

30 January 2017

Committee	Overview and Scrutiny
Date	Tuesday, 7 February 2017
Time of Meeting	4:30 pm
Venue	Committee Room 1

ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND



**for Sara J Freckleton
Borough Solicitor**

Agenda

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the visitors' car park at the front of the building and await further instructions (staff should proceed to their usual assembly point). Please do not re-enter the building unless instructed to do so.

In the event of a fire any person with a disability should be assisted in leaving the building.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

To receive apologies for absence and advise of any substitutions.



Item	Page(s)
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
Pursuant to the adoption by the Council on 26 June 2012 of the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct, effective from 1 July 2012, as set out in Minute No. CL.34, Members are invited to declare any interest they may have in the business set out on the Agenda to which the approved Code applies.	
4. MINUTES	1 - 11
To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2017.	
5. CONSIDERATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN	12 - 15
To determine whether there are any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can give to work contained within the Plan.	
6. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17	16 - 19
To consider the forthcoming work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	
7. GLOUCESTERSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE	
To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting.	
8. GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH AND CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE	
To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting.	
9. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COUNCIL'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH, COMMUNITY AND CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	20 - 23
To conduct the annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's involvement in the Gloucestershire Health, Community and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to authorise payment of the Council's contribution to the running costs for the forthcoming year.	
10. ENVIRO-CRIMES UPDATE	24 - 30
To consider the current position in respect of enviro-crimes and the actions being taken to tackle the issues.	
11. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE	31 - 39
To receive an update and note the ongoing review of the county and local community safety and anti-social behaviour activities within the borough.	

12. PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

40 - 71

To consider the progress made against the actions arising from the Peer Challenge and to agree that no further monitoring is required by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING**TUESDAY, 21 MARCH 2017****COUNCILLORS CONSTITUTING COMMITTEE**

Councillors: P W Awford (Chair), Mrs G F Blackwell (Vice-Chair), G J Bocking, K J Cromwell, Mrs J E Day, R D East, D T Foyle, Mrs R M Hatton, Mrs H C McLain, T A Spencer, Mrs P E Stokes, P D Surman, M G Sztymiak, H A E Turbyfield and M J Williams

Substitution Arrangements

The Council has a substitution procedure and any substitutions will be announced at the beginning of the meeting.

Recording of Meetings

Please be aware that the proceedings of this meeting may be recorded and this may include recording of persons seated in the public gallery or speaking at the meeting. Please notify the Democratic Services Officer if you have any objections to this practice and the Chair will take reasonable steps to ensure that any request not to be recorded is complied with.

Any recording must take place in such a way as to ensure that the view of Councillors, Officers, the public and press is not obstructed. The use of flash photography and/or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed and agreed in advance of the meeting.

OS.65 CONSIDERATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

- 65.1 Attention was drawn to the Executive Committee Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No. 15-18. Members were asked to determine whether there were any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give to the work contained within the Plan.
- 65.2 A Member noted that some of the Agenda looked very light; this was an issue which had been raised by the Committee on several occasions. In response, the Chief Executive explained that there were fluctuations with all Committee Agenda; however, he recognised that they needed to be planned as far as possible, particularly from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's point of view in terms of keeping abreast of forthcoming items to be considered by the Executive Committee and the support which it may be able to offer. He had recently sent a reminder to Officers to ensure that items were placed on the Forward Plan in a timely manner and he provided assurance that this was something he would be monitoring.
- 65.3 With regard to the confidential item in respect of the transfer of sports facilities at Cold Pool Lane, due to be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 26 April 2017, a Member questioned whether this could be agreed before the new financial year. The Chief Executive explained that the transfer of facilities was a long process and there were a series of actions still to be taken, including identifying the sports clubs which may be likely to take on the facilities, therefore 26 April was the earliest that this item was likely to come forward. He clarified that it was not essential for this matter to be resolved within the current financial year.
- 65.4 It was
RESOLVED That the Executive Committee Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

OS.66 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

- 66.1 Attention was drawn to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, 2016/17, circulated at Pages No. 19-22, which Members were asked to consider.
- 66.2 The Head of Corporate Services explained that an update on the Community Safety Partnership had been removed from the Agenda for the present meeting as it had been suspended pending a countywide review of Community Safety Partnerships. This work had now been completed and a report would be brought to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 February 2017. Members were also informed that the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Review Working Group had not yet concluded its findings and a report would not be ready to bring to the next meeting of the Committee. As such, this item would now be brought to the meeting on 21 March 2017. A Member raised concern that this review had been ongoing for some time and he questioned whether the new deadline was achievable. In response, Members were advised that the Officers involved had provided assurance that the work would be concluded in time for the March meeting.
- 66.3 It was noted that David Steels had now left his post as Environmental Health Manager and the Work Programme would need to be updated to reflect that. The Chief Executive indicated that Tewkesbury Borough Council had entered into an arrangement with Cheltenham Borough Council through which their Environmental Health Manager, Yvonne Hope, would run the Environmental Health and Licensing services whilst the potential for further collaboration with Cheltenham Borough Council was explored in respect of those services. In response to a Member query, he advised that Yvonne would be working four days per week and she was already in post. As part of the same arrangement, Cheltenham Borough Council was providing extra support within the Licensing team. Alastair Low from the

Environmental Health team had also picked up some additional work including taking on the role of District Emergency Planning Liaison Officer (DEPLO) where he was supported by Adrian Goode as Deputy DEPLO. The new Head of Community Services, Peter Tonge, would be joining the team at the end of the month at which time Richard Kirk, the Interim Head of Service, would leave the authority.

66.4 Having considered the information provided, it was

RESOLVED That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2016/17 be **NOTED**.

OS.67 GLOUCESTERSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PRESENTATION

67.1 The Chair introduced Steve Maginn, Local Risk Manager from the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service, and indicated that he would be giving a presentation about the impact of fire prevention and protection.

67.2 Members were advised that, when Stewart Edgar had been appointed as the Chief Fire Officer and Operations Director in 2014, he had a clear remit in terms of making efficiency savings and a new service delivery model had been introduced as a result. At the time there had been 33 pumping appliances across 22 stations with a budget of £18.25M and it had been necessary to reduce that by £3.4M. This had resulted in an unparalleled strategic review of all aspects of service delivery and support with the main outcomes being the reduction in demand on response and the creation of capacity to implement a greater prevention strategy. Prevention and protection was now at the heart of all of the work carried out by the Fire and Rescue Service. The catalyst for change was a piece of work carried out by Severn Park Fire and Rescue Service in the south-west which had looked at a range of 100 fires and highlighted seven 'at risk' groups within communities. Once these groups had been established, links had been made with the Police, health services and other agencies to identify where those people were located. Historically the Fire Service had undertaken a lot of home safety visits and, given that people felt comfortable with allowing Fire Officers into their homes, this had evolved from offering basic fundamental fire safety advice to 'Safe and Well' checks and had helped to identify vulnerable people. It was now possible to map where the most vulnerable groups were located and to plan resources and develop the prevention strategy accordingly.

67.3 As part of the Safe and Well visits, a pilot scheme had been run with Public Health England regarding winter-related illnesses. The scheme had involved five stations over a three month period during winter 2015/16 and 6,304 visits had been conducted during that time. It had been targeted at the over 65's and had focused on four main contributors to winter-related illness including the prevention of falls; the prevention of cold homes; the prevention of social isolation; and ensuring that people received flu immunisation. The project had included tackling the underlying causes of fire, fire fatalities and injuries whilst also improving the health and wellbeing of vulnerable adults. Through the scheme, the Fire and Rescue Service had been able to signpost the most vulnerable people in the community and look at safeguarding. It was hoped that the success of the scheme could be repeated this year with the addition of eye sight checks; this was one of the biggest issues with people aged over 65 and could cause problems in an emergency e.g. being able to get out of a property quickly.

- 67.4 With regard to telecare, the remote monitoring of an individual's condition or lifestyle, Members were informed that, under the previous system operated by Gloucestershire County Council, assessments could only be carried out if a family member could respond on that person's behalf. There was now an opportunity for the Fire Service to act as a responder and this had opened up the scheme to more people. Fire Officers were also involved with cardiac care on behalf of the ambulance service and acted as the First Person on Scene (FPOS) where access could not be gained; this had previously been carried out by the Police on behalf of the ambulance service. Members were advised that the telecare pilot, run from mid-June to mid-September 2016 in the North Cotswolds, had enabled 28 people to return home or remain in their own homes where the alternative would have either been a short or long term placement in a care home. If calculated for the full year, the savings across the pilot areas would have been £482,956 and, if applied across the county's six districts, would result in savings of £2.92M per year.
- 67.5 Members were advised that the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service had worked closely with Prior's Park Neighbourhood Project on a successful scheme during the course of 2016 which had yielded a lot of results in terms of vulnerability in that area. The new Police Inspector, Cheryl Godwin, was keen to launch the Aston Project - a scheme aiming to work with young people aged 9-17 by identifying their interests and engaging them in constructive activity which they built credits towards a reward activity through timebanking - within Tewkesbury Borough and Prior's Park would be the pilot area. The new Watch Manager in charge of the Fire Station in Tewkesbury, Michele Hick, was very driven in terms of prevention and youth involvement and one of her tasks was to develop a cadet force for the Tewkesbury area which would be run by the Fire Service; there had been great success with this scheme in Cinderford.
- 67.6 One of the biggest successes in terms of driving down response was the reduction in the number of false alarms caused by automatic fire detection apparatus in commercial properties; this had reduced by 82% since 2011 which was the biggest reduction in the whole country. This had created a massive capacity and generated huge financial savings. It was clear that the main challenges for the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service over the next three years would be finding a further £2.2M savings from the budget, thus making it the first £13M Fire and Rescue Service in the country; the intended reforms which had been set out by Teresa May whilst in her role as Home Secretary; and a potential bid from the Police and Crime Commissioner and the associated impacts on governance. Reducing the budget further would be a significant challenge and, whilst staff had been protected up until this point, it may now be necessary to consider new delivery models.
- 67.7 A Member was very impressed with the idea of a cadet force within Tewkesbury as he felt that this could offer discipline and guidance to young people. It could also help to prevent anti-social behaviour and he referred to several incidents of arson in Brockworth by way of example. He questioned how this would be paid for, given the need to make further budget cuts, and was advised that the Fire and Rescue Service could not afford to fund the project; however, it could offer support in terms of management, facilities and training. The Fire and Rescue Service relied heavily on volunteers and it was hoped that, with the guidance of the new Watch Manager at Tewkesbury who was leading the project, there would be at least five new recruits who would be ready to get involved in that type of activity with further support from parents. A lot of Fire Services were now running apprenticeships which bridged the gap between the cadet force and becoming a firefighter. There was a definite link with a reduction in anti-social behaviour and if a successful cadet force could be developed within Tewkesbury, it could be rolled out to Gloucester, which included the Brockworth area the Member had referred to.

- 67.8 In response to a query regarding Winchcome Fire Station and whether it was aligned to any other stations, Members were advised that this was a retained station as opposed to a voluntary station – there were no voluntary stations within Gloucestershire. It was intended to provide a managerial support group for North Cotswold, which would include retained firefighters, in order to link stations together as some Officers had a lot of experience which others could learn from. He pointed out that there was a particularly good relationship with the whole-time station at Uckington where there were four full-time Watch Managers so there were already links in place for retained stations such as Winchcombe. Another Member questioned whether any difficulty had been experienced obtaining information about vulnerable members of the community. He was informed that this was generally not a problem; third sector agencies could be reluctant to share information but this had not proven to be obstructive. Firefighters liked to know the outcomes and results of interventions but this was not always possible due to confidentiality. As such, consideration was being given to using reference numbers for jobs so they could be quoted without disclosing any sensitive information.
- 67.9 A Member sought an explanation as to how the 82% reduction in the number of false alarms caused by automatic fire detection apparatus in commercial properties had been achieved. Members were advised that consideration had been given to the profile of such cases, the percentage that had turned out to be real fires and whether anything could have been done to prevent them in procedural terms. It had been concluded that it was the responsibility of the business to ensure that alarms were investigated and that the Fire and Rescue Service was only called out to deal with real fires. It had been found that companies often enlisted call centres as a third party to deal with the alarms and they had tended to automatically put these through to the Fire and Rescue Service for investigation. The stance had therefore been changed and letters had been sent to thousands of organisations to outline their responsibility; there would be a full response to genuine fires but any false alarms would be challenged. The percentage reduction was an indication of just how big the problem had been and how simple it was to overcome. A Member indicated that business premises in America were charged for false alarms and she was advised that there was a ‘three strikes and out’ system in place here. As a lot of the false alarms were due to misplaced equipment or changes to processes it was considered to be more beneficial to give businesses the benefit of the doubt initially and work with them to address the problems; however, they were aware that they would be fined if the problem persisted.
- 67.10 The Chair thanked the Local Risk Manager for his informative presentation and indicated that the additional confidential information which had been provided in respect of the outcomes of the interventions to reduce the risk of harm to vulnerable groups from winter-related illnesses, along with a case study setting out how one particular member of the community had been assisted by the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service, would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED That the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service presentation be **NOTED**.

OS.68 HOUSING STRATEGY REVIEW REPORT

- 68.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Housing Strategy Review Working Group, circulated at Pages No. 23-213. Members were asked to consider the achievements to date in respect of the outcomes identified in the Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 Action Plan; to endorse the Housing Strategy 2017-21 and the first year action plan and recommend to Council that it be adopted with effect from 1 January 2017; and to endorse the arrangements in respect of future action plans arising from the strategy and monitoring as set out at Paragraph 4 of the report. Members noted that there was an error in the final recommendation which should refer to Paragraph 5 of the report.
- 68.2 The Chair of the Housing Strategy Review Working Group, and Lead Member for Built Environment, indicated that he was happy to present the 2015/16 achievements of the Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 and to draw that strategy to a close whilst presenting the Committee with a new five year Housing Strategy for 2017-21. He explained that the Housing Advice team continued to provide advice and assistance via a drop-in service at the Public Services Centre to over 1,000 customers annually; in 2015/16 1,360 households had received support. It was noted that the number of residents seeking advice had doubled since 2010. The number of residents approaching the Council with serious housing difficulty, who were in need of in-depth assistance, had risen by 24% during the lifetime of the previous strategy to 229 households in the last financial year, which was in line with national homeless trends. A renewed emphasis on homeless prevention during the lifetime of the strategy had resulted in a slight reduction in homeless applications. On average, 120 households approached the Council as homeless each year, of which about half were accepted as homeless; although the figures did vary year on year. The last financial year had seen a slight drop in the number of homelessness approaches but the figure year on year was relatively stable. Of those approaches, the numbers accepted had slightly reduced but, similarly, remained stable. Homelessness prevention figures had seen a significant increase in the last financial year to 172; on average the preventions had been at around 105 per year. In the current financial year (April to December 2016), the number of preventions stood at 87 households. Members were advised that the Housing Advice team focused on preventative services rather than dealing with customers in crisis having already reached a state of homelessness. Officers sought to assist customers early and positively through landlord negotiations, family mediation or supporting them to find alternative accommodation, including access to private rented housing where appropriate. The Anti-Social Behaviour Youth Diversion Worker had an essential role in homelessness prevention and worked with housing services, housing providers/landlords and the Police in order to prevent evictions where the household was likely to become homeless due to anti-social behaviour. The countywide Sanctuary Scheme for households experiencing domestic violence had been remarkably successful. Since the inception of the scheme in 2014, 31 households had been able to remain in their homes to date through target hardening measures such as lock changes, security lighting and panic alarms. In addition, temporary housing had been sourced for households fleeing domestic violence in the Borough through a joint project with other local authorities in Gloucestershire.

- 68.3 Members were advised that the Council had five properties within the Borough which were let on licence agreements to provide emergency accommodation. These had been invaluable in enabling most of the families needing emergency accommodation to remain within the borough, however, there continued to be a heavy reliance on bed and breakfast in other areas for single households and couples. Much work continued to secure further temporary accommodation in the borough for those groups working with social housing providers. During the lifetime of the Housing Strategy 2012-16, 668 additional affordable homes had been built across the Borough. It was currently estimated that a further 197 affordable homes would be built in the current financial year, which continued to exceed the Council Plan target of 150 affordable homes per annum. In 2015/16, 139 new homes were built for rent and available through housing associations. In the same period there were a total of 409 lets across the borough in housing association properties meaning that 34% of lets came from new-build affordable rented homes. Affordability of housing was impacting on many residents, for example, large families on benefits affected by the benefit cap would be unable to afford to rent a home in the borough, even at social rented levels, unless they could secure employment or increase the number of hours they currently worked. Single people under 35 and young people aged 18-21 who were on benefits would also find all rented accommodation unaffordable unless they secured employment. Officers were working with the Revenues and Benefits team, housing providers, job centres and the Citizens' Advice Bureau to prevent residents from losing their homes and to secure more 'skills for life' training. The Environmental Health team continued to respond accordingly to requests for support from private rented tenants and private landlords regarding housing conditions, including the 'Safe at Home' and 'Warm and Well' schemes. On average, eight Category 1 hazards were removed per year as a result of interventions from Officers.
- 68.4 The Housing Strategy 2017-21, attached at Appendix 2 to the report, included a statutory requirement for a Homelessness Strategy and a Tenancy Strategy which could be found at Appendices 2 and 3 of the Strategy respectively. The five year strategy played a key part in delivering the Council Plan which identified housing as a priority. The strategy had been brought together by Officers and an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group where Members had been presented with the housing and homelessness evidence needed to inform them of the whole picture of needs and challenges for the borough. The Working Group had agreed priorities and objectives for public and stakeholder consultation which had run for a six week period. The consultation had identified many areas of concern and gaps in the original evidence base which had been addressed in the document before the Committee. The strategy was an overarching document which took into account the principal national and local issues that were likely to affect Tewkesbury Borough in the foreseeable future. It set out the housing challenges and explained how it was intended to address the issues through four key priorities: increasing housing supply; homelessness and homelessness prevention; meeting the needs of specific groups; and improving the health and wellbeing of local people. The key objectives were detailed within each of the priority areas and were set out at Page No. 80 of the report. Targets and outcomes for delivering the objectives would be included in an annual action plan. An action plan for the first year had been agreed by the Working Group and was set out at Page No. 82 of the report. It was proposed that this be updated annually to allow the Council to be proactive, as well as reactive, to the changing needs of the community and to respond when new government policies were implemented. The action plan would be as flexible as possible so that new actions could be started as and when appropriate over the five year period. Action Plans would be taken to the Executive Committee for approval with bi-annual monitoring reports taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

- 68.5 Several Members of the Housing Strategy Review Working Group took the opportunity to congratulate Officers for the amount of work that had gone into the review, particularly given the short timescale for completion, the complexities associated with housing and the amount of work required to be undertaken by such a small team. With reference to that, a Member sought assurance that the first year action plan was realistic and the Housing Services Manager confirmed that Officers were confident they could be achieved, particularly considering the amount of work that had been done over the last couple of years and the focus of the team. The Chief Executive agreed that the targets were challenging but pointed out that the actions would be delivered in connection with a range of partners. The Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing praised the Housing Services team for its achievements in recent years, particularly given the stressful and often undesirable circumstances in which Officers had to work, and indicated that he had every confidence that they would succeed in delivering the action plan.
- 68.6 A Member drew attention to Page No. 35 of the report and questioned how many empty homes had been brought back into use. The Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer advised that the figures in relation to long-term empty properties were set out at Page No. 163 of the report and covered the period 2011/12 to 2016/17. With regard to the previous strategy, a Member noted that one of the measures to achieve the objective 'to provide social housing for those most in need' was to 'continue to implement the Gloucestershire Homeseeker allocations procedure' with the outcome of 'ensuring all households in emergency bands are housed appropriately within a reasonable timescale' and she sought clarification as to what was meant by a 'reasonable timescale'. The Housing Services Manager explained that emergency banding was a misleading term as it included anyone downsizing within that band, which was an emergency for Officers as opposed to the customer; however, it also included people who were in a true emergency situation and required accommodation immediately e.g. where a property was subject to a Prohibition Order (where there was a serious threat to health and safety of occupants) or a person returning from hospital required specialist accommodation. Officers generally resolved these issues within two months. With regard to Page No. 84 of the report, a Member sought further explanation as to what was meant by 'stop the use of private bed and breakfast for emergency accommodation except in emergencies' as stated in relation to Priority 2, Action 8. In response, the Housing Services Manager advised that, whilst a certain amount of homelessness cases could be anticipated, there would always be unforeseen incidents, for instance, people being made homeless as a result of flooding, which may require emergency accommodation, such as bed and breakfasts, and the action intended to ensure that type of accommodation was only used for such purposes. A Member went on to draw attention to Page No. 127 and he questioned what was meant by 'bashes' in the Department of Communities and Local Government definition of rough sleeping set out at Paragraph 4.1. The Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer explained that bashes were temporary structures made by rough sleepers to protect themselves against the elements and she undertook to insert an explanatory note to this effect.
- 68.7 The Deputy Chief Executive felt that the Housing Strategy was successfully summarised in the diagram at Page No. 63 of the report; it fitted with a number of other key strategic documents both at a borough and countywide level and he felt that there was interaction between the various different elements. He reiterated the importance of flexibility given the uncertainty in terms of future legislation and he felt that this had been achieved within the draft strategy for 2017-21. Having considered the information provided, and views expressed, it was

RESOLVED

1. That the achievements made to date in respect of the outcomes identified in the Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 Action Plan, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report, be **NOTED**.
2. That the Housing Strategy 2017-21 and first year action plan be endorsed, as set out at Appendix 2 of the report, and that it be **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that it be **ADOPTED** with effect from 1 January 2017.
3. That the arrangements in respect of future action plans arising from the strategy and monitoring be **ENDORSED**, as set out at Paragraph 5 of the report.

OS.69 REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 69.1 The report of the Head of Corporate Services, circulated at Pages No. 214-229, set out the findings of an assessment of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's effectiveness. Members were asked to approve the recommendations identified at Paragraph 2.5 of the report.
- 69.2 The Head of Corporate Services explained that the Corporate Peer Challenge, completed in November 2014, had recognised how the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made an important contribution and had made recommendations to maximise its value and increase effectiveness. Work had subsequently been undertaken by the Committee both in 2015 and in 2016, when the membership of the Committee had changed following Borough Council elections, to obtain Members' views and ideas. At the workshop held on 9 February 2016, Members had agreed to be critiqued by an independent assessor and Ann Reeder from Frontline Consulting had observed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 14 June 2016. Initial observations had been fed back to the Committee directly following the meeting and the formal report was attached at Appendix 1 of the Committee report.
- 69.3 The Head of Corporate Services had summarised the main findings within Paragraph 2.0 of the Committee report. Ann had highlighted numerous examples of good practice including the publication of the annual Overview and Scrutiny Committee report; commitment of the Committee and robust Chairmanship; strong Officer support; relevant and significant issues being included within the Work Programme; and the Committee's understanding of 'what mattered' e.g. policy development and issues relating to the Borough. Another area where the Committee really added value was when undertaking reviews in Working Group mode, for instance, the reviews of car parking, public participation at Planning Committee, the Housing Strategy and the emerging Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. The report recommendations were very detailed and there were several statements of fact about what was already taking place. For example, it was suggested that the Committee focus on RAG (Red, Amber, Green) ratings and direction of travel indicators – these were used within the performance tracker; the report had pointed out that Members could be reminded that they could make suggestions for the Agenda – Members were already aware that they could input into the Committee Work Programme as and when they felt appropriate; and, it was stated that the pre-meeting could usefully help the Committee as a whole to identify the overall areas for focus – the Head of Corporate Services tried to do this in the pre-briefings which were held immediately prior to the Committee meetings.

- 69.4 Following discussion between Officers, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee and the Lead Member, it was felt that some of the recommendations would add no value to the effectiveness of the Committee and, in some cases the benefits would be disproportionate to the resources available to effectively implement the recommendation, for instance, Members sharing out responsibility for specific areas of performance; conducting preparation for pre-briefings via email in advance; and the introduction of a Select Committee style seating arrangement. Three key recommendations had been identified which it was believed would add value to the effectiveness of the Committee and they were set out at Paragraph 2.5 of the report. In terms of the identification of key partners who contributed to the delivery of the Council's priorities and programming their attendance at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it was felt that it would be more beneficial to focus on partners who would help to deliver the Council Plan rather than choosing them more randomly due to an interest in a particular area. It was also agreed that a consistent approach across all monitoring reports would be advantageous and Officers would ensure that future reports included a RAG rating or direction of travel indicators in a similar way to the performance tracker. Finally, it was accepted that ongoing training and development, particularly in respect of effective questioning and the relationship between the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees, was necessary and the Heads of Corporate Services and Democratic Services would work on a training and development programme to increase effectiveness. In addition, attention was drawn to Paragraph 2.6 of the Officer report which explained that, at the time the observation exercise had been undertaken, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had still been receiving financial information as part of the quarterly performance management report, which was no longer the case as the financial information was now reported directly to the Executive Committee only. Members may wish to consider whether this was an appropriate arrangement or whether the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should continue to have an input into the Council's financial position.
- 69.5 With regard to the updates from the Council's representatives on the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel, a Member suggested that the updates could be circulated in advance of the meeting and another Member agreed this was a good idea. However, several Members were of the opinion that it was helpful to hear the reports from the representatives at the meeting and that scrutiny of those bodies would be less effective without a verbal presentation. It was subsequently agreed that the reporting arrangements for these updates remain unchanged. A Member went on to express the view that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive financial information and Members were advised that this could easily be reincorporated into the quarterly performance management report. The Chief Executive's view was that, if receiving this information helped more Members to understand the Council's financial position, this could only be beneficial in terms of making decisions at Council. A Member queried whether this would impact upon Officer time and he was advised that the information was produced for the Executive Committee anyway and the Head of Finance and Asset Management already attended Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings where performance management was being reported so there would be no additional impact.
- 69.6 The Lead Member for Organisational Development explained that she was in a difficult position as both a Member of the Executive Committee and Portfolio Holder for Scrutiny. One of the objectives of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was to challenge Lead Members and she found it frustrating that this did not seem to happen. She pointed out that the Lead Member for Built Environment had presented an item earlier on the Agenda but this had been prepared by Officers and no questions had been directed to him by other Members. Another Member indicated that he frequently raised concern that Lead Members did not provide

enough feedback to other Members. The Chief Executive reminded Members that Tewkesbury Borough Council was a fourth option authority and Committee reports were produced by Officers rather than Members as they would in a Cabinet arrangement. The Lead Member for Built Environment had presented the report on the Housing Strategy and, given the significance of the document and the complexity of the topic, it was not unreasonable that Officers had assisted with its preparation. He pointed out that it was down to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to follow-up with questions if they felt that the information provided needed to be challenged. Members were advised that Lead Members regularly presented to Council so that all Members were kept abreast of what was happening within their Portfolios. The Head of Democratic Services agreed that scrutiny in a fourth option authority was much more difficult than in a cabinet arrangement with single party control. Whilst there was a role for scrutiny, this was much less clear cut and, as a result, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had tended to play a greater role in other elements such as policy development - a huge area of success for the Committee. She explained that Lead Members could be invited to attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings; however, this should be on the basis of them being challenged on particular issues and not simply to provide information. She also highlighted occasions in the past when Lead Members had attended the Committee to answer questions on matters of concern to Members such as recycling. Tewkesbury Borough Council strived for partnership working between the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees and it was important that the two Committees did not become confrontational as that could be detrimental to the business of the Council and how it operated. She accepted more training was needed around the nature of the relationship between the Committees and that would be arranged in due course.

69.7 A Member felt that one of the main problems was a lack of understanding among Members as to what was covered within each of the Lead Member Portfolios. On that basis, he suggested that the performance tracker could be updated to include the name of the Lead Member responsible for each action and it was agreed that would be implemented for the next quarterly report. The Chief Executive advised that Members had all previously been issued with a list of the Portfolios and this could be recirculated following the meeting. He clarified that it was down to the individual Lead Members as to how they chose to run their Portfolio.

69.8 Having considered the report, and the views expressed, it was

RESOLVED

1. That the report on the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be **NOTED** and the recommendations identified in Paragraph 2.5 be **APPROVED**.
2. That financial information be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the quarterly performance management report.
3. That the performance tracker be updated to include the names of the Lead Members responsible for each action.

The meeting closed at 6:18 pm

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN 2016/17

REGULAR ITEM:

- Forward Plan – To note the forthcoming items.

Addition to 1 February 2017

- Performance Management Report – Quarter Two 2016/17.
- Confidential Item: Revenues and Benefits Restructure.
- Confidential Item: Public Service Centre Refurbishment.

Deletion from 1 February 2017

- Treasury Management Strategy – Removed as is part of the Budget Report.

Committee Date: 15 March 2017

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Fee Charging Strategy	To consider and agree a Fee Charging Strategy for the Council.	Simon Dix, Head of Finance and Asset Management.	Yes – from January 2017.
Joint Core Strategy Strategic Allocation Sites: Allocation of Affordable Housing.	To consider changes to the allocation of affordable housing on the Strategic Allocation sites in the Joint Core Strategy and to make a recommendation to Council on the way forward.	Paul Baker, Housing Services Manager.	No.
Workforce Development Strategy.	To approve the Workforce Development Strategy.	Janet Martin, Human Resources Manager.	Yes deferred from February 2017.

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Agenda Item 5

Committee Date: 15 March 2017

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
<p>Confidential Item: Spring Gardens/Oldbury Road Regeneration.</p> <p>(To be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).</p>	<p>To consider the information provided and agree a way forward.</p>	<p>Simon Dix, Head of Finance and Asset Management.</p>	<p>Yes – Deferred from January 2017 to allow time for further information to come forward to allow a decision on the matter.</p>
<p>Confidential Item: Disposal of Garage Sites.</p> <p>(To be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).</p>	<p>To consider the information provided and agree a way forward.</p>	<p>Simon Dix, Head of Finance and Asset Management.</p>	<p>No.</p>

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Committee Date: 26 April 2017

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Performance Management Report – Quarter 3 2016/17 (Annual).	To receive and respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s review of the quarter three performance management information.	Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services.	No.
Flood Risk Management Group Terms of Reference and Action Plan (Annual).	To undertake an annual review of the Terms of Reference of the Flood Risk Management Group and action plan.	Yvonne Hope, Environmental Health Manager	No.
Council Plan 2016/20 Refresh - Year One (Annual).	To consider the Council Plan refresh and make a recommendation to Council.	Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services.	No.
High Level Service Plan Summaries (Annual).	To consider the key activities of each service grouping during 2017/18.	Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services.	No.
Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.	To approve the amended Economic Development and Tourism Strategy following an Overview and Scrutiny review.	Andy Sanders, Economic and Community Development Manager.	Yes deferred from January 2017 to allow for Overview and Scrutiny Committee consideration.
Confidential Item: Transfer of Sports Facilities, Cold Pool Lane.	To consider the transfer of sports facilities at Cold Pool Lane to a club or organisation on a 25 year lease.	Andy Noble, Asset Manager	No.

(To be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

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Committee Date: (Date To be Confirmed) June 2017			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Appointment of Portfolio Holders and Support Members (Annual)	To approve the Portfolio Holders and Support Members for the forthcoming Municipal Year.	Lin O'Brien, Head of Democratic Services.	No.

Committee Date: (Date To be Confirmed) July 2017			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Performance Management Report – Quarter Four 2016/17 (Annual).	To receive and respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of the quarter four performance management information.	Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services.	No.
Financial Outturn Report incl. capital financing and earmarked reserves (Annual).	To consider the Council's financial outturn.	Simon Dix, Head of Finance and Asset Management.	No.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

REGULAR ITEMS:

- **Executive Committee Forward Plan**
- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2016/17**

Addition to 7 February 2017

- Community Safety Partnership Update
- Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel Update – Last meeting due to be held on 3 Feb.
- Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update – Last meeting held on 10 Jan.

Committee Date: 21 March 2017

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Performance Report – Quarter 3 2016/17.	To review and scrutinise the performance management information and, where appropriate, to require response or action from the Executive Committee	Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services	No.
Complaints Report	To consider – six monthly update.	Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager	No. – Report to be considered on an annual basis in accordance with the decision made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 September 2016.
Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Review Report	To endorse the report of the Working Group and recommend the strategy to the Executive Committee for approval.	Andy Sanders, Economic and Community Development Manager	Yes – Moved from 7 February 2017 as the Working Group had not yet had its final meeting to consider the draft strategy.

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Agenda Item 6

NB – Changes from previous work programme highlighted in bold

Committee Date: 21 March 2017

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Flood Risk Management Group Report	To receive an annual report on the progress against the Flood Risk Management Action Plan and to recommend to the Executive Committee that the Flood Risk Management Group Terms of Reference be adopted for the next 12 months.	Yvonne Hope, Environmental Health Manager	No.
Grounds Maintenance Update	To consider grounds maintenance performance, in particular, the implementation of Key Performance Indicators.	David Steels, Environmental Health Manager	No – agreed by O&S when considering the Grounds Maintenance Update report at its meeting on 18 October 2016. – To be included in the Review of Ubico to be considered at the meeting on 2 May 2016.
Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel Update	To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting.	N/A	No.
Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update	To receive an update from the Council's representative on matters considered at the last meeting.	N/A	No.

Committee Date: 2 May 2017			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2017/18.	To approve the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for the forthcoming year.	Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services	No.
Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2016/17.	To approve the annual report as required by the Council's Constitution to ensure that the activities of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are promoted both internally and publicly to reinforce transparency and accountability in the democratic process.	Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services	No.
Review of Ubico	To consider – annual update.	Peter Tonge, Head of Community Services	No. NB – This will include the grounds maintenance update in accordance with the decision made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 November 2016.
Gloucestershire Families First Update	To consider – six monthly update.	Adrian Goode, Community Development Officer	No. Report to be considered on an annual basis in accordance with the decision made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 November 2016.

NB – Changes from previous work programme highlighted in bold

Committee Date: 2 May 2017			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Customer Care Strategy	To consider- annual update.	Clare Evans, Communications and Policy Manager	No.
Disabled Facilities Grants Review Monitoring Report	To consider - six monthly update.	Yvonne Hope, Environmental Health Manager	No.

PENDING ITEMS

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item
Review of Borough News	Terms of Reference to establish a Working Group to undertake the review to be brought to the Committee when the Communications and Policy Manager returns from maternity leave – agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 29 November 2016.
Risk Management Strategy Review	Agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 14 June 2016.
Absence Management Policy Review	Agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 14 June 2016.
Financial Inclusion	Requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 April 2016 – report to be considered by the Committee prior to the Executive Committee.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2016
Subject:	Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the Council's Involvement in the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Report of:	Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services
Corporate Lead:	Mike Dawson, Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor Mrs E J MacTiernan, Lead Member for Organisational Development
Number of Appendices:	None

Executive Summary:

As a member of the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (GHCOS) Tewkesbury Borough Council has made a contribution to the running costs since 2002. At its meeting held on 5 October 2011, the Executive Committee agreed that:

- a contribution of £2,500 remain in the Council's base budget to be paid subject to the Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertaking an annual review; and
- as well as receiving regular reports from the Council's representative, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee considers on an annual basis, the effectiveness of the Council's continued involvement in GHCOS and whether value for money is being achieved for the contribution paid;

Subject to this review, and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee being content, payment of the contribution would be authorised.

Recommendation:

- 1. To CONSIDER the effectiveness of the Council's continued involvement in the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
- 2. That, subject to the Committee being satisfied that value for money is being achieved, Officers be authorised to make the payment of £2,500 from the Council's base budget**

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Council continues to support its commitment to health improvement, to act as an advocate for the borough's communities, and continue working in partnership with other public bodies within the county.

Resource Implications:

The £2,500 contribution is included within the Council's budget.

Legal Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

Risk Management Implications:

Not being part of the Committee would reduce the Council's ability to influence health related issues within the borough.

In view of the fact that all other Gloucestershire districts contribute, there would be a potential reputational issue if the Council did not.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Regular feedback is given to Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the Council's representative.

Environmental Implications:

None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 In 2003, when the County Council set up the then Health, Community and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it was agreed to involve the district councils and, since that date, all districts have made a contribution to the running costs. The contribution covers the administrative expense of running the Committee. There is wide coverage of health and care related issues and an Officer with specialist knowledge is essential for the Committee to operate effectively.

1.2 The Executive Committee, at its meeting of 1 October 2008, approved payment for three years commencing April 2008. A further report was taken to the Executive Committee on 5 October 2011, to agree a way forward, as the three year approval period had elapsed. At this meeting, Executive Committee agreed that:

- a contribution of £2,500 remain in the Council's base budget to be paid subject to the Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertaking an annual review; and
- as well as receiving regular reports from the Council's representative, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers on an annual basis, the effectiveness of the Council's continued involvement in GHCOS and whether value for money is being achieved for the contribution paid.

2.0 GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH AND CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2.1 This is a County Council function but throughout it has included representatives from each District Council. It was decided that the principle behind health overview and scrutiny was to produce a model that involved cross-council co-operation and the effective joining up of the health agenda in the promotion of community development. This model is recognised nationally as best practice.

2.2 The purpose of the Committee (as described on the County's website) is : -

1. *Carry out the overview and scrutiny functions of the County Council delivering the roles set out in Article 8 of the Constitution focussing on health issues from the public's perspective including the use of task groups to carry out its overview and scrutiny functions. To act as a lever to improve the health and those services that impact on the health of local people, working in partnership with other agencies. To address issues of health inequalities between different groups in the community. To determine those matters referred to in Article 11.02.2 of the Constitution (joint committees concerning health service changes).*
2. *Under the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013, to exercise the Council's role:*
 - *in reviewing and scrutinising matters relating to the planning, provision and*
 - *in commenting on or making a recommendation in relation to proposals for a substantial development or variation to services save that 'referral powers' to the Secretary of State remain with full Council.*
3. *Carry out the overview and scrutiny functions of the County Council delivering the roles set out in Article 8 of the Constitution in the context of all matters relating to adult social care.*

2.3 Councillor Mrs J E Day is the Tewkesbury Borough Council representative on the Committee and reports regularly to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the activities of the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.0 WORK OF THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH AND CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3.1 The Committee received a wealth of presentations, monitoring reports, performance reports and financial reports from organisations within the health sector. These included;

- Receiving a presentation on mental health developments within Gloucestershire.
- Presentation of an End of Life Care Strategy.
- Quarterly Adult Social Care and Public Health performance report.
- Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group performance report.
- Review of accident and emergency waiting times.
- Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust financial position.
- Presentation on Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group's Sustainability and Transformation Plan.
- Healthwatch Gloucestershire quarterly performance report.
- Update report from Director of Public Health re: sexual health remodelling, immunisation uptake, flu activity, drug and alcohol recovery service contract, healthy lifestyle contract award etc.
- Review of ambulance response times.
- Review of minor injury and illness units in Gloucestershire.
- Non-emergency patient transport system review.
- Presentation on workforce planning.

All agendas and reports can be accessed on the Gloucestershire County Council website: <http://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=669&Year=0>

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The GHCOS has considered a wide range of scrutiny work during 2016/17 which has contributed to improving health and care services across the whole of the county. Elements of this work impact in Tewkesbury Borough and this Council's engagement with the Committee has allowed local views to be represented to, and considered by, the Committee in its deliberations.

4.2 Continued membership of GHCOS will allow Tewkesbury Borough Council to maintain its influence on important health issues. Through membership, this Council is able to act as an advocate for the communities in the borough.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 None.

7.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

7.1 Council Plan (2016-2020)

8.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

8.1 The Localism Act promotes joint working and the need for local councils to act as advocates for its communities.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

9.1 £2,500 annual contribution.

10.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

10.1 None.

11.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

11.1 Involvement in GHCOS helps to identify and improve any health, care and wellbeing issues.

12.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

12.1 None.

Background Papers: None

Contact Officer: Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services
01684 272002 graeme.simpson@teWKesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: None

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2017
Subject:	Enviro-Crimes Update
Report of:	Richard Kirk, Interim Head of Community Services
Corporate Lead:	Rob Weaver, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Cllr J R Mason, Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment
Number of Appendices:	None

Executive Summary:

In July 2016 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report regarding the Council's approach to tackling enviro-crime within the borough. This report provides an update on the progress that the Environmental Health Section has made since the summer of 2016.

A number of positive steps have been made to tackle the problem, including a successful prosecution, positioning of warning signs in hot-spot areas and improved partnership working. The persistent and apparently organised fly-tipping, which is currently blighting several areas within the borough remains a challenge and the Environmental Health Section is currently reviewing the further options available to address the problem.

This report also provides an update on the current position regarding the recruitment of an Environmental Warden to work across the borough in partnership with Town and Parish Councils to reduce enviro-crime.

Recommendation:

- 1. To CONSIDER the current position in respect of enviro-crimes, particularly fly-tipping, and the actions being taken by the Environmental Health Section to tackle the issue.**
- 2. To CONSIDER the current position regarding the recruitment of an Environmental Warden.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Council's performance in respect of enviro-crimes is monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report highlights the positive progress being achieved by the Environmental Health Section through the introduction of a range of measures to tackle fly-tipping since the previous update was provided to the Committee in July 2016.

Resource Implications:

Responsibility for the enforcement of enviro-crimes lies with the Environmental Health Section. Ubico has responsibility for clearing fly-tipped material, littering and dog fouling on public land. An estimate of the enviro-crime investigation costs and the costs incurred by Ubico for removing fly-tipped material is provided in Tables 1 & 2 within Section 4.0 of the report. Table 3 compares the Council's fly-tipping clearance and enforcement costs with the national average.

Legal Implications:

Several enviro-crimes, such as fly-tipping, are criminal offences and therefore investigations must only be undertaken by suitably authorised and competent Officers. Failure to conduct investigations in accordance with statutory guidelines relating to criminal investigation procedure may expose the Council to successful legal challenges against enforcement action.

In particular, Officers must pay particular attention to the provisions contained within the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), when considering whether to employ overt or covert surveillance measures and the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) when conducting investigations and gathering evidence under caution.

In dealing with the investigation of enviro-crimes and determining the most appropriate course of action, Officers will adhere to the Council's Enforcement Policy to ensure that any formal action is proportionate, consistent and transparent.

Risk Management Implications:

Enviro-crimes are unsightly and can blight communities. Failure to tackle enviro-crimes could result in a potential reputational risk to the Council. Furthermore, enviro-crimes are costly to clear up and a reduction in such crimes will have a benefit in terms of financial risk management for the Council.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The level of enviro-crimes is a key performance indicator for the Council and is monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's performance tracker on a quarterly basis.

Environmental Implications:

Enviro-crimes have a direct effect on both visual and physical environmental quality, therefore a reduction in enviro-crimes will result in a clear improvement to the environment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** In 2014 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee convened an Enviro-Crime Working Group against a backdrop of increasing reports of enviro-crimes within Tewkesbury Borough. The Working Group report was adopted at the meeting of the Executive Committee on 16 July 2014 and recommended a range of measures, which continue to be implemented by the Environmental Health Section. Recently there has been notable progress on the implementation of the Working Group strategy, particularly in relation to enforcement and improved partnership working.
- 1.2** Despite the positive steps made recently, enviro-crimes continue to present a challenge, particularly abandoned vehicles and the serious organised fly-tipping currently taking place in Sandhurst and Aggs Hill. Moving forwards, the Environmental Health Section will seek to build on the recent progress and explore further options available to tackle this problem.

2.0 CURRENT POSITION & RECENT PROGRESS

2.1 The following work has been undertaken since the previous update report which was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2016:

- A householder has been successfully prosecuted for breach of the domestic waste duty of care. The individual was fined a total of £230 including costs and the prosecution has been reported in the local media to raise awareness.
- One Legal has been asked to consider investigation files for prosecution in connection with separate fly-tipping offences in Sandhurst and Aggs Hill.
- An individual and a company will be interviewed under caution in connection with a recent fly tipping incident in Maisemore.
- An individual will be interviewed under caution in connection with a fly tipping incident in Sandhurst.
- 11 fly-tipping warning signs have been positioned throughout Sandhurst Village. The signs have been well received by residents and have appeared to result in a noticeable decrease in the number of reported fly-tips. The number of reported fly tips for quarter 3 has reduced to 85 compared to 116 in quarter 2.
- A joint fly-tipping enforcement project in Sandhurst has been proposed to the police, based on powers available to both agencies to combat fly-tipping. This would involve vehicle stop and search checks and joint patrols.
- The Principal Environmental Health Officer has met with Sandhurst Parish Council and a commitment has been made to improve communication between Environmental Health and the Parishes.
- A meeting has been convened between Environmental Health and Ubico with the aim of improving communication and joint working.
- An application has been made to secure two of the overt community safety partnership cameras for use to gather evidence to tackle fly-tipping in Sandhurst and Coriander Drive.
- A multi-agency project involving the Council, Severn Vale Housing and the Police has been initiated to address the environmental problems at Coriander Drive. A joint agency advice letter has been sent to all residents regarding responsible waste disposal and the use of bins.
- The services of the anti-fraud specialist at Cheltenham Borough Council have been secured to help with complex investigation techniques, such as tracing the mobile telephone numbers of offenders.
- A multi-agency working group involving the Police and all Gloucestershire authorities has been set up to review the current approach to abandoned vehicles. Options explored include standardising procedures across all authorities and clarification of the roles expected of the Police and local authorities, particularly regarding burnt-out and dangerous vehicles. The joint procurement of vehicle collection and disposal arrangements is also being considered.
- The abandoned HGV trailer at Ripple lay-by has now been removed and disposed of, including the waste inside the trailer. The trailer was one of several dumped across the region, which is part of a collective police and Environment Agency investigation. The Environmental Health Section is currently exploring the enforcement options available against the owner with a view to recovering the disposal costs.

- In addition to the street cleansing operations carried out by Ubico, the Volunteer Litter Picking Scheme continues to operate and is proving to be extremely effective in dealing with minor littering incidents across the borough. A spring-time event is planned to address the volunteers, thank them for their efforts and to promote the scheme further.

3.0 FURTHER WORK REQUIRED

3.1 The Environmental Health Section is exploring further options available to combat high level and persistent fly-tipping, which is currently blighting Parishes in areas such as Sandhurst, Coriander Drive, Aggs Hill and Ripple. The options planned include:

- the implementation of the joint project plan with the Police;
- visits to local authorities which have successfully reduced serious fly tipping incidents to share knowledge regarding successful strategies;
- training Officers within the Environmental Health Section on the specialist investigation techniques required to identify individuals responsible for fly-tipping;
- establishing a fly-tipping working group across Gloucestershire to pool and share resources aimed at tackling serious fly-tipping - this could involve joint procurement of a specialist fly-tipping investigator;
- introducing a general enviro-crime training plan for relevant Officers in 2017/18;
- adopting the provisions of the Unauthorised Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalty) Regulations 2016 to support the introduction of a Fixed Penalty Policy to increase fixed penalty fines from £200 to £400 per offence;
- increasing the use of Fixed Penalty Notices, especially regarding abandoned vehicles and also prosecuting offenders for illegal vehicle disposal; and
- reviewing departmental procedures to allow officers to issue on-the-spot Fixed Penalty Notices where instances of dog fouling and littering are observed.

3.2 A further review of the Council's enviro-crime policies, procedure and investigation will form a key part of the remit of the Head of Community Services when he takes up his appointment with the Council. Any additional measures adopted and the respective outcomes will be reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.0 ENVIRO-CRIME COSTINGS

4.1 **Table 1:** Estimated Officer Investigation Costs (based on average officer recharge rate across relevant officer grades) April to December 2016.

Activity	Unit rate	Volume	Total (£)
Fly-tipping complaints	£23/hr	37 at an estimate of 4 hours average per case	£3404
Dog fouling complaints	£23/hr	23 at 1 hour per case	£529
Litter complaints	£23/hr	2 at 1 hour per case	£46
Abandoned vehicle complaints	£23/hr	200 at 4 hours per case	£18,400
Noise complaints	£23/hr	192 at 4 hours per case	£17664
Abandoned vehicle removal, storage and disposal (costs recovered)	N/A	Approximately 91 vehicles at £88.90 per vehicle	£8090
Enviro-crimes contractor	£50/hr	Total cost	£1564
PACE Interview transcript typing by 1 Legal	£30	3 hours	£90
Legal advice	£32	59 hours	£1900
Sub-total			£51687
Total		£51687 - £8090	£43,597

4.2 **Table 2:** Ubico Fly Tipping Clearance Costs (obtained from Fly-Capture database).

Period	Cost
Quarter 1	£5779
Quarter 2	£5742
Quarter 3	£6011
Total	£17,532

4.3 Table 3. Comparison with national data for period 2014/2015 (Public Sector Audit Appointments – Value for Money Profiles)

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Cost (£)</i> <i>TBC</i>	<i>National Rank</i> <i>(percentile)</i>	<i>National Average</i>
Street cleansing spend	£475	In the lowest 20%	£1068
Fly-tipping clearance cost	£33470	In the middle third	£52806
Fly-tipping enforcement cost	£4686	In the lowest 25%	£25125
Number of fly-tipping actions	142	In the lowest third	£723
Fly-tipping prosecutions	0	In the lowest 5%	3

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL WARDEN

5.1 In November 2016, the Executive Committee considered a report regarding a proposal to recruit an Environmental Warden in partnership with the Town and Parish Councils. The Environmental Warden will be funded by participating Parish Councils and will be managed from within the Environmental Health Section. The Warden will also be able to call on resources and assistance from the Environmental Health Section and share intelligence to help inform and direct further action.

5.2 The following progress has been made since the meeting in November:

- 11 Parish/Town Councils have expressed an interest, with 6 more giving the matter further consideration (30 Parish/Town Councils have indicated that they do not wish to participate).
- One Legal has commenced work on a standard partnership agreement between the borough Council and the participating Parish and Town Councils.

The job description and person specification for the post has been submitted to the Human Resources Team for job evaluation and pay grading.

5.3 It is envisaged that the Environmental Warden will primarily assist with tackling dog fouling and littering, however there is scope to extend the role to cover abandoned vehicles, fly-tipping and some elements of anti-social behaviour in the future. There may also be scope, should uptake be high enough, to employ more than one Environmental Warden in the future.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 All available options under consideration are contained within the report.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation with the Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment has taken place on a monthly basis during Portfolio briefings.

7.2 Consultation with the Parish and Town Councils has been undertaken as part of the scoping exercise to appoint the Environmental Warden.

7.3 Consultation with Sandhurst Parish Council has taken place to discuss local fly-tipping issues.

8.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

8.1 Overview and Scrutiny Environmental Crime Report 2014.

9.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

9.1 Refuse and Disposal Amenity Act 1978.

Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalty) Regulations 2016.

10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

10.1 As detailed in the report.

11.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

11.1 Reducing environmental crimes can improve community safety as well as economic, social and environmental sustainability. For example, a reduction in dog fouling may increase confidence in use of community land and playing fields.

12.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

12.1 Joint working with partner agencies, such as the police and housing associations, will enable organisations to pool resources, which may enable the Council to demonstrate improved value for money when tackling enviro-crimes.

13.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

13.1 None

Background Papers: Overview and Scrutiny Environmental Crimes Review 2014

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Appendices: None

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2017
Subject:	Community Safety Partnership
Report of:	Richard Kirk, Interim Head of Community Services
Corporate Lead:	Rob Weaver, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor Mrs K J Berry, Lead Member for Community
Number of Appendices:	None

Executive Summary:

Community safety responsibilities have continued to evolve since the original formation of the Tewkesbury Community Safety Partnership almost 20 years ago.

Successive changes to public services have resulted in less in-house capacity and a move away from localised services in other community safety partner agencies. The community safety agenda is no longer met through the six district partnerships in Gloucestershire and a more effective delivery is considered possible through a larger countywide community safety partnership, supported by thematic working groups and local community safety forums for local implementation.

The management of anti-social behaviour (ASB) within Tewkesbury Borough has been influenced by changes within the Council, and within the partner agencies, and is the subject of further review in the context of community safety, which is ongoing. Changes will now be implemented to support the new county model of community safety.

Recommendation:

To receive an update and note the ongoing review of the county and local community safety and anti-social behaviour activities within the borough.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Community Safety Partnership within Tewkesbury Borough has become progressively less effective. This has largely resulted from reduced capacity within the five responsible agencies to strategically drive community safety locally whilst maintaining other core functions.

Community safety remains a statutory obligation for the Council and the other responsible agencies and a rationalised model of delivery in conjunction with the other district authorities would enable the Council to meet its obligations more effectively.

The apparent contraction of services within the other agencies has led to larger, less localised structures, which are more compatible with a countywide community safety partnership. The formulation of a County Community Safety Partnership would enable responsible authorities to maintain a meaningful community safety agenda with all local districts within Gloucestershire.

Within the Council there has been a dispersion of ASB responsibilities across a number of service areas and a review of ASB services and the connection to wider community safety activities is necessary to ensure that activities remain effective.

Resource Implications:

ASB and community safety functions require the input of several in-house services and several external agencies and rely heavily on inter-agency partnerships to remain effective. Management and delivery of the ASB and community service functions will be met through the existing staffing establishment.

Legal Implications:

Community Safety Partnerships were set up under Sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. They are made up of representatives from 'responsible authorities' which are the local authorities, police, fire and rescue, probation and health. The proposed changes to the Community Safety Partnerships in Gloucestershire are set out in this report.

Risk Management Implications:

The risks associated with not delivering an integrated approach to community safety will be reduced by supporting the countywide community safety partnership model.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The new county partnership will be the subject of a co-ordinated performance management framework to assess the achievements and determine future priorities and workloads.

Environmental Implications:

None

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 Effective partnership working is essential to help reduce crime and improve outcomes for communities and ensure that local resources are used efficiently and effectively. There are legal requirements for the five "responsible authorities" (police, local authorities, fire & rescue authority, probation and health) to work together in Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to jointly:

- reduce re-offending;
- tackle crime and disorder;
- tackle anti-social behaviour;
- tackle alcohol and substance misuse; and
- tackle any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment.

1.2 Community safety activities within CSPs cover a broad spectrum of activities from serious issues, such as knife crime, to prevention/diversion activities. There are common factors which affect all CSPs and other localised issues which have a differential impact.

1.3 Since the introduction of the legal duty to form CSPs there has also been a raft of national legislation, initiatives and responsibilities, which have increased their responsibilities.

2.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY WITHIN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

- 2.1** CSPs usually work at district or unitary authority level. Within Gloucestershire, community safety is currently managed at a district level and there are consequently six separate district community safety partnerships.
- 2.2** There are considerable differences in the community safety focus across the partnerships reflecting the levels of challenge in the districts. The urban areas have developed and maintained comparatively more robust structures than within the rural districts where there tends to be a lower incidence of crime.
- 2.3** Whilst there are differences in capacity and demand across the districts, there are also similarities in common local challenges and the need to respond to national initiatives such as hate crimes, anti-slavery and the Prevent agenda.
- 2.4** The current county community safety structure inevitably involves considerable duplication of effort associated with six separate partnerships. It is recognised that there is inevitable fragmentation across the county and no clear conduit for sharing strategies, learning, or implementing lessons from emerging issues, such as domestic homicide reviews.
- 2.5** There is a lack of strategic focus in many CSPs resulting in some issues such as youth offending, hate-crime, drugs and alcohol, domestic abuse, anti-slavery losing prominence as CSPs focus upon locality issues.
- 2.6** The national policy context around public services has experienced dramatic change with the impact of austerity pressures since 2010. This applies similarly to services provided by single organisations and those cross-cutting functions, which involve wider partnerships.
- 2.7** During this period central government funding for a range of activities, which was a feature of the general "community safety landscape" pre-2010, has all but ceased, taking along with them some of the overarching county architecture, largely created to serve the Local Area Agreement process, which used to support the strategic overview of these issues. This has resulted in disjointed activities locally and countywide as the public services and other partners have contracted and priorities shifted.

3.0 UPDATE AND KEY ACTIVITIES

3.1 County Review of Community Safety

- 3.1.1** A "whole systems review" of community safety across Gloucestershire was commissioned by Leadership Gloucestershire in early 2016, which concluded in a leadership decision in December 2016.
- 3.1.2** The countywide review identified that there was a clear need to rationalise the current complex arrangements across the county and district partnership landscape.
- 3.1.3** It highlighted that the six community safety partnerships (CSPs) all operate differently with very different reflections on the evolution of community safety across the county. It suggested that an overall strategic vacuum across the county had led to fragmentation and disconnection between the districts, county partnerships and agencies. It was also considered that there was a need for an overarching Gloucestershire Community Safety Partnership, which takes rural and urban issues into account.

- 3.1.4** The review suggested three possible options to rationalise service delivery and jointly deliver against countywide partnership priorities:
- Option 1** – represented a relatively minor change with six district-based community safety partnerships remaining in place, but with a regular forum for chairs to meet.
- Option 2** – involved the establishment of a countywide community safety partnership working closely with the six district-based community safety partnerships.
- Option 3** - represented transformational change with the merger of the six district based community safety partnerships to form an overarching county partnership. Six district-based multi-agency forums would allow activities to be customised at a local level. Key forums relating to priority areas would have a direct relationship with the countywide partnership. This included public protection, ASB, drugs and alcohol, domestic abuse and sexual violence, domestic homicide reviews, hate crime, anti-slavery and organised crime.
- 3.1.5** The review also suggested that this model of delivery could incorporate more powerful and strategic links with the safeguarding agenda in the county by complementing the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children’s Board (GSCB) and Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adult’s Board (GSAB)’s current approach. This approach focuses on vulnerable individuals, with a community safety agenda to counteract group behaviours with safeguarding implications (such as the attitudes and behaviours of gangs to vulnerable people for example – i.e. issues raised in the Rotherham case).
- 3.1.6** The review also highlighted a hierarchy of community safety strategic planning ranging from those involving serious harm with high levels of intervention to those with low harm and a greater potential for prevention.
- 3.1.7** The Leadership Gloucestershire partners considered the review and determined that the transformational change in Option 3 would best meet the community safety needs of the county and facilitate effective efficient activities within the districts.

4.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY WITHIN TEWKESBURY BOROUGH

4.1 Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

- 4.1.1** Within the Council, the responsibility for community safety and ASB is seen as a cross-cutting activity involving the input from a range of service areas, including: Environmental Health, Community Development and Housing. ASB and community safety are no longer the principal elements of Officers’ roles in any one service (with the exception of the Youth Anti-Social Behaviour Officer) within the Council. ASB is also dealt with by the police, Families First, and our housing provider partners.
- 4.1.2** Reports of ASB are generally low across the borough as a whole and the Council’s commitment to building local community resilience through the Place Programme is seen to be part of the preventative agenda for ASB and a relevant context in which to tackle community safety.
- 4.1.3** Within the Council there is no common reporting or monitoring system for ASB across the service areas. Issues tend to be dealt with successfully on an individual basis, with no overview to identify emerging problematic areas beyond the service responding to their particular ASB issue. There is, therefore, little intelligence indicating what type of problems exist, where they occur and how they have been resolved; consequently, this presents a challenge when looking at the coordination of intervention activity across the borough.

4.2 Tewkesbury Borough Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

- 4.2.1** The current delivery arrangements within the CSP in Tewkesbury Borough have not been considered in the context of the capacity changes within the local partner agencies and stakeholders. Any reduced capacity within the agencies responsible for driving the community safety agenda will have a direct impact on the effectiveness of the local community safety partnership.
- 4.2.2** Securing attendance from the responsible agencies at the Tewkesbury Borough CSP has been problematic and there has been no attendance from Health or Probation services for several years. These agencies no longer have structures that match our district boundaries and could not commit to attendance at six different CSPs in the current climate. They consequently do not directly link in with the borough on community safety issues.
- 4.2.3** However, the general attendance at the Tewkesbury Borough CSP has grown to be extensive, including many agencies and voluntary groups with peripheral concerns. There has also been a tendency amongst the non-responsible partners to assume that community safety was a Council responsibility for which the Council should be accountable at CSP meetings, rather than a collaborative function with shared responsibility.

4.3 Progress on Local Reviews

- 4.3.1** The Community Safety Partnership in Tewkesbury Borough was suspended in August 2016 pending a borough systems review of local community safety and ASB activities. This decision was taken by the Deputy Chief Executive in post at that time, with the support of the Lead Member for Community, and to be completed by the new Deputy Chief Executive and the Head of Community Services (when in post) to lead and implement changes. In addition, to help inform the process, an external consultant was commissioned to undertake the review which commenced in October 2016 and incorporated input from the Police and Severn Vale Housing Authority as key local partners.
- 4.3.2** The purpose of undertaking a local review is to gain an accurate picture of current local practice and obtain views on the potential for improvement whilst incorporating the outcomes of the simultaneous systems review of county community safety by Leadership Gloucestershire.
- 4.3.3** The consultant will be delivering her recommendations on the local architecture for delivering effective ASB and community safety functions within the borough on 23 February 2017. Once this is received, the Council will have a clearer picture of how operational ASB issues can be improved.

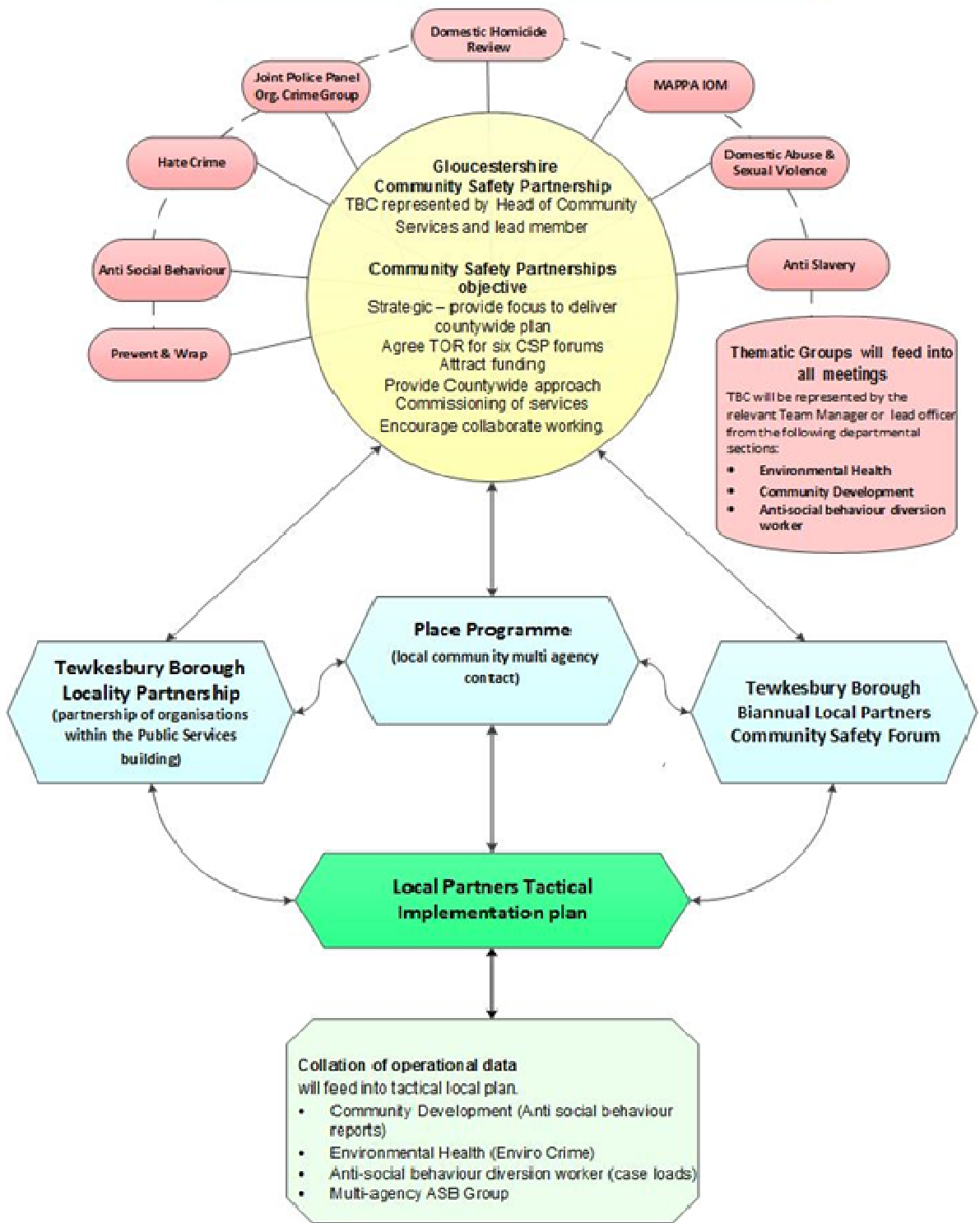
4.3.4 The adoption of the new county CSP, however, is likely to address many of the challenges facing the Tewkesbury Borough CSP, namely:

- an overarching county Community Safety Strategy with themed sub-groups would enable Tewkesbury Borough to contribute and benefit from a clear focus on priorities, determined by local need and national directive;
- a shared focus across the district authority boundaries will reduce duplication, increase capacity for strategic focus and offer sharing and learning opportunities;
- the structure will also provide a forum to communicate with public agencies now operating in larger geographic areas coterminous with county boundaries;
- sharing the responsibility for community safety across the districts will also enable Tewkesbury Borough to use resources more effectively to concentrate on tactical implementation based on intelligence from efficient thematic forums with appropriate agency representation;
- there will be greater partnership opportunities and capacity for co-commissioning and funding for delivery of local community safety initiatives; and
- the structure would firmly link the borough to the statutory services within the county structures who have not attended the local forum and enable the Council to input to the development of Community Safety Services in these areas.

4.3.5 The local detail is yet to be finalised, however, one potential option could be that the local structure can be delivered through the Council's Place Programme arrangements, which will offer local community multi-agency contact. The Place Programme arrangements could then be augmented with periodic stakeholder forum events to provide further opportunities for two way communication at the local level.

4.3.6

Proposed Gloucestershire Community Safety Structure 2017



5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Leadership Gloucestershire considered two alternative options for Community Safety, as outlined above.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1** The review undertaken by an independent consultant for Leadership Gloucestershire incorporated the views of responsible agencies throughout the county, district Council elected Members, the Police and Crime Panel, Police and Crime Commissioner, voluntary and community sector representatives, representatives from the six CSPs, victim support services and youth support services.
- 6.2** The review of ASB work within Tewkesbury Borough undertaken by the consultant has incorporated the views of key partners within Tewkesbury Borough and the responsible officers within the Council.

7.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 7.1** Data Protection Policy 1998.
Equality & Diversity Policy 2012 -2016.
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.
Corporate Enforcement Policy.

8.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- 8.1** Prevent.
Serious and organised Crime Strategy 2013.
Modern Crime Prevention Strategy 2016.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

- 9.1** None directly associated with this report other than the existing staffing establishment and elected Member time.
- 9.2** It is anticipated that a budget of up to a maximum of £5,000 will be required to cover the cost of the appointment of the consultant to undertake the internal review.

10.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

- 10.1** Contained within the body of the report.

11.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

- 11.1** None arising from this report.

12.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

12.1 None

Background Papers: Community Safety in Gloucestershire – Consultation Review 05.09.16
John Bensted

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Appendices: None

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2017
Subject:	Peer Challenge Action Plan
Report of:	Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services
Corporate Lead:	Mike Dawson, Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor R J E Vines, Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:

The peer challenge took place during 11-14 November 2014 and was facilitated by the Local Government Association (LGA). The process was an excellent learning opportunity for the Council, providing an external health check of where the Council is 'in life' and how we are set up to meet our future challenges, namely the delivery of our Transformation Programme.

Over four days, a challenge team interviewed nearly 80 staff and members and over 40 partners. The findings of the team were very positive and overall they concluded that we are a Council that 'is punching above its weight'. Following the challenge, a formal report was received which summarises the findings of the challenge team. This report included a number of recommendations where we can improve further.

The report and action plan were approved at Council on 19 February 2015. Council also approved that monitoring of the action plan should be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation:

To CONSIDER the progress made in delivering the recommendations within the peer challenge action plan and to AGREE that no further monitoring is required by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the majority of actions have been implemented or are monitored elsewhere.

Reasons for Recommendation:

It was a resolution by Council that the Overview and Scrutiny be tasked with monitoring delivery of the peer challenge recommendations. Implementation of the recommendations will support the Council on its improvement journey.

Resource Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

Legal Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

Risk Management Implications:

If the Council does not implement the recommendations made by the peer challenge team then this will be a lost opportunity for improvement.

If the Council does not implement the recommendations made by the peer challenge team then there will be a reputational risk in ignoring advice from a credible external assessment.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Progress in delivering the peer challenge recommendations will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a six monthly basis.

Environmental Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** As part of its approach to sector led improvement, the Local Government Association (LGA) offered, until Autumn 2014, every Council in the country a free peer challenge. Peer challenges are improvement focused, they are carried out to the specification of individual Councils and are aimed at improving, not judging, Councils.
- 1.2** This Council's peer challenge took place during 11-14 November 2014. The process was an excellent learning opportunity for the Council, providing an external health check of where the Council is 'in life' and how we are set up to meet our future challenges, namely the delivery of our Transformation Programme.
- 1.3** The challenge team was comprised of senior officers and a Member from other Councils. The team was led by a Chief Executive supported by an LGA challenge manager. Over four days, the team interviewed nearly 80 staff and members and over 40 partners. The findings of the team were very positive and overall they concluded that we are a Council that 'is punching above its weight'. Following the challenge, a formal report was received which summarises the findings of the challenge team. This report included a number of recommendations where we could improve further.

2.0 SCOPE AND FOCUS OF THE PEER CHALLENGE

- 2.1** The scope of all peer challenges undertaken by the LGA includes a review of five core components:
- **Understanding of local context and priority setting:** Does the Council understand its local context and has it established a clear set of priorities?
 - **Financial planning and viability:** Does the Council have a financial plan in place to ensure long term viability and is there evidence that it is being implemented successfully?
 - **Political and managerial leadership:** Does the Council have effective political and managerial leadership and is it a constructive partnership?
 - **Governance and decision making:** are effective governance and decision-making arrangements in place to respond to key challenges and manage change, and transformation?
 - **Organisational capacity:** Are organisational capacity and resources focused in the right areas in order to deliver the agreed priorities?

2.2 In addition to the five core themes, the scope was tailored with a particular focus on the Council's approach to business transformation through addressing the following questions:

- Is there a clear and understandable message – is the narrative on the kind of Council we want to be clear to staff, stakeholders and the community?
- Do people own it and are signed up to the changes the Council is embarked upon?
- Will the programme to manage, engage and develop the Council deliver the transformation desired?
- Have we missed anything?

3.0 PEER CHALLENGE OUTCOME

3.1 As a reminder for Members, the final report is attached at Appendix 1. The report gives much that the Council can be proud of. A summary of the positive feedback includes:

- An energetic and active approach towards its service delivery.
- Developing itself as an effective organisation with a strong emphasis on value for money.
- Very good relationship with partner organisations.
- High levels of resident satisfaction.
- Strong sense of community leadership.
- Pioneering a multi service and partner approach to its activities.
- A good corporate understanding and ownership of transformation activities.
- Good financial management.

The review team concluded that the Council 'punches above its weight' at a local, county and regional level.

3.2 As with all organisations, there will always be room for improvement. The challenge team made eight formal recommendations (Page 16 of the final report) where it considered that the Council could develop the strengths needed to help progress the improvement journey. The report also contained other opportunities for improvement that could be translated into formal recommendations.

4.0 PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

4.1 An action plan to progress these recommendations was approved at Council on 11 February 2015. Council also resolved that monitoring the delivery of the action plan would be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The first monitoring report was reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on July 2016 and this confirmed good progress in implementing the recommendations.

4.2 The action plan and a summary of progress in delivering the recommendations can be found in Appendix 2. The majority of actions are being, or have been, progressed through the ongoing work around development of the new Council Plan, individual service reviews, project management, financial management, Overview and Scrutiny and Member development. Only two actions remain outstanding (13 and 15). Of the two, Action 15 - development of a Workforce Strategy - is virtually complete. This action together with Action 13 – review of the Constitution - is also identified as a significant governance issue within the Council’s 2015/16 Annual Governance Statement (AGS). Delivery of these issues is monitored by the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis. Given the majority of peer review actions have now been implemented, and with the two outstanding recommendations monitored by the Audit Committee, it is recommended future monitoring by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is no longer required.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The undertaking of a peer challenge was approved at Executive Committee on 4 June 2014. A significant number of Officers, Members and partners were consulted during the peer challenge. The peer challenge report and action plan were approved at Council on 11 February 2015.

7.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

7.1 Council Plan 2012-16
Business Transformation Strategy

8.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

8.1 None

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

9.1 None directly arising from this report.

10.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

10.1 None directly arising from this report.

11.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

11.1 Implementation of recommendations will improve the efficiency of the Council.

12.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

12.1 None.

Background Papers: Executive Committee 4 June 2014 – approval of peer challenge approach.

Council 11 February 2015 – approval of final peer challenge report and action plan.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 19 July 2016 – first monitoring report on progress of actions.

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Appendices: 1- Final peer challenge report
2- Progress of peer challenge recommendations

Mike Dawson
Chief Executive
Tewkesbury Borough Council
Council Offices
Gloucester Road
Tewkesbury
GL20 5TT

17 December 2014

Dear Mike

**Tewkesbury Borough Council Corporate Peer Challenge 11th-14th
November 2014**

On behalf of the peer team I would like to say what a pleasure and privilege it was to be invited into Tewkesbury Borough Council to deliver the recent corporate peer challenge as part of the Local Government Association (LGA) offer to support sector led improvement.

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected member and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected your requirements and the focus of the peer challenge. Peers were selected on the basis of their relevant experience and expertise and agreed with you. The peers who delivered the peer challenge at Tewkesbury were:

- **John Robinson**, Chief Executive, Gedling BC
- **Gill Elliott**, Peer Support Adviser, LGA
- **Val Green**, Head of Organisational Development, Tunbridge Wells BC
- **Mike Hammond**, Director of Transformation at Babergh DC and Mid Suffolk DC
- **Councillor Lynda Turner**, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Communities & Environmental Services at Breckland DC
- **Bob Ross**, LGA Peer Challenge Manager

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T 020 7664 3000 F 020 7664 3030 E info@local.gov.uk www.local.gov.uk
Chief Executive: Carolyn Downs

Scope and focus of the peer challenge

You asked us to provide an external 'health-check' of your organisation in the context of your plans for the future. In particular you asked for peer observations on your programme of transformation. We have done this by considering the following core components looked at by all corporate peer challenges:

1. Understanding of the local context and priority setting: Does the council understand its local context and has it established a clear set of priorities?
2. Financial planning and viability: Does the council have a financial plan in place to ensure long term viability and is there evidence that it is being implemented successfully?
3. Political and managerial leadership: Does the council have effective political and managerial leadership and is it a constructive partnership?
4. Governance and decision-making: Are effective governance and decision-making arrangements in place to respond to key challenges and manage change, transformation and disinvestment?
5. Organisational capacity: Are organisational capacity and resources focused in the right areas in order to deliver the agreed priorities?

In addition and in relation to your programme of transformation we looked at the following questions that you asked us to consider

- Is there a cohesive and understandable message as to the kind of council that you want to be and is it clear to staff, stakeholders and the community?
- Do people own this and are they signed up to the changes the Council is embarked upon?
- Will the programmes to manage, engage and develop the council deliver the transformation desired?
- Have you missed anything?

The peer challenge process

It is important to stress that this was not an inspection. Peer challenges are improvement-focused and tailored to meet individual councils' needs. They are designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.

The peer team prepared for the peer challenge by reviewing a range of documents and information to ensure they were familiar with the Council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent 4 days on-site at Tewkesbury, during which they:

- Spoke to a wide range of people including a range of council staff together with councilors and external partners and stakeholders
- Gathered information and views from meetings, workshops and additional research and reading
- Collectively spent more than 250 hours to determine their findings – the equivalent of one person spending more than 7 weeks in Tewkesbury

This letter provides a summary of the peer team's findings. It builds on the feedback presentation provided by the peer team at the end of their on-site visit (11th – 14th November 2014). In presenting feedback to you, they have done so as fellow local government officers and members, not professional consultants or inspectors. By its nature, the peer challenge is a snapshot in time. We appreciate that some of the feedback may be about things you are already addressing and progressing.

Summary of feedback: overall observations and messages

The Council has an energetic and active approach towards its service delivery and in developing itself as an effective organisation with a strong emphasis on value for money. It has not only undertaken many internal transformation activities to achieve these aims but it has also maintained an external focus and developed very good relations with partner organisations at all levels of operation. The levels of resident satisfaction both with Tewkesbury Borough and the council itself are very high.

There is a strong sense of community leadership and the Council has an ambitious growth agenda for both business and homes. It is pioneering a multi-service and partner approach to its activities e.g. the impressive public service centre approach in the civic offices. The Council wishes to extend this approach still further and is embarking on a 'Place' initiative which is designed to help ensure that all public services are co-ordinated around the needs of individual communities. This approach will also have benefits within the council itself, helping to discourage silo working and develop the new tier of group managers as a corporate team.

An area for the Council to examine, however, is whether there is a clear enough link between its community engagement activities and the setting of the Council's overall priorities. This examination could also include discussions with business and partner organisations to ensure that there are truly shared outcome priorities.

The Council is ambitious and wishes to improve still further. To assist this it has put in place a wide ranging multi – activity transformation programme. Staff and other stakeholders understand and own these transformation activities. The emphasis on transformation has been so fully embraced by the Council that there are also many transformation activities taking place outside of the formal programme

A possible danger for the Council is that it may actually be trying to do too much in too short a time. A feeling that some staff are becoming overstretched was expressed during various discussions. Given the likely reduction in resources the Council should consider whether it can 'prioritise its priorities' to ensure that it is focusing on the key activities that will continue to transform its services and internal capability. This could include looking to see if there are ways to streamline monitoring activities as a way of increasing officer capacity.

The Council is not unique in having financial pressures. Its capital reserves will be reduced significantly in order to finance a new leisure centre and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) identifies a revenue funding gap of around £2.8m over the five years life of the MTFS. However, you have identified your financial pressures well and undertaken good risk analysis. This approach includes prudent use and predictions of New Homes Bonus (NHB) income and your transformation programme should also produce significant savings. You have identified some capital assets that you may be able to sell to boost the capital reserve. Although you are obviously working on tackling your financial pressures it would be prudent to firm up specific actions as soon as possible as to how these pressures will be met.

The written feedback below presents some additional detailed points and further explanation of the key issues arising during the peer challenge. There are, of course, still things to be done but you have already delivered significant achievements and are determined to continue your ambitious improvement journey. The peer team found that there was much for the Council to be proud of and it 'punches above its weight' at a local, county and regional level. It is also suggested that the Council takes time to celebrate what it has already achieved so far.

Summary of feedback: current performance, ability and capacity to deliver future ambitions

Understanding of local context and priority setting

Throughout the peer challenge there was a real feeling of enthusiasm and commitment to Tewkesbury Borough from all the groups and individuals that we met. It was evident that there is pride in the borough and its individual communities. Members spoke knowledgeably about their individual wards and the Council collectively has an ambitious growth programme for homes and businesses in the borough. There is a strong sense of identity and this helps drive the vision for the borough.

You intend to build on this approach and positive steps are being made to get even closer to your communities. This includes embarking upon a 'Place' initiative to develop further cross public sector working for the borough and help ensure a truly local focus. This initiative will enable further partnership working and identify areas where you can facilitate or enable other bodies to deliver prioritised and co-ordinated support to your communities

The recent resident survey demonstrated high levels of satisfaction with both Tewkesbury and the Council itself. These levels are a considerable achievement and would not be possible without proactive development of your services.

Within your five key priorities there is clear evidence that the Council is taking positive action to ensure that change really happens. This change has both an inward and external focus. As mentioned, the growth programme includes both business and housing growth. However, the Council is also transforming itself through a planned and co-ordinated transformation programme, internal streamlining etc. The Council has a strong emphasis on value for money and is reviewing all its services to ensure it delivers good quality services and at low cost. Staff are fully engaged with this.

The peer team did feel that the Council would benefit from a more systematic approach to the gathering and use of customer feedback. There was limited evidence about how local residents had informed the Council Plan and some business and voluntary sector partners would value having more input to the setting of priorities. In addition, more effective use could be made of customer feedback to drive performance improvement. It may be helpful, for example, to consider how residents surveys, such as the one undertaken in 2013, could feed into the annual service and budgetary planning process and be used to drive service improvement.

Allied to this, although the objectives and actions in your Council Plan give an indication of what is meant by each priority, the team felt that the initial statements could have greater impact if they were more explicit in terms of what you were trying to achieve i.e. were more outcome focused. How the current priorities are expressed makes measurement difficult and the peer team felt that there is scope to articulate specific aims to enable the community and staff to have a clearer understanding of the Council's initiatives.

There are significant potential benefits from your growth agenda, but it may be timely to consider whether current levels of service are sustainable and affordable in the future. The growth agenda itself will require additional support in order for it to be delivered successfully. The peer team did not see much evidence of consideration of stopping things or providing lower levels of service. The service reviews are providing an opportunity to look at how services are delivered and whether there are things that can be done differently. There may be opportunities within these reviews to consider whether current performance targets are realistic given future financial constraints.

The peer team felt that the Place initiative is a really exciting development. In the short term this will place further work pressures upon officers etc. and this should be taken into account. The role of the group managers as a team is vital here as they take on new area responsibilities and this will also have benefits in terms of their corporate team development. Care should be taken to ensure this does not create an over-stretched group of officers.

You should also continue to follow your practice of seeking examples of good practice from others when developing this initiative and ensuring that there are clear outcome criteria for measuring its success.

Financial planning and viability

The Council (along with many others) is facing significant financial challenges. You have good awareness of these as a corporate body and these challenges are well articulated in your MTFS which was published in October 2014. The MTFS also sets out a clear summary of your financial objectives and principles.

One of the main planks of your financial strategy is the amount of New Homes Bonus (NHB) that you will receive. Despite the financial pressures you have not taken an unrealistically optimistic approach to this income stream and the MTFS has adopted a prudent principle that the maximum NHB to be utilised for base budget support is 65%.

As stated, the growth agenda for the borough is ambitious. You are also aware that this agenda will help create an increase in the demand for services and will need investment to meet those needs. To help with this you have established a good relationship and influence within your Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Another element on your MTFS is to create savings through your transformation programme. You have identified that this programme will require support and some initial investment. To help ensure that the transformation takes place and savings actually achieved you are creating a transformation reserve of £350k. This is a clear example of both an 'Invest to Save' and "Value for Money ' approach. Aligned with this are the service baseline reviews you are undertaking. These should aid prioritisation for savings potential.

You are also debt free and have a number of capital assets that you are examining for income potential. Although you have a sizeable investment portfolio current interest rates mean that your returns on this are limited and you are seeking ways to improve this and £2m has been set aside with a view to exploring this. You have also undertaken a prudent 'sensitivity analysis' of your overall strategy.

We were made aware that the annual budget process had been refined and would support steps being taken to ensure a closer alignment between the setting of corporate and service priorities and the budget process.

Additionally there was some evidence that not all members are aware of the financial position of the council and the financial position of individual service areas. This financial understanding is very important given the financial pressures facing you, prioritisation etc. and you should consider how to create a more active political awareness and engagement in the financial management of the authority

You have shown your willingness to invest in activities that will produce savings or financial returns. The plans you have for the growth of homes and business in the borough should produce financial returns for you. Consideration should be given as to whether you are able to invest more in the growth agenda to expedite financial returns.

Your MTFS identifies two key immediate financial issues. These are that the current Capital Programme will deplete capital reserves to around £2.33m by March 2017. This is a level that will not meet future ambitions for asset investment, town centre redevelopment and the continuation of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme at the current level.

Additionally the MTFS identifies that due to various revenue pressures there may be a funding gap of £2.83m over the five year life of the MTFS including a revenue funding deficit of £807k for the 2015/16 financial year.

You are actively seeking ways to help resolve both of these issues and have already identified some specific actions that should generate around £500k of savings e.g. vehicle replacement, waste services and leisure services management plus an identification of possible capital sales. However, it is necessary to firm up further specific actions as soon as possible as to how these gaps will be met.

Political and Managerial Leadership

It was evident that there are positive relationships and high levels of trust between elected members and officers. There is an officer/ member protocol which is robust and followed. On both sides there is an open, inclusive and honest leadership and management style that has led to good working relations and is reflected in the high levels of commitment by staff. The Chief Executive is very high profile and accessible in conducting staff briefings etc. In addition communication channels such as the 'Myth Busters' facility on the intranet are used to encourage communication.

Care has been taken to streamline the senior management structure with a significant reduction of posts at what is now the Group Manager level. This has been successful in a number of respects including clearer accountability and, swifter decision-making and improved communication. Within the new structure members are fully aware of whom to contact and lead members also work closely with appropriate senior officers to manage their portfolio responsibilities

The leadership and management are very aware that they should not work in isolation and have taken proactive steps to develop good external relationships and are developing these still further. Indeed you are pioneering many elements of public sector reform and already there is an impressive public service centre approach within the civic offices with some partners operational staff being located within the civic offices. Partners spoke highly of the Council's approach to joint working and felt that they had strong relationships with you. The feedback from your community and voluntary sector groups we met and spoke to was that the Council is working with them to benefit residents in all parts of the borough and partners felt they are recognised as assets in this respect.

This approach extends to the County Council and other district councils with the joint core strategy pre-submission and sharing of legal services being given as examples of effective joint working.

As part of continuous improvement, encouraging both internal and external challenge is important. Care should be taken to ensure that the high levels of trust and confidence mentioned above does not 'blunt' such challenge. You may wish to consider how to ensure such challenge explicitly takes place and provide opportunities for this to happen. Several members of the Executive Committee reported that they would personally welcome a greater degree of challenge and more rigorous holding to account of the Executive Committee. One method of achieving this may be for Executive Committee members to personally present reports to Overview and Scrutiny.

Similarly care should be taken to ensure that briefings provided to portfolio holders provide sufficient time-lines, costings and performance indicators to allow for more informed discussion and challenge of officers.

Allied to this is that the culture change that has occurred and is still taking place should include elected members. Although a wide range of member development activities were reported it was noted that these were primarily based around information sharing. The Council should consider whether it can also place greater emphasis on developing the skills of members particularly as new leadership and management skills will arise from your transformation programme and partnership activities. Consideration should be given as to how the induction process for new members can contribute to this and the overall culture change.

Governance and decision-making

The governance arrangements for your Council are sound. Appropriate protocols exist for topics such as member officer relationships and we were not made aware of any standards issues or challenges/ complaints about formal procedures.

The peer team were informed that in the past decision-making could be a protracted process. The Council is now a more confident and less risk averse organisation that has proved itself able to make difficult decisions and to speed up its internal procedures.

The vision of the Council is to ensure 'Tewkesbury is a place where a good quality of life is open to all'. Ward members take this vision very seriously and are clearly champions for their areas and were consistently passionate about trying to make lives better for their communities. Each ward obviously has its own needs and level of support required. Members have good awareness of this and appear realistic in their expectations. It is hoped that the Place initiative will help enhance this localised, co-ordinated approach and actively engage residents and support their pride in their areas.

During the course of the peer challenge there were some comments received regarding the encouragement of participation of ward members and the public. Although it was difficult to examine this in detail during the timeframe of the peer challenge you may wish to consider how you can encourage greater participation in formal and informal meetings. Some members felt that when putting motions forward on behalf of their residents they should be given more prominence and encouraged/ enabled to have a greater level of discussion.

Overview and Scrutiny has proved it can make an impact and contribute well to policy development. A particular example of this is its work on reviewing and making recommendations regarding car park arrangements. The peer team would encourage you to ensure that the committee's contribution is maximised and they are producing more examples of such impact.

Although no governance issues were identified it is understood that the constitution was last totally reviewed 12 years ago. Many parts of the constitution have been reviewed and amended since that time to reflect changes in legislation/circumstances. However, it would be prudent to review it in its entirety to ensure that it is up to date – especially in the light of the Council moving forward its transformation programme at such a pace.

Organisational Capacity

All the staff peers spoke to were proud to work for the Council and keen to provide a good service for residents. They recognise the journey that the Council has been on in recent years and understand why you need to continue the change process. They were all able to articulate what the transformation programme is aiming to achieve and they can already see some of the benefits e.g. less silo working and a better relationship with partners who share the Council building.

The management restructure in 2013 achieved savings of £500k. It also created the opportunity for some of the Heads of Service to step up to the role of Group Manager. This group is a key link between strategic and operational functions. Many staff spoke of how they felt the speed of decision-making and accessibility had been enhanced by the new management structure.

There are good opportunities for staff training and development. A new Personal and Professional Development approach has been introduced and there were good examples of advantage being taken of learning from other local authorities together with a mix of training, mentoring, coaching etc. The Council is investing in management development with an external provider having been commissioned to deliver a management development programme down to Operational Manager level. Phase 1 has been completed and Phase 2 is about to start.

The Public Service Centre and co-location of some key partners is already having benefits and assisting capacity. Partners and Council staff spoke about improved relationships and better opportunities to work together on issues. Examples include fraud investigation between CAB and the Revenues and Benefits team and work on arson between the Council, the Fire Service and the police. All the partners felt welcomed by the Council and that close partnership working was assisting their own services.

In order to assist your transformation activities you have been willing to invest in bringing in specialist resources when necessary to supplement internal capacity. External consultants have assisted with the IT review; development of the Leisure Centre; the Regeneration development and the office refurbishment project. This willingness to invest in specialist support to supplement your own capacity is welcomed.

The Council has a successful apprenticeship scheme. On average six apprentices are taken on each year and many have found permanent jobs. This scheme obviously has a number of benefits for the individual apprenticeships and is also contributing to a younger demographic inside the Council.

The transformation programme and your culture change are developing more agile and flexible working style within the Council. Open plan offices means staff are gaining a better understanding of other teams' work areas. There is also more homeworking use of hot desks and flexible working which is allowing staff to balance their own domestic needs without impairing the delivery of your services.

A more open, creative and customer focused culture is increasingly emerging. This is recognised by having a lead Member for Customer Focus. The Council is looking at how customers access services and encouraging more digital contact via channel shift.

Improvements to the reception area in the Public Service Centre have already been implemented including a joint reception. Further improvements and the use of a floorwalker to assist customers are planned.

Further work is necessary to develop the collective role of the group managers. They are now a corporate team at this level and it is noted that how they operate as such is to be part of the management development programme. There was some evidence of group managers collaborating on projects but some felt that the need to focus on major issues such as Planning, Housing and Waste left little capacity for corporate working as a team. There is scope for group managers to operate in a more corporate way including undertaking more forward thinking activities.

There also appeared to still be some uncertainty amongst the managers as to whether their roles are partly strategic, tactical, partly operational or a combination of all three. It is understood that a review is underway of the pay and grading structure of the Group Manager role to recognise their new responsibilities and ensure that they reflect the structure and role differential between the group and operational managers. This review is welcomed by the peer team.

Similarly, Operational managers are still adapting to their new ways of working with their Group Managers. The Council should ensure that there are no 'un-tapped' talents within this tier and there are opportunities to further up-skill these managers via Phase 2 of the management development programme to maximise their potential. This will also better enable future succession planning.

The Council is managing a number of high profile projects including the economic growth agenda, new leisure centre, the depot services transfer project, delivering the Joint Core Strategy, Place initiative, developing a customer focus with a new Customer Access model, asset management projects. At the same time it is undergoing a significant culture change programme and looking to make savings of almost £3m over the next four years. The peer team is concerned that the Council may be trying to take on too much at one time and that the pace and delivery of all these projects may not be sustainable. Peers heard that some staff are beginning to feel over stretched as a result of the number of transformation activities, restructuring, greater spans of control, loss of admin support etc.

It was noted that there is not an up to date workforce strategy. As you are undertaking a wide transformation programme there will be many effects on your workforce. A workforce strategy should be developed to identify, supply and deal with the new skills, flexibility, ways of working, succession planning and organisational development. At this early stage progressing agile working also appeared inconsistent across the Council and you may wish to consider how the benefits to both the Council and to staff can be widened.

Various IT difficulties were described to the peer team such as hardware being old and dated, homeworking IT interfaces not working consistently, low levels of IT literacy amongst some staff and Members. There is a recognition that better IT will be needed to support a number of business development initiatives including channel shift and the expansion of One Legal. The Council has recognised this need to invest in its IT infrastructure and a review of this is underway with external specialist advice having been commissioned to assist with this.

Transformation

There is a clear commitment to transformation of how the Council manages itself, provides services and works with others. You have embarked upon a wide ranging multi – activity transformation programme and have identified four key streams of activity: Partnerships and Commissioning, Use of Buildings, Using Technology and Sustaining Improvement, People and Culture. There are detailed projects within each stream and the peer team feels that you are focusing on the right areas.

It is important to note, however, that Transformation is also, and as importantly, taking place beyond the formal programme. This is evidence as to how the whole Council has embraced the need to change and transformation is now ‘organic’ as well as managed through the formal programme. Your staff understand and can articulate the need for change in their own language and they own the transformation activities.

It was noted by the peer team that your Transformation activities have already delivered some significant achievements. Impressive examples of actual delivery of projects include the Public Services Centre, very significant improvements in your revenues and benefits processing etc. The management re-structuring exercise has also not just reduced costs but is having benefits in terms of breaking down silos internally and with partners. This is providing a good base for further transformation.

One of the reasons for your success is your willingness to look externally to learn from best practice with visits to other authorities to look at services such revenues and benefits, leisure centre management etc.

As already mentioned your Place initiative will complement and enhance your transformation programme. Although it has a focus upon identifying and meeting specific local needs it also has the potential to achieve many ‘spin-offs’. These include new management ways of working and a significant boost to your culture change programme as Group Managers, partners etc. work together across management boundaries to achieve commonly shared aims.

An area that you asked us to examine was whether there is ‘a cohesive and understandable message as to the kind of council that you want to be’. Without doubt your staff understand why and what changes are being enacted and there is a danger that you are over-complicating a message to an already converted audience. The peer team suggests that you keep your message simple, punchy and with an emphasis on outcomes and avoid too much detail. Consideration should also be given to ensuring that

you are also adopting this same approach with partners and the community itself and that there is a clear and simple message which is well understood by all.

Your ambition for transformation is evident. Care must be taken that the combined growth agenda, service reviews and transformation programme do not become over-stretching. Your staffing and financial resources are reducing but you appear to be trying to increase your range of activities. You should ensure that you have 'prioritised your priorities' and consider how to be certain that you are making sufficiently strategic choices on how best to use your decreasing resources. A way to help this prioritisation may be to develop explicit success measures for the transformation programme expressed in terms of outcomes and identify which activities most contribute to these.

The amount of activity you are undertaking must, of course, be properly managed and monitored. However, the same transformation approach should be applied to these management/ monitoring activities. Care should be taken to ensure that some of the formal agenda led and committee style meetings and paperwork are not using up capacity without adding real value.

Community groups and the private sector advised us that the Council's Web site was difficult to navigate around and 'clunky'. We are aware from comments at other meetings that improvements to the planning information on the web site have been well received. Hence there are mixed messages but it does appear that there is scope to improve the web site.

This will also be important to enable channel shift which is a key part of your transformation strategy and one that you may wish to consider giving a stronger focus to. We heard about initiatives such as the online bulky waste collection forms and we note that the Council has purchased the online forms package from FIRMSTEP, but it was difficult to discern an overall strategy for channel shift. The team felt that this should be an important element of your transformation programme and the improvement of the web site would contribute to this.

Our recommendations: suggestions and ideas for your consideration

In addition to the areas listed above, the peer team suggests you consider the points below. These are based on what we saw, heard and read. Drawing on our experience of the sector and knowledge of local government improvement, the following are things we think will help enable the above transformation and make best use of your skills and experience, deliver some quick wins, and develop the strengths you will need to progress your improvement agenda:

1. Engage local communities and partner organisations more actively in the development of your priorities and objectives
2. Develop a systematic approach to gathering customer feedback and incorporate it within your performance management arrangements
3. At the point you come to review your Council Plan, consider expressing your priorities in a way that is more focused on outcomes
4. Keep under review your capacity to deliver the current level of activity and regularly re-visit your volume and range of priorities
5. Develop specific actions to meet the identified revenue shortfall as a matter of priority
6. Build on the positives of your current culture by encouraging more rigorous challenge including members to members; members to officers and officers to officers
7. Revamp your website and develop a programme that sets out how and when you intend to achieve channel migration
8. Review the member development programme with a view to ensuring that it is aligned with overall organisational culture change

We have attached a set of slides that summarise the above feedback. The slides are the ones used by the peer team to present its feedback at the end of the onsite visit.

Next steps

We have sought to highlight the many positive aspects of the council through the peer challenge process but we have also outlined some areas for further consideration. You will undoubtedly wish to reflect on these findings and suggestions made with your senior managerial and political leadership before determining how the council wishes to take things forward. This might include how and when you communicate the findings of the peer challenge and your response to them, both internally and externally.

As part of the peer challenge process, there is an offer of continued activity to support further development. We will endeavour to signpost you to other sources of information and examples of practice and thinking.

In the meantime we are keen to continue the relationship we have formed with you and colleagues through the peer challenge to date.

I thought it helpful to provide contact details for Andy Bates who, as you know, is our Principal Adviser (South West). Andy can be contacted via email at andy.bates@local.gov.uk (or tel. 07919 562849) and is the main contact between your authority and the LGA. Hopefully this provides you with a convenient route of access to the LGA, its resources and any further support.

All of us connected with the peer challenge would like to wish you every success going forward. Once again, many thanks to you and your colleagues for inviting the peer challenge and to everyone involved for their participation.

Bob Ross – Peer Challenge Manager

On behalf of the peer challenge team

Appendix 2 – Progress Against Peer Challenge Action Plan

Formal Recommendation Ref (listed on Page 16)	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
1. (page 4, para 2)	Engage local communities and partner organisations more actively in the development of your priorities and objectives.	<p>The annual update of Council Plan actions (2015/16) is currently underway – this is the last year of the current plan.</p> <p>The development of the new Council Plan will take place during 2015/16. A programme of engagement with key stakeholders will support the development of the new plan.</p>	Chief Executive (Head of Corporate Services)	March 2016	COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) - a new Council Plan (2016-2020) was approved by Council on 19 April 2016. Limited engagement has taken place with key stakeholders in formalising the plan though the plan has been shared with key stakeholders.
2. (page 6, para 1)	Develop a systematic approach to gathering customer feedback and incorporate it within your performance management arrangements.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Review customer feedback systems in service areas to ensure there is a consistent and appropriate approach and feedback is acted upon. 2) Devise an effective residents' survey in order to drive performance. 	Chief Executive (Head of Corporate Services)	December 2015	1) COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) - Improvement work in Revenues and Benefits and Customer Services has included the development of new locally collected performance data to better manage and monitor delivery. Corporate customer care standards have also been implemented as part of the customer care strategy.

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Formal Recommendation Ref (listed on Page 16)	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
				July 2016 November 2016	<p>2) COMPLETE – A Citizens’ Panel has been promoted during the year with over 200 residents signed up to it. To date, the Panel has been used for ongoing feedback regarding the new website. The new website went live in November and will now be looked at to see how it can be used as a source of obtaining residents’ satisfaction. Moving forward, service areas will be encouraged to use the Panel. A new complaints framework has also successfully been implemented.</p>

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Formal Recommendation Ref (listed on Page 16)	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
3. (page 6, para 2)	At the point you come to review your Council Plan, consider expressing your priorities in a way that is more focused on outcomes.	Develop a new Council Plan so that it is outcome focused.	Chief Executive (Head of Corporate Services)	March 2016	COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) – a new Council Plan (2016-2020) was approved by Council on 19 April 2016.
4. (page 6, para 3)	Keep under review your capacity to deliver the current level of activity and regularly revisit your volume and range of priorities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Use Council Plan to refocus priorities. 2) CLT will regularly review projects, workloads and related sickness absence. 3) Look to improve project management capacity. 	Corporate Leadership Team	March 2016	COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Approval of new Council Plan (see 1 and 3 above) 2) Sickness absence is monitored and reported through the performance management framework. A review of the Absence Management Policy is a future item for O&S Committee. 3) Significant projects such as the leisure centre, LEADER, and Tewkesbury Regeneration project have been supported with dedicated project

Appendix 2 – Progress Against Peer Challenge Action Plan

Formal Recommendation Ref (listed on Page 16)	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
					support. The internal project management framework has also been reviewed and updated to enable greater scrutiny and accountability to individual projects.
5. (page 8, para 4)	Develop specific actions to meet the identified revenue shortfall as a matter of priority.	Transform Working Group with CLT will develop a financial plan with specific actions.	Corporate Leadership Team (Head of Finance and Asset Management)	December 2015	COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) – a rolling 5 year MTFS, developed in consultation with Members has been produced. Reviewed annually.
6. (page 9, para 3)	Build on the positives of your current culture by encouraging more rigorous challenge including Members to Members; Members to Officers and Officers to Officers (include review of effectiveness of portfolio briefings).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Address this through develop Member development programme and Officer development programme. 2) Build on current review of effectiveness of O&S Committee. 3) Review effectiveness of portfolio briefings with Lead Members. 	Corporate Leadership Team	March 2016	COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) 1) A comprehensive induction programme has been delivered to Members. The development of the programme is ongoing throughout the term of the Council and further training and development continues

Appendix 2 – Progress Against Peer Challenge Action Plan

Formal Recommendation Ref (listed on Page 16)	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
					<p>to be organised and well attended.</p> <p>2) Effectiveness work has taken place with the Committee and this work will continue during the Committee's life cycle. This work has included the implementation of pre-briefings, a six monthly O&S newsletter, independent critique of the Committee and additional training needs.</p> <p>3) How Lead Members wish their briefings to be managed is a personal choice. No negative feedback has been received and they will continue as programmed.</p>

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Formal Recommendation Ref (listed on Page 16)	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
7. (page 15, para 3)	Revamp your website and develop a programme that sets out how and when you intend to achieve channel migration.	Develop a new Customer Services Strategy to include: 1) Channel shift. 2) Review and update of the website.	Deputy Chief Executive (Head of Corporate Services)	March 2016 March 2016 June 2016 November 2016	1) COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016)- A Customer Care Strategy including corporate care standards was approved at Executive Committee on 9 March 2016. This strategy is supported by a Digital Strategy which provides the platform to offer online alternatives for our customers. 2) COMPLETE – the new website went live at the end of November.
8. (page 9, para 5)	Review the Member development programme with a view to ensuring that it is aligned with overall organisational culture change.	Following the Borough Elections, a needs and skills analysis will be offered to all Members leading to personal development plans aligned to the requirements of the Council.	Borough Solicitor (Head of Democratic Services)	December 2015 Jan 2016 Sept 2016	COMPLETE – online skills questionnaire available to all Members and development plans available as requested.

Appendix 2 – Progress Against Peer Challenge Action Plan

Other identified recommendations	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
9. (page 4, para 3).	Council should consider whether it can 'prioritise its priorities' to ensure that it is focusing on the key activities that will continue to transform its services and internal capacity. Include looking at ways to streamlining monitoring activities.	See 1) and 3) above plus look at key corporate monitoring systems to identify any opportunities for streamlining.	Chief Executive (Head of Corporate Services)	March 2016	COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) – the new Council Plan has refreshed priorities supported with a focus on new initiatives such as commercialism and digitalisation. The latter has already streamlined activities such as FOI, complaints reporting, internal help desk facilities (ICT and Property).
10. (page 7, para 7)	Create a more active political awareness and engagement with Members with regards to financial management.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Financial awareness training to be included within Members' induction. 2) Establish and run a programme of Member events to engage with Members on financial management. 	Deputy Chief Executive (Head of Finance and Asset Management)	<p>June 2015</p> <p>March 2016</p>	<p>1) COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) A financial awareness session was held as part of Members' induction and received very positive feedback.</p> <p>2) COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) A number of events have taken place since induction to ensure engagement on</p>

Appendix 2 – Progress Against Peer Challenge Action Plan

Other identified recommendations	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
					financial management continues. Additional working groups established for specific finance related activities e.g. Commercial Investment Board.
69 11. (page 8, para 1)	Consideration should be given as to whether you are able to invest more in the growth agenda to expedite financial returns.	CLT and Transform Working Group to consider opportunities in relation to the growth agenda.	Corporate Leadership Team	March 2016	COMPLETE – internal and external funding invested in planning policy and development management to meet demand, progress the JCS and tackle specific growth areas such as junction 9. A commercial theme has been added to the Council’s Transform Programme. This has already seen a significant property investment come to fruition with further monies allocated for similar investments. Approval has also been given for the regeneration of Spring Gardens/Oldbury Road site.

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Other identified recommendations	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
12. (page 10, para 5)	Maximise the contribution of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	O&S has commenced a review of effectiveness and a formal action plan will be developed.	Chief Executive (Head of Corporate Services)	May 2016	COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) - A review of effectiveness workshop was held in February 2016 and an action plan developed. This includes training and development (including peer mentoring) which is an ongoing action.
13. (page 10, para 6)	Review the Constitution in its entirety to ensure it is up to date.	In consultation with Members, review and update the Constitution.	Borough Solicitor (Head of Democratic Services)	May 2016 December 2016	NOT YET COMMENCED – Other projects have taken priority such as the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections, the EU referendum, Neighbourhood Plan referendums and the review of Borough Ward boundaries. Resources are now focused on the County Elections and completing the Ward Boundary review. 2018 will be the first year for over 10 years when there are no major elections scheduled and priority will be given to completing the

Appendix 2 – Progress Against Peer Challenge Action Plan

Other identified recommendations	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Progress to date
					update of the Constitution. In the meantime, the constitution is still a serviceable document available on the internet.
14. (page 12, para 5)	Further work is necessary to develop the collective role of the Group Managers.	A programme of management development has been developed and is taking place.	Chief Executive (Head of Corporate Services)	June 2015	COMPLETE (reported to O&S 19 July 2016) – A management development programme for the management cohort has taken place. A new training programme will be developed for the new management team.
15. (page 13, para 3)	Implement an up to date workforce strategy including a consistent approach to agile working.	A workforce strategy will be developed to support the council's transformation agenda.	Chief Executive (Head of Corporate Services)	December 2015 March 2016 September 2016 February 2017	IN PROGRESS – a draft strategy has been produced. This will be presented at Executive Committee in March.