

# TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 September 2017
<b>Subject:</b>	Tewkesbury Borough News Review Report
<b>Report of:</b>	Tewkesbury Borough News Review Working Group
<b>Corporate Lead:</b>	Mike Dawson, Chief Executive
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Cllr D J Waters, Leader of the Council
<b>Number of Appendices:</b>	Two

## **Executive Summary:**

A Member workshop was held on 10 October 2016 to gain feedback on corporate communications. One specific area discussed was Tewkesbury Borough News and this generated a lot of discussion, such as cost, quality, regularity of production and format, without reaching any formal conclusion.

Given the extent of discussion and the high profile nature of the newspaper, it was agreed a formal review of the newspaper was required and that an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group could undertake that work.

This report outlines the information presented to the Working Group and the Working Group's findings and overall recommendations.

## **Recommendation:**

**To ENDORSE the Tewkesbury Borough News Review Report and to RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE that it be ADOPTED.**

## **Reasons for Recommendation:**

To ensure we have a cost-effective way of communicating with our residents, which is fit for purpose.

## **Resource Implications:**

If the report is approved by Executive Committee, the overall cost of Tewkesbury Borough News will be reduced by £4,066 per year.

## **Legal Implications:**

None.

## **Risk Management Implications:**

None.

**Performance Management Follow-up:**

Annual review of the work of the committee provides transparency and accountability and helps the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prepare its work programme.

**Environmental Implications:**

None.

**1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

**1.1** Tewkesbury Borough News is the Council's main proactive communications method, which reaches all households in the borough.

**1.2** A Member workshop was held on 10 October 2016 to gain feedback on corporate communications. One specific area discussed was Tewkesbury Borough News and this generated a lot of discussion, such as cost, quality, regularity of production and format, without reaching any formal conclusion.

Given the extent of discussion and the high profile nature of the newspaper, it was agreed a formal review of the newspaper was required and that an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group could undertake that work.

**1.3** At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 21 March 2017, a Working Group was established to review the Tewkesbury Borough News comprising the following Members:

Councillors Mrs G F Blackwell, D T Foyle, Mrs S E Hillier-Richardson, Mrs H C McLain and Mrs P E Stokes plus the Lead Member for Customer Focus (M Dean)

**2.0 SCOPE OF THE REVIEW**

**2.1** The terms of reference of the review (attached at Appendix 1) asked the Working Group to investigate three options for the future of Tewkesbury Borough News:

- retain Tewkesbury Borough News in its current format and circulation;
- retain Tewkesbury Borough News but consider an alternative format and/or circulation e.g. digital options/issue twice-yearly/reduced circulation; or
- stop producing Tewkesbury Borough News.

**2.2** The review took place over three sessions where a range of information was considered and debated including:

- Background of Tewkesbury Borough News – including current format and cost.
- Feedback from Citizens' Panel on its views of Tewkesbury Borough News, and what the Panel members would like in future.
- Detailed costings and mock-ups from two designers.
- Cost avoidance.
- Advertising.
- The pros and cons of magazine and newspaper formats.

**2.3** Further details of the review sessions can be found within the report, attached at Appendix 2.

### **3.0 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**3.1** Having considered all the information provided during the review, in particular the costings and the mock-up front covers, the final recommendations of the Working Group were as follows:

- To move from three to two editions per year.
- To move to a magazine publication.
- That Wychavon District Council be recommended as the preferred design for a 12-month trial period.
- To engage with Parish Councils which do not currently submit news articles.
- To work to maximise advertising income.
- To introduce a one-flick PDF online.
- To ensure the magazine is placed in a prominent place on our website.

**3.2** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to endorse the Working Group report, as set out at Appendix 2, and to refer it to the Executive Committee for consideration at its meeting on 11 October 2017.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

**4.1** None.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

**5.1** Two consultations were carried out with the Citizens' Panel as part of the review.

Operational Managers were consulted in terms of the potential impact of moving from three editions to two editions in terms of their service area.

### **6.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES**

**6.1** None.

### **7.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

**7.1** None.

### **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)**

**8.1** None

### **9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)**

**9.1** None

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

**10.1** None

### **11.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS**

**11.1** None.

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**Background Papers:** None

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**Appendices:** Appendix 1 – Tewkesbury Borough News Review Working Group Terms of Reference  
Appendix 2 – Tewkesbury Borough News Review Report