

Corporate Plan 2012/13

Tamworth Borough Council

One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed



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Foreword

The Corporate Plan for 2012-2013 sets out the many achievements of the last 12 months. It will detail how Tamworth Borough Council and its partners will meet the ever increasing needs of our communities, while responding to current and future financial constraints.

"Challenging" has to be the most used adjective by public sector chief executives to describe the current environment. And yet, in the south eastern corner of rural Staffordshire sits a small, mostly urban borough, that has delivered some notable successes in the face of adversity.

Despite the reductions in public spending, the ongoing implications of a European financial crisis and a schedule of policy change and ever growing reforms, Tamworth Borough Council has enjoyed one of its most successful periods for decades.

Last year's plan set the tone for all future plans; not only did it set out the borough council's intentions but also those shared by our major partners all of which share the single vision of "One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed". It was the successful delivery of the plan, coupled with strong political support and the skills and commitment of public sector staff locally, that enabled Tamworth and its communities to look back with pride.

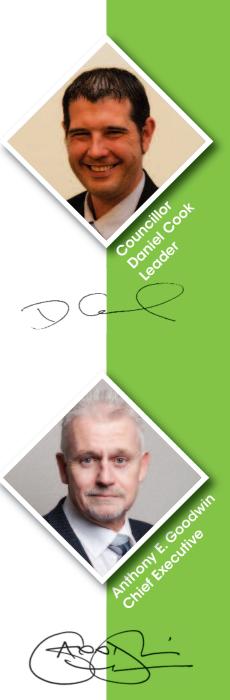
Proud we can all be, complacent we cannot. We are personally proud of the response from all borough council staff to the challenges set at last year's Annual General Meeting. Not only were they achieved - they were exceeded. Yet we will all face a number of difficult issues in the coming months and with them, some difficult decisions.

We have been able to plan ahead with confidence. For the second successive year, Tamworth is one of the first West Midland authorities to approve a four year balanced budget with no major impact on front-line services, no redundancies and elements of growth to fund improvements.

If we and our partners continue to support the most vulnerable in our communities, while directing our resources towards them, we will progress further and faster towards our vision and all that it will bring to our economy, our environment and our quality of life.

Others can "speculate to accumulate" we will "innovate and regenerate".

This plan will help.





Our achievements: 2011/12

Tamworth hit the headlines for a number of reasons last year; the Staffordshire Hoard saw thousands of people flock to Tamworth Castle, the grounds were taken over for a three-day living history festival which saw Saxons keeping a watchful eye over the Hoard, world class music acts performed at the Ultrasound Music Festival and Tamworth struck gold in the In Bloom competition.

Tamworth Borough Council joined forces with the Birmingham Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This means we now play a key role in making strategic decisions to drive sustainable growth and job creation across the region.

News that the Olympic Torch was coming to Tamworth on its journey across the country was met with a ripple of excitement across the borough, as it was announced by two of our home-grown Olympic hopefuls.

We must not overlook the day-to-day achievements of our benefits team, our housing staff, planning officers and environmental health teams who collectively and tirelessly work to make Tamworth a better place. These include 31 successful benefit fraud prosecutions involving more than £209k in over claimed benefit and maintaining more than 7,650 council tax and housing benefit claims.

At the same time, our support services ensure that Tamworth Borough Council continues to operate to such high ethical, financial and performance standards.

Our Annual Review, which will be available later in the year, will look at these in more detail.

Our 2012/13 focus 'One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed'

Organisations across Tamworth have, for many years, worked together to address major issues in the borough.

Communities have always been at the heart of everything the borough council and its partners have done, while helping to shape priorities.

It has been a political aspiration for all organisations to share a single vision and last year, our Cabinet and other partners endorsed the new single, shared vision 'One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed'.

This means the borough council, the county council, police, health service, Fire & Rescue Services, voluntary sector and others all share this same vision. We are also sharing skills and knowledge more than ever before.

Therefore the strategic priorities of all organisations are more closely aligned to the needs of the community, based upon the most recent data and intelligence provided by each organisation. In addition, the views of Tamworth residents helped shape our new priorities.





2. "To be Healthier and Safer in Tamworth"

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

How do we do this?

By working wth others, we will:

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

The day to day delivery of our services, designed to meet the needs of our communities - and in particular, the most vulnerable, remain at the heart of the organisation.

Providing access to good quality, affordable housing, keeping people safe, managing the local environment, providing high standard benefit services and promoting Tamworth are as important now as they ever were.



A look forward: Our plans for the next 12 months

Councillor Daniel Cook, Leader of the Council

The policies that I and my fellow Cabinet members have put in place over the last two years have provided the framework, freedom and flexibility to enable the Chief Executive and Council staff to maintain a full range of high-quality public services to the people of Tamworth. This is our goal and I am extremely confident we will maintain it.

Working with our public, councillors now have a genuine understanding of the real issues facing our communities. Some of these issues are life-changing; others - no less important - simply make life easier. Either way, the joint executive board is committed to achieving our shared vision.

In the last few years we have made some difficult - and some would say 'brave' - decisions and the coming year is unlikely to be any easier. Striking the balance between cost cutting for the sake of efficiency and remaining resilient to change is hard, but what isn't these days?

This year's plan represents real optimism; it talks about growth, regeneration and renewal. Whether the subject is housing, the town centre, tourism and the visitor economy or jobs and prosperity, the plan represents momentum...... progress.

The Olympic Torch is coming to Tamworth on 30th June, 2012, we then have the Olympic event in the Castle Grounds, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, improved outdoor events such as St. George's Day and the fireworks night and so much more. The 2012 Corporate Plan is a plan for progress. We will not stand still but push for better, using the resources we have locally.

Raise the aspiration and attainment levels of young people

2011/12

- Tamworth Castle's education workshops won a Sandford Award for a second time
- Academies reported improved attainment levels

2012/13

- Continue to have executive membership of Landau Forte Board
- The Tamworth Strategic Partnership will continue to work with headteachers to increase educational and vocational opportunities



Create opportunities for business growth through developing and using skills and talent

2011/12

- We are a key partner on the Great Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership, helping to shape strategic business decisions for the area
- The Think Local 4 Business show was held for the 8th consecutive year attracting 612 delegates, 64 exhibitors and provided 11 seminars

2012/13

- Develop the Tamworth Strategic Partnership and build on the strengths of the Place Group
- Revise and roll out the second round of voluntary and community sector commissioning to give increased influence over public sector commissioning and a set of service contracts based on local needs



Promote private sector growth and create quality employment locally

2011/12

- Major retailers such as John Lewis at Home, B&Q, Maplins and Next Home stores opened stores creating almost 400 jobs
- The Southern Staffordshire
 Partnership was integrated into the
 Greater Birmingham and
 Staffordshire Local Enterprise
 Partnerships

2012/13

- Lead on town centre regeneration such as the Gateways Project and the Cultural Quarter development
- Work closely with town centre landlords to improve opportunities



Corporate Plan 2012/13

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

2011/12

2012/13

- The Castle Grounds staged the Ultrasound Music
- The Staffordshire Hoard display at Tamworth Castle attracted 14,000 visitors and the Saxon Summer Festival attracted 21,000 people
- 25,000 people attended the Firework display & 6,000 attended the Christmas lights switch on
- St. George's Day event attracted more than 9,000 to the town
- The Heritage Lottery Fund awarded a grant of £875k to Tamworth Castle for a conservation & education programme
- 58 new market traders were attracted to the new look Tamworth market following the transfer to a new market operator
- The Tamworth Information Centre relocated to bigger and better premises at the Philip Dix Centre
- As well as the Olympic Torch Relay passing through Tamworth the Council will also support the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. We will also provide a comprehensive outdoor events programme which includes fireworks night and Heritage Open Days
- In partnership with Staffordshire County Council, explore ambitious plans to develop Tamworth Assembly Rooms and create a cultural quarter with the Library



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

2011/12 2012/13

- A new housing repairs and gas maintenance prgramme rolled out across the borough
- The Tamworth & Lichfield Waste & Recycling Team won the local authority team of the year at the National Recycling Awards
- Tamworth won gold in the Heart of England in bloom competition for the second year running and a special award for horticultural excellence
- The Core Strategy was approved for pre-submission publication

- Environmental works to be carried out with council-owned housing areas
- Progress the Anker Valley Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood scheme
- The achievement of green flag award to both Wigginton and Dosthill parks
- The designation of local nature reserve status for Town Wall
- Another gold award in the heart of England in bloom programme
- The waste management and recycling service will see an increase in household recycling to 52% and a review of collection rounds to optimise and reduce the distance travelled during collection

"To be Healthier and Safer in Tamworth"

Address the causes of poor health in children and young people

2011/12

- Free Swimming for all was made available at Wilnecote Leisure Centre
- Supported local sports initiatives and projects such as the BMX track, Tamworth Athletics Club and Tamworth Rugby Club
- Continued support for the Schools Sports Programmes

2012/13

- ◆ The quality of life, health and well-being of Tamworth residents and visitors will be improved through the implementation of identified environmental health projects like monitoring local air quality, food safety inspections off all registered food premises and the inspection of those businesses that have high risk health and safety ratings
- Delivery of the housing capital programme will ensure council dwellings remain decent



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

2011/12

- Outdoor gyms installed at Dosthill & Wigginton Parks,
- In conjunction with the Primary Care Trust, Phase Four Cardiac support was established at the Castle grounds gym and the opening hours of general referrals was extended to cope with demand
- The Home Repair Assistance Grant scheme was made available to those homeowners and private tenants to carry out repairs on their homes

2012/13

- Delivery of year one of the Healthier Housing Strategy Action Plan including a reviewed approach to the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants and Disabled facilities adaptations and increased housing advice availability for older people
- ◆ Impact of the Welfare Reform Act
- Prepare for the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and Universal Credit.





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

2011/12

- Major partnership initiatives including:
- Operation Take Home
- Proxy sales campaign
- As a result of the reducing alcohol misuse project, the findings will be sent to the Chief Constable.
 Community Safety Commissioner and county Commissioner for Substance Misuse

2012/13

◆ The task and finish group concerned with reducing alcohol misuse by tackling both the inappropriate availability and consumption of alcohol will progress work with Tamworth secondary schools on the PHSE curriculum, contribute and support work with parents via Tamworth's Head Teachers Forum and engage with the County's alcohol – reducing harms in Staffordshire programme to influence service delivery in Tamworth.



Implement 'Total Place' solutions to tackling crime and ASB in designated localities

2011/12

- A Community Safety Hub was created at Tamworth Police Station where Council Community Safety staff work alongside other organisations including victim support and housing staff
- Various crime prevention events were held throughout the year including a number of events at the Assembly Rooms and Ankerside, along with a presence at community days held by the borough council
- Roll out of anti dog fouling campaigns in hot spots

2012/13

- With the forthcoming Police and Crime Commissioner Elections, ensure that the Community Safety Partnership is well placed to advise and influence the new Commissioner
- Continue to monitor and manage the CCTV service
- Engage with residents via a visible Street Warden Scheme
- Deliver year one of the Healthier Housing Strategy Action Plan including the appointment of an ASB officer resulting in an integrated approach to ASB and increased satisfaction in the way ASB is dealt with

Develop innovative early interventions to tackle youth crime and ASB

2011/12

- Operation Safer Nights Plus was aimed at informing and educating revellers about how to stay safe, while at the same time supporting the town's night-time economy by making Tamworth a much safer place to be at night
- Introduction of alternative/ diversionary activities such as the Skateboard Park, BMX Track and other music and arts based programmes

2012/13

- ◆ The Tamworth Strategic Partnership will continue to work with partners on projects to tackle youth crime
- The Community Safety Partnership will run targeted, localised consultations with residents to find out what is import to them and how we can tackle issues



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

2011/12

- ◆ The first annual tenants conference was held
- Accreditation was achieved against the Centre Sheltered Housing Studies quality assessment framework
- Extension of the HEAT scheme enabled residents to benefit from improvements to insulation
- The "Community Together" events in Glascote, Kettlebrook, Stonydelph & Amington attracted more than 1,000 people
- The "Estate Walkabouts" continued in Belgrave, Stonydelph and Glascote giving residents in those areas the opportunity to identify problems, make suggestions and become involved in providing solutions
- The "Big Glascote Heath Tidy Up" saw various public sector agencies and residents take part in a clean up operation
- The Housing & Health Strategy was launched

2012/13

- Mobilise and embed a new Repairs and Maintenance Contract including Gas Servicing and Installation
- Completion of Feasibility Studies in relation to the area regeneration of Tinkers Green and Kerria areas
- Redevelop garage sites to provide new affordable housing
- Implement the recommendations in the 2011 Locality Working Review in an effort to narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged areas and the rest of Tamworth





Approachable, Accountable and Visible

It is vital that Tamworth Borough Council provides value for money and is also accountable for how it manages its finances. Working with others, we will deliver services that are ethical, efficient, effective, well governed and viable.

A look back: 2011/12

- No increase in Council Tax.
- Set a four-year balanced budget.
- The State of Tamworth debate.
- Achievement of an unqualified external audit opinion and a positive value for money conclusion following production of IFRS compliant accounts for the first time.
- ◆ The Tamworth Strategic Partnership was formed and the new vision and priorities were launched.
- ♦ Local elections and national referendum on voting reform.
- ◆ 'Transforming Tamworth' programme saw the implementation of e-billing, reducing the cost of Council Tax collection per dwelling to £9.78 from £14.47, while maintaining a high collection rate of 98.1%.
- ♦ The benefits service was involved in 31 successful prosecutions for benefit fraud involving more than £209k in over claimed benefit.
- Maintained a live caseload of 7,560 Council Tax and Housing Benefit claims.
- Implemented e-claim for benefit claimants.
- ◆ The Support Services Options Appraisal identified £85k year on year savings.
- More than 200 members of staff attended the AGM.
- Successfully recovered £5.5 million more than 70% of monies due deemed at risk in Icelandic deposits.
- Successfully implemented ATLAS (Automated Transfers to Local Authority Systems) allowing the Department for Works and Pensions to securely transfer benefit data.
- ◆ ICT service desk support to Bromsgrove and Redditch councils respectively.

- ◆ Supported the HRA self financing process including the successful arrangement of £44.68m funding to deliver the buy out of the housing subsidy scheme.
- Achieved the Gold standard on the match rate between the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and Non-Domestic Rates property records.

What we will do in 2012/13

- Tamworth Listens priority based consultation.
- Implement a new Customer Relationship Management system providing improved customer insight and better access to services.
- ♦ A change programme that will maximise efficiencies, savings and capacity will see the introduction of agile working.
- Implement a new website and content management system which is more accessible.
- Develop a Customer Insight strategy resulting in services more tailored to customers needs.
- Implement a new Human Resources and Payroll system to give improved management information and more efficient processes.
- Introduce a Competency Framework to improve management and leadership skills.
- Update and modernise the Council brand in line with the new corporate vision.
- Deliver the improvements identified in the Support Services review.
- Development of our ICT services including external service delivery, improved usage of our Geographic Information System.
- Democratic engagement through the elections, the annual canvas, a review of scrutiny, a member development programme and civic representation through the mayor.
- Review member's allowances.
- Implement strategies, policies and procedures to address the implications of the Localism Act.
- Plan for the localisation of Business Rates retention.
- Have a sound financial basis with a balanced medium term financial strategy for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital funds.



Leadership & resources

Organisation



Cabinet members & responsibilities

The council currently has 30 members (18 Conservative, 11 Labour, 1 Independent) representing its ten wards.

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



Cllr Daniel Cook Leader of the Council



Cllr Robert Pritchard Deputy Leader of the Council Portfolio: Core Services & Assets



Cllr Lee Bates Portfolio: Reputation and Engagement



Cllr Steve Claymore Portfolio: Economic Development & Enterprise



Clir Stephen Doyle Portfolio: Environment & Waste Management



Cllr Michael Greatorex Portfolio: Housing



Cllr Jeremy Oates Portfolio: Community Development



Tony Goodwin, Chief Executive

One of my challenges this year is writing this piece for the Corporate Plan without repeating last year's contribution and, do you know what? It's difficult.

The legislative changes, policy reforms and financial constraints are now moving to implementation stage at the same time as funding, resources and capacity is reducing. Yet again, it is local government that is bearing the brunt of these challenges and, until or unless central government departments and the wider public sector family get their act together, it will remain that way. In the 12 months prior to September 2011, local government shed 195,000 jobs. This equates to 75% of all public sector job cuts. The majority of these cuts were in the West Midlands and the South West.

Despite the efforts of local councillors and the MP for Tamworth, it is extremely difficult to effect change and consequently, it falls to us; members, officers, staff and partners to make sense of it all and to do our utmost for Tamworth...... the place and its communities.

To achieve this, we need to continue forward with a number of projects and programmes started last year. "Agile Working" generated great interest when discussed at last years staff AGM. This will now be a major work stream within the wider "Transforming Tamworth" programme.

We will continue our efforts to generate further efficiencies.... but not at any cost! Customer satisfaction, service standards and staff well-being will be key considerations prior to any cost-cutting. The contributions of TBC staff to the efficiency agenda have gone a long way to securing our current financial position whether through doing 'more for less', working in partnership; shared services or, through the voluntary redundancy route.

The 2012-2013 Corporate Plan represents a delicate balance between meeting the ever increasing aspirations and expectations of our communities with our ability to deliver high quality public services to those who need them most.

The 'firm foundation' I referred to last year remains in place and, with the continued support and commitment of all of us, I anticipate the laying of several courses of bricks this year as we start to build on the notable successes and achievements of the 2011 plan period.

Yet again, the Council's overall performance exceeded both targets and expectations; yet again the scope and standard of public services remains high and yet again, we can take on the challenges of the forthcoming year with confidence and determination borne from a genuine desire to make Tamworth a better place to live, work and visit...... and have time to celebrate the Olympics and the Diamond Jubilee.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2012 - 2016

John Wheatley, Executive Director (Corporate Services)

The 2012/13 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2012/16 ensures that appropriate resources are focussed on the single vision and strategic priorities. We will continue to identify where our resources can be realigned to ensure, where possible, we meet the needs of local people.

'One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed' and the strategic priorities are clear; by stating what we are aiming to achieve, how we will do it and the resources we will use to support these.

In light of the national economic situation and the significant constraints in public spending following the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), a measured approach to budget setting was approved for 2012/13 by Cabinet as any growth proposals would require compensating reductions in other budget areas and services.

A commitment was made as part of the 2011/12 budget process to protect front line services (as far as possible) and there was continued commitment to working in the heart of our community through our locality work, with ongoing support for the most vulnerable and those affected by the recession.

Through this approach and the use of the council's reserves and balances, coupled with a programme of short-term and long term activity reviews, we identified measures to help the council cope with grant reductions of 25% in first two years (2011/12 and 2012/13) with further reductions anticipated in 2013/14 & 2014/15



Key Financial Information:-

The Council operates it services on an annual budget of £67.5m gross revenue expenditure (£48.5m General Fund, £19m Housing Revenue Account);

This is derived primarily from: £27m in Government Benefit Grants, £5m in Government Support, £17m from Council Housing Rents, £13m from other rents, fees & charges and other income and £3.5m from Council Tax;

The Capital programme for 2012/13 totals £9.6m (£7.8m Housing, £1.8m General fund);

The Council Tax for 2012/13 is £1,423.61 for band D (representing £1028.81 for Staffordshire County Council,;£177.61 for Staffordshire Police Authority, £67.64 for Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and £149.55 for Tamworth Borough Council Services.

The main financial headline figures for 2012/13 are:

- A General Services net revenue council tax requirement of £3,496,180;
- A transfer of £770,420 from General Fund (GF) balances;
- A transfer of £1,119,710 from Housing Revenue Account (HRA) balances;
- Band D Council Tax of £149.55, the same level as in 2011/12;
- An average rent of £76.47 which represents an increase of £5.17 (7.1% on the current average rent) in line with the Government's Rent Restructuring rules (based on a 50 week rent year), equating to £73.53 on an annualised 52 week basis:
- A General Fund Capital Programme of £1.804m (£5.733m over 4 years);
- A Housing Capital Programme of £7.816m (£29.745m over 4 years).

The delivery of a balanced four year Medium Term Financial Strategy is a major achievement and shows we are in a good position. Like many others, our budget planning process had to be carried out in light of unprecedented adverse economic conditions. This included a great deal of uncertainty over future investment and income levels such as car parking, land charges and corporate property rents. 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.

The budget incorporates the council's commitment to minimising the effects of the economic downturn on key service provision. 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.

The key challenges affecting the medium term financial planning process, which add a high level of uncertainty to budget projections, arise from:

- Future Revenue Support Grant levels (from 2013/14 onwards)
- Fundamental changes to Local Government Finance and associated grant funding levels from the planned localisation of the retention of business rates and support for council tax
- Proposed changes set out in the Welfare Reform Bill and introduction of Universal Credit – potentially impacting on income receipts of the Council
- The impact of any further uncertainty over future interest rate levels and their impact on investment income/treasury management
- The severity of the recession and the impact it has had and still could have on the council's income streams; and

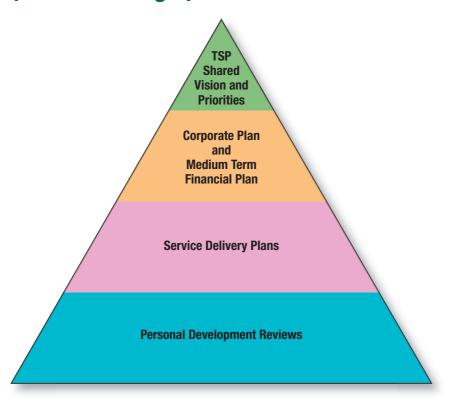
While the council capitalised the estimated loss from Icelandic Bank investments in 2009/10 over a 20 year budgeting period, the financial impact has been reduced following successful proceeding through the Icelandic system which mean that the Council will receive 100% (plus interest) of it's deposit of £3m with Glitnir with expected recoveries from deposits of £4.5m with the UK based banks affected in the region of 85 to 90%.

Corporate Planning Process

Our corporate planning process is a fundamental part of the successful management of the Council.

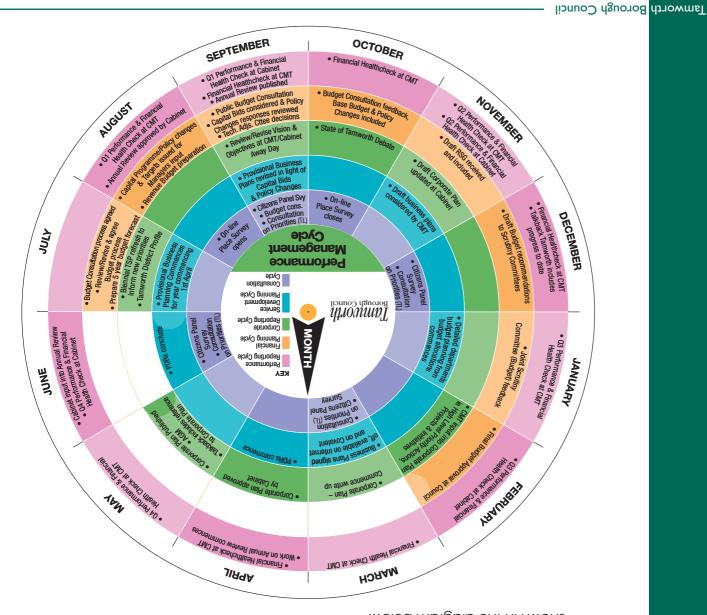
Our corporate planning framework sits within a wider planning hierarchy that has the Tamworth Strategic Partnership shared vision and priorities at the top. The Council's corporate plan and medium term financial strategy focuses on how the Council will deliver its contribution to these, while the service delivery plans show how the services will also contribute. Below this are the personal developments plans for each employee. The links between the plans form the "golden thread" that ensures everyone in the organisation is working towards the same goals and that the priorities will be achieved.

Corporate Planning Pyramid



Performance Management Framework

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



How we will assure what we do

Performance Scorecard

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

Performance Monitoring & Reporting Arrangements

The Performance Scorecard is monitored by:

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

A link to our current and past performance is available on the council's website:

www.tamworth.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/performance.aspx





Contact Us

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

For more information about Tamworth Borough Council visit our website at www.tamworth.gov.uk or pick up a copy of our residents' magazine, Talkback.

Alternative Formats

If you require this document in an alternative format or language please contact us at:

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