

24 August 2015

Committee	Executive
Date	Wednesday, 2 September 2015
Time of Meeting	2:00 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	
<p>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.</p>	
4. MINUTES	1 - 13
<p>To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2015.</p>	
5. ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	
<p>To receive any questions, deputations or petitions submitted under Rule of Procedure 12.</p> <p><i>(The deadline for public participation submissions for this meeting is 26 August 2015).</i></p>	
6. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN	14 - 17
<p>To consider the Committee's Forward Plan.</p>	
7. GLOUCESTERSHIRE DEVOLUTION PROJECT	18 - 34
<p>To note progress to date, to consider the establishment of a Member Devolution Working Group and to recommend to Council that the potential benefits of the devolution agenda are supported in principle.</p>	
8. STROUD DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN - FURTHER POST SUBMISSION PROPOSED CHANGES	35 - 40
<p>To approve the Council's comments on the Stroud District Local Plan – Further Post Submission Proposed Changes.</p>	
9. CHANGES TO THE DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT POLICY FOR HOUSING BENEFITS	41 - 52
<p>To consider the guidelines for the determination of Discretionary Housing Payment Claims.</p>	
10. COMMUNITY GRANTS	53 - 68
<p>To review the criteria and operation of the Community Grants Scheme and approve the new Community Grants Information Guide.</p>	
11. NAMING OF NEW LEISURE FACILITY	69 - 72
<p>To make a recommendation to Council on the name of the new Leisure Facility.</p>	

DATE OF NEXT MEETING
WEDNESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2015

COUNCILLORS CONSTITUTING COMMITTEE

Councillors: R E Allen, Mrs K J Berry, R A Bird, D M M Davies, M Dean, Mrs E J MacTiernan, J R Mason, R J E Vines (Chairman) and D J Waters (Vice-Chairman)

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 Chairman 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.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee held at the Council Offices,
Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Wednesday, 15 July 2015 commencing at
2:00 pm**

Present:

Chairman
Vice Chairman

Councillor R J E Vines
Councillor D J Waters

and Councillors:

R E Allen, Mrs K J Berry, R A Bird, D M M Davies, M Dean, Mrs E J MacTiernan and J R Mason

also present:

Councillors P W Awford and Mrs J Greening

EX.12 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 12.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was taken as read.
- 12.2 The Chairman welcomed Councillor P W Awford to the meeting and explained that he was in attendance, as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for Agenda Item 7 – Performance Management – Quarter Four 2014/15. Councillor Mrs J Greening was in attendance as an observer and the Chairman also welcomed her to the meeting.

EX.13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 13.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.
- 13.2 The following declarations were made:

Councillor	Application No./Item	Nature of Interest (where disclosed)	Declared Action in respect of Disclosure
R E Allen	Item 9 – Disposal of Surplus Assets.	Is the Council's representative on the Board of Severn Vale Housing Society.	Would speak and vote.
D J Waters	Item 9 – Disposal of Surplus Assets.	Is the Council's representative on the Board of Severn Vale Housing Society.	Would speak and vote.

- 13.3 There were no further declarations made on this occasion.

EX.14 MINUTES

- 14.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2015, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

EX.15 ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- 15.1 There were no items from members of the public on this occasion.

EX.16 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

- 16.1 Attention was drawn to the Committee's Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No.8-11. Members were asked to consider the Plan.

- 16.2 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the Committee's Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

EX.17 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - QUARTER FOUR 2014/15

- 17.1 The report of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, circulated at Pages No. 12-70, asked Members to review and, if appropriate, take action against the observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following its review of the 2014/15 quarter four performance management information.

- 17.2 The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee explained that this had been the first meeting of the new Committee and Members had asked a lot of questions which he felt was good news. In terms of the delivery of the Council Plan actions, the good progress which had been identified within the report had been noted. The specific questions that had arisen at the meeting had been in relation to the second floor accommodation in the Council Offices building and the plans, costs and loss of income thereof; the live date for the property search database; more information about the LEADER funding; the arrangements for the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy; fly-tipping and dog fouling; the value for money of the Anti-Social Behaviour Youth Diversion Worker; the levels of sickness absence; and planning performance and processing times. In terms of the financial summary information, Members had discussed the business rates revaluation in which it was agreed Members were well versed. Referring to the LEADER funding, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee explained that Members had been encouraged to contact the Programme Manager to advise of any businesses that might benefit from the funding and, whilst it had not been raised at the meeting, the Chairman felt that, given the value of the funding, a presentation should be made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in six months' time so that Members could understand how the fund was progressing. There was some concern expressed about the Community Infrastructure Levy and whether or not Neighbourhood Plans were still relevant; particularly given the amount of work that some areas had already put into their Plans. In terms of dog fouling and flytipping, the Committee had raised genuine concerns about the level of enviro-crimes and had been advised that Environmental Health had recently gone through a structure review during which it had been necessary to recruit to some posts; the service would soon be fully staffed which would allow more community work to be undertaken. Surveillance cameras had recently been purchased, Brockworth Parish Council had bought glow in the dark signs and posters had been used to good effect in Shurdington and would also be used at The Vineyards in Tewkesbury. Lastly, in respect of planning performance, Members had been informed of the forthcoming service

review which would follow a similar process as the recent review of the Revenues and Benefits Service which had proven to be very successful. Planning performance was currently improving against a backdrop of an increase in applications which was pleasing. At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee had reiterated that there were a number of large and complex applications being received and he hoped the new scheme of delegation may help reduce overall processing times.

- 17.3 Referring to the Joint Waste Committee's discussions about the procurement of cameras, a Member questioned whether the cameras would be covert or overt. In response, he was advised that they would be overt and therefore not subject to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA). Referring to the use of posters in Shurdington to discourage dog fouling, a Member advised that in Churchdown Parish they had discovered a cheap and effective way of stopping dog fouling which used a stencil saying 'bag it and bin it' with a picture of a dog in the middle; this was used to spray the pavement in problem areas. The scheme had been monitored and seemed to be effective. The Deputy Chief Executive indicated that Officers welcomed the sharing of any good practice across the Borough and she undertook to discuss the approach taken in Churchdown with the Member. In respect of flytipping, a Member advised that this was a real problem in the Highnam/Minsterworth area. The last time he had reported it he had seen a swift response and he knew that an address had been found amongst the rubbish which had been followed up; however, he had never been advised of the final outcome which he felt was a shame since he had initially reported it. The Deputy Chief Executive undertook to follow this up and ask that the Member be advised of the outcome of the incident. A Member expressed the view that fly-tipping was a blight and Tewkesbury Borough Council was certainly not the only one that suffered. He explained that, at the Joint Waste Committee, Members delivered reports on what was being done in their areas and the Forest of Dean District Council's reports were usually quite heartening. It paid Herefordshire County Council to prosecute fly-tippers and this seemed to work well; although it did need a person dedicated to deal with it. The Joint Waste Committee intended to look at this for the whole of Gloucestershire and consider whether it would be a cost effective way forward. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that Members would welcome such a possibility; although he understood there would need to be a cost/benefits balance. The Deputy Chief Executive agreed that pooling resources across the County may be a good way forward to really have an effect on enviro-crimes and she felt it was helpful that this was being looked at by the Joint Waste Committee. A Member questioned whether there would be any mileage in not charging builders etc. for disposing of their waste for a trial period to see if this helped the situation. The Lead Member indicated that this could be investigated by the Joint Waste Committee.
- 17.4 Referring to Page No 37, a Member questioned why the Council did not have tougher enforcement on dog fouling. She indicated that previously the Council had chosen not to be involved in the 'Clean Towns Initiative' and she felt that this had been a mistake. She noted that the Enviro-Crimes Working Group had decided that Parish Councils should make a quarterly report on dog fouling to provide to the Borough Council; however, this was not practical as residents often did not report the problem and therefore the Parish Council was not aware of the extent of the issues. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive indicated that the Borough Council was using Fixed Penalty Notices for dog fouling wherever possible but unfortunately residents did not report the issues to the Borough Council either. There were a number of ideas being considered and it was felt that the 'Paws on Patrol' Scheme would be helpful. With regard to Parish Councils, she advised that it was the identification of 'hot spots' which the Borough Council required. This would allow resources to be targeted in problem areas; it was not the intention that the Parish Councils would have a complete data capture across the whole area.

Members generally understood that catching people letting their dogs foul without picking it up was the real issue and that evidence was needed before any prosecutions could take place. Another Member advised that, in her area, the problem was getting worse rather than better and her Parish had looked at the possibility of partnering with other Parishes to jointly procure a Dog Warden in the hope that this would help. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had undertaken a review of Enviro-Crimes and there would be a report shortly on the actions undertaken since that review. She felt that it was still quite early after the review to have experienced huge changes but work on this was moving forward. The problem with a Dog Warden was that they still had to catch people that were letting their dogs foul without picking it up and this remained an issue with or without a Dog Warden in place. There had been one successful outcome in Northway Parish whereby someone who was known not to pick up after their dog had been sent a letter to encourage them to do so and this seemed to have worked. Members were advised that Tewkesbury Borough Council had also used this approach in the past but, again, the perpetrators had to be identified before this could be successful. A Member suggested that there had been a law whereby dog fouling was an offence in areas where the speed limit was 40mph or above and he felt that this would have a major effect on rural areas; the Borough Solicitor advised that she was not aware of that law but undertook to investigate. A Member suggested that residents could be encouraged to take photos on their mobile phones of people that allowed their dogs to foul and did not pick it up. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that, whilst it was increasingly common for people to use technology to report things, and one of the strands of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review had been communication, identifying people from pictures would probably be quite difficult. She felt that the main deterrent would be to catch a few people and then use that as part of a publicity campaign to show that the Council was tough on enviro-crimes. There was also a need to create a different culture so that people understood that it was not acceptable not to pick up after their dogs or to fly-tip etc.

- 17.5 In reference to Page No. 22, a Member questioned whether the explanation of the difference between high, medium and low risk in terms of food establishments which were broadly compliant with food hygiene regulations had been circulated to Members following the meeting and, if so, whether that information could be circulated to all Members rather than just to Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members. The Deputy Chief Executive undertook to action this request. The Member also noted that there were many establishments which she visited that did not display their one to five rating and she questioned whether the Council could say that the certificate had to be visible to the public. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that establishments were not legally required to display their certificates but it certainly was best practice to do so. She further advised that there was to be a review of the Environmental Health and Planning services and, as part of that process, Officers would be looking to understand the impact of the services on customers etc. She felt that this could be considered as part of that work and maybe the ratings from the Council could be put into the public domain somehow rather than just relying on the individual establishments to show their certificates. The Chief Executive indicated that he would ensure a Member Update was circulated which explained how the food hygiene rating system worked. A Member suggested that food establishments could be encouraged to 'wear their badge with pride' in respect of food hygiene ratings as this would lift their clientele which would be helpful to their business.

- 17.6 A Member drew attention to Page No. 26, Paragraph b) Improve complaints handling, including learning from complaints received to improve service delivery, and expressed the view that the Council must learn from any complaints received as this was the only way it would improve in those areas where there was an issue. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that an internal audit had been undertaken which had identified that there were significant learning points which were not being addressed. Officers were working to rectify those issues.
- 17.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman indicated that he would take the Executive Committee's comments on fly-tipping and dog fouling back to his Committee for discussion. The Chief Executive also reminded Members that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would soon be considering an update on the review of enviro-crimes which he felt would offer an opportunity to discuss what was working/not working following that review. He felt there may be opportunities for improved partnership working with Parishes and other Districts and he was of the view that conversations at the Joint Waste Committee meetings could be of great help in this area.
- 17.8 Having considered the information received, it was

RESOLVED: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments on the Performance Management Report for Quarter Four of 2014/15 be **NOTED**.

EX.18 FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2014/15

- 18.1 The report of the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager, circulated at Pages No. 71-93, highlighted the Council's financial performance for the previous year, setting out the general fund and capital outturn positions, as well as providing detail on both the positive and negative variances against the budget. Members were asked to note the general fund outturn for 2014/15; the financing of the capital programme and the annual treasury management report and performance; and to approve the transfers to and from earmarked reserves.
- 18.2 Members were advised that the report was brought to the Committee in recognition that the Executive Committee had not previously received a comprehensive report like this which provided an overview of performance against the general fund revenue budget for 2014/15 with an explanation of the significant variances. The report also addressed the movement on reserves and requested Member approval for the creation of new reserves or additions to existing reserves that fell outside of a previously approved sum. It also sought to confirm the full year progress against the capital programme and the sources, if finance was used in delivering that programme, as well as reporting the performance in 2014/15 of the treasury management function in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice. All of the information contained within the report would be included in the Council's Statement of Accounts which would be approved by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 30 September 2015.
- 18.3 The Finance and Asset Management Group Manager explained that the general fund revenue outturn position for the full year could now be reported at a surplus of £207,742 which represented a positive variance of 2.4% and was within the tolerance of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. It was pleasing to report a surplus for the Council within the financial year; particularly given the financial climate for local government and the squeeze on service budgets. The surplus would now be utilised to finance the reserve and carry forward requests of the Council. The outturn position was mainly attributable to major items such as the development management income exceeding target by over £152,000 as a result

of planning and land charges income; other income targets exceeding expectation, in particular trade and garden waste and car parking; and expenditure on employee costs being in excess of the budgeted position as the use of agency staff to cover both vacancies and sickness absence had a substantial impact. In addition, vacant posts were being filled quicker than in previous years which prevented any savings accruing from vacant posts. Pages No. 80 and 81 set out the notes to explain the variances and also identified the responsible Group Managers for Members' information. In contrast to the excellent position reported for the general fund, the financing of the fund had been substantially impacted by the performance of the retained business rates scheme in 2014/15. The scheme allowed the Council to retain a percentage of the growth in the local business rate base above a calculated baseline. Tewkesbury Borough had budgeted for retained income of £250,000 from the scheme and was also a member of the Gloucestershire business rates pool which maximised the retention within Gloucestershire. Whilst Councils could benefit from growth in business rates, they must also share in the risk of businesses successfully challenging their business rate valuation. The Council had allowed for substantial provisions against successful appeals within the scheme but, as previously documented, had suffered from a number of successful appeals by Virgin Media. This had meant that Tewkesbury Borough Council had lost all of the £250,000 it envisaged it would have had to finance its services and had also needed to utilise the reserve it had previously set aside for business rates. In addition, the position had been supported by a safety net payment of £3.95 million from the Gloucestershire pool which, in turn, had placed the pool into deficit. The governance arrangements of the pool meant that any deficits needed to be met by the members of the pool in proportion to their baseline funding targets. The deficit to be met by Tewkesbury Borough was approximately £225,000 and could be met from previous surplus distributions of the pool and balances within the business rates reserve for the Council.

- 18.4 A Member indicated that she had recently read an article in the Gloucestershire Echo which had stated that Tewkesbury Borough's uncollected Council Tax amounted to over £1 million. The article indicated that the Council disputed that figure but did not state what it should be. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that the Council did dispute the article as it actually had a high collection rate and Officers were investigating where the Echo had got its information from. The correct information would be supplied once Officers had put it all together but she believed the actual figure was substantially lower. In terms of the use of agency staff, the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager indicated that there were a number of reasons for their use i.e. the inability to recruit permanent staff or the inability to recruit staff quickly enough; to cover temporary absences; to bring in additional income through the use of additional staff; or when restructures were ongoing etc.
- 18.5 Referring to Paragraph 2.4 of the report, a Member indicated that the fact that planning income was exceeding target seemed to explain the problems in meeting performance targets as there were a large number of applications being submitted. In terms of the car parking income, he felt it was important to note that this was not due to the parking strategy at this stage as that had only been introduced in April; he felt it would be interesting to see the results at the end of the year. The Chief Executive advised that an increase in income tended to be an indicator of an improving economy in the Borough; this had knock-on effects in terms of resources but was a good sign for the area. A Member indicated that she was aware of issues with service in the Planning Department. She understood that a review was underway and that agency staff had been employed on a temporary basis until permanent staff could be appointed. She felt that the use of agency staff could cause extra work for permanent staff as they did not know the background etc. of the Borough and she questioned why the Council could not advertise permanently

for Planning Officers as this may ensure quicker employment in the long term. She also questioned what was involved for Officers in a review of the scope that was proposed as she felt it could add pressure to a department that was already finding it difficult to cope. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that recruitment of Planning Officers was a national problem as local authorities struggled to compete with the private sector. She felt that the Council needed to look at different ways of recruiting. In terms of the expectation of staff while the review was underway, she explained that this review would be carried out in a similar way to the recent Revenues and Benefits review. The reality was that the Council was facing more cuts and it had to consider doing things differently even if there was an increase in workload for staff whilst the review was ongoing. In Revenues and Benefits the review had resulted in staff being less pressurised having also had the opportunity to look at their service and assess how efficient it was which had proven to be a successful way forward. There may be a drop in performance whilst the review was being undertaken but the longer term solutions to be gained were of great benefit. She further reiterated that Development Management was within the scope of the review but Planning Policy was not. In terms of the number of new staff within the Planning Department, the Deputy Chief Executive agreed that it would be helpful for Members to be offered the opportunity to meet them and she undertook to arrange this in due course.

- 18.6 The Finance and Asset Management Group Manager explained that a breakdown of the Council's reserves as at 31 March 2015 was attached at Appendix B to the report. The reserves had been grouped under strategic headings with the aim of providing Members with a better understanding of the actual intended use of the monies that were set aside. There were notes included to explain any significant movement within the year; in terms of Note 2 – reserve established to allow for timing differences in accounting for retained business rates and the cash flow associated with the scheme, Members were reassured that this did not relate to the Virgin Media appeals, it was purely an anomaly of the process. In continuing his presentation of the report, the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager explained that the Council had committed to a substantial capital programme in the last few years and this was highlighted in the level of capital expenditure incurred in 2014/15. Over £819,000 of capital had been expended during the year on the office refurbishment project which had been completed ahead of schedule and had been £28,870 under the total budget allocation for the project. The new leisure facility build project had commenced in February 2015 with the initial groundworks and had seen expenditure of £1.25 million by 31 March. Monies set aside for investment purposes were held back in the second half of the year resulting in a substantial underspend against the capital investment programme. Within the total expenditure on housing and business grants was expenditure on flood relief grants for properties and businesses affected by flooding in winter 2014. £315,000 had been spent on that programme in the 2014/15 financial year and had been financed from the Council's capital balances. However, the scheme was backed by central government and capital grants to cover the expenditure incurred would be received by the Council in 2015/16. A summary of the capital programme was attached at Appendix C to the report. The detailed treasury report was attached at Appendix D to the report for information. The Finance and Asset Management Group Manager indicated that he was obliged to report this twice a year and he was relatively pleased with the treasury activities that had taken place during the previous year. The two performance indicators for the financial services section had shown significantly improved performance in 2014/15 compared to the previous year which was also good news.

- 18.7 The Vice-Chairman felt that the format of the report was helpful and accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

1. That the general fund outturn for 2014/15, the financing of the capital programme and the annual treasury management report and performance be **NOTED**.
2. That the transfers to and from earmarked reserves be **APPROVED**.

EX.19 DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS ASSETS

- 19.1 The report of the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager, circulated at Pages No. 94-99, introduced a new framework for the Council to consider the use of its assets and Members were asked to consider whether or not the assets listed in the report were required for continued or future service use.
- 19.2 Members were advised that the Council held a limited portfolio of land and property assets of any commercial value but nevertheless retained a number of assets that were not required for current or future service use and did not provide a substantial community amenity. Councils were required to assess their assets to gain the optimal value and return either in terms of service delivery, financial return or reduced ongoing liability. The Committee was asked to consider a number of sites which included the MAFF site, Tewkesbury; land off Evesham Road, Bishop's Cleeve; Land at Uckington; and all remaining retained garage sites managed by Severn Vale Housing Society. Any assets agreed for disposal would be dealt with in line with the Council's Constitution and, where required, reports would be submitted to the Executive Committee for further consideration. The report currently before Members was intended as the first step in formalising the process for declaring any land and property asset owned by the Council surplus to requirements and would provide a formal and public declaration by the Council rather than maintaining the current ad-hoc arrangements for the disposal of individual assets. Previous reports on asset disposal had often included elements of a commercially sensitive nature, such as bid prices, and this had prevented the full report being aired in open business. Having declared a property surplus to requirements, the Asset Management Team would consider a number of options on whether the Council should retain the asset as part of the investment portfolio for letting purposes; retain the asset for redevelopment; or dispose of the asset and generate a capital receipt. By following the process outlined within the report, it was hoped that the Council would establish a robust and transparent position on each asset which would allow an early dialogue with both the community and potential bidders, whilst providing proper authority and disposal parameters from which the Asset Management Team could take forward the Council's property ambitions.
- 19.3 In respect of the remaining retained garage sites, the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager advised that all of the sites were of a similar construction and age and ranged in size from 94m² up to 811m². The units were manufactured from a concrete frame and asbestos roof and were suffering from age. They were considered to be uneconomical to repair and maintain given the type of construction and the rental income from the units with no value in replacing them. In addition, many of the sites had suffered from various types of anti-social behaviour over the years. In terms of garage unit lets, around 20% of units were currently let to tenants of Severn Vale Housing Society and 45% were let to private tenants. Void units currently accounted for 35% of the total; a proportion that was increasing. The garages agreement with Severn Vale Housing Society allowed first

refusal on the site to be given to Severn Vale Housing Society should the sites no longer be required for garage use. Should the Council wish to work with Severn Vale Housing Society to redevelop the sites, the Society would also be able to relocate many of the existing tenancies to other garage units within their stock. Officers felt that there was no service use going forward for the sites and the potential to do something different with them was interesting. It was hoped that Members would agree to undertake discussions with Severn Vale to see what might be possible.

- 19.4 During the discussion which ensued, a Member indicated that it was helpful to see the full list of garage sites and the areas they were located and he felt they should be considered for the development of affordable housing. In response, the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager indicated that they had not been looked at in detail yet and as such the optimum way forward was yet to be established; however, Officers would certainly bear that in mind as an option. Another Member questioned what was meant when an asset was described as 'surplus to service requirements'. In response, he was advised that there were a total of around 5,000 assets in the ownership of the Borough Council; the vast majority of which were very small areas within developments. The term 'surplus to service requirements' meant assets that were not needed for operational requirements or had not been earmarked for service use. All of the assets needed to be reviewed but at this stage only the larger sites were being considered.
- 19.5 A Member expressed concern that, when the Council dealt with organisations such as Severn Vale Housing Society, it tended not to get the best market value for the asset and she asked for reassurance that current valuations for all of the assets would be sought and that, where possible, value for money was gained from their transfer. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive explained that the assets were part of the Council's resources and therefore they had to be utilised for the benefit of the community as well as having a financial benefit. Any proposal in connection to the asset base would need a valuation and if it was proposed that they be disposed of at less than market value this would have to be a decision of the Executive Committee. In terms of the garages, the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager confirmed that they were all within the freehold of the Council and it would have to approach Severn Vale in the first instance if it was looking to develop them for social housing. Officers would be investigating the best package whilst taking account of all of the options. A Member expressed concern that many of the assets should already have been disposed of but that he would not want them to be disposed of now in a piecemeal way. In response, the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager advised that the reason for the current report was to look at the asset base as a whole, rather than independently, which was the preferred way forward. Members were generally in agreement that this was an excellent approach and they were pleased with the action proposed within the report. One Member did, however, feel that there must be proper research before the assets were disposed of and she suggested a workshop with Members to explore the options for the Council in developing sites would be helpful.
- 19.6 The Chief Executive advised that the disposal of some assets was about filling the gap in capital but also about allowing investment in other assets that would provide a better return. There was often a need to generate capital to gain a higher return. Having considered the information provided, it was

RESOLVED: That it be **AGREED** that the following land and property assets are surplus to service requirements and that Officers investigate the potential for disposing of the assets or retaining them to provide an ongoing return:

- MAFF Site, Tewkesbury.
- Land off Evesham Road, Bishop's Cleeve.
- Land at Uckington.
- All remaining retained garage sites managed by Severn Vale Housing Society.

EX.20 CHELTENHAM BOROUGH PLAN PART 1 - ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

- 20.1 The report of the Development Services Group Manager, circulated at Pages No. 100-166, attached, for Members information, the Cheltenham Borough Plan Part 1 – Issues and Options consultation document and asked the Committee to agree the Council's response to the document.
- 20.2 The Development Services Group Manager explained that that the Cheltenham Borough Plan provided the District-level planning framework that sat underneath the strategic-level Joint Core Strategy. Together the two Plans provided the Development Plan for Cheltenham Borough up to 2031, along with the Gloucestershire Minerals and Waste Plans and any Neighbourhood Plans. Cheltenham Borough Council was now consulting on its draft Plan and that consultation period was ongoing until 3 August 2015. It was important that Tewkesbury Borough Council provided representations on the Cheltenham Plan due to the collaborative working on the higher-level Joint Core Strategy and the cross-boundary issues that were present. It was also important that the Cheltenham Plan sufficiently provided the appropriate sites and policies to deliver the growth identified in the Joint Core Strategy and in line with the spatial strategy it set out.
- 20.3 Members were advised that the key points to consider were local green space, housing allocations and employment allocations. In terms of local green space there were cross boundary issues as some of the areas were within the emerging strategic allocations. In recognition of the potential conflicts, the Joint Core Strategy inspector would be considering the local green space submissions as part of the examination. In addition, no indication was provided within the document as to whether there were an adequate number of suitable, achievable and deliverable sites to meet the development needs as set out in the Joint Core Strategy and it was also noted that none of the sites being consulted upon that were in the Green Belt or the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty were considered to be suitable development which could present a problem when looking for sufficient sites to meet the need identified for development. The consultation document did not make it clear how the Council would find the residual number and it was felt that this needed to be questioned. It was also unclear how it would address the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople allocation and whether there were adequate sites to meet development needs. Appendix 5 set out Tewkesbury Borough Council's proposed response to the consultation document.

- 20.4 A number of Members questioned whether the response was robust enough, particularly in terms of the whole concept of local green space. The Development Services Group Manager felt that the response was appropriate at the current stage of the process. Cheltenham Borough Council would be looking at all of the responses received and would take them forward to the next stage of the process. She felt that Members should take reassurance from the fact that the Joint Core Strategy inspector had already expressed an interest in the deliverability of the strategic sites and that Tewkesbury Borough Council would object to anything that undermined the Joint Core Strategy. The Deputy Chief Executive agreed that the response was adequate to make clear Tewkesbury Borough Council's concerns at this stage and provided a clear message to Cheltenham Borough Council about what would and would not be acceptable. A Member indicated that, whilst he accepted the document was still one for consultation, he felt there may be a need to add a phrase at the end of the Council's response to state that the document was not currently acceptable to Tewkesbury Borough Council.
- 20.5 There was some concern expressed about the current progress of the Joint Core Strategy examination and Officers indicated that they understood the issues raised and would be discussing what might be done to address this; although Members did need to bear in mind that much of the examination process was out of the control of the Councils involved.
- 20.6 Having considered the information provided, it was proposed and seconded that additional wording be added to the Council's response to indicate that it would object to any proposal which would undermine the integrity of the Joint Core Strategy and, accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the Council's response to the Cheltenham Plan Part 1: Issues and Options Consultation, as set out at Appendix 5 to the report, be **AGREED** subject to the inclusion of a sentence to state that 'Tewkesbury Borough Council will object to any proposal which will undermine the integrity of the Joint Core Strategy'.

EX.21 INTERIM ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENFORCEMENT POLICY

- 21.1 The report of the Environmental and Housing Services Group Manager, circulated at Pages No. 167-187, set out how the Council's Environmental Health and Licensing services responded to regulatory non-compliance. The Committee was asked to consider and approve the interim Policy, as set out at Appendix B to the report.
- 21.2 Members were advised that this was a very high level document which looked at the way that enforcement was undertaken in the Environmental Health and Licensing services. There was currently a policy in place but recently there had been specific changes in legislation which provided a principles-based framework for how regulators should engage with those that they regulated. The new Regulators Code covered specific Local Authority services which included food safety, environmental protection, health and safety, private sector housing, public health, trading standards, waste and licensing. It did not cover planning, building control and parking services enforcement. The reason that the proposed policy was an interim policy was that, in the long term, Officers would like to look at other areas of the Council's regulatory work, i.e. planning, to see if there was scope to introduce a common corporate approach to enforcement. This may or may not be possible but it was felt that there was an opportunity to investigate this which should not be lost.

- 21.3 Members felt that the interim policy was sensible and that it would be helpful to investigate the possibilities of a corporate approach. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the draft Interim Health Enforcement Policy be
APPROVED.

EX.22 ROSES THEATRE REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

- 22.1 The report of the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager, circulated at Pages No. 188-191, advised the Committee of action taken under the Urgency Procedure in respect of the Roses Theatre refurbishment project. Members were asked to note the action taken.
- 22.2 Members were advised that under the terms of the lease on the Roses Theatre, the Council had the responsibility for the roof of the Theatre which, following an inspection, had been identified as being in need of urgent and substantial repair and replacement. To address the issues, and to work alongside the Roses Theatre Trust with its plans to refurbish the interior of the building, the Council had approved an injection of funding of £150,000. The tenders received for the work on the roof had been much higher than expected due, in part, to the demand for roofing contractors during the summer months, and partly due to the fact that the development industry overall was in greater demand than it had been previously. In terms of the timing of the works, Members were advised that the refurbishment would take place over the summer months as that was the Theatre's quietest performance period and, since the Theatre needed to be closed for the duration of the works, this was the option that made the most business sense. The newly refurbished building would open in late September to allow for the autumn and Christmas performance schedules which were obviously much busier.
- 22.3 To enable acceptance of the roofing tender, the appropriate budgetary provision had to be in place and, in light of this, an urgent decision request had been made to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee and the decision had been taken to allow the virement of £100,000 to support the required work at the Theatre. There would, in the longer term, be a cost benefit to the Council as the overall improvements would benefit the Council as the owner of the building.
- 22.4 In response to a query regarding the reason for the increase in costs, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that, in addition to the reasons already noted, when the work on the roof had begun the contractors had found asbestos that had not been identified within the condition survey. Members questioned why this had been the case and in response, the Deputy Chief Executive was unsure how this had occurred and assured Members that she would investigate. She did, however, reiterate that the additional £100,000 was not required purely due to the asbestos in the roof, although that had increased the costs slightly. In terms of maintenance, the Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the Roses Theatre was no different to any of the Council's other assets in that it needed to be maintained to ensure its future going forward; it would otherwise become a burden to the Council that it could not afford. The Theatre was extremely well thought of by the Arts Council which perceived it as one of the best cultural venues in the Country. In addition, the benefit that it brought to residents of the Borough in terms of its outreach work, its community and schools work and its use as an arts centre as well as a Theatre was exceptional. Members generally expressed the view that the Theatre was of great benefit to the Borough and that it brought a lot of enjoyment to many residents. One Member indicated that the Council should also remember that it had another such asset in Cleeve Hill Golf Club and he reminded Officers that there was a lot of work required on that asset to bring it up to a good standard.

22.5 Having considered the report, it was

RESOLVED: That the action taken in accordance with the Urgency Procedure be **NOTED**.

EX.23 SEPARATE BUSINESS

23.1 The Chairman proposed, and it was

RESOLVED That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EX.24 SEPARATE MINUTES

24.1 The separate Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2015, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 5:05 pm

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2015 TO JANUARY 2016 (No Meeting in December)

REGULAR ITEM:

- **Forward Plan – to note the forthcoming items.**

Addition to 2 September 2015

- Stroud District Local Plan.
- Devolution Report.

Committee Date: 14 October 2015

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Performance Management Report – Quarter One 2015/16.	To receive and respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s review of the quarter one performance management information.	Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager.	No.
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).	To recommend to Council the adoption of the five year MTFS which describes the financial environment the Council is operating in and the pressures it will face in delivering its services and a balanced budget over the period.	Simon Dix, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager.	No.
Asset Strategy.	To recommend to Council the adoption of an updated and comprehensive Asset Strategy covering the next 4 years and the Council’s entire asset portfolio.	Simon Dix, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager.	No.
Customer Services Strategy.	To approve a Strategy that will set out how the Council will provide a high quality customer service so we serve our customers in an open, inclusive and efficient manner.	Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager.	No.

14

Agenda Item 6

Committee Date: 14 October 2015			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Review of Fraud Prosecution Policy.	Following the implementation of a new Single Fraud Investigation Service the Council needs to review its Fraud Prosecution Policy as it is no longer required to carry out fraud investigations in Housing Benefit cases as well as prosecute them.	Richard Horton, Revenues and Benefits Group Manager.	Yes – from July Executive Committee.
Gold Standard and Housing Options.	The Gold Standard is a target set by the DCLG for local authority homeless services. In achieving that standard the Council needs to make some changes to its present working practices.	Val Garside, Environmental and Housing Services Group Manager.	Yes – from July Executive Committee.
Volunteering Policy (Phase 2).	The second phase of the Volunteering Policy will set out how the Council will support employees who wish to do volunteer work within the community or for charitable institutions.	Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager.	Yes – from September Executive Committee.
Six Monthly Ubico Update.	To receive the first six monthly update from Ubico.	Val Garside, Environmental and Housing Services Group Manager.	No.
Tewkesbury Rugby Club Lease	To consider an extension of the lease to include additional public open space.	Simon Dix, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager	No.
Lease of Facilities at Cold Pool Lane, Badgeworth.	To consider the lease of land currently owned by Bloor.	Simon Dix, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager	No.

Committee Date: 14 October 2015			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Establishment of Boundary Review Working Group.	To agree the establishment of a Boundary Review Working Group.	Lin O'Brien, Democratic Services Group Manager.	No.

Committee Date: 25 November 2015			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Take-Up Strategy.	To review the strategic approach to encourage the take-up of benefits and consider the impact of financial inclusion.	Richard Horton, Revenues and Benefits Group Manager.	No.
Climate Change Strategy.		Val Garside, Environmental and Housing Services Group Manager.	No.
Waste Management Strategy.	To consider the Waste Management Strategy.	Val Garside, Environmental and Housing Services Group Manager.	No.
Review of Safeguarding Children Policy		Val Garside, Environmental and Housing Services Group Manager	No

Committee Date: 12 January 2016			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Budget 2015/16.	To recommend a budget for 2015/16 to Council.	Simon Dix, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager.	No.
Performance Management Report – Quarter Two 2015/16.	To receive and respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s review of the quarter one performance management information.	Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager.	No.
Cemetery Provision in Tewkesbury.	To review the options for the provision of cemetery facilities within Tewkesbury.	Simon Dix, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager.	No.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	2 September 2015
Subject:	Gloucestershire Devolution Project
Report of:	Mike Dawson, Chief Executive
Corporate Lead:	Mike Dawson, Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor R J E Vines, Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:

There is considerable national interest in the 'devolution agenda'. In Gloucestershire, Council and other public and private sector leaders working together through Leadership Gloucestershire, have expressed an interest to government to explore this further and made initial proposals for further exploration. There are potential benefits for Gloucestershire in exploring what powers and budgets may be devolved. This would also require consideration of appropriate governance arrangements. These will include the potential creation of a combined authority to manage decisions related to the devolved powers and any powers that may be delegated by partner organisations. This report asks the Committee to note progress to date, recommends the establishment of a Member Devolution Working Group and recommends to Council that the potential benefits of the devolution agenda are supported in principle.

Recommendation:

- 1. That the Committee note the progress undertaken to date by Leadership Gloucestershire in respect of the devolution agenda.**
- 2. That a Member Devolution Working Group is established, in accordance with the Terms of Reference set out at Appendix 2, with the political composition being determined by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and Group Leaders then being invited to make nominations to the Group as appropriate.**
- 3. That it be RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that it notes the progress undertaken by Leadership Gloucestershire in respect of the devolution agenda and that it supports in principle further devolution development work together with Leadership Gloucestershire partners.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

To note progress to date and give in principle support to the Gloucestershire devolution agenda whilst establishing a Member Devolution Working Group to engage Members in this work.

<p>Resource Implications:</p> <p>None at this stage.</p>
<p>Legal Implications:</p> <p>None at this stage.</p>
<p>Risk Management Implications:</p> <p>None at this stage. Risk analysis will be undertaken as the project progresses.</p>
<p>Performance Management Follow-up:</p> <p>None at this stage.</p>
<p>Environmental Implications:</p> <p>None.</p>

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** Nationally, there is an active debate about the need for government to pass significant powers down to local government in England to match the powers devolved to the parliament in Scotland and the national assemblies in Wales and Northern Ireland. So far ‘deals’ between the government and local authorities have tended to focus on English cities and large urban areas. However, across the country many two-tier areas are keen to take part in the discussion and the government is now seeking expressions of interest in further potential devolution projects, including those from two tier areas.
- 1.2** The purpose of these expressions of interest is so that government and local public sector partnerships can explore what policy/budget areas might be advantageous to both if they were to be devolved for more local control.
- 1.3** In Gloucestershire public sector partners, working through Leadership Gloucestershire, have recognised potential benefits of achieving devolved powers and budgets for Gloucestershire and also in developing closer and more effective working between public sector bodies in the county. The partners include the Leaders of all seven councils, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chairs of the LEP and the Clinical Commissioning Group. In mid-July Leadership Gloucestershire submitted an expression of interest (EOI) document to Government for consideration.
- 1.4** The purpose of the EOI was to alert government to Gloucestershire’s interest in exploring devolution benefits further, not to set out the full detail that would be needed for a worked up devolution bid. The EOI covered the following workstream areas:
- Economic growth;
 - Strategic planning and infrastructure;
 - Health and wellbeing;
 - Community Safety; and
 - Governance.

1.5 There are significant potential benefits associated with devolution. These include support and devolved government funding to encourage economic growth and infrastructure provision, better use of public funds in areas such as health and wellbeing allowing cross sector investment to reduce demand on services and more coordinated decision making in respect of major issues such as strategic planning, strategic housing and infrastructure delivery. These points are made within the EOI.

1.6 This is clearly an agenda which will be of great interest to Members and to keep Members aware of progress two briefing seminars on the subject of devolution have been held on 30 June and 26 August. In addition the EOI was circulated to all Members at the Leader's request in July shortly after submission the government. A copy of the EOI is attached at Appendix 1 for information

2.0 THE CURRENT POSITION

2.1 Since submission of the EOI, feedback has been received from Government that more detailed information is needed in respect of the actual 'asks' of government and benefits to be achieved under the work streams. Given the limited nature of the EOI, this was not unexpected.

2.2 Furthermore, information has been received in the feedback that the Government is at this time focussing on city and urban areas and will only select 3-5 non-urban areas to go forward in the current devolution round. Civil servants have advised that for any area to be included in the process at this stage, the required information must be submitted by 4 September.

2.3 This is a very tight timescale, however work is under way to develop the required information for a further more detailed submission and this will be considered by Leadership Gloucestershire on 2 September. If Leadership Gloucestershire agrees to submit this further information and is selected as an area to be considered for devolution there will follow a period of intense work to review potential governance options, develop business cases for the proposal and devolution 'asks' of government and development of other local partnerships related to the workstream areas.

2.4 The status of the documents submitted to date is that they are expressions of interest aimed at opening dialogue with government about devolved powers for Gloucestershire and the appropriate governance arrangements that will be needed. This Council and all partners will need to agree to support any devolution 'deal' and associated governance arrangement. If the Gloucestershire EOI is successful there is considerable work to be done to bring this to fruition.

2.5 This further work would involve consultation with all partners, including this Council, throughout the autumn. Current understanding would suggest that a decision by partner Councils/boards to agree the final arrangements would be needed around February 2016.

2.6 If, as is most likely given the limited places available, Gloucestershire is not selected to take part in the current round of devolution discussions with government, it is not possible to say when future opportunities will be offered. However, there are potentially significant benefits to government, to Gloucestershire public sector organisations and to the people of Gloucestershire. Therefore, it is likely that Leadership Gloucestershire will wish to continue to develop the case for devolution in Gloucestershire in preparation for any future opportunities.

2.7 Given that the devolution agenda will remain in either scenario it would be helpful to engage Members in the development work in the coming months. This will allow a Member perspective to be inputted to any proposals as they are generated, assist in the distribution of information at Member level and support the Leader and Deputy Leader in this work.

2.8 It is therefore proposed that a Member Devolution Working Group is established comprising nine Members including the Leader and Deputy Leader in accordance with the Terms of Reference attached as Appendix 2.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 Members have been advised of progress through briefings. There will be a need to maintain Member engagement in the devolution agenda as it progresses. Councils will be consulted about proposals in the event of the bid from Leadership Gloucestershire being selected for further work by government.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 The Council Plan – any devolution proposals would need to support the overall aims of the Council Plan.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 Government policy and existing and emerging (Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill) legislation relating to local government.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None at this stage.

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

8.1 None.

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

9.1 None.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None

Contact Officer: Mike Dawson, Chief Executive Tel: 01684 272001

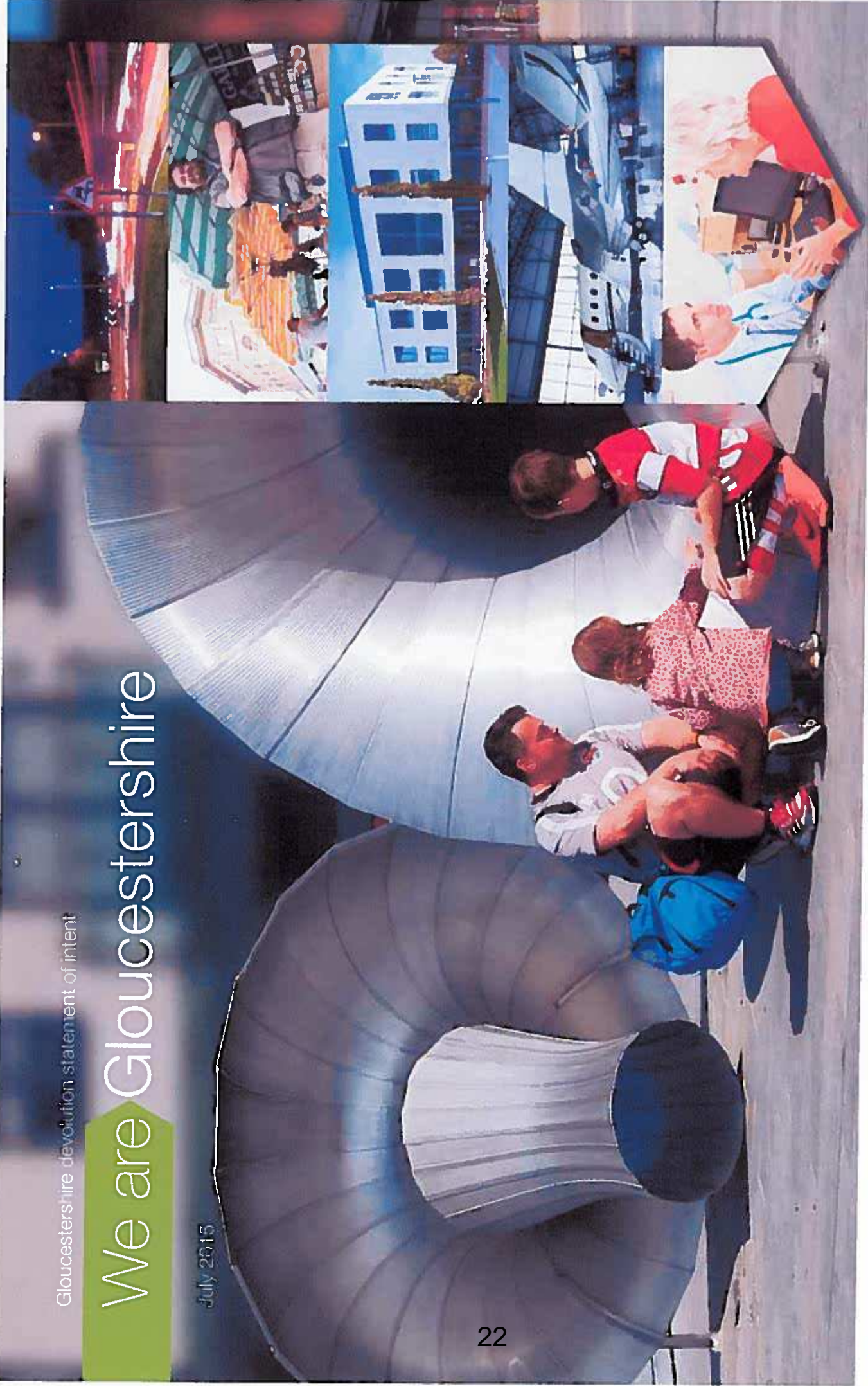
Appendices: Appendix 1 – Expression of Interest – Gloucestershire Devolution submitted in July 2015

Appendix 2 – Proposed Terms of Reference for Member Working Group

Gloucestershire devolution statement of intent

We are Gloucestershire

July 2015



-  **CHELTEMPHAM**
BOROUGH COUNCIL
-  **COTSWOLD**
DISTRICT COUNCIL
-  **Forest of Dean**
DISTRICT COUNCIL
-  **Gloucester**
City Council
-  **STROUD**
DISTRICT
COUNCIL
-  **Tewkesbury**
Town Council
-  **Gloucestershire**
COUNTY COUNCIL
- 
- 
-  **gfirst LEP**
-  **NHS**
Gloucestershire
Clinical Commissioning Group

The Gloucestershire challenge

Economic growth

Working with the private, public and voluntary sectors to generate

34,000 and over **5,000** **NEW APPRENTICESHIPS**

Deliver over **47,000** new homes



Supporting the creation of

200 NEW BUSINESSES between 2016 and 2021



DEVELOPMENT

of 180 hectares of employment land, including around Junctions 9 and 10 of the M5



Aim to drive **GROWTH** of **4.7%** GVA per annum (£500m) by 2022

Public sector reform

The number of carers is likely to

RISE by **12%** to **70,000** by 2017 due mainly to the increasing number of older people



3,400 MORE older people each year between 2012 and 2037



Need **FEWER CHILDREN** IN CARE

RISING NUMBERS OF CHILDREN

are leading to increased demand for school places and other services



LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

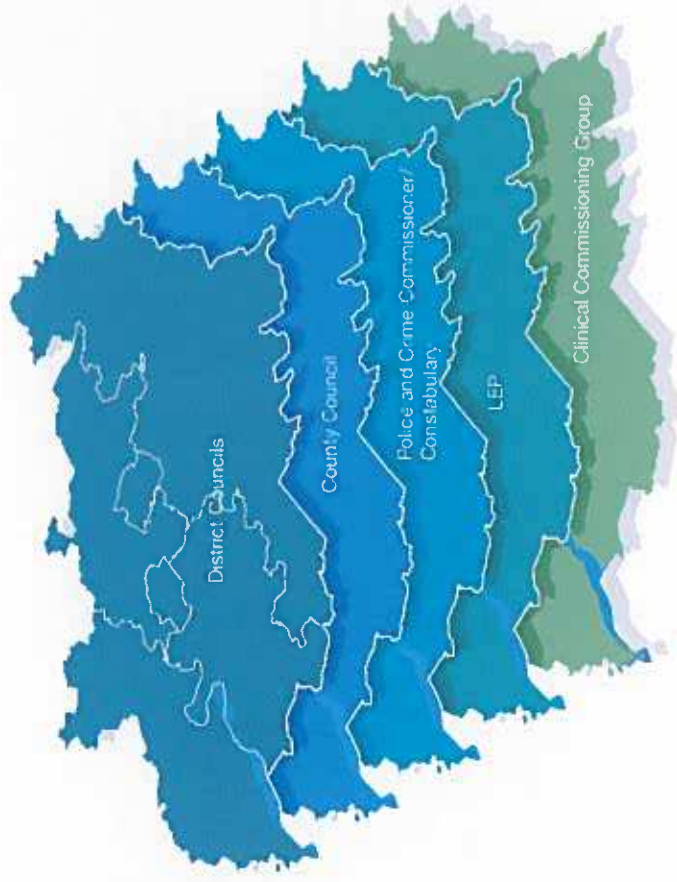
Reducing cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease as the main causes of death in Gloucestershire

CLOSING THE HEALTH INEQUALITY GAP



Finding new solutions – devolution

We are Gloucestershire...



This statement of intent sets out our devolution vision for Gloucestershire and has been put together by the county council, six district councils, the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, the Local Economic Partnership (LEP), the Gloucestershire Constabulary and the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner.

We are coterminous, working together to reduce costs, minimise future costs and deliver better outcomes for the benefit of the people of Gloucestershire. We believe our county is uniquely placed to take forward the exciting opportunity devolution presents and that we have the experience, capability, ambition and enthusiasm to move quickly.

Gloucestershire is ready to build on the strong partnership working and well developed joint commissioning that already exists, delivering more joined up services, support and opportunities for people and achieving more for the Gloucestershire pound. We have a significant advantage in Gloucestershire as the boundaries of our key organisations already match. We also have a single health and wellbeing board, with the majority of acute, community, mental health and social care services provided by three countywide NHS Trusts, the county council and a single regional ambulance service.

Gloucestershire is ready for devolution. We have achieved a lot working together and we want to do more. We're ready to do more, well rehearsed in the complexities and challenges of working together with an established shared geography.

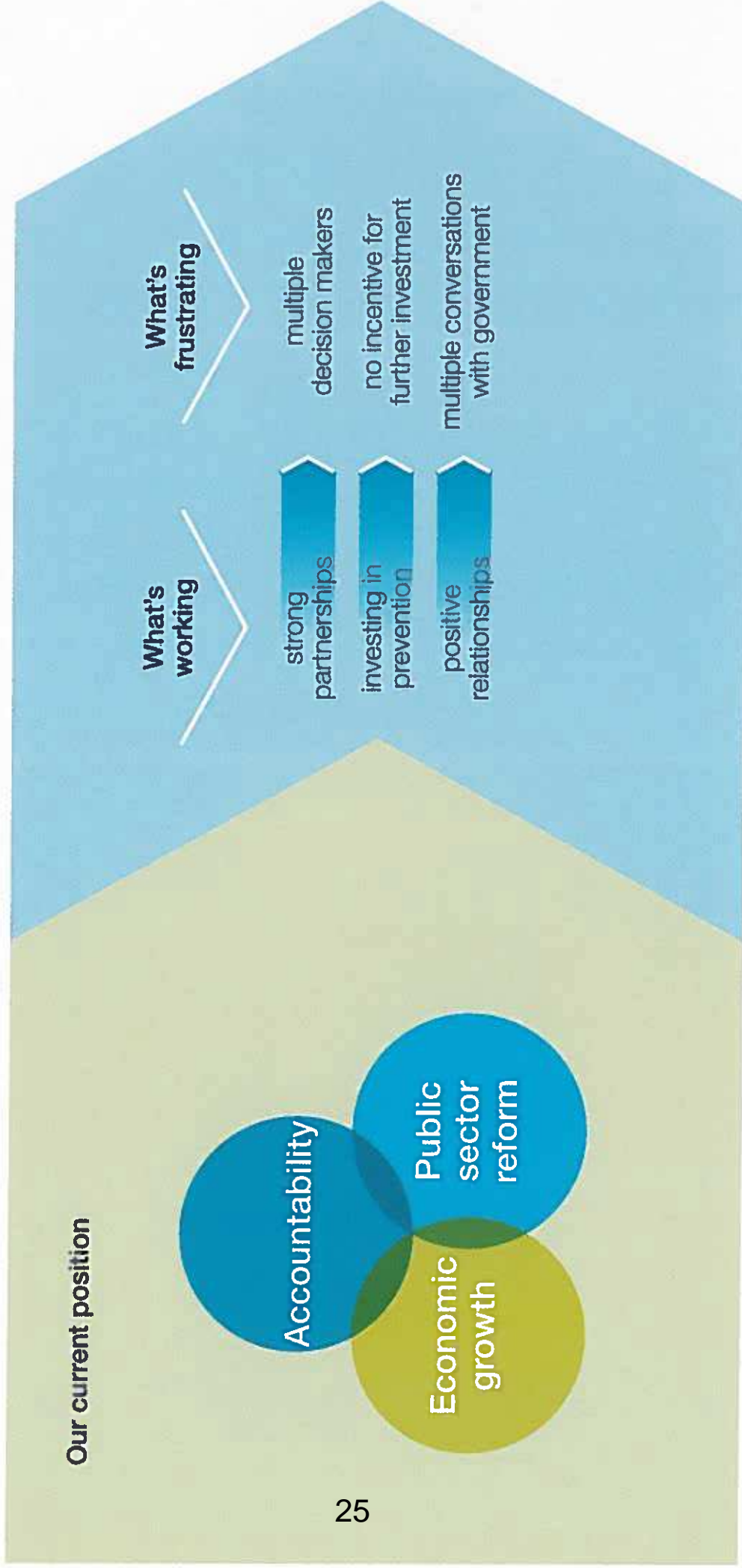
Our request is for a discussion with government about how we become a combined authority, as quickly and effectively as possible.

One boundary } one vision

...ready for devolution

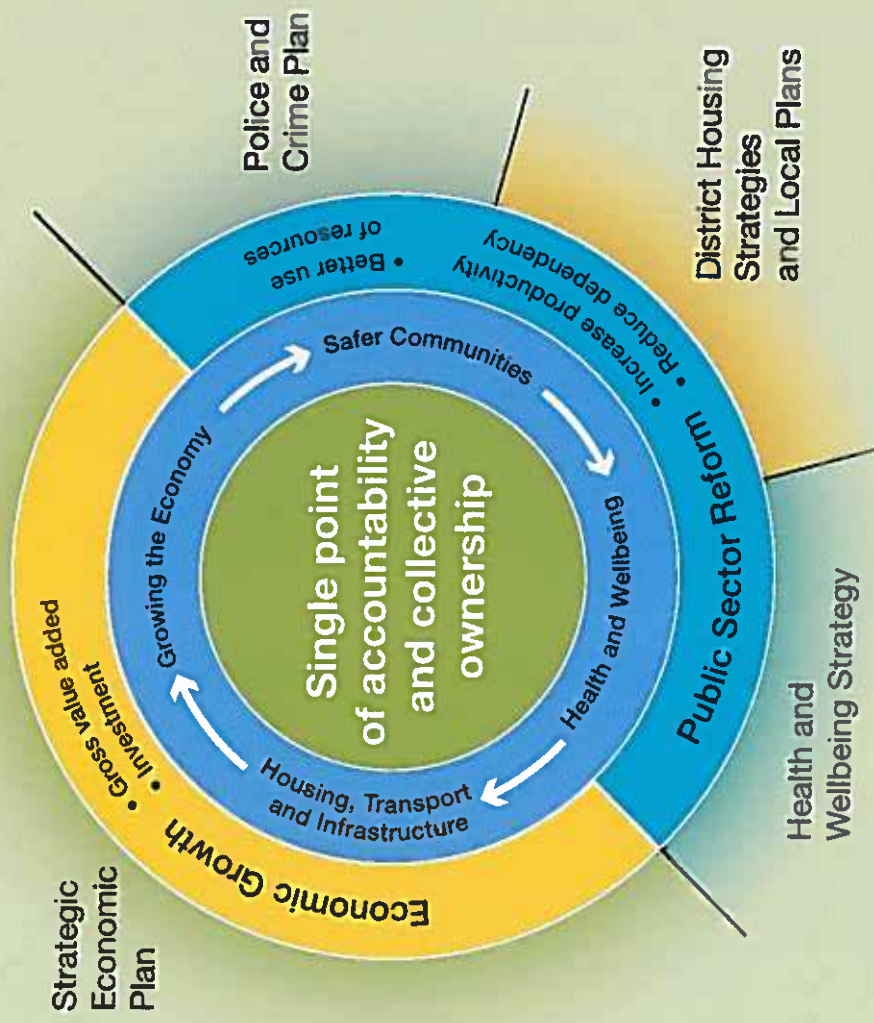


We know where we are now...



We need....

A system without frustrations	
Whole area governance	Single point of decision making
Place based budgets	Making investment in prevention work
Shared asset management	Maximising use of public sector assets
Greater local control over tax and spending Gloucestershire £	Reducing costs and making Gloucestershire £ go further
Subsidiarity	Decisions and services delivered at the right level



We know what we want....

We want...

...to grow the Gloucestershire economy

Improved productivity is important for the national and local economy, so our priority will be the devolution of the powers and resources to tackle this. Devolution will provide the opportunity for Gloucestershire, with leadership from the private sector through the LEP, to fully achieve the ambitions of the Strategic Economic Plan - growing Gloucestershire's economy by creating 34,000 jobs and creating GVA up lift of 4.7% - almost £500 million.

What has worked so far?

- The development of GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership demonstrated the strength of commitment to economic growth and the functional economic area of Gloucestershire
- The Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment Fund (dispensing Growing Places Fund loans) has brought together expertise from across the public and private sectors to successfully review and monitor investments, which has so far committed £7m
- The GFirst LEP Strategic Economic Plan is widely recognised and supported by business across Gloucestershire and government
- We are a leader in disability employment where we have seen our employment rate for people with learning disabilities rise from 5.9% to 19.6% in just over two years

Devolution - what will be better in the future?

Devolved accountability and budgets for the key levers of the local economy to enable county-wide economic planning to be driven by GFirst LEP:

- Business Support (e.g. for export, for innovation)
- Skills budget to allow us to match education and skills provision to business need throughout the education system (e.g. FE funding, STEM provision, quality provision of careers advice and guidance, provision for those with barriers that stop them from working)
- Apprenticeships (e.g. funding and support for businesses and individuals)
- Employment land to allow us to match supply to need (e.g. through enterprise zones, inward investment of high growth businesses)
- Standardisation of best practice that enables economic growth (e.g. planning, licensing, highways)
- Alignment of resources (e.g. European Funding for Gloucestershire, economic development resource within local authorities to support work of the LEP, county-wide strategies)
- 100% local retention of business rates growth to reinvest in the Gloucestershire economy

Growing Gloucestershire's economy by creating 34,000 jobs

We want...

...accelerated delivery of homes and infrastructure

Gloucestershire has a successful economy and the demand for growth is high. The seven councils and the LEP are working together to provide for homes, jobs and infrastructure. Through this effective partnership we are already supporting and growing this vibrant economy across our diverse county.

What has worked so far?

- Across the county our local plans increase Gloucestershire's GVA by 4.7% through the delivery of over 47,000 new homes and 180 hectares of employment land
- The three councils at the heart of the LEP growth zone have developed a joint core strategy delivering over 30,000 new homes and 21,000 jobs, covering Cheltenham Borough, Gloucester City and Tewkesbury Borough
- Joint infrastructure pipeline planning has been established through the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee. This will provide a clear jointly owned plan detailing priorities, delivery schedules and funding plans for infrastructure provision in Gloucestershire

Devolution - what will be better in the future?

- Simplify decision making for strategic planning, housing and infrastructure. Reduce the number of plans in Gloucestershire, share priorities and coordinate resources across the whole county to do everything to make sure planned growth happens when and where it should
- One conversation with government that provides a single view of public sector assets to drive growth and investment at the local level
- Government departments and agencies maximizing local investment by making appropriate and timely investment in the county's trunk road and rail network to maximize individual growth, for example in delivering needed improvements to the A417 at Birdlip, the A46 as it approaches M5 junction 9 at Ashchurch and the creation of a 4-way junction at M5 junction 10

47000
new homes

180 hectares
of employment
land

£800m of
infrastructure

Delivered in the
right place at
the right time

We want...

...improved health and wellbeing

Our vision is of a joined up Gloucestershire where services work in partnership with individuals, carers and local communities to transform the quality of care and support we provide. Through the Gloucestershire Strategic Forum we have developed a single vision for health and wellbeing supported by an agreed model 'People and Place' for service development.

What has worked so far?

- Top 10% of counties nationally for delayed transfers to care
- Shifting towards prevention agenda, by working together to support active communities with social prescribing rolled out across the whole county signposted by health and social care
- £200 million health and social care budgets already under joint commissioning arrangements
- Successful implementation of integrated health and social care community teams, supporting people to live well at home and reducing admissions to hospital

Devolution - what will be better in the future?

- Fully delegated authority for all health care commissioning budgets (including specialist commissioning) to allow for more efficient and effective management of pathways, from prevention through to specialist care
- Fully integrated approach to health and social care, with the opportunity to remove perverse incentives from the system that can still act as barriers to working together and using resources effectively
- Move further faster towards delivering our vision of a truly joined up Gloucestershire, where all parts of our system are working together around the patient to deliver improved health and wellbeing within available resources, helping reduce costs for government

Transform the quality of care and support for all
A proactive whole system avoiding the wasted costs of episodic care



We want...

...to make communities safer

The Police and Crime Plan both complements and is supported by the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board which has a strong focus on safeguarding and links to the Safeguarding Boards. Tackling child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and sexual violence, youth offending and early intervention are all priorities for local partners and are managed through a series of effective partnerships including the Criminal Justice Board and the Children's Partnership. There is a real opportunity to join up public protection and safeguarding practice to improve outcomes for some of our most vulnerable people.

What has worked so far?

- The creation of a commissioner's fund which enables the wider communities of Gloucestershire to apply for funding for projects or initiatives that support the delivery of one or more of the police and crime plan priorities, to date we have funded c.190 projects
- Adopting a strengths based approach within our communities and the voluntary sector - a 'bottom up' approach
- Positive outcome for over 900 families through Families First (Troubled Families) with extra funding secured from government in recognition of success
- Year on year reduction in first time youth offending
- Joint funding of domestic violence perpetrator programme
- Implementation of the Police & Crime Plan with leads from organisations across the county to deliver an inclusive approach to less crime, more peace and good order

Devolution - what will be better in the future?

- Creating multi agency, community or place based budgets to work more closely with communities to reduce dependence and increase community safety
- Co-commissioning of interventions to reduce domestic violence, sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation
- Investing in upstream activity that will prevent and divert vulnerable people from committing crime and improve outcomes for the most vulnerable

Investing in prevention, reducing dependency, delivering benefits for all, reducing costs



We want...

...collective decision-making and accountability

The Gloucestershire £

Over £3 billion is spent by public sector Gloucestershire. We recognise that on-going pressures on public sector resources will require us to be innovative to get the best from this spending power. We have already pooled our business rates support. We have a social impact bond to help homeless and NEET young people. We have well-established joint commissioning in health and social care. We are looking at place and system-based approaches to commissioning and budget planning. We are looking for new ways to shift resources into prevention/early intervention and demand management.

What has worked so far?

- Gloucestershire has a long and successful track record of partnership working
- Leadership Gloucestershire, established in January 2011, brings together the leaders of the public sector organisations in Gloucestershire. Its role is to provide vision, leadership and strategic direction
- Gloucestershire Strategic Forum unites commissioners and providers of health and social care
- Successful transition to the role of the Police & Crime Commissioner and launch of Health and Wellbeing Board, the Local Enterprise Partnership and a Strategic Economic Growth Joint Committee.

Devolution - what will be better in the future?

- Single point of accountability and collective ownership
- The freedom to fundamentally reform the public sector
- We have a whole system that allows investment in prevention to be rewarded, making the Gloucestershire £ go further
- A system designed for the future not inherited from the past
- Decisions and services delivered at the right local level
- Local determination of public resources
- We know we need a stronger form of collective decision-making and accountability, such as a combined authority
- The LEP voice of business across the devolution agenda

Single point of accountability, a combined authority reducing costs for Gloucestershire and government

We ask...

Gloucestershire is asking for the freedom to go forward with public sector reform and economic growth through a new approach that allows greater local control of tax and spending, with the right forms of governance. The savings we can make as a combined authority will be of benefit locally and nationally. What's good for Gloucestershire is good for the country.

Our shared geography, experience, capability, ambition and enthusiasm means we're ready to take this forward and ask for a discussion with government about how we go further faster with a whole structure and accountability, through a combined authority.

Today

Start
negotiation of
Gloucestershire
deal

Autumn 2015

Devolution deal
signed with
Gloucestershire

We are Gloucestershire



DEVOLUTION WORKING GROUP

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To oversee the development of Gloucestershire's devolution agenda and associated proposals from a Tewkesbury Borough Council perspective.

2. CONSTITUTION AND POWERS

- (i) The Group shall comprise the Leader, the Deputy Leader and 7 other Members (political composition to be determined by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council followed by nominations from Group Leaders as appropriate).
- (ii) The Group shall complete its task upon the conclusion of work in respect of devolution in Gloucestershire.
- (iii) The Group shall, at its first meeting, appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
- (iv) The quorum of the Group shall be three Members.
- (v) Substitution arrangements will not apply.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- (1) To guide the work associated with devolution in Gloucestershire as it impacts upon Tewkesbury Borough Council.
- (2) To consider any proposals for devolution in terms of the positive or negative impact upon the communities and businesses in Tewkesbury Borough.
- (3) To support the Leader and Deputy Leader and officers in respect of this work by providing a forum for discussion of relevant issues.
- (4) To make recommendations in respect of the distribution of information to keep all Members aware of progress being made in respect of the Gloucestershire devolution agenda.

4. DELEGATED POWERS

All issues that require a Committee decision will be reported to the Executive Committee and/or Council.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	2 September 2015
Subject:	Stroud District Local Plan - Further Post Submission Proposed Changes
Report of:	Julie Wood, Development Group Manager
Corporate Lead:	Rachel North, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor D M M Davies, Lead Member for Built Environment
Number of Appendices:	None.

Executive Summary:

The Stroud District Local Plan, has been prepared by Stroud District Council to cover the period to 2031. Tewkesbury Borough Council has previously made comments in respect of the Stroud District Council Local Plan at the 'Alternative Strategies', 'Preferred Strategies', consultation on Policies stage and Pre-Submission stage.

The Stroud District Local Plan – Consultation on Further Post Submission Proposed Changes has been published for public consultation and Tewkesbury Borough Council has been invited to comment on the current proposals by Wednesday 9 September 2015.

Recommendation:

That the comments set out at Section 2 (paragraphs 2.1 – 2.6 inclusive) of this report be APPROVED for submission to the public consultation on the Stroud District Local Plan.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To ensure the views of Tewkesbury Borough Council and the emerging Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy are taken into consideration in the development of the Stroud District Local Plan.

Resource Implications:

None.

Legal Implications:

Pursuant to Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 inserted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011, Local Planning Authorities have a duty to cooperate with each other in maximising the effectiveness with which the preparation of development plan documents are undertaken so far as relating to strategic matters, such as sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas.

In particular, the duty requires Local Planning Authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in any process by means of which the preparation of development plan documents are undertaken.

If the person appointed to carry out the independent examination of the development plan documents considers that the Local Planning Authority has not complied with its duty to co-operate under Section 33A in relation to its preparation the person can neither recommend adoption or modifications and in such cases the Local Planning Authority cannot then adopt the development plan document.

Risk Management Implications:

Additional development near to the border of Gloucester City could potentially impact on the emerging Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy. This strategy is currently assessing sustainable development locations across the Joint Core Strategy area to meet the needs of the three authorities to 2031.

High levels of development immediately to the south of the Joint Core Strategy area could impact on service and infrastructure requirements for the Joint Core Strategy area.

The allocation of land to the south of Gloucester within Stroud District to meet Stroud's housing requirement, rather than Gloucester's housing requirement may have a direct impact on land take within Tewkesbury.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Tewkesbury's Planning Policy Team will continue to review the progress of the Stroud District Local Plan and report on its production.

Environmental Implications:

Biodiversity has been considered by Stroud District in the preparation of the public consultation document.

The Stroud District Local Plan has been published alongside a Habitats Regulations Assessment, which assesses the potential impacts of the Plan on protected European species and habitats.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 The Stroud District Local Plan has been prepared by Stroud District Council to cover the period up to 2031. Previously the Plan period looked to 2026. The Stroud District Local Plan – Consultation of Further Post Submission Proposed Changes Draft has been formally published and Tewkesbury Borough Council has been invited to comment on the current proposals by 9 September 2015.

1.2 Stroud District's Local Plan covers the administrative area of Stroud District. It sets out the development strategy for the area and allocates land to deliver housing and employment growth to 2031. Given the removal of both regional and structure plans, the amount of future employment and housing development has been determined at a local level and Stroud has assessed the need for housing locally to provide a bottom up approach.

- 1.3** Stroud District Council submitted its Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in December 2013. The examination commenced in April 2014 and the Inspector conducting the Examination in Public suspended the examination whilst Stroud District Council prepared additional supporting information. Stroud District Council approved a series of changes to its Plan in December 2014 to include a revised housing requirement figure in the draft Stroud District Local Plan. The figure of at least 11,400 dwellings for the period 2006-2031 was subsequently recently recommended by the government's Planning Inspector who has been examining the Local Plan this year. This represents a slight increase from the figure of 11,200 dwellings approved by Stroud District Council in December 2014 and Stroud District Council resolved to include the 11,400 figure at its Council meeting on 16 July 2015.
- 1.4** Tewkesbury Borough Council has previously made comments in respect of the Stroud District Local Plan, which sought greater clarity on the emerging proposals. At the last stage, Tewkesbury supported the overall distribution strategy which Stroud had set out and the principle of extending the Gloucester urban area. However, Tewkesbury raised concerns that the duty to cooperate had not been discharged with respect to cross boundary development, in particular helping to meet the unmet needs of Gloucester City.
- 1.5** The Inspector conducting the examination into the Stroud District Local Plan considered that Stroud District Council had discharged its legal requirements in relation to Duty to Cooperate and it is not for this report to reopen that debate.
- 1.6** A copy of the Stroud District Local Plan can be accessed at <https://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/local-plan-further-post-submission-proposed-change/consultation> and a copy has been placed in the Members' Lounge.

2.0 STROUD DISTRICT CORE STRATEGY -

Consultation on Further Post-Submission Proposed Changes

- 2.1** The Stroud District Core Strategy is at an advanced stage of its preparation. The Council is now consulting on further changes to the Plan, post examination.
- 2.2** The main changes to the Plan at this stage include:
- increasing the housing requirement from 9,500 to 11,400 dwellings;
 - increasing the Hunts Grove extension site at Hardwicke from 500 to 750 dwellings;
 - increasing the employment requirement from 38 to 58 hectares;
 - a new affordable housing policy reflecting amended government policy;
 - detailed changes to policy wording as a result of the examination process; and
 - early review of the Plan is proposed within 5 years of adoption or by December 2019 whichever is the sooner.
- 2.3** The increases in the requirement for both housing and employment land are noted and the pressure for development within Stroud District is recognised.

- 2.4** The most relevant location for strategic growth is at the Gloucester fringe. Part of the justification for providing development at this location is given as its proximity to Gloucester and its primary level of services, facilities and major employment hubs and development at this location would have the potential to be easily integrated into the existing and planned development. The principle of providing urban extensions to Gloucester fully accords with spatial strategy set out within the emerging joint Core Strategy.
- 2.5** The provision of an increase to the urban extension to the Hunts Grove site to the south of Gloucester at Hardwicke is one which this Council has previously supported and continues to support. However the houses to be delivered at this location, referred to within the Stroud Local Plan as part of the Gloucester urban area, are proposed in full to meet the housing needs arising within Stroud District. The 500 homes are not fully or partly being delivered to meet the unmet needs of Gloucester City.
- 2.6** Tewkesbury Borough Council, and the other Joint Core Strategy authorities, would welcome the opportunity to work closely with Stroud District Council in an early review of the Stroud District Local Plan, particularly with regard to future growth issues and the potential for any further urban extensions to Gloucester.
- 2.7** Officers consider that the above responses represent an appropriate consultation response in respect of the further post submission changes in order that the Stroud District Local Plan can progress. Responses will be considered by the Planning Inspector before he issues his report, expected later this year.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1** In arriving at the development strategy set out in the Stroud District Local Plan, it has been demonstrated that alternative options have been considered and that the emerging strategy presents the most sustainable and robust option in accordance with the overarching vision. Several alternative strategies and options were considered and the reasons for not selecting them were provided within the Plan.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1** General public consultation is being carried out by the Stroud District Council. The consultation will run between Wednesday 29 July and Wednesday 9 September 2015. Only comments relating to the Further Proposed Changes, the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum or the Habitats Regulations Assessment will be considered by Stroud Council and the Inspector before he reaches his final conclusions about the legal compliance and soundness of the Plan.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 5.1** The saved policies of the adopted Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan (2006).
Tewkesbury Borough Housing Strategy 2012-2016.
The Pre-Submission version of the Joint Core Strategy.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- 6.1** National Planning Policy Framework.
National Planning Practice Guidance.
Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 inserted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None.

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

8.1 Development to the south of Gloucester could impact on facilities and infrastructure in Gloucester and the wider Joint Core Strategy area.

8.2 The allocation of land to the south of Gloucester within Stroud District to meet Stroud's housing requirement, rather than Gloucester's housing requirement may have a direct impact on land take within Tewkesbury.

8.3 A Sustainability Appraisal Addendum (SA) and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Further Proposed Changes have been prepared and representations are also invited on these documents.

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

9.1 The impacts on Equalities and Human Rights will need to be considered by the Stroud District Local Plan Team in preparation of the Plan.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 Executive Committee decision 7 April 2010 regarding the Stroud District Core Strategy – Alternative Strategies.

10.2 Executive Committee decision 29 February 2012 regarding the Stroud District Local Plan – Preferred Strategy.

10.3 Executive Committee decision 2 October 2013 regarding the Pre-Submission Stroud District Local Plan.

Background Papers: Stroud District Local Plan – Further Post-submission Proposed Changes (including further potential Main Modifications. Available electronically via <https://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/local-plan-further-post-submission-proposed-change/consultation>

Stroud District Local Plan – Post-Submission Proposed Changes. Available electronically via https://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/local-plan-post-submission-proposed-changes/supporting_documents/PLAIN%20TEXT%20Local%20Plan%20Incorporating%20Postsubmission%20Proposed%20Changes_Feb2015.pdf

Stroud Local Plan – Pre-Submission Draft. Available electronically via http://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/stroud-district-local-plan-pre-submission-consulta/consult_view

Stroud Local Plan – Towards a Preferred Strategy. Available electronically via http://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/http-consultation-stroud-gov-uk-planning_strategy/consult_view

Stroud Core Strategy: Alternative Strategies Consultation. Available electronically via http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/plan_strat/1_4.pdf

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Appendices: None.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	2 September 2015
Subject:	Changes to the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy for Housing Benefits
Report of:	Richard Horton, Revenues and Benefits Group Manager
Chief Officer:	Rachel North, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor D J Waters, Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:	<p>The Council has powers to award a discretionary housing payment where a tenant is having difficulties in meeting their rent liabilities and where it is appropriate to do so. But also to make appropriate payment towards other housing costs.</p>
Recommendation:	<p>To adopt the revised Discretionary Housing Payment Policy.</p>
Reasons for Recommendation:	<p>The existing policy for awarding discretionary housing payments has been reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of welfare reform and the Chancellors budget of 8 July 2015; • The work done on financial inclusion; and • The completion of the transformation project in the benefits team. <p>If the changes are adopted then it will greatly assist both the benefits team and housing services in the administration of the discretionary housing payments and will help in reducing discretionary housing payment expenditure. The proposed changes will assist moving clients into cheaper alternative accommodation and reduce the need for the claimant to make a further application for discretionary housing payments. In addition, there will be further reductions in welfare benefit awards for some recipients. It is important that the Council is in a position to react and assist housing benefit recipients who could be facing further reductions in benefit.</p> <p>On 8 July 2015 the Chancellor announced that benefit awards would be capped to £23,000 for those residents in London and to £20,000 to those living outside of London. It is possible that a number of housing benefit recipients will be experiencing financial difficulty and it is appropriate to make payment.</p>

Resource Implications:

The Borough Council receives a grant from Central Government so that it can make awards of discretionary housing payments. The scheme is subject to budgetary limits and is subject to managerial checks.

Legal Implications:

The regulations covering Discretionary Housing Payments are contained in the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001.

Risk Management Implications:

Awards of discretionary housing payments are monitored regularly and reviewed to ensure that continued payment is appropriate.

Performance Management Follow-up:

All claims to discretionary housing payments are regularly monitored.

Environmental Implications:

None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** An Overview and Scrutiny workshop was held on 8 July 2015 to review the Policy. On 21 July 2015 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee met to discuss the reviewed policy and recommended that it be passed to the Executive Committee on 2 September 2015 for adoption.
- 1.2** Discretionary housing payments are made to those tenants who are on low incomes. To qualify they must be eligible for housing benefit. Currently, the discretionary housing payment is being used to help tenants keep their homes where their housing benefit does not meet their full rent. In the majority of cases, awards are made for short periods of time. Welfare budgets are being reduced and there is a need to encourage some tenants to move into cheaper alternative accommodation. The impact this will have is to reduce the regular monthly discretionary housing payments which will mean less reliance on awards of discretionary housing payments to continue to support the household.
- The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in his budget that housing benefit awards will be reduced. Currently, the amount being awarded to some recipients is being restricted or capped to no more than £26,000 a year per claimant. In future welfare benefits will be capped to the following levels: for residents in London to £23,000 and outside of London to £20,000 per year. The impact is that the Council may need to react to deal with cases which are experiencing acute or difficult circumstances and award a discretionary housing payment, for a period of time, to help that person or family through the difficulty.

1.3 Proposed changes

The Revenues and Benefits Team and the Housing Team are working closely together on claims to discretionary housing payments. To assist the claimant in moving we would like to offer assistance by being able to pay:

- towards the rent deposit when moving into a new home; and
- assist with removal costs.

When considering the application the decision maker must take into account whether:

- the property is affordable for the tenant; and
- the tenant has a valid reason to move; and
- the deposit or removal cost is reasonable.

Currently, the Borough Council has five housing benefit claimants whose benefits are being capped; it is very likely that the numbers will increase following the Chancellor's announcement in his budget speech on 8 July 2015. It is important that the Borough Council is in a position to offer assistance where there is a need and the housing benefit recipient is:

- in temporary accommodation; or
- individuals or families fleeing domestic violence; or
- those with kinship care responsibilities; or
- individuals or families who cannot move immediately for reasons of health, education or child protection.

Finally there is a need to update the introduction of the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy to include the following points:

- Local Authorities may also make payment awards towards other housing costs. (This is to better reflect the proposed changes to the policy).
- The level of DHP awarded must not exceed the eligible rent, taking into consideration the claimant's overall financial and personal circumstances. For lump sum payments such as deposits and or removal costs the above limits do not apply. (This proposed change is in place to bring the policy in line with the regulations).

2.0 SIGNIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUES

2.1 All applications for discretionary housing payments are made in writing and with supporting evidence. Cases are reviewed and managerial checks made. The discretionary housing payment budget is subject to checking by the Council's auditors who have a duty to report any incorrect expenditure.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 The proposed changes were considered at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee workshop on 8 July 2015 prior to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 21 July 2015 which then recommended the Policy to the Executive Committee.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 The existing Policy for Discretionary Housing Payments at Appendix 1.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 Discretionary Housing Payments Housing Guide.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None arising from this report.

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

8.1 None.

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

9.1 None. An equalities impact assessment has been carried out.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

Contact Officer: Richard Horton, Revenues and Benefits Group Manager
Tel: 01684 272119 Email: richard.horton@teWKesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1 - The existing Discretionary Housing Payment Policy.
Appendix 2 - The proposed revised Policy.

POLICY ON DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS

Introduction

Local authorities have powers to make Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to top up Housing Benefit (HB) or where Universal Credit is in payment to top up the housing element of the rental liability where these did not meet the full rent.

Any payments made under the DHP scheme are completely separate to the statutory housing benefit scheme. The applicant must be in receipt of HB must be in payment and the weekly DHP award must not exceed the maximum HB that could be awarded.

The DHP scheme is cash-limited with the amount that can be paid by an authority in any financial year being determined by the Secretary of State.

Claiming a DHP

A claim for DHP must be made in writing, preferably using the Council's DHP application form, although written requests, and email may also be accepted.

The claimant, or person claiming on their behalf, must provide sufficient information and evidence to enable the Council to determine whether a DHP is appropriate and the amount of any award.

Claimants must provide all information/evidence requested that is necessary for a DHP claim to be considered within one month of a DHP application form being issued. If the applicant does not provide the required information the claim may still be determined but the Council will take account of the information and evidence that is available and may disregard any unsubstantiated statements.

Determination of a DHP

Applications for DHP will be determined by the Benefit Team Leader

In dealing with a DHP claim consideration will be given to:

- The liability of the claimant to pay rent
- Any disabilities or long term medical conditions
- Steps taken by the applicant to reduce their rent liability
- Whether the claimants maximum HB has been restricted by the Rent Service and if so the extent and the reason for that restriction
- The financial and social or medical needs of the applicant, their partner and any other members of the household.
- The income and expenditure of the claimant, their partner and any other member of the household
- Any savings or capital that the claimant or family may have
- Any exceptional circumstances of the claimant or members of the household
- Any previous DHP awards
- The potential consequences of rent or council tax arrears on the claimant or family members in particular any that are vulnerable by reason of their age, sickness or disability

- The impact of the Council not making an award
- The amount available in the Council's DHP budget
- Any other special circumstances brought to the attention of the Council

If a DHP award is made this does not guarantee that a further award will be made at a later date even if the claimant's circumstances have not changed.

Welfare Reform

The Council will consider awarding Discretionary Housing Payments in the following circumstances:

- Social sector tenants affected by the impact of the social sector size criteria changes. Consideration will be given to those who live in properties that have been substantially adapted to meet needs arising from severe disabilities and to aid independent life. In considering the application, the cost of the move to a new property will be considered. It may be uneconomic to expect the applicant to move.
- Social sector tenants affected by the social sector size criteria changes which create difficulty in sharing a room with another person.
- Short term support for families affected by the benefit cap that is due to be introduced in the summer of 2013. Failure to do so could lead to the council finding emergency and costly temporary accommodation for families far in excess of the savings reaped by central government.

Two Homes

The Council will consider making an award of Discretionary Housing Payment on two homes when someone is temporarily absent from their main home. For example, because of domestic violence, or to stay near a child receiving treatment in hospital.

Period of Award

Where it is considered appropriate to award a DHP the Council will decide the length of time for which the award will be made based on the known facts and the evidence supplied.

A DHP cannot be awarded for any period for which the claimant has no entitlement to HB under the statutory scheme.

A DHP will normally be awarded for weekly periods up to 52 weeks or to the 31st March of the financial year whichever is the shorter period. It is possible for a DHP to be renewed, amended or cancelled according to circumstances. The minimum period for a DHP award will be one week.

The award will commence from the Monday following receipt of the DHP claim although the Council will consider any reasonable request for backdate provided the request is in writing and within one month of the claimant being notified of the initial award.

Discretionary Housing Payments cannot be paid in the following circumstances:

- Those Service Charges that are not eligible for Housing Benefit.
- Increases in rent due to outstanding rent arrears.
- Sanctions and enforced reductions in benefit.
- Where Housing Benefit or Universal Credit has been suspended.
- Shortfalls caused by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit overpayment recovery.

Changes in Circumstances

Claimants are required to notify the Council immediately of any changes in their circumstances, or those of any other household member.

The Council will review the appropriateness of any DHP in the light of any change in circumstances and if necessary will require the claimant to reapply.

Payment of DHP

DHP will normally be paid in line with the claimants HB.

Payments towards the rent will usually be four weekly in arrear and either by cheque or electronically through the Bankers Automated Clearing System (BACS).

The Council will decide who the most appropriate person is to whom payment should be made and this could be the claimant, the landlord, an appointee or an agent.

Overpayments

If a DHP is overpaid the Council will decide whether this is recoverable and from whom it should be recovered. Generally the Council will not seek to recover an overpayment caused by official error unless the claimant caused or contributed to the error or was aware that they were receiving payment to which they were not entitled.

Overpaid DHP's are recoverable from either the claimant or the payee and the Council will issue a Debtor Invoice for the outstanding amount.

Overpaid DHP cannot be recovered from any ongoing HB entitlement.

Appeals

There is no statutory right of appeal over the Council's refusal to award a DHP.

Claimants can ask for their claim to be reviewed by the Operations Manager if they are not satisfied with the Council's decision. Requests for the claim to be reviewed must be made in writing and within one month of the date of the decision.

Fraud

The Council is committed in its fight against fraud in all forms.

Anyone who fraudulently tries to claim a DHP by falsely declaring their circumstances, providing a false statement or evidence in support of their application may have committed an offence under the Theft Act 1968.

Where the Council suspects that such a fraud may have been committed the matter will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with the Council's Counter Fraud policy and the Benefit Prosecution policy.

POLICY ON DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS

Introduction

Local authorities have powers to make Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to top up Housing Benefit (HB) or where Universal Credit is in payment to top up the housing element of the rental liability where these did not meet the full rent. **Local authorities may also make payment awards towards other housing costs.**

Any payments made under the DHP scheme are completely separate to the statutory housing benefit scheme. **The applicant must be in receipt of HB and the level of DHP awarded must not exceed the eligible rent, taking into consideration the claimant's overall financial and personal circumstances. For lump sum payments such as deposits and or removal costs the above limits do not apply.**

The DHP scheme is cash-limited with the amount that can be paid by an authority in any financial year being determined by the Secretary of State.

Claiming a DHP

A claim for DHP must be made in writing, preferably using the Council's DHP application form, although written requests, and email may also be accepted.

The claimant, or person claiming on their behalf, must provide sufficient information and evidence to enable the Council to determine whether a DHP is appropriate and the amount of any award.

Claimants must provide all information/evidence requested that is necessary for a DHP claim to be considered within one month of a DHP application form being issued. If the applicant does not provide the required information the claim may still be determined but the Council will take account of the information and evidence that is available and may disregard any unsubstantiated statements.

Determination of a DHP

Applications for DHP will be determined by the Benefit Team Leader

In dealing with a DHP claim consideration will be given to:

- The liability of the claimant to pay rent
- Any disabilities or long term medical conditions
- Steps taken by the applicant to reduce their rent liability
- Whether the claimants maximum HB has been restricted by the Rent Service and if so the extent and the reason for that restriction
- The financial and social or medical needs of the applicant, their partner and any other members of the household.
- The income and expenditure of the claimant, their partner and any other member of the household
- Any savings or capital that the claimant or family may have
- Any exceptional circumstances of the claimant or members of the household
- Any previous DHP awards

- The potential consequences of rent or council tax arrears on the claimant or family members in particular any that are vulnerable by reason of their age, sickness or disability
- The impact of the Council not making an award
- The amount available in the Council's DHP budget
- Any other special circumstances brought to the attention of the Council

If a DHP award is made this does not guarantee that a further award will be made at a later date even if the claimant's circumstances have not changed.

Welfare Reform

The Council will consider awarding Discretionary Housing Payments in the following circumstances:

- Social sector tenants affected by the impact of the social sector size criteria changes. Consideration will be given to those who live in properties that have been substantially adapted to meet needs arising from severe disabilities and to aid independent life. In considering the application, the cost of the move to a new property will be considered. It may be uneconomic to expect the applicant to move.
- Social sector tenants affected by the social sector size criteria changes which create difficulty in sharing a room with another person.
- Support for those subject to the benefit cap after taking into consideration the following circumstances:
 - Those in temporary accommodation;
 - Individuals or families fleeing domestic violence;
 - Those with kinship care responsibilities;
 - Individuals or families who cannot move immediately for reasons of health, education or child protection;

Two Homes

The Council will consider making an award of Discretionary Housing Payment on two homes when someone is temporarily absent from their main home. For example, because of domestic violence, or to stay near a child receiving treatment in hospital.

Assistance with moving

Consideration will be given to making payment towards rent deposits and removal costs. When determining the award consideration must be given to whether:

- The property is affordable to the tenant
- The tenant has a valid reason to move
- The deposit or removal cost is reasonable

Period of Award

Where it is considered appropriate to award a DHP the Council will decide the length of time for which the award will be made based on the known facts and the evidence supplied.

A DHP cannot be awarded for any period for which the claimant has no entitlement to HB under the statutory scheme.

A DHP will normally be awarded for weekly periods up to 52 weeks or to the 31st March of the financial year whichever is the shorter period. It is possible for a DHP to be renewed, amended or cancelled according to circumstances. The minimum period for a DHP award will be one week.

The award will commence from the Monday following receipt of the DHP claim although the Council will consider any reasonable request for backdate provided the request is in writing and within one month of the claimant being notified of the initial award.

Discretionary Housing Payments cannot be paid in the following circumstances:

- Those service charges that are not eligible for Housing Benefit.
- Increases in rent due to outstanding rent arrears.
- Sanctions and enforced reductions in benefit.
- Where Housing Benefit or Universal Credit has been suspended.
- Shortfalls caused by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit overpayment recovery.

Changes in Circumstances

Claimants are required to notify the Council immediately of any changes in their circumstances, or those of any other household member.

The Council will review the appropriateness of any DHP in the light of any change in circumstances and if necessary will require the claimant to reapply.

Payment of DHP

DHP will normally be paid in line with the claimants HB.

Payments towards the rent will usually be four weekly in arrear and either by cheque or electronically through the Bankers Automated Clearing System (BACS).

The Council will decide who the most appropriate person is to whom payment should be made and this could be the claimant, the landlord, an appointee or an agent.

Overpayments

If a DHP is overpaid the Council will decide whether this is recoverable and from whom it should be recovered. Generally the Council will not seek to recover an overpayment caused by official error unless the claimant caused or contributed to the error or was aware that they were receiving payment to which they were not entitled.

Overpaid DHP's are recoverable from either the claimant or the payee and the Council will issue a Debtor Invoice for the outstanding amount.

Overpaid DHP cannot be recovered from any ongoing HB entitlement.

Appeals

There is no statutory right of appeal over the Council's refusal to award a DHP.

Claimants can ask for their claim to be reviewed by the Operations Manager if they are not satisfied with the Council's decision. Requests for the claim to be reviewed must be made in writing and within one month of the date of the decision.

Fraud

The Council is committed in its fight against fraud in all forms.

Anyone who fraudulently tries to claim a DHP by falsely declaring their circumstances, providing a false statement or evidence in support of their application may have committed an offence under the Theft Act 1968.

Where the Council suspects that such a fraud may have been committed the matter will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with the Council's Counter Fraud policy and the Benefit Prosecution policy.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	2 September 2015
Subject:	Community Grants Review
Report of:	Simon Dix, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager
Corporate Lead:	Rachel North, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor Mrs K J Berry, Lead Member for Community
Number of Appendices:	Two

<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>With capital resources depleting, the Council made a decision in February 2015 to replace the current use of capital monies to finance community grants with revenue monies made available from New Homes Bonus. This change of finance allows the current grant scheme to be widened to include the support of activities and other revenue costs as well as providing monies to support the development of physical facilities.</p> <p>In addition, although the scoring criteria used by the Working Group was updated in October 2012 to reflect the new Council priorities, a full review of the whole grants scheme criteria has not taken place since October 2011.</p> <p>This report suggests an amended criteria that reflects the financing changes and deals with a number of the issues encountered under the current criteria.</p>
<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>To approve the new Community Grants Information Guide.</p>
<p>Reasons for Recommendation:</p> <p>To update the community grants criteria to reflect the new financing available and ensure that the criteria meets future requirements.</p>

<p>Resource Implications:</p> <p>None associated directly with the report. The Council has made £150,000 per annum available from New Homes Bonus to support the community grants scheme. In addition, a Funding Officer has been employed to bring external funding into the Borough which should mean organisations are less dependent on the Borough for grant funding.</p>
<p>Legal Implications:</p> <p>None.</p>

Risk Management Implications:

None associated directly with the report.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The requirement for applicants to submit a written report on the success of their project measured against the objectives set out in the original application forms part of the criteria and will be reviewed by the Council's Funding Officer.

Environmental Implications:

None associated with this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** In Autumn 2009 the Executive Committee decided to form a Working Group to specifically review grant funding requests in a systematic manor and therefore replace the ad-hoc arrangements which saw individual applications presented to Committee. The new Grants Working Group, consisting of four Members, was established in December 2009 and given an initial budget of £250,000 from capital balances.
- 1.2** Over the last six years, the Working Group has approved 55 grants totalling £1.38m. Due to the use of capital reserves to fund the grants scheme, all of the grants awarded are to support projects of a physical nature. Examples of projects funded include new and refurbished village halls and community buildings, skate parks, sporting facilities such as changing rooms, vehicle purchase, play equipment and solar panels. Grants of this type range in value from a few thousand to over £100,000 in one particular case with average grant level of around £25,000.
- 1.3** The original criteria of the grants scheme was reviewed in October 2011 and further updated with the Council's new priorities in October 2012.
- 1.4** The Council has had a heavy capital programme in recent years with investments in new leisure facilities, the Roses Theatre and the Public Service Centre as well as ongoing commitment to both community and disabled facilities grants which has led to a substantial reduction in capital reserves available. The Council therefore agreed to refinance the grants scheme from New Homes Bonus, a revenue stream, with effect from 1 April 2015.
- 1.5** In addition, the Council also agreed to the employment of a Funding Officer, again utilising New Homes Bonus, with the aim of supporting organisations across the Borough in finding and applying for grants from regional, national and European sources which will reduce the burden on the Borough Council to fund large grants.

2.0 REVISED COMMUNITY GRANTS CRITERIA

- 2.1** The use of revenue monies to finance the grants scheme allows the Council to consider extending the remit of the scheme to allow grant applications which would not have been eligible for a capital grant. The type of additional grant that can be now be met includes one off running costs for an event or organisation, feasibility or survey work at an early stage of a project, hiring of a venue for an event, small equipment purchase such as sports equipment or kits, general repairs and maintenance of facilities, start up funding or trips for disadvantaged or elderly residents. Grants of this nature tend to be limited in size, usually attracting awards of no more than a few thousand pounds.

- 2.2** The Council can still offer grants of a capital nature even though it is utilising revenue financing. This offers the opportunity to revisit the current criteria in order to strengthen the criteria and reinforce some of the requirements of applicants. Given the distinct differences between capital type grants and revenue ones, it is necessary to have two different grant schemes both operating under the 'Community Grants' umbrella.
- 2.3** The direction of travel the Council wishes to see for its grants programme is for there to be less direct financial dependence on it and an increased enabling function which aims to draw external funds into the area. This direction therefore needs also to be reflected in the new criteria.
- 2.4** The current criteria is shown at Appendix A while the proposed new criteria, in the form of a Community Grants Information and Guidelines document, is shown in Appendix B.
- 2.5** The main amendments to the capital grants and the new detail of the revenue grants are highlighted below:
- New maximum for capital grant awards - £30,000 or 50% of project costs;
 - Minimum lease period for a building type application amended to 10 years;
 - New revenue grants limited to £3,000 and 80% of project costs;
 - Revenue grants to be awarded on a yes/no basis. Capital grants continue to be awarded against a scoring matrix based on Council priorities;
 - Revenue grants to be paid as a one off advance. Capital grants to be paid in arrears based on applicants expenditure;
 - Further clarification on the types of grant the Council will and will not support and also the types of organisation who can apply to the Borough;
 - Successful applicants cannot reapply for further grants until two years have passed between the completion of the original project and submission of another application; and
 - Discretion to support applications in excess of the scheme limits will rest with the Executive Committee.
- 2.6** The proposed Information Guide has been discussed with the current Grants Working Group at its meeting in July. The proposals were well received with only a couple of amendments proposed. These amendments are incorporated within the document at Appendix B.
- 2.7** In order to allow the transition between the old criteria and new criteria, it is proposed that application forms already sent to applicants are honoured and judged under the current criteria. Applications issued after the call-in period has finished for the Executive Committee will be done so under the new criteria. This will lead initially to a mixture of applications received but this will be managed by both officers and the Member Working Group. To aid the transition, a temporary moratorium on issuing application forms has been put in place from the middle of August.
- 3.0 CONSULTATION**
- 3.1** The current Community Grants Working Group has been consulted on the proposed amendments. In addition officers from Community, Finance and Legal, who are all involved in the current scheme, have had input into the design of the new guidelines.
- 4.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES**
- 4.1** None.

5.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

5.1 None.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

6.1 None.

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

7.1 None.

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

8.1 None.

9.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

9.1 Grants criteria review – Executive Committee – October 2011.

Background Papers: None

Contact Officer: Simon Dix, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager
Tel: 01684 272005 Email: simon.dix@teWKesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: A – Current Grants Criteria
B – Proposed Community Grants Information Guide

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Capital Grant Aid Criteria

1.0 Objectives

- 1.1 Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) will only support applications that contribute towards the achievement of the Council priorities from its Council Plan.
- 1.2 The Council will help fund projects which are Capital by nature, examples of which are:
- Purchase of land and buildings
 - Improvements to existing facilities such as alteration, refurbishment or extensions but not maintenance, decoration or furnishings such as carpets and curtains unless they are part of a larger refurbishment.
 - Solar Panels and all types of insulation if they help make the building more viable.
 - New building/construction.
 - Play areas and MUGAs

2.0 Council Vision and Priorities

“Tewkesbury Borough, a place where a good quality of life is open to all”.

2.1 Use resources effectively and efficiently

1. To provide customer focused services which answer customer needs

2.2 Promote economic development

1. To provide support to help businesses or promote local economic growth.

2.3 Improve recycling and care for the environment

1. To maintain a good quality environment and promote sound waste and resource management.

2.4 Provide customer focused community support

1. To support the health and wellbeing of our residents.
2. To support projects which develop the community and improve community infrastructure.
3. To maintain a low level of crime.

3.0 Community Strategy Ambitions

- A thriving economy where businesses succeed.
- A health, safe and inclusive community where people and places matter.
- A sustainable, natural and built environment where the future matters.

Applications should also contribute towards (TBC's) objectives for grant aid which are to:

- Stimulate and encourage a vibrant voluntary sector
- Encourage active involvement of residents within the community to provide services or facilities for the wider community
- Support activities undertaken by voluntary and “not for profit” organisations that complement the Council’s Corporate Goals
- Support activities and projects that contribute significantly to the well-being of the wider community.

4.0 Eligibility

Organisations must be:

- A community group or a town or parish council based within the Tewkesbury Borough area and be a “not for profit” organisation
- Open to all unless targeted at a special group e.g. junior club, and not for the benefit of private individuals

Organisations must also:

- Complete the Council’s capital project application form together with supply of associated documents i.e. provision of latest audited accounts
- Acknowledge the Council’s contribution e.g. a plaque on a building
- Report annually to the Corporate Head of Community Development and Partnerships for a period of three years after completion on the outcomes the project has achieved.

5.0 Procedures

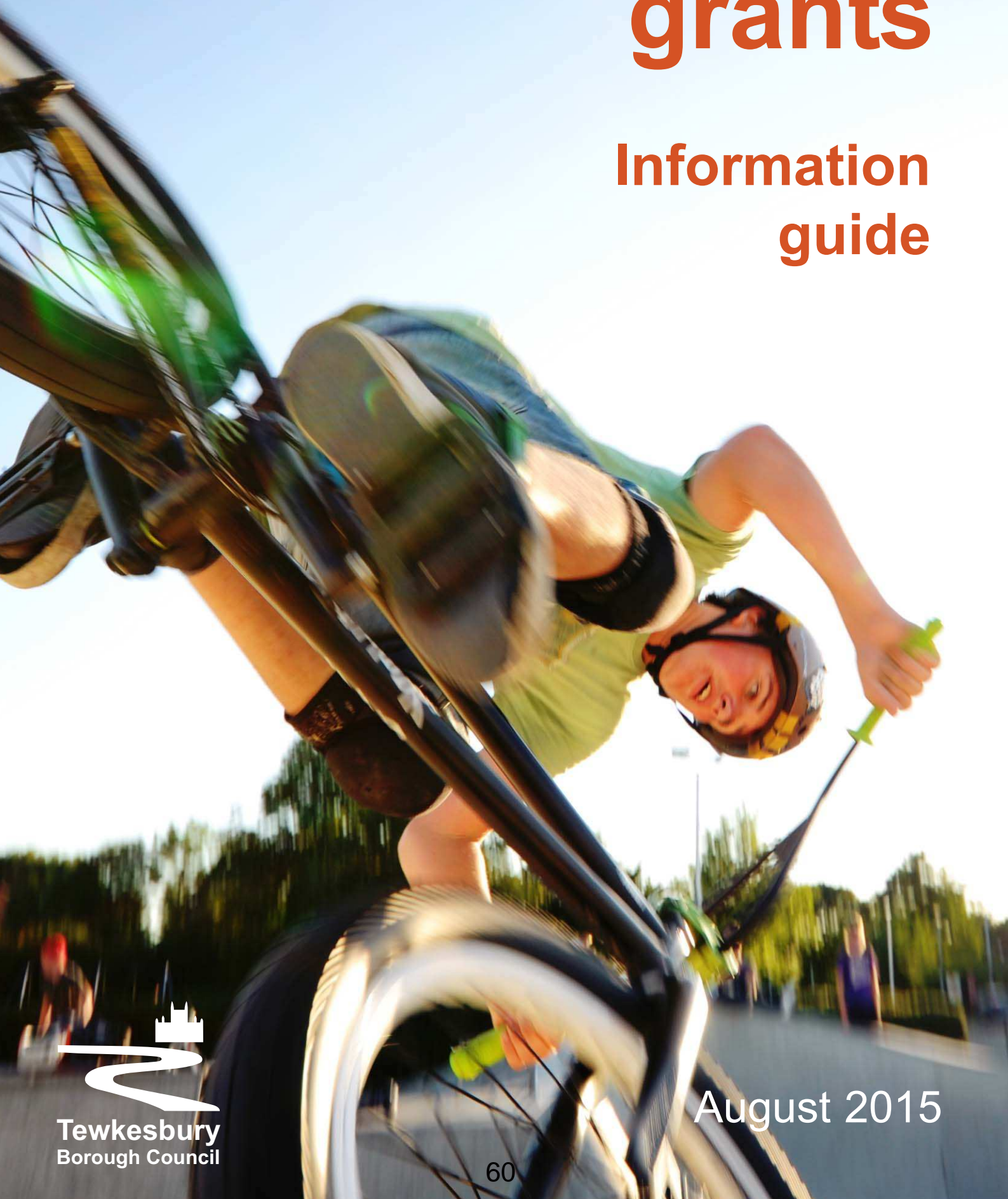
- 5.1** Capital grant applications are considered by the Council’s Grants Working Group which decides the level of grant to be awarded. The Grants Working Group meets quarterly.
- 5.2** Capital grants will be assessed against the Council agreed criteria which rewards value dependent upon their importance to the Council i.e. relevance to helping the Council meet its objectives and priorities.
- 5.3** Grants will be subject to the Council’s legal terms and conditions which will be in the form of a Legal Charge/Deed for grants greater than £20,000 and a sum of £350 towards the Council’s legal costs. Applicants may include the £350 within their total project costs. It may then be paid out of the grant.
- 5.4** The Borough Council may require access to the accounts and records of the applicant for audit purposes. This would include access to bank statements and records to assess actual payments against grant requests.
- 5.5** For grants less than £20,000 a 3 year business plan and specification of works should be included with the application.
- 5.6** For grants more that £20,000 a 5 year business plan and specification of works should be included with the application. These grants will also be subject to a deed to protect the Council’s interest
- 5.7** No organisation will be given a grant of more than 75% of the cost of the project.
- 5.8** Capital grants that benefit only, or mainly, members of a particular club or organisation will only receive a grant of up to 50% maximum of the cost of the project.
- 5.9** The maximum available grant will be normally £70,000 towards any single project. Although the

Grants Working Group may decide to award a larger grant in exceptional circumstances within budget.

- 5.10** S.106 contributions may be taken into account when considering what proportion of funding the Borough Council would like to commit to a project.
- 5.11** In all cases, applicants will be expected to contribute a minimum 5% of the total cost with their own funding i.e. not from other grants. The Council will look more favourably on groups which commit above the minimum.
- 5.12** The Borough Council would not normally consider funding a project unless the local parish council has made or is committed to a reasonable contribution. S.106 contributions will not be considered as part of the Parish Council's contribution.
- 5.13** The Borough Council may take into account any previous grants awarded in any one particular Parish, when considering any new applications for that Parish.
- 5.14** Work / goods / services in kind will not be taken into account.
- 5.15** Save in exceptional circumstances (to be determined by the Grants Working Group) the applicant must hold the freehold interest in the property benefitting from the grant, or a lease with at least 21 years to run. The title to the property must be registered at the Land Registry with either Title Absolute or (where appropriate) Good Leasehold title.
- 5.16** Capital grants will only normally be awarded based on the total project costs net of any VAT.
- 5.17** The decision of the Working Group is final.
- 5.18** Projects should normally be started within 12 months from the award of the grant, and completed no later than 12 months from commencement of the project.
- 5.19** If the scheme/project has not commenced 12 months after date of award of grant then Council reserve right to withdraw grant. The applicant will be required to submit a written report on the status of the scheme/project to justify retention of grant award.
- 5.20** 12 months after completion the applicant should submit a report measuring the success of the project against the objectives set out in the application.
- 5.21** The applicant will be expected to acknowledge any grant awarded by the Council in any general literature produced and to assist in any publicity the Council may organise.

Community grants

Information guide



Community grants

Introduction	1
Scheme objectives	2
Who can apply?	2
What the grants can and cannot fund	3
Summary of the grants scheme	4
Process for awarding grants	5



Introduction



Tewkesbury Borough Council's community grants are available to support a range of projects to benefit the people in the borough. This guide provides full details on the community grants scheme. It provides details of what the council can fund, who is eligible to apply, any restrictions and what you need to provide with your application form.

It is important that all applicants read this guide as it provides additional information that is not contained within the application forms. All applications must be made on an appropriate application form and a variety of supporting documentation is required. It is important that each question is fully answered on the application form as each application is assessed using a standard process based on answers to the questions.

When reading the information guide and completing your application form if you have any queries please contact the council's Community Funding Officer, **Martha Mundy, on 01684 272099 or Martha.mundy@tewkesbury.gov.uk**

Community grants are subject to council budget approval. Tewkesbury Borough Council retains the right to withdraw its grant schemes at any point.

Scheme objectives

Scheme objectives

Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) will only support applications that contribute towards the sustainable impact and achievement of at least one of the council's five priorities from its Council Plan.

- **Use resources effectively and efficiently**
 - To meet customer needs
- **Promote economic development**
 - To provide support to help businesses or promote local economic growth
- **Improve recycling and care for the environment**
 - To maintain a good quality environment
- **Provide customer focused community support**
 - To support the health and wellbeing of our residents
 - To support projects which develop the community and improve community infrastructure
 - To maintain a low level of crime
- **Develop housing relevant to local needs**

Applications should also support one of the council's key themes for grant aid:

- Stimulate and encourage a vibrant voluntary sector
- Encourage active involvement of residents within the community to provide services or facilities for the wider community
- Support activities undertaken by voluntary and "not for profit" organisations that complement the Council's Corporate priorities
- Support activities and projects that contribute to the health, well-being and social interaction of the wider community.

Who can apply?

To apply for a community grant your organisation must be some type of formally governed 'Not for Profit' organisation with a written governing document (E.G Constitution, Trust Deed, Articles of Association etc). You are also required to hold a bank account in the organisations name.

Examples of eligible and ineligible groups are listed in the table below:

Who can apply?	Eligible Groups	Ineligible groups
	✓ Registered charities	✗ Informal groups
	✓ Constituted community groups	✗ Individuals
	✓ Community amateur sports club	✗ Private business
	✓ Social enterprises	✗ Organisations that distribute profits/surpluses
	✓ Town & parish councils	✗ Organisations with selective membership
		✗ Schools

What the grants can fund

What the grants can and cannot fund

The council will help fund projects of both a capital and revenue nature on a 'one-off' basis.

What we can fund	What we cannot fund
<p>Capital costs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Building improvements ✓ Vehicle purchases ✓ Playground equipment ✓ Sports or community facilities ✓ IT equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Retrospective applications for work already taken place and paid for ✗ Ongoing revenue costs ✗ Prize money ✗ Projects that mainly benefit individuals ✗ General appeals or sponsorship ✗ Activities of a religious or political nature ✗ Projects occurring outside of the borough or not benefitting residents of the borough ✗ Land or building projects where the ownership of that land or a minimum 10 year lease is not yet in place ✗ Ordinary activities of a statutory body ✗ Travel costs ✗ Loans
<p>Revenue costs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Events costs ✓ Training fees ✓ Start up costs ✓ Small equipment purchases ✓ General repairs 	



Summary of the grant scheme

Capital grants

- Maximum grant available = £30,000
- 50% funding limit. Grants will not exceed 50% of the total cost
- Applications can be submitted at any time
- If applying for grant towards building works, the applicant must either be the freehold owner of the site or have a minimum 10 years left on a lease with express permission to carry out the intended works from the lessor prior to applying. An application not meeting these requirements will be rejected.
- An organisation can receive only 1 Tewkesbury Borough Council community grant each financial year, and there must be a break of at least 24 months between completing your project and reapplying to the scheme
- Unsuccessful applicants may reapply at any time
- Applications must be made using the application form
- Applicants are required to have safeguarding policy in place if working with children and young people, or vulnerable adults and a volunteer policy where appropriate
- Organisations are required to have insurance
- For grants requests over £5,000 additional information will be required including:
 - Up to date bank statements
 - Latest annual accounts
 - At least 2 quotes
 - Confirmation of tenure if applying for a grant to buildings or land
- Grant requests over £20,000 will be required to supply a 3 year business plan (a template business plan is available on request)
- Reasonable monetary support from the local town or parish council
- Other information, particularly in regards of building and land applications, is also welcomed e.g. photo's, drawings and designs, confirmation of other grant support etc.

- Grants must be accepted by the applicant by completing the council's terms and conditions document
- For grants over £20,000 a legal charge will be required. A fee of £350 will be made for this charge and deducted from the grant award.
- Grants are paid in arrears on submission of evidence of expenditure incurred and where required, evidence of statutory sign off e.g. building control completion certificate

Revenue grants

- Maximum grant available = £3,000
- 80% funding limit. Grants will not exceed 80% of the total cost
- Applications can be submitted at any time
- An organisation can receive only one Tewkesbury Borough Council community grant each financial year, and there must be a break of at least 24 months between completing your project and reapplying to the scheme
- Unsuccessful applicants may reapply at any time
- Applications must be made using the application form
- Grants must be accepted by the applicant by completing the council's terms and conditions document
- Grants paid in advance



Process for awarding grants

Grants are awarded by the community grants working group which has a quorum of three elected members. The working group will usually meet, subject to applications received, on a quarterly basis.

Applicants for a land or property related capital project must ensure that they have either a freehold interest in the asset or a lease with at least 10 years left to run before applying for a grant. If the interest is via a lease and there is a break clause or a forfeiture provision contained within the lease then there will be a requirement from the council for either:

1. The lease to be varied; or
2. The landlord to enter into a deed of covenant with the council.

If an applicant is currently negotiating a lease, it is recommended that the applicant does not conclude the lease until they have checked with the borough council that the terms are acceptable.

Capital grants will be assessed against the council agreed criteria which rewards value dependent upon their importance to the council i.e. relevance to helping the council meet its objectives and priorities and supporting the council's key themes for grant aid.

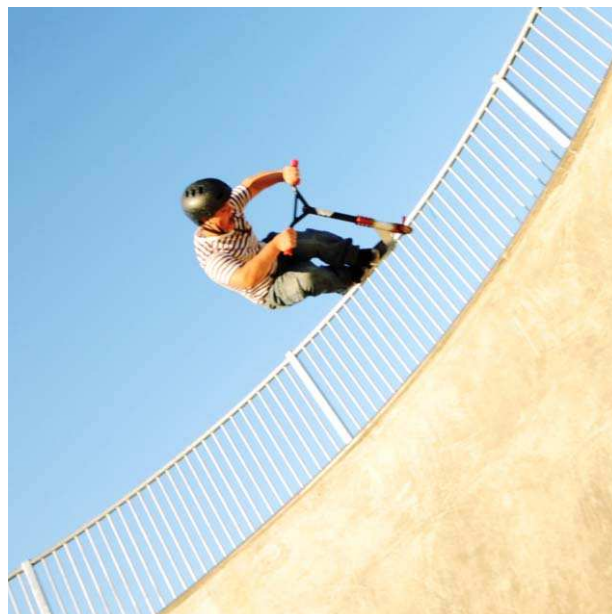
The assessment will lead to a percentage score which will be applied to the total project costs in order to determine the level of grant awarded. When calculating total project costs for larger capital projects, applicants may count works or services in kind.

For capital grants in excess of £20,000 the council will require a legal charge to be made. If a lease contains a prohibition against the charging of the premises then depending on the terms of the lease, the lease may need varying or the consent of the landlord obtained.

Capital grants to be paid in arrears will be paid in relation to the percentage of grant awarded.

For capital grants awarded for new build or refurbishment of existing buildings, the final 5% of the grant will only be paid on receipt of either a practical completion certificate from an appropriately qualified individual or company or a building control completion certificate.

Revenue grants will be decided on a yes / no basis. Successful grants will be paid in full on receipt of signed terms and conditions.



Process for awarding grants

The decision of the working group is final. In exceptional circumstances, the community grants working group may wish to support an application in excess of the limits defined within these guidelines. In these circumstances, the recommendation will be referred to the council's Executive Committee for a final decision unless it is related to the 24 month period in which applicants can't apply for a new grant, where a decision will be taken by the grants working group.

Projects should normally be started within 12 months from the award of the grant, and completed no later than 12 months from commencement of the project.

If the scheme/project has not commenced 12 months after date of award of grant then council reserve right to withdraw grant. The applicant will be required to submit a written report on the status of the scheme/project to justify retention of grant award.

12 months after completion the applicant should submit a report measuring the success of the project against the objectives set out in the application.

The applicant will be expected to acknowledge any grant awarded by the council in any general literature produced and to assist in any publicity the council may organise.

The council reserves the right to take into account existing or future s106 funding available.

Transparency

Tewkesbury Borough Council believes it is important to be open, transparent and accountable to local people. We publish a range of information including community grants to support this principle.

Further Information

Support for completing the application form and through the application process can be obtained from the council's community team.

The council also employs a community funding officer who can assist organisations in locating and applying for external grant funding.

Please contact Martha Mundy on 01684 272009 or Martha.mundy@tewkesbury.gov.uk

The council may redirect you to alternative funding streams if they are to be seen to be more appropriate.



Tewkesbury Borough Council
Tel: 01684 272009
email: martha.mundy@teewkesbury.gov.uk



TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	2 September 2015
Subject:	Naming of New Leisure Facility
Report of:	Simon Dix, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager
Corporate Lead:	Rachel North, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor D J Waters, Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management Councillor R E Allen, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing
Number of Appendices:	None

Executive Summary:

In November 2013 the Council approved the development of a new leisure centre to be sited next to the Council Offices in Tewkesbury in order to provide modern and additional facilities to the residents of the Borough for the long term. A contractor, Wilmott Dixon, has been appointed to build the new centre and upon completion in Summer 2016 a new operator, Places for People, will manage the new centre.

With the build now seven months in and progressing well, it is essential to the development of the business that a name for the new facility is agreed in order to give certainty to the next phases of promotion of the new centre.

Recommendation:

To RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL the approval of ‘Tewkesbury Leisure Centre’ as the name for the new leisure facility at Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To commence the next phase of promotion and communication at the start of Autumn 2015, the name of the new facility needs to be agreed. This will enable the brand to be developed and ensure that all materials produced are consistent with the chosen name.

Resource Implications:

No costs directly arising from this report.

Legal Implications:

None.

Risk Management Implications:

Failure to agree a name for the new facility would result in the promotion of the centre being undermined by inconsistency and uncertainty.

Performance Management Follow-up:

None associated with this report.

Environmental Implications:

None associated with this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In November 2013 the Council agreed to provide a new leisure facility for the residents of the Borough which would incorporate the wet side facilities of the current Cascades facility but also add dry side facilities such as a sixty station gymnasium.
- 1.2 In January 2015 the Council signed contracts with Wilmott Dixon to build the new facility and Places for People to manage the facility once it is completed. The building works commenced in February 2015 and are forecast to be completed by June 2016 with the new facility being open to the public from 1 July 2016.
- 1.3 Upon completion of the new facility, the Council will end its interest in the current Borough swimming pool at Cascades in Tewkesbury. The Tewkesbury Swimming Bath Trust held a public vote on 10 June 2015 and has agreed to terminate its lease of Cascades in line with the opening of the new centre. The facilities at Cascades will remain open until the new leisure facility is opened to the public.

2.0 NAMING OF NEW LEISURE FACILITY

- 2.1 To date no name for the new leisure facility has been agreed and the facility has been using the working title of Tewkesbury Leisure Centre. With less than twelve months to go until the new centre opens to the public, it is essential that a name for the centre is formalised in order to allow sufficient time for the branding to be finalised and effective promotion and communication with regards to the new facility to take place.
- 2.2 Securing an appropriate name for the new facility is vital for the owners of the facility, the business that operates from the facility and the community that will use the facility.
- 2.3 The Leisure Facility Member Reference Group, which includes members of the Swimming Bath Trust, has considered this requirement on several occasions and have explored different options for the name including maintaining the current name; choosing a name that says what it is, i.e. Tewkesbury Borough Leisure Centre; choosing a name relevant to the area, e.g. Battle or Sabrina; or selecting a modern naming approach such as the postcode. Members also felt that retaining the name of Cascades was not appropriate as customers needed to realise a new facility was being made available.

- 2.4** In discussion, the Reference Group was advised that the name of Cascades, although now a recognisable name synonymous with swimming in Tewkesbury, had taken many years of hard work and expense to establish as a brand. In recent times, much work had gone into ensuring relevant internet searches return Cascades as a swimming destination in Tewkesbury, given it was not immediately recognisable from the name. It is worth noting, however, that despite this work there have still been occasions when people have arrived at Cascades for a party booking, before realising that it had been booked at a Cascades in a different location.
- 2.5** Members were advised of the effect on business that a good or bad name could have. As highlighted in the previous paragraph, ensuring internet searches return the facility's name at the top of the list is imperative in delivering the customer numbers needed to make the business model viable. The appointed operator, Places for People, was clear that it preferred a simple name which says exactly where it is and what it does, e.g. Tewkesbury Borough Leisure Centre. Whilst this may not be an exciting name, it lends itself to supporting the business requirements and making it easily identifiable for customers.
- 2.6** Given these arguments it was decided to recommend a straightforward name for the new facility. Concern was expressed that by including the word Borough in the title, although reflective of the wide customer base of the centre, the name could be time limited by any local government reorganisation. The use of the word Borough may also lead to uncertainty over the exact location of the facility for customers.
- 2.7** It was therefore decided that the name Tewkesbury Leisure Centre should be recommended as the most suitable name to be adopted.

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1** The Leisure Facility Member Reference Group, which includes members of the Swimming Baths Trust, has been consulted on options for naming the facility. Its preferred option is the recommendation contained in this report.
- 3.2** The operator of the new facility, Places for People, has also been consulted as to its preferred name given that it has a direct effect on its business. It has confirmed that Tewkesbury Leisure Centre is its preferred name.

4.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 4.1** None.

5.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- 5.1** None.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

- 6.1** None.

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

- 7.1** The recommended name of the new leisure facility is sustainable over the long term and is not subject to change following any local government reorganisation.

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

8.1 None.

9.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

9.1 Council decision in November 2013 to commence the build of a new leisure facility.

Background Papers: None.

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Appendices: None.