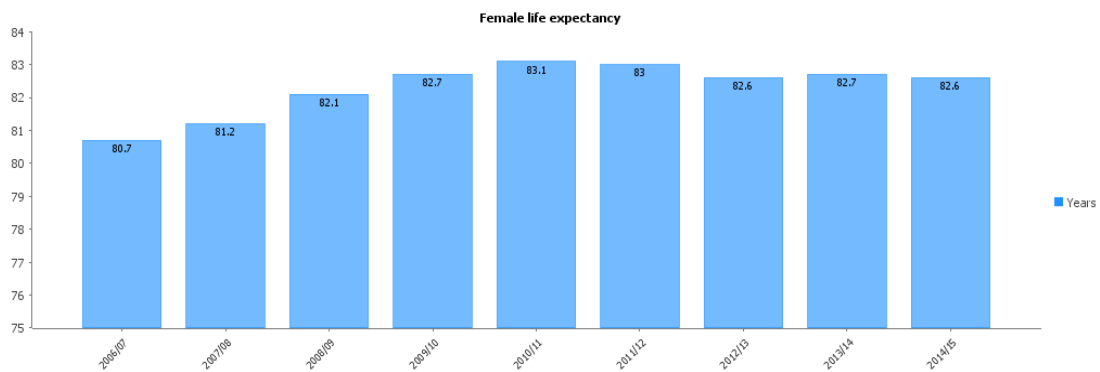
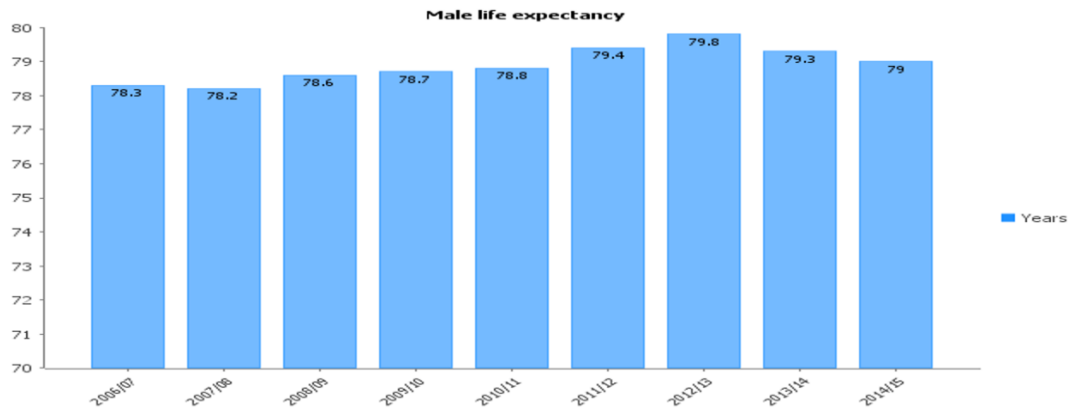
This ambition was seen as important by 73% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise; the second highest under this strategic priority.

When asked to select five things that make somewhere a good place to live, good health services was seen as important by 76% of respondents; the second most popular choice. With 70% of respondents believing the health service needed to improve to make Tamworth a better place to live.

Many comments received about this were around the provision of a hospital in Tamworth;

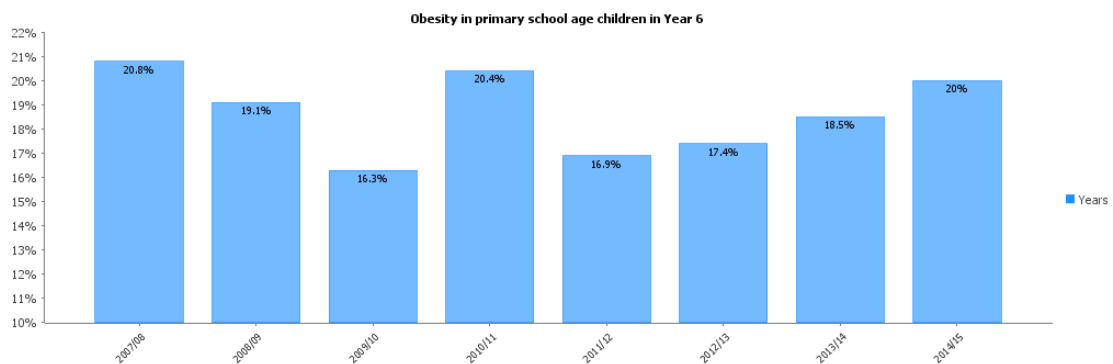
- *Tamworth should have its own A&E Department, the population is growing and we should not have to travel to Birmingham or Burton or Nuneaton to access this and other health services,*
- *A cottage hospital (The Peel) when we were supposed to have a main hospital is wrong and what happened to the money from the land that was sold on which St Editha's and Tamworth General stood. It should have gone to building a main hospital instead we still only have Good Hope and Burton,*
- *A fit for purpose new Hospital,*
- *A Hospital not befitting the size of Tamworth,*
- *Proper hospital- like we were promised,*
- *Provision of decent hospital,*
- *To have a major A & E hospital, expand at Robert Peel,*
- *We need a decent and fully functioning hospital etc. in this town. With all the new properties under construction our numbers will swell. When will some acknowledge this fact!!*
- *We really need a more local large hospital - Good Hope serves too many and is too far away,*
- *The vision and priorities and ambitions are very good especially focusing on longer lives, as a pensioner now it is important to look after all ages.*

The overall health of people has improved over the last few years; people's life expectancy is improving. Life expectancy for a female is 82.6 (compared to 83.1 nationally) and for a male is 79.0 (compared to 79.5 nationally).



Fewer children will be obese and run the risk of heart disease and diabetes

This ambition was seen as important by 60% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise



Comments made in this area were around the provision of sporting activities in Tamworth:

- *better sports programmes for over 50s (do not know of any at present) to keep fitter...continuous improvement in the sports options for kids as I believe this helps them develop not just physically but mentally and also helps social interaction,*
- *Sports and leisure need to be affordable and the gyms are very expensive.*

However, only 11% of respondents cited good sports and leisure facilities as an important factor in making somewhere a good place to live and only 10% felt these needed to improve in Tamworth.

People will feel safer and less fearful of crime and anti-social behaviour

This ambition was seen as important by 81% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise, the highest under this strategic priority.

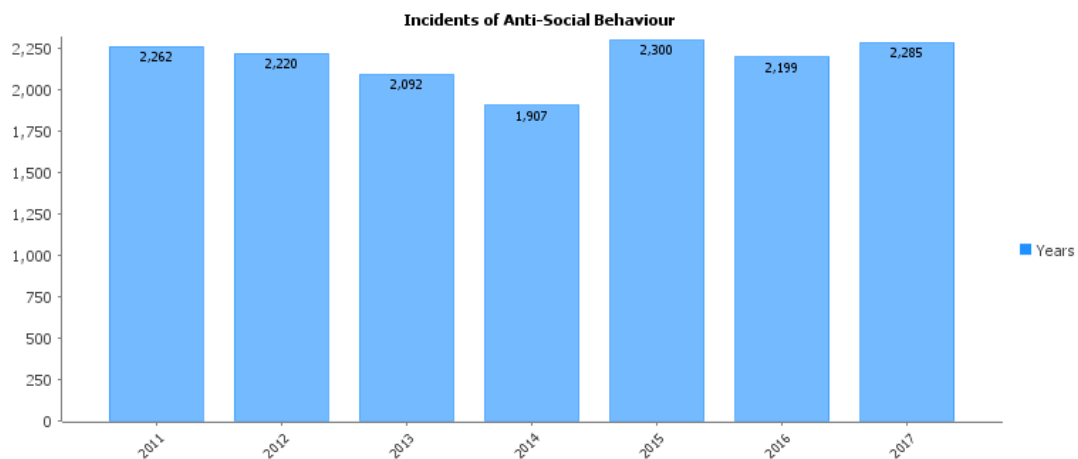
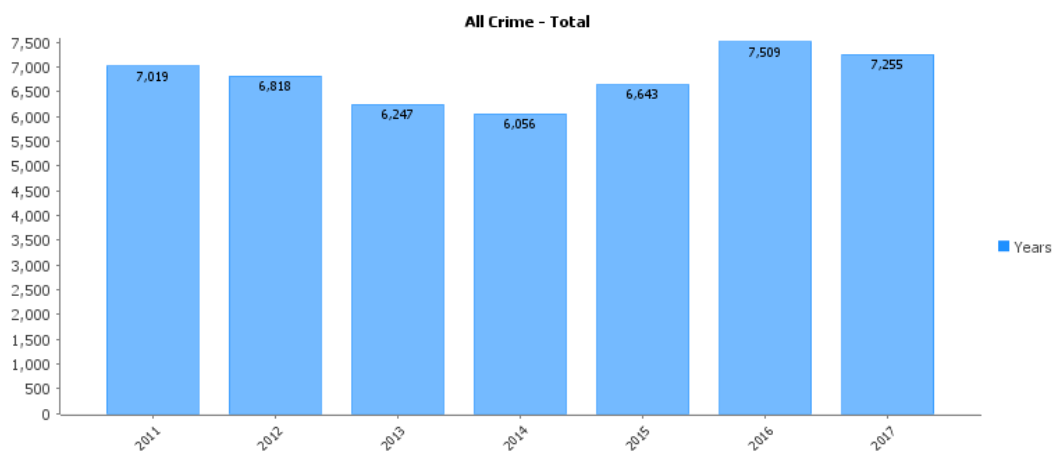
When asked to select five things that make somewhere a good place to live, low crime levels were cited as important by 90% of respondents; the highest. With 76% of respondents believing the crime levels needed to improve to make Tamworth a better place to live.

Many of the comments received concerned the presence of police and the street wardens in Tamworth

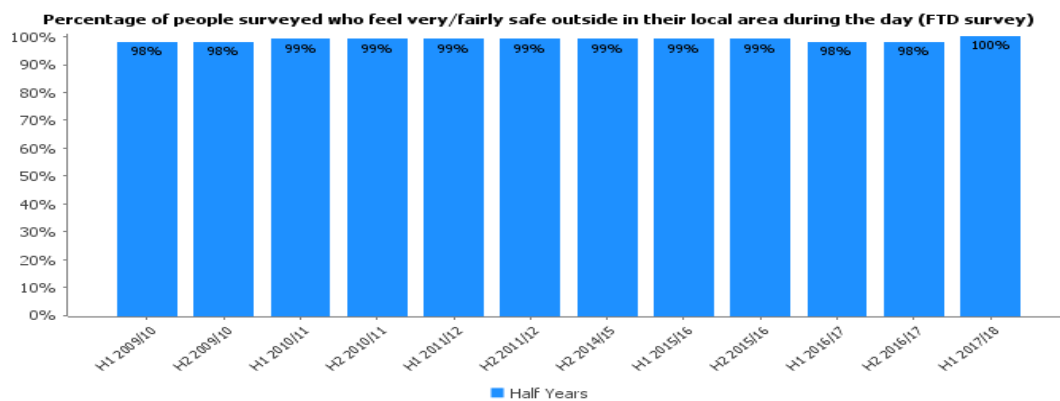
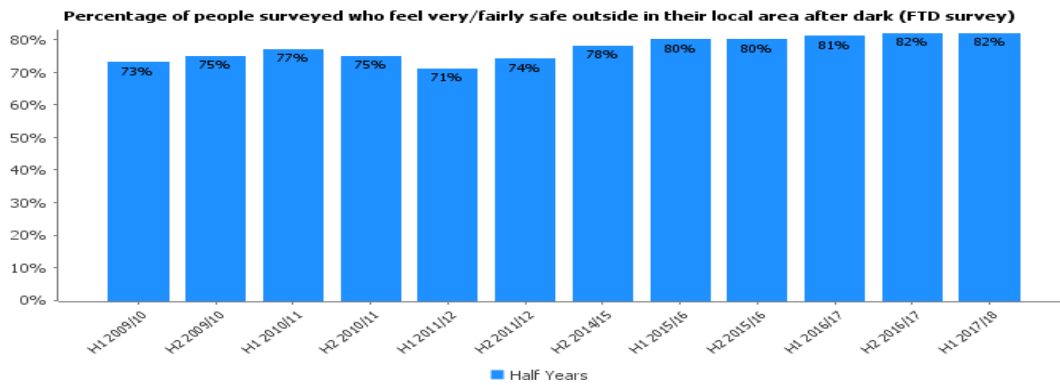
- *We could do with more community wardens. These guys had always provided a great service in Tamworth and now there's only a couple left,*
- *It was better when we saw the street wardens in their own areas,*
- *Make use of the Street Wardens etc. to keep cyclists on the road - not on the pavements - it has become the 'norm' to ride on pavements and is not acceptable,*
- *Clamp down on professional beggars. More police presence in the town centre. A 24 hour Police Station (not 9am-5pm),*
- *A higher and more police presence,*
- *Crime reduction and police on the beat should be number 1 priority, increase my council tax if needed to fund it,*
- *Every time we ring the Police about motorbikes on the open parks no one comes out, or it's 2 to 3 hours later when they have gone,*
- *Police more available. Someone needs to do something about all these motorbikes that drive you mad with the noise they make,*
- *More Police patrolling local areas,*
- *Lack of police presence,*
- *We need more policing in the centre of town - there are increasing numbers of youths in groups hanging in the centre and behaving in an unsociable manner. Zero tolerance,*
- *Improve the antisocial behaviour in the streets especially when Tamworth have put on events and large number exit at the same time,*
- *The Community Safety Partnership was the best in the County. You have allowed it to fail,*

- *Enough is not done in estates to monitor tenant's behaviour, their living & so on. Multiple agencies need to do more to spot troublesome families & work with neighbours & the families to raise the standards of living for all. It's amazing how it effects everyone around them,*
- *Sort out the on-going problems with travellers costing us money year in year out. If other councils can get them moved on within 24 hours, why can't Tamworth? Is there an officer who can specialise in this line of work? A training course they could go on perhaps? To add insult to injury, these people park for free on Jolly sailor car-park each year,*
- *We need to improve the perceived levels of Crime.*

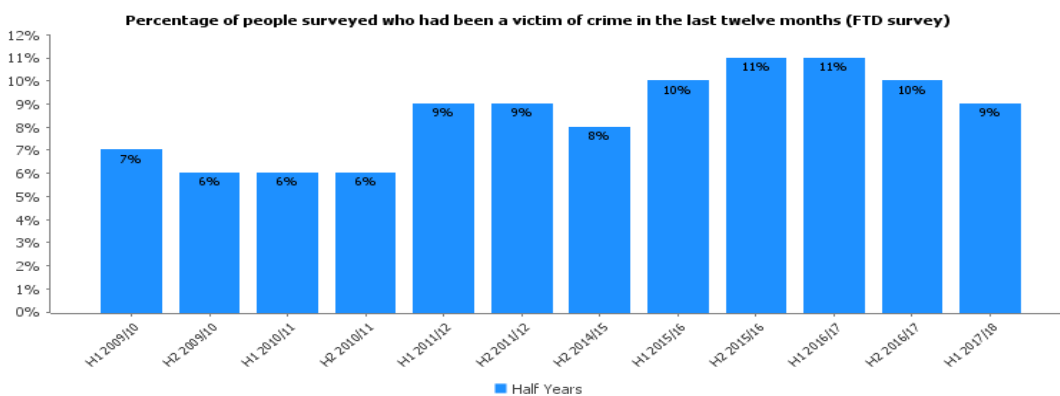
The number of all crimes recorded decreased slightly during 2017 but the number of anti-social behaviour cases has increased slightly.



People's perception of crime in the Feeling the difference survey has remained largely the same over the same period.



The number of people surveyed who have actually been a victim of crime has also fallen.



The built and natural environments will be conserved to the highest possible standards

This ambition was seen as important by 71% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise and when asked to select five things that make somewhere a good place to live, clean streets were seen as important by 52% of respondents with 57% of respondents believing the cleanliness of streets needed to improve to make Tamworth a better place to live. Good parks and open spaces were deemed important by 57% of respondents with 40% feeling that they needed to improve.

There were mixed views on the cleanliness of Tamworth:

- *Clean streets more, look after the street trees, clean up the Magistrates Court - it is a disgrace, the litter and weeds spoils Tamworth and. repair pot holes in road,*
- *Street cleaning very poor,*
- *I live in Belgrave and I have to say I think we are forgotten as far as the council are concerned. It is dirty untidy nobody seems to care about rubbish or cleaning the environment and the trees are in desperate need of pruning. We as residents where I live do things ourselves, we shouldn't have to,*
- *Litter is a real issue for the perception of visitors and locals alike. There seems to be fewer bins available in the Castle grounds and the bins on the pedestrian walkway from the Castle grounds to Amington Road have been removed. Dog poo is also a problem. Perhaps if a few people are 'made an example of' it may result in more people taking responsibility for their actions,*
- *Although the Council do a good job in most areas in the town keeping grass cut cleaning up rubbish etc. I feel parts of the town could be improved e.g. the fountain island at the Comberford junction is full of weeds. The walk into town is always full of rubbish, I realise it is near schools and colleges but it is also an approach to our wonderful town. The majority of people throw their litter in bins but there are still an awful lot we discard fast food rubbish and drink bottles down this area. It is also a pity something could not be done to make the fountain island live up to its name,*
- *Employ litter wardens to generate revenue while reducing the million pounds you spend on cleaning,*
- *Encourage communities to keep their paths clean outside their home, clean up litter and dog mess,*
- *Standards, when street cleaning, grass cutting, hedge cutting is done to a poor standard, needs to be improved around people's walkways and front doors instead of rubbish left lying around,*
- *Stop dogs being taken in green spaces. Litter - this is not the Council's fault, it is the disgusting people who live all round town and outlying areas,*
- *Tamworth is in need of a deep clean, that is to be maintained to the highest standards,*
- *The state of the cleanliness and condition of some council housing areas are dreadful. The amount of weeds, nettles and brambles growing in some pathways are quite dangerous to young children,*
- *The streets need to be cleaned more often as a lot of litter is thrown onto the ground especially in the Fazeley area where I live. More litter bins and patrolling is needed to improve the situation. I have emailed twice regarding this matter and the situations remains the same,*
- *We need street cleaning more regularly, the grass cuttings should be taken away.*

The state of roads and path were also felt to be in need of attention in some parts of Tamworth

- *You do not mention the state of all the roads pavement precincts that are not being maintained drains not being cleaned,*
- *Improve surface and cleanliness of paths (Coton Green),*
- *Make sure you keep to your promise and carry out job that needs doing then Tamworth will be fit to live in again,*
- *Roads and pavements - for the first time this year I have noticed the high amount of weeds growing along the pavements i.e., Offa Drive.*
- *Walkways need to be cleaned more regularly especially behind houses,*
- *The state of most roads are appalling and lack of weeding along guttering, paths etc. Many of hedgerows are very overgrown as to be hazard.*

Comments recognised the importance of the maintenance of the green spaces in Tamworth:

- *Green space is very important needs protection,*
- *The park in the castle grounds needs some sort of water play area for the children in the summer months, and the roundabout needs replacing as it doesn't turn. The mess from the Canadian geese needs hosing down more often from the walkways,*
- *There are lots of open spaces that could do with some care. The Castle grounds are magnificent but I hope they are not used as an excuse for not looking after other areas. The cycle paths are often overgrown with trees that need cutting back,*
- *Wildflower patches along roads was a brilliant idea - bee and insect friendly and good 'feel good' factor - more please,*
- *We have beautiful flowers and parkland provided and tended by the council. We need to open the castle more to the town and provide more events to bring the community together.*

More people will be living independent lives with access to facilities

This ambition was seen as important by 68% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise.

Comments made included:

- *Your vision is good but there is nothing in Tamworth for adults with Autism, they want a place to live with support and with other Autistic adults. It seems like they don't exist. My son's social worker is great but deals mainly with learning disabilities which he hasn't got. Help for him and others like him would be a priority for us.*

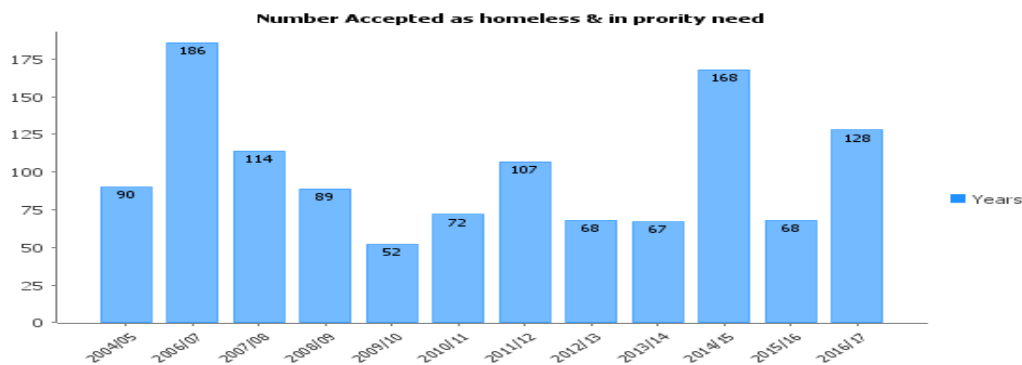
There will be fewer vulnerable people requiring specialist services.

This ambition was seen as important by 58% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise; the lowest under this strategic priority.

Comments received included:

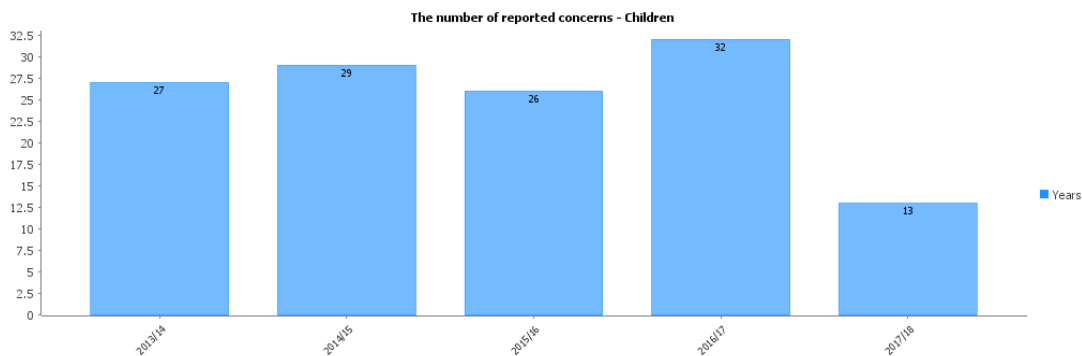
- *It appears your vision takes a priority towards business and not supporting the poor and those in need. More social housing is required and investment in social care. Stop wasting money on fireworks and use that money for the poor*

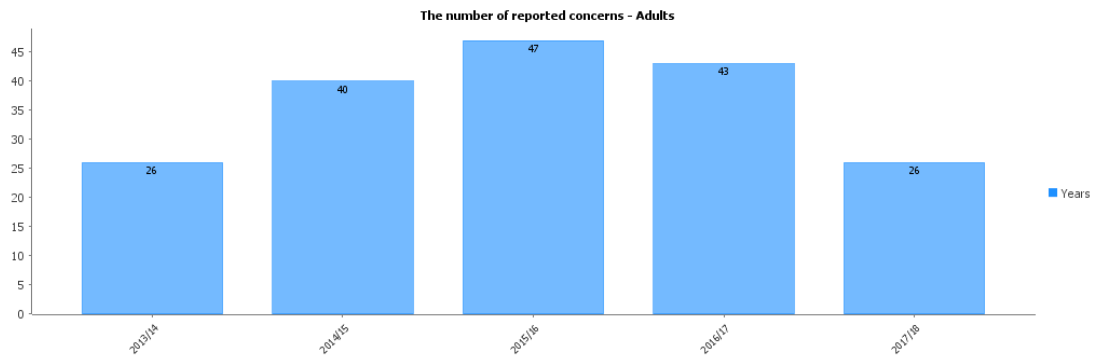
The number accepted as homeless and in priority need saw a rise in 2016/17. 25% of respondents felt that more should be spent on the area of housing advice, grants and homelessness.



As an organisation, Tamworth Borough Council has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. The figures recorded provides evidence that staff understand this responsibility and recognise what neglect and abuse is and know how to appropriately respond to concerns they have.

The number of concerns raised in relation to children has remained consistent whilst the number of concerns raised in relation to adults at risk has increased steadily over the past four years evidencing the increased demand on the service over this period.



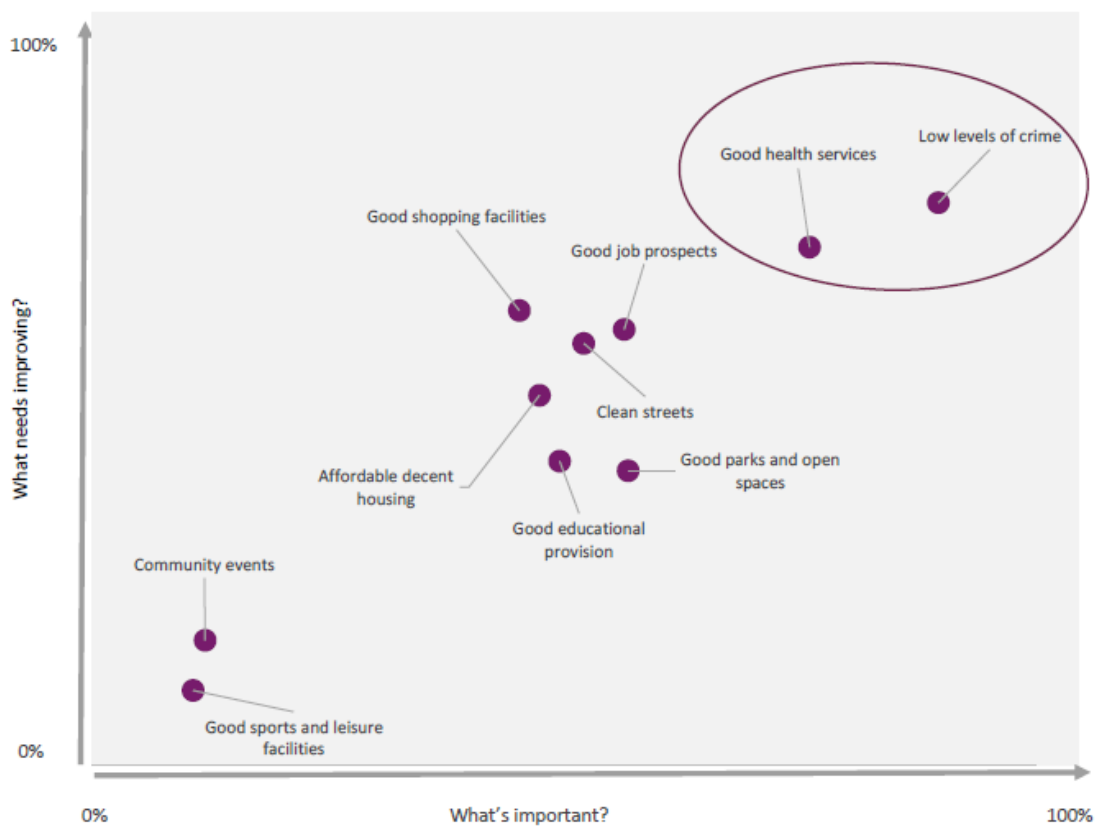


The number of adult social care users fell in 2016/17 to 1190 from 1220 the previous year.

What makes somewhere a good place to live and what needs improving in Tamworth?

From the results of the Budget Consultation 2018/19, this graph shows both what respondents feel is important and what needs improving to make Tamworth a better place to live.

Low levels of crime and good health services were seen as both of higher importance in making somewhere a good place to live and also higher in needs of improvement in Tamworth.



At the Tamworth Listens Question Time Event in March 2018, the following questions were asked on living a quality life in Tamworth.

- *Should there be an increase in the number of community wardens? Currently I believe there are just five, I would like to see at least ten with each ward area having a named warden and contact details for them. This means for lesser crime such as littering, dog fouling and some anti-social behaviour residents know where to turn. I understand there will be an argument of cost but with more fines being given out for these behaviours more money would come in, hopefully these behaviours would reduce due to an increased deterrent meaning less money being spent cleaning up. Other ideas could be two councillors for each ward instead of three alongside the community warden or to decrease parking wardens for which I regularly see at least two patrolling the same area.*
- *What are the local police force doing to make the public feel secure when visiting the town, public parks and other family areas where there has been a number incidents involving teenage groups causing anti-social behaviour?*
- *What can be done about the issue of parking near schools at the 'drop off' and picking up times?*
- *What effect will the Police Response Hubs have on Tamworth Police Station and the level of service we receive from the Police?*
- *Is the size of Tamworth's Police force directly related to its size as a proportion of the area of the county of Staffordshire?*
- *Our CCTV system is becoming obsolete; does the Police and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire have funds available to assist in its renewal?*

Growing stronger together in Tamworth

To support this strategic priority, Tamworth Borough Council works towards these ambitions;

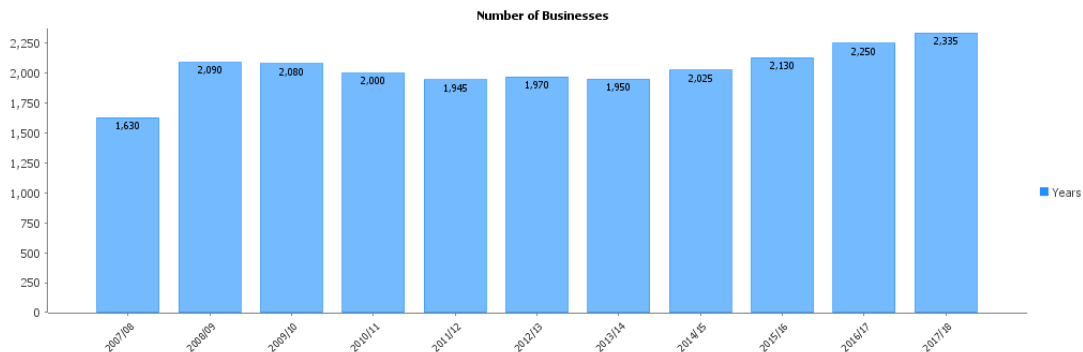
- More businesses will locate and succeed in Tamworth;
- People will have access to a full range of quality housing options;
- Local infrastructure and connectivity will support an active workforce and help grow the economy;
- The Council will be recognised as both business friendly and business like in the way it facilitates and operates;
- Tamworth Town Centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer;
- Tamworth will mean 'a great place to live' not simply 'a place with more houses',
- The Council will have a Commercial Investment Strategy and an associated trading arm designed to invest in assets/other means of sustainable income generation.

More businesses will locate and succeed in Tamworth

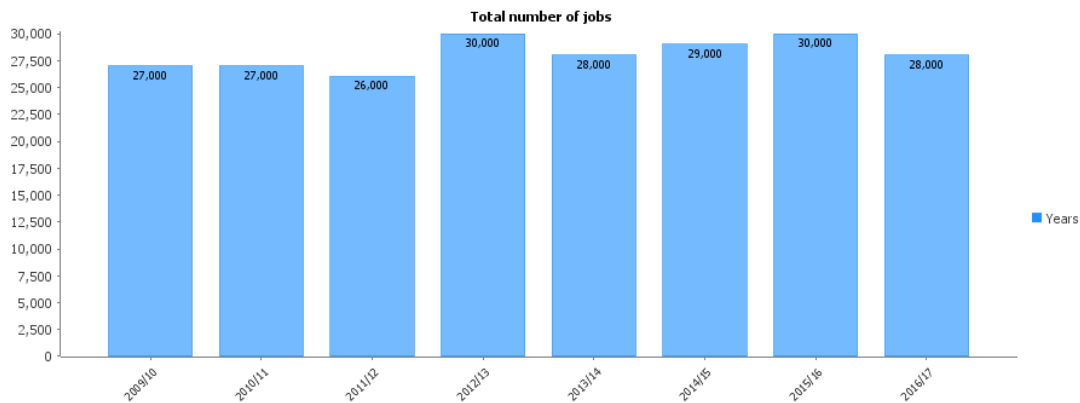
This ambition was seen as important by 63% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise. Good job prospects were considered important by 59% in making somewhere a good place to live and 59% feeling this needed to improve in Tamworth.

The Council is keen for local businesses to grow and therefore needs to be aware of what barriers need to be broken down in order for this to happen. Businesses were asked to identify what they felt were the main barriers to business expansion. The 'cost of business rates' were viewed as the main barrier to expansion, 'parking capacity' was the second most common barrier to expansion.

The numbers of businesses in Tamworth has increased in the last four years.



The total number of jobs figure fell in 2016/17.



Claimant count is a measure of unemployment and measures the out of work benefits of universal credit and job seeker's allowance. In December 2017, there were 520 claimants (1.1% of the working age population). This compares to 2.4% in the West Midlands and 1.0% in Staffordshire.

Comments made around job creation and encouraging business included:

- *Better quality jobs so that those on higher incomes can work in Tamworth. Right now, most higher earners commute out of town,*
- *Most work in Tamworth is low level of pay for unskilled workers,*
- *Bring in some big name companies for jobs also to reduce the business rates in Ankerside to fill the empty units,*
- *Lower the shop rents permanently to encourage business to stay and to encourage businesses in Tamworth. Surely it's better to have all shops trading than 50% closed,*
- *The quality of high end job opportunities in Tamworth is not available. No University provision in Tamworth, why can't we have satellite sites assigned to Birmingham Uni or Loughborough etc. This would encourage local take up and also the offering of Tamworth,*
- *I believe that the Council's aim will bring many of the business, social and leisure plans to success with a little help from prosperous business and local good will,*
- *Jobs, jobs, jobs, to create a vibrant town centre and content population,*
- *Tamworth needs a vision for employment. More than "Perfectly Placed", it needs to be the "Perfect Place". We need a pro jobs / business attitude.*

People will have access to a full range of quality housing options;

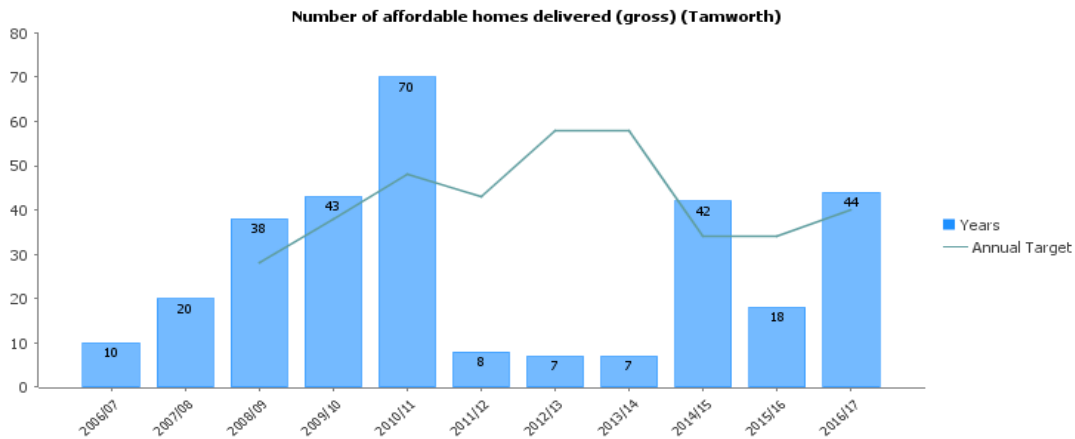
This ambition was seen as important by 55%% of respondents in the 2017/18 budget consultation exercise. Having affordable decent housing was felt to be important by 48% of respondents with 50% being of the opinion that this needed to improve to make Tamworth a better place to live.

Comments made reinforced this:

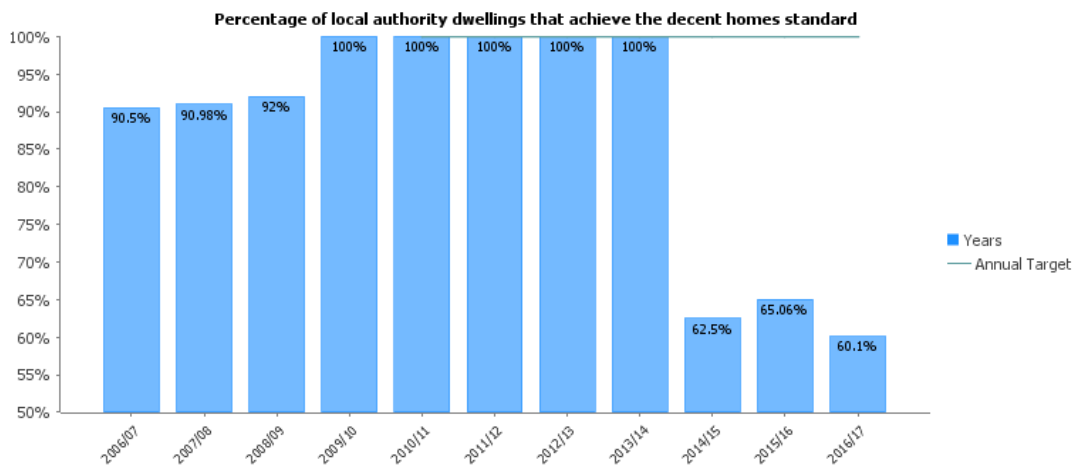
- *Ensure affordable housing as first priorities. Enforce balanced friendly high quality low cost rented accommodation,*

- *The need of 4/5 bedroom social housing accommodation to help larger families have the extra room(s) that they need,*
- *All new housing developments need to be biased towards affordable housing, i.e. At least 50% three bed or less and 25% two bed or less,*
- *A large number of houses are in the planning phase. How many will be 'affordable'?*
- *Most builders do not want to build low cost housing, so luxury housing are not affordable for the people who need housing,*
- *More public spaces, toilets are needed given the expanding population along with affordable housing and access to health care,*

The provisional return for affordable homes completions for the year 2016/17 was 44 units. The Council's role in providing new homes is setting the right environment for house building by producing an up to date and sound Local Plan and the approval of planning applications for sustainable development. Whilst the figure was above the target of 40 units, a number of schemes are currently under construction which should lead to higher surplus next year.



The low decent council homes standard figure is due to revised stock condition data and the start of a new five year cycle commencing 2015/16.



Local infrastructure and connectivity will support an active workforce and help grow the economy

This ambition was seen as important by 59% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise. 43% felt that an improved road network was needed to assist business and the economy.

The state of Tamworth's roads generated many comments:

- *The state of the roads is appalling. Tamworth Council needs to petition the County Council to invest more money in our roads,*
- *The state of the roads is a disgrace,*
- *Roads need to improve, too many potholes,*
- *We need to spend some money on fixing potholes in residential areas - absolutely disgraceful – it's all very well spending money on the route from the railway station to town via Victoria Road to make it all look 'nice' to visitors but don't forget the residents who use these awful roads every day!,*

Respondents were also concerned on the building of additional housing and the infrastructure to support it:

- *Road networks are stretched at peak periods. The addition of new houses means better infrastructure is needed. This has not been catered for,*
- *Far too much housing going on without the infrastructure, recently I wanted a doctor's appointment, the wait was 5 weeks!!! I had to appeal for all 3 of my children to go to the school most local to us because houses being built within the changed catchment now get priority. Their school walk and crossing only 1 minor road would go from 15 mins to over 40 mins and having to navigate 3 of the most major junctions at 11 yrs old or having to take them by car. Forcing more parents on the school-run on already busy roads. Finally, new estates being built only have provision in the plans for primary schools...then what? The extra traffic congestion, doctors, dentists, school places, refuse etc. are not being discussed at all,*
- *Investment in infrastructure road/rail/tram & bus access to town and surrounding area investment in town and facilities will influence private investment in housing and commercial. Local residents will spend free cash locally not in other areas. Link together main station and town - shopping areas (Ventura park),*
- *Although it is accepted that we need more housing I feel the infrastructure is very lacking to accommodate this, the roads, doctors, surgeries, schools cannot cope,*
- *Invest in infrastructure for businesses, regenerate town centre and surrounding areas ensuring good access, drive out waste from Council spending, ensure adequate health, education, leisure and housing with investment,*

- *Successive elected members have only been interested in lining their pockets with attendance allowances, junkets & freebees rather than properly representing the interests of their electorate, resulting in Lichfield building right on the borough boundary where residents will be using Tamworth facilities while making no financial contributions to those services & facilities - totally ridiculous & outrageously unfair. Planning regulations are now pathetic & lining the pockets of developers & those who are probably getting rewards for supporting big businesses but beware the electorate are investigating in great detail these specific infringements. You will be brought to account for your ridiculous decisions. Why are Lichfield & Tamworth working hand in glove with refuse collection & planning services without the authorities being formally joined together. The situation is currently most unsatisfactory - if fact it stinks!*
- *Too much interference from Staffordshire County Council and other neighbours holding a gun to the head of Tamworth Borough Council to participate in schemes that will not benefit Tamworth,*
- *Traffic problems on Glascote Road must be improved to help your ambitions,*
- *Your 'vision' would appear to be empty retail units and every available green space built upon!*
- *More and more spaces been used to build on taking away many areas for children to play safely in area close to their homes.*

Transport links also drew comments

- *Travel link from Town centre to Ventura park,*
- *Transport links are still shocking. Taxis, buses and trains all cost much more than neighbouring towns. Our young people are hampered and end up seeing it as too hard or expensive to travel into Birmingham for work, education or leisure. Can this be looked at?*

The Council will be recognised as both business friendly and business like in the way it facilitates and operates

This ambition was seen as important by 48% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise, the lowest under this priority.

- *Allow smaller new companies to prosper as most cannot afford business rates and rates*

Tamworth Town Centre will be regenerated and complement the outstanding retail and leisure offer

This ambition was seen as important by 75% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise, the highest under this priority. Good shopping facilities were viewed by 46% as making somewhere a good place to live and 61% believing this needed to improve in Tamworth. However, good sports and leisure facilities were seen as far less important at 11%.

Numerous comments were received on this area and can be grouped into five themes: shops, housing, parking fees, public toilets and visitor attraction.

Shops

- *I agree that the town centre needs regeneration but this will surely not happen until a 'quality' store moves in to the town centre, for example 'Debenhams'!!but of course this is unlikely to happen either because they all want to go to Ventura, not the town. The Castle and grounds are fantastic, (I often take people there) but there needs to be a better 'link' to make people go to the town as most just won't go because of the lack of quality shops. Also, I think the 'Co-op' building should be turned into a good quality department store, instead of a store that keeps changing its content and no-one can keep up with what's going on,*
- *The Tamworth community is built around the shared space of the town centre. Sadly there are a majority of empty shops and a dated shopping centre. Venture Park cannot offer those facilities such as market/banking/small businesses, however it is all Tamworth has to offer. The town centre clearly boasts some interesting architecture and could pull new businesses if footfall and investment were made. Don't let this town die completely,*
- *A decent shopping centre in Tamworth town with not so many charity shops, lowers the rents then you might get more traders come in,*
- *By improving shopping facilities I mean I feel that small businesses. We'd to be supported in ensuring they can survive in our town centre and allow the town to keep it's quirky charm rather than looking like any other high street full of large corporations,*
- *Drop rates then more different shops will be in Tamworth. Seems to be cafes, card shops, bookies. Sort buses out, Tamworth may as well be in the Gobi desert after 18.00hrs. The pubs are closing a danger sign. Less talk, more action before Tamworth becomes like a forsaken play out ghost town. Remember Lichfield/Burton/Brum will get the prospects if you don't,*
- *Independent retailers should be encouraged (look at Lichfield or Ashby de la Zouch - they have lovely interesting shops. No more building should be allowed on the fields and green spaces surrounding the area,*
- *Most people shop at Ventura as the shops in Tamworth seem to be Tattoo parlours, fast food outlets, nail tending shops, hairdressers. We do not have a decent shoe shop. The impression Tamworth gives is a scruffy town: this is a great shame as I am fond of Tamworth and like living here but the general little problem is very off putting. The car park in Gungate is filthy with litter, cigarette ends under benches not a few but lots. Flowers are gorgeous and the Castle Grounds lovely, apart from the litter,*
- *The town centre needs more shops. Lower rent so people can start up their own business. Cheaper parking, more toilets,*
- *Rent needs to be cheaper for shops to stay in Ankerside. Need more variety not just card and phone shops,*

- *Tamworth needs more shops within the town itself. Ventura Park excellent but road network and parking is not good,*
- *Tamworth town centre needs more variety of shops not just banks and charity shops. This could be achieved by reducing the rates for new businesses. If town centre car parks were free it could compete fairly with Ventura Park shops,*
- *Tamworth town centre needs to be saved by bringing more decent shops into the town like Primark; Dunelms etc. Not all of us shop in Ventura I for one hardly shop there at all. Also lately our market stalls are not as good as they used to be,*
- *The town centre is slowly dying through heavy rates on shops and too much spent on Ventura Park shopping complex, not everyone has the way to shop in outside shopping centres. Bring back our market town shops and amenities,*
- *There needs to be more variety of shops in the Town Centre. When I first moved here it was a lovely town but it is deteriorating and filling up with charity shops. It looks dull and uncared for which is sad as the Castle Grounds is something to be proud of and then you walk into the town itself,*
- *To make Tamworth town centre, more different shops,*
- *Town centre needs better shops, bars and restaurants*

Town centre housing

- *Emphasis should now be placed on encouraging the building of more housing in the town centre rather than shop units. An ageing population and more shopping on line mean fewer shops are needed. Also having more people living in the town centre will ensure demand for services there,*
- *The town centre must shrink. We should not try keeping it as it is. We should let it shrink in on itself and use the next ring of the doughnut made vacant by empty shops for housing. This would in turn mean more people live in the town centre. We shouldn't think our excellent retail offer at Ventura is immune to change. This will in time also shrink as we move online, again freeing space for housing,*
- *Providing grants to encourage owners of shop/ commercial premises to convert them into usable housing units. Also grants to improve the outside look of buildings in the town centre which look tired. The council also need to spend more money in maintaining and improving the buildings they themselves own to make them more attractive to rent. Either that or if they cannot afford to do that sell them to the private sector,*
- *Tamworth has great potential, it could be a Lichfield. We need to be drawn back in to show locally before the town centre becomes a redundant space which gets bulldozed for housing,*

Parking fees

- *Dropping parking fees would help regenerate the town centre. Tamworth Castle is a huge tourist attraction and should again be floodlit at night - pride in Tamworth!*
- *We need a town to be proud of its run down and is not worth the time to go into free parking for the first two hours in all the car parks that will help bring people back but we need a good variety of shops and good names it can be done look at Burton or Solihull,*
- *Reduce parking fees in town centre. Make Tamworth more attractive for retailers. There are too many empty shops due to, I suspect, rents/rates,*
- *Free parking for the first 2 hours would generate more business in the town,*
- *Keeping Tamworth Town Centre Alive. Free parking. Better evening transport,*
- *Make the town more accessible by free parking not overcharging,*
- *More people will visit the town centre if parking charges are reduced or preferably dropped,*
- *Stop charging visitors to park in Tamworth town centre - it is killing the town's shops! What message do you think "Parking Enforcement", on the back of traffic wardens, sends to visitors?,*
- *Small charge for parking to keep shops open i.e. park and ride*

Public toilets

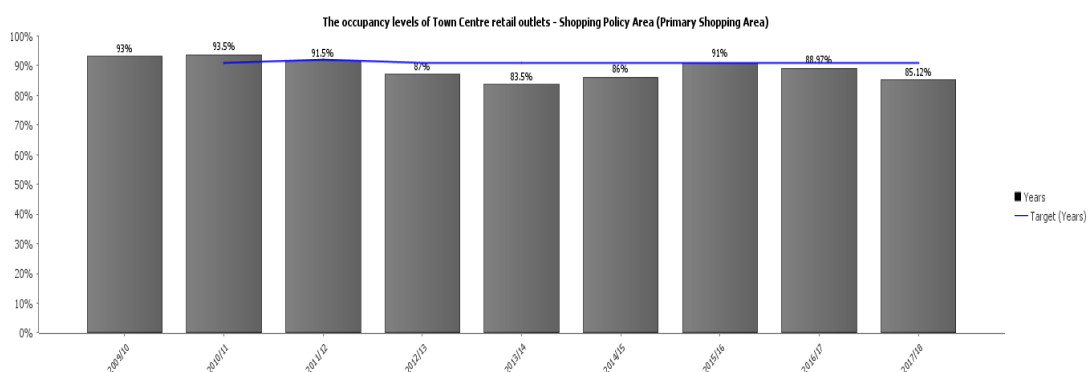
- *How can you possibly aspire to all this in a town without public toilets, the Castle Grounds toilets are a disgrace on the few occasions that they are open,*
- *I don't know whose decision it was to get rid of all public conveniences except for those in Ankerside but it was a big mistake. I don't exclusively shop in Ankerside and several times have been extremely inconvenienced! You need at least one more, the one near the bus stops in corporation street for example,*
- *Too few toilet locations in the town and Castle Grounds,*
- *Town centre toilets, why were they closed, rubbish decision,*

Visitor attraction/Regeneration

- *Town centre needs regeneration. We have an historic castle but the town centre looks run-down,*
- *The use of the rivers Anker and river Tame could be improved around the town and put to better use!*
- *To make sure that Tamworth town centre is remodelled. It needs a revamp and detail to 'old' Tamworth (that which is left) should be maintained. Independent shops should be encouraged. Try to get back the small 'town centre' that enhances our history so many think that 'Tamworth' is Ventura Park,*

- *Town centre needs regeneration, too many empty shops, less emphasis on Ventura Park - very poor roads around Ventura,*
- *Town centre needs urgent regeneration with more visitor friendly shops and streets,*
- *We need more shops in Tamworth to make it attractive for people to come and visit and make the most of the Castle Grounds. Why not have boat rides on the river open little cafes for visitors. Take a trip to Chester and see what they have done,*
- *We need to utilise the empty shops in Tamworth Centre in order to attract visitors to our town. Presently Town Centre very poor with the emphasis now being Ventura Retail Park. We need to give businesses/shops an incentive to stay in the centre,*
- *I feel very sad at the dilapidated look of the Town (Now mainly banks and charity shops) I would love to see a clean busy thriving town again. The bare bones are there do what you can to improve it,*
- *Make it a decent town for people to come and visit - for several years now it has been a really off putting place for anyone to want to visit,*
- *People should be encouraged to shop in town centre not only on market days, Ankerside shops should be opened on Sundays not just a few shops. The days of Sunday being a day of rest have gone because unsociable working times,*
- *Tamworth centre needs to be developed. The number of closed units in Ankerside reflects badly on the city,*
- *Tamworth is currently a depressing place to be. The town centre is dying but parking charges are still excessively expensive, the streets are filled with obese smokers, many of whom almost run people over with their mobility scooters. We need more of a community feel to the town centre especially. Little independent retailers, community cafes, activities for all age groups. Learning opportunities would help people get involved with others. Low level vandalism and street crime is my other priority. I want to feel safe in the town I call home,*
- *Shops are closing down so most people go to Lichfield, Sutton and Birmingham. Empty shopping centre does not encourage tourists to shop,*

The occupancy level of town centre retail units is beginning to fall from the level seen in 2015/16.



Tamworth will mean ‘a great place to live’ not simply a place with more houses’

This ambition was seen as important by 72% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise, the second highest under this strategic priority.

In the Feeling the Difference survey, 90% of respondents were very/fairly satisfied with their local area.

Comments received included:

- *All the houses that are being built but no infrastructure in place,*
- *Please put emphasis on persevering and enhancing our historic past in the planning department,*
- *We have an opportunity to build Tamworth in to a beautiful place use it*
- *Stop building on the last few green spaces in Tamworth and stop building on agricultural land,*
- *Stop house building keep the town centre rural not mini Birmingham,*
- *Tamworth does not currently have a single secondary school rated 1. children are our future,*
- *The balance between development and preserving our heritage needs to be given a high priority with these two aspects seen as complimentary rather than mutually exclusive,*
- *We need green space, the golf course sell off was one big mistake and now you are building in every available space. I do not believe you are looking at the full picture*

The Council will have a Commercial Investment Strategy and an associated trading arm designed to invest in assets/other means of sustainable income generation

This ambition was seen as important by 47% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise, the lowest under this strategic priority.

At the Tamworth Listens Question Time Event in March 2018, the following questions were asked on growing stronger together in Tamworth

- *Tamworth is expanding greatly and this may impact on traffic routes and journey times around The Borough. To what degree is there a clear strategy in place which will provide an adequate road infrastructure for the current and future housing demands in Tamworth?*
- *When reporting potholes/road and pavement defects we get an email to say that the problem will be looked at within 14 days. As this is continually not happening what is being done to hold the company responsible to account? If service standards are not being met surely there should be some accountability?*

- Can you please confirm that the so called 'pot hole zapping machines' do exist in Staffordshire?*

Is the announcement of an extra £5m true or just a smoke and mirrors exercise?

The roads in Tamworth are in a shocking condition due to potholes and wear and tear due to the amount of traffic on them.

What plans does Staffordshire County Council have to remedy the dire situation?

I don't believe Tamworth gets a fair share of the highway's budget that it deserves, what can we do as residents to try and improve the situation?

Is there anything that you and other Tamworth's County Councillors do to improve the situation?
- As elected guardians of the town of Tamworth, what procedures do you have in place to monitor the appearance of the town, the state of the roads and also the standard of work carried out on behalf of the Council. For example, the Tamworth Gateway Project from the railway station to the town centre?*

Our roads are a total disgrace with all the potholes and I don't believe Staffordshire County Council realise how busy and well used our town roads are. I think they still think Tamworth is a small market town and not a town with nearly 80,000 people. We need to let them know how busy and growing our town is. So, how can you improve this?

The Tamworth Gateway Project has only just recently been completed but already the block paving is uneven in the area around the bus stops in Victoria Road. Marmion Street has been dug up and replaced by a lump of Tarmac. I don't believe we have had value for money in this case, how can you improve this?

We need to make Tamworth an attractive town to shop and visit in the future.

What can be done to alleviate the traffic congestion at peak times in Tamworth and who is accountable for the plan to alleviate it?

Is the car park at Ventura going to be increased in size despite Lichfield District Council's objection to the proposal?

Delivering quality services in Tamworth

To support this strategic priority, Tamworth Borough Council works towards these ambitions;

- Customer Satisfaction levels will be maintained above 90%;
- Access to all Council Services will be improved;
- The Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff;
- We will save you time and money by doing business with you 'On-line';
- Fewer customers will have to visit the Council offices to resolve their issues.

Customer Satisfaction levels will be maintained above 90%

This ambition was seen as important by 72% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise.

Access to all Council Services will be improved

This ambition was seen as important by 80% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise, the highest under this strategic priority.

Comments received included:

- *Better communication between SCC and TBC, If I report a fallen tree to TBC it doesn't help by being told it is for SCC,*
- *I can never visit the offices as you are never open weekends or any night for out of normal hour queries,*
- *The approachability of the Council Officers has become less over the years and the out-sourcing has increased to no-ones benefit other than that of the Council even then at the cost of staff or slimmed down services,*
- *You have a mountain to climb with these ambitions. Access to TBC services are awful*

The Council will set and maintain service standards that will be consistent, accessible and delivered by skilled staff;

This ambition was seen as important by 77% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise.

Comments received included:

- *It's one thing having a vision but you need a great team to help deliver it. I don't think you have a great team on board. Reasons are that to try to get in touch with a council official is nigh on impossible, the local*

councillor takes weeks to respond And the council rarely delivers what it says it will. You say you want to make Tamworth a great place to live,

- *Reception ladies most helpful, outstanding people,*
- *Too much red tape not enough action You talk a good job but don't deliver*

We will save you time and money by doing business with you 'On-line';

This ambition was seen as important by 39% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise, the lowest under this strategic priority.

The feeling amongst respondents was that the Council should not do everything solely on-line and recognise that some sectors in society prefer to deal with a person and continue to cater for this.

Comments made have included:

- *A large amount of people do not have computers,*
- *Alternative options must remain available not everyone computer literate,*
- *Although I somewhat agree that it is good for a percentage of people to use on line, there are many people who do not have the means or capabilities to use this service,*
- *Assumes everyone has or wants to have on-line access. This is not necessarily the case. You cannot switch to on-line only,*
- *You have a lot of older generation that do not understand technology with this in mind technology should be introduced slowly,*
- *In my family, several members do not complete any business on-line whatsoever. They need phone access to staff to resolve any issues,*
- *Not all people online or can afford to,*
- *The Council seem to think everyone can use on-line, as do many more companies etc. to do their business. I happen to work with a company looking after the elderly and technology is a 'frightening' concept to them. You also need to have access to the necessary equipment,*
- *I think it's important, to be able to do things on line, however the older generation may not be savvy, enough to do this, it is important that people, can come in and resolve issues, as not all answers are provided by ticking a box. From what I have seen, particularly with claiming housing benefit and starting work, there is a gap, from providing information requested, such as wage slips to actually filling the forms in. You need to put something in place that, people struggling can come in and receive help, so this reduces the stress of sorting it out,*

However, the ability to offer on line services is important to others

- *It is important to offer online services. I live in Tamworth but work in Burton so I am unable to visit Council or even call when I'm at work.*

Respondents to the Customer Access Survey expressed a willingness to utilise self –serve options:

- 41% would use a customer portal/on-line account to use our services,
- 37% are happy to use on-line forms on the internet.

Fewer customers will have to visit the Council offices to resolve their issues.

This ambition was seen as important by 41% of respondents in the 2018/19 budget consultation exercise. It was common for respondents to welcome the ability to see /speak to someone in person if the situation warranted it:

- *Being an OAP I don't have access to on-line activities so I need to phone or go in person to Council Offices, please remember this,*
- *Better to deal with elected members in person,*
- *Face to face better than over net,*
- *Fewer customers coming in - still the need for face to face interviews on occasion to address some customer needs. Some people unable to cope without this,*
- *I can understand about doing more business online, but there are still many people who don't have or don't know how to use a computer, also a lot of elderly citizens prefer to visit the Council Offices and speak to someone face to face,*
- *I don't agree with more people doing business with the Council on line. I like to talk to people face to face when I have an enquiry or have an issue solved,*
- *I feel it is important to be able to deal with the Council face to face rather than online all the time. The Council does not need to lose its personal face,*
- *I like to visit Council Offices talking face to face with personnel. Many people of elder status do not have computers. Perhaps free computer courses for the elderly citizens,*
- *I myself like to see and talk to Council staff (I for one am NOT on line),*
- *I think we need the Council offices as most elderly people cannot use the internet and prefer a face to face with Council staff. Try to think of elderly people more,*
- *Important to have face to face communication as not everyone has access to internet,*
- *Not all people have access to or use internet, so it is important to maintain a personal service,*
- *Not all people like to go on the computers. Want a good access and help from the Council verbally,*
- *People like to speak to a friendly person at the Council Offices. A lot of old people haven't got a computer so welcome talking to someone who knows what they're doing,*
- *People need to 'speak' to staff at the Council offices, rather than 'online', which is very impersonal and difficult to know if / when matters are being dealt with,*
- *Personal face to face service is more highly valued,*

- *Please remember that some elderly people will not have access to mobile phones, computers and will not be mobile,*
- *The need to have face to face contact with the Council. Tamworth has high rate of elderly residents and vulnerable adults who are unable to access or understand on line or e-mail access,*
- *Too much emphasis on being on line. Tamworth has many elderly people who do not have access to a computer or the knowledge or desire to use one. It is being constantly rammed down our throats that everything has to be online. I for one like to speak to a person,*
- *While I believe it is important to enhance what the future brings ,I still believe there is still a need for human 1 to 1 interaction and I would like it where we see and meet our council and not just when it is an election,*
- *With respect, the council should never lose the personal contact with the people of Tamworth; The Council should at all times make access to people who are making all the decisions, to take total responsibility for those decisions. All over the world people are being pushed along the path that will cause us to become numbers on forms and not people, who can ask as today of who is responsible.*

At the Tamworth Listens Question Time Event in March 2018, the following questions were asked on delivering quality services in Tamworth.

- *Should there be a set of standards, drawn up in agreement with the public that all councillors have to adhere to? This could include such things as providing residents surgeries, community engagement days with other agencies and regular resident updates. At the moment these are provided on some wards, but not all which means some residents are getting a better standard of service than others. The resident updates could include a six monthly newsletter to all residents from their three councillors. This could include who they are, what they can help with, any updates for the town/ward agreed by all three and signposting to other agencies such as local police; it could be based on the three main aims of TBC which we are discussing here today. This would have the advantage of better engagement between the council and us and would hopefully give people a better insight of the workings meaning people understand better what the council are responsible for.*
- *Apart from implementing the green bin charge, what other steps is the council taking to secure financial independence when they stop receiving central government funding in the year 2020?*
- *Like a lot of councils, Tamworth has always loved its vanity projects at taxpayer's expense. Given the council tax hikes we are seeing, will the Council please publish the cost of its support, both direct & indirect, to the community radio station? I for one don't feel the Council need or should support it. Why should hard pressed taxpayers be paying for the likes of TCRFM radio Tamworth?*

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