

20 December 2019

Committee	Executive
Date	Wednesday, 8 January 2020
Time of Meeting	2:00 pm
Venue	Tewkesbury Borough Council Offices, Severn Room

ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND

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 (during office hours staff should proceed to their usual assembly point; outside of office hours proceed to the visitors' car park). 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.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pursuant to the adoption by the Council on 26 June 2012 of the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct, effective from 1 July 2012, as set out in Minute No. CL.34, Members are invited to declare any interest they may have in the business set out on the Agenda to which the approved Code applies.



	Item	Page(s)
4.	MINUTES To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2019.	1 - 6
5.	ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC To receive any questions, deputations or petitions submitted under Rule of Procedure 12. <i>(The deadline for public participation submissions for this meeting is 2 January 2020)</i>	
6.	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN To consider the Committee's Forward Plan.	7 - 10
7.	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT - QUARTER TWO 2019/20 To receive and respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of the quarter two performance management information.	11 - 62
8.	COUNCIL PLAN 2020-2024 To recommend the Council Plan 2020-24 to Council for adoption.	63 - 84
9.	COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY To approve the Communications Strategy and Media Protocol.	85 - 115
10.	MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY To recommend to Council the adoption of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25.	116 - 138
11.	TREASURY AND CAPITAL MANAGEMENT To consider and make a recommendation to Council for the approval of a range of policies and strategies relating to treasury and capital management.	139 - 172
12.	COMMUNITY GRANTS To consider the updates provided and agree an approach to the ongoing management of the grant award.	173 - 179
13.	COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME AND COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS To receive an update on the annual review of Council Tax discounts and to make a recommendation to Council.	180 - 189
14.	DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS To request additional budget for Discretionary Housing Payments.	190 - 192

Item	Page(s)
<p>15. CYBER CENTRAL GARDEN COMMUNITY - WEST CHELTENHAM STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT</p> <p>To approve the draft Cyber Central Garden Community Draft Supplementary Planning Document for consultation for a period of five weeks in line with the arrangements set out within the report and to delegate authority to the Head of Development Services to make editorial changes to the draft document in terms of formatting, presentation and accuracy prior to publication for consultation purposes.</p>	193 - 289
<p>16. CHURCHDOWN AND INNSWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM</p> <p>To approve the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan to progress to Community Referendum.</p>	290 - 434

DATE OF NEXT MEETING
WEDNESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2020
COUNCILLORS CONSTITUTING COMMITTEE

Councillors: R A Bird (Chair), G F Blackwell, M Dean, L A Gerrard, M A Gore, E J MacTiernan, J R Mason (Vice-Chair), C Softley, R J Stanley, M G Sztymiak and R J E Vines

Substitution Arrangements

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

Recording of Meetings

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, 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, 27 November 2019 commencing
at 2:00 pm**

Present:

Chair	Councillor R A Bird
Vice Chair	Councillor J R Mason

and Councillors:

M Dean, M A Gore, E J MacTiernan and M G Sztymiak

EX.49 ANNOUNCEMENTS

49.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was taken as read.

EX.50 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

50.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G F Blackwell, L A Gerrard, J R Mason, C Softley, R J Stanley and R J E Vines. There were no substitutions for the meeting.

EX.51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

51.1 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.

51.2 There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

EX.52 MINUTES

52.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2019, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record.

EX.53 ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

EX.54 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

- 54.1 Attention was drawn to the Committee's Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No. 8-12. Members were asked to consider the Plan.
- 54.2 A Member noted that the January Agenda looked very heavy and questioned whether anything could move to a different date. The Chief Executive undertook to take the matter away for consideration, although he was conscious that many of the items would need to be considered at that meeting.
- 54.3 Accordingly, it was

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

EX.55 FINANCIAL UPDATE - QUARTER TWO 2019/20

- 55.1 The report of the Head of Finance and Asset Management, circulated at Pages No. 13-32, highlighted a quarter two deficit of £18,530 on the revenue budget and detailed the expenditure to date against both the capital programme and the approved reserves. Members were asked to consider the financial information provided.
- 55.2 The Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that, overall, the deficit had fallen at the end of quarter two which was good news; however, it was still early in the year. Employee costs showed a surplus of £111,439 which had been generated mainly through staff vacancies across most services. Services had managed vacancies during the period by utilising current staff to cover work in the short term and limiting the use of agency staff where possible. Supplies and services were showing a deficit of £79,197, this was mostly due to expenditure incurred on delivering the European elections. The Council received grant income to cover the cost of the elections therefore an income surplus within Democratic Services matched that expenditure. The Borough election expenditure was also contained within Democratic Services and this was matched through one-off funding from reserves and New Homes Bonus meaning, overall, Democratic Services was in a cost neutral position. In terms of payments to third parties, a deficit of £168,280 was shown - this related to the delivery of the waste and recycling services due to additional resources on grounds maintenance rounds to ensure issues with grass cutting were minimised during the growing season and the additional cost of the depot which had been agreed after the budget was set. Both overspends were being covered through one-off reserve use for the current year. The remaining significant element of the Ubico budget position was the hire of additional vehicles: there was the specific hire cost of an additional vehicle whilst the procurement for a new narrow access vehicle continued. There had also been a couple of accidents which had meant additional hire and repair costs whilst those vehicles were out of operation. In terms of transfer payments, there was a deficit of £130,000 which related to housing benefit claimant payments and recovery of expenditure from the government. The Council was entitled to 100% of the debt if it could be reclaimed from the claimant and therefore it was possible, in the long-term, to eradicate the housing benefit claim; however, recovering significant overpayments could take a long time and was extremely difficult. The situation would continue to be monitored through the rest of the year with the housing benefit team targeting key individuals to recover debt as quickly as possible. In terms of income, there was a surplus currently of £200,970 which was due to £148,000 of grant funding for the European elections; £55,000 of grant funding for the revenues and benefits service; £37,000 gain from the garden waste service; and £12,000 gain on car parking. The positive position was offset by a deficit on

planning income at the half year point, the expectation was that by the year-end several large individual planning applications would be received to ensure the income target was met. In addition, there was a deficit on the amount of recycling credits received due to the actual level of recyclate collected being less than was included in the budget - the budget had not included an allowance for non-recyclable material in the system therefore there had been an overestimation of the recycling credits due.

- 55.3 In terms of the corporate codes which included other sources of financing that were needed to balance the budget, there was a significant budget deficit being shown on investment properties due to the Council not having secured another commercial opportunity as expected at the end of the previous year; this had meant the income expected to have been received in rent had not been achieved. That loss had been mitigated by treasury management costs having been reduced through lower borrowing and no minimum revenue provision being made meaning a cost neutral position on the budget. Business rates was showing a surplus at the half year stage which was helping to reduce the overall deficit position for the Council. The Gloucestershire-wide business rates pool was going well and there was a potential windfall to Tewkesbury Borough Council of £250,000 although it had to be borne in mind that there was a risk to that position as it was only half way through the year. There had been a slight overspend on the capital budget due to incurring a higher than predicted expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants; however, as the Council had a large grant allocation from central government to pay for those it was not depleting the Council's capital allocation. In addition, the capital programme still included a budget of £6.6million to secure a commercial investment acquisition which was now profiled to happen in the next quarter of the financial year. The Council had reviewed a number of opportunities in the current year but none had come to fruition to date. Appendix C to the report provided a summary of the current usage of available reserves. Whilst the quarter two position showed a significant balance, it was the expectation that this would be spent in the future. The finance team had asked all departments for updates on their plans to ensure earmarked reserves would be used for their intended purpose or released back to the general fund.
- 55.4 Referring to the mid-year treasury management report, the Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that, at this point, treasury investment activities had resulted in an average return of 1.38% on investments which resulted in a surplus of £7,847 - this was considered to be an excellent return given the impact of sustained low rates during the investment period and was commensurate with the risk taken on investments. It was the intention to increase investment in similar amounts in the second half of the year therefore boosting the interest received by the Council.
- 55.5 During the discussion which ensued, a Member questioned whether it was correct that Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) interest rates were due to increase by 1%. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management confirmed that the increase had already happened. The announcement had been a complete surprise to local authorities and had affected all types of borrowing for all durations. He understood the intention was to reign in the commercial activity being undertaken by Councils as well as controlling the level of borrowing. The change had had a slight impact on that but would be more detrimental to housing and redevelopment schemes which was unlikely to have been the intention. Unfortunately, that approach meant the PWLB was becoming uncompetitive and borrowers were being encouraged to borrow from the market instead; the Head of Finance and Asset Management was of the view that this may slow down borrowing but was unlikely to deter local authorities. In terms of recycling credits and contamination, a Member questioned whether the problem had been anticipated. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that some contamination was anticipated but the levels found were far in excess of what was expected. The

waste team was working with the contractor to identify the contaminants and the issue had been flagged up for next year's budget. Unfortunately, many authorities were suffering from the same issues so there was work to be done. Members welcomed a briefing note on the problem identifying the level and type of contamination and what was being done to address it and the Chief Executive undertook to enable a discussion at an informal meeting.

55.6 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the financial performance information for the second quarter of 2019/20 be **NOTED**.

EX.56 DIGITAL STRATEGY

56.1 The report of the Head of Corporate Services, circulated at Pages No. 33-41, set out a new Digital Strategy for the Council which Members were asked to approve.

56.2 In introducing the report, the Lead Member for Customer Focus explained that, over the last few years, the Council had been catching up in terms of its digital 'presence'; however, it was now one of the leading authorities in terms of embracing digital technology. The strategy before the Committee was about what the Council was aspiring to do and contained three themes as set out in Paragraph 2.2 of the report: digital customer; digital workforce; and digital place. In explaining the themes, he advised that "digital customer" referred to the Council wanting to interact with customers in a way that suited them and to improve how it communicated with them i.e. keeping them updated automatically without the need to telephone or email. Digital workforce was about supporting the 'one Council' approach to the Council's commercialisation and business transformation journey with the digital approach aiming to drive improvements and efficiencies and create an environment where Members and staff were empowered to make positive change. Digital place referred to the importance of working with partners to increase the capability of those who were digitally excluded as well as those who were online but lacked the confidence and knowledge to make the most of it. Each of these was supported by five principles: to put the customer first – digital by preference but access for all; make digital services as simple as possible; embrace change and show openness to new ideas; have a 'one Council' approach so everyone was pulling in the same direction; and to use evidence and insights to drive decision-making.

56.3 In response to a query, the Corporate Services Manager confirmed that the IT and Digital Teams would be undertaking the review of the Council's website with engagement from services across the Council. The Digital Strategy would sit alongside the Communications Strategy which was also about how people communicated with the Council, and vice-versa, and both were important to ensure access for all.

56.4 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the Digital Strategy be **APPROVED**.

EX.57 CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

57.1 The report of the Head of Corporate Services, circulated at Pages No. 42-45, provided information about the approach and scope of a corporate peer challenge and asked Members to endorse the undertaking of the peer challenge process for the Council.

- 57.2 Members were advised that the report before the Committee would formally set the Council in motion to prepare for the corporate peer challenge which would take place during week commencing 3 March 2020. The process was aimed at improving the Council and provided a real learning opportunity through a 'critical friend' approach. The Head of Corporate Services explained that the peer challenge was not an inspection; it did not deliver a scored assessment; it was not a detailed service assessment; it was not driven by external requirements; and it was not reported to government. The scope of each peer challenge included a general health check on five core components which included: understanding of local context and priority setting; financial planning and viability; political and managerial leadership; governance and decision-making; and organisational capacity. In addition, the Council had asked the peer challenge team to look at whether the Council was set up organisationally to successfully deliver its growth plans and ambitions; whether it could be confident in the delivery of the garden communities projects; and whether it had the ability and capacity to deliver the new Council Plan.
- 57.3 In respect of the team which visited the Council, the Head of Corporate Services advised that there would usually be between five and six members which included a Local Government Association (LGA) representative. There would also be a Chief Executive lead along with Member representation which would reflect the general political make-up of Tewkesbury Borough Council. As background information for the team, the Council would need to produce a short position statement which would serve as the Terms of Reference for the peer challenge and would provide a brief to the team in terms of its focus. During the course of the peer challenge, the team would meet with a variety of stakeholders including staff and partners. At the conclusion of the challenge, a presentation of the key findings would be made by the peer challenge lead and it was common practice for all internal participants to be invited to that presentation. Following that a formal report would be produced, usually within six to eight weeks of the conclusion of the challenge. From that report an action plan was developed which was approved by Council and monitored through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 57.4 The Chief Executive advised that the Local Government Association funded the process and there was great interest from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government in the quality of the peer challenges carried out; it had been suggested that, if local authorities did not engage in the process, the government may return to some form of inspection process instead as it was expected that Councils would open themselves up to external scrutiny. In response to a query from a Member, it was advised that the Council had previously been found to be 'punching above its weight'; however, it was understood that there were still areas that could be improved upon. The Chief Executive indicated that he had recently been a peer reviewer and there were lessons which he had learnt from that process as well – he felt the whole experience was a great way to exchange good practice and to learn lessons from each other.
- 57.5 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the undertaking of a Corporate Peer Challenge be **ENDORSED**.

EX.58 HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE

- 58.1 The report of the Head of Development Services, circulated at Pages No. 46-49, advised Members of the content and progress of the preparation of the High Street Heritage Action Zone bid and asked for authority to be delegated to the Head of Development Services to work up the programme design document and to submit it to Historic England in line with the deadlines. If the bid was successful, authority would also be delegated to the Head of Development Services to take all necessary steps to implement the programme.
- 58.2 The Head of Development Services explained that, in July 2019, the Council had submitted an expression of interest to Historic England to be accepted onto a grant aided scheme called High Streets Heritage Action Zone and, in September, the Council had received confirmation that Tewkesbury had been successful in securing a place in the scheme. This was a nationwide initiative designed to secure lasting improvements to historic high streets for the communities that used them. The project programme lasted for four years and consisted of a number of grant funded initiatives to develop and implement physical changes in the high street and to strategic heritage buildings. The project would include community engagement as appropriate and also provide access to funding and training for local cultural and community groups to engage in a cultural programme to celebrate their high street. The Council had until 6 December to submit a programme design for the project setting out in detail the elements of each chosen project with timescales and costings and a commitment from relevant community groups; the funding would start in April 2020 and last for up to four years.
- 58.3 Tewkesbury Borough Council's bid for physical interventions included facilitating investment in the redevelopment of the Healings Mill site; to assess and implement improvements to the public realm within the High Street and Quay Street including measures to improve the pedestrian experience, interpretation and signposting of the historic environment, installation of public art and improvements to alleys; this would also improve the public realm linking the Abbey to the High Street; and to manage a grant scheme for shopfront and façade improvements including promotion of habitation above historic shops and the promotion of the use of traditional skills and materials for repair. A component of the bid was that the Council would set up, but not control, a 'cultural consortium' consisting of six to eight local community groups (from business groups to amenity societies and schools etc.). The purpose of the consortium was to initiate cultural community based activities and leave a legacy of skills.
- 58.4 It was suggested that there should be a mechanism for consultation with local Members within the process and accordingly, it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED:

1. That the content and preparation of the Heritage Action Zone Bid be **NOTED**.
2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Development Services to work up the Programme Design Document and to submit it to Historic England in line with the deadlines and, if successful, to take all necessary steps, including appropriate Member consultation, to implement the programme.

The meeting closed at 2:50 pm

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN 2019/20

REGULAR ITEM:

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

<p><u>Addition to 8 January 2020</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Development Plan. • Communications Strategy. • Discretionary Housing Payments.

Committee Date: 5 February 2020			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Budget 2020/21 (Annual).	To recommend a budget for 2020/21 to the Council.	Head of Finance and Asset Management.	No.
Financial Update - Quarter Three 2019/20.	To consider the quarterly budget position.	Head of Finance and Asset Management.	No.
Prosecution of Housing and Tenancy Fraud on behalf of Social Housing Providers.	To consider a proposal that the Council undertakes prosecutions on behalf of Social Housing providers where the property is situated outside of the Counter Fraud Unit Partnership area and where the Counter Fraud Unit has undertaken the investigation.	Head of Corporate Services.	No.
Housing Strategy Monitoring Report (Year 4) (Annual).	To approve the Housing Strategy Monitoring Report for Year Four.	Housing Services Manager.	Yes, from January meeting as not urgently required in January.
Joint Core Strategy Authorities Joint Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Governance Arrangements.	To make a recommendation to Council regarding the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Governance Arrangements.	Head of Development Services.	Yes, deferred to allow further time to consider the options.

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Agenda Item 6

Committee Date: 5 February 2020

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Joint Core Strategy Authorities Review of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedules.	To make a recommendation to Council regarding the Review of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedules.	Head of Development Services.	Yes, deferred to allow further time to consider the options.
Whistleblowing Policy.	To approve the Whistleblowing Policy.	Head of Corporate Services.	No.
ICT Strategy.	To approve the ICT Strategy.	Head of Corporate Services.	Yes, deferred to allow further time to develop the strategy.
Confidential Item: Irrecoverable Debts Write-Off Report (Quarterly).	To consider the write-off of irrecoverable debts.	Head of Corporate Services.	No.

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

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Committee Date: 4 March 2020			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Grounds Maintenance Working Group Report	To consider the recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of the work undertaken by the Grounds Maintenance Working Group and to determine whether there is a continuing role for the Group.	Head of Community Services.	No.

6

Committee Date: 8 April 2020			
Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required
Performance Management Report – Quarter Three 2019/20.	To receive and respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s review of the quarter three performance management information.	Head of Corporate Services.	No.
Council Plan 2016/20 Refresh (Annual).	To consider the Council Plan and make a recommendation to Council.	Head of Corporate Services.	No.
High Level Service Plan Summaries (Annual).	To consider the key activities of each service grouping during 2018/19.	Head of Corporate Services.	No.

PENDING ITEMS

Agenda Item	Overview of Agenda Item
Shopfronts Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).	To agree the document for the purposes of consultation.
Spring Gardens Regeneration Phase 1a report.	To agree the recommendation of the preferred option for the regeneration of Spring Gardens.
Parking Strategy Review – July 2020.	To consider the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Parking Strategy Review – September 2020.	To consider the statutory responses to the Parking Strategy Review.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Performance Management – Quarter 2 2019/20
Report of:	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Corporate Lead:	Chief Executive
Lead Members:	Lead Member for Commercial Transformation
Number of Appendices:	Five

Executive Summary:

The refreshed Council Plan (2016-20 – Year 4) was approved by Council on 16 April 2019. The plan contains four priorities, supported by a set of objectives and actions. Progress in delivering the objectives and actions are reported through a Council Plan Performance Tracker (Appendix 2). The tracker is a combined document which also includes a key set of performance indicators. The report also includes the Revenue Budget Summary Statement (Appendix 3), the Capital Monitoring Statement (Appendix 4) and the Reserves Position Summary (Appendix 5). This performance information is reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis and the outcome is then reported to the Executive Committee by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

At Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2019, consideration was given to the 2019/20 quarter two performance management information. The observations made by the Committee can be found in Appendix 1. The performance management documents presented at Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be found in Appendices 2-5.

Recommendation:

To scrutinise the performance management information and, where appropriate, require action or response from the Executive Committee.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference require it to review and scrutinise the decisions and performance of the Council and its Committees.

Resource Implications:

None directly associated with this report.

Legal Implications:

None directly associated with this report.

Risk Management Implications:

If delivery of the Council's priorities is not effectively monitored then the Council cannot identify where it is performing strongly or where improvement in performance is necessary.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Performance management information is reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. The outcome of each quarterly review is then reported to Executive Committee.

Environmental Implications:

None directly associated with this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The refreshed Council Plan (2016-20 – Year 4) was approved by Council on 16 April 2019. The plan contains four priorities, supported by a set of objectives and actions. Progress in delivering the objectives and actions are reported through a Council Plan Performance Tracker (Appendix 2). The tracker is a combined document which also includes a key set of performance indicators. The report also includes the Revenue Budget Summary Statement (Appendix 3), the Capital Monitoring Statement (Appendix 4) and the Reserves Position Summary (Appendix 5). This performance information is reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis and the outcome is then reported to the Executive Committee by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2** At Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2019, consideration was given to the quarter two monitoring report for 2019/20. The observations made by the Committee can be found in Appendix 1. The majority of information within the performance tracker reflects the progress of Council Plan actions as at the time of writing the report. The key performance indicator information is of a statistical nature so represents the position as at the end of September 2019 (Quarter 2). The tracker includes actions that have been refreshed to ensure the Council Plan is a 'live' document. The refreshed plan was approved by Council on 16 April 2019. This is the last year of the four year plan and work has started to develop a new plan and priorities.

2.0 COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE TRACKER

- 2.1** The Council Plan (2016-20) has four priorities which contribute to the overall Council Plan vision "*Tewkesbury Borough, a place where a good quality of life is open to all*". The priorities are:
- Finance and resources.
 - Promoting and supporting economic growth.
 - Growing and supporting communities .
 - Customer focused services.

Each of the four priorities is supported by a number of objectives and actions which will focus activity on delivery of the priorities. The tracker has been developed and contains a set of key performance measures to monitor delivery of each Council Plan action. The actions are reviewed and where appropriate refreshed on an annual basis.

2.2 For monitoring the progress of the Council Plan actions, the following symbols are used:

☺ – action progressing well.

☹ – the action has some issues or delay by there is no significant slippage in the delivery of the action.

☹ – significant risk to not achieving the action or there has been significant slippage in the timetable or performance is below target.

Grey – project has not yet commenced.

✓ – action complete or annual target achieved.

For monitoring of key performance indicators, the following symbols are used:

↑ - PI is showing improved performance on previous year.

↔ - PI is on par with previous year performance.

↓ - PI is showing performance is not as good as previous year.

2.3 This report presents the second quarter of the final year of the current plan. Key successful activities to bring to Members' attention since the last performance report include:

- Council approval for an additional £20million towards commercial property investment.
- The Public Services Centre has been extended to include the letting of a further 1000sq ft (the old print room) to Gloucestershire County Council.
- High Street Heritage Action Zone expression of interest was successful for Tewkesbury Town.
- Growth Hub has seen 1325 businesses benefitting from support it provides.
- Comments on the draft Local Industrial Strategy have been collated and submitted to the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- An additional neighbourhood area has been designated, Woodmancote Parish Council, making it 16 in total across 21 Parishes.
- Proactive approach to enviro-crimes - 12 fixed penalty notices have been issued, six cases referred to One Legal for prosecution, officer attendance at Parish meetings, four community events, and undertaking of 35 patrols.
- Workshop was held in partnership with Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group to support development of a local integrated health partnership.

2.4 Due to the complex nature of the actions being delivered, inevitably some may not progress as smoothly or quickly as envisaged. Actions with either a 😞 or 😊 are highlighted below:

Action	Status and reason for status
Disposal of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) site.	😞 Disposal is on hold pending the outcome of the Spring Gardens regeneration project and parking strategy review to understand any potential requirements arising from the projects. The target date has been amended twice previously.
Deliver employment land through the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Tewkesbury Borough Plan (TBP).	😞 Target date has been amended from Autumn 2019 to Spring 2020 . This is to allow for a more comprehensive draft plan to be produced for the next public consultation.
Review the tourism resources to maximise the tourist provisions in the borough.	😞 Date has been amended from October 2019 to March 2020 to consider partnering options for the Old Hat Shop and develop a business case. The date for this action has been amended twice previously.
Work with partners to undertake the required reviews to the JCS.	😞 Target date has been amended from Autumn 2019 to Spring 2020 . This is to allow for a more comprehensive draft plan to be produced for the next public consultation.
Ensure adequate land is allocated within the JCS and Tewkesbury Borough Plan to meet housing need.	😞 Target date has been amended from Autumn 2019 to Spring 2020 . This is to allow for a more comprehensive draft plan to be produced for the next public consultation.
Develop a programme to work with landlords to ensure residents have a supply of rented properties to meet their needs.	😞 Target date has been amended from September 2019 to December 2019. The initial work that commenced in Q1 was paused and due to restart in November. The date for this action has been amended twice previously, to factor the private rented housing sector accommodation fund pilot going to Executive Committee and transfer and responsibility to deliver the private rented scheme.

Introduce the option for paperless billing for Council Tax and business rates.	☹️ There has been a combination of issues relating to this project around the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), software integration and contract performance. An in-house solution is currently being investigated. The date for this action has been amended three times previously.
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3.0 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

3.1 The set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are a combination of contextual indicators and target related indicators. The set of KPIs must remain flexible to ensure they meet our needs. The data reported is the position at end of September 2019.

3.2 Of the 17 indicators with targets, their status as at the end of quarter two is:

Awaiting data	😊 (on target)	☹️ (below target but confident annual target will be achieved)	☹️ (below target and target unlikely to be achieved)
2	10	3	2

In terms of the direction of travel i.e. performance compared to last year, for all indicators (not all indicators have a target e.g. crime) the status is:

Awaiting data	↑ (better performance than last year)	↓ (not as good as last year)
2	10	7

3.3 KPI's where the direction of travel is down and/ or KPI is either a ☹️ or 😊 are highlighted below:

KPI No.	KPI description	Reason for ☹️ or 😊
12	Percentage of 'major' applications determined within 13 weeks or alternative period agreed with the applicant.	↓ Figure is down compared to the outturn of 2018/19, from 90.30% to 85.71%. This is a result of two major application missing the target timescale during Q2. However, the overall target of 85% was achieved.
13	Percentage of 'minor' applications determined within 8 weeks or alternative period agreed with the applicant.	↓ ☹️ Due to the complexity of the issues needed to address some of the 'minor' applications, it has taken longer for nine minor applications to be determined within the agreed timescale during Q2.

14	Percentage of 'other' applications determined within 8 weeks or alternative period agreed with the applicant.	☹️ The Q2 cumulative figure, 86.71% is below the 2019/20 target of 90%, due to 27 applications being answered outside of the agreed timescale.
18	Number of reported enviro-crimes.	↓ ☹️ 344 crimes were reported in Q2 making it 625 for the year, compared to a total of 1,089 reported in 2019/20.
26	Number of overall crime incidents.	↓ There has been an increase in the number of overall crime incidents of 3.26%, during a 12 month period.
27	Average number of sick days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE).	↓ ☹️ Although the number of sick days in Q2 is down from Q1 the target of eight days will not be achieved. At the end of quarter 2, the outturn is 6.4 days.
31	Percentage of Freedom of information (FOI) requests answered on time.	↓ Whilst the target of 80% has been achieved, the quarterly figure has dropped when compared to the outturn (92%) for 2018-19. This is due to the number of responses not meeting the 20 working day timescale.
32	Percentage of formal complaints answered on time.	↓ ☹️ The Q2 figure compared to last year's outturn has slightly decreased as a result of high number of complaints received during this quarter not being answered within the 20 working day timescale. Ten complaints were answered late, during Q2.

Note: Waste and recycling data for quarter two was not available for this report due to a change in process for the disposal of waste.

Areas where key indicators are performing particularly well, include:

- KPI 6: the number of visitors to Winchcombe Tourist Information Centre has been achieved, with 7,954 this year so far.
- KPI 7: 706 visitors entered the Growth Hub during the first two quarters which is on track to meet the 1000 target.
- KPI 21: with the benefits team putting in place new ways of working, it has improved the average number of days to process new benefit claims, from 22 days (Q4 2018/19 figure) to five days.
- KPI 22: The number of days to process change in circumstances has also improved as a result of new ways of working from five days to three days.
- KPI 23: with an additional 411 dwellings being added to the valuation list the percentage of Council Tax collected remains on target to meet the 98.3% by the end of the year.

4.0 FINANCIAL SUMMARY - REVENUE POSITION

4.1 The financial budget summary for Q2 shows a (£18,530) deficit against the profiled budget (Q1 – (£71,190)). Below is a summary of the expenditure position for the Council split out between the main expenditure types.

4.2 Services expenditure	Budget	Budget Q2	Actual Q2	Variance
	£	£	£	£
Employees	9,864,860	4,433,679	4,322,241	111,439
Premises	640,349	390,724	404,482	(13,758)
Transport	157,779	70,975	62,853	8,121
Supplies & Services	1,985,608	800,428	879,625	(79,197)
Payments to Third Parties	5,497,115	2,959,183	3,127,462	(168,280)
Transfer Payments - Benefits Service	13,611,266	7,366,417	7,496,417	(130,000)
Income	(20,478,721)	(3,382,126)	(3,583,096)	200,970
	11,278,256	12,639,280	12,709,985	(70,705)

Corporate Codes

Interest Received	(394,822)	(197,411)	(251,259)	53,848
Interest Costs	650,500	325,250	226,851	98,399
Investment Properties	(2,753,605)	(1,505,396)	(1,353,173)	(152,223)
Corporate Savings Targets	(7,500)	0	0	0
RSG and other grant funding	(36,565)	(18,290)	(18,740)	450
New Homes Bonus	(3,273,399)	(1,636,700)	(1,636,700)	0
Business rates	(2,497,557)	0	(51,701)	51,701
	2,965,308	9,606,733	9,625,263	(18,530)

Note: With regards to savings and deficits, items in brackets and red are overspends

4.3 Position on Service Expenditure

The budget position in relation to service expenditure shows an overall budget deficit of (£70,705) as at the end of September 2019 (Q1 - (£52,242)).

Employee Costs – surplus of £111,439

These savings are being generated mainly through staff vacancies, across most services, with Corporate Services generating the most savings at £40,767. Services have managed vacancies during the period by utilising current staff to cover work in the short term and limiting, where possible, use of agency staff.

Supplies & Services – deficit of (£79,197)

There is a deficit being reported on both Supplies and Services and Payments to Third Parties. This is mostly due to the expenditure incurred on delivering the European elections. The Council receives grant income to cover the cost of the elections and therefore an income surplus within Democratic Services matches off this expenditure. The Borough election expenditure is also contained within Democratic Services and this is matched off through one off funding from reserves and New Homes Bonus. Overall, Democratic Services is in a cost neutral position.

Payments to Third Parties – deficit of (£168,280)

Community Services is reporting a deficit of (£114,908), which relates to the delivery of our waste and recycling services. Ubico is reporting a half year deficit position of (£99,536), with a projected year end overspend of (£199,072). As reported in Q1 a large proportion of this is as a result of:

- deploying additional resources on grounds maintenance rounds to ensure issues with grass cutting are minimised during the growing season, which is being reviewed by a Working Group; and
- the additional cost of the depot from the review of use of space, which was agreed after the budget was set.

Both these overspends are being covered through one-off reserve use for the current year.

The remaining significant element of the Ubico budget position is due to the hire of additional vehicles. There is the specific hire cost of an additional vehicle whilst the procurement for a new narrow access vehicle continues. There have also been a couple of accidents which has meant additional hire and repair costs whilst these vehicles are out of operation.

Transfer Payments – deficit of (£130,000)

The deficit on transfer payments relates to Housing Benefit claimant payments and recovery of expenditure from the government. During the year, several significant overpayments as a result of claimant error, which go back over several years, have been identified. One of which is for over £20,000 and included a fraud investigation. The Council only receives government subsidy of 40% where claimant error is identified and, as a result, we are predicting a deficit on the budgeted subsidy recovery of (£80,000).

However, the Council is entitled to 100% of the debt if it can be reclaimed from the claimant and therefore, in the long run, the deficit on the Housing Benefit claim could be eradicated. Unfortunately recovering significant overpayments can take time and has resulted in an increase in the level of debt held in relation to Housing Benefit. Given the good work the recovery team has made in previous years we had assumed as part of setting the budget at the start of the year that the level of debt would fall again in the current year. Given that debt has actually increased we have recognised a £50,000 deficit on the budget. We will continue to monitor through the second half of the year and the Housing Benefit team are targeting key individuals to recover debt as quickly as possible.

Income – surplus of £200,970

Income is showing a surplus position of £200,970, recovering from the deficit position reported in Q1. This is due to

- £148,000 of grant funding for European Elections as discussed above.
- £55,000 of grant funding for the revenues and benefits service.
- £37,000 gain from the Garden waste service.
- £12,000 gain on car parking.

This positive position is being offset by a £70,000 deficit on planning income at the half year point. The expectation is that, by the year end, several large individual planning applications will be received to ensure that the income target is met.

There is also a £58,000 deficit on the amount of recycling credits received. This is due to the actual level of recyclate being collected being less than was included in the budget. It has been identified that the budget did not include an allowance for non-recyclable material in the system, and therefore overestimated the recycling credits due. This means that we are receiving less income than predicted. The community team is working with the contractor Suez to manage the level of rejected materials to maximise the income received from recycling credits.

4.4 Attached at Appendix 3 is a summary of the position for each Head of Service, which shows the current variance against their budget. Where the main types of expenditure headings within the Head of Service's responsibility have a variance over £10,000, a short explanation for the reason for the variance has been provided.

4.5 Whilst an improvement against the Q1 position, the reported deficit at the end of the second quarter remains disappointing, and a significant difference from the same position in 2018/19 which was a reported surplus of £572,086. The Management Team is confident that the deficit will be eradicated over the next quarter and no corrective action is suggested at this stage. This position will be kept under scrutiny and, should the position deteriorate or the expectations be downgraded, the Management Team of the Council will need to consider what action it takes to correct the position. Having just benefited from a year of significant surplus, the revenue budget for the current year cannot be allowed to return a deficit and utilise the reserves now set aside for specific projects and future financial sustainability.

5.0 CAPITAL BUDGET POSITION

5.1 Appendix 4 shows the capital budget position as at Q2. This is currently showing a deficit against the profiled budget of £68,940. This deficit is due to incurring a higher than predicted expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants. However, as we have a large grant allocation from the government to pay for these it is not depleting the Council's capital allocation.

5.2 The capital programme still includes a budget of £6.6million to secure a commercial investment acquisition which is now profiled to happen in the next quarter of the financial year. The Council has reviewed a number of opportunities in the current year and made a decision to bid on two specific properties. Unfortunately, it has failed to secure either of these properties as the first one was withdrawn from sale by the vendor and the Council was outbid on the second property.

5.3 The market for investment properties, specifically in the industrial or alternative sector which the Council requires for a balanced portfolio, has become increasingly competitive with less high quality investments coming to the market. The Council continues to work with its advisors to source and secure new property and hopes to conclude a suitable investment within the calendar year.

5.4 Other capital schemes are progressing in line with budgets.

6.0 RESERVES POSITION

6.1 Appendix 5 provides a summary of the current usage of available reserves.

6.2 Reserves have been set aside from previous years to fund known future costs and the strategic planning of the authority's operation. The information in the Appendix does not take account of reserves which have been committed, but not yet paid.

6.3 Whilst the Q2 position shows that there remains a significant balance on the reserves, the expectation is that the balances will be spent in the future. Finance has asked for updates from all departments about their plans to ensure that earmarked reserves are either used for their intended purpose or released back to the general fund.

7.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 None.

8.0 CONSULTATION

8.1 None.

9.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

9.1 Council Plan 2016-20.

10.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

10.1 None directly.

11.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

11.1 None directly.

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

12.1 Linked to individual Council Plan actions.

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

13.1 Linked to individual Council Plan actions.

14.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

14.1 Council Plan 2016-20 approved by Council 25 April 2018.

Background Papers: None.

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Appendices:

- 1 –Overview and Scrutiny Committee review.
- 2- Council Plan Performance Tracker Qtr 2 2019/20.
- 3 - Revenue Budget.
- 4 - Capital Budget.
- 5 – Reserves.

**Questions raised by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at meeting held on
3 December 2019**

Questions raised by Overview and Scrutiny	Response from officers
Performance Tracker – Priority: Promoting and Supporting Economic Growth	
<p>Objective 2 – Action a) Deliver employment land through the Joint Core Strategy and Tewkesbury Borough Plan – A Member sought clarification as to the amended target date and whether this was realistic.</p>	<p>The Head of Development Services confirmed that the target date was spring 2020 rather than 2019 as incorrectly stated in the report. She reminded Members that Tewkesbury Borough Council was working with two other Joint Core Strategy authorities so there were a lot of complex issues to address but she was as confident as she could be that the new date would be achieved. Although it was a very challenging timetable, the revised date ensured that the Borough Plan remained on course for examination in 2021 and adoption in 2022.</p> <p>She stressed that it was not a quick process – the Joint Core Strategy had taken longer than anticipated as further work had been required at the examination stage – and, whilst it was possible to make up time at different points during the process, clearly it was important not to fall too far behind at this early stage.</p>
<p>Objective 3 – Action a) Produce a detailed strategy for the delivery of growth at Junction 9 – A Member noted that the comments against this action referenced the Garden Town project and she questioned whether it would be appropriate for Members to receive an update to understand what was happening and how the Garden Town impacted on other actions such as the delivery of growth at Junction 9.</p>	<p>The Head of Development Services advised that the Tewkesbury Garden Town Member Reference Panel was currently meeting every two weeks, although she accepted that the wider membership was not engaged so she would be happy to arrange a Member seminar in the New Year and to work with the Communications Team on the most appropriate method for communicating key messages as the Garden Town project progressed.</p>

<p>Objective 5 – Action b) Review the tourism resources to maximise the tourist provisions in the borough – A Member raised concern that the target date for this action had now changed four times and he sought an update on how this was progressing.</p>	<p>The Head of Development Services reminded Members that this action was not just about the Tewkesbury Tourist Information Centre, which had its own particular issues associated with its location in the Hat Shop, and she advised that a review of the broader service was underway; ultimately she felt there was a tourism post which could be utilised more effectively and she hoped to be able to report back to Members in March 2020. The Deputy Chief Executive undertook to ensure that the action was revised to reflect the fact that it was a strategic tourism review rather than simply being focused on the future of the Hat Shop.</p>
<p>Key Performance Indicators for Priority: Promoting and Supporting Economic Growth</p>	
<p>KPIs 3 and 4 – Number of business births and business deaths – A Member noted that there was no data for 2019 and asked when this would be provided.</p>	<p>The Head of Development Services advised that the information was backdated which was why the last available information was from 2017; due to collection times, the new data would be available in quarter three which would be included in the next performance report and would relate to 2018.</p>
<p>Performance Tracker – Priority: Growing and Supporting Communities</p>	
<p>Objective 2 – Ensure a supply of land to accommodate a five year requirement – A Member questioned why there was no Key Performance Indicator for the five year housing land supply.</p>	<p>The Head of Development Services explained that five year housing land supply was calculated on an annual basis therefore it remained the same each quarter. In response to a query as to whether a ruling had been made on whether housing built in advance could be included in the housing land supply figures, the Head of Development Services advised that the High Court Judge had decided not to rule on the position deeming it a matter for each decision-maker. As such, the Council would continue to defend its position and that would be tested through the appeal process when it was able to demonstrate a five year supply which she hoped would be in the new financial year. It was noted there were no new cases nationally to test the position.</p>

<p>Objective 4 – Action a) – Continue to improve the proactive homelessness prevention programme – A Member raised concern that the commentary box contained a lot of jargon which made it difficult to understand, for instance, ‘kata type questions’ ‘Liberating Structures’ and ‘Trello boards’.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services apologised and indicated that he would take this on board for future reports.</p>
<p>Objective 4 – Action b) Achieve the Council’s affordable homes target by working with local housing providers – A Member noted that a total of 109 affordable homes had been delivered in the first two quarters of 2019/20 with only 36 of those in quarter two and she questioned why so many more had been achieved in quarter one.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services advised that this was linked to when developments came on line; as the Council had little control over this, delivery of affordable homes was not evenly spread across the year.</p>
<p>Objective 4 – Action d) Develop a programme to work with landlords to ensure residents have a supply of rented properties to meet their needs – A Member noted that a new additional post had been recruited to within Housing Services to assist with the additional workload associated with the new legal duties and she asked how this was progressing, particularly as the target date for this action had been amended twice previously.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services reminded Members that Tewkesbury Borough Council had led the successful bid for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) funding to incentivise landlords to take tenants on lower incomes. Slow progress had been made due to a key member of staff leaving the authority; however, there had been further developments during the third quarter and the scheme which was about to be adopted would include rent in advance, an enhanced deposit scheme and tenancy support. It was noted that Tewkesbury Borough Council was no further behind any of the other Gloucestershire authorities despite the delay. A launch event for landlords and agents was being organised by the person who had been appointed to the new post within Housing Services which would take place in January. Members were advised that the MHCLG project had been due to end in March but he was pleased to report that the pilot could continue until all of the money had been spent which was great news. He undertook to bring a full report on the project to the Committee in September 2020.</p>
<p>Key Performance Indicators for Priority: Growing and Supporting Communities</p>	

<p>KPIs 8, 9 10 and 11 in relation to housing applications and homelessness – A Member questioned why there was no direction of travel for these KPIs as it was unclear if they were performing well or not, for instance, 334 homeless applications had been accepted in 2018/19 with 22 in the first two quarters of 2019/20.</p>	<p>The Head of Community Services explained that legislative changes meant that the information being compared was not like for like. It was intended to review the KPIs ready for 2020/21 to coincide with the new Housing Strategy and consideration would be given to more meaningful measures which could be compared year on year. In the meantime, he undertook to ensure that more comments were included in the narrative so it was clearer if performance was positive or negative. A Member felt that it was right to reconsider the KPIs in light of the significant changes brought about by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 so he would be supportive of a complete review.</p>
<p>Performance Tracker – Priority: Customer-focused services</p>	
<p>Objective 3 – Action b) Introduce the option for paperless billing for council tax and business rates – A Member sought further detail of the issues experienced and whether this action would still be delivered.</p>	<p>The Head of Corporate Services explained that it had not been an easy process and there had been issues around the performance of the supplier so One Legal was currently looking at the contract. The Council’s Digital Developer was looking at an in-house solution and he would know within the next seven to 10 days whether that could be achieved for February 2020.</p>
<p>Key Performance Indicators for Priority: Customer Focused Services</p>	

<p>KPI 31 and KPI 32 – Percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests answered on time and percentage of formal complaints answered on time – A Member questioned why only 108 of the 142 FOI requests and 52 of the 62 formal complaints had been answered within the 20 working days deadline.</p>	<p>The Head of Corporate Services confirmed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an annual report on formal complaints. In terms of the first two quarters of the year, 129 formal complaints had been received of which 115 had been answered on time. Of the remaining 14, six related to planning; two to waste and recycling; two to grounds maintenance; two to environmental health; one to customer services; and one to housing – whilst complaints were across the board, six of the 13 complaints received by planning had not been answered within the deadline. It was noted that there was an opportunity to discuss an extension of time with the complainant if it was not possible to respond within 20 working days.</p> <p>The Head of Development Services indicated that this matter had been discussed by management team and she was very keen to address the situation. She reiterated that planning complaints were often complex and required input from other departments such as One Legal so if a complaint could not be resolved within 20 working days, Officers should be negotiating a new deadline to ensure that they remained compliant with the KPI.</p> <p>With regard to FOIs, the Head of Community Services felt it was important to recognise the sheer amount of requests, some of which asked for information dating back a number of years, or were repeat requests with a slight variation in the data or format being asked for. This was incredibly time consuming and management team was considering what information could be published on the Council's website in order to reduce the resources currently being used for FOIs.</p> <p>A Member sought clarification as to the number of FOIs that came under one of the exemptions i.e. where the information requested did not have to be provided. The Head of Corporate Services confirmed that a very small number were subject to exemptions and he undertook to circulate the figures following the meeting.</p>
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Appendix 2 - Council Plan Performance Tracker and Key Performance Indicators 2019-20 Progress Report

Council Plan tracker actions/ KPI progress key:		KPI direction of travel key:	
😊	Action progressing well/ PI on or above target	↑	PI is showing improved performance on previous year
😐	Action has some issues/delay but not significant slippage/ PI below target but likely to achieve end of year target	↔	PI is on par with previous year performance
😞	Significant risk to not achieving the action or there has been significant slippage in the timetable, or performance is below target/ PI significantly below target and unlikely to achieve target	↓	PI is showing performance is not as good as previous year
	Project has not yet commenced/ date not available or required to report		
✓	Tracker action is complete or annual target achieved		

PRIORITY: FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Actions	Target date	Responsible Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
Objective 1. Seek to be financially independent of the government's core grants.				
a) Deliver the council's transformation programme to deliver a balanced budget.	Target date: March 2020	Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) Lead Member for Commercial Transformation	😊	<p>Projects within the transform programme have their individual milestones and target dates. March 2020 is an annual target date used to assess the overall in year success of the programme. For example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden waste phase 2 – this has generated income of £885k • Bulky waste service review – this will be reported to Transform Working Group (TWG) as a project due to commence and will look at; pricing policy, on-line bookings, recyclables etc. • Pool car pilot – it will be reported to TWG that the pilot has been a success. Supporting the project is the installation of electric charging points by the end of the calendar year.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the council's commercial strategy • Spring Gardens regeneration project. • Mental Health work plan – this is a key action of the Workforce Development Strategy.
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PRIORITY: FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Actions	Target date	Responsible Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 1. Seek to be financially independent of the government's core grants.

27	b) Maximise retention around business rates.	Target date: 31 March 2020	Head of Finance & Asset Management Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management	😊	Outturn figures for 2018/19 highlight an overall retention of business rates totalling £1.18m for the year. This is an exceptional year boosted by the fact that the council were in a 100% retention pilot for the year. Our projection of retained rates for the current year is £680,000. Whilst we are not in a pilot this year following our unsuccessful bid, we are in the county wide pool which will allow us to retain higher amounts than if we acted as an individual authority.
	c) Work to reduce the council's deficits, outlined in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).	Target date: 18 Feb 2020	Head of Finance and Asset Management Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management		New MTFS due to be produced in early Winter. Although there has been a one year spending review announcement, there is uncertainty on how local government will be funded beyond March 2021. Without this information it is difficult to project the deficits the council will face in the medium term. The deficit highlighted in the previous MTFS for the current year has been met through additional income, internal service restructure savings and an increase in the council tax.

Objective 2. Maintain a low council tax.					
Actions	Target date	Responsible Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment	
a) Produce a Medium Term Financial Strategy which ensures that council tax remains in the lowest quartile nationally.					
	Target date: 31 January 2020	Head of Finance & Asset Management Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management		Current MTFS suggests the potential for £5 annual council tax increases over the medium term. This would mean that our council tax, which at £119.36 is currently the fifth lowest in the country, would remain within the lowest quartile even without allowing for likely increases in the threshold. A new MTFS will be produced in early Winter for Council approval.	
PRIORITY: FINANCE AND RESOURCES					
Objective 3. Investigate and take appropriate commercial opportunities.					
28	a) Deliver the aims and objectives of the commercial property investment strategy.	Target date: 31 March 2020	Head of Finance & Asset Management Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management	☺	The council now has a commercial property portfolio of £39.5m producing an annual gross income of £2.4m. In October, Council approved further sum of £20m to add to the balance of £6.7m. The Commercial Investment Board continue to source suitable, high quality investments to meet the portfolio needs.
	b) Undertake a review of the discretionary trade waste service to ensure it is operating on a viable commercial level.	Target date: April 2017 July 2017 August 2017 April 2018 April 2019 December 2019 January 2020 (reported to O&S 10 September 2019)	Head of Community Services Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment	☺	As an interim measure, a marketing campaign is currently underway to increase the customer base. As reported to O&S committee in February 2019, a wider strategic review of the service is also being undertaken. As agreed with the O&S committee, a report will be brought back in January 2020 with the outcomes of the review.

c) Increase commercial activity in all services in line with our commercial strategy.	Target date: March 2020	Heads of service Deputy Chief Executive / Lead member for Finance and Asset Management.		To increase awareness of what commercialisation means to the council, a range of workshops has been held for senior management and members. A communications plan is also currently being developed to embed a commercial culture across the council. There are a number of projects currently in progress with a commercial element to them, e.g. garden waste, bulky waste, trade waste.
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PRIORITY: FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Actions	Target date	Responsible Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 4. Use our assets to provide maximum financial return.

29	a) Explore options for the regeneration of Spring Gardens.	Target date: June 2019 July 2019 March 2020 (reported to O&S 12 March 2019)	Head of Finance and Asset Management Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management		Council has received and approved a report on the progress made to date and the recommendation to short list four options. This phase of the project is now complete. The project is now in the next phase of due diligence and is currently considering the social and economic impact of the four options on the town and also reviewing the data gained from car parking surveys undertaken in the summer.
	b) Disposal of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) site.	Target date: 31 March 2020	Head of Finance & Asset Management Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management		Disposal on hold pending the outcome of both the Spring Gardens regeneration and the parking strategy review to understand any potential requirements arising from the projects. This site potentially offers flexibility to the council to meet any emerging requirements. Should there be no requirements, the council will proceed with a disposal.
	c) Investigate the potential use of remaining vacant areas in the Public Services Centre (PSC).	Target date: December 2019	Head of Finance & Asset Management Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management		The use of the Public Service Centre has been extended to include the letting of a further 1000 sq ft to Gloucestershire County Council. The Public Services Centre is effectively now operating at full capacity at this time with a small area retained to flexibly meet the council's ongoing needs.

PRIORITY: PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
Objective 1. Deliver our strategic plans.				
a) Deliver year three of our Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.	Target date: June 2020	Head of Development Services Lead Member for Economic Development/ Promotion	☺	Year three of the strategy commenced in June 2019. Work achieved includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful Heritage Action Zone expression of interest for Tewkesbury. Programme design currently in development. • Delivery of inward investment programme with Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). • Chinese delegation visit to the Public Service Centre • Business support, including business grants • Hosting press trips (for tourism purposes)
6) Deliver growth hub services in the Public Services Centre.	Target date: April 2020	Head of Development Services Lead Member for Economic Development/ Promotion	☺	Ongoing successful delivery of hub services – following launch in November 2018: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with Job Centre Plus – delivery of six-week course supporting people back to work and self-employment. • To date 1325 businesses have visited the hub, benefiting from support • Delivery of 15 business workshops and 1-2-1 events in this quarter – including social media marketing, export branding and growth reviews. The number of events delivered increased by seven in this quarter. • Signed up five new business event delivery partners • Welcomed new incubator tenant – Daffodil Support Services, a home care company. • Developed and launched a Tewkesbury Growth Hub Case Study Video featuring Miss Muffet’s Deli – a new start-up business in Tewkesbury.

c) Work with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and other partners to contribute to the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).	Target date: December 2019	Head of Development Services Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion	☺	Officers are engaged with the LEP to help deliver the strategic action required through the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) in the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. The draft LIS was circulated for comment in October. Deputy Chief Executive collated comments and submitted them to LEP. LIS member seminar was held in November to give information on the background processes and headline of the LIS.
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PRIORITY: PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 2. Deliver employment land.

31 a) Deliver employment land through the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Tewkesbury Borough Plan (TBP).	JCS target date: Autumn 2019 (Draft JCS Consultation) New revised date: Spring 2020 (Draft JCS Consultation) (New target date reported to O&S 3 December 2019)	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	☹	Following adoption of the JCS, which includes 112ha of employment land, planning and economic development officers are working to promote employment land in the borough. The take up of employment land will be monitored in the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) which government planning guidance requires the council to publish. The JCS review is underway which will consider future employment land needs. The initial Issues and Options consultation was completed on 11 January 2018. Responses to the consultation are now being considered in order to progress the review to Draft Plan stage. This will include further evidence gathering on employment needs – and progress in underway to commission a Gloucestershire-wide economic needs assessment to support this. Two new officers have been appointed to ensure that the plan can be prepared in the most expedient manner to achieve the strategic direction in the strategic plan. The target date has been amended to Spring 2019 (from Autumn 2019) to allow a more comprehensive draft plan to be produced for the next public consultation in order to save time in the overall process of getting the plan adopted.
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	Borough plan target date: Spring/ Summer 2019 December 2019 (reported to O&S 4 Sept)		☺	<p>The Tewkesbury Borough Plan has identified further employment sites which will be informed by the Employment Land Review. As part of the development of the Borough Plan, potential employment sites have been assessed to see if they would make sustainable allocations for inclusion in the plan. This has been supported by a number of evidence base documents to support evidence of deliverability.</p> <p>The Pre-submission of the plan was published for public consultation on 4 October for six weeks. Following this the plan will be submitted to the Government for its independent examination. The Pre-Submission plan seeks to allocate sites totalling around 45ha of employment as well as providing significant further potential at Gloucestershire Airport.</p>
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PRIORITY: PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 3. Maximise the growth potential of the M5 junctions.

a) Produce a detailed strategy for the delivery of growth at Junction 9.	Target date: Project Delivery Plan- September 2019 Masterplan produced: June 2021	Head of Development Services Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion	☺	The Ashchurch area has now been awarded Garden Town status. Officers have worked with Homes England to produce a Project Delivery Plan which sets out the key components to deliver the Garden Town. A team of officers is being created to deliver the Garden Town with the first appointment of the Programme Director secured in August 2019. Work is progressing on the creation of the masterplan. In parallel, work is progressing on the JCS to secure the strategic site allocation.
b) Work with partners to secure transport infrastructure improvements around the borough, including the all-ways Junction 10, Junction 9 and A46	Target date: 2021 (approved business case)	Head of Development Services Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion	☺	<u>All-ways Junction 10</u> Led by Gloucestershire County Council with district council support, the business case for all – ways J10 was submitted in March. Subject to Government’s review, it is expected that the outcome will be made available later this year. This consists of an all-ways motorway junction and associated link roads to the development sites, notably the Cyber Park and based upon the funding criteria is to be delivered by 2023. The council, working with partners Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council, is responding to questions from Government on the submission to ensure that the case is made to achieve the funding. Various officer groups are set up and officers are feeding into

improvements.				<p>the programme. A recent ministerial visit has allowed the case to be heard at government. Officers and Members are working together across the JCS authorities to secure this funding.</p> <p><u>J9 and A46</u> Tewkesbury Borough Council continues to be actively engaged in both the A46 Partnership and Midlands Connect to promote the development opportunities at Ashchurch and hence the need for an off-line solution. The J9/A46 area has been submitted by GCC with support from Tewkesbury Borough Council as an early Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Western Gateway Sub National Transport Body for improvements to J9/A46 and this is seen as a priority for the transport body. The detailed bid now needs to be finalised and submitted in December. Officers are working with the County Council to submit this detailed bid.</p>
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PRIORITY: PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 4. Deliver regeneration for Tewkesbury town.

a) Prepare and adopt a supplementary planning document for the regeneration of Tewkesbury Town.	<p>Target date: April 2018 September 2018 October 2018 November 2018 April 2019</p> <p>(reported to O&S 12 March 2019)</p>	<p>Head of Development Services</p> <p>Lead Member for Built Environment</p>	✓	<p>The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was approved for adoption at a meeting of the Council on 16 April 2019.</p>
b) Develop a programme with partners to progress Healings Mill and other key development opportunity sites to support the	<p>Target date: September 2017 January 2018 March 2018 September 2018 March 2019 (reported to O&S 4</p>	<p>Head of Development Services</p> <p>Lead Member for Economic Development/ Promotion</p>	☺	<p>Discussions are being held with the developer and agencies to explore what options may exist to try and bring forward an acceptable development proposal.</p> <p>However, this site remains very difficult due to a number of constraints, for example flooding and heritage issues, which are incorporated in the discussions.</p> <p>The site is referenced as an opportunity site in the recently adopted</p>

regeneration of Tewkesbury.	Sept) September 2019 (reported to O&S 18 June 2019) March 2020 (reported to O&S on 10 Sept 2019)			<p>Tewkesbury Town Supplementary Planning Document and was referenced in the High Streets Bid. The site is also identified as a site in the Tewkesbury Borough Plan.</p> <p>The site has recently been designated as a grade II listed building which brings with it further challenges. Officers have met with the owners to discuss the opportunities and constraints with this designation in place.</p> <p>Officers were successful with the bid for high street heritage funds. A second stage bid will be submitted before end of December to ascertain in detail options for moving projects forward and the amount of funding.</p>
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PRIORITY: PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 5. Promote the borough as a visitor attraction.

34 a) Explore with partners- including the Battlefield Society- the potential to increase the heritage offer at the Battlefield site.	<p>Target date: Complete feasibility -December 2017- April 2018 September 2018 December 2018 March 2019 (reported at O&S committee 12 March 2019) March 2021 (reported to O&S on 10 September).</p>	<p>Head of Development Services Lead Member for Economic Development/ Promotion</p>	<p>😊</p>	<p>Productive meetings have recently been held with representatives from the Abbey and the Battlefield Society and other partners.</p> <p>A project plan has been produced outlining the key milestones and potential council involvement.</p> <p>The plans have also been shared with the 2021 Group with the aim that this celebration will also act as a catalyst for the Battlefield.</p> <p>In 2021 Tewkesbury will be celebrating 550 years since the Battle of Tewkesbury, as well as 900 years since the consecration of Tewkesbury Abbey. This year will mark a number of celebrations and events. The anticipation is that the development of the heritage offer and concept for the Battlefield will be part of the 2021 celebrations.</p> <p>Through a new Cultural Consortium, the council will be looking to facilitate a cultural programme funding application. This will sit alongside the Heritage Action Zone work.</p>
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<p>b) Review the tourism resources to maximise the tourist provisions in the borough.</p>	<p>Target date: April 2019 June 2019 October 2019 New revised date: March 2020 (New revised reported to O&S committee 3 December 2019)</p>	<p>Head of Development Services Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">☹</p>	<p>Discussions are ongoing with Winchcombe Town Trust regarding the Tourist Information Centre provision as a result of their successful LEADER European bid, which is to develop a new heritage centre.</p> <p>Whilst building works are progressing, the plan is for the Winchcombe Library to host the Tourist Information Centre service.</p> <p>Partnering options with regard to the Old Hat Shop are currently underway with one particular organisation interested and looking to develop a business case, target date have been amended to factor this.</p>
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Key performance indicators for priority: Economic development

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
35 1	Employment rate 16-64 year olds.	84.7%		81.8%						81.8% relates to 45,900 people within the borough. This is above the national rate of 75.4% (Source ONS April 2018 – March 2019 current figures)	Leader Member Economic Development/ Head of Development Services
2	Claimant unemployment rate.	1.5%		1.5%	1.6%					1.6% relates to 870 people within the borough. This rate is below the county rate of 1.9% and national rate 2.8% (Source: ONS)	Leader Member Economic Development/ Head of Development Services
3	Number of business births.	415 (2017 figure)									Leader Member Economic Development/ Head of Development Services
4	Number of business deaths	405 (2017 figure)									

5	Number of visitors to Tewkesbury Tourist Information Centre (TIC)	27,697	28,000	7,578	9,487 (Q1 & Q2 = 17,065)			↑	😊	Footfall is increased from the last quarter, but is down year on year for Tewkesbury, although up in Winchcombe.	Leader Member Economic Development/ Head of Development Services
6	Number of visitors to Winchcombe Tourist Information Centre (TIC)	9,456	7,500	3,648	4,306 (Q1 & Q2 = 7,954)			↑	😊		Leader Member Economic Development/ Head of Development Services
367	Number of visitors entering the Growth Hub	751 (Q3 & Q4)	1000	358	348 (Q1 & Q2= 706)			↑	😊	Footfall is high and exceeding targets of 100 people per month due to ongoing success of the Growth Hub and the service provided to businesses. The figures have dropped by just 10 on the previous quarter but taking into account that this quarter was the summer holidays, the figures are very good and show great take up.	Leader Member Economic Development/ Head of Development Services

PRIORITY: GROWING AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 1. Increase the supply of suitable housing across the borough to support growth and meet the needs of our communities.

a) Work with partners to undertake the required reviews to the JCS.	Target date: Autumn 2019 (Draft JCS Consultation) Spring 2020	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the	☹️	The JCS Review and the initial Issues and Options consultation was completed on 11 January 2018. Responses to the consultation are now being considered in order to progress the review to Draft Plan stage. The review will consider future growth requirements in the area, including
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	(Draft JCS Consultation) (New target date reported to O&S 3 December 2019)	Built Environment		addressing the shortfalls identified in the adopted JCS. Key pieces of evidence for the review are being commissioned, including a retail assessment, a study on the potential for strategic sites and an assessment of economic need requirements Two dedicated JCS staff have also now been appointed to progress the plan towards a Draft for consultation. The target date has been amended to Spring 2019 (from Autumn 2019) to allow a more comprehensive draft plan to be produced for the next public consultation in order to save time in the overall process of getting the plan adopted.
37	b) Prepare and adopt the Tewkesbury Borough Plan. Target date: Winter 2018 Spring/Summer 2019 Autumn 2019 December 2019 (revised date reported to O&S 10 September 2019)	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	☺	The Pre-Submission Tewkesbury Borough Plan was published for a six week consultation on 4 October 2019. Following this consultation the plan will be submitted to the Government to be subject to its independent examination.
	c) Support communities in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP), where they are brought forward. Target date: March 2020	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	☺	A total of 16 neighbourhood areas have now been designated across 21 parishes; the latest being Woodmancote parish. We have six 'made' NDPs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winchcombe & Sudeley • Highnam • Gotherington • Twyning • Alderton • Down Hatherley, Norton and Twigworth The Churchdown and Innsworth NDP is current subject to independent examination in October 2019. If successful a public referendum on the NDP is expected in early 2020.

				<p>The Ashchurch Rural NDP is being progressed and the group is working towards submitting the plan to Tewkesbury Borough Council to undertake its consultation prior.</p> <p>Highnam has already got a 'made' NDP but has now started the process of reviewing the plan.</p>
d) Ensure land is allocated for housing as part of the Junction 9 masterplan.	Target date: December 2019	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	☺	Following designation of the Garden Towns Programme for Tewkesbury at Ashchurch, a number of meetings have been held with Homes England to ascertain the best way to deliver the project and secure planning status. Similarly, work is ongoing to ensure appropriate capacity is in place to deliver the necessary governance to deliver a project of this magnitude. The Joint Core Strategy is being prepared to secure the strategic site allocation.
e) With partners, explore options for the provision of modular and innovative housing to meet housing needs.	Target date: December 2018 December 2019 (reported to O&S 12 March 2019)	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	☺	Rooftop is expecting to allocate the Staverton properties in January, which would be completed within five months of the start of construction on the site. We will continue to raise the profile of modular methods of construction options and hold it as a target when committing committed sums to new projects.

PRIORITY: GROWING AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
Objective 2. Ensure a supply of land to accommodate a five year requirement.				
a) Ensure adequate land is allocated within the JCS and Tewkesbury Borough Plan to meet housing need.	Target date: Autumn 2019 (Draft JCS Consultation) New date: Spring 2020 (Draft JCS Consultation) (New target date)	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	☹	<p>The JCS Review and the initial Issues and Options consultation was completed on 11 January 2018. Responses to the consultation are now being considered in order to progress the review to Draft Plan stage.</p> <p>The review will consider future growth requirements in the area, including addressing the shortfalls identified in the adopted JCS as well as planning for the long term. A key piece of ongoing work is an assessment of the potential options for strategic growth in the area.</p> <p>The target date has been amended to Spring 2019 (from Autumn 2019) to allow a more comprehensive draft plan to be produced for the next public consultation in order to save time in the overall process of getting the plan</p>

	reported to O&S 3 December 2019)			adopted.	
	Target date: Spring/ summer 2019 (TBP) December 2019		😊	The Pre-Submission Tewkesbury Borough Plan was published for a six week consultation on 4 October 2019. Following this consultation the plan will be submitted to the Government to be subject to its independent examination. The Pre-Submission plan proposes to allocate sites that would deliver over 1100 new homes.	
39	b) Work with developers and stakeholders to deliver sustainable sites to meet housing needs.	Target date: March 2020	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	😊	The JCS was adopted on 11 December 2017. The JCS sets out the overall housing requirement for the borough and sets the spatial strategy for meeting development needs. In undertaking strategic duties with the planning authority, officers are working to deliver housing needs. The JCS Review will further consider development needs and the identification of additional sites to meet growth requirements going forward. This will involve further work with developers and stakeholders to progress sustainable site options.

PRIORITY: GROWING AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
Objective 3. Deliver the homes and necessary infrastructure to create new sustainable communities in key locations.				
a) Monitor annually the delivery of homes within the borough.	Target date: August 2019	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	✓	The 2018/19 housing monitoring has been completed and the housing monitoring report was published in August 2019. This report provides information on how many homes have been delivered within the previous year.

<p>b) Work with partners, infrastructure providers and developers to progress the delivery of key sites.</p> <p>40</p>	<p>Target date: March 2020</p>	<p>Head of Development Services</p> <p>Lead Member for the Built Environment</p>	<p>😊</p>	<p><u>Innsworth</u> – Reserved matters applications are being submitted, with phase one approved.</p> <p><u>Twigworth</u> – Conditions applications being resolved following outline permission for 725 dwellings. Further outline permission granted for 74 dwellings on separate parcel.</p> <p>Reserved matters application received and approved for the infrastructure on this site – vehicular access off the A38.</p> <p><u>South Churchdown</u> - first phase of 425 homes has outline planning permission. Further applications are anticipated and the reserved matters for the initial 425 has been submitted.</p> <p><u>Brockworth</u>- two reserved matters applications on first phases of the development (for circa 450 dwellings) received one of which now has consent.</p> <p><u>North West Cheltenham</u> - officers continuing to work with the developers on transport issues, expecting a planning application before the end of the financial year.</p> <p><u>West Cheltenham</u> - related to above, officers are working on transport matters as well as other master planning/development issues and a masterplan SPD contract has been let. The SPD will be presented to Exec for approval to consult in January 2020.</p> <p><u>Ashchurch</u> – The masterplan is being produced which will lead to the preparation of an SPD in parallel to the production of the JCS. The Secretary of States’ decision on the Fiddington site is expected before Christmas.</p>
<p>c) Produce a business case for improvements to the A40 at Longford, including improvements to Longford roundabout.</p>	<p>Target date: April 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>(Revised date reported to- O&S 12 March 2019)</p>	<p>Head of Development Services</p> <p>Lead Member for the Built Environment</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>LEP board approval was obtained in July.</p>

PRIORITY: GROWING AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
Objective 3. Deliver the homes and necessary infrastructure to create new sustainable communities in key locations.				
d) Deliver short- term access improvements to the infrastructure around the Ashchurch Housing Zone.	Target date: March 2019 March 2022 (reported to- O&S 12 March 2019)	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	☺	The new railway bridge at Ashchurch is nearing the stage of funding agreement with Homes England. This is expected to be finalised by the end of the year. In the meantime work is underway to confirm the location of the bridge and prepare the necessary information for the planning approval process – scheduled Spring 2020. Due to the time taken to progress contracts (Homes England) the overall programme delivery was extended to March 2022. Legal conditions are now being agreed with Homes England for the funding agreement and regular discussions are taking place with Homes England. Gloucestershire County Council, through Atkins, is supporting with feasibility work.
41 Integrate Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) into community planning processes.	Target date: Dec 2019	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	☺	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was approved in October 2018 and brought into effect in January 2019. Since January 2019, all three JCS authorities have been levying CIL on all liable schemes. A software system has been purchased to enable this and this is being rolled out across all three authorities. The Governance arrangements for the spending of CIL is due to be considered by all three authorities in the new year with Member’s seminars planned for all three authorities before the end of the calendar year. This will determine the way that the strategic element of CIL is allocated to projects.
Objective 4. Deliver affordable homes to meet local need.				
a) Continue to improve the proactive Homelessness Prevention programme.	Target date: December 2019	Head of Community Services Lead Member for Housing	☺	<u>By the end of the year the following will have been achieved:</u> • Processes relating to customer applications mapped and analysed according to value/failure/waste work and initial changes prototyped based on kata type questions around the problem, the solution, the expected impact.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letters reviewed and updated including their organisation within the Locata database. Personal Housing Plans updated and implemented on a continuous improvement basis. <p><u>Completed to date:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching training for all officers. Officers using Liberating Structures to lead on workshops for service improvement projects. All officers now using Kanban to task manage their case work and all officers using Trello boards to map this and used as the basis for monthly case-coaching 1-1s.
b) Achieve the council's affordable homes target by working with local housing providers.	Target date: March 2020	Head of Community Services Lead Member for Housing	😊	<p>Q2 had 36 affordable housing properties delivered at time of writing (still awaiting returns from registered providers). They came through in Bishops Cleeve, Brockworth, Longford, Toddington & Wheatpieces. Eight social rent, seven affordable rent and 14 shared ownership (seven waiting for data). There have been a total of 109 for the first two quarters.</p> <p>The councils 2019/20 affordable homes target is 220.</p>
42 Work in partnership to deliver the council's housing and homeless strategy.	Target date: March 2020	Head of Community Services Lead Member for Housing	😊	<p>Stroud District Council is compiling a bid to the Move on Fund to increase the supply of suitable move on accommodation, helping people to recover by meeting the needs of those leaving rough sleeping, homelessness, and domestic violence. The fund aims to free up hostel and refuge spaces and provide accommodation that people can move straight into from the streets to avoid having to stay in a hostel or refuge all together. Various discussions are taking place at a county wide level to complete the bid. The bidding window is open until September 2020.</p> <p>A Local Housing Needs Assessment has been commissioned working with the other Gloucestershire local authorities. This will identify property and tenure types required to be delivered in Tewkesbury borough and will be used for five years. Final report due Dec 2019.</p> <p>We have continued to work in partnership to commission schemes such as homeless outreach work, target hardening and out of hour's service. Work has been completed with the County homeless network to agree protocols during cold weather (SWEP) period November to March.</p>

An update to the Homeseeker Plus (housing register) policy is close to being agreed. It will be released for consultation by stakeholders and public. Exec Committee considered the policy ready for consultation.

PRIORITY: GROWING AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Actions	Target date	Reporting Officer/Group	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 4. Deliver affordable homes to meet local need.

<p>d) Develop a programme to work with landlords to ensure residents have a supply of rented properties to meet their needs.</p> <p>43</p>	<p>Target date: March 2019 June 2019 September 2019 New revised target date: December 2019. (New target date reported to O&S 3 December 2019)</p>	<p>Head of Community Services Lead Member for Housing</p>	<p>☹</p>	<p>We have recruited an additional post within Housing Services to assist with the additional workload associated with the new legal duties. Part of this post is to develop a private rented scheme for those in housing need. The local offer for private rented sector landlords has been drafted and was presented to Executive Committee in June 2019 for approval and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) grant funded initiative is currently being finalised.</p> <p>Due to the requirement to transfer responsibility for delivery of this scheme implementation has been delayed. Marketing will focus on Facebook and reporting structures in currently being finalised.</p>
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<p>e) Carry out housing needs assessments in parish areas with a view to delivering affordable housing in rural areas.</p>	<p>Target date: March 2020</p>	<p>Head of Community Services Lead Member for Housing</p>	<p>☺</p>	<p>Working in partnership with Gloucestershire Rural Communities Council, a programme of Housing Needs Surveys has begun to identify rural housing needs.</p> <p>A rolling programme will aim to ensure that every rural parish has an up to date (within five years) survey completed.</p> <p>We will always attempt to do this with engagement through the parish council/ meeting however the survey activity will not be contingent on this.</p> <p>Reports have been produced this year for Snowhill, Stanton, Stanway, Buckland and one based on employers in Staverton. Further surveys for Alderton, Dumbleton, Toddington, Teddington, Gretton, Prescott, Oxenton and Gotherington will be released in Nov/Dec 2019.</p>
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Key performance indicators for priority: Growing and supporting communities

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
8	Total number of homeless applications presented	620		173	177					This is 177 total including 90 triage cases, as an indication of total service demand.	Lead member for Housing Head of Community Services
9 44	Total number of homeless applications accepted	334		19	3					<p>Following the changes in legislation a statutory homeless duty is accepted to all applicants likely to be homeless within 56 days.</p> <p>There are three distinct duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention duty which lasts 56 days: 46 • Relief duty for homeless households which lasts 56 days: 30 • Full statutory homeless duty, this is similar to the old duty: 11 • Advice/Triage: 90 	Lead member for Housing Head of Community Services

Key performance indicators for priority: Growing and supporting communities

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-2019	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
10 45	Total number of active applications on the housing register	2214 1143 – 1 bed 664 – 2 bed 284 – 3 bed 93 – 4 bed 26 - 5 bed 3 – 6 bed		1973 One bed – 978 Two bed – 610 Three bed – 263 Four bed – 96 Five bed – 21 Six bed - 5	1645 One bed = 797 Two bed = 508 Three bed = 235 Four bed = 88 Five bed = 13 Six bed = 4					The breakdown of bands is: Emergency – 38 Gold – 82 Silver – 586 Bronze - 1242	Lead member for Housing Head of Community Services
11	Total number of homeless prevention, relief and legacy prevention cases	189		89	87 (Q1 & Q2= 176)					For Q2 this figure is from 177 total housing cases minus 90 triage/advice.	Lead member for Housing Head of Community Services

Key performance indicators for priority: Growing and supporting communities

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-2019	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
12	Percentage of 'major' applications determined within 13 weeks or alternative period agreed with the applicant.	93.3%	85%	90.91%	80% (Q1 & Q2= 85.71%)			↓	☺	<p>During Q2 10 major decisions were issued, 8 decisions were issued within the target timescales.</p> <p>80% of decisions were within the target timescales, this is slightly below the local target of 85%. However, performance for the year to date is 85.71% which is above the local target and considerably above the national target of 60%.</p>	Lead Member Built Environment/ Head of Development Services
13	Percentage of 'minor' applications determined within 8 weeks or alternative period agreed with the applicant.	86.05%	80%	72.73%	76.92% (Q1 & Q2= 74.46%)			↓	☹	<p>76.92% (30 of the 39 decisions issued) were within agreed timescales. This is an improvement in performance compared to the previous quarter although still below the local target of 80%. This is partially due to the complexity of the issues to be addressed for some minor applications (includes 1-9 dwellings and commercial developments up to 999sqm).</p> <p>Performance for the year to date is 74.46% which is just below the local 80% target but above the national target of 70%.</p>	Lead Member Built Environment/ Head of Development Services

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14	Percentage of 'other' applications determined within 8 weeks or alternative period agreed with the applicant.	86.17%	90%	87.23%	83.13% (Q1 & Q2= 86.71%)			↑	☹️	<p>83.13% of other applications were within agreed timescales (133 out of 160 decisions issued).</p> <p>The performance was below the target of 90% and is lower than Q.1 performance. This is a reflection of the volume of work in this category with a 13% increase in the number of "other" decisions issued compared to Q.1.</p> <p>Performance for the year to date is 86.71% which is just below the local 90% target but considerably above the national target of 70%.</p>	Lead Member Built Environment/ Head of Development Services
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PRIORITY: CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES

Actions	Target date	Reporting Line	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 1. Maintain and improve our culture of continuous service improvement.

a) Implement the One Legal business review and associated case management system replacement.	Target date: March 2019 June 2019 April 2020 (reported to O&S 18 June 2019)	Head of Law Lead member for the Corporate Governance	☺️	Case management system contract entered into and 'go live' on target for April 2020.
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b) To continue to proactively enforce against enviro-crimes including fly-tipping and dog fouling in accordance with the action plan.	Target date: March 2020	Head of Community Services Lead Member for the Clean and Green Environment	😊	Officers continue to take a robust proactive approach to tackling Enviro-crime. To date 12 fixed penalty notices have been issued and six cases referred to One Legal for prosecution. The public space protection order continues to be promoted across the borough. Officers have attended 12 parish meetings, four community events and carried out 35 patrols.
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PRIORITY: CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES

Actions	Target date	Reporting Line	Progress to date	Comment
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Objective 1. Maintain and improve our culture of continuous service improvement.

48	c) Deliver our Place Approach.	Target date: March 2020	Head of Development Lead Member for Community	😊	Three area meetings have now been held with the Members in each area to discuss priorities and ways of working. The principle objectives being to use council resources effectively, enable communities to help themselves and others and for the council to act in an enabling role utilising the strengths of our communities. Discussions at place meetings have covered issues such as education provision and cycle routes.
	d) Review our Advice and Information Centres (AICs)	Target date: April 2020	Head of Corporate Services Lead Member for Customer Focus	😊	We are currently gathering customer feedback via direct contact with users, through the website and with the Citizen's panel to establish the types of visit and general awareness of the four centres. Once baseline data has been collected it is the intention to use an Overview and Scrutiny working group to review the overall effectiveness of the centres. This will be programmed for the final quarter of the year.

Objective 2. Maximise partnership working within the Public Services Centre.

<p>a) Develop a programme to create partnerships within Public Services Centre.</p> <p>49</p>	<p>Target date: December 2019</p>	<p>Deputy Chief Executive Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>The council has a well-developed Locality Partnership (focused on partner organisations based within the public service centre – detailed as follows; Police, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Gloucestershire Care Services – adult health and children’s services, Early Help Families First, Clinical commissioning group, Children’s Centre, Tewkesbury School, Severn Vale Housing Society and Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue.</p> <p>As well as a Financial Inclusion partnership. This partnership developed from major improvement work within the council’s revenues and benefits service which highlighted the need to be more proactive around supporting vulnerable people around welfare reform changes.</p> <p>It has grown well over the last two years and is well attended by a range of public and voluntary organisations with an interest in ‘welfare’ as detailed below: DWP, Gloucestershire County Council – Customer Services, Food Bank, Citizen Advice Bureau, Credit Union, Registered Providers, Severn Trent Water, Fire and Rescue and Families First.</p> <p>Following conversations with both groups, the next step in enhancing partnership working, will be to merge the two groups and increase the potential for joint working and networking between all parties.</p> <p>In addition, an ‘open afternoon’ was held on 3 October. Members were invited, as an informal opportunity to meet and discuss key projects and work streams with partner agencies.</p>
<p>b) To work with health and well-being partners to support the development of a Local Integrated Health Partnership (LIHP)</p>	<p>Target date: December 2019</p>	<p>Head of Development Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>😊</p>	<p>A workshop hosted jointly by the council and Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group was held in October, bringing together local senior strategic leaders to discuss plans and priorities, focussing on the health agenda. The workshop was well received and there was a will to develop this into a regular meeting with potential for a shared plan.</p>

PRIORITY: CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES

Actions	Target date	Reporting Line	Progress to date	Comment
Objective 3. To improve customer access to our services and service delivery through digital methods.				
a) Explore options to provide online public access to interactive planning policy information maps.	Target date: March 2019 June 2019 March 2020 (reported to O&S 18 June 2019)	Head of Development Services Lead Member for the Built Environment	☺	Web based online mapping is being developed using the council's existing Geographic Information System providers. The mapping information is being uploaded to the online system for testing. This testing period is expected to be completed ready for the Tewkesbury Borough Plan Pre-Submission consultation. The next stage will be to publish the information by March 2020 and pilot it on the website once the Tewkesbury Borough Plan policies have been adopted.
50 b) Introduce the option for paperless billing for council tax and business rates.	Target date: February 2019 June 2019 September 2019 February 2020 (reported to O&S on 3 December 2019)	Head of Corporate Services Lead Member for Customer Focus	☹	There has been a combination of issues relating to this project around GDPR, software integration and contract performance. The service team supported by the digital team are currently looking at an in-house solution to deliver a viable alternative.
c) Explore options for a corporate-wide customer relationship management (CRM) system.	Target date: March 2019 September 2019 (reported to O&S 18 June 2019)	Head of Corporate Services Lead Member for Customer Focus	✓	Options have been considered and the conclusion is that we should retain a low-code solution. Our current solution is a product called Firmstep and is used for on-line forms, 'report it' issues etc. As a council we want to push our digital aspirations further and are now in the process of moving to the procurement stage for a new solution.

d) Investigate digital methods to improve customer engagement.	Target date: March 2020	Head of Corporate Services Lead Member for Customer Focus	😊	A new digital strategy will be presented at Executive Committee on 27 November 2019. This will set out the digital aspirations of the council. Programmed work around digital includes, digitisation of the licensing function, proving a suitable alternative to the current Firmstep platform, review of the council's website and on line bookings for bulky waste.
e) Review our corporate website.	Revised date: March 2020	Head of Corporate Services Lead Member for Customer Focus		The project will commence once the new intranet project is completed. The new intranet went live in early November.

Key performance indicators for priority: Customer focused services

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
51 15	Total enquiries logged by the Area Information Centre (AIC).	985		256	204 (Q1 & Q2= 460)					Q1, Q2 Bishops Cleeve 56, 66 Brockworth 100, 77 Churchdown 48, 36 Winchcombe 52, 25 <hr/> Total 256, 204	Lead Member Customer Focus/ Head of Corporate Services
16	Total number of people assisted within the borough by Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).	1593		415	833					1724 issues raised during quarter one and two, which is relatively consistent with the previous years. With 84% of the issued raised being represented by the following: Benefits 39% Debt 20% Employment 10% Relationships 7% Housing 5% Of the 833 clients seen, the heaviest demand was Tewkesbury South with	Lead Member Economic Development/ Promotion / Head of Development Services

										9.3%.	
										The following six wards represent 49% of all clients seen: Tewkesbury South 78, Northway 76, Churchown St Johns 67, Brockworth West 66, Tewkesbury Town & Twyning 64, Cleeve St Michael 59.	

Key performance indicators for priority: Customer focused services

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
57	Financial gain to clients resulting from CAB advice	£374,207		£540,285	£861,244					During the six months clients resident in Tewkesbury Borough have benefitted from £861,244 of financial gains, of which £325,456 represented debts written-off.	Lead Member Economic Development/Promotion / Head of Development Services
18	Number of reported enviro crimes	1089	1000	281	344 (Q1 & Q2= 625)			↓	☹️	<p>Enviro-crime figures for Q2. Figures in brackets Q2 2018/19 (allows seasonal comparison):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fly tips- 184 (177) littering-3 (1) dog fouling-10 (7) abandoned vehicles- 56 (43) noise- 91 (56) <p>Total for Q2 – 344 (284)</p> <p>Overall Q2 figures are broadly in line with those of Q2 from 2018/19. There has been a slight</p>	Lead Member Clean and Green Environment/ Head of Community Services

											rise in number of noise complaints and fly tips. Analysis of the complaints does not indicate any obvious pattern or cause.	
19	Community groups assisted with funding advice	193		35	30 (Q1 & Q2=65)						In Q2 the council supported groups to raise £120, 030 in external grants. Since July 2015 community groups have been supported by the borough to receive £2,036,267 in grants from external funders.	Lead Member Economic Development/Promotion / Head of Development Services

Key performance indicators for priority: Customer focused services

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
20	Benefits caseload: a) Housing Benefit b) Council Tax Support	3,169 4,399		3,004 4,390	2,889 4,370					The housing benefit caseload continues to fall due to the migration of claimants to Universal Credit, however still not to the extent estimated previously. Delays in managed migration means that we will continue to deal with some claim types until at least 2022.	Lead Member Finance and Asset Management/ Head of Corporate Services

21	Average number of days to process new benefit claims	22	15	10	5			↑	☺	The performance measures and new ways of working put in place in the latter quarters of 2018/19 have resulted in improved performance well above the national average.	Lead Member Finance and Asset Management/ Head of Corporate Services
22	Average number of days to process change in circumstances	5	4	3	3			↑	☺	The performance measures and new ways of working put in place in the latter quarters of 2018/19 have resulted in improved performance above the national average.	Lead Member Finance and Asset Management/ Head of Corporate Services

Key performance indicators for priority: Customer focused services

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
54 23	Percentage of council tax collected	98.1%	98.3%	29.9%	57.9%			↑	☺	Council tax collection is slightly below the Q2 target of 58.3%. There continues to be considerable growth in the borough and a further 411 dwellings were added to the valuation list by 30 September 2019. This impacts on the profile of payments however we are still on track to meet the collection target by the end of the year.	Lead Member Finance and Asset Management/ Head of Corporate Services

24	Percentage of NNDR collected	99.3%	98.5%	33.1%	60%			↑	😊	Business rates collection is well above the Q2 target of 58.5%.	Lead Member Finance and Asset Management/ Head of Corporate Services
25	Number of anti-social behaviour incidents	1937		501	438 (Q1 & Q2= 939)			↑		Over a rolling 12 month period there has been a decrease in incidents of 11.06%.	Lead Member Community/ Head of Community Services

Key performance indicators for priority: Customer focused services

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
26	Number of overall crime incidents	3305		799	999 (Q1 & Q2= 1798)			↓		Over a rolling 12 month period there has been An increase in incidents of 3.26%.	Lead Member Community/ Head of Community Services
27	Average number of sick days per full time equivalent	10.2	8.0	3.7	2.7 (Q1 & Q2= 6.4)			↓	☹️	Total number of sick days lost in Q2 is down from Q1 (464 days as opposed to 638 days) This comprises; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 343 days long term (407 days Q1 2019/20) - 121 days short term (230 days Q1 2019/20) This equates to 2.7 days lost per fte for the quarter (compared to 3.7 in Q1). Taking both Q1 and Q2 into account as if the days lost in the rest of the year were the same as Q's	Lead Member Organisational Development/ Head of Corporate Services

										1&2 the outcome would be a total of 12.8 days lost per fte Q2 saw a reduction in long term absence compared with the previous quarter given the resolution during the quarter of some long term absence cases. These should help the performance in Q3 when the resolution of more cases will occur.		
56	28	Percentage of waste recycled or composted.	52.59%	52%	54.11%	Data not available			To be reported Q3	To be reported Q3	Following the change of disposal point from landfill to Javelin Park energy from waste facility, there has been a delay in receiving the data from Gloucestershire County Council. The county has had to divert some waste to its contingency disposal points, which is not uncommon when commissioning a new technology plant. This has caused some delays in presenting the data back to districts for KPI reporting. The kg/hh and recycling % cannot be calculated without this data. The tonnages for recycling and food waste have been constant therefore the performance is not likely to change significantly.	Lead Member Clean and Green Environment/ Head of Community Services

Key performance indicators for priority: Customer focused services

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
29	Residual household waste collected per property in kgs.	401kg	430kg	104kg	Data not available			To be reported Q3	To be reported Q3	See comment above.	Lead Member Clean and Green Environment/ Head of Community Services
37	Food establishments hygiene ratings.	3.3%	5% With a food hygiene rating Under three	3.9%	4.2%			↑	😊	There are 741 registered food businesses compared with 711 in the last quarter. Of these, 31 are below a food hygiene rating of three compared with 28 being below 3 in the last quarter. This remains below the target of no more than 5% of food business having a food hygiene rating of less than three.	Lead Member Clean and Green Environment/ Head of Community Services

Key performance indicators for priority: Customer focused services

KPI no.	KPI description	Outturn 2018-19	Target 2019-20	Outturn Q1 2019-20	Outturn Q2 2019-20	Outturn Q3 2019-20	Outturn Q4 2019-20	Direction of travel	Traffic light icon	Comment	Portfolio Lead / Head of service
31	Percentage of Freedom of information (FOI) requests answered on time.	92%	80%	87%	91% (Q1 & Q2= 89%)			↓	😊	Total number of FOIs received in Q2 was 142. 108 of these were answered within the 20 working days deadline.	Lead Member Customer Focus/ Head of Corporate Services

32	Percentage of formal complaints answered on time.	92%	90%	90%	84% (Q1 & Q2 = 87%)			↓	☹️	62 complaints were received in Q2. 52 were answered within the 20 working days deadline. Total received during 2019/20: 129	Lead Member Customer Focus/ Head of Corporate Services
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Quarter 2 Budget Report

Appendix 3

Chief Executive

	Full Year Budget	Budget	Actual	Savings / (Deficit)	
	£	£	£	£	
Employees	251,670	125,680	108,470	17,210	1
Premises	0	0	0	0	
Transport	2,308	1,156	1,154	3	
Supplies & Services	8,132	4,796	1,566	3,230	
Payments to Third Parties	0	0	0	0	
Income	0	0	0	0	
TOTAL	262,110	131,632	111,190	20,442	

1) The saving on Employee costs is as a result of the Chief Executive taking flexible retirement.

Community Services

	Full Year Budget	Budget	Actual	Savings / (Deficit)	
	£	£	£	£	
Employees	1,188,811	594,346	573,006	21,340	2
Premises	5,000	1,500	1,338	162	
Transport	36,213	18,134	18,970	(836)	
Supplies & Services	122,602	16,426	12,157	4,269	
Payments to Third Parties	4,721,382	2,669,913	2,784,820	(114,908)	3
Income	(2,219,088)	(1,667,792)	(1,679,356)	11,564	4
TOTAL	3,854,920	1,632,527	1,710,935	(78,409)	

2) Employee costs savings are being made in both the Community team and Environmental health team with vacant posts and changes in hours worked by officers. This is being offset by additional use of agency staff in the housing services team

3) The Ubico contract is under pressure from the level of grounds maintenance work being generated and also an additional cost of depot which was not part of the original budget. These additional costs are being covered from one-off reserves in the current year. In respect of other waste services delivered by Ubico there is additional cost pressures from use of agency staff and also a higher than predicted level of hire costs due to both a procurement of a new narrow access vehicle and also several accidents which has taken vehicles out of operation.

4) Income from Garden Waste Customers and Licence applications has been higher than budgeted, but this is being offset by less income recovered through recycling credits than predicted in the budget. This was due to the budget income not reflecting a level of rejected recyclate material in the calculation of credits due back to the council.

Corporate Services

	Full Year Budget	Budget	Actual	Savings / (Deficit)	
	£	£	£	£	
Employees	1,871,180	939,953	899,185	40,767	5
Premises	0	0	0	0	
Transport	10,785	5,465	5,136	329	
Supplies & Services	574,926	222,370	223,645	(1,275)	
Payments to Third Parties	82,300	22,972	20,318	2,654	
Transfer Payments - Benefits Service	13,611,266	7,366,417	7,496,417	(130,000)	6
Income	(14,113,610)	(206,933)	(262,412)	55,479	7
TOTAL	1,963,477	8,350,243	8,382,289	(32,046)	

5) Employee savings are being generated across all departments which is leading to a reasonable underspend for this service.

4) During the first half of the year several large overpayments have been identified, mostly by the counter fraud team, going back over several years. Utilising the additional resources provided by the counter fraud team alongside access to better information from a variety of sources has resulted in identifying these specific overpayments. The impact is to reduce the benefit subsidy we receive (budget deficit of £80k) and also means that the overall level of debt has increased, when the budget had assumed a continuation of prior year work to reduce debt levels (budget deficit of £50k). These large one off overpayments have a significant an unpredicted impact on the councils budget position.

5) Additional grants have been provided to the benefits team to help cover the cost of developments and changes in the service, particularly the implementation of Universal Credit

Democratic Services

	Full Year Budget	Budget	Actual	Savings / (Deficit)	
	£	£	£	£	
Employees	261,197	128,930	127,339	1,591	
Premises	0	0	9,993	(9,993)	
Transport	16,000	8,004	8,475	(471)	
Supplies & Services	439,457	335,096	433,519	(98,423)	8
Payments to Third Parties	132,600	14,621	55,527	(40,906)	8
Income	(2,000)	0	(148,203)	148,203	8
TOTAL	741,229	486,651	486,651	0	

8) Variance due to two elections in Q1 (Borough & Parish Elections on 2nd May and European Parliamentary Election on 23rd May). Expenditure includes that of Postages, Printing and Equipment. European Election is externally funded so income is included in Income figure below, Borough Elections are paid for from reserves and this has been included in the budget to offset costs.

Deputy Chief Executive

	Full Year Budget	Budget	Actual	Savings / (Deficit)
	£	£	£	£
Employees	117,497	58,964	58,791	173
Premises	0	0	0	0
Transport	2,730	1,372	1,623	(251)
Supplies & Services	2,650	1,834	643	1,191
Income	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	120,064	62,170	61,057	1,113

Development Services

	Full Year Budget	Budget	Actual	Savings / (Deficit)	
	£	£	£	£	
Employees	1,958,850	979,260	976,135	3,125	
Premises	44,572	39,980	40,042	(62)	
Transport	55,006	27,532	26,402	1,130	
Supplies & Services	209,977	109,196	92,008	17,188	9
Payments to Third Parties	231,721	85,046	84,106	940	
Income	(1,557,752)	(786,152)	(714,840)	(71,312)	10
TOTAL	942,374	454,862	503,853	(48,991)	

9) The saving is a result of a surplus on Building Regulations at Q1 (Q2 position not yet known) and Growth Hub Budget savings

10) The shortfall in the planning income is due to large fees associated with known major applications that have not yet submitted. Discussions with developers indicate that these major applications will be submitted before the end of the financial year. Therefore it is anticipated that the year-end planning income target will be achieved.

Finance and Asset Management

	Full Year Budget	Budget	Actual	Savings / (Deficit)	
	£	£	£	£	
Employees	2,850,154	1,422,969	1,401,708	21,261	11
Premises	590,777	349,244	353,109	(3,865)	
Transport	14,330	7,180	17	7,163	
Supplies & Services	493,160	108,882	113,993	(5,111)	
Payments to Third Parties	312,552	134,993	139,430	(4,437)	
Precept	6,100	6,100	6,654	(554)	
Income	(1,363,497)	(670,240)	(720,048)	49,808	12
TOTAL	2,903,576	1,359,128	1,294,863	64,265	

11) Saving accrued from a vacant post in Asset Management and a maternity absence covered by existing staff

12) Income is up in a number of areas including car parking, cemeteries and the public offices. In addition, further grant monies have been received for Brexit preparations.

One Legal

	Full Year Budget	Budget	Actual	Savings / (Deficit)	
	£	£	£	£	
Employees	1,365,501	183,578	177,605	5,973	
Premises	0	0	0	0	
Transport	20,407	2,132	1,076	1,055	
Supplies & Services	134,704	1,828	2,094	(265)	
Payments to Third Parties	10,460	25,538	36,606	(11,068)	13
Income	(1,222,774)	(51,009)	(58,236)	7,226	
TOTAL	308,298	162,067	159,146	2,921	

13) The small variance on supplies and services is in relation to disbursements, for works done for third parties which are then recovered through income.

Appendix 4 - Analysis of Capital Budget

	Q2 Budget Position £	Q2 Actual Position £	(Over) / Under spend £	% Slippage	Comments
Council Land & Buildings	30,000	26,602	3,398	11	Payments in Q2 are in line with expectations.
Equipment	50,000	56,474	(6,474)	(13)	Payments in Q2 are in line with expectations.
Capital Investment Fund	0	0	0	0	No expenditure expected in Q2
Community Grants	0	0	0	0	No expenditure expected in Q2
Housing & Business Grants	250,000	315,864	(65,864)	(26)	1/2 of budget released up to date, however we received more applications for Disabled Facilities Grants than we originally predicted for the end of Q2.
	330,000	398,940	-68,940	-21	

Appendix 5 - Revenue Reserves for 19/20

Reserve	Balance 31st March 2019	Spent in Reserve Quarter 2	Reserve Remaining	Note
Service Reserves				
Asset Management Reserve	1,188,731	72,200	1,116,531	1
Borough Growth Reserve	500,000	-	500,000	
Borough Regeneration Reserve	1,537	-	1,537	
Business Rates Reserve	500,000	-	500,000	
Business Support Reserve	182,339	23,267	159,072	2
Business Transformation Reserve	692,837	72,781	620,056	3
Community Support Reserve	80,057	5,375	74,682	
Development Management Reserve	254,687	43,273	211,413	4
Development Policy Reserve	600,936	13,848	587,088	
Elections Reserve	85,348	4,500	80,848	
Flood Support and Protection Reserve	10,196	550	9,646	
Health & Leisure development reserve	1,989	-	1,989	
Housing & Homeless Reserve	522,842	97,607	425,235	5
IT Reserve	84,500	21,002	63,498	6
MTFS Equalisation Reserve	1,000,000	-	1,000,000	
Open Space & watercourse Reserve	678,720	16,169	662,552	7
Organisational Development Reserve	137,072	34,415	102,657	8
Risk Management Reserve	5,000	-	5,000	
Transport Initiatives Reserves	395,110	-	395,110	
Waste & Recycling development Reserve	1,090,835	5,807	1,085,028	
	<u>8,012,736</u>	<u>410,795</u>	<u>7,601,941</u>	

Totals

- 1 Delivery of the Spring Gardens regeneration project
- 2 Payment of business support grants
- 3 Purchase of procurement system / Council Tax Reduction Scheme review costs
- 4 Cost of planning appeals
- 5 Homeless prevention expenditure
- 6 Provision of ipads
- 7 New equipment to support grounds maintenance
- 8 Interim HR management

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	New Council Plan (2020-2024)
Report of:	Head of Corporate Services
Corporate Lead:	Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:

The Council Plan is a key strategic document which establishes an overarching vision for the borough and sets out, in broad terms, the priorities, objectives and actions that the Council will focus upon to work towards the vision.

The current plan (2016-20) was approved by Council on 19 April 2016 and is now in its last year. A new plan is therefore required to set the strategic priorities of the Council. A Member workshop was held on 5 November 2019 to discuss and shape what the new priorities and supporting objectives may look like. This confirmed that Members were generally happy, though textual amendments were put forward, to retain the four current priorities plus the addition of two new priority areas. The six priority areas were also subject to a two week public consultation which led to 345 responses. The proposed draft Council Plan (2020-2024) is attached at Appendix 1.

Recommendation:

Subject to any amendments from the Executive Committee, the new Council Plan is RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL for ADOPTION.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The current Council Plan is in its last year so a new plan and set of priorities is required.

Resource Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Legal Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Risk Management Implications:

If the Council does not have an up to date Council Plan then it cannot demonstrate that priorities are being achieved.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Delivery of the Council Plan actions are monitored through a Performance Tracker which is reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. Actions within the plan are also refreshed on an annual basis to ensure they remain relevant.

Environmental Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 The Council Plan is a key strategic document which establishes an overarching vision for the borough and sets out the priorities, objectives and actions that the Council will focus upon to work towards the vision.

The current plan (2016-20) was approved by Council on 19 April 2016 and is now in its last year. A new plan is therefore required to set the strategic priorities of the Council.

A Member workshop was held on 5 November 2019 to discuss and shape what the new priorities and supporting objectives may look like. This confirmed that Members were generally happy to retain the four current priorities (with the addition of some minor textual amendments) plus the addition of two new priority areas.

The six priority areas were also subject to a two week public consultation, which led to 345 responses. The proposed draft Council Plan (2020-2024) is attached at Appendix 1.

The six new priorities build on the successes of our previous Council Plan, and reflect the challenges we have ahead of us around finance, growth, customer demand, and emerging issues such as garden communities and climate change.

2.0 COUNCIL PLAN 2020-2024

2.1 In terms of the plan's overall vision and values, these remain unchanged.

The vision for the borough is *'A place where a good quality of life is open to all'*.

Our values continue to reflect the fact that we are a Council which:

- Puts customers first.
- Is positive about working with others.
- Values its employees.

2.2 In terms of the priorities, feedback from the workshop was that Members were generally on the 'same page', and that the four current priority areas should remain, though various re-wordings were put forward. In addition, two new priority areas emerged as part of the discussions.

2.3 Within the plan document itself, there is a short introduction explaining why it is a priority area.

The proposed priorities are:

- Finances and resources (*no change*).
- Economic Growth (*formerly promoting and supporting economic growth*).
- Housing and Communities (*formerly growing and supporting communities*).
- Customer First (*formerly customer-focused services*).

Two new priorities were discussed and agreed:

- Garden Communities (*the delivery of the Tewkesbury Garden Town and the Cyber Central Garden Community are significant developments that will have a financial, social and reputational impact upon the Council*).
- Sustainable environment (*nationally, environmental issues have risen in profile. The Council has also recently declared a 'climate emergency' supported by a Member Working Group to look at carbon neutrality of the Council offices and commit to work with partners in Gloucestershire to achieve countywide carbon neutrality aims. This priority also reflects waste and recycling objectives and actions, one of the Council's highest profile service delivery areas.*)

2.4 Each of the six priorities is supported by a series of key objectives and these also formed part of the discussion at the Member workshop. Again, Members were generally in agreement but with alternative options put forward for certain aspects of wording. The proposed objectives therefore summarise and translate the opinions put forward.

The actions within the plan did not form part of the workshop discussion. These are the responsibility of Corporate Management Team and their relevant service leads to put forward the actions to deliver the priorities and objectives.

As with previous Council plans, to ensure it remains a live document, the plan will be refreshed on an annual basis. Historically, priorities and objectives tend to remain fixed across the period of the plan. It is the actions that tend to be updated to reflect if any actions have been delivered within the year (thereby removed from the plan), to identify any emerging actions (thereby added to the plan) or to change the scope of any actions (thereby amended within the plan).

3.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

3.1 A two-week consultation was undertaken via social media and through engagement with the Citizens' Panel. To encourage responses, it was kept as simple as possible and centred around two key questions. In relation to the proposed six priorities:

- 1) Do you agree these are priority areas for the Council?
- 2) Do you feel there is a priority area missing?

A total of 345 responses were received.

In terms of question one:

- 37 strongly agreed.
- 141 mostly agreed.
- 98 neither agreed/disagreed.
- 45 mostly disagreed.
- 20 strongly disagreed.
- 4 responded 'don't know'.

With regards to question two:

- 202 answered 'yes'.
- 143 answered 'no'.

For those who answered 'yes', a summary of their comments can be found in Appendix 2. While the opinion of those responding suggests they think a priority is missing, in fact:

- A number of suggestions made, although not priorities in their own right, are already cross cutting through one or more objectives e.g. infrastructure, environment.
- A number of the suggestions are ones we do not have direct influence as the primary provider e.g. education provisions, public transport, support medical services.
- Although important to local communities, a number of the suggestions were location-specific e.g. Bishop's Cleeve infrastructure, Tewkesbury waterside, policing within Bishop's Cleeve.

4.0 MONITORING PROGRESS

4.1 As with previous Council plans, an established performance tracker document is in place to monitor delivery of the actions. This is reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review on a quarterly basis. Outcomes of this review are then reported to Executive Committee by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. As detailed above, to ensure the plan remains 'live' and relevant, it is refreshed annually.

5.0 PROMOTING THE COUNCIL PLAN

5.1 The primary audiences for the Council Plan are the Council's Members, staff and key partners. There will be significant engagement internally, particularly as the Council's ability to deliver the plan forms part of the scope of the Corporate Peer Challenge in early March 2020. For example, the updated plan will be available on our website (including links to key strategies and policies e.g. Economic Development and Tourism Strategy), intranet and in hard copy format on request. Easy print and summary versions will also be available. The plan will be published in the media and through Tewkesbury Borough News. Poster versions will also be available for use internally.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 None.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Corporate Management Team.

Member workshop 5 November 2019.

Public consultation via social media and Citizen's Panel.

8.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

8.1 There are a number of key strategies that support delivery of Council plan priorities. For example; digital strategy, housing and homelessness strategy, economic development and tourism strategy, etc.

9.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

9.1 A wide range of government policies underpin actions within the priority themes.

10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

10.1 No direct resource implications.

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

11.1 The Council Plan seeks to ensure economic, social and environmental sustainability.

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

12.1 The Council Plan seeks to ensure value for money and equitable service provision.

13.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

13.1 Council plan (2016-2020) approved 19 April 2016.

Background Papers: None.

Contact Officer: Head of Corporate Services Tel: 01684 272002
Email: graeme.simpson@tewkesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: 1 – Draft Council Plan (2020-2024).
2 – Summary of Consultation re: ‘missing’ priority areas.



Tewkesbury Borough Council Plan

Year 1: 2020

2020-24



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Councillor Rob Bird, Leader of the Council



Councillor Jim Mason, Deputy Leader of the Council

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

Foreword

We are pleased to introduce the Council Plan 2020 to 2024. This document is a statement of intent to drive forward our vision:

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

To deliver this vision and provide focus we have established six priorities:

- Finance and Resources
- Economic growth
- Housing and communities
- Customer first
- Garden communities
- Sustainable environment

The next four years promises to be an exciting and challenging time for Tewkesbury Borough Council - for a relatively small council, we have big ambitions. We continue to face unprecedented financial challenge, which means we are focusing closely on improving the way we deliver our services and adopting a more commercial approach to income generation so that we can continue to provide excellent value for money. Our council tax remains one of the lowest in the country, so we are experts in doing more with less.

The future for Tewkesbury Borough is solid infrastructure, innovative skills, timely housing delivery and cohesive communities. By remaining focused on our priorities we can ensure we use our resources effectively to improve the quality of life for our residents. For this Council Plan we have

developed the four priorities from the last plan and added two more: garden communities and sustainable development. Our commitment to delivering a garden town for Tewkesbury at Ashchurch and a garden village at West Cheltenham reflects our desire to deliver sustainable, well designed and vibrant communities where people can live, work and raise families. Our borough has an abundance of beautiful, natural assets and our commitment to prioritise a sustainable environment will help us enhance and protect our landscape and support our climate emergency declaration.

The focus and commitment of the council's staff, councillors and partners will enable us to overcome the challenges ahead and make our vision and priorities a reality. We work extremely well with others and have taken radical steps to bring together our public sector partners to share our building and our vision for our communities.

We are transforming our business to meet the challenges we face and, in everything we do and in the decisions we make, we will be a council that is 'better for customers, better for business'.



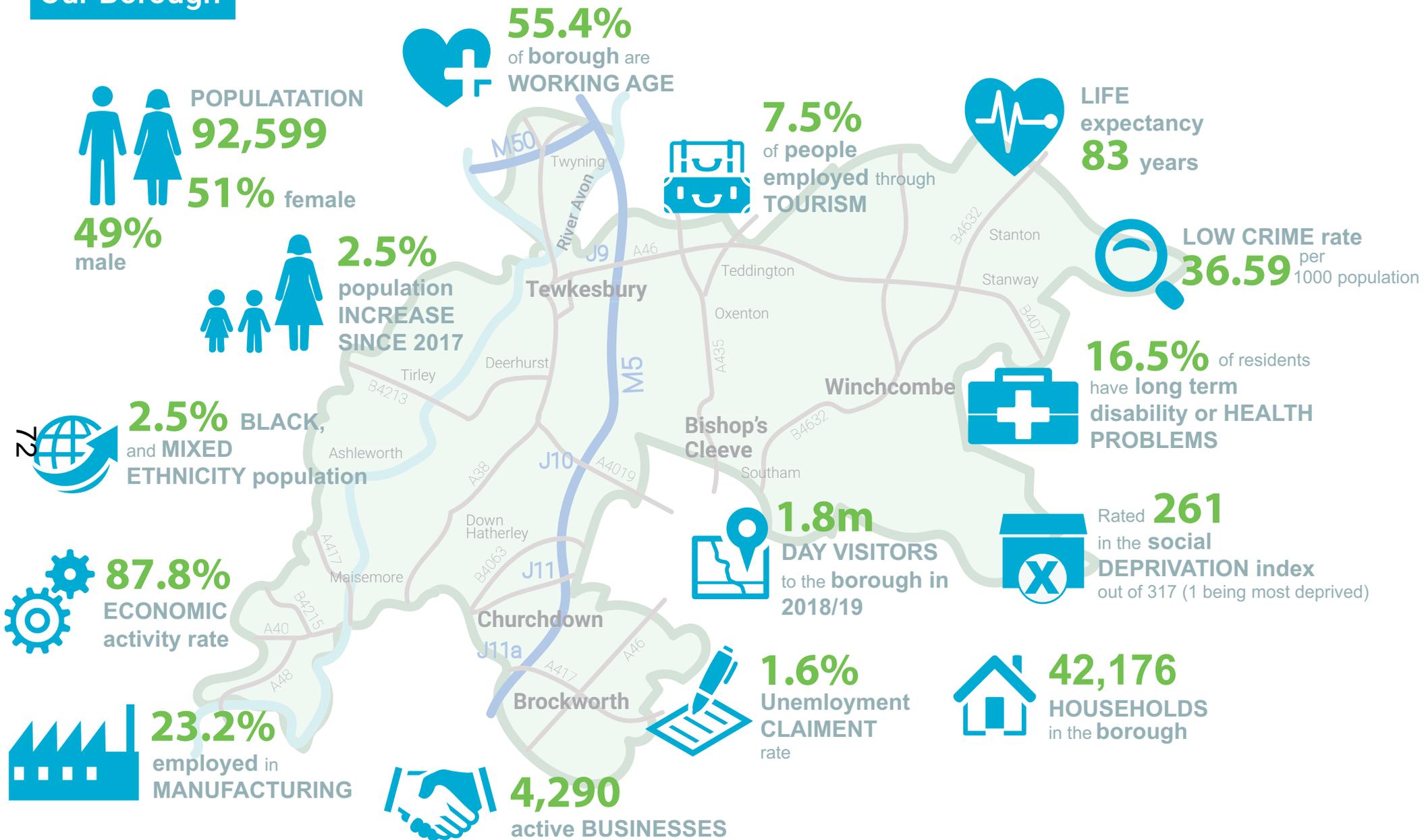
Tewkesbury Borough

Our borough is predominantly rural and located in the north of the county extending southwards beyond Gloucester and Cheltenham. The eastern part of the borough lies within the Cotswold AONB. Our population is roughly 92,599 made up of 42,176 households spread across 160 square miles. It has an excellent location at the heart of the M5 corridor.

Although apparently rural character, our borough includes a wide range of economic activity - from large multinationals to micro businesses. We are an established centre for high quality manufacturing and home to some world class high tech aero engineering firms. The diverse and contrasting range of settlements provides a high quality environment in which to live. Combined with its excellent strategic location, it makes an ideal area for economic and business growth.



Our Borough



More about us...



741
FOOD BUSINESSES
registered



Responded to
599 FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION requests



Employ
203
STAFF



Carried out
5000 TREE
ASSESSMENTS
which is 70% of the land
with trees in our ownership



Dealt with
77k
CALLS
to key services



1535
PLANNING
APPLICATIONS
considered



401,789
people PARKED
in our car parks



Carried out over
4 million
BIN COLLECTIONS



Paid
4500
INVOICES
during the year



Our Growth Hub saw
1672
VISITORS
in the first year



300k
Visits to
TEWKESBURY
LEISURE centre
in a year



Carried out
1248
PLAYGROUND
INSPECTIONS



17,542
tonnes of WASTE was
RECYCLED or
COMPOSTED

73



3305
CRIME incidents
reported



We have
38
COUNCILLORS



285
Volunteer LITTER
...PICKERS



Considered
192 FORMAL
COMPLAINTS



Received
1.2m
PAGE VIEWS by 397,946
visitors through our WEBSITE



17,000
GARDEN
WASTE customers



38,000
visits to our TOURIST
INFORMATION CENTRES



1645
active applicants on our
HOUSING
register



Responded to
1089
ENVIRO-CRIMES



Dealt with
10,231 applications
for CHANGE of CIRCUMSTANCES
for benefits customers



“Everything we do is aimed at **delivering our vision** but the way we deliver services is equally important to us”

Our vision and values 2020-2024

Our vision is to make:

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

Our values

Everything we do is aimed at delivering our vision but the way we deliver services is equally important to us. We are an ambitious council punching above its weight, and we have therefore adopted a set of values which we apply across all of our activities. We are a council which:

✔ Puts customers first

We will put the needs of our customers at the heart of what we do and listen to what they say, treating people fairly and without bias.

✔ Is positive about working with others

We recognise we cannot achieve our vision by working alone. We will continue to develop productive working relationships with other organisations and our communities, including the voluntary sector, town and parish councils and neighbourhood groups to achieve common goals.

✔ Values our employees

We will support, praise and invest in our workforce to develop our organisation.

Supporting our values we also have an ethos that whatever we do will be ‘better for customers, better for business’.





Our priorities and objectives 2020-24

Finance and resources

- To ensure the council remains financially secure in the long term
- Maintain a low council tax
- Maintain our assets to maximise financial returns
- Deliver the council's commercial strategy

Economic growth

- Deliver our strategic and economic development plans
- Deliver employment land and infrastructure to facilitate economic growth
- Deliver borough regeneration schemes
- Promote the borough as an attractive place to live and visit

Housing and communities

- Deliver the housing needs of our communities
- Ensure development plans provide for the five year land supply requirement
- Support infrastructure and facilities delivery to enable sustainable communities

Customer first

- Maintain our culture of continuous service improvement
- Develop online services to achieve 'digital by preference, access for all'

Garden communities

- Delivery of Tewkesbury Garden Town
- Delivery of Cyber Central Garden Community

Sustainable environment

- Deliver the climate emergency action plan
- Promote a healthy and flourishing environment in the borough
- Promote responsible recycling across the borough
- Preserve and enhance the natural assets and built heritage of our borough





“The council has to manage with less money whilst demands on our services increase”

Finance and resources

The local government financial climate means we have no choice but to manage with less money from central government while the demand on our services and costs increase. We therefore need to ensure that every pound spent by the council is spent efficiently and achieves the maximum possible benefit whilst also seeking to generate additional income to support our front line services. We are also proud of our council tax setting history and maintaining our place as one of the lowest charging councils in the country is an integral part of our financial strategies. The council is determined to meet our financial challenges whilst continuing to provide value for money for our residents and businesses.

To deliver this priority, our objectives and actions are:

To ensure the council remains financially secure in the long term

- a) Introducing and complying with CIPFA's new Financial Management Code
- b) To maximise the return and balance the risk of our treasury investments

Maintain a low council tax

- a) Produce a Medium Term Financial Strategy, which ensures council tax remains low for our residents.

Maintain our assets to maximise financial returns

- a) Update the council's asset management plan.
- b) Approve a new planned maintenance programme.
- c) Review our property portfolio to ensure ongoing benefits to our communities.

Deliver the council's commercial strategy

- a) Develop a business case to ensure our trade waste service operates more commercially.
- b) In-source the management of our homeless property portfolio.





“The borough occupies a strategic location and we want the local economy to thrive”

Economic growth

Tewkesbury Borough is THE place to do business and this mindset is embedded in everything we do. Reflective of this mindset is our commitment to deliver employment land and housing, together with the right infrastructure and skills. Attracting new investment, as well as retaining and strengthening existing businesses, will help us to ensure the future prosperity of our borough.

To deliver this priority, our objectives and actions are:

Deliver our strategic plans and economic development plans

- a) Deliver the final year of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
- b) Deliver growth hub services in the Public Services Centre
- c) Work with the Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners to deliver the Local Industrial Strategy.

Deliver employment land and infrastructure to facilitate economic growth

- a) Deliver employment land through allocating land in the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Tewkesbury Borough Plan (TBP)
- b) Work with partners to secure transport infrastructure improvements around the borough, including the all-ways Junction 10, Junction 9 and the A46 improvements.
- c) Support the delivery of the County’s Local Transport Plan.

Deliver borough regeneration schemes

- a) Work with partners to deliver the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ)
- b) Bring forward plans for the redevelopment of Spring Gardens

Promote the borough as an attractive place to live and visit

- a) Work with Cotswold Tourism to promote the area
- b) Promote, through the HAZ, the heritage offer of Tewkesbury through the cultural consortium.
- c) Celebrate with partners the significance of 2021 for Tewkesbury.



“We recognise how important it is for residents to feel part of their communities”

Housing and communities

Our borough was recognised as the fastest growing district outside of London (ONS 2019) and without doubt, our ambition for growth is unprecedented for a borough of our size. We are committed to punching above our weight and creating a ‘sustainable place’ to meet the needs of our growing population.

To deliver this priority, our objectives and actions are:

Deliver the housing needs of our communities

- a) Work with partners to undertake the required review to the JCS.
- b) Finalise and adopt the Tewkesbury Borough Plan.
- c) Develop a work programme with landlords to ensure residents have a supply of rented properties to meet their needs.
- d) Carry out housing needs assessments to deliver affordable housing in rural areas.

Ensure development plans provide for the five year land supply requirement

- a) Ensure adequate land is allocated within the JCS and Tewkesbury Borough Plan to meet housing need.
- b) Work with developers and stakeholders to deliver sustainable sites to meet housing needs.
- c) Annually monitor the delivery of homes within the borough.

Support infrastructure and facilities delivery to enable sustainable communities

- a) Work with partners, infrastructure providers and developers, to progress the delivery of key sites.
- b) Through the development process, work with communities to deliver the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106.





“We want to provide the **best possible service** to all of our customers”

Customer first

Without our customers (residents and businesses) the council would not exist. We are here to provide a positive customer experience by providing good quality services. We want to make it as easy as possible for our customers to contact and engage with us. We will listen to what they tell us, so that we can meet their changing expectations. We want to provide more services online to make it more convenient, whilst continuing to offer excellent customer service through traditional means.

Maintain our culture of continuous service improvement.

- a) Continue to improve the proactive homelessness prevention programme.
- b) Continue to build on the success of our garden waste club.
- c) Deliver the planning service improvement plan.
- d) Deliver the council’s Communications Strategy Action Plan.
- e) Establish the new business transformation team to support service improvements.

Develop online services to achieve ‘digital by preference, access for all’

- a) Develop and implement a corporate digital platform.
- b) Implement an on online offering for the licensing service.
- c) A full review of the bulky waste service including the online bookings.
- d) Explore the opportunity for an online offering for our cemeteries function.



Garden communities

We will work with Homes England and other partners to develop plans for the garden town communities at Ashchurch in Tewkesbury and Cyber Central in Cheltenham. These garden communities reflect our commitment to delivering sustainable, well-designed and vibrant communities where people can live, work and raise families. Improving transport links, education provision and green infrastructure, such as new parks and cycle routes will all play a big role in the development of these new communities.

To deliver this priority, our objectives and actions are:

Delivery of Tewkesbury Garden Town

- a) Formally establish the garden town planning status through the JCS.
- b) Establish a governance structure and ways of working with key stakeholders.
- c) Prepare a masterplan that sets out the key principles, quality development and infrastructure requirements.
- d) Deliver the first phase of the 'bridge project', in line with the funding requirements.

Delivery of Cyber Central Garden Community

- a) Produce a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for west Cheltenham Cyber Park in collaboration with Cheltenham Borough Council.
- b) Prepare a land assembly programme to aid in the delivery of the Garden Village.



“Deliver a masterplan that sets out the key principles and quality development expected ”



“Deliver the **climate emergency** action plan”

Sustainable environment

We recognise that it is important that we carefully manage our carbon footprint and support our recent climate change declaration. Our borough is full of natural assets and built heritage, and we are committed to preserving and enhancing these. We also know that reducing waste and increasing recycling is key to helping our environment flourish, and we will work with our residents to promote responsible waste and recycling habits.

To deliver this priority, our objectives and actions are

Deliver the climate emergency action plan

- a) Review and update our plans in relation to environmental sustainability and carbon management, taking account of the latest evidence and national policy.
- b) Seek to reduce waste and emissions across our own estate, assets and activities, and use natural resources more efficiently.
- c) Work with Gloucestershire County Council and other partners to help local residents and businesses to take action to reduce their own carbon footprint, and use of resources.

Promote a healthy and flourishing environment in the borough

- a) Establish planning policies to ensure the delivery of healthy and sustainable communities.
- b) Improve bio-diversity across the borough and educate communities on its benefits.
- c) Work with volunteers across the borough, and help communities to maintain our "place".

Promote responsible recycling across the borough

- a) Take a robust approach towards fly-tipping and other enviro-crimes.
- b) Working with the Gloucestershire Waste and Resources Partnership to encourage recycling and reduce plastic waste.

Preserve and enhance the natural assets and built heritage of our borough

- a) Work with the local nature partnership on the natural capital asset mapping.
- b) Publish the heritage strategy to set out the actions to protect our built environment.



Keeping our performance on track

Good performance management is when an organisation knows it is doing the right things well. To monitor how well we are performing, our performance management framework includes a council plan performance tracker. The tracker monitors the progress in delivering the actions which support each priority theme. Progress is reported on a quarterly basis to our Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Supporting the tracker is a set of key performance indicators and a financial summary analysis. The findings from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review are personally reported by the chair of committee to the council's Executive Committee.

Supporting our performance management framework and delivery of this Council Plan are other key governance processes such as our:

- Risk management framework
- Project management framework
- Communications strategy
- Transformation programme
- Digital and ICT strategies

Collectively, the above provides a good oversight on what we are delivering and alert us to when we need to take remedial action.

We look forward to reporting our new Council Plan success and as always the plan will be refreshed annually to ensure it remains a live document.

Should you require any further information about the Council Plan, please contact:

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Produced: January 2020

Appendix 2- Summary of consultation re: 'missing' priority areas

Priority areas residents feel are missing	Number received
Infrastructure	28
Traffic management	20
Bishops Cleeve Infrastructure	20
Crime prevention	19
Education provisions	14
Public transport	13
Parking	13
Young people's services	11
Flood prevention	11
Support medical services	7
Community support	9
Environment (air quality, dog fouling etc.)	7
Road and footpath repairs	6
Policing within Bishops Cleeve area	6
Anti-social education	5
Sport and Leisure facilities	4
Protection of the Green Belt and Open Spaces	4
Adult Social Care	3
Support for businesses	2
Community engagement	2
Better shopping facilities	2
Grounds maintenance	2
Brownfield development	2
Tewkesbury Waterside	1
Spring Gardens	1
Children Social services	1
Keeping the town clean	1
Promote heathy living	1
Plant more trees	1
Tewkesbury Town Regeneration	2
Leisure facilities in Churchdown	1
M5 junction 10- all-ways junction	1
Electric charging points	1
Waste collections	1
M5 junction 9 area	1
Build Social housing not affordable housing	1

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Communications Strategy
Report of:	Head of Corporate Services
Corporate Lead:	Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:

Communications has a vital role to play in helping Tewkesbury Borough Council deliver its vision, priorities and objectives to local people.

This Communications Strategy and action plan is short and simple – looking at how we can grow our communications from how it is now to our aims for the future.

It will support the Council Plan and the Council's other strategies by ensuring we effectively communicate our priorities and objectives to relevant audiences.

Recommendation:

To approve the Communications Strategy and Media Protocol.

Reasons for Recommendation:

Given that we are a Council delivering a wide range of complex services to more than 90,000 residents, we need a clear strategy to face the challenge of communicating effectively.

Resource Implications:

None other than officer time to implement the action plan.

Legal Implications:

None directly arising from this report but legal advice will be provided as the actions in the strategy are implemented, in order to comply with relevant legislation such as the Data Protection Act 2018 and procurement law.

Risk Management Implications:

If the Council does not have a strategy in place then this will adversely affect its reputation.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Progress in delivering the action plan will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

Environmental Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The previous Communications Strategy was approved by Executive Committee in 2017, so it is now necessary to introduce a new strategy that develops and improves our communications, as well as making sure it is in line with current best practice. It is important we recognise that communicating is at the heart of everything we do at all levels of the organisation. Clear communication helps us to strengthen our links with the public, our residents, stakeholders, Councillors and staff.
- 1.2** As the financial challenges facing local government continue, and services change to be as cost effective as possible, it is vital that we communicate these changes effectively to our target audiences – both internally and externally.
- 1.3** The strategy and action plan reflect the importance of supporting the Council’s transformation programme. Communications will be vital in helping our customers, Members, staff and stakeholders know when and how a service is changing, or when it can be accessed in a different way.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

- 2.1** To communicate effectively means to listen as well as broadcast and it only works when what we are saying is clear and easy to understand.
- 2.2** This Communications Strategy (2020 to 2024) provides a framework and action plan for how we can drive forward our approach to communications – both internally and externally - ensuring we embrace modern digital communications (such as social media, the website and email communications) while recognising the need to continue to include the more traditional methods (such as face-to-face and phone).
- 2.3** The strategy identifies:
- Key communication principles.
 - What we have achieved so far.
 - What people think of us.
 - What we want to achieve – our six objectives.
 - How we will achieve this.
- 2.4** It is supported by an action plan, which will sit alongside the day-to-day work of the communications and graphics team, which includes:
- Responding to media enquiries.
 - Responding to communication and design requests from all services across the Council.
 - The production and delivery of proactive communications, such as press releases, posters, Tewkesbury Borough News, Staff Briefings and e-newsletters.
 - Social media monitoring and updates.

2.5 Within the ‘How will we achieve this?’ section, the strategy outlines the different approaches we will use to achieve our objectives, which will be through:

- Media and PR.
- Corporate communications.
- Social media.
- Promoting digital.
- Creative and design service.
- Tewkesbury Borough News.
- Internal communications.

2.6 Attached at Appendix 2 is the Council’s Media Protocol, which outlines our approach to responding to media enquiries, developing press releases and identifying spokespeople. The Media Protocol remains very much the same as in previous years, with the addition of a section to clarify who should be quoted in a press release about motions to Council. This can be found on Page No. 14 under ‘who should be quoted in a press release?’

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 Citizens’ Panel consultation on communications – November 2019.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 Council Plan 2016 to 2020.
Social Media Policy and Guidelines.
Digital Strategy.
Written Style and Branding Guide.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 None.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 Managed within current resources and budget.

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 Good communications will improve stakeholder's knowledge of, and access to, Council services and information.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

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Email: clare.evans@tewkesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: 1. Communications Strategy.
2. Media Protocol.

Communications strategy



2020 - 2024

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Why do we need a communications strategy?

Good communication can create a positive experience for those who interact with the council. It helps residents, councillors, employees, partners, and the media understand our objectives, values, services, challenges and achievements.

To communicate effectively means to listen as well as broadcast, and it only works when what we are saying is clear and easy to understand. Given that we are a council delivering a wide range of complex services to more than 90,000 residents, we face a significant challenge to communicate well. This strategy explores how we will go about facing that challenge.

It is important we recognise that communicating is at the heart of everything we do at all levels of the organisation – communications is not just the responsibility of the communications team.

This strategy provides a framework and action plan for how we can drive forward our approach to communications, ensuring we push our digital communication channels (such as social media, the website and email communications) while recognising the need to continue using more traditional methods (such as face-to-face and phone).

As the financial challenges facing local government put more pressure on services to change and to be as cost effective as possible, it is vital that we communicate these changes to our target audiences – both internally and externally. Our customers, members and staff need to know

when and how a service is changing or when it can be accessed in a different way.

This communications strategy is short and simple - looking at how we can build on what's been achieved so far and how we can grow to meet our aims for the future. It is backed up by an action plan, which sets out the milestones along the way.

Who do we want to communicate with?

As a borough council, we have a wide range of audiences and stakeholders. It is important that we target communications at the right audience, so that we communicate with the right people at the right time, in the right way

These include:

- councillors
- residents
- employees
- the media
- public sector partners
- town and parish councils
- businesses
- government
- local community groups and charities.

Our key principles

The following principles will underpin all our communications work:

- We recognise that good quality communication is essential for the effective delivery of our services.

- We will be as transparent, open and accountable as possible.
- We will ensure information is shared, accessible and meets equality standards.
- All our communication - spoken, written and digital - will:
 - o Be honest, accurate, timely and up-to-date.
 - o Be clear, written in plain English, and easily understood.
 - o Be consistent and suitable for the audience - including hard-to-reach groups.
 - o Meet the corporate Written Style and Branding Guide and be clearly identified with Tewkesbury Borough Council.
 - o Be compliant with relevant legal requirements and conform to the Code of Conduct on local government publicity.
- have excellent media relations with the local media, and we meet regularly with them.
- Effective ways of communicating – we hold seminars and publish newsletters for our town and parish councils. We now have a number of social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. In addition, we publish a monthly online newsletter for staff, as well as daily updates on the intranet.
- We continue to ensure communications is published in line with our Written Style and Branding Guide so that all external communication is written and designed in a consistent and professional manner.
- Our community news page in Tewkesbury Borough News has opened up the opportunity for town and parish councils across the borough to add their news to our paper.
- A consistent, accurate and controlled approach to our response to emergency situations is now in place.

How are we doing?

Since our previous Communications Strategy 2017 to 2019, there have been a number of notable achievements as a result of improved communications, including:

- Media coverage continues to be positive, with only a small percentage of stories reflecting negatively.
- Communication has become even more proactive, using press releases as standard, but social media allows for more informal, quick updates.
- We are the lead communications team for the Joint Core Strategy, working with the team to produce press releases, newsletters, member updates and social media posts.
- Improved media relations – we continue to

What do people think of us now?

To know what people think of us, we need to understand how our reputation really stands in our communities.

In 2016 we set up a Citizens' Panel, which is a diverse group of Tewkesbury borough residents (from different communities, age groups, needs and backgrounds) who we email occasionally to ask for opinions about our services and to help us pilot new ways of delivering services.

We currently have 251 members and we use the information they provide us with to ensure that our services are available and suitable for everyone.

The list of topics we ask about range from testing online services before they go live, to giving feedback on strategies (e.g. car parking, waste and recycling collections).

In November 2019, we carried out a snapshot survey and asked the panel what they thought of our communications. 58 members responded to the survey which revealed:

- That 72 per cent of respondents felt we kept them very or fairly well informed about our services and the benefits we provide – an increase of 8 percent since the last survey in 2017.
- Encouragingly, the main way our respondents find out about the council is through our own website (39 people chose this source of communication), followed by our own publication – Tewkesbury Borough News – (32 people chose this source of communication) and through local media (15 people chose this source of communication).
- 81 per cent of respondents read Tewkesbury Borough News either in full or in part.
- 16 per cent of respondents said that they did not receive Tewkesbury Borough News, but work is already in place to bring this figure down.

What do we want to achieve?

While the feedback from our citizens' panel is encouraging, it can only be regarded as an indication of how we are performing, and the communications team wants to continue pushing communication forward through digital and traditional channels.

Our communications objectives are to:

- Maintain and improve our local reputation through proactive communications.
- Ensure that all elements of our communication (traditional, digital and graphic design) are integrated, consistent and co-ordinated across all channels to give maximum support to our Council Plan.
- Encourage two-way dialogue.
- Promote the image of the council as an effective, efficient and listening organisation that is focused on the public and their needs.
- Build and maintain a professional corporate identity for consistent and co-ordinated use throughout the organisation.
- Ensure that our communications activities reflect the full diversity of the community and help ensure equality of access to all our services.

How will we achieve this?

Media and PR

The communications team runs a busy press office function, producing responses to daily media enquiries and issuing proactive releases to publicise council services, news, decisions and performance.

The way we need to respond to media enquiries is changing. Most stories are published online first, so reporters want a very quick turnaround. In addition, reporters are much more likely to pick up stories through social media.

It is important that we make the most of the opportunities to use the media to help

communicate our messages to their audiences, such as:

- Issuing media releases in a timely and relevant manner.
- Being proactive when it is clear a decision or approach may be controversial.
- Responding to inaccurate information or misleading interpretation of the facts.
- Continuing to foster excellent working relationships with the media through regular meetings and briefings.
- Producing regular updates of the council's media coverage for councillors and managers.

Corporate communications

The team manages proactive communications to increase public awareness of council policies, initiatives and service updates. The team is also responsible for maintaining a strong corporate identity across the council, and for managing high quality and consistent communications.

Social media

Social media provides a quick and easy way for the public to receive information and engage with us.

The insight and ability to target specific audiences provides opportunities to support campaigns and key messages. To help support this, we will:

- Grow our social media accounts to help support the effective sharing of news, including in emergency situations.
- Ensure enquiries received through social media are responded to quickly and in an appropriate tone.

Promoting digital

Supporting and promoting digital channels is now a communications priority to reflect the continuing and rapid growth in web and social networking.

Using digital methods we can communicate quickly and target our more hard-to-reach groups (for example, young people). One significant benefit to using digital methods of communication, is that it tends to be inexpensive.

However, it is also important to recognise that whilst we embrace digital channels, our traditional methods of communication are still important. We must not exclude groups or individuals who do not have access to social media or the internet.

Creative and design service

We have an experienced, in-house graphic designer working across all forms of design for digital as well as print media.

The designer offers a professional service – managing the whole process from concept to production. Key to the work of the team is to protect and manage the use of our corporate identity, ensuring the quality of council artwork adheres to the highest standards and the purpose of publications is relevant.

The team will also take a lead in developing innovative design solutions to present council information through digital and social media platforms. This will help us to ensure that our digital presence remains current at all times.

Tewkesbury Borough News

Our residents' magazine, which is delivered twice a year, provides information and features about the council and its services, as well as details of events in the borough. Our recent snapshot survey revealed that it is still one of the main ways in which residents find out about council-related news.

- Written style and branding guide
- Customer care strategy
- Digital strategy

Strategy review

This communications strategy and action plan will be reviewed regularly, and progress on the action plan will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

Internal communications

Where staff understand what is required of them and morale is high, they become ambassadors for the organisation that they work for.

Even without a specific programme of change, organisations - particularly councils - are changing constantly and good internal communication is the best way of retaining the support of staff and the key to long-term improvement.

We have a multi-channel approach to our internal communication including:

- Face-to-face staff briefing sessions
- Management team briefings
- Intranet updates
- Monthly digital newsletter – News4U
- Email updates for emergencies

Supporting documents

The following plans support the work of the communications team:

- Media protocol
- Social media policy and guidelines
- Social media user tips
- Social media response check

Communications Strategy action plan 2020

Communications action plan YEAR ONE				
Recommendation / Action	Responsible officer	Target date	Status	Aim
Support the Digital Strategy to promote digital ways of communicating	Corporate services manager	Ongoing with needs of digital projects	○	Clear, consistent communications is needed throughout this council priority to ensure all audiences feel engaged and understand what is happening and why.
Provide social media training for councillors	Corporate services manager	January 2020	○	To ensure councillors are aware of the benefits and potential risks of using social media.
Promote our media protocol to staff and councillors	Corporate services manager	February 2020	○	Our media protocol ensures we have an agreed understanding of how we deal with media enquiries, statements and interviews. It is required that we review the aspects of this protocol that are affected by social media.
Carry out a review of internal communications that can be improved by Office 365 applications	Corporate services manager ICT manager	March 2020	○	Utilisation, where appropriate, of the tools available to us through the Office 365 apps with the aim of improving internal communications.
Carry out a review of internal communications	Corporate services manager	September 2020	○	Ensure we are following best practice and are using methods of internal communication that work, and are useful, for staff.
Increase video output	Corporate services manager	December 2020	○	Use of video to promote the brand, events etc has proved successful. We should actively seek out opportunities where this medium can be used.
Promote council achievements in the local government arena, such as the Municipal Journal	Corporate services manager	December 2020	○	To raise the profile of Tewkesbury Borough Council across the local government sector. Aim for a minimum of two pieces of national media coverage throughout the year.
Deliver regular communications to town and parish councils.	Communications officer	Ongoing through 2020	○	Having reviewed the effectiveness of this document in 2019, now look to formulate an e-newsletter, which promotes great, engaged, two way conversation between the council and the parishes.
Continue to lead on communications for the Joint Core Strategy team	Communications officer	Ongoing throughout strategy	○	Help to ensure consistent and accurate information in simple language is provided about the progress of the JCS. The aim being to highlight and bring JCS news to the attention of interested parties and members of the public

Communications Strategy action plan 2020

Communications action plan YEAR ONE					
Recommendation / Action	Responsible officer	Target date	Status	Aim	
Promote the new Council Plan.	Communications officer	February 2020	O	As the council's key corporate document setting out our vision, aims and priorities, it is important that our staff and members of the public know what it is and what it means.	
Continue to develop our communications through social media	Communications officer	December 2020	O	Continue to engage on social media on both of our two key platforms (Twitter and Facebook), protect the council's reputation, and keep the council up-to-date with new social media communications channels and trends.	
Promote the joint work carried out through the Public Service Centre	Communications officer	December 2020	O	This should include the opening of the new PSC and the ongoing support of the new Growth Hub.	
GDPR compliant photo storage	Corporate Services Manager	March 2020	O	To introduce a photo policy. Photo storage for promotional use is held in a number of departments and does not make the best use of this resource.	
Peer Challenge	Communications officer	February 2020	O	Explain the peer challenge to members and staff, communicating the process and sharing updates regularly. The results of the peer challenge will be shared with all appropriate audiences.	
Support the communications for the development of Garden Communities	Communications Officer and Garden Communities Project Team	December 2020	O	Provide support to the Garden Communities team to make the communication around garden communities timely and effective, with the aim of reassuring local communities.	

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Status key
O - Action not yet commenced. (may not yet be programmed for action)

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Appendix 2

Tewkesbury Borough Council's Media Protocol 2019

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INTRODUCTION

This protocol explains how the council will achieve a coordinated approach to media relations and will ensure that all media relations activity meets legal requirements.

The protocol provides clarity and agreement on when and which councillors and other council representatives should comment to the media.

Tewkesbury Borough Council recognises the need for 'openness' and accountability, and this is reflected in how the council deals with the media. The council will endeavour to be honest and proactive and will forge strong professional links with local, regional, national and specialist media.

MORI research shows that the better-informed people are the more satisfied they are with public services - so communication is clearly a vital function for Tewkesbury Borough Council.

Key means of communicating include: Tewkesbury Borough Council's website; *Tewkesbury Borough News* (the council's newspaper to residents), corporate leaflets; media relations; emails; social media; advertising, together with a range of consultation activities.

This document deals primarily with the protocol for handling outgoing communications. A separate document deals with the council's Consultation Policy.

Please note: The council only has one communications officer. If the communications officer is away from the office for any length of time, the response time to an enquiry may be longer.

The supporting officer will be the corporate development and performance manager, who will endeavour to respond to enquiries as quickly as possible.

The leader of the council is the lead member for communications.

PART A: THE LEGAL POSITION

Underpinning all aspects of this protocol is the general principle, reflecting government legislation, that the council will not involve itself in any publicity which appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party.

The council also aims to be open in its workings, ensure information is accessible, encourage public involvement in decision making and promote the interests of the borough's residents.

In addition, all council communications will comply with relevant legal requirements, and conform to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Government Publicity, issued by the Secretary of State in March 2011, which highlights factors to be borne in mind when taking decisions on publicity - see: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1878324.pdf>

For the purposes of guidance for councillors and officers, paragraphs 16 and 34 are particularly relevant and are reproduced below:

16. Any publicity describing the council's policies and aims should be as objective as possible, concentrating on the facts or explanation or both. Local authorities should not use public funds to mount publicity campaigns whose primary purpose is to persuade the public to hold a particular view on a question of policy. It is acceptable for local authority publicity to correct erroneous material which has been published by other parties, despite the fact that the material being corrected may have been published with the intention of influencing the public's opinions about the policies of the authority. Such publicity should seek to explain the facts in an objective manner.

34. During the period between the notice of an election and the election itself, local authorities should not publish any publicity on controversial issues or report views or proposals in such a way that identifies them with any individual members or groups of members. Publicity relating to individuals involved directly in the election should not be published by local authorities during this period unless expressly authorised by or under statute. It is permissible for local authorities to publish factual information which identifies the names, wards and parties of candidates at elections.

PART B: LOCAL COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

The following sections describe the local protocols for communication and publicity adopted by the council. These take in to account the legal framework and good practice.

B1: Media Enquiries

All media enquiries should be passed to the communications officer in the first instance. It is that officer's role to deal with and decide the best way to respond to the enquiry.

The communications officer will contact the relevant lead member and/or officer to decide the best method of response. It is imperative that the lead member and/or officers respond promptly to the communications officer's request to ensure a quick response to any media enquiry. The communications officer will endeavour to respond to media enquiries within the same day and certainly within 24 hours.

Every media enquiry should be used as an opportunity to get the council's vision and priorities across to the public.

If there is a disagreement between the officers and the councillors about how a story should be handled, the chief executive and the leader will be requested to arbitrate. In the absence of the leader, the relevant member to arbitrate would be the deputy leader and that in the event of the chief executive being absent it should be one of the corporate heads of service who is not involved in the "story" in question.

B2: Spokespeople

Councillors

When communicating the work and decisions of the council, emphasis should be placed on those who are democratically accountable for those decisions.

The leader, deputy leader and lead members will, on behalf of the council, be the designated spokespeople on Executive Committee decisions and agreed council policy.

The leader of the council is the principal spokesperson for the council at local, regional and national level. Each of the lead members has a portfolio and the relevant portfolio holder will be the nominated spokesperson on the area of his/ her responsibility.

If the lead member is not available to comment then the communications officer will work with officers to draft a comment.

Note: Nothing in this protocol precludes councillors or political groups from speaking or contacting the media directly. This would include letters, faxes and emails. Councillors must, however, make it clear to the media whether they are speaking:

- (a) Officially on behalf of Tewkesbury Borough Council - in this case the communications officer must be involved in the process (or in their absence the relevant corporate head of service).
- (b) Officially on behalf of their particular political group - stating the name of that political group.
- (c) Personally as a ward councillor when talking about more specific issues.

The response to a release issued by a political group remains with group leaders, ensuring that officers' political neutrality cannot be called into question.

If a borough councillor also represents another authority (such as the county council) and is asked to comment on an issue that directly affects Tewkesbury Borough Council, the councillor must inform the communications officer so he or she is aware of the issue.

Ward councillors

When reacting to a media enquiry, the comment will be attributed to the appropriate lead member and/or corporate head of service.

However, where we are acting proactively through press releases and the issue is specific and local to a particular ward, the communications officer will invite the local ward councillor(s) to provide a comment to go alongside the lead member's comment. The communications officer will review the comment and recommend for inclusion as appropriate to the lead member.

It is the responsibility of the ward members to respond quickly to a comment request as deadlines are often very tight.

Where there is any disagreement or need to clarify appropriateness, the comment will be referred to the chief executive for a decision. For wards represented by more than one councillor from the same party, they must agree and supply one quote attributed to one of them.

If there is more than one political group represented within a ward, then each political group may supply one local ward quote. However, inclusion of more than three quotes is not considered best practice and if this situation arises the communications officer will lead the discussion to resolve the issue.

Officers

All officers must operate within the legal restrictions on publicity described in Section A and the council's Code of Conduct, as well as keeping to the member/officer protocol. These documents are available on the intranet.

All officers must, in carrying out their jobs, act in a politically neutral way.

The media are often keen to talk directly to officers as they may have a more in-depth knowledge of a project or initiative. This will be to answer questions of fact, technical information and areas of expertise. Any employee who receives a media enquiry should redirect it to the communications officer in the first instance.

Unless an agreement has been made, it is not appropriate for officers to initiate contact with the media or respond to media enquiries independently without first consulting with the chief executive, the relevant corporate head of service or the communications officer.

The communications officer will then, in consultation with relevant officers, issue statements in response to such media enquiries. If the enquiry relates to a matter of agreed council policy rather than simple factual checks the communications officer will liaise with the relevant lead member.

Officers who have not received media training will not normally be expected to do live on-air interviews.

The Corporate Management Team or senior officers may be required to speak to the media on major and corporate issues, particularly if a quick response is needed and the lead member is not available. If you are required to speak to the media, it is essential that the communications officer is fully debriefed.

Chief executive

The chief executive will comment on recommendations to implementation of policy. In matters relating to the budget, the head of finance and resources will provide appropriate support. The chief executive may delegate to a relevant officer if appropriate.

In the chief executive's absence, the relevant Corporate Leadership Team member will comment.

Partnerships

Increasingly the council is working in partnership with other agencies. This includes issuing joint communications and publicity. The terms of this protocol and local government publicity law must be followed when the council issues joint publicity.

Where the council is approached for a comment in relation to a partnership of which it is a member, the communications officer will liaise with the relevant lead member and the partners to agree an appropriate comment.

B3: Photo opportunities

Journalists often arrange a photo opportunity to support and enhance a story. It is the responsibility of the lead member to be available for the photograph. If the lead member is not available then a discussion will take place between the communications officer, and the leader and deputy leader as to who would be best suited to take the lead member's place.

Ward member(s) will be invited to take part in the photo opportunity if the story is specific to their ward.

Officers and third parties may be involved in photo opportunities, where appropriate.

Please note: You need a person's consent (or parental consent for those under-16) before taking their photograph. Parental consent forms can be found on the intranet.

B4: Targets for responding to media enquiries

The communications officer will endeavour to answer all media enquiries within 24 hours. Some enquiries may require an even quicker response to meet press deadlines. In the case of TV and radio, responses are required almost instantly and sometimes hourly. The communications officer will make clear the priority of the enquiry when contacting lead members and officers.

Responding on target is only possible with the co-operation of all appropriate members acting as spokespeople and all officers responding quickly when asked for information. It can be damaging to the council's reputation to fail to respond to enquiries in a timely and effective manner.

B5: Use of embargoes

Embargoes will only be used when considered essential. For example, the following may legitimately be subject to an embargo:

- When news releases are linked to a launch event.
- When an issue of confidentiality requires it.
- When it is required by a third party.

Note: Embargoes are not legally enforceable and are adhered to by general local agreement. Nevertheless, they are important in terms of media relations so any breaches need to be referred to the communications officer.

B6: 'No comment'

While every effort must be made to avoid being 'unavailable for comment' there are some occasions when it is inappropriate to comment. For example, when legal action is pending, where an issue relates to the personal affairs of an individual or where there is a need to respect the privacy of a complainant or someone being complained about.

If 'no comment' is unavoidable, it should be supported by an explanation as to why the council is not in a position to comment. For example: "It would be inappropriate to comment on this issue due to the on-going court case," rather than "No comment".

Members and officers should discuss with the communications officer if it is felt that a "no comment" stance is the most appropriate.

B7: Off-the-record

When information is given 'off the record' the information is **not** for publication.

If information is given 'off the record' then a recorded agreement must be made clear beforehand.

B8: Inaccurate reporting

If an article appears in the media that is damaging to the reputation of the council, the lead member and/or head of service will work with the communications officer to prepare a response.

B9: Emergencies

Tewkesbury Borough Council has a key role to play in the Emergency Plan for Tewkesbury Borough. Arrangements are in place to ensure the council works with the other agencies involved. A communications officer from one or more of the agencies will be nominated to deal with the media. During an emergency, clear guidance on the relevant media contacts will be issued to officers and councillors.

B10: Bad news stories

Our policy is for mistakes to be acknowledged and apologised for 'on behalf of the council' where appropriate and where we are able to do so. Any proactive statements, or answers to media questions such as these, should be discussed with the communications officer and agreed with the relevant lead member and/or leader or deputy leader and head of service. All proactive statements in response to bad news stories should endeavour to have reference to the council's improvement journey.

B11: Respecting confidentiality

Occasionally issues come to the attention of the media that involve staff or councillors and aspects of their private lives or employment contracts. It is not the council's policy to comment upon such issues. Factual responses are permitted, for example - 'I can confirm that the employee is no longer in employment with Tewkesbury Borough Council, but we are not prepared to discuss the situation in any greater detail'.

Members and officers speaking to the media should never give out personal information.

B12: Staff and councillors' responsibility to protect the council's reputation

Leaking of confidential information is not acceptable and for staff will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

The leaking of confidential information by a councillor may amount to a breach of the council's Code of Conduct and Councillors should take advice from the monitoring officer before considering releasing to the press confidential information which they may feel is in the public interest.

B13: Press at committee meetings

The press is welcomed to all formal meetings. The press will be excluded in the part of the meeting that contains confidential items. These will normally be highlighted as being exempt in the meeting agenda.

The press will be asked to be seated in a designated area. All mobile phones should be turned off during the meeting.

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, proceedings of committee meetings may be recorded and this may include the recording of persons seated in the public gallery or speaking at the meeting. Anyone with objections to this practice must notify the democratic services officer, and the mayor 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 the 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.

B14: Reporting Full Council/Executive Committee decisions

The agenda and papers for the meetings are made available to the media and public in advance. Releases issued prior to these meetings will be factual only. If an approach is made by the media for an interview before the meeting, it will be for the lead member or, where necessary, a relevant officer to decide whether or not they wish to comment.

The lead members and relevant officers, in consultation with the communications officer, will identify any individual issues warranting other media and website publicity after each meeting, or where possible beforehand.

It is possible that journalists attending the meeting or reading the press release will also request interviews with lead members and every effort will be made to accommodate this. If the lead member is unavailable, the relevant head of service or senior officer will be contacted.

The communications officer will liaise with the leader/deputy leader and relevant lead members and officers to prepare news releases to follow Executive Committee and Full Council meetings. These news releases, as with all others, should be issued as promptly as possible after the meeting/event to maximise coverage and to ensure they remain contemporaneous.

Releases will be factual, outlining the decision, the context in which it was made, issues relating to it and any action to be taken. Any quotes included will relate to the member's council responsibility and will not be party political. Releases on Executive Committee and Full Council decisions will outline the call-in procedure and will give contact details if more information is needed.

The communications officer will respond to media enquiries about decisions of these meetings by referring journalists, wherever appropriate, to the leader or lead member and relevant officers.

B15: Press Releases

A press release is the most common way of informing the media about the work of the council.

The communications officer may issue proactive press releases in a range of circumstances and in conjunction with others e.g. emergency services. For example:

- To inform about a member decision / recommendation.
- To publicise how to access a service – particularly if changes are being made.
- To publicise an event.
- To promote a campaign or raise awareness of a topic of local interest.
- To pass on good news for Tewkesbury Borough Council.
- To publicise Tewkesbury Borough Council's good practice and to raise its profile in support of the council's core values and objectives.
- To publicise an inspection report – good or bad.
- To publicise the fact that consultation is taking place and how to become involved in it.
- To inform residents what to do in cases of an emergency or to give safety alerts.
- To announce an appointment, election, reshuffle.

The content of proactive releases is drawn up in consultation with relevant officers to ensure factual accuracy and sent to the relevant lead member and head of service/operational manager for approval.

Who writes press releases?

Officers should, wherever possible, not only prepare a draft press release but also give five working days' notice before the press release needs to be issued so that there is enough time to fully prepare the release.

The communications officer will ensure that the press release is approved by all relevant parties and issue it to the media. The communications officer may give advice and/or amend any draft release as appropriate to maximise possible coverage and continue to present a consistent corporate view.

If the communications officer is absent then the corporate development and performance manager will be responsible.

It is recognised that some press releases are generated in response to unforeseen circumstances and these would be issued as soon as is practicable.

Press releases will be issued to the relevant media organisations and will be made available via the Intranet and the council's website.

No reference to any political groups or parties will be made in the body of any press release and the release will not present conflicting views of political groups and/or parties.

Note to councillors: Councillors and political groups may issue their own press releases but they must clearly state that the views expressed are their personal views, or those of their political party.

Note to officers: All written material must adhere to the council's Branding and Written Style Guide, which can be found on the intranet.

Who should be quoted in a press release?

Quotes are effective devices to make a press release more interesting to read and to back up the information in the press release.

In most cases, and where possible, the relevant lead member will be quoted. Where appropriate, the relevant officer may also provide a comment.

Where it is appropriate, the communications officer will contact the local ward member(s) for a comment.

If there is more than one political party represented within a ward, then each party may supply one local ward quote. However, inclusion of more than three quotes is not considered best practice and if this situation arises a view will be taken by the communications officer.

If a third party is involved in the news story, for example a town or parish council, or a local business, then the third party will be asked to include a quote in the press release.

Press releases and statements may contain officer contact details so that they can supply technical information to support a story or issue.

For press releases on committee decisions, the quote should be attributed to the relevant lead member unless that lead member or relevant members of staff have not had any involvement in the decision, in which case the chair of the committee should be quoted.

For press releases on motions approved at Council, quotes should be attributed to the relevant lead member or leader of the council (whichever is most appropriate) and the member who tabled the motion.

Stages of press release approval

Before issuing a press release to the media the communications officer will seek the approval from:

- Any quoted councillor/officer.
- Originating officer (where there is one).
- Any third parties involved in the press release.

Contact details on press releases

There must be contact details on the press release to give the media a contact for further information.

This will always include a contact for the communications officer and may also contain contacts for the lead member and/or relevant officer.

It will also contain contact details for any other third party mentioned within the press release.

It is essential that the councillor and/or officer lets the communications officer know if they are not going to be available at the time of the issuing of the press release.

Distribution of press releases

All press releases will be distributed to the following groups:

- Media
- Councillors – who are responsible for disseminating the relevant information to their town or parish council
- Head of service and operational managers
- Local MPs

Equalities

When drafting press releases or selecting photographs, all officers should be mindful of the council's Equalities Scheme.

Publicity should avoid the stereotyping of roles and should demonstrate the council's commitment to promoting equality and diversity. This applies to services and opportunities to people of any colour, gender, age, sexual orientation, race, religion or faith and people with disabilities.

Wherever necessary, information about services should be communicated in appropriate community languages.

Issuing a press release when the communications officer is absent

No Tewkesbury Borough Council press release should be sent to the media without being agreed by the communications officer, who will also issue the press release. If the communications officer is absent then press releases will need to be agreed by the relevant head of service and/or corporate leadership team member, and passed to the corporate services manager who will issue the press release to media contacts.

Each press release is also sent to every borough councillor so they can disseminate the relevant information to their parish and town councils.

All press releases must be uploaded to the council's website. In the communications officer's absence, IT will be requested to upload the content.

B16: Mayoral publicity

The mayor is the borough's civic head and is involved in several civic functions each year including the mayor's Civic Reception, the Civic Service and the Remembrance Services.

The Mayor of Tewkesbury Borough can be invited to attend various events in and around Tewkesbury Borough. Requests can be made in writing or through the council's website.

The Democratic Services team co-ordinates the Mayor's Diary.

B17: Court cases

Tewkesbury Borough Council will occasionally commence prosecutions and will want to use successful outcomes of court cases to deliver a message to the public. The best ways of doing this are by encouraging the press to attend the court case or by releasing the information to the media via a press release. It is imperative that all press releases about court cases are issued to the media at the earliest opportunity.

The communications officer should be informed about imminent court cases. The communications officer should also be alerted to the result of the court case as soon as possible.

B18: Press Briefings

Press briefings have two purposes:

1. To help explain complex issues that will aid the media's understanding of the subject and encourage accurate reporting.
2. To communicate an important story (good and bad news) that will attract media attention.

Press briefings will be held on an ad hoc basis to provide additional support including:

- When complex or major issues are being determined/raised.
- When sensitive issues need absolute accuracy and confidentiality.
- When major incident situations arise.
- When the media request clarity on council reports and agendas ahead of council meetings (a briefing will not go ahead if there is no media interest).
- To illustrate the work of major services.

The relevant officer should be involved to explain the technical details of the project, and the lead member should be in attendance for policy-related issues.

Any media briefing should only take place with the agreement of the lead member and outcomes of the briefing should be fed back to the lead member.

Regular media briefings will take place between the communications officer and the local media to ensure a constant dialogue around council business.

If a political group wishes to hold a press briefing this must be hosted outside of the council's premises and with no assistance from the communications officer or any other council officer.

B19: Media Interviews

When the communications officer is approached to provide a spokesperson for a media interview, the following guidelines will apply:

- Policy issues will be dealt with by the council leader, deputy leader or the lead councillor responsible for the relevant portfolio. Officer engagement may also be necessary.
- Civic issues will be dealt with by the mayor.
- The chief executive, Corporate Leadership Team and officers may be asked to take part in media interviews to provide technical information.

The media should be aware that a proposed interviewee has been selected to take part in the interview because of their knowledge and area of responsibility. A list of lead members, their areas of responsibility and photographs will be made available to the press and media

B20: Monitoring

Regular media monitoring will be conducted to ensure that Tewkesbury Borough Council is maximising all opportunities to communicate using the press.

A monitoring report of the media coverage of press releases is sent to lead members and the corporate management team, when possible, every day. A copy will also be available from the communications officer for anyone who might like to view it.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25
Report of:	Head of Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Lead:	Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) attached at Appendix A provides the financial plan for the Council for the period 2020/21 – 2024/25. It sets out the Council’s estimates of its commitment expenditure, identifies the spending pressures it faces and the budget savings needed to achieve the recommended Council Tax levels for each of the three years of the plan.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND TO THE COUNCIL the ADOPTION of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The agreement of a medium term financial plan is crucial to the Council in ensuring sufficient resources are allocated to priority areas and that the Council remains financially sustainable.

Resource Implications:

The Council could face a deficit in its base budget of over £5.06million in the next five years. The assumptions that have been made in reaching this estimate are included in summary within this report. The MTFS sets out some of the strategies that will need to be considered to deal with the deficit.

Legal Implications:

None.

Risk Management Implications:

Set out in in MTFS.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The MTFS will be kept under continual review and amended in line with significant policy changes, and performance will be monitored against the plan by Members through the quarterly performance monitoring reports.

Environmental Implications:

None directly associated with this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 Financial planning is fundamental to good financial management and the Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out resource availability within recommended Council Tax levels.

2.0 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

2.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a key element within the Council's overall strategic planning framework. The Strategy takes a medium term perspective and is reviewed, updated and rolled forward annually to set a framework for how budget pressures and priorities will be managed within the best estimates of available capital and revenue resources.

2.2 The MTFS outlines the budget that will be delivered over the medium to long-term. A further report, specifically on the 2020/21 detailed budget, will be presented to both Executive Committee and Council in February 2020 for Member approval.

2.3 It is important to understand that the MTFS does not constitute a formal budget in respect of the period 2020/21 to 2024/25 and as such the indicative annual assumptions included both within the projected spending pressures and the potential funding detailed, will be subject to a full review and decision making process as part of each of the annual Revenue Budget and Council Tax setting decisions.

2.4 Instead, the MTFS is intended to outline, in broad terms, the specific service and funding issues over the period and how the Council will, within its financial constraints, fund its priorities and achieve major service change and savings.

2.5 The position of local government finance has been uncertain for a long period of time and successive MTFS's have tried to outline a medium term plan against this uncertain backdrop. In producing this year's strategy, there is continued uncertainty. Some of the issues contributing towards this include:

- The General Election.
- The new government's approach to public spending.
- Potential economic impacts resulting from the country's decision to leave the European Union.
- A one year only Spending Review Period resulting in uncertainty to the level of funding available to local government as a whole beyond 2021.
- A one year delay to the introduction of the Fair Funding Review giving uncertainty to how needs will be calculated and funding distributed in the future.
- A one year delay to the introduction of a scheme for the 75% retention of business rates from 2020.
- An indication that the New Homes Bonus scheme will be withdrawn and potentially replaced.

- 2.6** In addition to the national uncertainty the Council faces with regards to its financial plans, both corporate and service related financial pressures continue to have a significant impact on the Council's forwards projections of its financial position. These include:
- Salary growth pressure of at least 2% per annum.
 - The growing cost of waste collection.
 - Increasing demand for additional resources to meet a range of service requirements and pressures.
- 2.7** The MTFS also contains important strategic planning in a number of areas in order that the Council can plan for the changes it will need to make in the medium term to ensure it is able to meet its statutory duty of producing a balanced budget on an annual basis.
- 2.8** Best estimates have been made of the future financial position of the Council within the attached MTFS based on current assumptions of both government and local policy. Clearly the projections within the MTFS are subject to potentially significant change as a result of government policy on local government finance, either positively or negatively, and therefore strategic financial management of this authority will need to be flexible to be able to respond to the rapidly moving agenda.
- 3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**
- 3.1** None.
- 4.0 CONSULTATION**
- 4.1** Statutory consultation will be carried out with businesses and a public consultation is carried out through the Autumn.
- 5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES**
- 5.1** MTFS sets out the level of resource availability to meet the Council priorities and pledges which form the Council Plan.
- 6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES**
- 6.1** Council Tax levels must be set within government limits to avoid the need to hold a referendum on 'excessive' increases.
- 7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)**
- 7.1** Some of the savings streams identified may have implications on staffing levels and the asset portfolio. These will be set out specifically within the detailed reports surrounding proposed saving actions.
- 8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)**
- 8.1** These will be set out specifically within the detailed reports surrounding proposed saving actions.

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

9.1 These will be set out specifically within the detailed reports surrounding proposed saving actions.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

Contact Officer: Head of Finance and Asset Management Tel: 01684 272005

Appendices: A - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25.

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Medium Term Financial Strategy

2020/21 to 2024/25

Tewkesbury Borough Council
January 2020

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- 1.0 Background
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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provides a financial framework for the council's strategic planning and decision making. The MTFS 2020-25 incorporates key factors such as the changes in Government funding, our spending plans and the level of savings and increased income that are likely to be needed. By anticipating financial pressures now, we can plan ahead early to meet the significant challenges in a way that ensures financial resources are targeted to the council's highest priorities and have the minimum impact on services.
- 1.2 These are unprecedented times for budget setting, with not only significant cuts in public spending continuing but with the added uncertainty around local government finance in general post 2021. Local government as a sector awaits clarification from Central Government on a number of critical issues which affect our medium term planning. These include:
- Spending Review – on the 4th September 2019, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a one year only spending review. The spending review confirms the overall quantum of funding available to the sector but only covers the period until March 2021. The new Government urgently need to undertake a spending review in 2020 covering the years after 2021 and give some certainty to the sector on overall funding levels in the early part of the next decade.
 - Fair Funding Review – this will detail a new methodology for allocating local government funding to individual authorities. The impact of this review has now been delayed for a further year until at least 2021.
 - Business rates retention – as with the Fair Funding Review, the move to 75% retention of business rates has been pushed back until 2021
 - New Homes Bonus – the Government has again signalled that they will review the New Homes Bonus scheme in 2020, leaving its future uncertain.
- 1.3 In addition to this sector specific uncertainty, the country as whole faces uncertainty as a result of the exit arrangements from the European Union in addition to weak economic data which could signal a potential downturn or even recession. It is therefore essential that the council takes action within its MTFS to provide sufficient contingency to meet the risks that could be associated with these scenarios materialising.
- 1.4 Once again, financial planning has to be made without a stable footing and core assumptions are made on the basis of what is actually known at the current time and best estimates of the future direction of financing the council. It is therefore essential that we continue to set our annual budget within the context of a rolling five year resource strategy. A longer term strategic view must be taken when decisions are made that have a financial impact beyond the annual budget as it enables us to assess the sustainability of such decisions.
- 1.5 The 2019-2020 approved budget provides the base position for the financial strategy from which projections can be made to give an overall forecast of expenditure and income levels for the coming years. It is also necessary to maintain a minimum level of reserves to provide working capital and act as a contingency to meet any unforeseen needs particularly with the unknown consequences of changes to the makeup of local government funding.
- 1.6 In order to progress towards our aims and objectives, as contained within The Council Plan 2016 – 2020, we need to prioritise our spending plans. This involves not only considering the financial pressures identified, but also undertaking a strategic review of existing

services; identifying new ways of working and areas where reduced levels of activity or discontinuation should be pursued.

1.7 Whilst effectively managing spending will help to reduce the deficit over the medium term, it will not address the financial challenge in its totality. The council will need to consider how it can increase income, both within its core services and from its financing streams, and therefore grow its way towards financial sustainability and perhaps in the medium to long term be able to be self-sufficient and insulated from economic shock and central government funding decisions.

1.8 To meet this challenge, the council will need to think differently, have a strong risk appetite and be prepared to venture into new and innovative ways of tackling the funding gap.

2.0 THE COUNCIL PLAN 2016-2020

2.1 In April 2016, the new Council Plan for 2016 – 2020 was approved. The document is a statement of intent to drive forward our vision:

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

2.2 To deliver this vision and provide focus we have established four priorities and a number of objectives within each priority. We will:

Finance & Resources:

- Maintain a low council tax.
- Start on the path to being financially independent of the government’s core grants.
- Investigate and take appropriate commercial opportunities.
- Use our assets to provide maximum financial return.

Economic development:

- Be the primary growth engine of Gloucestershire’s economy.
- Identify and deliver employment land within the borough, in accordance with the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Tewkesbury Borough Plan.
- Maximise the growth potential of the M5 junctions within the borough.
- Deliver regeneration for Tewkesbury town.

Housing:

- Increase the supply of suitable housing across the borough to support growth and meet the needs of our communities.
- Achieve a five year supply of land.
- Deliver the homes and necessary infrastructure to create new sustainable communities in key locations.
- Deliver affordable homes to meet local need.

Customer focused services:

- Maintain and improve our culture of continuous service improvement.
- Develop our customer service ethos to ensure that we deliver to the needs of residents.

- Further expansion of the Public Services Centre (bring in other partners).
 - Improve and expand our partnerships both public and private sector and explore opportunities to do this.
 - To improve customer access to our services and service delivery through digital methods.
- 2.3 The Council is currently considering the content of a new Council Plan to cover the period from 2020 to 2024. The first draft of the new Council Plan builds upon the current plan and provides continuation of the council ambitions into the next decade. Future financial strategies will reflect the new Council Plan once approved.

3.0 NATIONAL ECONOMIC CONTEXT

- 3.1 The UK's progress negotiating its exit from the European Union, together with its future trading arrangements, will continue to be a major influence on the Authority's treasury management strategy and financial environment for 2020/21.
- 3.2 UK Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) for September registered 1.7% year on year, unchanged from the previous month. Core inflation, which excludes the more volatile components, rose to 1.7% from 1.5% in August. The most recent labour market data for the three months to August 2019 showed the unemployment rate ticked back up to 3.9% while the employment rate was 75.9%, just below recent record-breaking highs. The headline 3-month average annual growth rate for pay was 3.8% in August as wages continue to rise steadily. In real terms, after adjusting for inflation, pay growth increased 1.9%.
- 3.3 GDP growth rose by 0.3% in the third quarter of 2019 from -0.2% in the previous three months with the annual rate falling further below its trend rate to 1.0% from 1.2%. Services and construction added positively to growth, by 0.6% and 0.4% respectively, while production was flat and agriculture recorded a fall of 0.2%. Looking ahead, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Report (formerly the Quarterly Inflation Report) forecasts economic growth to pick up during 2020 as Brexit-related uncertainties dissipate and provide a boost to business investment helping GDP reach 1.6% in Q4 2020, 1.8% in Q4 2021 and 2.1% in Q4 2022.
- 3.4 The Bank of England maintained Bank Rate at 0.75% in November following a 7-2 vote by the Monetary Policy Committee. Despite keeping rates on hold, MPC members did confirm that if Brexit uncertainty drags on or global growth fails to recover, they are prepared to cut interest rates as required. Moreover, the downward revisions to some of the growth projections in the Monetary Policy Report suggest the Committee may now be less convinced of the need to increase rates even if there is a Brexit deal.
- 3.5 Growth in Europe remains soft, driven by a weakening German economy which saw GDP fall -0.1% in Q2 and is expected to slip into a technical recession in Q3. Euro zone inflation was 0.8% year on year in September, well below the European Central Bank's target of 'below, but close to 2%' and leading to the central bank holding its main interest rate at 0% while cutting the deposit facility rate to -0.5%. In addition to maintaining interest rates at ultra-low levels, the ECB announced it would recommence its quantitative easing programme from November.
- 3.6 In the US, the Federal Reserve began easing monetary policy again in 2019 as a pre-emptive strike against slowing global and US economic growth on the back on of the ongoing trade war with China. At its last meeting the Fed cut rates to the range of 1.50-

1.75% and financial markets expect further loosening of monetary policy in 2020. US GDP growth slowed to 1.9% annualised in Q3 from 2.0% in Q2.

3.7 Table 1 details the forecast of the Bank of England base rate based on the MPC maintaining its position of a slow rise in interest rates.

Table 1 – Base rate forecast

Official Bank Rate	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22
Upside risk	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Arlingclose central forecast	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Downside risk	-0.50	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75

4.0 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT

4.1 The current financial year sees the end of the four year agreement with central government which confirmed funding levels for needs based grant funding. Needs based grant funding comes in the shape of both the Revenue Support Grant and the Business Rates Baseline. This is supplemented in some authorities with the Rural Services Delivery Grant. Since the beginning of the austerity period, this council has seen its needs based funding reduce by over £3.7m in cash terms. If inflation were to be added in, this reduction would be closer to £4.5m.

4.2 With the ending of the four year agreement, it had been hoped that central government would give the sector some certainty upon which it could build its financial plans by providing a multi year settlement. However, on the 4th September 2019, the Government put forward a one year only Spending Review covering the financial year 2020-21. This leaves the Council in exactly the same position as 12 months previous with certainty only being provided for one year. It is extremely difficult for a Council to develop and deliver medium and long term plans when it does not know what it's needs based funding will be beyond 12 months.

4.3 It is hoped that the new Government will prioritise delivering a new multi-year Spending Review and local government settlement within its first year to provide some of the certainty required by the sector. It is however expected that local government, as an unprotected department, will see little real terms growth in its funding envelope given the commitments being made to other parts of the public sector including the NHS, Education and the Police.

4.4 For the purpose of this MTFs, our projections, supported by the views of our advisors, of core government support see an increase of 1% per annum from 2022/23 following a transitional year in 2021/22. This increase is of course on a much reduced base figure and results in a monetary increase of approximately £19,000. To put this into perspective, a 2% increase in salary would cost the Council circa £160,000. Table 2 highlights the current projections of needs based funding for Tewkesbury Borough Council.

Table 2 – Core Government support 2019 – 2025

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Support Grant	23	23	0	0	0	0
Business Rates baseline	1,816	1,848	1,825	1,843	1,862	1,880
Rural Services Delivery Grant	14	14	0	0	0	0
Total	1,853	1,885	1,825	1,843	1,862	1,880
Change	-220	32	-60	18	19	18
Change %	-10.6%	1.7%	-3.2%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%

4.5 In addition to the delay in committing to a multi-year settlement, the Government has also confirmed a one year delay to the outcome of the Fair Funding Review (FFR). This will review the model currently in place for distributing funding to individual authorities based on assessed need less an assumed level of local resource. Assessing need has become a very complex area with a number of funding streams being assessed on certain metrics which culminates in an overall funding level for each authority. The government is currently reviewing the model to ensure it is fit for purpose and fair to all authorities. However, with any change in allocation process, there are likely to be winners and losers and it remains to be seen which category Tewkesbury will fall into.

4.6 No impact of the FFR has been included within the current MTFS as a result of the further work to be undertaken in developing the model. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note the current direction of travel and potential outcome. Recent modelling has suggested that overall distribution is likely to flow from lower tier authorities, such as ourselves, and London Boroughs towards County Councils and Metropolitan Authorities. The modelling suggests losses in needs based funding could be as much as £400,000 for this authority in the coming years. As the FFR progresses, the results will be fed into the MTFS and could add further to the deficit shown in this document.

4.7 It is also interesting to note how this authority is effectively penalised within the model for its low council tax. The assessment of resources available to each council is effectively based on national average council tax and as a result the Governments methodology over estimates the amount of needs that can be met with resources raised locally. As a result, the net grant payable to the Council is significantly reduced. The FFR will be scrutinised as it progresses to see if any deviation away from this long standing approach is being considered.

5.0 NEW HOMES BONUS

5.1 New Homes Bonus (NHB) was introduced in 2011 and provides funding of a sum equivalent to the average annual council tax for every new home built, once occupied. The Borough Council retains 80% of the funding with the County Council receiving 20%. This sum was payable for six years with an additional bonus of £350 for every affordable home occupied. The final scheme design included the principles of the funding being both permanent and flexible. There was no ring-fencing of the funding and no specific requirements for its use.

5.2 The introduction of NHB alongside retained business rates demonstrates the Governments objectives of moving away from needs based funding to a system that rewards performance and delivery of certain objectives. Tewkesbury is in a very fortunate position in that it has been able to benefit from relatively large amounts of NHB accumulating in the first six years of operation of the scheme and effectively offsetting some of the reductions

seen in needs based funding.

- 5.3 Following an extended period of consultation, the Government announced in the Provisional Local Government Settlement for 2017/18 its intention to amend the NHB scheme by reducing the number of years of benefit from six to four years. This was widely anticipated. More surprisingly, was the announcement of a 'deadweight' of 0.4% of baseline properties below which no NHB would be paid. The Government believe that house building will take place naturally, regardless of local authorities encouragement or otherwise, and therefore local authorities should not be rewarded with NHB for this natural level of growth.
- 5.4 The Technical Consultation launched in October 2019 has now gone further than mechanical changes to the existing scheme and has indicated the potential ending of the scheme altogether. The consultation paper makes the following two points:
- any funding beyond 2020-21 is subject to the 2020 Spending Review and potential new proposals, any new allocations in 2020-21 will not result in legacy payments being made in subsequent years on those allocations.
 - It is the Government's intention to look again at the New Homes Bonus and explore the most effective way to incentivise housing growth. We will consult widely on proposals prior to implementation.
- 5.5 This has confirmed that the new allocation for 20-21 will last for only one year rather than the usual four years and it is widely expected that the Government will only honour existing legacy payments in future years with no new allocations of NHB being made. Table 3 highlights how NHB is likely to be withdrawn in the next few years.

Table 3 – Forecast New Homes Bonus

	2019/20	2020/21 Projection	2021/22 Projection	2022/23 Projection	2023/24 Projection	2024/25 Projection
Year 6	£659,431	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Year 7	£750,088	£750,088	£0	£0	£0	£0
Year 8	£898,713	£898,713	£898,713	£0	£0	£0
Year 9	£965,166	£965,166	£965,166	£965,166	£0	£0
Year 10	£0	£1,111,600	£0	£0	£0	£0
Year 11	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Year 12	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Year 13	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
	£3,273,398	£3,725,567	£1,863,879	£965,166	£0	£0

- 5.6 If this elimination of NHB is confirmed, this will have a substantial and significant impact on the Council's funding of its core services which could result in major structural change of the Council and the reduction of its service offering. The council currently utilises £2.8m of NHB to fund its core services with the balance being used to fund a range of one-off needs and ambitions. Table 4 illustrates this and forecasts how this will be affected by the withdrawal of the NHB scheme.

Table 4 – Forecast split usage of NHB

	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
	2019/20	2020/21 Projection	2021/22 Projection	2022/23 Projection	2023/24 Projection	2024/25 Projection
Support to base budget	£2,810,755	£2,810,755	£1,584,297	£820,391	£0	£0
% of total NHB	86%	75%	85%	85%	-	-
One-off's available	£462,643	£914,811	£279,582	£144,775	£0	£0
% of total NHB	14%	25%	15%	15%	-	-
Total NHB	£3,273,398	£3,725,566	£1,863,879	£965,166	£0	£0

5.7 The consultation does however suggest that the Government will consider an alternative scheme to incentivise housing growth. As an area that continues to deliver residential growth and has plans in place to see that continue over the next decade, we would support the development of a new scheme that would provide at least some reward for the housing being delivered.

6.0 RETAINED BUSINESS RATES

- 6.1 The current Business Rates Retention Scheme (BRRS) was introduced in 2013 and is intended to provide incentives for local authorities to drive economic growth, as the authorities will be able to retain a share of the growth generated in business rates revenue in their areas.
- 6.2 In recent years, Tewkesbury has at last begun to see the benefits of the retention scheme rather than just the substantial losses it suffered in the early years. The current year budget saw the inclusion of a growth target of circa £680,000 in relation to its position as an individual authority within the 50% scheme.
- 6.3 The Government had previously suggested that it would look to move local government as a sector to 100% retention but without primary legislation this will not be possible. As a compromise the Government announced a move to 75% retention from 2020 as this could be achieved within the current regulations. However, as with other forms of government funding, this has been delayed for a year with a new implementation date of April 2021.
- 6.4 To enable this, the Government has been working closely with a number of key stakeholders to refine and simplify the system in light of the issues within the current retention system. At the time of writing this MTFS, clarity on what the scheme is likely to look is not available and many key questions are yet to be answered. Reference to the minutes of the various steering groups, previous consultation papers and the insights of the Council's advisors have proven useful in trying to forecast how the scheme may work and what the impact will be on Tewkesbury.
- 6.5 Whilst many questions remain unanswered it now looks certain that a reset, partial or full, of the current system will take place in 2021, whereby a proportion of growth currently enjoyed by authorities will be redistributed. This assumption has been built into the forecast of potential business rate retention over the MTFS period. This is outlined in table 5.

Table 5 – Business rate retention estimate

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Baseline funding	£1,816	£1,848	£1,825	£1,843	£1,862	£1,880
Growth	£681	£732	£390	£357	£372	£381
Total	£2,497	£2,580	£2,215	£2,200	£2,234	£2,261

- 6.6 The table above does not include any significant growth that the Borough may expect in the coming years. Sites such as the proposed retail outlet at junction 9 of the M5 are included within the high level deficit reduction programme and as their likely development timescale and rates valuation are firmed up, they can be migrated across to the expected level of rates retention.
- 6.7 In addition to the impact of scheme redesign, it must be remembered that the health of the national economy will have a significant impact on the amount of money retained by local government from the scheme. As highlighted earlier, economic indicators suggest potential issues ahead whilst the impact of Brexit is may also have a negative impact on our economy. Also, a number of political parties have indicated, through general election campaigning, that they are prepared to reconsider the use of business rates as a tax on business. Local Government will be particularly interested in any proposals that the new Government bring forward.
- 6.8 For 2020/21, Tewkesbury is likely to remain in the Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool. The Pool attracts a lower levy than individual Council's and as a result more business rates can be retained locally. The additional retention is treated as a windfall at year end and used to reinforce the Council's forward planning and risk management reserves. It is unclear whether a new 75% retention scheme would provide any financial incentive to pool in the future and therefore no future expectation of windfall is made.

7.0 GROWTH PRESSURES

- 7.1 In addition to the pressures on the Council's finances already mentioned, the Council continues to face rising costs. Whilst the budget is prepared on a standstill basis, in that no price inflation is added other than to contractual commitments and the cost of energy, other areas of rising and potential cost can have a major impact on the Council's budget as highlighted in the following paragraphs.
- 7.2 Employees is the area of single greatest spend with around £9.7m per annum being consumed by employee related expenditure. Of this total, around £5.9m is spent directly on employee salaries and as a result the annual pay award can have a significant impact upon the council finances. A one percent award has an annual impact of circa £80,000 on the Council's budget once on-costs are factored in.
- 7.3 The agreement of pay awards are negotiated between employers and Unions and, as yet, there is no agreement in place beyond March 2020. Given the current and projected level of inflation, an assumption of flat 2% pay awards has been built into the MTFs. Clearly any agreement in excess of this or if extra weighting is given to lower paid workers as in

previous years, additional pressure will be put into the MTFS.

- 7.4 The second biggest cost under employees, is the cost of payments to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in the form of costs for current employees and the cost of accumulated deficits within the scheme. In the current year, the Council will pay a combined total of £3 million to the LGPS. At the time of writing, the pension fund is being valued and the level of contribution being determined for the next three years. Early indications suggest the Council could save on its secondary contributions, towards the existing deficit, whilst primary contributions, payments associated with current staff, could increase. The base position of the MTFS anticipates a freeze in both primary and secondary contributions.
- 7.5 The Council has in place a number of contracts to deliver specified services, the largest of which is the contract with Ubico for the delivery of waste and recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance. The cost of delivering these contracts at the same output levels will continue to increase with inflation and an assumption of the relevant level of inflation to apply for each contract has been made. With regards to Ubico, their contract sum is particularly affected by the pay awards referred to earlier as a high percentage of their employees benefit from the higher increases at the bottom end of the scales. This contract is also significantly impacted by fuel inflation and other vehicle related costs such as insurance. As a result, even before other changes impact the cost of the contract, it is estimated that the contract cost will increase by circa £840,000 over the course of the MTFS.
- 7.6 In addition to the standard inflationary increases within the Ubico contract, a number of additional factors may influence the cost of service provision in the medium term. These include:
- Grounds maintenance – an evaluation of the level and quality of service the Council would wish to see in its Grounds Maintenance Service has taken place. There is also recognition of the increased area that needs to be maintained by the crews. It is expected that resource levels will need to increase by £100,000 per annum
 - It is anticipated that the Borough will grow by over 5,000 properties in the next five years and additional rounds will be required at some point to meet this additional demand with an anticipated cost of £150,000 per round per annum
 - As the vehicle fleet gets older, it is likely to require an increasing amount of maintenance. In addition, the council only currently sets aside £400,000 per annum for the replacement of the vehicle fleet. This is unlikely to be sufficient to meet the needs in the medium term and additional monies should be set aside to ensure funds are sufficient to meet needs.
 - The Council is seeing an increased level of contamination within the recycling it collects. As a result, less recycling tonnage is subject to recycling credit income from the County Council. This could cost the Council around £100,000

It is estimated that these factors could cost the Council around £450,000 per annum in the medium term.

- 7.7 In addition to these specific areas, growth is likely to be required across all service areas as a result of one or all of the following:
- New council priorities such as tackling the climate emergency
 - General growth of the Borough resulting in increasing demand on services such as within the Revenues section
 - Tackling emerging risks such as cyber security

- Replacing our IT infrastructure and investing in digital technologies
- New government initiatives placing additional burdens on service areas
- Roll out of Government policies that adversely impact the financial position of the Council such as the potential introduction of free garden waste collection
- Delivery of Council ambitions and priorities such as regeneration, housing and economic development

7.8 The MTFS contains an allowance for general growth which hasn't been defined as yet. The annual budget cycle will determine the exact growth required and what is affordable in the overall context.

8.0 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

8.1 The capital expenditure of the Council has an impact on the revenue budget and is part of the overall preparation of the revenue proposals for the coming year.

8.2 It is estimated that £8.1m will be spent on Capital Programme schemes during 2019/2020 which are to be funded by a combination of usable capital receipts reserve (£0.43m), capital grants (£0.97m), revenue resources (£0.1m) and external borrowing (£6.63m). The programme includes the acquisition of a further commercial property to the Council's portfolio and the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants.

8.3 Looking ahead, the total value of the currently approved Capital Programme over the following five years is approximately £39.9m and is focussed on the additional commercial property acquisition programme of £20m approved by Council in October 2019, estimates of expenditure to deliver regeneration in Tewkesbury Town centre, the ongoing delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants, the delivery of the Ashchurch bridge project and the replacement vehicle programme. Table 5 summarises the planned capital expenditure for future years, together with information on the funding of that expenditure.

Table 6 – Capital programme

	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	TOTAL £'000
Capital expenditure	8,122	18,731	11,516	5,200	3,425	1,072	48,066
Funded by:							
Capital receipts reserve	429	409	75	75	100	100	1,188
Capital Grants	966	2,800	5,866	500	500	500	11,132
External Borrowing	6,627	15,000	5,500	4,500	0	0	31,627
Revenue Reserves	100	522	75	125	2,825	472	4,119
Total	8,122	18,731	11,516	5,200	3,425	1,072	48,066

8.4 The capital programme may see further increases in planned expenditure in future years as new investment plans are brought forward. The capital programme will be updated with these plans as and when they receive approval from full Council.

9.0 TREASURY STRATEGY AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP)

- 9.1 The Treasury and Capital Management Strategies will be presented to Council annually in January and provide detail on the Councils plans for managing those aspects of its business.
- 9.2 The Council is likely to have a borrowing requirement of circa £59m based on the current capital programme and has taken a balanced approach to financing this requirement. The MTFs assumes continuation of this approach with a proportion of debt secured against long term borrowing, potentially from the Public Works Loan Board, and a proportion secured on short term borrowing. This balances the long term cost to the council with the gains that are made on current short term market rates and current medium term projections of interest rates suggest that this is a sustainable strategy in the medium term.
- 9.3 The Council has elected to use an annuity calculation for its Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). This approach sees an initial low cost for MRP, but with increasing amounts year-on-year to ensure the principal borrowed can be repaid. This increase in MRP should be matched by increases to the rental value of the properties purchased. It is estimated that this cost together with interest costs will total around £2m per annum in the medium term.
- 9.4 Whilst capital balances have been expended, the Council holds significant revenue balances and amounts of cash flow which it invests with various financial institutions. Market predictions of likely interest rates currently remain relatively flat and low over the medium term but additional income can be made by diversifying into other types of investment product. The Council currently has £4m deposited with the CCLA Property Fund and it will look to invest in suitable equity or multi-asset funds in the short term in order to generate additional income whilst mitigating risk.

10.0 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PROJECTION

- 10.1 The council's Medium Term Financial Projection includes the impact of all known capital and revenue commitments between 2020/21 and 2024/25 and includes the assumptions on financing streams previously highlighted. This is summarised in table 7.

Table 7 – Medium Term Financial Projection

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Total (Base budget)	9,976	10,809	11,063	11,446	11,800	12,171
Growth	0	563	699	1,009	1,074	1,124
Approved savings plan	0	17	-859	-1,149	-1,251	-1,260
Net budget	9,976	11,389	10,903	11,306	11,623	12,035
Financed by:						
Settlement Funding	-1,853	-1,885	-1,825	-1,843	-1,862	-1,880
Retained Business Rates	-681	-732	-390	-357	-372	-381
Collection Fund Surplus	-41	-50	-50	-50	-50	-50
New Homes Bonus	-3,273	-3,725	-1,864	-965	0	0
Council tax income	-4,128	-4,213	-4,304	-4,397	-4,532	-4,665
Total financing	-9,976	-10,605	-8,433	-7,612	-6,816	-6,976
Deficit (cumulative)	0	784	2,470	3,694	4,807	5,059
Deficit (annual)	0	784	1,686	1,224	1113	252

10.2 The table illustrates a funding gap of £5.06m over the five year life of the MTFs. It must be noted however that this is subject to significant change, both positive and negative, in regard to the Government's position on funding local government.

11.0 COUNCIL TAX

11.1 The current Band D Council Tax for the authority is £119.36 per annum and is the fifth lowest in England for a District Council. The current year charge was an increase of £5 or 4.4% over the previous year, the largest increase allowed by the Government before the increase is deemed excessive and would be subject to a local referendum. This was the fourth year that the council has decided to increase its council tax by the maximum available following on from a period of six years of frozen Council Tax.

11.2 The Technical Consultation for 2020/21 has put forward an excessive council tax threshold of £5 or 2%, whichever is higher, for a District Council. This is a slight reduction for some Councils but allows Tewkesbury to once again make an increased charge of up to £5. It is unlikely that there will be any further changes for local government when the Local Government Settlement is finalised in the new year and it is assumed that this level of threshold continues into the medium term.

11.3 The Borough continues to develop with significant growth expected to be delivered in the next 5 years and the table below highlights the increases to the tax base expected.

Table 8 – Council Tax base

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Tax base	34,585	35,296	36,062	36,837	37,971	39,087	
Increase	726	711	766	775	1,134	1,116	4,502
Increase	2.15%	2.06%	2.17%	2.15%	3.08%	2.94%	13.02%

11.4 The Council Plan 2016-2020 makes a commitment to 'maintain a low Council Tax' and this is expected to continue into the new Plan. The Council Plan also sets out objectives to develop alternative revenue streams, and rebase the revenue structure, to become less dependent on government core grants, and collections from taxpayers. Increasing Council Tax to fund any deficit outcome should be a last resort. The previous Medium Term Financial Strategy recognises the likely need for further increases in council tax in future years in order to provide the flexibility to deal with the anticipated deficit faced. Although Council finances have improved, and additional revenue streams are now being developed, there may continue to be a need to resort to some measure of further Council Tax increase each year over the Strategy period. The Council will maintain this previous financial strategy, accepting the likely need for future increases, but seeking to maintain the Council Tax to the lowest possible levels.

Table 9 – Potential Council Tax strategy

Year	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Band D Council Tax	£124.36	£129.36	£134.36	£139.36	£144.36	
Increase (£)	£5.00	£5.00	£5.00	£5.00	£5.00	
Increase (%)	4.19%	4.02%	3.87%	3.72%	3.59%	
Additional council tax income generated	£176,480	£180,310	£184,185	£189,855	£195,435	£926,265

- 11.5 The next table extrapolates table 9 and shows the proposed charge against all bandings for each of the five years. It also highlights how many households there are currently in each band.

Table 10 – Impact of potential charges per Council Tax band

Year	Number of properties	% of total	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Band A charge	6,522	15.55%	£82.91	£86.24	£89.57	£92.91	£96.24
Band B charge	6,668	15.90%	£96.72	£100.61	£104.50	£108.39	£112.28
Band C charge	11,742	27.99%	£110.54	£114.99	£119.43	£123.88	£128.32
Band D charge	6,154	14.67%	£124.36	£129.36	£134.36	£139.36	£144.36
Band E charge	5,349	12.75%	£152.00	£158.11	£164.22	£170.33	£176.44
Band F charge	3,374	8.04%	£179.63	£186.85	£194.08	£201.30	£208.52
Band G charge	1,937	4.62%	£207.27	£215.60	£223.93	£232.27	£240.60
Band H charge	198	0.47%	£248.72	£258.72	£268.72	£278.72	£288.72

- 11.6 The proposed Council Tax for the next financial year of £124.36 is still likely to be approximately £43 below the bottom quartile threshold and £66 below the national average for a District Council. Should excessive council tax thresholds remain in place over the medium term, Tewkesbury will, by default, continue to remain in the bottom quartile for council tax charged unless there are some dramatic changes in the levels charged by other authorities.
- 11.7 For a number of years, this Council has retained the default scheme as its preferred position for the Local Council Tax Scheme. By adopting this position, the council continues to provide council tax discount at an equivalent level to the previous council tax benefit scheme that was in place until 2013 and as a result continues to bare the cost. Tewkesbury is one of a few authorities to still retain this default position due to the reduced funding levels associated with the new scheme. A full review of the Council's position will be undertaken early in 2020/21 so that any potential change can be fed into the budget cycle for the year after.

12.0 DEFICIT REDUCTION PROGRAMME

- 12.1 If increases to Council tax were approved in line with the example set out within table 9 this would still leave over £4.1M to be found in order to set balanced budgets over the life of the MTFS. The Council's Business Transformation Strategy supports the delivery of additional income streams and service cost reductions and the following paragraphs look at some of the opportunities within that strategy and additional strategies that will need to be considered in order to balance the budget.
- 12.2 It is important to note that whilst some of the suggested actions and strategies are already being progressed, in order to balance the 2020-21 budget, some of those suggested are yet to be established and will require many months or even years to develop viable business cases. It is of equal importance to note that the suggested deficit reduction programme is based on our current assumptions around the likely deficit. Should the actual position be more favourable in the coming years then not all of the programme will be required. Equally other ideas to meet the deficit could emerge which may replace some of the suggestions made in the following paragraphs and table 11. The key message though is that preparatory work must start now in order to deliver some of our longer term requirements. We cannot wait until final confirmation of actual budgets is in place before we embark on some of this programme, even if the actions are ultimately not required.
- 12.3 The Council is benefiting from increased treasury management balances but an average return of circa 1.4% could be bettered by redirecting surplus funds towards alternative investment vehicles. These would include multi-asset and equity based funds which could see average returns of 4.5% being generated. This would complement the existing £4m invested with the CCLA property fund.
- 12.4 The Council continues to investigate ways of providing the same level of service at a reduced cost. The recent trialling of a car pool to undertake business travel has proved to be successful and as a result will now become permanent. The provision of the car pool will mean that the Essential Car user allowance can also be withdrawn. As a result, the Council will still be able to undertake the business travel necessary but at a reduced cost of approximately £86,000.
- 12.5 The triennial valuation of the Gloucestershire Local Government Pension Scheme is currently taking place. Initial estimates suggest that Tewkesbury could see a significant reduction in its contributions towards the outstanding pension deficit whilst there may be some increase in the rate charged for current employees.
- 12.6 The Council has aspirations of being more commercial in its approach and this is an existing strand of the Business Transformation Strategy. As part of this drive, the Council will need to consider its existing commercial services such as trade waste and building control and should ensure that those services do not operate at a deficit. It will also need to explore potential additional commercial activities and inter authority trading but these will need to be supported by thorough business cases which explore the cost of the provision, the market being entered, any competitive advantage, the sustainability of the service, the profitability of the proposal and any impact on core services.
- 12.7 One specific area where the Council would hope to see some returns from increased commercial activity would be from Ubico Ltd. The company was established as a teckal company in order to benefit from the trading of its services to other private or public sector entities. The Council will hope to see the development of business plans to deliver this and exploit the teckal exemption. In addition, it is hoped that some cross boundary working or shared arrangements can be developed within Ubico to reduce the direct cost of service provision and again the Council will hope to see proposals for this in the near future and to the benefit of the Council during the life of the current MTFS. In addition, given the financial

pressures it is facing, the Council may need to consider the level of provision in its waste collection service and undertake a review of the viability of moving towards a three weekly or even a monthly collection of residual waste.

- 12.8 It is anticipated that the Borough will see some significant business development in the next five years, particularly in relation to land around junction 9 of the M5. An estimate of growth above the baseline, and after the full reset of the retention system, has been made which suggests levels of growth could approach £1m over the next five years. The duration of enjoyment of these growth levels will be determined under the current review.
- 12.9 The capital programme currently contains an estimate of funding potentially required to help regenerate the Spring Gardens area of Tewkesbury. It would be expected that, alongside the social and economic value to the community of the development, the Council would see some return on the investment being made and hence a prudent estimate has been included.
- 12.10 A major element of the increased deficit reported in this MTF5 is as a result of the removal of the NHB scheme over the next couple of years. In moving towards this, the Government has restated its intention to consult on a replacement scheme that will continue to incentivise housing growth. Given this intention, it is right to include a prudent estimate of potential funding from this scheme. A figure of £1m has been included which is just over 25% of the current funding level associated with NHB.
- 12.11 The final part of the deficit reduction programme, after all other avenues have been exhausted, is inevitably the reduction of service provision. This could be either a reduction in the levels of statutory service provided or a reduction in the number of discretionary services provided. In addition or alternatively, the Council may consider shared service opportunities or the viability of reducing its management structure. Whilst the Council would not wish to see a reduction in service provision, the current direction of travel for funding in local government may make this unavoidable. Many councils are already further ahead on this journey and are preparing for a 'core service only' offering.
- 12.12 In order to summarise both the overall deficit and the various strategies which have been highlighted to tackle the deficit, a high level five year projection of a potential deficit reduction programme has been compiled – see table 11. The monetary amounts allocated against each area are indications of potential given current expenditure or income levels. Detailed business cases will be needed to establish the viability of a number of the suggestions and the actual amounts achievable.

Table 11 – Summary of potential deficit reduction programme

Income from Council Tax increases	£926,000
Treasury Management	£230,000
Business travel costs	£86,000
Pension deficit contributions	£450,000
Waste and recycling costs	£400,000
Open spaces reserve	£60,000
Council tax schemes and discounts	£32,000
Business rates retention growth	£960,000
Replacement housing incentive scheme	£1,000,000
Regeneration and housing schemes	£150,000
Commercial activities	£265,000
Service reviews	£500,000
	£5,059,000

12.13 The potential deficit reduction programme has been compiled against the current assumptions of increasing cost and local government funding. Clearly this position is subject change and further detrimental impacts on the Council's funding position cannot be ruled out. Should the projected deficit therefore increase, it will be necessary to identify further savings or income generation targets in order to balance the position.

13.0 REVENUE RESERVES

13.1 The General Fund 'working balance' and the earmarked reserves are a significant element of the Council's financial resources, and as such it is important that they are aligned to priority areas as well as mitigating against potential financial risks to the authority.

13.2 The Council's 'Working Balance' is the revenue reserve that is set aside to cover any significant business risks and emergencies that might arise outside of the normal set budget. In recognition of the very low levels of reserve held in the working balance, and highlighted in CIPFA's Financial Resilience Index, this reserve had been increased from £450,000 to £800,000 over the last two years which now equates to approximately 9.1% of net revenue budget for the year 2019/20.

13.3 Given the increasing risk associated with a political and economic uncertainty and the specific threat to local government funding streams, it may be prudent to increase both the general fund reserve and other specific earmarked reserves in order to manage risk and insulate the Council as much as possible from any impacts associated with these risks as we head into the next decade. The ability to increase reserves will of course be dependent on the overall funding available to the Council but this is a course of action that will need to be given a priority status in the MTFs.

13.4 As at the 31 March 2018, the Council had £8.01m in useable earmarked reserves, although it should be noted that a large proportion of this money is grant funding from external sources for specific projects.

13.5 It is suggested that the level of these reserves are adequate to cover medium levels of risk. Further expansion of the risk management reserves should be considered at the earliest opportunity in order to provide enhanced levels of confidence and reassurance in the financial affairs of the council.

13.6 Given the £5m deficit faced by the Council in the next five years it may be necessary to use a substantial amount of reserves to help smooth the deficit. In addition, one-off funding could be required to make significant changes to the council structure and operating model as it adjusts to lower levels of funding. The Council currently has £1,000,000 in reserve to support the budget and meet any one-off costs required.

13.7 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Finance Officer to report to the council, as part of the budget and tax setting report, their view on the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of reserves. This view will be given in the report to council in February 2020.

14.0 PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

14.1 The production of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the annual budget report is carried out with reference to the Transform Working Group, with views of members taken into account when compiling both reports.

14.2 In addition, consultation with both the general public and local businesses will continue to take place on budget principles and specific budget proposals.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Treasury and Capital Management
Report of:	Head of Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Lead:	Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management
Number of Appendices:	Five

Executive Summary:

The Council is required to adopt a range of strategies and policies before the start of the financial year in order to provide clarity on the plans for the financial management of the authority in the forthcoming year.

Two new requirements were introduced in 2019 - the Capital strategy which is a requirement of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA's) Prudential Code and the Investment Strategy which is a statutory requirement from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The new strategies complement the existing requirements and together form a suite of treasury and capital management strategies.

Given the number of strategies, and the increased focus on these documents, they are presented together in a standalone report rather than forming part of the annual budget papers.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND TO THE COUNCIL the ADOPTION of:

- **The Capital Strategy 2020/21.**
- **The Investment Strategy 2020/21.**
- **Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2020/21.**
- **Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21.**
- **The Flexible use of Capital Receipts Policy 2020/21.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

It is a statutory requirement to adopt these strategies prior to the start of the financial year.

<p>Resource Implications:</p> <p>None directly relating to the report.</p>
<p>Legal Implications:</p> <p>As detailed within the report and appendices.</p>
<p>Risk Management Implications:</p> <p>As detailed within the appendices.</p>
<p>Performance Management Follow-up:</p> <p>As detailed within the appendices.</p>
<p>Environmental Implications:</p> <p>None.</p>

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 There has been a longstanding requirement for the Council to produce both a Treasury Management Strategy and a Minimum Revenue Provision Policy before the start of the financial year. In addition, with the Council taking advantage of the flexibility currently available for the use of capital receipts, a further policy was introduced in 2018/19. All three of these policies were previously presented as part of the set of budget papers.
- 1.2 As Councils increase their commercial property activity, there has been increasing concern about this area of expenditure and as a result a desire for Councils to be more transparent in reporting these activities. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has updated its Prudential Code and included a new requirement for a Capital Strategy to be produced annually. Alongside this, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) updated its investment guidance which included the new requirement of an Investment Strategy being produced on an annual basis.
- 1.3 Given the increase in strategies and policies required, as well as additional focus now on these documents, they are presented as a suite of treasury and capital reports rather than forming appendices to the annual budget report.

2.0 TREASURY AND CAPITAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

2.1 The following paragraphs give a brief overview of each of the five appendices.

2.2 Capital Strategy

This is a requirement of CIPFA's Prudential Code to place decisions around borrowing in the context of the overall longer term financial position of the authority and to improve links between the revenue and capital budgets.

This Capital Strategy was introduced for 2019/20, giving a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

2.3 Investment Strategy

This comes from updated MHCLG statutory guidance and applies to accounting periods starting 1 April 2018.

This is not the Council's strategy for actual investment or otherwise in either commercial property or service property. It does not commit the authority to any future direction or expenditure. The report provides oversight on how the Council undertakes transactions of this nature, the proportionality of these investments and a one year forecast of a range of financial indicators based on the standing investment decision of Council.

2.4 Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2020/21

The statement at Appendix C sets out the Council policy on making a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for the 2020/21 financial year in accordance with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008. The policy is also in line with the revised guidance issued in 2018. As a result of the Council's recent capital programme, funded by borrowing, the Council is required to make a MRP in order to repay the principal borrowed.

The Council will look to utilise capital and revenue balances where possible in order to reduce the revenue impact of investment plans. However, where either internal or external borrowing is required a MRP will be required to be made. To minimise the impact on the revenue account, the financially most advantageous MRP option will be chosen.

2.5 Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition (the CIPFA Code) requires the authority to approve a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year. The report at Appendix D fulfils the authority's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.

The Treasury Management Strategy 2020/2021, sets the framework in which day-to-day and strategic treasury activities are operated. The documents are compiled from the recommendations within the CIPFA guidance and from the Council's Treasury Management advisors with consideration given to the current financial climate and factors affecting market conditions.

The budget for investment income in 2020/21 is £0.55million, based on an average investment portfolio of £27million at an interest rate of 2.02%. The budget for debt interest paid in 2020/21 is £0.51 million, based on an average debt portfolio of £35million at an average interest rate of 1.47%. If actual levels of investments and borrowing, and actual interest rates differ from those forecast, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

2.6 The Flexible use of Capital Receipts Policy 2020/21

The Secretary of State has allowed, for a temporary period only, the flexible use of capital receipts to support transformational projects. The Council has no new requirements for this flexibility but will continue to support the projects approved within the 2018/19 budget.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 None.

- 5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES**
- 5.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES**
- 6.1 As detailed within the appendices.
- 7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)**
- 7.1 No specific proposals within appendices affecting human or property resources.
- 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 As contained within the appendices.
- 10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS**
- 10.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

Contact Officer: Head of Finance and Asset Management Tel: 01684 272005

Appendices: A – Capital Strategy 2020/21.
B – Investment Strategy 2020/21.
C – Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2020/21.
D – Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21.
E – The Flexible use of Capital Receipts Policy 2020/21.

Capital Strategy Report 2020/21

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Introduction

This capital strategy report gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It has been written in an accessible style to enhance members' understanding of these sometimes technical areas.

Capital Expenditure and Financing

Capital expenditure is where the Authority spends money on assets, such as property or vehicles that will be used for more than one year. In local government this includes spending on assets owned by other bodies, and loans and grants to other bodies enabling them to buy assets. The Authority has some limited discretion on what counts as capital expenditure, for example assets costing below £10k are not capitalised and are charged to revenue in year.

- For details of the Authority's policy on capitalisation, see Note 2.16 in the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019

In 2020/21, the Authority is planning capital expenditure of £18.672m as summarised below:

Table 1: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Expenditure in £ millions

	2018/19 actual	2019/20 forecast	2020/21 budget	2021/22 budget	2022/23 budget
General Fund services	2.155	1.495	3.731	6.516	5.200
Capital investments	8.516	6.627	15.000	5.000	0
TOTAL	10.671	8.122	18.731	11.516	5.200

The main General Fund capital projects include the replacement of the Vehicles which are used to deliver waste and recycling services, delivery of the ICT and Asset management strategies, the delivery of the Ashchurch bridge project and also payment of Disabled Facility Grants. The Authority also plans to incur £15.000m of capital expenditure on investments, which are detailed later in this report.

Governance: Service managers must take a report to full Council in order to include projects in the Council's capital programme. Finance calculate the financing cost (which can be nil if the project is externally financed) and review any business case for the proposal to ensure it meets the council requirements over payback periods (if applicable). Council appraises all proposals based on a comparison of service priorities against financing costs and approves the use of capital resources. The final capital programme is then presented to Executive Committee and to Council in February each year.

All capital expenditure must be financed, either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Council's own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing and Private Finance Initiative). The planned financing of the above expenditure is as follows:

Table 2: Capital financing in £ millions

	2018/19 actual	2019/20 forecast	2020/21 budget	2021/22 budget	2022/23 budget
External sources	0.906	0.966	2.800	5.866	0.500
Own resources	1.249	0.529	0.931	0.150	0.200
Debt	8.516	6.627	15.000	5.500	4.500
TOTAL	10.671	8.122	18.731	11.516	5.200

Debt is only a temporary source of finance, since loans and leases must be repaid, and this is therefore replaced over time by other financing, usually from revenue which is known as minimum revenue provision (MRP). Alternatively, proceeds from selling capital assets (known as capital receipts) may be used to replace debt finance. Planned MRP and use of capital receipts are as follows:

Table 3: Replacement of debt finance in £'000

	2018/19 actual	2019/20 forecast	2020/21 budget	2021/22 budget	2022/23 budget
Own resources	403	537	640	852	878

The Authority's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP and capital receipts used to replace debt. The CFR is expected to be £14,361k during 2020/21. Based on the above figures for expenditure and financing, the Authority's estimated CFR is as follows:

Table 4: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement in £'000

	31.3.2019 actual	31.3.2020 forecast	31.3.2021 budget	31.3.2022 budget	31.3.2023 budget
General Fund services	0	0	0	500	4,500
Capital investments	36,686	42,776	57,137	61,285	60,907
TOTAL CFR	36,686	42,776	57,137	61,785	65,407

Asset management: To ensure that capital assets continue to be of long-term use, the Council has an asset management strategy in place. This plan is set in the wider context of ensuring a sustainable future for Council expenditure and revenue and aims to:

- Identify and explain the context and objectives of Asset Management at Tewkesbury Borough Council.
- Identify and explain how the plan links with our Corporate Plan and processes that will be followed to deliver Asset Management to Tewkesbury Borough Council.
- Identify the specific challenges and opportunities that currently affect Tewkesbury Borough Council's land and building assets and the ability of those assets to deliver the priorities, goals and promises set out in our Corporate Plan.
- Identify and recommended strategies to address and resolve issues and opportunities within the asset portfolio.
- Establish an annual Service Action Plan summarising the required actions arising from those recommendations.

The Council's asset management strategy can be found on our website.

Asset disposals: When a capital asset is no longer needed, it may be sold so that the proceeds, known as capital receipts, can be spent on new assets or to repay debt. The Council is currently also permitted to spend capital receipts on service transformation projects until 2021/22. Repayments of capital grants, loans and investments also generate capital receipts. The Council plans to receive £160,000 of capital receipts in the coming financial year as follows:

Table 5: Capital receipts receivable in £'000

	2018/19 actual	2019/20 forecast	2020/21 budget	2021/22 budget	2022/23 budget
Asset sales	208	218	110	10	10
Right to buy receipts	155	75	50	50	50
TOTAL	363	293	160	60	60

- The Authority's Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy is available alongside this report.

Treasury Management

Treasury management is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the Authority's spending needs, while managing the risks involved. Surplus cash is invested until required, while a shortage of cash will be met by borrowing, to avoid excessive credit balances or overdrafts in the bank current account. The Authority is typically cash rich in the short-term as revenue income is received before it is spent, but cash poor in the long-term as capital expenditure is incurred before being financed. The revenue cash surpluses are offset against capital cash shortfalls to reduce overall borrowing.

Due to decisions taken in the past, the Authority currently has £28m borrowing at an average interest rate of 1.73% and £32.2m treasury investments at an average rate of 1.65%.

Borrowing strategy: The Authority's main objectives when borrowing are to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Authority therefore seeks to strike a balance

between cheap short-term loans (currently available at around 0.75%) and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but higher (currently 2.0 to 3.0%).

Projected levels of the Authority's total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing, PFI liabilities, leases) are shown below, compared with the capital financing requirement (see above).

Table 6: Prudential Indicator: Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement in £'000

	31.3.2019 actual	31.3.2020 forecast	31.3.2021 budget	31.3.2022 budget	31.3.2023 budget
Debt	28,163	34,790	49,790	55,290	59,790
Capital Financing Requirement	36,686	42,776	57,137	61,785	65,407

Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short-term. As can be seen from table 6, the Authority expects to comply with this in the medium term.

Liability benchmark: To compare the Authority's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £10m at each year-end. This benchmark is currently £17.9m and is forecast to rise to £34.82m over the next three years.

Table 7: Borrowing and the Liability Benchmark in £ millions

	31.3.2019 actual	31.3.2020 forecast	31.3.2021 budget	31.3.2022 budget	31.3.2023 budget
Outstanding borrowing	28.16	34.79	49.79	55.29	59.79
Liability benchmark	17.90	15.32	31.43	34.82	37.55

The table shows that the Authority expects to remain borrowed above its liability benchmark. This is because a deliberate decision has been made to borrow additional sums due to the volatility of the Councils cash flows.

Affordable borrowing limit: The Authority is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the authorised limit for external debt) each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower "operational boundary" is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

Table 8: Prudential Indicators: Authorised limit and operational boundary for external debt in £m

	2019/20 limit	2020/21 limit	2021/22 limit	2022/23 limit
Authorised limit – borrowing	55	60	65	70
Operational boundary – borrowing	50	55	60	65

Further details on borrowing are in the treasury management strategy

Treasury investment strategy: Treasury investments arise from receiving cash before it is paid out again. Investments made for service reasons or for pure financial gain are not generally considered to be part of treasury management.

The Authority's policy on treasury investments is to prioritise security and liquidity over yield, that is to focus on minimising risk rather than maximising returns. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, for example with the government, other local authorities or selected high-quality banks, to minimise the risk of loss. Money that will be held for longer terms is invested more widely, including in bonds, shares and property, to balance the risk of loss against the risk of receiving returns below inflation. Both near-term and longer-term investments may be held in pooled funds, where an external fund manager makes decisions on which particular investments to buy and the Authority may request its money back at short notice.

Table 9: Treasury management investments in £'000

	31.3.2019 actual	31.3.2020 forecast	31.3.2021 budget	31.3.2022 budget	31.3.2023 budget
Near-term investments	14,118	21,937	14,187	15,447	16,327
Longer-term investments	5,993	6,993	12,993	12,993	12,993
TOTAL	20,111	28,930	27,180	28,440	29,320

Further details on treasury investments are in the treasury management strategy

Risk management: The effective management and control of risk are prime objectives of the Authority's treasury management activities. The treasury management strategy therefore sets out various indicators and limits to constrain the risk of unexpected losses and details the extent to which financial derivatives may be used to manage treasury risks.

Governance: Decisions on treasury management investment and borrowing are made daily and are therefore delegated to the Head of Finance and Assets and staff, who must act in line with the treasury management strategy approved by council. Half yearly reports on treasury management activity are presented to Executive Committee along with quarterly performance being reported as part of the quarterly budget reporting. The Audit Committee is responsible for scrutinising treasury management decisions.

Commercial Activities

With central government financial support for local public services declining and uncertainty around future funding sources (e.g. New Homes Bonus), the Council has no choice but to invest in commercial property purely or mainly for financial gain. Total commercial investments are currently valued at £40.9m (with a cost value of £37m) providing a net return after all costs of 3.3%.

With financial return being the main objective, the Council accepts higher risk on commercial investment than with treasury investments. The principal risk exposures include voids, fall in capital value and high asset management costs. These risks are managed by using professional property advisers who are used to analyse the risk of voids, advice on alternative uses or exit strategies for investment properties. In order that commercial investments remain proportionate to the size of the authority, these are subject to an overall maximum investment limit of £65m and contingency plans are in place (including a contingency reserve) should expected yields not materialise.

Governance: Decisions on commercial investments are made by the Head of Finance and Asset Management alongside the Commercial Investments Board in line with the criteria and limits approved by Council. Property and most other commercial investments are also capital expenditure and purchases will therefore also be approved as part of the capital programme.

- Further details on commercial investments and limits on their use are in the investment strategy.
- Further details on the risk management of commercial investments are also within the investment strategy.

Liabilities

In addition to debt of £28m detailed above, the Council is committed to making future payments to cover its pension fund deficit (valued at £34m). It has also set aside £6.7m to cover risks of provisions (of which £6.4m relates to business rates appeals).

Governance: Decisions on incurring new discretionary liabilities are taken in line with the Financial Procedure Rules by service managers in consultation with Head of Finance and Asset Management and the Borough Solicitor.

Revenue Budget Implications

Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP are charged to revenue, offset by any investment income receivable. The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from Council Tax, business rates and general government grants.

Table 10: Prudential Indicator: Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream

	2018/19 actual	2019/20 forecast	2020/21 budget	2021/22 budget	2022/23 budget
Financing costs (£m)	0.45	0.60	0.61	0.94	0.97
Proportion of net revenue stream	5.15%	6.84%	6.90%	10.58%	11.18%

Further details on the revenue implications of capital expenditure are in the 2020/21 revenue budget.

Sustainability: Due to the very long-term nature of capital expenditure and financing, the revenue budget implications of expenditure incurred in the next few years will extend for up to 40 years into the future. The Head of Finance and Asset Management is satisfied that the proposed capital programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable because it has all been full costed and the full revenue implications have been included within the Medium Term Finance Strategy (MTFS).

Knowledge and Skills

The Council employs professionally qualified and experienced staff in senior positions with responsibility for making capital expenditure, borrowing and investment decisions. For example, the Head of Finance and Asset Management is a qualified accountant with 19 years' experience, the Asset Manager has many years' experience and is supported by an experienced team including engineers and building surveyors. The Council pays for staff to study towards relevant professional qualifications including CIPFA and AAT.

Where Council staff do not have the knowledge and skills required, use is made of external advisers and consultants that are specialists in their field. The Council currently employs Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers, Lambert Smith Hampton as property consultants and Womble Bond Dickinson as legal specialists. This approach is more cost effective than employing such staff directly and ensures that the Council has access to knowledge and skills commensurate with its risk appetite.

Investment Strategy Report 2020/21

Introduction

The Authority invests its money for three broad purposes:

- because it has surplus cash as a result of its day-to-day activities, for example when income is received in advance of expenditure (known as **treasury management investments**),
- to support local public services by lending to or buying shares in other organisations (**service investments**), and
- to earn investment income (known as **commercial investments** where this is the main purpose).

This investment strategy meets the requirements of statutory guidance issued by the government in January 2018 and focuses on the second and third of these categories.

Treasury Management Investments

The Authority typically receives its income in cash (e.g. from taxes and grants) before it pays for its expenditure in cash (e.g. through payroll and invoices). It also holds reserves for future expenditure and collects local taxes on behalf of other local authorities and central government. These activities, plus the timing of borrowing decisions, lead to a cash surplus which is invested in accordance with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. The balance of treasury management investments is expected to fluctuate between £25m and £35m during the 2020/21 financial year.

Contribution: The contribution that these investments make to the objectives of the Authority is to support effective treasury management activities.

Further details: Full details of the Authority's policies and its plan for 2020/21 for treasury management investments are covered in a separate document, the Treasury Management Strategy.

Service Investments: Loans

Contribution: The Council may lend money to local businesses/charities to support local public services and stimulate local economic growth. Although a loan agreement for £30k is being drawn up, it currently isn't in place at the time of writing this report.

Security: The main risk when making service loans is that the borrower will be unable to repay the principal lent and/or the interest due. In order to limit this risk and ensure that total exposure to service loans remains proportionate to the size of the Authority, we ensure that any default in the repayment is affordable for the Council.

Accounting standards require the Authority to set aside loss allowance for loans, reflecting the likelihood of non-payment. The figure for any loans in the Authority's statement of accounts at the end of 2019-20 will be shown net of this loss allowance. However, the Authority makes every reasonable effort to collect the full sum lent and has appropriate credit control arrangements in place to recover overdue repayments.

Risk assessment: The Authority assesses the risk of loss before entering into and whilst holding service loans. As we only have one in progress we have assessed their credit rating and also ensured we could afford any financial loss of a default in repayment.

Service Investments: Shares

Contribution: The Council invests in the shares of a jointly owned teckel company (Ubico Ltd) to support local public services (environmental services). Tewkesbury Borough Council have a £1 share and there are 6 other authorities each owning £1 each.

The purpose of the investment is to work with other local authorities to create efficiencies and resilience within our environmental services and also enable a more commercial outlook within the company.

Security: One of the risks of investing in shares is that they fall in value meaning that the initial outlay may not be recovered. As the only shares we have are nominal and relate to a service objective then there is no risk of falls in value.

Other Shares

We also hold shares in a Local Authority Property Fund however this is covered within the Treasury Management Strategy.

Commercial Investments: Property

Contribution: The Council invests in local and UK wide commercial property with the intent of making a profit that will be spent on local public services. The properties held cover a range of sectors including industrial and retail to spread the risk and include a wide range of lease types and lengths. The income generated from these investments enables us to continue functioning as a council and provide our statutory duties.

Some investments are held for service reasons as well and are immaterial in value. The material items are shown in the table below:

Table 3: Property held for investment purposes in £ millions

Property	Actual	31.3.2019 actual	
	Purchase costs	Gains or (losses)	Value in accounts
Land only	1.5	(0.2)	1.3
Office	22.9	0.1	23.0
Industrial	3.8	(0.3)	3.5
Retail	12.9	(0.6)	12.3
TOTAL	41.1	(0.1)	40.1

Security: In accordance with government guidance, the Authority considers a property investment to be secure if its accounting valuation is higher than its purchase cost (including taxes and transaction costs) or, overall, the value of material investment properties are no less than 10% lower than purchase cost. A fall in the value of the property does not impact on the council as it is reversed out in the Movement in Statement of Reserves. The council is concerned about the net income return as this is crucial to the budget.

Where value in accounts is below purchase cost: The fair value of the Council's investment property portfolio is lower than the original purchase price as the fair value looks at the length of any leases currently in place (and as the lease term diminishes the fair value falls). If the value falls a significant

amount (10% or more) then further work is done to identify whether any mitigating actions are needed to protect the capital invested. These actions include analysing any risk of lease defaults or cancellations and ensuring contingency funds are in place to mitigate any material impact on the budget.

Risk assessment: The Authority assesses the risk of loss before entering into and whilst holding property investments by:

- using professional property advisers (LSHIM) to assess the full cost of any potential commercial property purchase, including void periods;
- ensuring an exit strategy by looking at the alternative use for the property;
- costing any asset management requirements required and setting aside monies in the budget;
- looking at lease lengths and break clauses to ascertain the risk of any voids and to enter early negotiations with tenants;
- ensuring a minimum rate of return that enables all known costs to be covered;
- diversifying the portfolio over a number of sector areas.
- Undertaking an independent valuation exercise to substantiate the purchase price prior to completion
- Undertaking other building and environmental surveys
- Reviewing the strength of covenant of the existing tenant
- Reviewing the strength of economy in the surrounding area

Liquidity: Compared with other investment types, property is relatively difficult to sell and convert to cash at short notice and can take a considerable period to sell in certain market conditions. To ensure that the invested funds can be accessed when they are needed, for example to repay capital borrowed, the Council would use professional agents to sell these assets to maximise best value.

Proportionality

The Council is dependent on profit generating investment activity to achieve a balanced revenue budget. Table 4 below shows the extent to which the expenditure planned to meet the service delivery objectives of the Authority is dependent on achieving the expected net profit from investments over the lifecycle of the Medium Term Financial Plan. Should it fail to achieve the expected net profit, Council's contingency plans for continuing to provide these services to firstly use any contingency reserves available to continue to provide these services in the short term, whilst an assessment of the investments future capabilities are made, and then cost reductions would be made to ensure the council is financially viable in the longer term.

Table 4: Proportionality of Investments

	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Budget
Gross service expenditure	37,736	32,471	33,489	33,940	34,287
Investment income	2,147	2,209	2,055	2,340	2,351
Proportion	6%	7%	6%	7%	7%

Borrowing in Advance of Need

Government guidance is that local authorities must not borrow more than or in advance of their needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. The Authority has chosen not to follow this guidance and has previously borrowed for this purpose because, as a small council with the 5th lowest council tax in the country, the level of cuts to core government support along with losses associated with the retained business rates scheme and the growing size of the Borough mean that the Council would be unlikely to balance its budget without this income and therefore would be forced to reduce service offering drastically. It would also heighten the potential for issuing a s114 notice. The Authority's policies in investing the money borrowed, including management of the risks, for example of not achieving the desired profit or borrowing costs increasing, is to always have a fixed rate for borrowing for at least 40% of investments to manage the risk of interest rate increases. In addition, the Council ensures any rental income is managed and leases are reviewed early to allow for any potential break clauses and void periods which can be factored into the budget.

Capacity, Skills and Culture

Elected members and statutory officers:

A Commercial Investment Board was set up along with an approved Commercial Investment Strategy (Council, December 2016) to provide a level of scrutiny and governance around property purchases. The board consists of six Members and council officers (to include the Head of Finance and Asset Management and the Asset Manager) who receive investment proposals and evaluate individual proposals for bidding.

Commercial deals and corporate governance:

Lambert Smith Hampton Investment Management (LSHIM) were appointed as our professional property investment advisers. The Council gave them the total amount of money available for investment and the minimum net return we will accept and they recommended a balanced portfolio between industrial, retail and office accommodation in order to spread the risk between sectors.

When a property comes to the market that LSHIM believe fits this criteria they will send us a summary to see whether we are interested in pursuing it further. If we choose to look into the investment we commission LSHIM to perform their due diligence and prepare a full report on the property.

Detailed analysis of any potential bids are received by the board outlining the risks, returns, any existing tenancies and asset management opportunities for the property explained. LSHIM are aware of the differing requirements of a local authority and recommend properties that would fit within our approved commercial strategy and risk appetite. Detailed financials are received outlining possible net returns to us which include our statutory costs such as minimum revenue provision (MRP) and also allow for voids and conservative estimates of any rent increases.

Authority of investments up to £12m can be made by the Head of Finance and Assets in consultation with the Commercial Investment Board whereas anything over £12m is referred to the Executive Committee for deeper scrutiny and decision making.

Investment Indicators

The Authority has set the following quantitative indicators to allow elected members and the public to assess the Authority's total risk exposure as a result of its investment decisions.

Total risk exposure: The first indicator shows the Authority's total exposure to potential investment losses. This includes amounts the Authority is contractually committed to lend but have yet to be drawn down.

Table 5: Total investment exposure in £millions

Total investment exposure	31.03.2019 Actual	31.03.2020 Forecast	31.03.2021 Forecast
Treasury management investments	14.9	29.47	28.36
Commercial investments: Property	40.9	47.52	62.52
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	55.8	76.99	90.88

How investments are funded: Government guidance is that these indicators should include how investments are funded. Since the Authority does not normally associate particular assets with particular liabilities, this guidance is difficult to comply with. However, the following investments could be described as being funded by borrowing. The remainder of the Authority's investments are funded by usable reserves and income received in advance of expenditure.

We have no treasury management investments funded by borrowing and have no plans to do this in the future either.

Table 6: Investments funded by borrowing in £millions

Investments funded by borrowing	31.03.2019 Actual	31.03.2020 Forecast	31.03.2020 Forecast
Commercial investments: Property	28.16	34.79	49.79
TOTAL FUNDED BY BORROWING	28.16	34.79	49.79

Rate of return received: This indicator shows the investment income received less the associated costs, including the cost of borrowing where appropriate, as a proportion of the sum initially invested. Note that due to the complex local government accounting framework, not all recorded gains and losses affect the revenue account in the year they are incurred.

Table 7: Investment rate of return (**net** of all costs)

Investments net rate of return	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Forecast
Treasury management investments	1.74%	1.41%	2.02%
Commercial investments: Property	3.03%	3.30%	2.76%
ALL INVESTMENTS	3.32%	2.50%	2.50%

Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2020/21

Where the Authority finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there has been no statutory minimum since 2008. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to have regard to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's *Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision* (the MHCLG Guidance) most recently issued in 2018.

The broad aim of the Guidance is to ensure that capital expenditure is financed over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant.

The MHCLG Guidance requires the Authority to approve an Annual MRP Statement each year, and recommends a number of options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP. The following statement incorporates options recommended in the Guidance.

For capital expenditure incurred after 31st March 2008, MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant asset as the principal repayment on an annuity with an annual interest rate of the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) annuity rate (less the 0.2% for certainty rate) for 20 years on the day or purchase, starting in the year after the asset becomes operational. MRP on purchases of freehold land will be charged over 50 years. MRP on expenditure not related to fixed assets but which has been capitalised by regulation or direction will be charged over 20 years.

For assets acquired by finance leases, MRP will be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2020/21 will not be subject to a MRP charge until 2021/22.

Based on the Authority's latest estimate of its capital financing requirement (CFR) on 31st March 2020, the budget for MRP has been set as follows:

	31.03.2020 Estimated CFR £m	2020/21 Estimated MRP £'000
Unsupported capital expenditure after 31.03.2008	42.8	640
Total General Fund	42.8	640

Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2020/21

Introduction

Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management.

Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act 2003* to have regard to the CIPFA Code.

Investments held for service purposes or for commercial profit are considered in a different report, the Investment Strategy.

External Context

Economic background: The UK's progress negotiating its exit from the European Union, together with its future trading arrangements, will continue to be a major influence on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2020/21.

UK Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) for September registered 1.7% year on year, unchanged from the previous month. Core inflation, which excludes the more volatile components, rose to 1.7% from 1.5% in August. The most recent labour market data for the three months to August 2019 showed the unemployment rate ticked back up to 3.9% while the employment rate was 75.9%, just below recent record-breaking highs. The headline 3-month average annual growth rate for pay was 3.8% in August as wages continue to rise steadily. In real terms, after adjusting for inflation, pay growth increased 1.9%.

GDP growth rose by 0.3% in the third quarter of 2019 from -0.2% in the previous three months with the annual rate falling further below its trend rate to 1.0% from 1.2%. Services and construction added positively to growth, by 0.6% and 0.4% respectively, while production was flat and agriculture recorded a fall of 0.2%. Looking ahead, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Report (formerly the Quarterly Inflation Report) forecasts economic growth to pick up during 2020 as Brexit-related uncertainties dissipate and provide a boost to business investment helping GDP reach 1.6% in Q4 2020, 1.8% in Q4 2021 and 2.1% in Q4 2022.

The Bank of England maintained Bank Rate to 0.75% in November following a 7-2 vote by the Monetary Policy Committee. Despite keeping rates on hold, MPC members did confirm that if Brexit uncertainty drags on or global growth fails to recover, they are prepared to cut interest rates as required. Moreover, the downward revisions to some of the growth projections in the Monetary Policy Report suggest the Committee may now be less convinced of the need to increase rates even if there is a Brexit deal.

Growth in Europe remains soft, driven by a weakening German economy which saw GDP fall -0.1% in Q2 and is expected to slip into a technical recession in Q3. Euro zone inflation was 0.8% year on year in September, well below the European Central Bank's target of 'below, but close to 2%' and leading to the central bank holding its main interest rate at 0% while cutting the deposit facility rate to -0.5%. In addition to maintaining interest rates at ultra-low levels, the ECB announced it would recommence its quantitative easing programme from November.

In the US, the Federal Reserve began easing monetary policy again in 2019 as a pre-emptive strike against slowing global and US economic growth on the back on of the ongoing trade war with China. At its last meeting the Fed cut rates to the range of 1.50-1.75% and financial markets expect further loosening of monetary policy in 2020. US GDP growth slowed to 1.9% annualised in Q3 from 2.0% in Q2.

Credit outlook: Credit conditions for larger UK banks have remained relatively benign over the past year. The UK's departure from the European Union was delayed three times in 2019 and while there remains some concern over a global economic slowdown, this has yet to manifest in any credit issues for banks. Meanwhile, the post financial crisis banking reform is now largely complete, with the new ringfenced banks embedded in the market.

Challenger banks hit the news headlines in 2019 with Metro Bank and TSB Bank both suffering adverse publicity and falling customer numbers.

Looking forward, the potential for a "no-deal" Brexit and/or a global recession remain the major risks facing banks and building societies in 2020/21 and a cautious approach to bank deposits remains advisable.

Interest rate forecast: The Authority's treasury management adviser Arlingclose is forecasting that Bank Rate will remain at 0.75% until the end of 2022. The risks to this forecast are deemed to be significantly weighted to the downside, particularly given the upcoming general election, the need for greater clarity on Brexit and the continuing global economic slowdown. The Bank of England, having previously indicated interest rates may need to rise if a Brexit agreement was reached, stated in its November Monetary Policy Report and its Bank Rate decision (7-2 vote to hold rates) that the MPC now believe this is less likely even in the event of a deal.

Gilt yields have risen but remain at low levels and only some very modest upward movement from current levels are expected based on Arlingclose's interest rate projections. The central case is for 10-year and 20-year gilt yields to rise to around 1.00% and 1.40% respectively over the time horizon, with broadly balanced risks to both the upside and downside. However, short-term volatility arising from both economic and political events over the period is a near certainty.

A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is attached at Appendix A.

For the purpose of setting the budget, it has been assumed that treasury management investments will be made at an average rate of 2.02%, and that long-term loans will be borrowed at an average rate of 2.03%.

Local Context

On 30th November 2019, the Authority held £28.0m of borrowing and £32.2m of treasury investments. This is set out in further detail at Appendix B. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance sheet summary and forecast

	31.3.19 Actual £m	31.3.20 Estimate £m	31.3.21 Forecast £m	31.3.22 Forecast £m	31.3.23 Forecast £m
General Fund CFR	36.69	42.78	57.14	61.79	65.40
Less: External borrowing **	28.16	34.79	49.79	55.29	59.79
Internal borrowing	8.53	7.99	7.35	6.53	5.61
Less: Usable reserves	15.94	22.03	18.28	17.54	16.42
Less: Working capital	12.85	15.43	17.43	19.43	21.43
Treasury investments	20.26	29.47	28.36	30.47	32.24

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Authority's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing.

The Authority has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme, but minimal investments and will therefore be required to borrow up to £59.79m over the forecast period.

CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities recommends that the Authority's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. Table 1 shows that the Authority expects to comply with this recommendation during 2019/20.

Liability benchmark: To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes the same forecasts as table 1 above, but that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £10.0m at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity but minimise credit risk.

Table 2: Liability benchmark

	31.3.19 Actual £m	31.3.20 Estimate £m	31.3.21 Forecast £m	31.3.22 Forecast £m	31.3.23 Forecast £m
CFR	36.69	42.78	57.14	61.79	65.40
Less: Usable reserves	15.94	22.03	18.28	17.54	16.42
Less: Working capital	12.85	15.43	17.43	19.43	21.43
Plus: Minimum investments	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Liability Benchmark	17.90	15.32	31.43	34.82	37.55

Following on from the medium-term forecasts in table 2 above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes capital expenditure funded by borrowing as shown in the Capital Strategy, minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on the professional valuers estimate of asset life, expenditure and reserves all forecasted based current knowledge and historical evidence.

Borrowing Strategy

The Authority currently holds £28.16 million of loans, remaining at the level of the previous year, as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. The balance sheet forecast in table 1 shows that the Authority expects to borrow up to £15.0m in 2020/21. The Authority may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £60 million.

Objectives: The Authority's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

Strategy: Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead.

By doing so, the Authority is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of internal and short-term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly. Arlingclose will assist the Authority with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Authority borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2020/21 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.

The Authority has previously raised all of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB but the government increased PWLB rates by 1% in October 2019 making it now a relatively expensive options. The Authority will now look to borrow any long-term loans from other sources including banks, pensions and local authorities, and will investigate the possibility of issuing bonds and similar instruments, in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code.

Alternatively, the Authority may arrange forward starting loans, where the interest rate is fixed in advance, but the cash is received in later years. This would enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period.

In addition, the Authority may borrow short-term loans to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.

Sources of borrowing: The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and any successor body
- any institution approved for investments (see below)
- any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
- any other UK public sector body
- UK public and private sector pension funds
- capital market bond investors
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues

Other sources of debt finance: In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

- leasing
- hire purchase
- Private Finance Initiative
- sale and leaseback

Municipal Bonds Agency: UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. It plans to issue bonds on the capital markets and lend the proceeds to local authorities. This will be a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities will be required to provide bond investors with a guarantee to refund their investment in the event that the agency is unable to for any reason; and there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report to full Council.

Short-term and variable rate loans: These loans leave the Authority exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the interest rate exposure limits in the treasury management indicators below. Financial derivatives may be used to manage this interest rate risk (see section below).

Debt rescheduling: The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Authority may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk.

Investment Strategy

The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Authority's investment balance has ranged between £22.8 and £32.2 million, and similar levels are expected to be maintained in the forthcoming year.

Objectives: The CIPFA Code requires the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Authority will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested.

Negative interest rates: If the UK enters into a recession in 2020/21, there is a small chance that the Bank of England could set its Bank Rate at or below zero, which is likely to feed through to negative interest rates on all low risk, short-term investment options. This situation already exists in many other European countries. In this event, security will be measured as receiving the contractually agreed amount at maturity, even though this may be less than the amount originally invested.

Strategy: Given the increasing risk and very low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Authority aims to further diversify into more secure and/or higher yielding asset classes during 2020/21. This is especially the case for the estimated £6.0m that is available for longer-term investment. The majority of the Authority's surplus cash is currently invested in short-term unsecured bank deposits,

money market funds, other local authorities, and housing associations. This diversification will represent a continuation of the new strategy adopted in 2017.

Business models: Under the new IFRS 9 standard, the accounting for certain investments depends on the Authority's "business model" for managing them. The Authority aims to achieve value from its internally managed treasury investments by a business model of collecting the contractual cash flows and therefore, where other criteria are also met, these investments will continue to be accounted for at amortised cost

Approved counterparties: The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in table 3 below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown.

Table 3: Approved investment counterparties and limits

Credit rating	Banks unsecured	Banks secured	Government	Corporates	Registered Providers
UK Govt	n/a	n/a	£ Unlimited 50 years	n/a	n/a
AAA	£2m 5 years	£2m 20 years	£2m 50 years	£1m 20 years	£2m 20 years
AA+	£2m 5 years	£2m 10 years	£2m 25 years	£1m 10 years	£2m 10 years
AA	£2m 4 years	£2m 5 years	£2m 15 years	£1m 5 years	£2m 10 years
AA-	£2m 3 years	£2m 4 years	£2m 10 years	£1m 4 years	£2m 10 years
A+	£1m 2 years	£2m 3 years	£1m 5 years	£1m 3 years	£1m 5 years
A	£1m 13 months	£2m 2 years	£1m 5 years	£1m 2 years	£1m 5 years
A-	£1m 6 months	£1m 13 months	£1m 5 years	£1m 13 months	£1m 5 years
None	£1m 6 months	n/a	£2m 25 years	£50,000 5 years	£1m 5 years
CCLA Property Fund*		£4m			
Pooled funds and real estate investment trusts		£2m per fund or trust			

*CCLA Property Fund set as higher limit as this will form part of the balanced pooled fund portfolio.

This table must be read in conjunction with the notes below.

Credit rating: Investment limits are set by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from a selection of external rating agencies. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

Banks unsecured: Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.

Banks secured: Covered bonds, reverse repurchase agreements and other collateralised arrangements with banks and building societies. These investments are secured on the bank's assets, which limits the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency, and means that they are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used to determine cash and time limits. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

Government: Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Central Government may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

Corporates: Loans, bonds and commercial paper issued by companies other than banks and registered providers. These investments are not subject to bail-in, but are exposed to the risk of the company going insolvent. Loans to unrated companies will only be made either following an external credit assessment or to a maximum of £50,000 per company as part of a diversified pool in order to spread the risk widely.

Registered providers: Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of registered providers of social housing and registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are tightly regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (in England), the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Welsh Government and the Department for Communities (in Northern Ireland). As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

Pooled funds: Shares or units in diversified investment vehicles consisting of any of the above investment types, plus equity shares and property. These funds have the advantage of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a fee. Short-term Money Market Funds that offer same-day liquidity and very low or no volatility will be used as an alternative to instant access bank accounts, while pooled funds whose value changes with market prices and/or have a notice period will be used for longer investment periods.

Bond, equity and property funds offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Authority to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Authority's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.

Real estate investment trusts: Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties. Investments in REIT shares cannot be withdrawn but can be sold on the stock market to another investor.

Operational bank accounts: The Authority may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments, but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in, and balances will therefore be kept below £4m per bank. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Authority maintaining operational continuity.

Risk assessment and credit ratings: Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Authority's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:

- no new investments will be made,
- any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
- full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.

Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "rating watch negative" or "credit watch negative") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

Other information on the security of investments: The Authority understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support, reports in the quality financial press and analysis and advice from the Authority's treasury management adviser. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may otherwise meet the above criteria.

When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2011, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Authority will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Authority's cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government via the Debt Management Office or invested in government treasury bills for example, or with other local authorities. This will cause a reduction in the level of investment income earned but will protect the principal sum invested.

Investment limits: The Authority's revenue reserves available to cover investment losses are forecast to be £1.85 million on 31st March 2020. A group of banks under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes. Limits will also be placed on fund managers, investments in brokers' nominee accounts, foreign countries and industry sectors as below. Investments in pooled funds and multilateral development banks do not count against the limit for any single foreign country, since the risk is diversified over many countries.

Table 4: Investment limits

	Cash limit
Any single organisation, except CCLA or the UK Govt.	£2m each
CCLA	£4m
UK Central Government	unlimited
Any group of organisations under the same ownership	£2m per group
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£6m per manager
Negotiable instruments held in a broker's nominee account	£6m per broker

Foreign countries	£3m per country
Registered providers and registered social landlords	£6m in total
Unsecured investments with building societies	£2m in total
Loans to unrated corporates	£m in total
Money market funds	50% of total portfolio balance
Real estate investment trusts	£6m in total

Liquidity management: The Authority uses purpose-built cash flow forecasting software to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a prudent basis to minimise the risk of the Authority being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Authority's medium-term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

Treasury Management Indicators

The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

Security: The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit risk indicator	Target
Portfolio average credit rating	A

Interest rate exposures: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates will be:

Interest rate risk indicator	Limit
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	£705,000
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	£385,000

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at current rates.

Maturity structure of borrowing: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

Refinancing rate risk indicator	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	100%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	100%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	100%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year: The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

Price risk indicator	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£6m	£5m	£4m

Related Matters

The CIPFA Code requires the Authority to include the following in its treasury management strategy.

Financial Derivatives: Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (e.g. interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk (e.g. LOBO loans and callable deposits). The general power of competence in Section 1 of the *Localism Act 2011* removes much of the uncertainty over local authorities' use of standalone financial derivatives (i.e. those that are not embedded into a loan or investment).

The Authority will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Authority is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be taken into account when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds and forward starting transactions, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria. The current value of any amount due from a derivative counterparty will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.

In line with the CIPFA Code, the Authority will seek external advice and will consider that advice before entering into financial derivatives to ensure that it fully understands the implications.

Markets in Financial Instruments Directive: The Authority has opted up to professional client status with its providers of financial services, including advisers, banks, brokers and fund managers, allowing it access to a greater range of services but without the greater regulatory protections afforded to individuals and small companies. Given the size and range of the Authority's treasury management activities, the Chief Financial Officer believes this to be the most appropriate status.

Financial Implications

The budget for investment income in 2020/21 is £27 million, based on an average investment portfolio of £545,000 at an interest rate of 2.02%. The budget for debt interest paid in 2020/21 is £513,000, based on an average debt portfolio of £35 million at an average interest rate of 1.47%. If actual levels of investments and borrowing, or actual interest rates, differ from those forecast, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

Other Options Considered

The CIPFA Code does not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Chief Financial Officer, having consulted the Cabinet Member for Finance, believes that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Some alternative strategies, with their financial and risk management implications, are listed below.

Alternative	Impact on income and expenditure	Impact on risk management
Invest in a narrower range of counterparties and/or for shorter times	Interest income will be lower	Lower chance of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be greater
Invest in a wider range of counterparties and/or for longer times	Interest income will be higher	Increased risk of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be smaller
Borrow additional sums at long-term fixed interest rates	Debt interest costs will rise; this is unlikely to be offset by higher investment income	Higher investment balance leading to a higher impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be more certain
Borrow short-term or variable loans instead of long-term fixed rates	Debt interest costs will initially be lower	Increases in debt interest costs will be broadly offset by rising investment income in the medium term, but long-term costs may be less certain
Reduce level of borrowing	Saving on debt interest is likely to exceed lost investment income	Reduced investment balance leading to a lower impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be less certain

Appendix A – Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast November 2019

Underlying assumptions:

- The global economy is entering a period of slower growth in response to political issues, primarily the trade policy stance of the US. The UK economy has displayed a marked slowdown in growth due to both Brexit uncertainty and the downturn in global activity. In response, global and UK interest rate expectations have eased.
- Some positivity on the trade negotiations between China and the US has prompted worst case economic scenarios to be pared back. However, information is limited, and upbeat expectations have been wrong before.
- Brexit has been delayed until 31 January 2020. Following the General Election, the Conservative position in parliament has been strengthened, which reduces the chance of Brexit being further frustrated. A key concern is the limited transitional period following a January 2020 exit date, which will maintain and create additional uncertainty over the next few years.
- UK economic growth has stalled despite Q3 2019 GDP of 0.3%. Monthly figures indicate growth waned as the quarter progressed and survey data suggest falling household and business confidence. Both main political parties have promised substantial fiscal easing, which should help support growth.
- While the potential for divergent paths for UK monetary policy remain, the weaker external environment severely limits potential upside movement in Bank Rate, while the slowing UK economy will place pressure on the MPC to loosen monetary policy. Indeed, two MPC members voted for an immediate cut in November 2019.
- Inflation is running below target at 1.7%. While the tight labour market risks medium-term domestically-driven inflationary pressure, slower global growth should reduce the prospect of externally driven pressure, although political turmoil could push up oil prices.
- Central bank actions and geopolitical risks will continue to produce significant volatility in financial markets, including bond markets.

Forecast:

- Although we have maintained our Bank Rate forecast at 0.75% for the foreseeable future, there are substantial risks to this forecast, dependant on market reaction to the policy making of the new Conservative Government and the evolution of the global economy.
- Arlingclose judges that the risks are weighted to the downside.
- Gilt yields have risen but remain low due to the soft UK and global economic outlooks. US monetary policy and UK government spending will be key influences alongside UK monetary policy.
- We expect gilt yields to remain at relatively low levels for the foreseeable future and judge the risks to be broadly balanced.

	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Average
Official Bank Rate														
Upside risk	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.21
Arlingclose Central Case	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Downside risk	-0.50	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.73
3-month money market rate														
Upside risk	0.10	0.10	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.25
Arlingclose Central Case	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Downside risk	-0.50	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75	-0.73
1yr money market rate														
Upside risk	0.10	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.25	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.23
Arlingclose Central Case	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85
Downside risk	-0.30	-0.50	-0.55	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.65	-0.60
5yr gilt yield														
Upside risk	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.37
Arlingclose Central Case	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.57
Downside risk	-0.35	-0.50	-0.50	-0.55	-0.60	-0.60	-0.60	-0.60	-0.60	-0.60	-0.60	-0.60	-0.60	-0.56
10yr gilt yield														
Upside risk	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.37
Arlingclose Central Case	0.75	0.75	0.80	0.80	0.85	0.85	0.90	0.90	0.95	0.95	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.88
Downside risk	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.45
20yr gilt yield														
Upside risk	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.37
Arlingclose Central Case	1.20	1.20	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.40	1.40	1.30
Downside risk	-0.40	-0.40	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.50	-0.50	-0.45
50yr gilt yield														
Upside risk	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.37
Arlingclose Central Case	1.20	1.20	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.40	1.40	1.30
Downside risk	-0.40	-0.40	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.50	-0.50	-0.45

PWLB Certainty Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 1.80%

PWLB Local Infrastructure Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.60%

Appendix B – Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

	Nov-19 Actual Portfolio £m	Nov-19 Average Rate %
External borrowing:		
Public Works Loan Board	19.00	2.23
Local authorities	9.00	0.78
LOBO loans from banks	0.00	n/a
Other loans	0.00	n/a
Total external borrowing	28.00	
Other long-term liabilities:		
Private Finance Initiative	0.00	n/a
Leases	0.00	n/a
Transferred Debt	0.00	n/a
Total other long-term liabilities	0.00	n/a
Total gross external debt	28.00	1.73
Treasury investments:		
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	8.22	0.95
Registered Providers	3.00	1.59
Government (incl. local authorities)	11.00	0.88
Corporate bonds and loans	0.00	n/a
Money Market Funds	6.00	0.72
Other pooled funds	3.99	4.21
Real estate investment trusts	0.00	n/a
Total treasury investments	32.21	1.65
Net Investments	4.21	

Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy

Introduction

As part of the November 2015 Spending Review, the Government announced that it would introduce flexibility for the period of the Spending Review for local authorities to use capital receipts from the sale of non-housing assets to fund the revenue costs of service reform and transformation. Guidance on the use of this flexibility was issued in March 2016 which applies to the financial years 2016/17 through to 2019/20. In December 2017 the Secretary of State announced that this flexibility would be extended for a further 3 years (until 2021-2022).

The Guidance

The guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003 specified that;

- Local authorities will only be able to use capital receipts from the sale of property, plant and equipment received in the years in which this flexibility is offered. They may not use their existing stock of capital receipts to finance the revenue costs of reform.
- Local authorities cannot borrow to finance the revenue costs of the service reforms.
- The expenditure for which the flexibility can be applied should be the up-front (set up or implementation) costs that will generate future ongoing savings and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs or to improve the quality of service delivery in future years. The ongoing revenue costs of the new processes or arrangements cannot be classified as qualifying expenditure.
- The key determining criteria to use when deciding whether expenditure can be funded by the new capital receipts flexibility is that it is forecast to generate ongoing savings to an authority's net service expenditure.
- In using the flexibility, the Council will have due regard to the requirements of the Prudential Code, the CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Code of Practice and the current edition of the Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice.

The Council is also required to prepare a "Flexible use of capital receipts strategy" before the start of the year to be approved by Council which can be part of budget report to Council. This is that Strategy.

The guidance sets out examples of qualifying expenditure which includes;

- *Sharing back-office and administrative services with one or more other council or public sector bodies;*
- *Investment in service reform feasibility work, e.g. setting up pilot schemes;*
- *Collaboration between local authorities and central government departments to free up land for economic use;*
- *Funding the cost of service reconfiguration, restructuring or rationalisation (staff or non-staff), where this leads to ongoing efficiency savings or service transformation;*
- *Sharing Chief-Executives, management teams or staffing structures;*
- *Driving a digital approach to the delivery of more efficient public services and how the public interacts with constituent authorities where possible;*
- *Aggregating procurement on common goods and services where possible, either as part of local arrangements or using Crown Commercial Services or regional procurement hubs or Professional Buying Organisations;*
- *Improving systems and processes to tackle fraud and corruption in line with the Local Government Fraud and Corruption Strategy – this could include an element of staff training;*
- *Setting up commercial or alternative delivery models to deliver services more efficiently and bring in revenue (for example, through selling services to others);*
- *Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies (for example children’s social care, trading standards) to generate savings or to transform service delivery.*

The Council’s Proposals

The Council has one new intention for the use of flexibility over capital receipts to support transformational projects in 2020/21 as follows:

1. £40,000 to support service reform feasibility work within the waste collection and recycling service area

The Council has already approved the following projects in its 2019/20 budget:

1. Enabling the implementation of the Council’s Digital Strategy through the employment of dedicated resources to deliver targeted projects and direct support for the delivery of identified actions and projects – Year 3

In 2018/19 the council approved the following transformational projects:

1. Enabling the implementation of the Council's Digital Strategy through the employment of dedicated resources to deliver targeted projects and direct support for the delivery of identified actions and projects – Year 2

Total Capital Receipts Used - £20,656

2. Service reconfiguration within One Legal

Total Capital Receipts Used - £40,000

Impact on Prudential Indicators

The Council will have due regard to the requirements of the Prudential Code and the impact on its prudential indicators from implementing the proposed schemes.

As transformation proposals develop, the expenditure to be incurred will be included in the capital programme to be funded by capital receipts generated in the financial year. The capital expenditure prudential indicators will be amended and approved as appropriate. These receipts have not been earmarked as funding for any other proposed capital expenditure and therefore there is no anticipated additional impact on the Council's prudential indicators as set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. The Council will also have due regard to the Local Authority Accounting Code of Practice when determining and including the entries required from undertaking and funding this scheme within the Council's Statement of Accounts

Monitoring this Strategy

This strategy will be monitored throughout the financial year and may be updated and replaced as proposals are developed and expenditure is incurred.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Community Grants
Report of:	Head of Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Lead:	Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Community
Number of Appendices:	Three

Executive Summary:

This is the second annual update to the Executive Committee on capital grant schemes which remain outstanding since the Community Grants Working Group, which approved the applications, was disbanded. The Executive Committee has taken back responsibility for overseeing and managing each grant scheme going forward.

At the last update in November 2018 there were four of these grants, plus one older capital grant, that had either yet to begin or had not yet drawn-down the full allocation. The Committee decision at that time was to give three schemes a 12-month extension with conditions attached, one scheme was awaiting payment of final invoices and the final scheme was agreed to be completed and outstanding monies on the grant award to be returned to the general capital pot.

This report provides an update on progress on meeting the grant conditions set out by the Executive Committee. All grant awardees have been approached to provide an update on the current position of each project. The details of the responses received are appended to this report.

The Executive Committee is asked to consider the responses and provide guidance to Officers on how it wishes to manage each grant going forward.

Recommendations:

To consider the updates provided and, for the remaining two grants, agree an approach to the ongoing management of the grant award.

Reasons for Recommendation:

There are now three grant awards that were made that remain uncompleted. The balance of grant award is £112,518 (£115,299 in November 2018). It is now 32 months since the Council's approach to supporting community projects changed and the Council has looked to see the completion of all outstanding projects.

It is an appropriate time for a full update to be presented to Executive Committee and Members given an opportunity to provide guidance to officers on the future management of the outstanding grants.

Resource Implications:

In total, there remains £112,518 of grant monies that have yet to be claimed. Should Members decide to withdraw grants from applicants the monies will be returned to capital balances for use on future capital grants or projects.

Legal Implications:

For the 3 grant applications detailed in Paragraph 2.1 of the report, each scheme is required to sign a formal grant agreement, registered against each property (unless the recipient is a local authority).

The Wormington Village Society grant document has not been completed due to the title issues.

The Winchcombe Skate Park grant document has not been completed due to the delay in obtaining planning permission.

There is a provision that the works in each case have to be carried out within 26 weeks of the date of the grant document, or such later date as the council may agree. This period (actual in the case of Priors Park, anticipated in the other two applications) has passed in all three cases.

The Priors Park grant document contains a provision standard in all the Council's capital grant documents requiring repayment of all or part of the grant if the grant conditions are not complied with, but the council must not act unreasonably: if the council proposes recalling or withholding part of the grant funds, it should give reasonable notice to the grant recipient warning them that if the works are not completed by a stated future date, then the provisions of the grant agreement will be enforced and either repayment required or remaining sums withheld.

Similarly, if the Council proposes withdrawing the grant offer to Wormington and Winchcombe, it must act reasonably, in particular giving reasonable notice to ensure that the applicants are not put to wasted expense

Where there is a surplus and additional works are being considered, it would be appropriate for this to be formally recorded so that the original grant conditions apply to the additional works as they would have been to the original works.

Risk Management Implications:

There is a reputational risk to the Council both in continuing to support grant awards, given the age of some, and withdrawing support at this stage. In addition, there is a risk that worthwhile capital projects may not be supported due to insufficient capital balances if the Council continues to earmark monies for projects which have yet to progress.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Officers will implement the instructions given by Committee and report back on progress as per Member instructions.

Environmental Implications:

None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Executive Committee received an update in November 2018 on the outstanding capital schemes, which have yet to be completed, approved by the previously constituted Member Working Group. This Group was disbanded 18 months earlier in Spring 2017. An update on five schemes was provided to the Committee detailing the position on each scheme and asking for Member direction on the continued support for each scheme.

1.2 In the last 12 months, two of the schemes have been completed and all grant funding provided in line with the approval given. This has left three schemes which are still to be completed. This report sets out the conditions which were attached to each of these schemes at the last meeting and the progress in achieving them.

2.0 COMMUNITY GRANTS UPDATE

2.1 The Grants Working Group awarded nearly £1.5million in capital grants during its existence and the majority of those grants have now been claimed and the expected community benefit delivered. Three grants however remain either unclaimed or part-claimed as detailed in the table below:

Grant applicant/ Project	Date of award	Amount of award	Balance
Priors Park Community Project – Parking Provision Grant	03/11/2010	£70,000	£25,054
Wormington Village Society / Wormington Village Hall	07/03/2013	£57,700	£57,700
Winchcombe Parish Council / Winchcombe Skate Park (£29,764 is capital and £40,236 is revenue)	15/12/2015	£70,000	£70,000

* Priors Park grant was awarded outside of Working Group structure.

2.2 Priors Park Community Parking Provision

The decision of the Executive Committee in November 2018 was to approve a 12-month extension to a grant agreement to allow the investigatory work on further parking provision to be undertaken.

An update on the scheme has been set out in Appendix A. In summary, Tewkesbury Borough Council has identified suitable sites in its own ownership and is now at the stage of procuring design and specification services to apply for planning permission early in the New Year. Given this is being progressed by the Council on Council owned land with no actual grant to a separate body being made, it is now essentially a capital scheme and as such should be re-designated as a capital project rather than as its current designation as a capital grant. The capital programme of the Council will be updated accordingly.

2.3 Wormington Village Society (WVS) – Village Hall.

The decision of the Executive Committee in November 2018 was to approve a 12-month extension to the grant agreement with stringent conditions applied in terms of the commencement of development. A letter was written to the Village Society on 7 December 2018 setting out that, during the 12-month period, it was expected that:

- the legal issues would be resolved;
- all funding would be secured;
- planning permission would be in place;
- a contractor would have been appointed; and
- works would have begun by 1st November 2019.

An update has been received from WVS and is set out in Appendix B. In summary, WVS has not been able to agree with Dumbleton Parish Council on the use of the land and therefore they have not been able to progress commencement of the scheme.

2.4 Winchcombe Parish Council - Winchcombe Skate Park

The decision of the Executive Committee in November 2018 was to approve a 12-month extension to grant agreement to allow completion of works. A letter was written to the Parish Council, which is overseeing the project, on 7 December 2018 setting out this condition.

An update on progress has been received and is set out in Appendix C. In summary, the Parish Council has had planning conditions that required approval. Due to a change in scheme design there is a planning condition and Tewkesbury Borough Council is in discussions with the Parish Council to ensure that the change is appropriate. Commencement of the scheme is dependent on being able to agree the revised scheme design.

2.5 Member Decision

Executive Committee is asked to consider the summary updates provided and provide guidance to officers on how they wish the grants to be managed going forward.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 All bodies with grant awards have been consulted on progress in order to inform this report.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 None.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 None.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None.

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

8.1 There could be some community impact if the outstanding grants are withdrawn.

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

9.1 None.

Background Papers:	None.
Contact Officer:	Head of Finance and Asset Management Tel: 01684 272005
Appendices:	A – Priors Park Parking Provision. B – Wormington Village Society. C – Winchcombe Parish Council.

Priors Park Parking Provision	
When Awarded	03/11/2010 (9 years 2 months)
Original Grant Award	£70,000
Current Balance	£25,054
Background	The Council set aside a sum of £290,000 for community facilities on Priors Park in 2000/01. The Priors Park Neighbourhood Project building was refurbished leaving a balance of approximately £200,000. A further report went to Executive Committee in November 2010 to propose further community use of the funds available. Part of the decision was to allocate £70,000 of the balance to a Community Parking Provision on an area of open space owned by Tewkesbury Borough Council at Queen's Road, Prior's Park. The total project cost was expected to be £68,460 and the grant awarded covers the whole project cost (i.e. 100%).
Where we are now	<p>First stage of project completed leaving a significant balance. Balance of the grant has been reallocated to look at the potential to provide additional parking elsewhere within the estate. Two sites have been identified as being suitable and discussions have been had with utility companies, the highways authority and local interested groups. Agreement in principal has been obtained from all parties and so the next stage is to move to get planning permission.</p> <p>The next stage is for Tewkesbury Borough Council to engage a company to produce the designs and specifications to support the planning application. A procurement exercise is planned for January 2020 with aim of submitting a planning application in the spring of 2020. If planning permission is granted then works would be completed within 6 months of that decision.</p>
Constraints placed on scheme at November 2018 Executive meeting	12-month extension to grant agreement to allow the investigatory work on further parking provision to be undertaken.

Wormington Village Hall	
When Awarded	07/03/2013 (6 years & 10 months)
Original Grant Award	£57,700
Current Balance	£57,700
Background	<p>Grant awarded in 2013 for the construction of a village Hall in the village of Wormington, where village events are currently held in a marquee on the open space.</p> <p>Total cost of the project was expected to be £206,000. The grant award therefore represents 28% of the total project cost. A business case was included in the grant application (although no tests of the validity have been undertaken by Tewkesbury Borough Council).</p> <p>Planning permission was granted in 2017 and is valid for 5 years.</p> <p>Wormington Village Society have identified where the funding will come from and £137,200 has currently been secured.</p>
Where we are now	The lease of the land upon which the building is to be sited has not yet been concluded as there are ongoing negotiations.
Constraints placed on scheme at November 2018 Executive meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the legal issues to be resolved, - legal issues remain between WVS and DPC, see comments below. • all funding to be secured, As at February 2017 - The Project costs were estimated to be £211,062 - WVS had secured £137,200 of funding and - WVS had identified where the remaining £73,862 would come from. - We have not asked for what the current cost of the project would be. • planning permission in place, - Yes planning permission was granted in 2017 by Tewkesbury Borough Council and is valid until 2022. • a contractor appointed and - No contractor has been appointed given the outstanding legal issues • works to have begun by 1st November 2019. - No works have been appointed given the outstanding legal issues
Summary of update from Wormington Village Society 25th October 2019	The dispute between Wormington Village Society and Dumbleton Parish Council, owner of the land earmarked for the village hall, remains ongoing. This dispute essentially revolves around the designation of the land as open space and whether as a result the land can be developed. As reported previously, this dispute and the associated negotiations has been ongoing for many years and as a result no progress has been made in delivering the hall. Whilst two members of the Village Society are now members of the Parish Council and continue to push the case for the village hall, the position of Dumbleton Parish Council has not changed.

	Winchcombe Skate Park
When Awarded	15/12/2015 (4 years 1 months)
Original Grant Award	£70,000
Balance 13/09/19	£70,000
Background	£70,000 grant awarded in 2015 for the construction of a Skate / BMX Park in Winchcombe. The total project costs were initially expected to be £192,510, so the grant award represents 36% of this cost.
Where are we now	<p>There were delays in determining the planning application (granted in August 2018) and there were 13 planning conditions that need to be discharged before construction can be started.</p> <p>There has been a change in design on the drainage within the scheme, which has been resubmitted to the Council. The Council is currently reviewing the new designs to establish whether they meet the planning requirements and conditions set out in the original decision. If the decision is that they are not compliant the Parish Council would need to undertake further design work to ensure that the scheme is compliant.</p> <p>Before construction can begin Western Power are required to relay the overhead electrical cable and pole mounted switching gear underground and into new cabinets respectively. Severn Trent Water are also looking to redirect the power cables on the land, as part of an anticipated upgrade of Winchcombe Sewage Treatment Works. Talks are underway with this request.</p>
Constraints placed on scheme at November 2018 Executive meeting	<p>12-month extension to grant agreement to allow completion of works.</p> <p>- Discharge of planning constraints has taken longer than anticipated, delaying the start of the project</p>
Update from Clerk of Winchcombe Parish Council 14th October 2019	<p>I can confirm that we have planning permission subject to 13 conditions. All of those conditions have been discharged bar these listed below: Condition 5 – Contamination investigation – a ground investigation is needed Conditions 4,6,& 7 – the drainage and Suds scheme has been submitted but is awaiting a decision by Tewkesbury Borough Planning Department this was submitted on 6th August 2019.</p> <p>The total project cost is estimated to be £990,000. The Town Council has appointed Fenella Bellinger of Bellinger Design to prepare the detailed technical specifications and drawings and we have appointed a Project Manager (Rhodri Dean) to take the tendering process forward once the detailed technical drawings and specifications are ready. We understand that these should be ready by December 2019.</p> <p>The Town Council will be applying for a Public Works Loan Board loan of up to £500,000 approved by Winchcombe Town Council at the 3 July 2019 meeting and as announced in the August edition of Winchcombe Matters. This will not impact on the precept. In the meantime the Council continues to look for funding opportunities with the help of Active Gloucestershire and other sources. It is hoped that the full £500,000 may not need to be drawn down.</p> <p>Given that the Council has now commissioned the Technical drawings and they are completed by December, the Project Manager can then commence the tendering process. It is therefore hoped that work could start early spring 2020 and the project complete by Summer 2020. Unfortunately the reserved matters i.e. the 13 conditions placed upon the Town Council and the preparation of the reports has introduced a delay in the project timescales which could not be anticipated.</p> <p>Specifically in relation to the project for the skate park we know that there will be an increase in the cost of materials due to the quotes being from a few years ago so the budget of £192,510 will have to be increased slightly. This figure will be unknown until there is a firm date to start and a purchase order has been made.</p>

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Discounts
Report of:	Head of Corporate Services
Corporate Lead:	Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

There is a requirement to have a Council Tax Reduction Scheme to support residents who qualify for assistance in paying Council Tax. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires each billing authority in England to make a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of Council Tax payable by persons, or classes or person, whom the authority considers are in financial need ("a Council Tax Reduction Scheme").

The report also provides Members with an update on the annual review of Council Tax discounts and to seek approval for their adoption effective from 1 April 2020.

Recommendation:

To RECOMMEND TO THE COUNCIL:

- 1. The adoption of the default Council Tax Reduction Scheme effective from 1 April 2020 with a minor revision to the national working age regulations to allow for a de minimis tolerance for income changes.**
- 2. That delegated authority is given to the Head of Finance and Asset Management, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management, to agree the uprating of the working age regulations incorporated into the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme in line with those announced by Department for Work and Pensions.**
- 3. The adoption of the following Council Tax discounts effective from 1 April 2020:**
 - **The discount for unoccupied and substantially unfurnished properties is 25% for a maximum period of six months.**
 - **The discount for properties which are vacant and require major repair work to render them habitable is 25% for a maximum period of 12 months.**
 - **The discount for unoccupied furnished properties (second homes) is zero.**
 - **An empty homes premium of an additional 100% is levied on properties that have remained unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years.**
 - **An empty homes premium of an additional 200% is levied on properties that have remained unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

The report recommends that the Council continues with the default Council Tax Reduction Scheme that was first adopted in April 2013. To reduce costs to the Council, changes would have to be made to the level of support provide to working age claimants. Most authorities have already incorporated a reduced level of support into their local scheme however it is not considered appropriate to do so at the present time having considered the results of the public consultation.

In order to reduce the administrative complexity of the default scheme it is recommended that income changes of £10 or less per week do not require the reassessment of Council Tax Reduction. This will also make it easier for claimants to manage their finances.

It is best practice to review Council Tax discounts annually to ensure they reflect any changes in legislation and best meet the financial needs of the Council.

Resource Implications:

For the past seven years the Borough Council has absorbed the cost of the 10% initial reduction of funding imposed by the government following the introduction of the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the subsequent reduction to needs based funding of 55%. The total cost of this reduced funding over the period is now estimated to be circa £200,000 per annum for the Borough Council. This significant cut to funding has resulted in most Councils making changes to their local scheme in order to balance their budgets.

Tewkesbury has made significant savings in a range of areas over the last seven years as well as increasing income and Council Tax. However, it still finds itself facing a shortfall in funding of at least £3million over the next five years which is a position that could increase dramatically if the government withdraws its support for the New Homes Bonus scheme as expected. It is therefore right that the Council examines all options for the making of necessary savings in order to close the budgetary gap.

Legal Implications:

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and instead required each billing authority to design a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of Council Tax. The prescribed regulations set out the matters that must be included in such a scheme.

All authorities in England are required to have a scheme identifying the reductions payable by their constituents who are in financial need under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (updated in 2012). Schedule 1A paragraph 5 of the Act states that for each financial year, Councils must consider whether to revise their scheme or replace it with another scheme and that such decisions need to be made by 11 March in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to take effect. If the Council does not make/revise its scheme by 11 March 2020, a default scheme will be imposed on the Council which will be effective from April 2020.

The Local Government Finance Act 2012 amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) requires each billing authority to make a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to the amount of Council Tax payable.

Section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) allows the Council to charge a Council Tax premium. Section 67(2) of that Act provides that the power to decide to charge a premium can only be exercised by the Council. Further, The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax Empty Dwellings Act 2018 allows billing authorities, from 1 April 2020, to apply a premium of an additional 200 per cent of the Council Tax due where a dwelling has been empty for five years and over.

Risk Management Implications:

To reduce the cost to the Council, changes would have to be made to the level of support made to working age claimants. Most local authorities have already incorporated a reduced level of support into their local schemes and they should be reviewed on an annual basis. There is a risk that the cost of maintaining the current local scheme will increase if the number of claimants rises due to the state of the local and national economy.

Changes to Council Tax discounts may mean it becomes difficult to collect the increased Council Tax due, but all available remedies will be used to mitigate this risk.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The impact of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and its costs will be closely monitored and updated through Lead Member briefings.

Environmental Implications:

None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 In January 2019 Council approved a Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for the 2019/20 financial year. The scheme has remained the same since 2013/14 and it was agreed that the scheme would be reviewed for the 2020/21 financial year due to the impact of the rollout of full-service Universal Credit in the Borough.

2.0 BACKGROUND - COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

2.1 Since April 2013 the Council has been required to establish a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme to help working age people on a low income to pay their Council Tax. This scheme replaced the national scheme for Council Tax Benefit which was fully funded by central government. Tewkesbury Borough Council has remained on the default scheme since it was first introduced.

2.2 The Council is also required to administer the prescribed government Council Tax Reduction Scheme for pension age customers and is not able to make any changes to this scheme.

2.3 Approval was given by Executive Committee at its meeting of 4 September 2019 to consult on three options for a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2020/21 as follows:

- (a) an income banded scheme, or
- (b) a scheme where all working age claimants pay a percentage of Council Tax, or
- (c) remain on the default scheme.

- 2.4** As part of the move towards replacing Council Tax Benefit, the government cut funding for Council Tax support by 10% in 2013/14. As a result of this, and the Borough Council's decision to remain on the default scheme, a cost of approximately £30,000 was incurred by the Borough Council and a further £387,000 shared between the County Council and the Police. Following the changes made, national funding of the scheme was absorbed into the core, needs based funding allocated by government and is no longer separately identifiable. Needs based funding from the government for Tewkesbury has been reduced from over £4million at the time of change to £1.85million in the current year; a reduction of £2.2m or 55%. The reduced funding on offer from the government has resulted in most Councils changing their scheme to reduce costs in line with at least the 10% reduction in funding.
- 2.5** National data shows that from April 2018, 36 out of 326 Councils are continuing to provide the same level of support available under the former Council Tax Benefit system. The most common change has been the introduction of a minimum payment scheme which requires everyone to pay at least some Council Tax regardless of income. From April 2018, 264 schemes include a minimum payment which was the same as in April 2017, but up from 229 in April 2013. This is the most recent national data available.
- 2.6** The legislation requires the Council to review its Council Tax Reduction Scheme on an annual basis. If there are amendments to be made to the scheme these must be done by 11 March 2020. Having considered the outcome of the consultation it is proposed that the Council continues with the default Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which was first adopted in April 2013, with some minor changes to reduce the administrative burden of income changes due to Universal Credit.
- 2.7** It is proposed that eligibility under the new local scheme mirrors the national regulations for working age claimants. The impact of Universal Credit has been monitored and it is recommended that a tolerance level of income changes of £10 or less per week is introduced. This will reduce the administrative burden on the team who are currently required to reassess Council Tax Reduction every time there is a change in income. It will also make it easier for claimants to manage their finances as they will not receive a new Council Tax bill every time there is a change in their income.
- 2.8** Council Tax Reduction is currently provided to 4,367 households in Tewkesbury Borough at an annual cost of £4.2million. This includes working and pension age claimants. At present there are 2,451 working age claimants and the cost for these is approximately £2.5million. The cost of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme is met by Tewkesbury Borough Council and the major precepting authorities in proportion to their share of the Council Tax.

COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS

- 2.9** The Local Government Finance Act 2012 abolished certain Council Tax discounts with effect from 1 April 2013 and replaced them with discounts which can be determined locally. These have remained the same since the 2013/14 financial year other than the introduction of an Empty Homes Premium. Options for Council Tax discounts have been reviewed in conjunction with proposals for a revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme in order to determine the most effective use of local discretions.
- 2.10** Council determined that furnished chargeable dwellings which are not someone's sole or main residence (i.e. second homes) should no longer receive a discount. They had, prior to April 2013, received a discount of 10%. If we continue to set the discount at zero it is estimated that this will result in additional income of £42,000 of which the Council would retain approximately £3,360.

- 2.11** Council also determined that the discount in respect of unoccupied and substantially unfurnished properties should be 100% for one month followed by 25% for five months. The initial discount of 100% causes a lot of landlord and tenant disputes and it is therefore recommended that the discount is changed to 25% for six months. As well as freeing up officer time to deal with other added value tasks, such as recovery of Council Tax arrears, this would also result in overall additional income from Council Tax of £52,000 of which the Council would retain approximately £4,160.
- 2.12** Council further exercised its discretion to determine that chargeable dwellings which are vacant and undergoing major repair work to render them habitable should be given a discount of 25% for 12 months. This discount costs approximately £7,000 overall in lost Council Tax.
- 2.13** Prior to 1 April 2013 billing authorities could charge up to a maximum 100% Council Tax on dwellings that have been empty for more than two years. From April 2013 billing authorities were given new powers to charge a premium of up to 50% of the Council Tax payable. New legislation was introduced which allows for a 100% empty homes premium to be levied from 1 April 2019. This was agreed by Members in February 2019 and the additional income from this premium currently stands at £127,000 and is levied on 76 properties. The Council's share of this income is £10,160.
- 2.14** An additional power has been granted to allow the increase of the levy charge to 200% for properties which have been unoccupied and unfurnished for a period of over five years. If this option was adopted it would result in additional income from Council Tax of approximately £50,000 with the Council retaining £4,000. More widely, however, it would support the Council's strategy to bring empty properties back into use.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1** To not agree a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2020/21. This would have financial implications for the Council and those residents affected by wider welfare reform.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1** Public consultation on options for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2020/21 was undertaken during the period 16 September 2019 to 25 October 2019. The results of the consultation are attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.2** We had 108 responses to the public consultation with the majority from those residents not currently in receipt of council tax reduction. The preference for the three proposed options was an income banded scheme with 65% of respondents in favour, however the low overall response rate means it is recommended that we remain on the default scheme for 2020/21.
- 4.3** Consultation has also taken place with Gloucestershire County Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire although at the time of writing no comments have been received.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 5.1** The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- 5.2** Housing Strategy Action Plan 2017-2021 regarding bringing empty properties back into use.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 The Council is required to adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age claimants on an annual basis.

6.2 Legislation was drafted with an express intention to use Empty Homes Premium as a tool to support bringing empty properties back into use.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None directly associated with this report other than officer time.

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 To support the preferred option an equalities impact assessment will be produced.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

Contact Officer: Revenues and Benefits Manager Tel: 01684 272119

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Appendices: 1. Consultation Responses.

Appendix 1 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme Consultation responses

Are you a resident in the Tewkesbury Borough area?

Answer choices	Percent
Yes	100%

Are you registered for Council Tax?

Answer choices	Percent
Yes	97.22%
No	2.78%

Do you currently receive council tax reduction?

Answer choices	Percent
Yes	24.07%
No	75.93%

Question 1: The Council is considering an income banded scheme which would be a flat rate percentage discount awarded based on what income band the person's total weekly income falls into. Do you agree this is a fair way to help people on a low income?

Answer choices	Percent
Strongly agree	24.30%
Agree	41.12%
Neutral	14.95%
Disagree	10.28%
Strongly disagree	9.35%

Question 2: Council tax payers can have capital of up to £16,000 and still receive council tax reduction. Do you think that the capital limit should be reduced?

Answer choices	Percent
Strongly agree	20.75%
Agree	19.81%
Neutral	18.87%
Disagree	19.82%
Strongly disagree	20.75%

Question 2 (b): If you think it should be reduced what do you think the new limit should be?

Answers	Percent
£3,000	31.71%
£6,000	43.90%
Other	24.39%

Question 3: Currently a person can receive 100% council tax reduction and does not have to pay any council tax. Do you think people should continue to receive 100% help?

Answer choices	Percent
Strongly agree	28.30%
Agree	14.15%
Neutral	21.70%
Disagree	21.70%
Strongly disagree	14.15%

Question 3 (b): If you disagree what do you think the maximum amount of help should be?

Answer choices	Percent
90%	12.82%
80%	20.51%
75%	15.38%
50%	33.33%
25%	7.69%
Other	10.27%

Question 4: Should the Council provide protection for some groups from any changes made to the council tax reduction scheme from April 2020?

Answer choices	Percent
Strongly agree	23.81%
Agree	28.57%
Neutral	31.43%
Disagree	12.38%
Strongly disagree	3.9%

Question 4 (b): If you have answered agreed which of the following group(s) do you think should receive protection?

Options	Number
People with responsibility for children	30
People who pay for child care	31
People who receive Personal Independence Payments.	37

People who receive Disability Living Allowance for a child or children	42
Other	12
Answer deleted	3

Question 5: The current scheme ignores 100% of child benefit income. Should this be ignored for the purposes of calculating a person's weekly income?

Answer choices	Percent
Strongly agree	33.65%
Agree	17.31%
Neutral	10.58%
Disagree	25.96%
Strongly disagree	12.50%

Question 6: The current scheme ignores 100% of child maintenance payments received. Should this be ignored for the purposes of calculating a person's weekly income?

Answer choices	Percent
Strongly agree	23.81%
Agree	10.48%
Neutral	15.24%
Disagree	29.52%
Strongly disagree	20.95%

Question 7: A non-dependant is a person living as part of the household without direct responsibility for household bills like an elderly relative or a grown-up child. Do you think the non-dependant should contribute to the running of the household which results in the council tax payer receiving less council tax reduction?

Answer choices	Percent
Strongly agree	17.92%
Agree	37.74%
Neutral	16.04%
Disagree	10.38%
Strongly disagree	17.92%

Question 8: If a single applicant does not qualify for council tax reduction themselves, they can claim Second Adult Rebate. This can be awarded up to 25% of the council tax liability and is based on other people’s income in the household, for example an elderly relative or adult child still living in the applicant’s home. As this is not based on the council tax payer’s ability to pay do you agree this should be discontinued?

Answer choices	Percent
Strongly agree	14.95%
Agree	31.78%
Neutral	24.30%
Disagree	12.15%
Strongly disagree	16.82%

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Discretionary Housing Payments
Report of:	Head of Corporate Services
Corporate Lead:	Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management
Number of Appendices:	None

Executive Summary:

The Council has the power to award Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) to provide additional financial assistance towards housing costs where claimants are in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (where housing costs are included).

An annual funding allocation is provided by the government and the Council is able to top up this funding from its own resources by an additional 150%.

Due to the increased pressures we are seeing on the DHP budget, the Executive Committee is asked to consider topping up this funding from its own resources.

Recommendation:

That the Executive Committee agrees additional funding of £40,000, to be funded by the expected windfall on business rates retention, to supplement the Council's allocation for Discretionary Housing Payments for the 2019/20 financial year.

Reasons for Recommendation:

Discretionary Housing Payments enable us to support some of the most vulnerable residents in the Borough. If additional funding is not agreed there is an increased risk of homelessness due to tenants not being able to meet their rental liability and possibly facing eviction.

Resource Implications:

Funding is provided by the Department of Work and Pensions. The allocation for 2019/20 is £108,061 and, as at 12 December 2019, the whole of the budget has been allocated through current expenditure or commitments to the end of the financial year. The legislation allows us to use our own funds to top up the government contribution by up to an additional 150%.

Whilst the outturn financial report for quarter 2 highlighted a small deficit for the Council overall, this position has been improving in recent months particularly in relation to housing benefit subsidy and business rates retention. The latest projection for the windfall the Council is likely to receive from the Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool is circa £300,000. Whilst there are always risks with business rates, a major risk to the pool – the challenge by NHS Trusts – has been greatly reduced following a positive ruling by the Courts. In light of this, it is suggested that £40,000 of the expected windfall is utilised to support DHPs.

Legal Implications:

The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (as amended) set out the legal framework empowering the Council to make discretionary awards to help residents with their housing costs.

Payments are discretionary however the Council has a duty to act fairly, reasonably and consistently. Each case must be considered on its own merits and decision making should be consistent throughout the year.

Risk Management Implications:

The funding available for Discretionary Housing Payments is limited and there is a risk that awards may exceed the allocated resources or that awards may be inconsistently applied and fail to benefit those residents most in need of assistance.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Each financial year initial estimates and mid-year estimates of expenditure have to be submitted to Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). In addition to this, returns are submitted to DWP providing details of awards made. Monitoring takes place on a quarterly basis to ensure that awards are made fairly and in accordance with the policy.

Environmental Implications:

None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) help people on Housing Benefit and Universal Credit (where housing costs are included) to pay their rent if their entitlement does not cover their full rental liability. The amount each Council is able to spend annually is limited by the permitted total the government sets. Councils can top up this funding from their own financial resources up to an additional 150%.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Discretionary Housing Payments scheme was introduced in 2001 to enable local authorities to make financial awards in addition to Housing Benefit (subsequently amended to include the housing costs element of Universal Credit) where there is a shortfall between the applicant's benefit and rent. DHP is not a long-term solution and the Council's policy, which was adopted by Executive in March 2018, reflects the objective of helping households move towards being able to afford their rent without it.

2.2 As at 12 December 2019 the DHP spend was £85,278.75 and the additional committed spend to year-end is £22,685.19. Based on current estimates, total DHP expenditure for 2019/20 is estimated to be approximately £150,000. This exceeds the government contribution by £41,939.

2.3 At the Spending Round 2019 the Chancellor announced additional earmarked funding of £40m for DHPS "to tackle affordability pressures in the private rented sector in England and Wales" however this additional funding will not be received until 2020/21.

2.4 There has been a particular pressure on the DHP budget due to the impact of the rollout of Universal Credit in the Borough. Of the 198 applications received and assessed at the time of writing 116 have been from those residents in receipt of Universal Credit.

2.5 In order to enable us to continue to support the most vulnerable residents in the Borough, Members are asked to approve the “topping up” of the DHP budget from our own resources. However, to be confident we are making the best use of resources a review will be undertaken by Internal Audit to ensure that awards are being made consistently and only to those demonstrating a real need for financial support.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 Members could choose not to supplement the Council’s allocation, however, this would mean it would be unable to continue to help some of the most vulnerable residents in the Borough.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 Formal consultation is not required.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 Discretionary Housing Payments Policy.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 Department of Work and Pensions Discretionary Housing Payments Guidance Manual, including Local Authority Good Practice Guide, August 2019.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None directly associated with this report other than officer time.

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 Positive impact.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

Contact Officer: Revenues and Benefits Manager Tel: 01684 272119
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Appendices: None.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Cyber Central Garden Community – West Cheltenham Strategic Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document
Report of:	Head of Development Services
Corporate Lead:	Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Built Environment
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:

This report seeks authority to consult on Cyber Central Garden Community Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for a period of five weeks. It is recommended that consultation commences on the SPD on 13 January 2020.

The draft SPD has been subject to engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community of West Cheltenham through a series of face to face engagement sessions. The draft has been subject to technical review by specialist officers across Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council.

The SPD has been informed by the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS), the emerging Local Industrial Strategy, Connecting Cheltenham Transport Strategy, applications for Local Green Space designations and Hesters Way Neighbourhood Plan, together with technical reports and assessment detailing constraints and opportunities for West Cheltenham.

This is the first formal stage in the preparation of the SPD. Once consultation has been completed, a full report on the consultation, together with any subsequent changes to the SPD, will be presented to Council. This is scheduled for 21st April 2020. The amended SPD will be presented to Council for approval, if approved the SPD will become a material consideration to the determination of future planning applications.

Recommendation:

That the Executive Committee:

- 1. Approves the Draft Cyber Central Garden Community Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), at Appendix 1, for consultation in accordance with Regulation 13 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for a period of five weeks.**
- 2. Approves the consultation arrangements set out in Appendix 2 of this report.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Head of Development Services to make editorial changes to the draft SPD in terms of formatting, presentation and accuracy prior to publication for consultation purposes.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

Having an SPD in place for West Cheltenham will support the Council in exercising its responsibilities as a Local Planning Authority. An SPD, once approved, will help guide future decision making and will have material weight in decision making.

Resource Implications:

Resource implication on officer time to undertake the consultation, analyse the responses and make any changes appropriate before progressing the SPD towards adoption.

Legal Implications:

The preparation of an SPD is not a statutory requirement, but a decision for each local planning authority based upon demands for further information to assist in the delivery of sustainable development and they are not subject to independent examination.

An SPD cannot in itself establish land use, development management or site allocations policies, but can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites or on particular issues.

An SPD must contain a reasoned justification of the policies contained within it, must not conflict with the adopted development plan and must have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

In preparing an SPD the Council must comply with its Statement of Community Involvement and must carry out formal public consultation for at least four weeks, accompanied by the provision of a Consultation Statement setting out who was consulted in the preparation of the SPD; a summary of the issues raised; and how those issues have been addressed.

Once adopted, the SPD would be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. A planning authority can adopt an SPD either as originally prepared or as modified to take account of any representations made in relation to the SPD or any other matter they think is relevant.

Risk Management Implications:

There is no statutory requirement to prepare SPDs. However, it is considered to be important that Tewkesbury Borough has appropriate planning policies to guide the development of the garden community to ensure that it supports the objectives of the Joint Core Strategy and comes forward as a high quality sustainable site that makes a positive contribution to the wider area.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Following the consultation the SPD will be subject to a further Council decision seeking the adoption of the SPD. Following adoption, the Council will monitor the effectiveness of the SPD as part of the planning and development process and will use the results to review policies and practices if necessary.

Environmental Implications:

Progressing with this stage of consultation will allow full public and stakeholder engagement on the master planning principles for the delivery of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) allocation at West Cheltenham. The JCS was subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was adopted by the three JCS Councils December 2017. Three specific policies are relevant to this report, firstly Policy SA1 – Strategic Allocations, secondly Policy A7 - West Cheltenham and thirdly, Policy SD5 – Green Belt.
- 1.2** Policy SA1 is a delivery policy that sets the context of how the JCS strategic allocations will be delivered. It requires that development proposals should enable a comprehensive scheme to be delivered via a masterplan. The policy sets out expectations in policy terms of use of local green space, the planning of infrastructure and strategy for transport.
- 1.3** Policy A7 formally designates land at West Cheltenham for approximately 1,100 new homes and approximately 45 hectares of employment land to be focused on a cyber security hub. The policy provides detail within the context of Policy SA1 and Policy SD5 relating to comprehensive master planning, constraints and transport.
- 1.4** Policy SD5 details the JCS policy for green belt, this also includes land identified to meet longer term development needs and allocated as safeguarded land. Land at West Cheltenham immediately adjacent to land allocated for development by Policy A7 is safeguarded. The trigger for development on this area is through a review of the JCS. The policy sets out criteria for development proposals, should such land be released, in terms on integration, transport and infrastructure and not leading to piecemeal, isolated or inefficient use of land in this area.
- 1.5** In spring 2019 the local planning authorities of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury agreed to the commissioning of consultants to prepare a masterplan SPD for West Cheltenham. It was agreed jointly across the two Councils of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury that, in order to drive quality both in terms of physical buildings, but also good place making in terms of connectivity to existing communities, transport, green space, infrastructure and sustainability, the Councils needed to take a more directional role in the steering of delivery outcomes. Having an SPD in place will provide: further planning guidance to supplement JCS policy A7 and add value in the determination of future planning applications.
- 1.6** Six consultancy bids were submitted via Homes England Framework. Following assessment, including interview of three shortlisted bids, consultants Avison Young were appointed.
- 1.7** The draft SPD, the subject of this report, has been prepared under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It is important that the Council as local planning authority takes a lead in the planning of the major strategic allocation at West Cheltenham, by doing so it provides an opportunity for community and stakeholder engagement on the SPD before any decisions are made on this key aspect of delivery of the JCS.

2.0 GARDEN COMMUNITY

- 2.1** In November 2018 a joint bid by Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils was made to the Garden Communities programme. The impetus to submit a bid was twofold, firstly concerns around pre application engagement with the site promoters at that time to deliver a successful comprehensive development that embedded the principles of sustainable and mixed communities as set out by the JCS, and secondly to drive the agenda of Cyber Central, building on this opportunity to drive exceptional quality and innovation.

2.2 Homes England supported the bid for Garden Communities and this status was awarded in June 2019. In providing Garden Community Status to the delivery of West Cheltenham, Homes England will be looking for clear demonstration against the principles set out in the bid, including:

- Diverse living options – varied affordable and flexible tenancies with the first 1000 homes being delivered by Cheltenham Borough Council.
- Connected – an accessible development that is physically, digitally and culturally integrated.
- A 24/7 campus – a dynamic community that integrates a diverse mixture of uses and people.
- Inclusive – a transformational development that creates strong communities.
- Healthy – a green and biodiverse development that encourages physical and mental wellbeing.
- Environmentally innovative – an ecologically friendly development that is restorative to its natural surroundings.
- A smart ecosystem – a connected community that is digitally, environmentally and socially intelligent.
- Intense & tranquil – a vibrant and thriving community within a unique landscape setting.
- A world class campus – a collaborative community that brings together leading cyber businesses and innovators alongside academic facilities dedicated to cyber and digital technologies.

2.3 In developing this SPD, taking fully into account the principles of Garden Communities we have a unique opportunity to deliver a national exemplar, planning for a pioneering new community that combines world class cyber business and academic facilities, exemplar housing and state of the art amenity and leisure facilities in a highly accessible and environmentally sustainable development. In drafting this SPD Homes England has been fully engaged.

3.0 CONSULTATION AND FEEDBACK

3.1 Engagement with the local community and wider stakeholders has been an integral part of the masterplanning process, this has included;

- Internal officer working group - comprising officers from across Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council with a remit to consider, advise and inform the emerging SPD. This group has fed into the drafting of the SPD.
- Engagement with Homes England technical specialists' team.
- Engagement with stakeholders including NHS, County Education, Gloucestershire Highways, Wildlife and Wetlands Trust, GCHQ, infrastructure providers. Informal engagement has taken place together with an evening workshop on 3 September 2019. 32 people attended the workshop representing the following groups:

BAE Systems, Bamboo Technology Group, Boddington Parish Council, Cheltenham Borough Homes, Cheltenham churches, Cheltenham Borough Council, Church of England, First LEP, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucester Local Nature Partnership, Hester's Way Neighbourhood Plan Forum, Hester's Way Partnership, local residents, Police, Stagecoach West, Swindon Parish Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Uckington Parish Council,

University of Gloucestershire and Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust.

- Four community drop in events were held at the following times and locations;
 - 11 September, 12:30-3pm at Hester's Way Community Centre.
 - 11 September, 3:30-5:30pm at Springbank Community Centre.
 - 19 September, 1-3:30pm at Tewkesbury-Cheltenham West Community Fire Station.
 - 19 September, 4:30-7:30pm at Gloucestershire College.

The community drop in events provided the opportunity for local residents to give their thoughts and ideas about the area, and the key opportunities as the masterplan was developed. A large map of the area was tabled alongside information boards introducing the project and key diagrams showing our initial ideas. 210 people attended across the four events. Whilst many wider stakeholders and local groups recognise the benefits of Cyber Central and the opportunities it brings for existing and new residents, residents at engagement sessions nearest to the site raised localised issues relating to boundaries, loss of green space and views, and regarding trees and hedgerows.

3.2 The feedback from the engagement to date has been invaluable in shaping the masterplanning process and has resulted in redrafting of the SPD in a number of key areas. From the feedback received during this stage of engagement, we have amended the SPD in the following ways:

- Emphasis on green spaces close to the existing community - the plan has been altered following drop-in events with local residents who were supportive of a new park close to the Springbank neighbourhood.
- Impact of traffic and car parking - aiming for the new development to have enough car parking to serve the employment and residential areas. Sustainable transport modes including improved bus networks and cycle networks will also contribute to improving access and reducing the reliance on the private car.
- Spreading the impact of employment - although the focus for the employment area will be to the south of the SPD area, close to GCHQ, conversations have highlighted the opportunity to focus some employment space with good access to the new road to J10 of the M5.
- Integration - comments have strengthened the focus on delivering links and shared facilities for new and existing residents.
- Response to climate change emergency – opportunity to be innovative.

4.0 CONSULTATION ON DRAFT SPD

4.1 Consultation on this SPD will be undertaken collaboratively by Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils and facilitated by the Avison Young consultancy team under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

4.2 Consultation on the SPD will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI is available to view on the Council's website: https://tewkesburyborough-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/website_tewkesburyborough_onmicrosoft_com/EeWUSrunIGBFugGFm8R_kcsBoq-7yhabFJkPprUYmkcZg?e=L8eedl

4.3 Consultation will take place for five weeks beginning on 13 January 2020 and closing at 5pm 17 February 2020. The minimum period for consultation as set by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 is four weeks.

- 4.4** To aid consultation an online community platform is being created by consultancy Commonplace. This will supplement engagement via our more traditional routes of Council websites, general notifications and face to face engagement. Using this platform will help the Councils reach those who do not engage through the more traditional channels to help us balance our understanding of community needs and views on the draft SPD. Using this platform will give the Councils real time community feedback, allowing us to focus our resources on amendments needed to the SPD.
- 4.5** The following list provides the range of consultation methods that will be utilised;
- Commonplace online community platform.
 - Letters/e-mails to all interested parties via CBC/TBC online database, including all Councillors and relevant Parish Councils.
 - Leaflet drop to locality directly impacted by the area of the SPD.
 - E-mails to Gloucestershire Voluntary and Community Sector.
 - Press releases.
 - CBC/TBC website.
 - CBC/TBC social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter).
 - Posters.
 - Public exhibitions.
 - Deposit locations for hard copies at council offices, community centres and libraries.
- 4.6** Any person may make representations on the SPD. Any such representations must be received by the local planning authority by the date specified. A consultation statement is provided at Appendix 2 of this report.
- 4.7** Technical appendices will be prepared to support the SPD for the purposes of consultations including analysis of site context and constraints and a full summary of the early engagement work with stakeholders and the wider community.
- 5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES**
- 5.1** Joint Core Strategy (2011-2031).
Emerging Tewkesbury Borough Plan (2011-2031).
- 6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES**
- 6.1** National Planning Policy Framework.
National Planning Practice Guidance.
- 7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)**
- 7.1** Resource implication on officer time to undertake the consultation, analyse the responses and make any changes appropriate before progressing the SPD towards adoption.

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

8.1 The preparation of the SPD provides the opportunity to guide, encourage and improve development within the Strategic Allocation that could have a positive impact in terms of helping to bring forward more sustainable forms of development.

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.

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Appendices: 1 – Draft Cyber Central Garden Community Supplementary Planning Document.

2 – Consultation Statement.

CYBER CENTRAL GARDEN COMMUNITY

WEST CHELTENHAM STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY
PLANNING DOCUMENT
December 2019





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PART

A

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT



1 Introduction

1.1 A unique opportunity

Cheltenham is located at the heart of 'Cyber Valley', a regional-scale cluster of cyber-related businesses running along the Severn Valley, but also connects into a much larger 'cyber arc' running from Birmingham to Bristol and beyond. The establishment of Cyber Central – a new cyber security mixed-use cluster in West Cheltenham – is becoming the centrepiece of the town's and wider Gloucestershire's economic development strategy, as set out in the emerging Local Industrial Strategy and Gloucestershire Strategic Economic Plan.

Responding positively to the Government's Garden Communities and National Cyber Security agendas, the objective is to deliver a pioneering new community that combines world-class cyber business and academic facilities, exemplar housing and state-of-the-art amenity and leisure facilities in a highly accessible and environmentally sustainable development.

As part of a number of key strategic sites being identified in the Joint Core Strategy, the site presents a unique opportunity to proactively deliver new investment, new jobs, new homes and new infrastructure in an innovative environmentally sensitive manner. Key requirements for the allocated site can be summarised as follows:

- The delivery of approximately 3,000 new homes, including affordable housing and diverse living options;
- The creation of a mixed-use Cyber Central Cluster including the creation of over 50 Ha of land, bringing together leading cyber businesses and innovators alongside academic facilities dedicated to cyber and digital technologies;
- Creating a cohesive site wide green infrastructure, for the benefit of people, environment and wildlife;
- The establishment of a diverse and vibrant neighbourhood with activities throughout the day and into the evening;
- A development which creates new and helps to transform existing communities, ensuring they are healthy, biodiverse environments which encourage physical and social wellbeing;
- An exemplar development, setting high sustainability and design standards that is responsive to the character of the landscape;
- Deploying new 'smart' technologies to reduce the use of resources including water and energy in both the development construction process, long term use of buildings and environments, and transport connections to, through and from the site; and
- An accessible development that is physically, digitally and culturally integrated.

Context

- 1.1.1 Since the arrival in Cheltenham of GCHQ in the 1950s, the town and its people have played an increasingly important role in the cyber security sector. This role was emphatically underwritten with GCHQ's decision to consolidate operations in West Cheltenham. Their 'Doughnut' HQ facility, which opened in 2005, is a strong and prominent symbol of the existing importance of the cyber security sector in the town, which now boasts an existing cluster of over 200 organisations. Investment has continued, with the GCHQ Cyber Accelerator programme opening in 2017 which provides support for start ups in the UK's cyber security sector.
- 1.1.2 The National Cyber Security Strategy and Industrial Strategy place huge importance on cyber growth. Cheltenham Borough Council's economic development ambitions as defined by the Cheltenham Place Vision, GFirst LEP's Local Industrial Strategy and the Gloucestershire Strategic Economic Plan have all found that tapping into growth opportunities in the cyber security sector will produce high value, high growth employment opportunities which will help achieve key objectives of both of these strategies. Co-ordinated effort to support growth in this sector will help to boost productivity.
- 1.1.3 Cyber Central will be the first of its kind in the UK; a unique location dedicated to the development of cyber research, skills and capability to counter a threat estimated to cost the UK up to £30bn annually. The ambition is to deliver one of the best places in the world to design, create, grow and operate innovative cyber security businesses of any scale. Cyber Central will be a campus that integrates high-tech workplaces with academic facilities, accommodation and leisure, attracting and developing the best talent. These cutting edge facilities will be set within a new garden community with homes of all tenures and types, contributing significantly to local housing needs.

Policy framework and infrastructure needs

- 1.1.4 The full potential of this unique employment-led mixed use development opportunity in West Cheltenham was considered during the preparation of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS), adopted in December 2017. This was a direct response to the longer term economic challenges and the need for new employment land. Working with key stakeholders, the JCS Councils collaboratively crafted a new growth strategy for the area.
- 1.1.5 Under JCS Policy A7, the site has been allocated for employment, housing and wider mixed-use development with the ambition to attract very significant levels of inward investment whilst also helping neighbouring communities to regenerate and actively engage in the opportunities new development will create.
- 1.1.6 Connectivity is key for West Cheltenham to maximise its potential, ensuring both direct access to the motorway and the effectiveness of the local highway network, through physical connections and suitable linkages for sustainable transport options. West Cheltenham's close proximity to the M5 is, however, currently undermined by its relatively poor accessibility to the national road network. Cheltenham and Tewkesbury councils are working with Gloucestershire County Council and Highways England to gain government support and direct funding, via the Housing Infrastructure Fund, to deliver upgrades to Junction10 (M5) to ensure it can fully support the strategic growth earmarked for North and North West Cheltenham.
- 1.1.7 The SPD also seeks to respond to the recent publication of national design guidance (October 2019)¹.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

Cyber Central Garden Community

- 1.1.8 The national housing crisis is presenting acute housing supply challenges across the country and particularly the south of England. Homes England, the Government's non-departmental body tasked with accelerating the delivery of housing across England, share Cheltenham and Tewkesbury's vision and ambition for the establishment of a new garden community in Cheltenham. The vision for Cyber Central in West Cheltenham encompasses the widest spectrum of uses and activities, clustered around the core cyber security commercial and research activities, to create an integrated and connected new garden community.
- 1.1.9 There are a number of key elements from the joint Garden Communities bid submitted by Cheltenham and Tewkesbury councils that are intended to be carried through into this SPD including:
- Diverse living options – varied affordable and flexible tenancies with the significant numbers of homes possibly being delivered by CBC
 - Connected – an accessible development that is physically, digitally and culturally integrated
 - A 24/7 campus – a dynamic community that integrates a diverse mixture of uses and people
 - Inclusive – a transformational development that creates strong communities
 - Healthy – a green and biodiverse development that encourages physical and mental well-being
 - Environmentally innovative – an ecologically friendly development that is restorative to its natural surroundings in pursuit of carbon neutrality.
- A smart ecosystem - a connected community that is digitally, environmentally and socially intelligent
 - Intense & tranquil – a vibrant and thriving community within a unique landscape setting
 - A world class campus – a collaborative community that brings together leading cyber businesses and innovators alongside academic facilities dedicated to cyber and digital technologies.
- 1.1.10 Significant challenges will need to be addressed to help realise the potential, but collaborative and co-ordinated action is now being taken to address these issues. Land has been safeguarded for further phases of growth. As well as providing supplementary guidance to help co-ordinate new development within the allocated site, this SPD also looks beyond the current plan period towards further phases of growth, highlighting the potentially very significant benefits associated with the relocation of the Hayden Sewage Treatment Works.
- A living document**
- 1.1.11 This SPD, prepared with the benefit of wide-ranging public and stakeholder engagement, presents a broad and flexible masterplan framework for the allocation site and adjacent safeguarded land. Detailed proposals will be expected, through the development management process, to respond positively to the objectives, principles and guidance contained in this SPD which supplement relevant JCS policies. See also 1.3 below for more information on the status of the document.

1.2 The site

- 1.2.1 The SPD area is shown in Figure 1 which outlines both the strategic allocation land identified in the JCS and the land safeguarded to the west which is earmarked to come forward in the next plan period. The SPD area is located to the west of Cheltenham between the westerly extent of the town and the M5 corridor. The land sits between Junction 10 and 11 of the M5.
- 1.2.2 The 132 Ha allocated site extends from the A4019 in the north to Pheasant Lane in the south. It borders the residential communities of Hester's Way, Springbank and Fiddler's Green to the east. Some of these communities suffer from significant issues of deprivation and therefore the delivery of regeneration benefits from this development is of key importance. The site's western boundary runs along Hayden Lane and the field boundaries close to Hayden Village. The 69 Ha safeguarded area takes in the Hayden Sewage Treatment Works to the south west.
- 1.2.3 A larger strategic allocation site north of the Tewkesbury Road, Elms Park, covers an area of 320 Ha and along with the West Cheltenham site, forms part of the ambitious growth vision for Cheltenham. To the west of this is another area of safeguarded land covering an area of 150 Ha, again planning for Cheltenham's long term development needs.
- 1.2.4 The borough boundary between Cheltenham and Tewkesbury runs north-south through the SPD site and both councils have been joint collaborators on this SPD.

1.3 Status and structure

- 1.3.1 The purpose of this SPD is to provide further guidance and details relating to the interpretation of policies set out in the relevant Development Plans. In this case, the JCS. This SPD supplements a number of JCS policies, but in particular Policy A7 West Cheltenham. The relevant policies include:
- Policy SA1 - a delivery policy that sets the context of how the JCS strategic allocations will be delivered. Development proposals should enable a comprehensive scheme to be delivered via a masterplan. The policy sets out expectations in policy terms of use of local green space, the planning of infrastructure and transport.
 - Policy A7 - formally designates land at West Cheltenham for approximately 1,100 new homes and approximately 45 hectares of employment land. The policy provides detail within the context of Policy SA1 and Policy SD5 relating to comprehensive master planning, constraints and transport.
 - Policy SD5 - details the JCS policy for green belt, this also includes land identified to meet longer term development needs and allocated as safeguarded land. Land at West Cheltenham immediately adjacent to land allocated for development by Policy A7 is safeguarded. The trigger for development on this area is through a review of the JCS.
- 1.3.2 Public and stakeholder engagement has been central to the process of SPD preparation. Having been prepared in accordance with the relevant regulations, the SPD is a material planning consideration and will have substantial weight in the determination of relevant planning applications by the two local planning authorities.
- 1.3.3 This SPD is structured in two parts. Part A introduces the site and its context. Part B contains the strategic masterplan framework, objectives and key principles. This includes the vision and



key objectives for the site which are outlined over several key chapters. Guidance on Placemaking and more detailed design guidance for new development is contained, along with longer term strategic guidance on the potential redevelopment of the Hayden Sewage Treatment Works site.

- 1.3.4 A summary is also provided which set out the next steps and makes reference to a planning and delivery strategy which will be developed in parallel to the SPD.

- 1.3.5 The appendices sets out further detail on the site's context, its physical and environmental constraints and a summary of engagement activities to date.

Assessment matrix

- 1.3.6 New development proposals will be assessed against the objectives and principles outlined in this SPD using the assessment matrix in Section 9.2.

Figure 1 Location of site showing the allocated land (red outline) and safeguarded land (dashed red line)

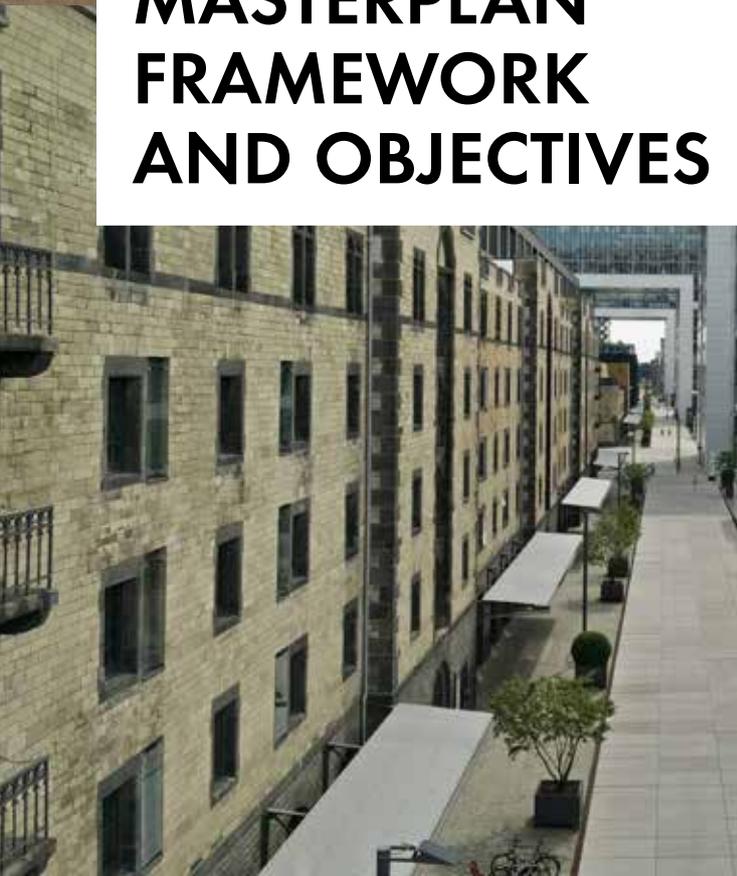




PART

B

**MASTERPLAN
FRAMEWORK
AND OBJECTIVES**



2 Vision and Strategic Objectives

2.1 Vision Statement

Cyber Central creates a vibrant pioneering community integrating hi-tech business, residential and leisure uses. At its heart the UK home of cyber, digital and creative sectors arising from Cheltenham's international reputation for leadership in cyber innovation. This is a sector that is experiencing rapid growth. The ability for the industry to scale-up is essential to maintain and enhance the UK leading role. With a significant development site adjacent to GCHQ in a highly accessible location with great connectivity, the opportunity exists to create a destination of global significance.

This is a place that is culturally rich and exciting, where the edges are blurred between living, working and play. A magnet for businesses, leaders, creators and innovators, built around a strong sense of community, somewhere exciting with soul and with a clear identity. Its energy and creative core will be an attractor to entrepreneurs and investors as much as it will be to local people and visitors.

Cyber Central will be the UK home of hi-tech innovation, nurturing an environment of creativity and collaboration. It is a place where this deep rooted pioneering culture thrives; a place where the boundaries of innovative thinking are constantly pushed. A place that bright minds and young talent co-create and want to live.

It will require the highest standards of environmental sustainability integrating exemplar homes as part of a thriving campus and garden community, defined by its quality in design, public spaces and approach to connectivity both digitally and physically.

Located in the heart of the UK, and anchored between existing centres of industrial and academic excellence in cyber tech such as Bristol, Oxford, Bath, Cardiff, Malvern and Warwick. This significant site is in a highly accessible location with great connectivity.

2.2 The masterplan framework and strategic objectives

2.2.1 The Cyber Central Garden Community Framework Masterplan is presented in Figure 2. The Masterplan Framework encapsulates a number of key objectives for the delivery of the Cyber Central Garden Community. These objectives are as follows:

- **OBJECTIVE A:** Embracing the highest standards of sustainability through ensuring development is resource efficient and carbon neutral; resilient through the application of sponge city principles; will enrich local biodiversity; forms the basis of a sustainable community and embraces the opportunity for sustainable transport and full urban integration.
- **OBJECTIVE B:** Cyber Central, a new and unique dedicated campus for the cyber-tech community, will be the focus of a vibrant, integrated, inclusive and diverse range of uses and activities, serving existing and new communities at densities which make effective use of land.
- **OBJECTIVE C:** Working with the natural landscape and its features to create new environments which integrate existing landscape assets; provision of generous and flexible network of formal and informal open spaces of varying scales which help to integrate with and connect to new and existing communities; create landscapes which help to minimise and mitigate flood risk; promote local food production; support and promote local public art initiatives; and, benefit from an appropriately resourced management regime.

- **OBJECTIVE D:** An integrated and connected extension of West Cheltenham through the establishment of an open and permeable network of streets and routes; the design and delivery of streets and junctions which prioritise the needs of people and sustainable modes of transport; the provision new direct connections to existing communities and facilities; and, a flexible approach to the application of parking standards to ensure development promotes modal shift.
- **OBJECTIVE E:** Promoting the highest standards of design quality through making effective use of land through higher density development, learning from local, national and international exemplars of good design, and applying good urban design principles.

2.2.2 It should be noted that this masterplan framework is indicative and for illustrative purposes only. Whilst it has been prepared in view of a high level understanding of the site's environmental, utilities related, topographic and other assets and constraints, it is meant to be a flexible framework. More detailed work will be required to ensure compliance with all relevant policies in the development plan and that development proposals are viable.

2.2.3 Under each objective, a number of key principles, each with supporting guidance, is outlined in the following sections. These objectives, principles and their guidance will be used when assessing development proposals for the site. See 9.2 for the Qualitative Assessment Matrix which will be used during that assessment process.

Key

- **Higher density mixed use** - Cyber Central related activities including the Innovation Centre, workspace, R&D and academic space, retail and support services
- **Mid density mixed use** - general mixed use development including commercial, community and residential uses
- **Mid density development** - housing-led garden communities including community infrastructure
-  **Cyber Central hub** - cluster of employment, retail, leisure and community activity

- Primary street frontage - most suitable for ground floor commercial, retail, community and leisure uses
- Formal landscape frontage - development should address these key public spaces
-  Connection with existing green space - urban integration

- ★ Key proposed flexible green open spaces
- Existing bus route
- - - Potential / enhanced bus route
- Pedestrian/cycle connection
-  Vehicular access/connection (major & minor)



Figure 2 Cyber Central Garden Community Masterplan Framework - this is an illustrative framework and not a blueprint for development

2.3 Key benefits to the wider area

2.3.1 A key objective of the Cyber Central Garden Community Framework Masterplan is to deliver a range of benefits to the wider community and existing residents in the West Cheltenham area. Responding to each of the identified objectives which are addressed in turn in the following sections, the lists below highlight some of the key wider community benefits and improvements that will be made as the development of the Cyber Central Garden Community is delivered:

Objective A - Sustainability

- Infrastructure investment to make the local area more resilient
- Measures to help manage local flood risk which benefits the wider community
- Ecological net gains which will benefit all residents in the wider area
- Provision of new open spaces and community facilities which are accessible to all existing residents
- A new integrated mixed community which is integrated with existing neighbourhoods
- Improvements to local public transport facilities, including improved links to Cheltenham Spa station
- Potential for lower energy bills for residents

Objective B - Land uses and activities

- New community facilities to complement existing local provision and open to the existing community
- New leisure and community services, accessible to existing local residents
- A new local centre to support local community life without undermining but supporting existing local facilities

- Significant new jobs created in this growth sector and inspiration to future generations seeking to address the current levels of deprivation in surrounding areas
- Wider benefits to help strengthen the local supply chain
- Increased local spend will benefit the local economy including potential investment in Coronation Square
- Strengthening links with local education providers to offer improved choices and enhanced facilities to local people in education

Objective C - Landscape

- Extensions to local open spaces
- Creation of a new network of landscape spaces, open to all
- New allotments to help meet increased needs
- New sports facilities
- Enhancements to local biodiversity

Objective D - Movement

- New street network will ensure new facilities are fully integrated with and connected to existing communities
- Expansive network of connected pedestrian and cycle routes and paths
- Improved access to Cheltenham Station and the town centre
- Expansion of and improvements to local bus services and network
- Opportunities for existing local people to gain access to bicycle and car hire schemes



3 Embracing the highest standards of sustainability

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 Alongside many of its partners, Cheltenham Borough Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to making Cheltenham carbon neutral by 2030.
- 3.1.2 Strategic developments of this scale and nature present unique opportunities to deliver an exemplar development in sustainability, which form catalysts for surrounding communities.
- 3.1.3 Supported and served by completely new site infrastructure, the Cyber Central Garden Community will help demonstrate the far reaching and long-term benefits of planning positively for more sustainable patterns of living and working. The application of smart technologies will have a central role to play in meeting public pledges made to carbon reduction.
- 3.1.4 The sustainability strategy for West Cheltenham is formed of five key themes, within which we outline both the aspiration and several key opportunities specific to the site.
- Resource efficiency
 - Resilience
 - Connection to nature
 - Community and culture
 - Mobility
- 3.1.5 The principles outlined below cover some of the core issues associated with delivering sustainable development and environmental resilience, but all the principles outlined in this SPD have an important role to play in delivering sustainable, carbon neutral, growth which takes proper account of the current climate emergency.
- 3.1.6 Development proposals will be assessed against the following key principles to ensure new proposals within the Cyber Central Garden Community meet this objective. Delivering against this objective will require long term prioritisation of this issue. This action might require the prioritisation of delivery objectives.

The adjacent plan is numbered to highlight some of the key points of the sustainability strategy for West Cheltenham, as follows:

- 1 Site-wide sustainable water conservation and management strategy, including sustainable drainage measures, attenuation areas and technologies to reduce water consumption.
- 2 New development which implements zero/low carbon technologies, delivering buildings with low energy and water demands.
- 3 A permeable network of streets and lanes, which respects existing Public Rights of Way, to help to encourage active and sustainable travel choices.
- 4 Direct pedestrian and cycle connections with immediately adjacent neighbourhoods to help ensure integration and facilitate regeneration.
- 5 Delivery of essential community infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population.
- 6 A mixed use new community delivering a balance of new jobs and homes.
- 7 Integration of retail, services and community uses that help meet the daily local needs of residents, workers and visitors
- 8 Extension of local allotments - which act as an increasingly important ecological and social/community resource.

Smart Cities

- 3.1.7 Smart city principles will underpin the planning and delivery of the Cyber Central Garden Community. However, this will present challenges and conflicts given the rapidly evolving thinking around the provision of smart infrastructure. These conflicts must be managed and risks identified including timescale and viability considerations for implementation.
- 3.1.8 Therefore the approach within this SPD and masterplan framework is to ensure that infrastructure which is to be delivered from the start of the scheme is done so on the basis of applying smart place thinking and smart place planning. In practical terms this means streets and buildings being well designed at detailed planning stages to ensure that they can support smart technologies as they evolve.
- 3.1.9 See the box on Page 19 below for more reflections on how the principles of Smart Cities could be applied in West Cheltenham.



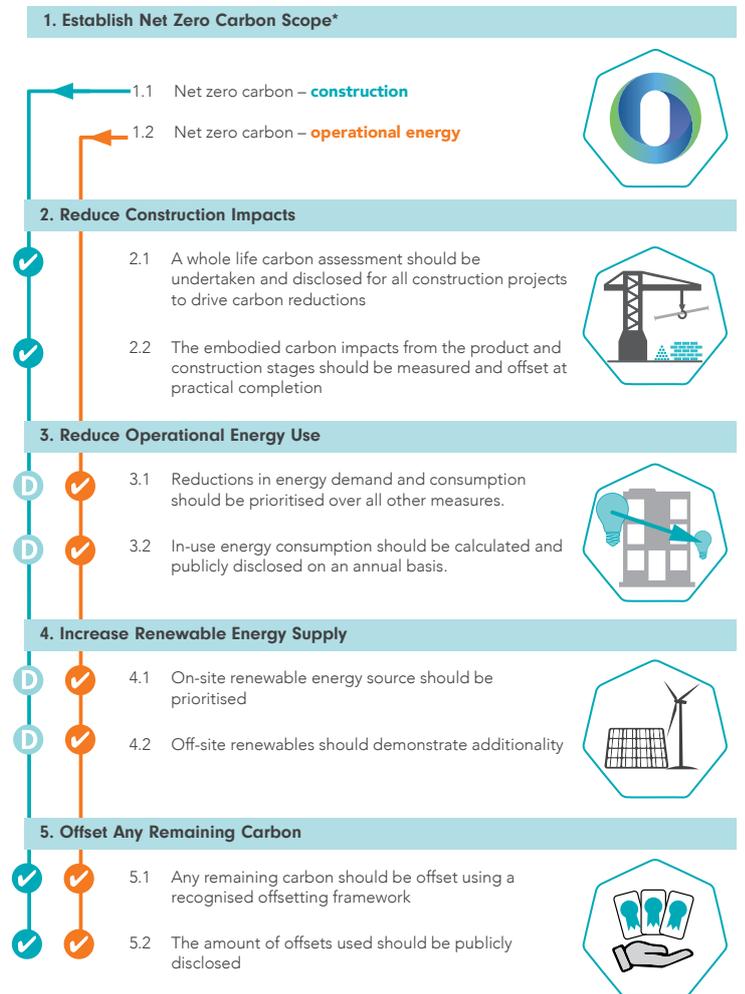
- Key**
- Site boundary
 - Existing bus route
 - Potential bus route
 - Cycle way
 - Informal cycle way
 - Public right of way
 - Other pedestrian connection
 - Commercial mixed use area
 - Allotment
 - School
 - Attenuation pond

Figure 3 Plan showing sustainability interventions

3.2 Key sustainability principles

A1. Resource efficiency: New development at Cyber Central Garden Community will be net carbon zero (or better) and an exemplar in water and energy conservation and waste management, employing the highest standards of environmental sustainability

- 3.2.1 Low or zero carbon (LZC) technologies will be installed throughout the site, at both at individual plot and community level (see Figure 4 for guidance on steps to achieve a net zero carbon building). Creating decentralised community energy centres for heat and power will add to a sense of social participation and responsible energy management, as well as offering an opportunity for cheaper, greener energy.
- 3.2.2 Technologies such as solar PV, wind, waste to energy, solar thermal and heat pumps (air, water, ground-source) will all have a role to play. The use of active network management tools alongside these technologies will enable the energy-user to control how their energy is used and when. Whilst this up-front investment carry a financial cost, it will help to reduce long term development cost and will help future proof the scheme as a whole.
- 3.2.3 Site-wide masterplanning will take account of opportunities to maximise solar/wind potential whilst minimising wider detrimental impact to views and conflicts with existing landscape assets.
- 3.2.4 An integrated strategy incorporating renewable technologies, energy storage and smart metering/controls will be required. The implementation of an on-site smart-grid will be pivotal in delivering an infrastructure strategy that minimises energy use and positively contributes to decarbonising and decentralising the energy networks.
- 3.2.5 Waste management forms a key part of Gloucestershire planning policy and is contained within its Waste Core Strategy. The scheme



D New buildings and major refurbishments targeting net zero carbon for construction should be designed to achieve net zero carbon for operational energy by considering these principles.

* Please also note, a further scope for net zero whole life carbon (1.3) will be developed in the future.

Figure 4 Steps to Achieving a Net Zero Carbon Building, from Net Zero Carbon Building - A Framework Definition by the UK Green Building Council (UKGBC 2019).

will adopt the principles of the waste hierarchy by minimising waste and promoting material recovery of any construction and demolition waste. In operational terms development should prioritise waste prevention, re-use, recycle, recovery and disposal only as a last resort. Early engagement with Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Councils waste service UBICO will be essential to collaboratively develop effective solutions for waste minimisation and efficiency in disposal.

Smart City principles: Opportunities in West Cheltenham

The application of 'Smart City' principles, utilising information technology in the design and management of our cities, towns and villages, offers potentially revolutionary opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public services and utilities.

The potential to deliver benefits from applying new technologies to existing and planned neighbourhoods and communities should be fully explored with the relevant authorities. These benefits could include but should not be limited to:

- Incorporating measure of reducing energy consumption in buildings:** Buildings will be built to high energy efficiency standards to reduce the need to heating/cooling. In addition, new development will be encouraged to employ smart heating and ventilation systems which use IT to help reduce unnecessary heating and cooling processes.
- Introducing measures for on-site electricity generation:** This will help to reduce energy costs for those in the area, including existing residents in adjacent neighbourhoods. Working with existing housing agencies in both the management of existing stock and the provision and management of new dwellings, smart technologies, potentially designed into new buildings from the outset, can help to move new development towards the Councils' net zero carbon targets.
- Providing live information on public transport services:** Cheltenham town centre already benefits from the provision of live travel information at bus stops, but expanding these measures to surrounding areas will help reduce waiting times, increase revenues for operators, and help support the shift towards more sustainable modes of transport.
- Introducing smart approaches to storing, collecting and processing waste:** The smart waste collection solutions are being developed by waste management companies to improve efficiency of waste collection services. They are based on a network of sensors - acting as fill gauges and identification chips - installed on waste containers. The approach gives those involved - the collection operator and local policy makers - the possibility of anticipating new economic models, including individual incentive pricing that benefits all the parties concerned and users in particular. The benefits are potentially wide ranging, but will help to optimize sorting practices, particularly among the public, and, ultimately, will reduce the volume of waste overall.
- Creation of a digital twin:** A visualisation model of the site that can assist in the customisation of the housing product which may link with modern methods of construction. There is scope for this technology to also support the capturing of data flows from smart infrastructure and associated revenue streams to help to maintain and manage the site via a management company.



Figure 5 A smart city is a designation given to a city that incorporates information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance the quality and performance of urban services
©AESG, 2019

- 3.2.6 The new development within West Cheltenham will promote the shift towards a circular economy. This will include disclosure of material embodied carbon and material efficiency at design stages, exemplary levels of recycling and reuse during construction, modularisation and standardisation of components and the ability to disassemble components for reuse at end of life.
- 3.2.7 The adjacent Hayden Sewage Treatment works could provide opportunities in terms of waste heat or energy production. However, as this site is being earmarked for a future phase of development, decisions regarding further investment in this facility will need to be taken in view of the facility's potential future relocation.

A2. Resilience: The design of new buildings, streets, open spaces and other required infrastructure will ensure new development is resilient in terms of flooding and overheating

- 3.2.8 Minimise the risk of flooding through the incorporation of sustainable drainage measures. This will include the provision of street trees, landscape verges including swales and the use of permeable surfaces. This thinking should extend across all scales, from how surface water is managed as it moves across the site to how rainwater and greywater could be harvested and reused to reduce the site's environmental footprint.
- 3.2.9 Careful development of building form and position of glazing in response to orientation is required. Minimising the solar exposure of south and west facing glazed elements reduces risk of overheating during summer months. Careful street planning and provision of external shading (including shading devices, balconies and facade articulation) will be used to limit solar exposure.
- 3.2.10 Increasing the provision of blue and green infrastructure and proximity to green space and large water bodies (within 100m radius) reduces the localised impacts of heat island effect, absorbing less heat and stabilising temperatures during peak summer conditions.
- 3.2.11 The landscape strategy outlined in this SPD for the site as a whole (see Objective C) has been devised in response to the topographic profile of the site, with locations identified for the provision of stormwater attenuation. The generous network of open spaces will play an important role in helping to manage surface water and reduce the risk of flooding across the new community.
- 3.2.12 Flexibility in terms of how buildings and spaces might be used over the long term is a fundamental principle of sustainability. Developers will be asked to demonstrate how their proposals (buildings and spaces) have been designed to be flexible and capable of conversion, adaptation and reuse over the course of their life.



Figure 6 The "Triangle" by Glenn Howells Architects was supported by the Government's Low Carbon Investment Fund. Homes have bicycle storage built in to the front canopy of each house

Sponge City principles: Opportunities in West Cheltenham

'Sponge cities' incorporate urban design that aims to reduce the risk of floods, by enabling environments to absorb water. In bringing development proposals forward for the site, the role played by green infrastructure in reducing the risk of flooding should be considered at every scale.

Large area of impervious hardstanding should not be provided within dwellings, parking courts and other areas for parking should employ permeable surfaces, streets design should incorporate sustainable drainage measures, the design of public open spaces and the wider network of green spaces which help to link neighbourhoods together should be designed to retain existing landscape features such as hedgerows and trees, with new trees and planted



Figure 7 Upton SuDS flood attenuation measures integrated into public space design

areas provided. Within the wider green infrastructure network, appropriated sized water attenuation areas should be provided which are not in areas already liable to flood. These will provide, in the longer term, a valuable ecological resource.

A3. Connection to nature: Development at Cyber Central Garden Community will enrich local ecology and biodiversity and will take proper account of air quality issues

- 3.2.13 Air quality is an issue in West Cheltenham due largely to pollution from road vehicles. New development will need to consider off-site effects from traffic accessing and egressing sites through an existing area of poor air quality to ensure air quality remains within acceptable levels.
- 3.2.14 The provision of new, and management of existing, landscape areas and features across the entire site is one the most exciting aspects of the Cyber Central Garden Community. These will include the provision of informal naturally landscaped spaces; new allotment spaces to meet both existing currently unmet and future demand; formal sports provision; and, new high quality and well managed flexible formal spaces which provide opportunities for meanwhile uses, events and other outdoor activities.
- 3.2.15 The site's biodiversity and ecology opportunities are of particular significance, with scope for collaborative working with key partners within the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership. All principal public sector partners involved in bringing this site forward through the JCS have signed up to the Gloucestershire Green Infrastructure Pledge. New development will be assessed against the Building with Nature Benchmark.
- 3.2.16 Working collaboratively with the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership, and particularly the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, the site presents a unique opportunity to support and foster birdlife in the context of the nearby Slimbridge Wetland Centre.

A4. Community and culture: Cyber Central Garden Community will mature into a thriving and mixed sustainable community, providing jobs, homes and community facilities for existing and new residents in a beautiful landscape setting

- 3.2.17 The Cyber Central Garden Community will, first and foremost, be a place for people. The Garden Community will provide a diverse range of environments including vibrant tech-based flexible workspaces, local community hubs serving new and nearby existing neighbourhoods and mixed residential neighbourhoods with a mix of housing types and tenures.
- 3.2.18 A connected network of streets and lanes will ensure different districts and environments of the development are linked and fully integrated, the design of which helps to encourage active and sustainable patterns of movement.
- 3.2.19 Whilst potential locations for new school premises are identified in the masterplan framework, additional financial contributions will be required through a S106 agreement towards provision of pre-school and primary school places.
- 3.2.20 The proposed new secondary school at Elms Grove has been planned at a size to serve that housing development. Financial contributions will be required and additional land may be required within the SPD area to allow the secondary school to be planned at a larger size if necessary to meet increasing needs. However, timing and delivery of development will be critical and it may be necessary to provide additional places at All Saints Academy if the Elm Grove development is not progressing to the same timescale.

- 3.2.21 Through ongoing liaison with health care providers and their relevant authorities, contributions towards additional health facilities will be required to ensure the health needs of new communities are adequately catered for.



Figure 9 Precedents: Kingsbrook Aylesbury, Set a new benchmark for wildlife friendly housing development. 2,459 homes have been built on greenfield land, and designed so wildlife can move freely through the residential areas. Swift boxes are shown here, built into the roofs of new home



Figure 8 Flood management scheme

A5. Mobility: Cyber Central Garden Community will be an integrated and fully connected extension of west Cheltenham

- 3.2.22 New development will be supported by infrastructure which helps to support local employees, visitors and residents to choose active and sustainable modes of travel. Electric bicycle and car hire facilities will be required in new development to meet the day-to-day needs of those who live in, work in and visit the area. New development will embrace new technologies in the rapidly evolving car and mobility sector. Car charging facilities will be made available to new residents and dwellings will be designed to take proper account of the space requirements of bicycle ownership for all occupiers.
- 3.2.23 New smart street furniture provides the opportunity to help support the delivery of smart new technologies. Street lighting provides scope to improve the efficiency of street lighting as well as supporting other initiatives such as integrated CCTV, movement detection to support smart traffic management measures, air pollution detection and WiFi services.
- 3.2.24 Connections to existing public transport infrastructure will be provided and contributions to the delivery of improvements to existing services will be required. This will include improved cycle and walking linkages to Cheltenham Spa Railway Station, the expansion of existing bus services across the site, and the establishment of pedestrian and cycle linkages to immediately adjacent neighbourhoods, including the provision of safe routes to schools – both those provided within the development and those nearby planned or existing schools which will help to meet demand for school places from new

development. The site is well placed to benefit from more strategic improvements in public transport between Cheltenham and Gloucester, including the ambition to bring forward a mass transit option. Development at West Cheltenham should take proper account of any such opportunities through the provision of interchange facilities as part of any such provision or other appropriate contributions.



Figure 10 Top: scooter hire is convenient and integrated into local neighbourhoods and, Bottom: electric vehicle car clubs

4 A vibrant and diverse range of uses and activities, serving existing and new communities

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 In 2015 as part of its revised National Cyber Security Strategy, the UK government announced that it would be setting up two Cyber Innovation Centres, one in London and one in Cheltenham. The innovation centre will foster an increase in the number of UK companies able to grow their business to a critical mass and compete internationally.
- 4.1.2 Cyber Central aims to be the first of its kind in the UK – a unique location dedicated to the development of cyber technology research, skills, business and capability. It will be a integrated and inclusive community where people can live, work and play and enjoy excellent quality of life.
- 4.1.3 Cyber Central will be a world class campus that integrates high-tech work places and academic facilities with supporting facilities which will serve those who live and work in the area. New dwellings will offer a wide range of living options and will support a tenure mix that matches the needs of the workforce in Cyber Central and the town more widely.
- 4.1.4 The Cyber Innovation Centre will measure itself against other world class facilities such as the Cyberspark Campus in Israel which is combining military intelligence, academia and industry in one place, and leading examples of innovation buildings such as the Bright building at Manchester Science Park.
- 4.1.5 Cyber Central will be an exemplar of social and environmental sustainability which provides for the educational needs of the new community, enables healthy and active lifestyles and where mental and physical well-being is a priority. Once established, the site will host a connected community that functions 24/7 and is digitally, environmentally and socially responsive.

The adjacent plan is numbered to highlight some of the key points of the land use strategy for West Cheltenham, as follows:

- 1 Cyber Central - an expansive mixed-use campus and clustering of business, enterprise, R&D and education activities within the cyber-tech sector.
- 2 Innovation Centre - a state of the art shared, semi-public facility which acts as a hub for interaction, knowledge share and exchange and events for the cyber-tech community.
- 3 Integration of retail, services and community uses that help meet the daily local needs of residents, workers and visitors.
- 4 A mix of sites and locations which will provide wide ranging and flexible opportunities for inward investment - many of which may form part of the cyber-tech supply chain.
- 5 A number of attractive, beautifully landscaped neighbourhoods, each with their own character. These will provide a mixed and balanced range of residential accommodation and tenures, including affordable housing and housing for more specialists sectors.
- 6 A new primary school to help meet the education needs of a growing local population.
- 7 Open market employment spaces of varying sizes which will enjoy good access to the motorway network and provide new job opportunities for local people.

- 4.1.6 The distribution of uses in the masterplan must have regard to the existing town and neighbouring communities and also the property market drivers which will underpin a successful and viable project. The Cheltenham area is already home to a dynamic and growing network of several hundred Cyber Technology Businesses, ranging from highly innovative start-ups to established international players such as BAE Systems, L3 TRL, Raytheon and many others.
- 4.1.7 The masterplan envisages a vibrant and diverse range of uses and activities which will serve both the existing and new communities. The range of uses will combine to deliver a successful Garden Community, making the best use of land to create vibrancy, local character, new facilities and services, integrated and accessible transport, innovative uses of technology and beautiful green spaces.

Potential improvements to M5 J10 proposed

Key

- **Higher density mixed use** - Employment-led tech-sector, retail, leisure & community with residential
- **Mid density mixed use** - A balanced mix of residential, employment and other uses
- **Mid density development** - Housing-led garden communities
- **Potential school** - Primary school to serve new and adjacent neighbourhoods
- Cyber Central hub** - Cluster of employment, retail, leisure and community activity

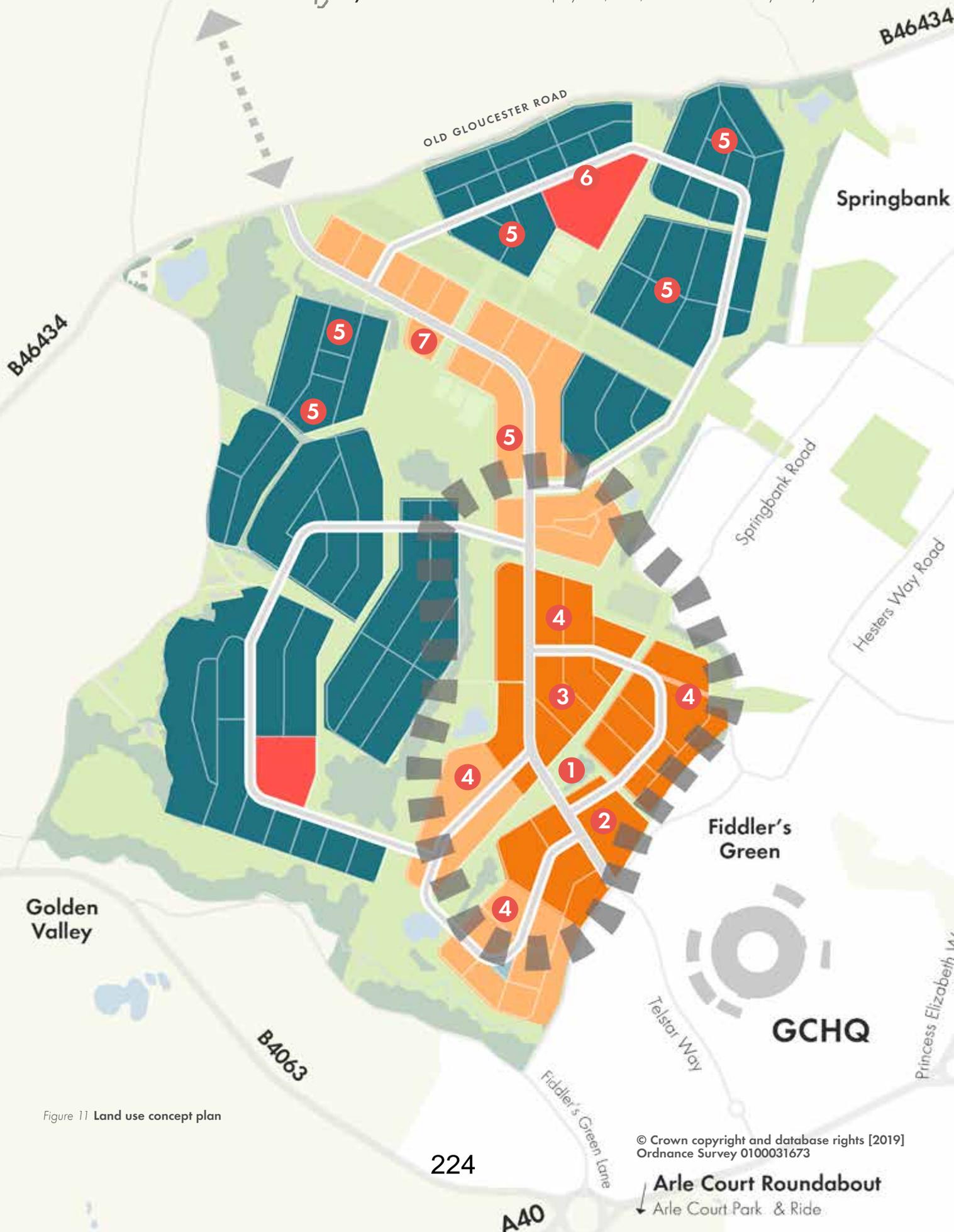


Figure 11 Land use concept plan

4.2 Key mixed use principles

B1. Delivered in partnership, a high profile and state of the art 'Cyber Innovation Centre' will be the focal point of the Cyber Central Garden Community

- The Innovation Centre and the surrounding campus will provide comprehensive infrastructure to support and foster the cyber tech industry, providing an open and welcoming environment where collaboration, research and innovation takes place. This would include:
 - A variety of flexible workspaces and R&D facilities to accommodate growing businesses through their lifecycle from hot-desking to stand-alone buildings;
 - Links with universities, education, and skills programmes such as the University of Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire College, C11 Berkeley, Universities of Bristol, Cardiff and West of England and UTC Swindon;
 - Support services such as business support, marketing, funding and legal advice;
 - Digital and physical infrastructure that is future-proofed and upgradable;
- A place that promotes creativity and innovation through leading cultural and event programmes;
- State of the art facilities, landmark architecture and inspirational surroundings;
- An environmental exemplar including a mix of commercial, residential and amenity buildings in a green landscape; and
- A new centre at the heart of the cyber tech network with direct links with existing cyber tech business networks including CyNAM and their Hub8 co-working space in Cheltenham town centre.
- Delivery of the Cyber Innovation Centre will require a committed partnership between business and the public sector. A dedicated organisational structure and operational model will be devised to drive forward the vision and provide leadership and the management and operational expertise to represent the key interests. These are envisaged to include Government agencies, local authorities, universities and educators, SMEs and industry, leisure and retail providers and local communities.



Figure 12 Employment and learning uses with active retail frontages at ground floor at Westworks, part of the White City campus (Allies and Morrison)

B2. 45Ha of mixed-use employment land, focussed around the Cyber Central hub, will provide flexible business space, hotels, retail and leisure provision and cultural and community uses to serve the local community and wider region

- Cyber Central proposal has the scale to deliver circa 2m square feet of commercial space on 45 hectares supporting circa 7,500 jobs. This critical mass of employment land will enable the cyber tech cluster to develop adjacent to GCHO and offer a range of property types to support business through their growth lifecycle.
- Cyber Central will be highly connected, physically, digitally and socially. Cyber Central will have access to the best digital infrastructure available to support the development and incubation of cyber enterprise. The development is perfectly located to take advantage of the UK's high capacity fibre network, providing completely secure, ultra-high-speed and unlimited fibre connectivity to the site.
- Beyond the Cyber Innovation Centre, the Cyber Central hub will be a mixed-use zone with a focus of commercial, community, leisure and residential uses, located centrally to best serve existing and new communities, all served by a high quality and flexible public realm.
- The Cyber Central hub will serve a vibrant and thriving community located within a unique landscape setting. The hub would be open and active at all times of the day and throughout the week and would host significant events and cultural facilities designed to attract the broadest range of users and visitors
- With access to the site being radically improved through the planned improvements to Junction 10 of the M5, the main street axis through the site will provide opportunity for a wide range of uses and activities which would benefit from prominent and accessible locations.
- A new primary school will be required to serve the new residential community and potentially the wider area. The new school should be designed to ensure community access to shared facilities.
- Secondary school capacity will be met by existing nearby schools and a planned new secondary school north of the site.



Figure 13 The Cyber Centre hub area will be a focus of a mix of activities, open to all (Grant Associates)

B3. A sustainable and deliverable range of housing tenures, including affordable housing and self-build, to meet local needs supported by community infrastructure

- New housing will need to address local needs and contribute to the creation of mixed and balanced sustainable communities. This means providing sufficient housing of the right sizes, types and mix to meet current and future needs as the West Cheltenham extension evolves over the delivery period.
- Delivering a mix of market tenures, from market sale to market rent, will underpin the economic viability of the development. In particular, market tenures will play a critical role in meeting the potential housing needs of younger professionals who will be attracted by the employment opportunities in new and emerging technologies, the ambitious vision of the area, the range of supporting infrastructure and the quality of the environment being created. The delivery of market rent housing has the potential to meet growing demand for this form of housing which is being supported by institutional investors.

- There will be a range of living space responding to the needs of the cyber tech start-up community. This could include co-living (shared apartments designed for new graduates), build to rent housing and apartments, self-build parcels, live/work space and affordable and key worker housing for employees.
- The Housing Investment Strategy will see Cheltenham Borough Council take a leading role in bringing forward high quality and affordable homes offering different tenures. New housing development will need to meet the requirements of current policy regarding affordable housing including levels of provision (35% within JCS Policy SD12) and tenure blind distribution throughout the site. Affordable housing is also expected to contribute towards meeting the identified housing needs as outlined in the relevant Local Housing Needs Assessment.
- New communities will be supported by the provision of social infrastructure including

Figure 14 The Cyber Central Garden Community will provide mixed housing types and tenures at a range of densities but in all cases building should positively address public realm and prioritise people over cars (Allies and Morrison)



B4. Higher densities and a range of dwelling typologies which make the best use of available land

- A key driver of the SPD is to increase densities in order to make the best use of land and deliver an exemplar development that creates a sense of community. The SPD promotes a flexible approach in terms of the type of housing provided. Apartments, stacked maisonettes and other forms of higher density housing will have a role to play in helping to ensure Cyber Central is supported by an appropriate housing mix and housing densities.
- The planning authority and its partners will support the delivery of higher density development to help meet the strategic objectives of the JCS. Both



Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils support the focus on making the very best use of the land within the area in a way that delivers high quality homes.

- The development proposals are expected to facilitate higher densities through measures which will include:
 - The use of innovative housing and mixed typologies, especially in the southern area including mixed use buildings with apartments over other ground floor uses;
 - Densities in the west of the site are expected to go above 'conventional' housing densities that might otherwise be built on a rural edge in light of the potential future reserve land (HSTW);
 - New development should learn from local and national precedents which demonstrate how successful higher density development can work alongside Garden Community objectives – see Section 7.2; and
 - Areas within the Cyber Central hub and along the main street axis will be designed to foster the establishment of mixed use environments with a higher proportion of apartments and smaller unit sizes.

Figure 15 Employment buildings that sit comfortably within a mixed use setting in Earlsfield, London (Allies and Morrison)

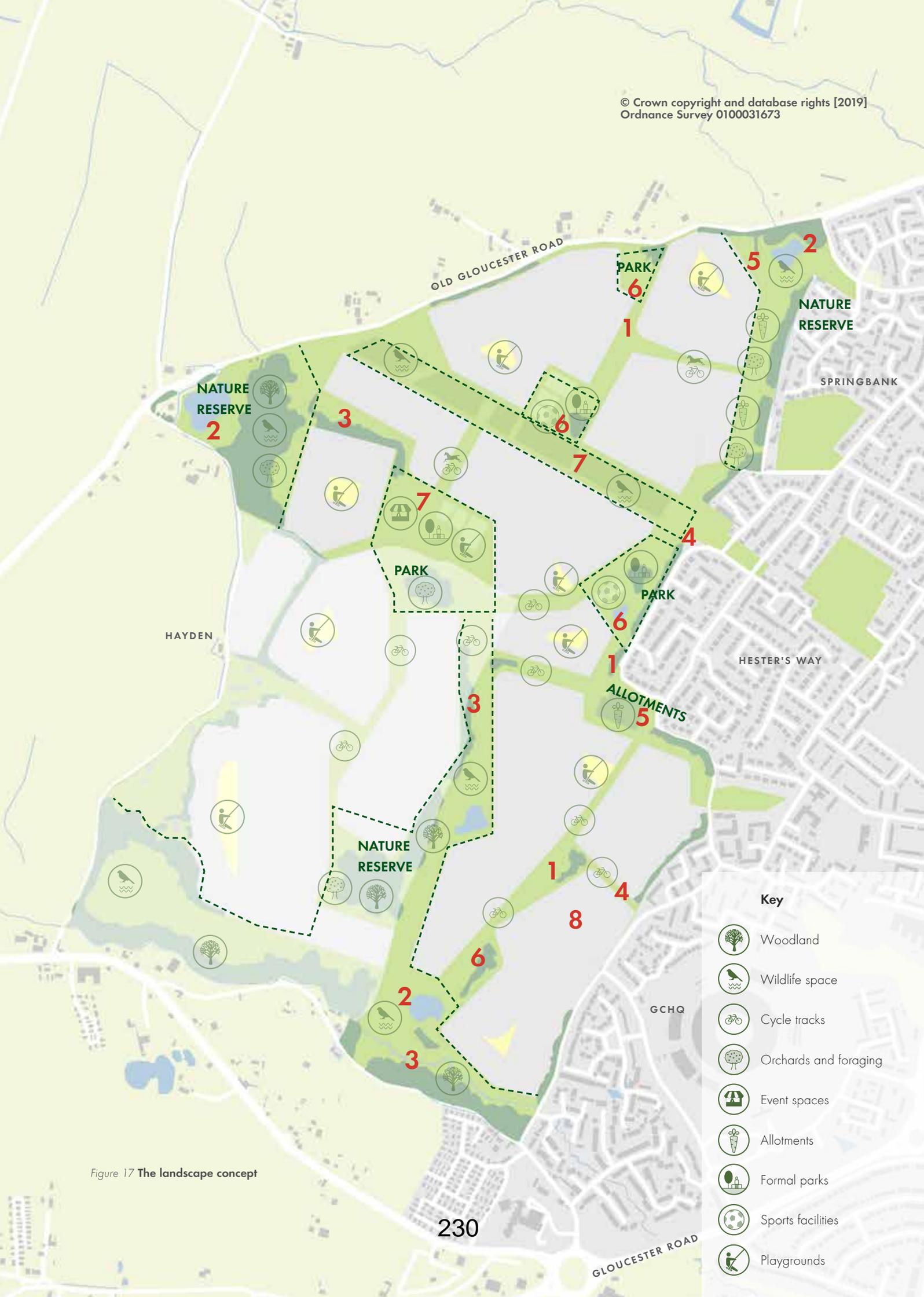
5 Working with the natural landscape and its features

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The Masterplan framework for the West Cheltenham SPD takes a 'landscape first' approach to site planning. This means that existing assets within the site such as waterways, trees and hedgerows are incorporated into the planning of site wide green infrastructure and new public spaces.
- 5.1.2 The overall strategy proposes an inter-linked network of natural, semi natural and more formal open spaces that together form connected routes through the site, between existing and new communities, and to the countryside beyond. These spaces will be designed to support the social, environmental and ecological objectives contained within this document.
- 5.1.3 It is important to cross reference the adjacent landscape concept plan (Figure 17) with the constraints plan (see appendix). This help explains the extent and location of some of the open spaces which are often defined by constraints such as flooding, existing trees and hedgerows and watercourses.
- 5.1.4 The following principles have shaped the landscape strategy and will need to be met when delivering growth in west Cheltenham:

The adjacent plan is numbered to highlight key points of the green infrastructure strategy. The strategy for West Cheltenham should:

- 1 Retain existing landscape assets including hedgerows, trees and water bodies which will help to inform the design of a multifunctional and connected green infrastructure network
- 2 Integrate a site-wide SuDS strategy that is informed by the existing topography, geology and soils. The potential for SuDS features to maximise amenity and habitat should be explored
- 3 Integrate strategic ecological corridors and create and connect a diversity of habitats through the site. Opportunities for habitat creation will be explored at all scales from site wide, to the design of development layouts, public spaces, streetscapes, and buildings. To include nature reserves
- 4 Create pedestrian and cycle connectivity with existing communities and facilities in West Cheltenham. To include the integration and expansion of PRoW and the promotion of nearby regional and local cycle routes
- 5 Establish a food strategy to enable food growing and foraging across the site. The Terry Ashdown allotments will be expanded for new and existing residents, alongside community orchards. Land will be safeguarded with statutory protection to ensure long term demand for allotments can be accommodated
- 6 Create a network of new public spaces that each create a focal point for a new neighbourhood, or form a connection between existing residents and the emerging community
- 7 Provide sports and recreational opportunities and a quantum of space typologies in line with CBC/TBC Open Space Policy
- 8 Create a formal and flexible space which creates a focus within Cyber Central. This space will present opportunities for a wide range of events and activities



Key

	Woodland
	Wildlife space
	Cycle tracks
	Orchards and foraging
	Event spaces
	Allotments
	Formal parks
	Sports facilities
	Playgrounds

Figure 17 The landscape concept



Figure 18 The public realm between buildings will be multi- purpose, incorporating SuDS, trees and seating areas (Grant Associates)



Figure 19 The scale of the Cyber Central Garden Community will opportunities to nurture a wide range of landscapes, including wildflower planting (Grant Associates)



Figure 20 Natural areas will be designed to be accessible to all (Grant Associates)

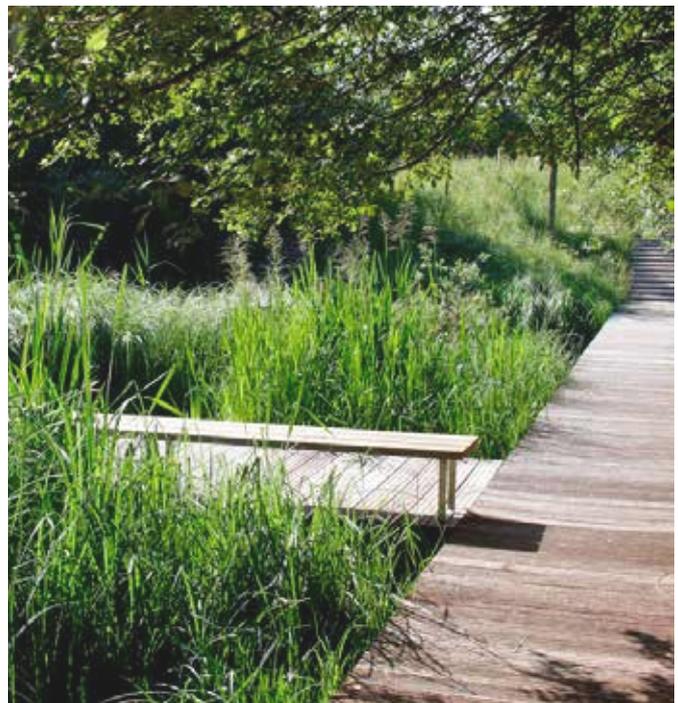


Figure 21 Development proposals for the site should work with existing water features and channels (Grant Associates)



Figure 22 Hard landscaped areas within the Cyber Central hub will be designed to offer flexibility for a range of activities and events (Grant Associates)



Figure 23 Tree avenues and planting form soft edges to development areas, with informal leisure routes helping to link communities (Grant Associates)



Figure 24 SuDS attenuation basin and swales can create natural boundary edges (Grant Associates)

5.2 Key landscape principles

C1. Development must positively integrate existing landscape assets and features and use these features to inform the development of a green infrastructure network for the site

- Existing assets will be considered early in the design process and integrated within development proposals.
- These natural assets should form the backbone of the landscape strategy and in doing so, play a key role in defining the size, location, boundaries and extent of proposed development parcels.
- Proposals should deliver biodiversity net gain to help diversify and enhance the existing landscape.
- Assets to be considered include;
 - The network of hawthorn hedges and hedgerow trees
 - Mature and veteran trees and patches of woodland
 - Existing streams, ditches and water bodies

C2. Proposals should respond to views into and out of the site and react to the existing topography and strategic landscape character

- Proposals need to respond to strategic opportunities to create visual and ecological connection with/to the wider landscape and countryside.
- Long views to the Cotswolds AONB and Hayden Hill need to be carefully considered during the design of the location and layout of open spaces and built development
- Proposals will need to consider the impact of built form/massing/roofscape/layout on views both in and out of the site.
- The topography of the site should influence the location of routes which traverse the topography and work with the fall of the land, creating views from existing and proposed public open spaces.
- At a more local scale, the network of hawthorn hedges and hedgerow trees give the impression of a well treed landscape and provide good visual containment and screen views to some areas in the wider landscape.



Figure 25 Development proposals for the site should work with existing water features and channels (Grant Associates)



Figure 26 Existing long views west from the site (Allies and Morrison)



Figure 28 Precedent: North West Cambridge
 Top - the integration of soft landscaped spaces within the street scene alongside cycle routes and pavements
 Bottom - attenuation spaces with a natural character incorporated within a country park (AECOM)

C3. Proposals shall include a network of public spaces to meet local open space requirements

- Existing spaces at Springbank and Hester's Way should be considered in the planning of the location of new spaces and connections, noting Pilgrove Way playground, Henley Road open space, Elm Farm open space and the Terry Ashdown allotments in particular.
- New spaces should be overlooked by new development to improve surveillance and community ownership of spaces.
- Figure 27 sets out the range of typologies of formal and more natural open spaces which will need to be accommodated within any future detailed masterplan for West Cheltenham. This will include a complete spectrum of managed spaces to more natural areas which will feel more like part of the wider countryside.
- Public spaces must be accessible and include areas of seating, shade and accessible paths in order that the widest range of the community is able to enjoy new spaces.
- In line with both borough's open space and sports standards, at a minimum the open spaces will provide a range of amenity spaces (2.91ha), natural and semi-natural spaces (0.61 ha), parks and garden (1.49ha), play spaces for children and young people (0.10ha), and sports facilities including 1 adult football pitch and 1 youth football pitch.
- Allotments will also be provided to serve the new population (0.63ha) alongside reallocation of statutory allotments to meet future demands currently allocated elsewhere in Cheltenham.
- Constraints to built development such as the overhead power cables create areas of open space which must be carefully integrated within the masterplan (see National Grid provides guidelines for development <https://www.nationalgridet.com/document/130626/download>).
- The masterplan shall integrate green infrastructure proposals in order to achieve Building with Nature Design accreditation, with a view to achieving full accreditation ('Excellent') upon delivery to exceed the statutory minima for green infrastructure.

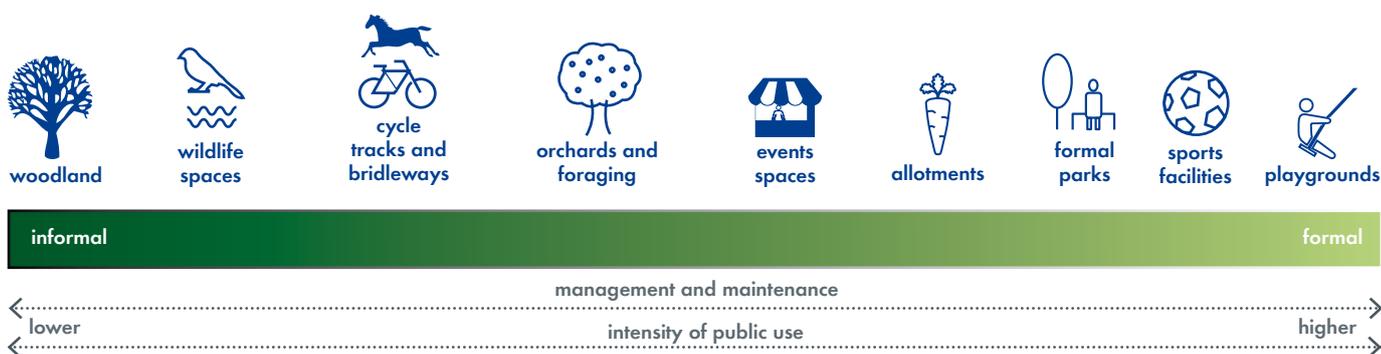


Figure 27 All of the above types of formal and more natural open spaces will need to be accommodated within any future detailed masterplan for West Cheltenham. The spectrum illustrates how open spaces across the site will vary in the extent to which they are managed. The spaces which are most intensively used by the public will often require the most maintenance, whilst spaces which are intended as natural or wildlife spaces will feel more like part of the wider countryside, left as wilder spaces for nature and wildlife (Allies and Morrison)



C4. A high quality new public space will be provided at the gateway of Cyber Central which will be designed to provide flexible spaces for events and activity

- The quality of the landscape at Cyber Central will be a distinguishing factor that makes this development exemplary.
- A formal space will provide a distinctive, high quality and stand-out address around which new buildings will cluster alongside the new Innovation Centre.
- This flexible space will create spaces for community events, provide spill out opportunities for the bars and cafes to serve the surrounding neighbourhood, working with existing water features across this part of the site.
- The masterplan aims to promote 'Sponge City' principles, where the development is part of a permeable system that allows water to filter through the ground and be absorbed to be re-used within the area (see Section 3.2). Interconnected green spaces, green roofs, porous surfaces and water recycling methods should all be considered to contribute to this system. In this way, residential properties can play an important role in rainwater recycling for grey-water as part of the overall SuDS strategy.
- Locations for attenuation water storage are shown indicatively on the masterplan (labelled 2 on Figure 17), which need to be downslope of the proposed development parcels within each catchment (please see the appendix for more technical detail).

C5. New development should take a creative approach to sustainable drainage to reduce the long-term risk of flooding

- Surface water drainage will need to be planned at a site-wide scale alongside the planned green infrastructure and network of routes.
- It must be a multifunctional asset that has amenity, ecological and educational value, whilst improving the quality of water in the public realm and therefore the wider hydrological catchment. There should be an exemplary approach to the use of wetland habitats, sustainable drainage and rainwater gardens.

C6. Development should promote a strategy for new tree planting and retention of existing species

- A tree planting strategy will help support ecological, water management, food production and broader environmental and design aspirations.
- The strategy should include a mix of native and non-native trees as well as an appropriate mix of life expectancy and size.
- The aspiration for a Community Woodland over the whole of the site will help to drive this ambition. The potential for the development to achieve 20% canopy cover across the whole site shall be evaluated at the start of the masterplanning process and a % aim agreed with the LPA. Canopy cover aims shall be taken forward as part of the green infrastructure strategy.

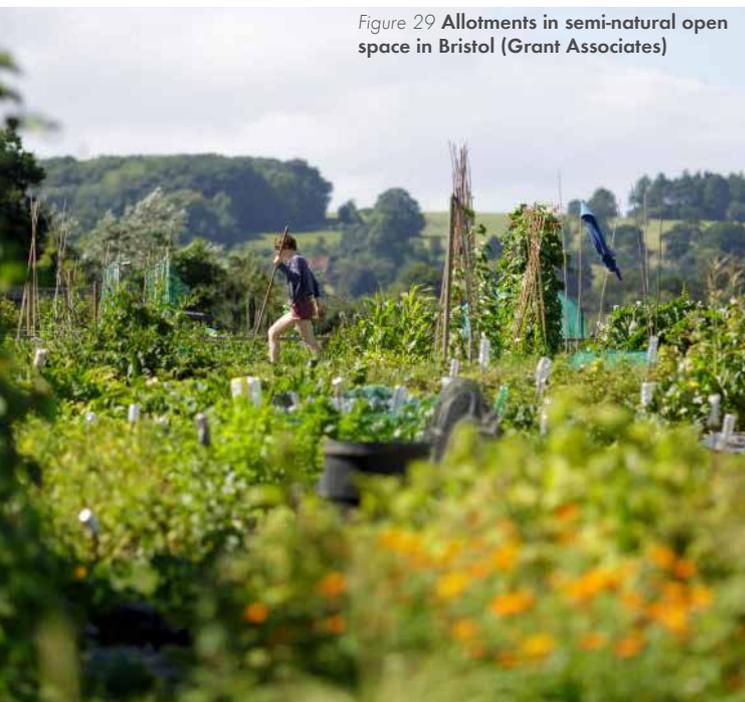
C7. The boundaries with existing communities, the wider countryside, the sewage works, and between phases of development shall be carefully planned and designed to maximise opportunities for physical and visual integration

- New development must respond positively along the edges where the masterplan area interfaces with existing homes, with a need for particularly high quality architecture and landscape provision.
- New landscape which is delivered to help respect the amenity of existing neighbourhoods should provide connections and shared facilities for all local residents. Landscape must not create leftover space or barriers.
- The Telstar Way entrance is the site's principal gateway and a high profile point of arrival. Architecture of the highest quality and street design with landscaping and tree planting will help to mediate between the character of new and existing places.

C8. The development must promote a positive approach to local food growing through the adequate provision of allotments as part of a wider strategy to meet existing and future need

- The Terry Ashdown allotments will be expanded for new and existing residents, alongside community orchards. Allotments will also be provided to serve the new population (0.63ha) alongside reallocation of statutory allotments to meet future demands currently allocated elsewhere in Cheltenham.
- The location of new allotments and other food growing opportunities must be in accessible locations that could be tools to help build a sense of community.
- Opportunities should be explored to connect to existing food networks and initiatives such as community supported agriculture projects, and local food banks to help improve the supply and availability of fruit and vegetables locally.
- The management of these spaces will need to be considered as a key part of the wider management strategy for the site and advice taken from organisations such as the Gloucestershire Orchard Trust.
- Allotment should be a key part of a wider strategy to enable food growing and foraging across the site. Other opportunities might include:
 - Private gardens and balconies to accommodate growing spaces
 - Shared community gardens and orchards.
 - Wilder and more natural spaces for foraging.

Figure 29 Allotments in semi-natural open space in Bristol (Grant Associates)



C9. Proposals should be devised with partners to develop and deliver an innovative public art programme

- The role and identity of any new public art should help to celebrate the natural setting and assets within the site.
- Opportunities for use in wayfinding and in helping to shape the identity of neighbourhoods within the overall area could be explored.
- This strategy should be considered in conjunction with informal playful spaces.
- Public art projects could also play a role in encouraging community participation and integration during the early build out phases together with helping to tie in cyber tech with everyday engagement of business users, residents and businesses.



Figure 30 Public art precedents (Allies and Morrison)

C10. A management strategy shall be developed across the site to inform the design process and with consideration to longer term sustainability

- The strategy should be designed to plan and design for a low maintenance landscape, with reference to climate change and low resource inputs.
- The strategy will include the establishment of intended responsibilities and broad maintenance standards for the streetscape within residential areas and the cyber park, for parks and public spaces, growing spaces, sports facilities, and site wide green infrastructure.
- The streetscape design will be required to demonstrate that landscape and planting proposals have been fully coordinated with highways and drainage design.
- Discussions are required at an early stage to explore the potential for partnership working with charitable trusts such as the Woodland and Wetland Trusts. Setting up a Community Land Trust may be one possibility to help organise the management of spaces.
- Broad landscape management principles will need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority early in the design process/at the pre-application stage.
- Any future planning application must include a detailed 25 year management and maintenance plan.

6 An integrated and connected extension of West Cheltenham

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Cheltenham Borough Council's recently published Connecting Cheltenham report outlines an ambitious long-term strategy and delivery plan for transport in Cheltenham. In outlining a series of drivers for change, the strategy acknowledges that priority must be given to supporting more active, shared and sustainable modes of transport alongside the overriding need for streets to be attractive, pleasant and accessible for all. The Cyber Central Garden Community provides a unique opportunity to demonstrate how the principles outlined in the Connecting Cheltenham strategy can be delivered.

6.1.2 JCS Policy A7 West Cheltenham includes the requirement for new development to be integrated with the existing neighbourhoods and communities on the western side of Cheltenham. Fundamental to this objective is the delivery of physical connections which provide direct and safe routes between the development opportunities at West Cheltenham and the Springbank and Hester's Way neighbourhoods. Further afield it will also be important to ensure connections with Cheltenham Rail Station and the town centre beyond. The site will be a place for people and local trips by sustainable modes and will ensure that it is attractive to make segments of longer trips (i.e. by rail) on foot or by cycle.

6.1.3 The local highway network in the adjacent communities is characterised by roads which provide frontage access to housing, have high levels of on-street parking and provide traffic calming. The impact of potential traffic generation on these local roads as a result of the phased delivery of the West Cheltenham development is a particular concern for local people. Priority will be given to pedestrian, cycle and public transport

connections which will encourage sustainable travel to and from the development whilst ensuring it is fully integrated into the existing community.

6.1.4 Sustainable travel will be encouraged between different uses on the site (i.e. residential and employment) and this will also assist with containing trips within the site. The creation of sustainable networks and priority bus measures will also encourage existing residents living locally to walk, cycle and travel by bus to the site for employment use.

6.1.5 New development will help to deliver real behaviour change to tackle both local air quality and global climate change issues and the design will positively embrace and drive a modal shift from car use. In this regard, and to encourage sustainable travel and connect into wider sustainable travel initiatives, the development will tie in with and facilitate the measures set out in Connecting Cheltenham.

The adjacent plan is numbered to highlight some of the key points of the movement strategy for West Cheltenham, as follows:

- 1 Principal all modes vehicular junction to the site - these are the primary first impression places, the gateways to the site. The quality of the environment here is of particular importance.
- 2 The alignment of the principal vehicular route across the site is informed by existing below ground constraints.
- 3 Secondary vehicular access - providing local access to an articulated early residential phase of development.
- 4 Potential bus gate access - controlled bus-only access.
- 5 Opportunities to extend local bus routes to serve the site.
- 6 To ensure new development is integrated with existing communities, direct connection with and improvements to the pedestrian / cycle link between Springbank and Coronation Square will be delivered.
- 7 These routes illustrate how the masterplan can secure a network of pedestrian and cycle routes which are directly informed by the existing pattern of PRoW across the site.

Key

- Potential extended bus routes
- Potential street-based pedestrian / cycle network
- - - Potential park-based pedestrian / cycle network
- ☼ Principal all modes junction
- ▣ Local vehicular access
- Bus gate access
- Potential pedestrian / cycle access integration
- Ⓜ Cycle hire, electric charging points and car clubs



Figure 31 Movement strategy

6.2 Key movement principles

D1. The design and delivery of new development will prioritise and support active and sustainable travel patterns and behaviour – public transport

- The Cyber Central Garden Community strengthens the case for new investment in radically improved public transport infrastructure linking Cheltenham and Gloucester along the A40 axis. Integration of or interchange with any such investment will radically improve connections to and from Cyber Central.
- Existing bus services will be diverted through the site and frequencies increased to serve new residents and employees as well as improve services for existing residents. This will encourage a modal shift to public transport for existing and potential future residents. Scope for improved services include:
 - Route C – Town centre to Kingsditch and Springbank;
 - Route A – GCHQ and Coronation Square to Cheltenham town centre;
 - Route H – Cheltenham town centre to Wymans Brook, Swindon Village and Arle Farm; and
 - Route 94 – Cheltenham to Churchdown and Gloucester.
- Within the site itself, bus priority measures, supporting by smart technology, will be provided across the street network and beyond.
- Opportunities to provide cleaner buses using electric or hydrogen fuel sources should also be provided to help address air quality issues.
- To mitigate against the threat of rat running on local streets, the use of bus gates (or similar) should be considered, particularly in the vicinity of Henley Road.

D2. Deliver new direct pedestrian and cycle connections to existing communities and facilities

- New pedestrian and cycle connections will be created with existing routes and paths in neighbouring communities. These walking and cycling routes will be direct, safe, well lit, comfortable and attractive. This will help to ensure new development at West Cheltenham is fully integrated with its surroundings.
- The following opportunities exist for the establishment of new pedestrian and cycle connections along the existing west Cheltenham boundary which will ensure good linkages are established with Coronation Square, Springbank Community Centre, All Saints Academy, Gloucester College Hester's Way community centre, Cheltenham Station and Cheltenham town centre and other important local facilities and locations:
 - In the vicinity of Meadow Close, towards the southern end of Fiddler's Green Lane;
 - On the east-west axis of Niven Courtyard;
 - At the existing agricultural access point opposite Lazenby Court;
 - At the junction with Telstar Way;
 - South of Beverley Croft;
 - At the existing stile off Beverley Croft;
 - At Springbank Road open space;
 - Adjacent to the Terry Ashdown Allotments off Henley Road;
 - Opposite Gloucester Road to link with the existing foot and cycle path;
 - At the northern bend in Henley Road, either side of the pylons;
 - Off Hope Orchard;
 - Off Harry Yates Way at Wheatlands Drive; and
 - At Pilgrove Way open space.



Figure 32 Typical primary street with carriageway, cycle lanes and footpaths with avenue tree planting, Jarmers Square, Copenhagen, Denmark (Grant Associates)



Figure 33 Shared space at junctions to slow traffic and promote pedestrian movement, Poynton (Grant Associates)

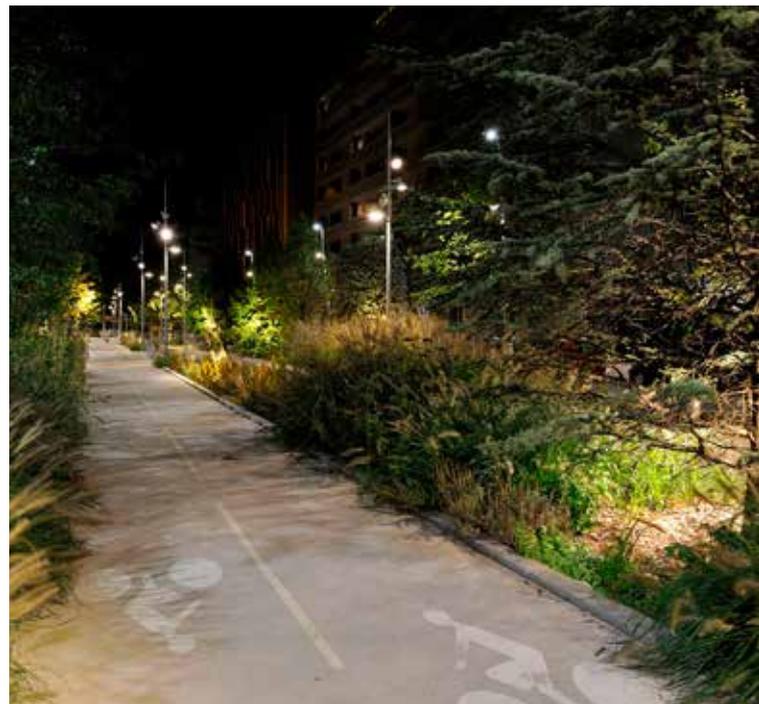


Figure 34 Dedicated cycle routes with planted verges and street lighting, Boulogne, France (Grant Associates)

- Other points of pedestrian and cycle connections will be provided around the remainder of the site perimeter to take account of Public Rights of Way, footpaths and other desire lines.
- The site will have both commuter and leisure trails for cycling. Routes adjacent to main streets will have segregated walking and cycling infrastructure, including a 3m wide segregated cycling lane. Leisure routes linking urban areas within the site would have a shared footway / cycleway width of 3 metres.
- Routes will need to accommodate provision for electric bikes (or low carbon alternatives), subject to legislation and these modes will need to be a key consideration within the design.
- The site will facilitate improved connections to Springbank and Hester's Way, Cheltenham Station and the town centre beyond, in accordance with the Connecting Cheltenham strategy. A continuous and high quality off-carriageway link to Cheltenham Rail Station will be provided linking to the site from the southern access and via Telstar Way and the A40. Signage and road marking improvements for cyclists will be considered within existing residential areas to further encourage and facilitate sustainable travel via direct routes.
- Fiddler's Green Lane offers scope to provide enhanced cycle connections towards Arle Court roundabout, the park and ride and areas to the south of the site, further strengthening the connections to the surrounding area.

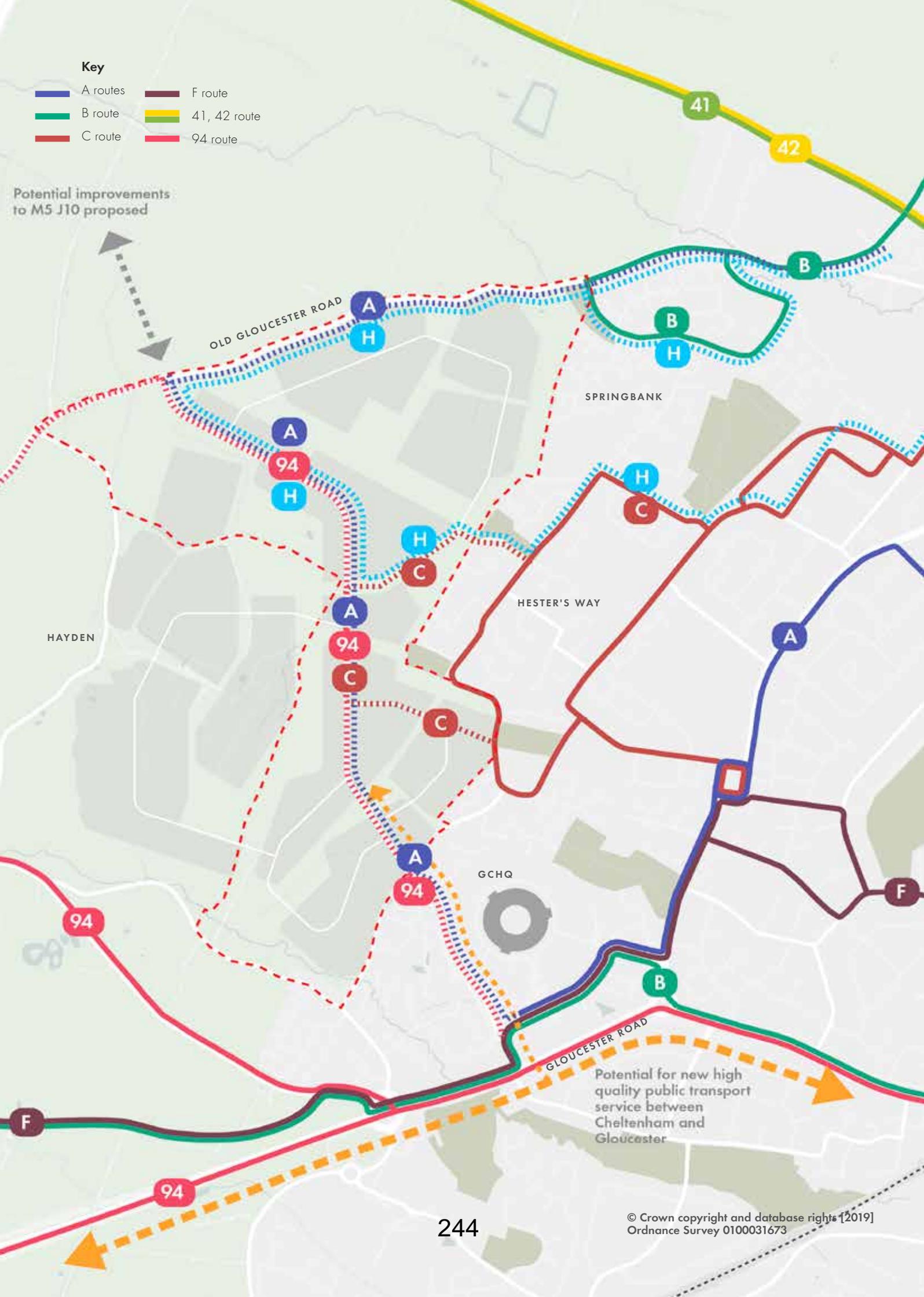
D3. Creation of an open network of streets and routes which can be managed to meet local needs

- As endorsed through the Connecting Cheltenham strategy, successful places are connected, accessible and open places which are easy to find and easy to navigate. The phased delivery of development at West Cheltenham will establish a network of streets, walking and cycling routes which will ensure new development is fully integrated with, and not separated from, existing adjacent communities.
- The delivery of fully integrated communities, connected in a straightforward manner by legible streets, will enable and support the wider long-term regeneration of the existing neighbourhoods of west Cheltenham.
- Development should generally take a perimeter block form resulting in a clear distinction between private and public space. To ensure walking and cycling movements are shortest and quickest, additional routes away from traffic will offer direct and attractive links between areas within the site.
- Conditions on existing local roads will be a key consideration. New routes will be aligned to provide direct connections to existing neighbourhoods. These routes will be managed to ensure the impact of new development on existing neighbourhoods is acceptable and to prevent 'rat running'.
- Analysis tools such as Space Syntax or similar should be used to assess levels of connectivity and integration. The Transport for New Homes checklist may also be useful in this assessment.

Key

- A routes
- B route
- C route
- F route
- 41, 42 route
- 94 route

Potential improvements to M5 J10 proposed



Potential for new high quality public transport service between Cheltenham and Gloucester

D4. Delivery of a new 'main street' between Telstar Way and Old Gloucester Road, designed as a street for people, not a road for vehicles

- The site will accommodate a main street connecting Telstar Way with the anticipated new road linking to an improved 'all directions' M5 Junction 10 to the north. The nature of this key piece of infrastructure through the site will play a very significant role in determining the character of West Cheltenham.
- This 'main street' should not be viewed as a high-speed direct route through the site, but as an integrated part of West Cheltenham, with mixed-use development providing frontage activity along its length.
- It will be designed to slow vehicle speeds through the site and encourage walking, cycling and public transport through the provision of footways, 3m cycleways and bus priority measures along its length.
- Subject to detailed design and capacity constraints, the main street should be a single carriageway road with a design speed of 30mph and straight sections would be of a short length to assist in enforcing low vehicle speeds. Frontage activity and side junctions will also assist in reducing vehicle speeds. It would incorporate at-grade pedestrian crossings and bus stops.

D5. Principal junctions should be designed to minimise land take and create safe and direct crossing points for pedestrians and cycles

- The key junction at the southern end of the site will be designed to give priority to pedestrian and cyclist movements. The walking / cycling routes will continue onto Telstar Way and provide a continuous pedestrian / cycle link between and within the site and onto the A40 and the wider area.
- The key junction in the north of the site would tie into the proposed M5 J10 link road. The J10 link road is proposed as a dual carriageway and the site access could either be a roundabout or signalled junction. A roundabout would allow for a transition from single to dual carriageway, as well as acting as a traffic calming measure to slow vehicle speeds entering and exiting the site. Formal crossings will be provided on the key arms of the roundabout to facilitate crossing movements, although pedestrian and cyclist activity is likely to be lower at this location than at other accesses across the site.
- Where further vehicular access points are provided, priority will be given to walking and cycling movements. Further connections directly into the existing Hester's Way and Springbank areas will be provided to ensure the site is fully permeable and integrated into the existing community. These links will encourage walking, cycling and public transport.
- If feasible, vehicle connections could be provided although these would need to consider the impact of vehicle movements on existing local streets and pedestrian / cycle environments.

D6. Provision of safe routes to schools, which will be provided within or beyond the West Cheltenham site

- Safe routes to local schools will be delivered through the network of walking and cycling routes within the site and numerous connections to the existing areas. These routes will provide dedicated, safe, direct, overlooked and well-lit routes which connect externally to the Springbank Primary Academy, St Thomas More Primary School, All Saints Academy as well as the required new primary school within the West Cheltenham site and the planned new secondary school at Elms Grove to the north.
- Where access across main roads is required, good quality dedicated controlled crossings will be required.

D7. A flexible and creative approach to the application of parking standards and emerging and new vehicle technologies and initiatives

- Attitudes towards car use and ownership are changing. Levels of car ownership, particularly for younger people, are generally falling and car hire services (car clubs) are becoming increasingly popular in built up areas. These changes are helping to reduce reliance on the private car and development at West Cheltenham will positively take account of the opportunities these trends raise.
- The planning system, and the local authorities' response to planning applications submitted in response to this SPD, will need to respond to these rapid societal changes as plans are prepared and reviewed and as standards are revised. The special and unique nature and scale of the development at West Cheltenham provides an opportunity to take a fresh and bespoke approach to the application of parking standards, supported by a robust management regime.
- Flexible and innovative approaches to the provision of residential parking will be encouraged, including implementing unallocated parking on-street parking, particularly in high density areas. Flexible parking between employment and residential uses will be introduced to maximise the use of the same parking spaces during different periods of demand. This will help to ensure that development is more resilient to the ongoing changes in personal mobility and vehicle technology, thereby helping to future proof the long-term phased delivery of the development as a whole.
- The development will be supported by good electric bike and car charging facilities and hire schemes (subject to legislation). A cycle parking and hire scheme 'hub' will be provided to encourage cycling throughout the site. It will be highly attractive to cycle within and around the site utilising the extensive network of dedicated routes.
- Provision of a decked parking structure will be supported within the Cyber Central campus hub. This will provide parking capacity for the new employment uses and the wider development as a whole. Large expanses of surface parking will not be permitted.
- Parking management measures such as Controlled Parking Zones and contractor parking strategies may be required to help protect local residents from the impacts of new development. This would reduce the attractiveness of travelling by car to workplaces and encourage and enhance sustainable travel behaviour.

7 Promoting the highest standards of design quality

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 Although there is one overall vision for the Cyber Central Garden Community, there will be a range of neighbourhoods within the area which should each have a distinctive local identity.
- 7.1.2 This section provides some specific design guidance about a number of site wide themes including densities, building typologies and developing locally distinctive places within Cyber Central that are 'friendly relatives' of the regency character of the town centre.
- 7.1.3 Principle E3 expands the description and zooms in to a number of key locations within the adjacent neighbourhoods to help communicate the varied character and identity within Cyber Central Garden Community. This guidance is set out within four themes; streets and movement; character and scale; landscape and public realm; and uses and activities. The Local Planning Authority will require design review to be built into the pre application and application process with appropriate time built into the process to allow recommendations to inform the detailed masterplanning process.
- 7.1.4 The adjacent plan is numbered to highlight some of the key neighbourhoods within the Cyber Central Garden Community at West Cheltenham.

- 1 Cyber Central neighbourhoods**
Focus of the employment-led mixed-use zone with a strong physical relationship with GCHQ. Vibrant and thriving within a high-quality landscape setting dedicated to the development of cyber technology research. Cyber Central neighbourhoods will form the heart of the community, with shops, a public square, leisure spaces and community uses
- 2 Main Street neighbourhoods**
A collection of accessible smaller mixed residential neighbourhoods and employment areas along the main street through the Cyber Central Garden Community
- 3 Old Gloucester Road neighbourhoods**
Mixed use residential neighbourhoods with shared community facilities including a new school and public open spaces for new and existing communities
- 4 The Works - Future neighbourhoods**
See Chapter 8 for details

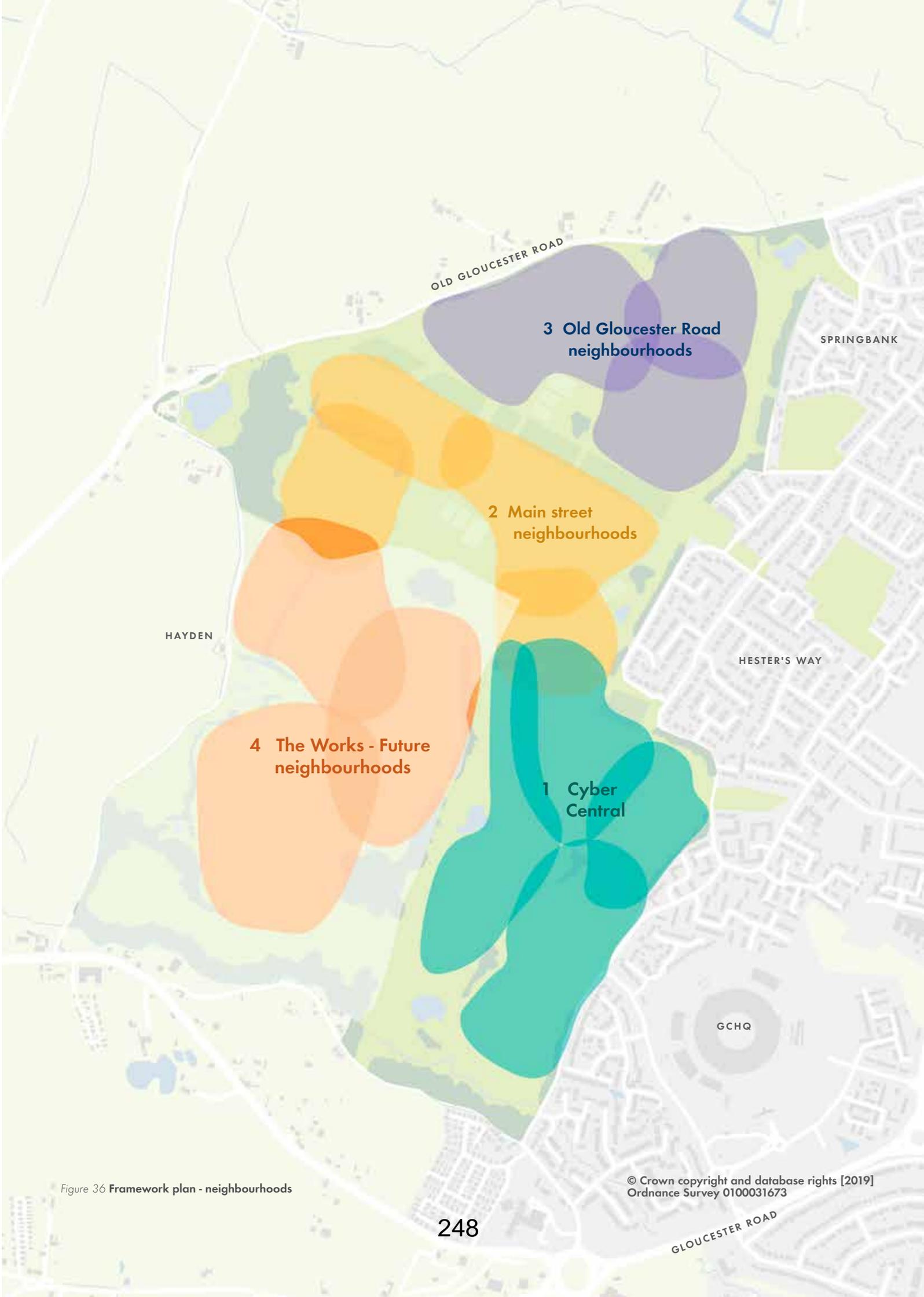


Figure 36 Framework plan - neighbourhoods

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7.2 Key character and placemaking principles

E1. New development will deliver a range of housing densities and typologies to ensure effective use of land is made

- 7.2.1 Releasing land from the green belt can only be done in exceptional circumstances. The case was made through the preparation of the JCS that the opportunity presented by West Cheltenham to deliver a new highly connected, diverse and mixed use sustainable garden community was an exceptional one.
- 7.2.2 To justify this position and ensure that the optimum use of land is made, housing typologies should be mixed to ensure there is a range of tenures and forms of housing to meet a wide range of needs.

- 7.2.3 The guidance provided below demonstrates the range of housing typologies considered to be appropriate for the Cyber Central Garden Community. The densities outlined are higher than those found in the immediately adjoining neighbourhoods, but higher densities will help to ensure best use is made of the new infrastructure provided.
- 7.2.4 Within the best connected and most diverse areas, housing typologies that deliver higher densities will be most appropriate, including more apartments, stacked maisonettes, town and terraced houses. Other neighbourhoods further away from services will also need to deliver a range of higher densities through housing typologies including mews, terraces, town houses and semi-detached properties.

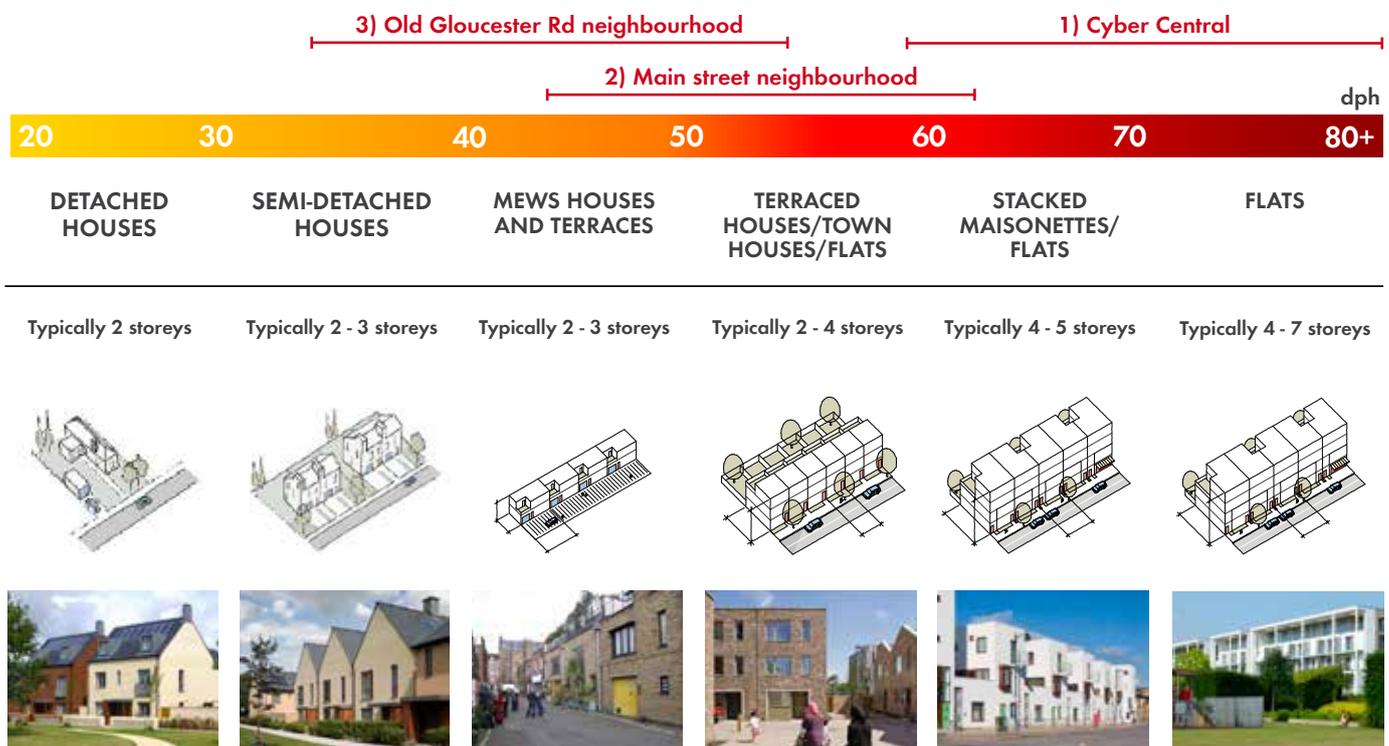


Figure 37 Density and typology spectrum
This spectrum illustrates the range of housing typologies and their likely densities which should be promoted within each of the neighbourhoods within the Cyber Central Garden Community (Allies and Morrison)



Figure 38 Plans and photos of Goldsmith Street - diverse housing typologies, quality spaces and architecture (© Mikhail Riches)

Goldsmith Street, Norwich

The 2019 RIBA Stirling Prize winning residential scheme for Norwich City Council at Goldsmith Street provides a good practice precedent as a higher density, environmentally friendly Passivhaus, Council-led residential scheme of exceptional design quality:

Numbers:

- 45 houses and 60 flats
- 112 dwelling per hectare / 1.04 FAR density

Block types:

- Typically two storey houses with three storey roof pop-ups and corner blocks
- Corner blocks consisting of flats with their own front door to the street, generous lobby for prams and bikes and private balconies.

Street widths:

- Typically 3.5m front gardens/space, 3.5m pavements, and 4m road (generally 12-14m front to front dimensions). Dimensions are tighter than allowed by policy but precedents from Norwich's historic terraced street typologies are used as precedents to justify local distinctiveness.
- On street parking conditions (2.5m parking with a smaller 1.5 pavement)

Character and open spaces:

- Secure and shared 'ginnels' between back gardens to encourage children to play together and a wide landscaped walkway within the street
- Materials to reference the city's history - black roof pantiles, creamy clay bricks.
- Passivhaus standards, consideration of building orientation, sun shading and recessed windows.
- Only residential use - no integration of employment or community spaces

E2. New development will look to local precedent in Cheltenham to help deliver locally distinctive forms of development

7.2.5 Cheltenham has a rich and diverse built character which provides exciting opportunities for contemporary architecture that does not slavishly copy its past. Opportunities should be taken to create sophisticated contemporary ‘relatives’ of the existing buildings and townscape. Future planning applications should deliver high architectural quality that is ‘of Cheltenham’ using robust and locally distinctive materials that celebrate the special mix of Victorian and regency proportions in the town. Some examples from Cheltenham which set out a number of key learning points for Cyber Central Garden Community are highlighted here:



Figure 39 A dense four storey typology with use of stone - a modern relation to the rhythm of the regency Cheltenham style (Bath, Alison Brooks Architects)

Royal Crescent

Numbers: 75 homes within 0.6ha = 125 dph

Description: Grand regency crescent in the town centre. 3.5 to 4.5 storeys with half basements and some roof extensions.

Street widths: Half basements and grand entrance staircases provide set back space from street (around 2m). 3m pavements and 12m carriageway with on street chevron parking.

Learning for West Cheltenham:

- A typology to deliver higher density development, but in a style that is ‘of Cheltenham’
- A typology that is flexible and resilient and can be houses, apartments or offices.
- A precedent for restrained but consistent facade decoration and features including balconies, window proportions and materials.



Victoria Place

Numbers: 55 homes within 0.74ha = 74dph

Description: Two storey Georgian terraced homes stepping up to larger houses at the end of the blocks, terraced and back to back gardens.

Street widths: 0-3m gardens, 1.5m pavements and 7.5 - 9m carriageway with on street parking. 12 - 18m building front to front.

Learning for West Cheltenham:

- Mixed use at the corners of blocks and some internal yards to incorporate employment spaces.
- Range in house sizes within a block - narrow two bed terraced houses alongside larger double fronted homes.
- Narrower streets with on-street car parking to make best use of land and help increase densities.



Albert Street

Numbers: 110 homes within 1.11ha = 99dph

Description: Very narrow Victorian two storey terraced homes with more prominent corner plots, alleyways for access at rear.

Street widths: No front gardens, 1.5m pavements and 6.5m carriageway with on street parking. 9 - 12m building front to front. 3.5m alleyways at rear.

Learning for West Cheltenham:

- Sustainable building typology due to efficient use of land and potential for well insulated forms.
- Bins and bikes are stored at rear and accessed via alleyways to reduce the overall street section.
- The character of the street is defined by the rhythm of the facade treatment.
- Homes were built with basements/cellars, many of which have been converted to living space.



7.3 Character studies

E3. New development will contribute to the distinct character of its neighbourhood whilst delivering the overall vision for Cyber Central Garden Community

7.3.1 This section contains character studies of our contrasting areas across the Cyber Central Garden Community. The three areas have been chosen to correlate with the three character areas (with the exception of the Hayden Works site) identified in Figure 41. They are as follows:

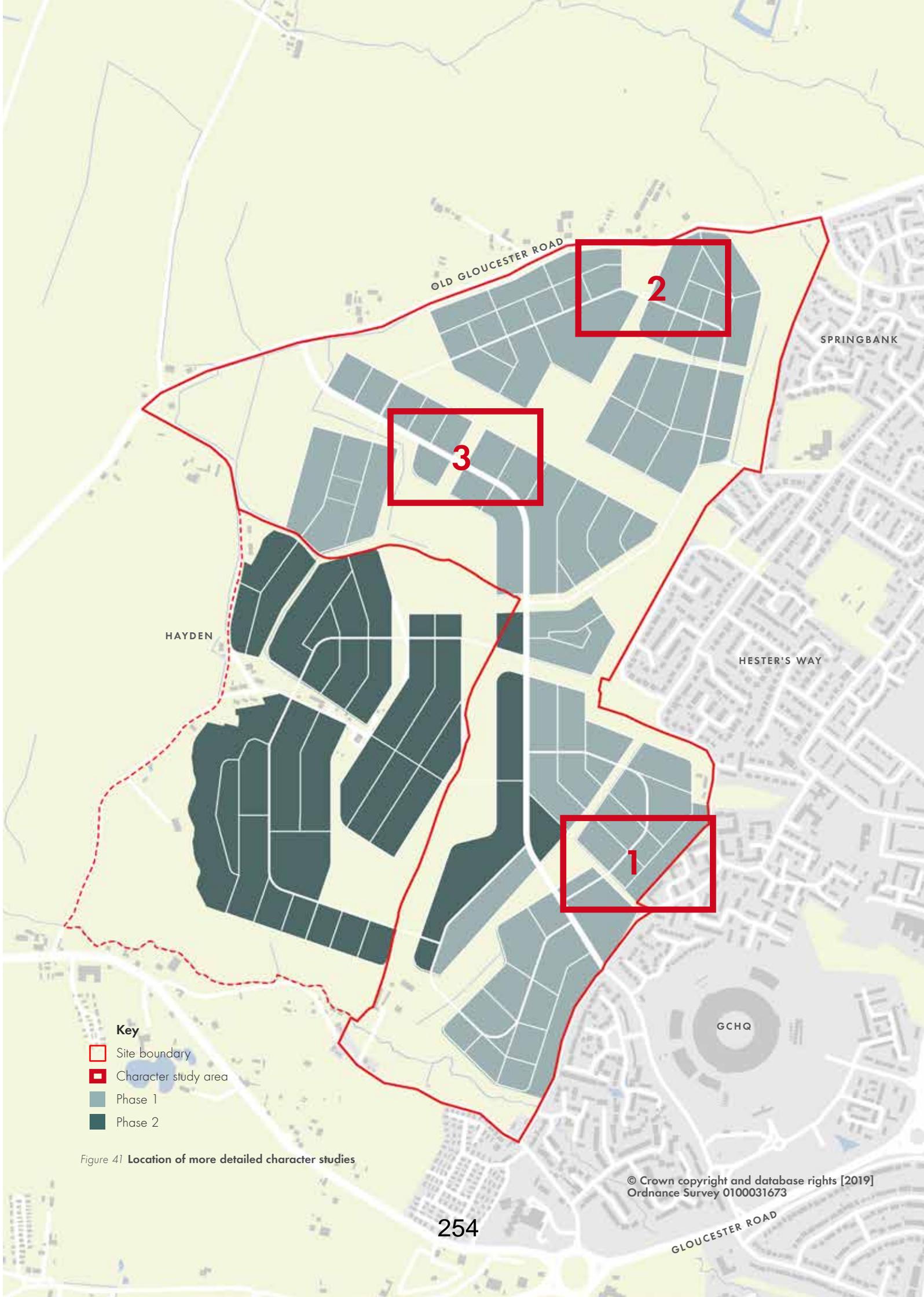
- 1 The Cyber Central cluster area, the area's principal arrival point, community hub with services and facilities;
- 2 The Gloucester Road neighbourhood, a predominantly residential area to the north of the site.
- 3 The main street area, a mixed use area with some employment uses and residential uses, centred around a main through route passing through the heart of the site; and

7.3.2 For each area the following design and development guidance is provided.

- An illustrative site plan - this is not a blueprint but a guide to demonstrate important principles and opportunities for the area.
- Urban design guidance relating to streets and movement, character and scale; landscape and public realm; and land uses and activities.
- An annotated artist impression or CGI view of each neighbourhood to help communicate an appropriate scale and character for new development and provide a vision for the public realm in each area.



Figure 40 Temple Gardens, Temple Cloud, Bristol. Reinterpretation of traditional forms and fenestration with use of brick and stone window surrounds. A design that feels rooted in place without resorting to pastiche. (Archio)



Key

- Site boundary
- Character study area
- Phase 1
- Phase 2

Figure 41 Location of more detailed character studies

7.4 Place 1: Cyber Central hub

Indicative layout plan

7.4.1 Figure 42 shows an indicative prospective layout plan for part of the Cyber Central hub, the principal gateway to, and community hub for, the new garden community. The annotations on the plan provide an overview of some of the more important opportunities that any proposals coming forward will be expected to respond positively to.

Streets and movement

- 1 A tree lined boulevard will be the principal connection for vehicles and buses to Telstar Way and the wider Hester's Way Neighbourhood. This will have active frontage provided by the mixed use buildings and have an easily navigable route for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2 A new signalled junction at the main entrance to the site will have a smaller land take and allow new development to have a stronger street frontage, as well as delivering a more cycle and pedestrian friendly environment.
- 3 Scope for a multi-storey car park will ensure that enough car parking is provided to serve employment uses. Car parking in this form, rather than surface car parking, allows the land to be intensively uses and the environment to not be dominated by tarmac.
- 4 A high quality and regular bus service will make this sustainable mode an obvious choice to get to Cyber Central. A pull-in area will allow people to be dropped in the most convenient location and allow a shuttle service to the station to easily operate.

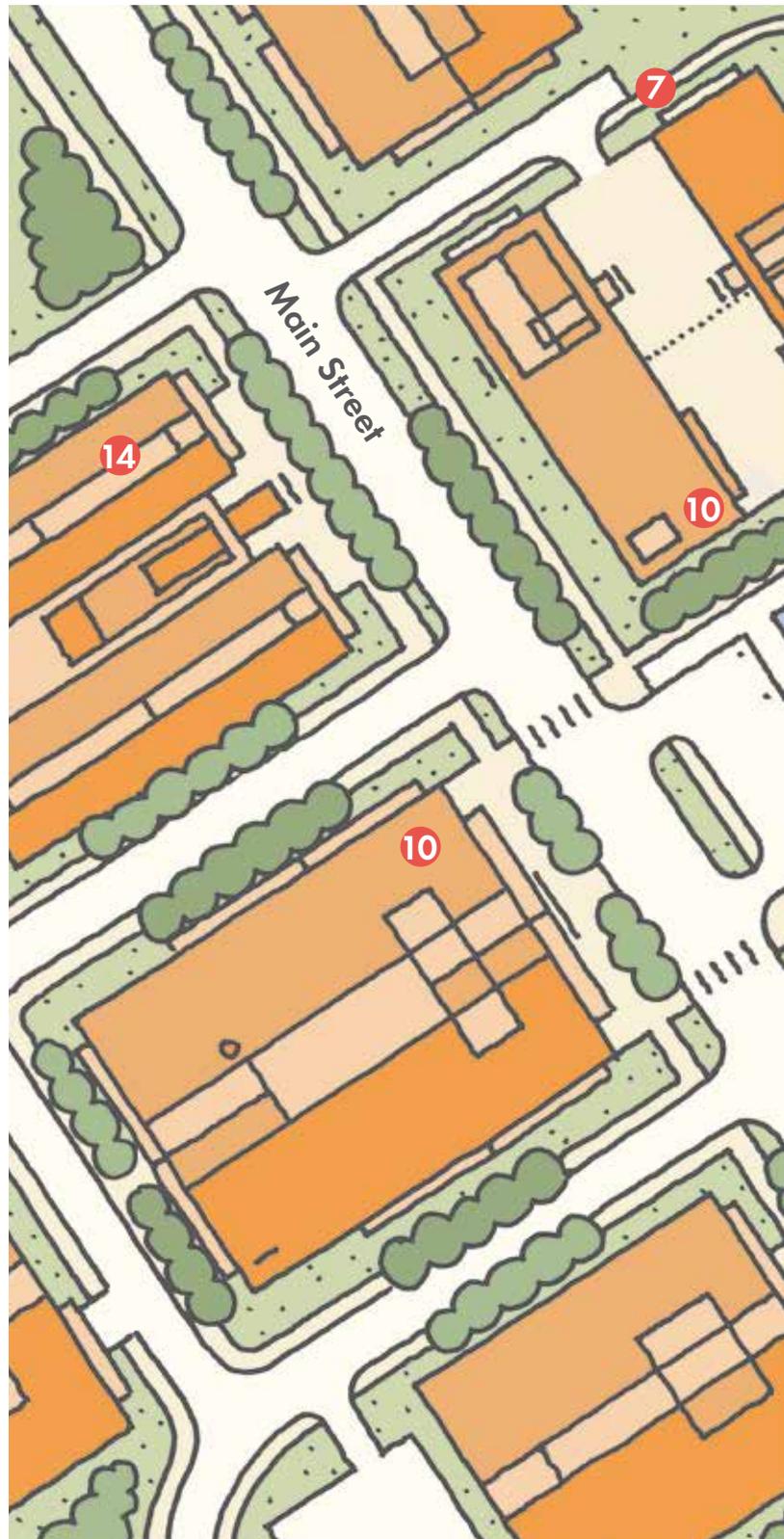
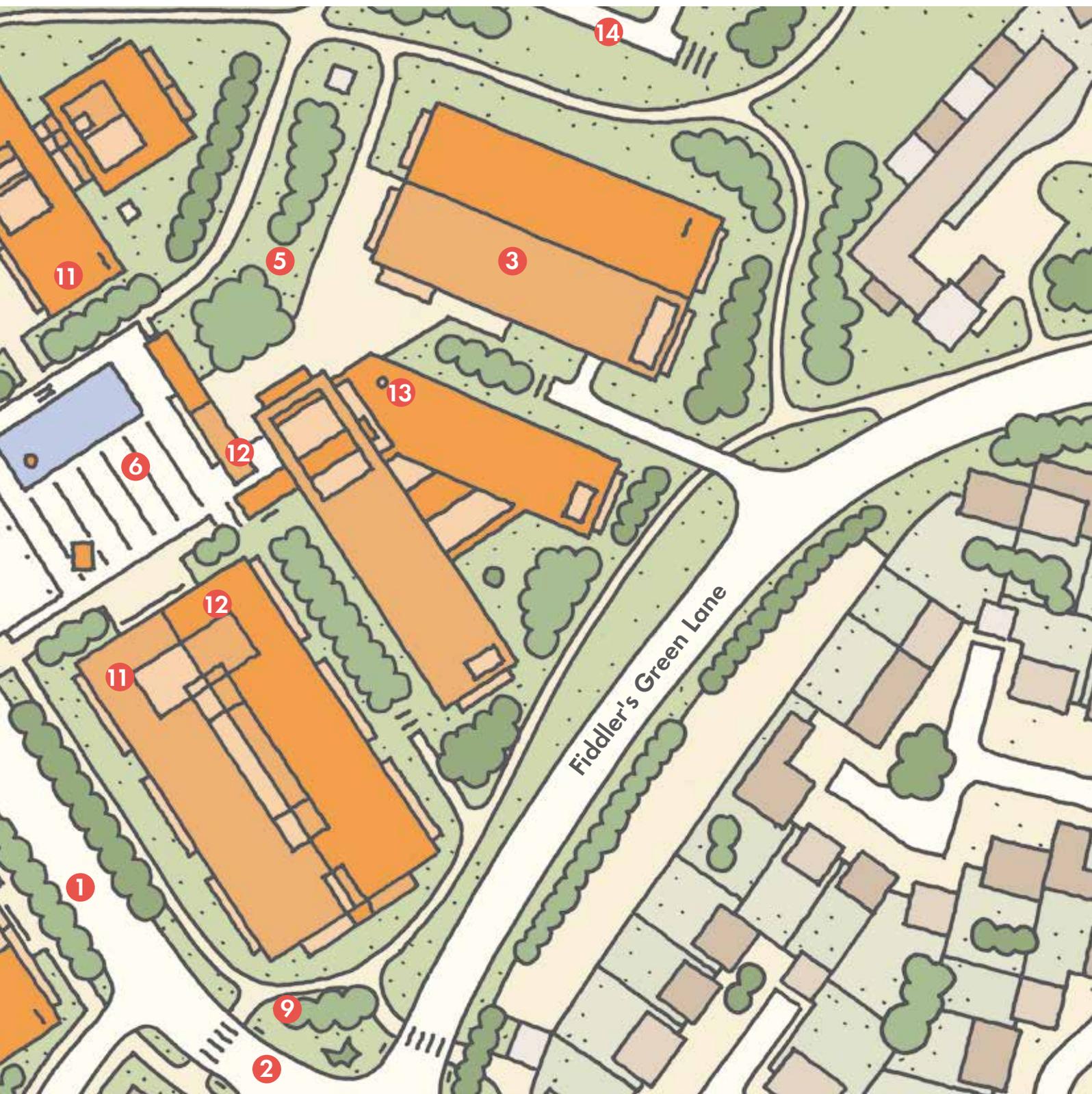


Figure 42 A sketch plan illustrating the character and identity of the neighbourhood at the threshold of Cyber Central, with the existing area at Telstar Way. These high level sketches are designed to give an indicative sense of the character of the place. Their purpose is not to provide detailed design guidance on street layout, building design or layout (Allies and Morrison)



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Landscape and public realm

- 5 The high quality landscape setting will be a key part of what sets Cyber Central apart. Its landscape will be part of its distinct identity and will be a key attractor to new businesses locating here.
- 6 A hard landscaped event spaces will allow festivals, markets and community events and help signpost the 'heart' of cyber central, adjacent to the Innovation Centre.
- 7 A network of off-road cycle and pedestrian routes will provide direct connections between buildings, through the green infrastructure network.
- 8 New buildings will make intensive use of the land, whilst balancing the need to deliver appropriate green infrastructure and create high quality streets and spaces by enhancing the existing assets within the site such as mature trees and waterways.

Character and scale

- 9 A distinctive and exciting threshold for the Cyber Central Garden Community. A high quality point of arrival where new buildings will have a positive relationship with this important corner. Public art and high quality landscaping will help mark the arrival.
- 10 Generally mixed use buildings will range from three to six storeys and will vary in scale and proportion to deliver the required range of uses. The grain of this area is likely to be coarser than other areas of Cyber Central Garden Community with larger and taller buildings, given the focus of employment mixed-use intended within this area.



Figure 43 The Kings Cross masterplan is a framework for incremental mixed use with spaces and routes driving placemaking (Allies and Morrison)



Land uses and activities

- 11 The Cyber Central hub will be home to an Innovation Centre - a flexible workspace facility to be shared with representatives from industry, academia and government. This facility will occupy a prominent location in the heart of Cyber Central, surrounded and supported by a wide range of uses and facilities within a high quality landscaped environment.
- 12 Shops, cafes, bars, restaurants, community and other leisure uses will be incorporated into buildings to serve employees and local residents and provide activity to streets and spaces.
- 13 Other uses such as hotels will be incorporated into this part of Cyber Central, serving the business community and local residents
- 14 Residential uses will also be located within the immediate area. These new homes are likely to be a mix of flats and town houses



Figure 44 New development in Hereford creates mixed use streets and spaces delivering shops, leisure and employment uses within characterful buildings that are locally distinctive (Allies and Morrison)



Figure 45 A CGI of what the Innovation Centre at Cyber Central could look like (for illustrative purposes only) (Allies and Morrison)

Residential areas are mixed with more employment focused streets to ensure that people are in Cyber Central throughout the day and into the evening

The high quality landscape is a distinctive part of the identity of Cyber Central

Shops, cafes, hotels and leisure spaces bring activity to Cyber Central - making it a 24 hour campus



The Innovation Centre is a landmark building and will be the most prominent address in Cyber Central. Event and meeting spaces, support services and public cafes make the building the hub of the campus

260

Hard landscaped spaces have been created that provide the platform for an exciting programme of events throughout the year, animating the public realm

An electric bus shuttles people into Cheltenham and to the station



Figure 46 An artist's impression of what the Cyber Central community hub might look like (Allies and Morrison)

High quality cycling infrastructure will help to encourage residents and commuters to choose other means of transport than the private car

Ground floors that provide the street edge with overlooking and activity - to help make streets and spaces feel safer for all uses

Priority is given to sustainable transport modes including bus provision



A range of types of dwelling to meet the needs of a wide cross section of people - including apartments suitably sized for families

New development is set around new high quality public space with area of planting, places to play and spaces for events and activity

New development steps up in height at the corners given the well connected location. Office and employment space in accessible locations which help to create mixed use environments and create footfall throughout the day

7.5 Place 2: Old Gloucester Road neighbourhood

Indicative layout plan

7.5.1 Figure 47 shows an indicative prospective layout plan of the area proposed for the residential neighbourhoods within the north of Cyber Central Garden Community. The annotations on the plan provide an overview of some of the more important opportunities that any proposals coming forward will be expected to respond positively to.

Streets and movement

- 1 New properties will actively address the Old Gloucester Road but retain the existing mature trees and hedgerows. Homes will be accessed from lanes within the new development.
- 2 There will only be a small number of vehicular connections out onto the Old Gloucester Road but regular pedestrian and cycle connections.
- 3 Bus services will stop along Old Gloucester Road to serve the primary school, existing residents and new homes. Buses will also stop on the main street, a short walk from school. These routes will need to be carefully designed with crossings and wide pavements to ensure safe route to schools.
- 4 A strong network of Rights of Way and cycle connections will link existing neighbourhoods to the east and out towards the countryside to the west.
- 5 Residential streets will be delivered through a series of connected streets (not cul-de-sacs). Residential parking will be provided in a range of ways including integrated garages, on-plot and on-street spaces.

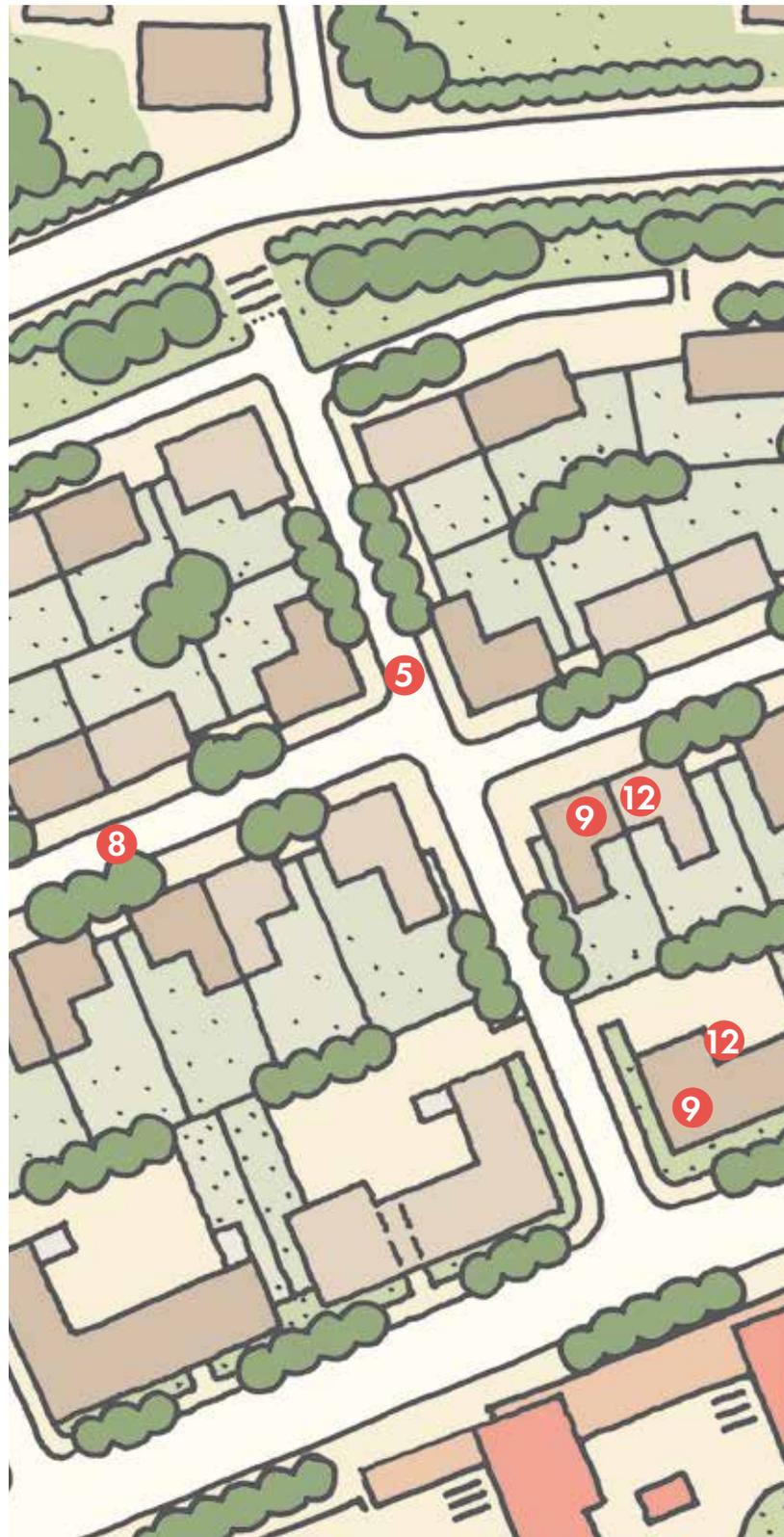


Figure 47 A sketch plan illustrating the character and identity of neighbourhoods near Old Gloucester Road. These high level sketches are designed to give an indicative sense of the character of the place. Their purpose is not to provide detailed design guidance on street layout, building design or layout (Allies and Morrison)



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Character and scale

- 6 The scale and grain of this area will be more modest in comparison to areas of Cyber Central to the south nearer Telstar Way. Buildings will generally be two to four storeys with scope for taller buildings on key corner plots or for significant locations and uses.
- 7 Employment uses, leisure and community facilities such as schools will need larger land parcels and buildings.
- 8 Residential streets will have a more intimate scale which may be shared space or home-zones to incorporate green infrastructure, play spaces, and car parking.
- 9 Residential typologies will vary which will influence the character and scale of streets. Some streets will be denser with flats and town houses, whilst other areas will incorporate slightly lower densities to include terraced houses and semi-detached homes. This variety will be important to deliver a varied and interesting neighbourhood as well as meeting a variety of housing needs.



Figure 48 Residential neighbourhoods must incorporate a range of typologies, tenures and densities. These photos illustrate examples of terraced houses, town houses and flats sitting comfortably within the same street (Allies and Morrison)





Landscape and public realm

- 10 New green spaces will be generous and accessible, within the heart of neighbourhoods, overlooked by homes. These spaces will provide opportunities for play, sport and community activities.
- 11 Existing green infrastructure such as mature trees and waterways will influence the structure of new spaces and green routes.

Land uses and activities

- 12 A diversity of residential typologies will offer a wide range of high quality and distinctive homes. This should include homes of a complete mix of tenures, including affordable homes, and homes for every stage of life.
- 13 A primary school and a cafe will be located at the corner of the park, forming the centre of this neighbourhood.



Figure 49 Lower and higher density housing typologies should always address the street directly with door and windows (Allies and Morrison)



Figure 50 An artist's impression illustrating the environment within the residential neighbourhoods in the north of Cyber Central Garden Community (Allies and Morrison)

New schools and community facilities form the centre of local neighbourhoods

Slightly higher densities at key locations to help improve legibility and support viability of local businesses

Play spaces in central and well overlooked places at the heart of new communities. Places designed for people - that bring people together to help build community spirit



Electric vehicles charging points and e-bike hire docks provide an integrated sustainable travel network

A range of types of dwelling to meet the needs of a wide cross section of people - including apartments suitably sized for families

High quality cycling infrastructure will help to encourage residents and commuters to choose other means of transport than the private car



7.6 Place 3: Main street neighbourhood

Indicative layout plan

7.6.1 Figure 51 shows an indicative prospective layout plan of the area proposed for the neighbourhoods along the Main Street, to the north west of Cyber Central Garden Community. The main street axis will provide the opportunity for a range of uses and activities - employment, community, commercial and residential - to share good quality access. The annotations on the plan provide an overview of some of the more important opportunities that any proposals coming forward will be expected to respond positively to.

Streets and movement

- 1 Designed as a multi-purpose street not a road designed only to efficiently move traffic along. Although this is likely to be a busy road for traffic, the route will have a priority measures for buses and cyclists to help prioritise sustainable modes.
- 2 Tree planting, high quality public realm and pavements of a comfortable dimension will help the environment feel like a good street.
- 3 A number of high quality crossings will allow pedestrians and cyclists to easily cross the boulevard, accessing the linked network of green open public spaces.
- 4 There will be on-street parking to allow people to easily park to visit friends or local businesses.



Figure 51 A sketch plan illustrating the character and identity of neighbourhoods along the main street through the area. These high level sketches are designed to give an indicative sense of the character of the place. Their purpose is not to provide detailed design guidance on street layout, building design or layout (Allies and Morrison)



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- 5 Residential properties will have car parking provided in a range of ways including integrated garages, on-plot and on-street car parking. Segregated access lanes would enable good quality access and frontage if access is restricted from the main street direct.
- 6 Employment areas will have car parking provided in multi-storey or small decked car parks to make most efficient use of land. In some places, service areas and small parking courts may be provided if well landscaped and carefully designed, away from the primary frontage.

Character and scale

- 7 The scale of development should step up towards the main street to balance the scale and width of this street. This might include development of four and five storeys in some areas.
- 8 Generally residential neighbourhoods located along the main street will consist of a range of typologies from flats and terraced homes in the most accessible locations, to semi-detached homes in more secluded locations.
- 9 Employment buildings will be mixed in typologies from small office buildings to semi-industrial sheds, coarser and larger in grain and footprint.



Figure 52 Glider bus, Albertbridge Road, Belfast



Figure 53 Southwark Street is a busy traffic route with regular buses and heavily uses as a route for cyclists. Tree planting, pedestrian crossings, cycle parking and high quality public realm create a positive street environment (Google)



Figure 54 Signage, planting and a changes in surfacing indicates that the street is a Home Zone, a residential space designed to be safely shared by people, children and vehicles (Northam Home Zone)

Landscape and public realm

- 10 A meadow grassland public space is established under the existing pylons axis to the rear. See National Grid design guidance for support and ideas on the potential design and uses for these spaces (<https://www.nationalgridet.com/document/130626/download>).
- 11 To the south of the main road is a nature reserve that is publicly accessible but intended to be a quieter area with varied habitats.
- 12 Existing landscape assets such as waterways and mature trees have shaped the development coming forward and have influenced the proposed connected future network. A small stream is retained and enhanced and will form an attractive feature between more employment and residential focused areas.

Land uses and activities

- 13 Accessible areas of mixed employment are located here, with good access to the proposed road to the M5 junction.
- 14 Residential areas of mixed tenure and type are accessed from the main street through the site.

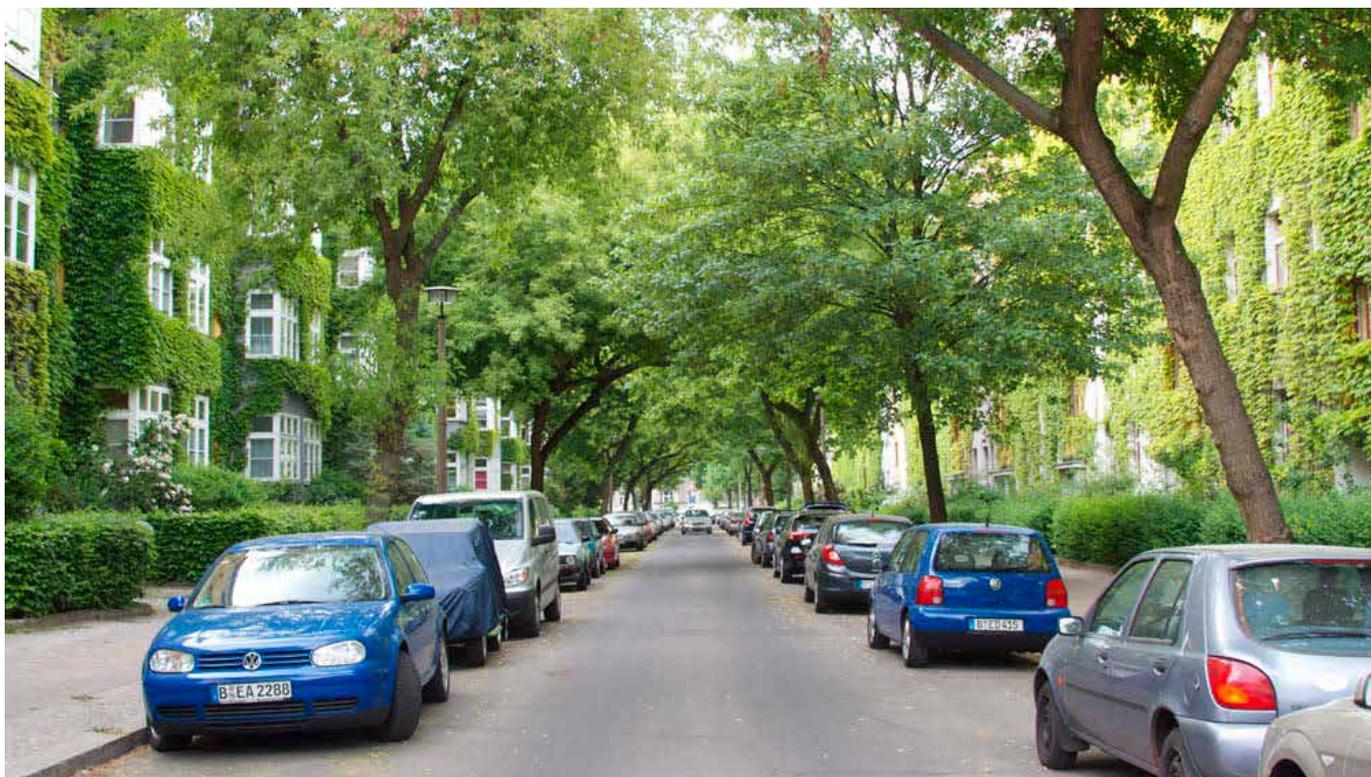


Figure 55 Tree lined streets with on-street parking provides a flexible and space efficient way of meeting parking demands (Grant Associates)



Figure 56 An artist's impression illustrating the environment along the main street through the Cyber Central Garden Community (Allies and Morrison)

Employment spaces provide activity to the main street and are a mix between small offices, workshops and semi industrial space

A green route connects across the street, linking two new open spaces, following the line of an existing water course

A cycle and bus only lanes means that sustainable transport modes have priority and are appealing to use



New homes provide activity to the street and have their front doors facing this main route

On street parking allows visitors to homes and businesses to easily stop

Pavements are provided all the way along the road with high quality materials and landscaping

8 Longer term phases of growth - Hayden Works site

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 Through the adoption in December 2017 of the JCS, the Hayden Sewage Treatment Works (HSTW) site, whilst not forming part of the West Cheltenham strategic allocation under Policy A7, was removed from the Green Belt and earmarked as 'safeguarded land'. This policy shift was made in view of the longer-term opportunity to bring the works site forward for redevelopment as part of the Cyber Central Garden Community. It is anticipated that the site will be included in the emerging JCS first review, as a forthcoming site allocation. If the JCS review is adopted by 2021, this would require extending the plan period to at least 2041.

8.1.2 To do so, the existing operational treatment works would need to be suitably relocated. This would be an expensive and complex operation, but if a suitable and viable alternative location can be agreed and the replacement facility is made operational in advance, the release of this site for redevelopment would potential deliver significant benefits. Further technical assessments (such as Odour Modelling and Contamination Assessments) will be required to aid the delivery of the allocated land. It is accepted that the delivery of homes and employment space on the allocated land will come forward well in advance of that on the safeguarded land. Appropriate provision of infrastructure must therefore be considered at a wider strategic level. Principles set out in Part B of this SPD shall inform the delivery of development on the 'wider site' as a whole, potentially delivering circa 3000 homes and 50ha employment land up to 2041 over both the strategic allocation and the safeguarded land as a whole.

8.1.3 Redevelopment of the works site at Hayden would contribute positively to many of the key objectives for the Cyber Central Garden Community development at West Cheltenham. Reflecting on each the key objectives outlined in the preceding chapters, this section provides an overview of the positive contribution redevelopment of the site could make to the Cyber Central Garden Community. Should this site opportunity come forward for development earlier than expected, any new development must be fully considered and tested against the context of the policy requirements set for the wider existing allocation including this SPD. Furthermore, at whichever time the site does come forward any new development is expected to conform to the design principles set out in this SPD.

The adjacent plan is numbered to highlight some of the key points relating to the longer term phases of growth for West Cheltenham, as follows:

- 1 A natural extension of the Cyber Central Garden Community development, with on principal road but two access points. This principal vehicular route would be suitable for bus services.
- 2 Landscape features will provide high quality landscape setting between different phases of development and help to reduce the impact of the redevelopment of the Hayden Works site on adjacent residents.
- 3 A permeable network of routes will provide access to all parts of the development and help to shorten walking distances between destinations thereby helping to encourage active and sustainable travel choices.
- 4 Access for pedestrian and cycles only will be possible via Hayden Lane. There will be no car access to the redevelopment via Hayden Lane.
- 5 New development should respect the rural character and scale of Hayden Village.
- 6 Hayden Knoll farm house is retained, with development to respect the setting and amenity of this existing building.

Key

- Site boundary
- Water
- Existing building
- Potential bus junction
- ➔ Potential bus access point
- Potential junction
- ➔ Potential access point
- Proposed primary route
- Proposed secondary route
- Proposed tertiary route



Figure 57 Illustrative masterplan - longer term phases of growth

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8.2 Key principles for Hayden Sewage Treatment Works site

SUSTAINABILITY - Embracing the highest standards of environmental sustainability

- 8.2.1 Redevelopment of the HSTW site does present exciting opportunities to continue a further phase of growth within the Cyber Central Garden Community. The latest technologies should be employed to reduce water and energy consumption of new development and the Smart Cities objectives within this SPD should be considered for the HSTW site.

LANDSCAPE - Working with the natural landscape and its features

- 8.2.2 Earlier phases of development are likely to have put a landscape structure in place which forms the basis of the establishment of a country park on the western side of the site. The availability of the HSTW site will underpin the establishment of a country park. Existing landscape assets and features will be retained where possible to help influence the form of development. In particular, existing hedgerows, trees and the mature features along the Hatherley Brook should be retained to help ensure new development is appropriately integrated with existing communities.

MOVEMENT - An integrated and connected extension of West Cheltenham

- 8.2.3 A permeable and connected network of streets and lanes will allow the later development of the HSTW site to be fully integrated with the development at Cyber Central Garden Community. New communities within the site will benefit from infrastructure which supports active and sustainable travel choices. New dwellings will be supported by vehicle charging points, which will be designed to have dedicated space for bicycle storage and will have access to the use of environmentally friendly vehicle hire schemes. The area will also be served by appropriate extensions to the local bus services.

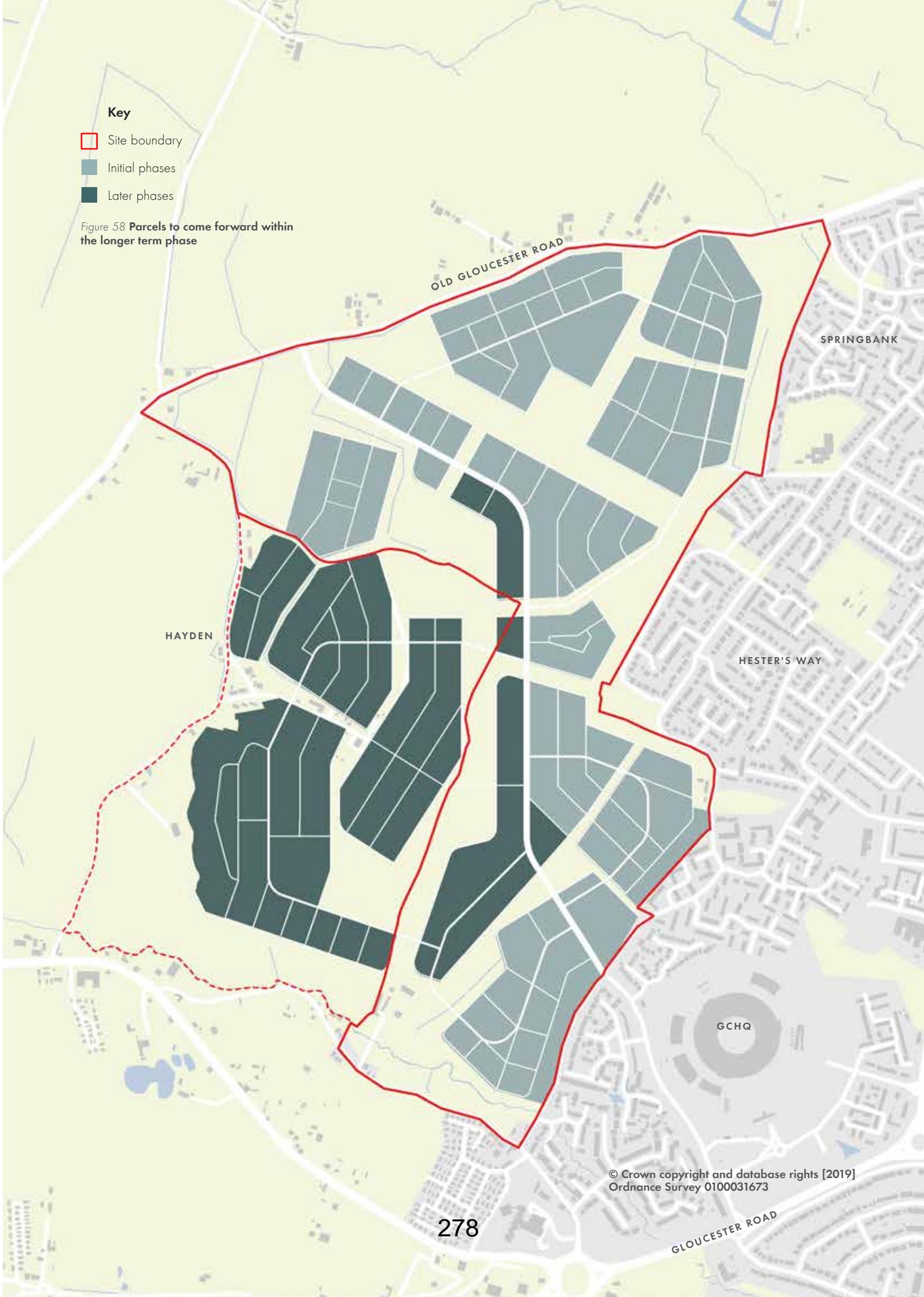
LANDUSES - A vibrant and diverse range of uses and activities, serving existing and new communities

- 8.2.4 This objective is not directly relevant to the HSTW site and it is acknowledged that the relocation of the HSTW will be of significant cost and therefore any alternative uses are likely to be residential led in order to generate the required land values. The cluster of cyber-tech uses will be concentrated on the West Cheltenham allocation site. Street design will incorporate sustainable drainage features to ensure flood resilience. New development will be designed to high energy and efficiency standards.
- 8.2.5 The design quality of both the houses and the public realm and landscape context of development across the HSTW site will be of paramount importance to its long-term environment, social and economic success and sustainability. Garden communities principles, which have underpinned the development of the core West Cheltenham SPD site, will be applied to the design of new housing neighbourhoods across the HSTW site. Fundamental to this is the application of good urban design principles which include creating safe and accessible streets and neighbourhoods, a clear distinction between public and private land, developments which create strong street edges which ensure public spaces are overlooked, and a mix of dwelling types and tenure to meet local needs.

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Initial phases
-  Later phases

Figure 58 Parcels to come forward within the longer term phase





CYBER PARK



9

NEXT STEPS

9 Longer term phases of growth - Hayden Works site

9.1 Next steps

- 9.1.1 As established by JCS policy A7, the Councils require a comprehensive and coordinated approach to development. This is in order to deliver the aspirations of this planning framework which is a material planning consideration (and is therefore offered considerable weight in the determination of planning applications), and the wider policy framework including the policies within the Joint Core Strategy and the relevant local plans.
- 9.1.2 In their role as enablers, the Councils may use their statutory powers including compulsory purchase powers to facilitate comprehensive development and delivery of the site in order to deliver the policy framework.
- 9.1.3 Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils will consider in conjunction with relevant partners, the following key stages (or subsequent stages to be agreed) which will need to be carried out, as outlined in Figure 60.

Validation checklist

- 9.1.4 In addition to the assessment of proposals against the objectives and principles outlined in this SPD, the following strategies and reports are likely to be required in support of forthcoming planning applications:
- 9.1.5 Landscape strategy
- 9.1.6 Utilities strategy
- 9.1.7 Energy strategy
- 9.1.8 Maintenance strategy
- 9.1.9 Employment plan
- 9.1.10 Other strategies/plans arising from SPD objectives.



Figure 59 Draft SPD programme

Stage of Delivery	Task
Stage 1- Mechanism for Delivery	<p>A Delivery Options Report has been prepared for CBC (as landowner) in parallel to the preparation of this SPD to inform the identification of the preferred delivery mechanism for the Council's land in the context of the whole site. This will assist TBC and CBC as LPAs to identify and agree a strategy for physically delivering development on the overall site.</p> <p>This SPD is being informed by a delivery testing model with high level informed inputs to understand the headline position and conditions required in order to ensure that a commercially viable proposition can come forward. However given the high level nature of the masterplan, the SPD is not based on fully costed infrastructure provisions or confirmed planning obligation costs. This analysis will need to take place during stage 2 below.</p>
Stage 2- Pre-Planning Application Submission	<p>Formation of one or more planning applications; pre application discussions with both LPAs, further technical and modelling works will be undertaken, and further public consultation will take place. The delivery of infrastructure and future management of such provision will need to be considered as early as possible in the planning process, this will include the mechanisms for delivery either via Section 106, CIL or other means being established.</p> <p>Given the extent of works required to open up the site these costs are likely to be significant and therefore further viability analysis will be required to identify any shortfalls and where external funding opportunities may need to be explored. Therefore, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan will need to be agreed by developers and landowners prior to the submission of the first planning application on site, this plan will need to set out a timely manner in which infrastructure will be delivered and include site wide phasing and trigger targets. The Delivery Plan will need to ensure that the scheme remains commercially viable and market facing.</p>
Stage 3- Formal Planning Application Submission(s)	<p>Submission of a formal planning application(s); Irrespective of which LPA boundary the application(s) fall in, officers at both CBC and TBC will be provided with an opportunity to comment on technical and design elements of each planning application, based on the requirements of the SPD, national and local planning policy.</p>
Stage 4 - Condition Discharge and Phased Development	<p>Commencement of development and key infrastructure secured through S106 agreement(s) / CIL shall be delivered on site in accordance with the agreed phasing and trigger mechanisms.</p>

Figure 60 Future stages of work

9.2 Assessment matrix and Design Review

9.2.1 The masterplan framework, its objectives and principles as outlined in this SPD will be used to assess development proposals as they come forward. To aid this process, all those involved in the preparation, assessment and determination of development proposals are encouraged to use assessment matrix below (Figure 61) to make qualitative assessments of how proposals can be considered to perform against key masterplan principles.

9.2.2 Alongside this process, schemes will be assessed through a formal design review process and, in the case of residential development, through the Design Council Cobe's Building for Life 12 assessment (or current equivalent) and requirement for Building with Nature.

ASSESSMENT RATING

Red Amber Green

CYBER CENTRAL GARDEN COMMUNITY VISION					
V	Does the proposal accord with the spirit of the Cyber Central vision and would its implementation help to realise this vision?				V
OBJECTIVE A: Embracing the highest standards of sustainability					
A1	Resource efficiency: New development at Cyber Central Garden Community will be net carbon zero (or better) and an exemplar in water and energy conservation and waste management, employing the highest standards of environmental sustainability				A1
A2	Resilience: The design of new buildings, streets, open spaces and other required infrastructure will ensure new development is resilient in terms of flooding and overheating				A2
A3	Connection to nature: Development at Cyber Central Garden Community will enrich local ecology and biodiversity and will take proper account of air quality issues				A3
A4	Community and culture: Cyber Central Garden Community will mature into a thriving and mixed sustainable community, providing jobs, homes and community facilities for existing and new residents in a beautiful landscape setting				A4
A5	Mobility: Cyber Central Garden Community will be an integrated and fully connected extension of west Cheltenham				A5
OBJECTIVE B: A vibrant and diverse range of uses and activities, serving existing and new communities					
B1	Delivered in partnership, a high profile and state of the art 'Cyber Innovation Centre' will be the focal point of the Cyber Central Garden Community				B1
B2	45Ha of mixed-use employment land, focussed around the Cyber Central hub, will provide flexible business space, hotels, retail and leisure provision and designed to maximise opportunities for physical and visual integration				B2
B3	A sustainable and deliverable range of housing tenures, including affordable housing and self-build, to meet local needs supported by community infrastructure				B3
B4	Higher densities and a range of dwelling typologies which make the best use of available land				B4
OBJECTIVE C: Working with the natural landscape and its features					
C1	Development must positively integrate existing landscape assets and features and use these features to inform the development of a green infrastructure network for the site				C1
C2	Proposals should respond to views into and out of the site and react to the existing topography and strategic landscape character				C2
C3	Proposals shall include a network of public spaces to meet local open space requirements				C3
C4	A high quality new public space will be provided at the gateway of Cyber Central which will be designed to provide flexible spaces for events and activity				C4
C5	New development should take a creative approach to sustainable drainage to reduce the long-term risk of flooding				C5
C6	Development should promote a strategy for new tree planting and retention of existing species				C6
C7	The boundaries with existing communities, the wider countryside, the sewage works, and between phases of development shall be carefully planned and designed to maximise opportunities for physical and visual integration				C7
C8	The development must promote a positive approach to local food growing through the adequate provision of allotments as part of a wider strategy to meet existing and future need				C8
C9	Proposals should be devised with partners to develop and deliver an innovative public art programme				C9
C10	A management strategy shall be developed across the site to inform the design process and with consideration to longer term sustainability				C10
OBJECTIVE D: An integrated and connected extension of West Cheltenham					
D1	The design and delivery of new development will prioritise and support active and sustainable travel patterns and behaviour - public transport				D1
D2	Deliver new direct pedestrian and cycle connections to existing communities and facilities				D2
D3	Creation of an open network of streets and routes which can be managed to meet local needs				D3
D4	Delivery of a new 'main street' between Telstar Way and Old Gloucester Road, designed as a street for people, not a road for vehicles				D4
D5	Principal junctions should be designed to minimise land take and create safe and direct crossing points for pedestrians and cycles				D5
D6	Provision of safe routes to schools, which will be provided within or beyond the West Cheltenham site				D6
D7	A flexible and creative approach to the application of parking standards and emerging and new vehicle technologies and initiatives				D7
OBJECTIVE E: Character and placemaking					
E1	New development will deliver a range of housing densities and typologies to ensure effective use of land is made				E1
E2	New development will look to local precedent in Cheltenham to help deliver locally distinctive forms of development				E2
E3	New development will contribute to the distinct character of its neighbourhood whilst delivering the overall vision for Cyber Central Garden Community				E3
P1	Cyber-centra hub - streets and movement; landscape and public realm; character and scale; land uses and activities				P1
P2	Gloucester Road neighbourhood - streets and movement; landscape and public realm; character and scale; land uses and activities				P2
P3	Main street neighbourhood - streets and movement; landscape and public realm; character and scale; land uses and activities				P3

Figure 61 Qualitative assessment matrix

Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners is not responsible for nor shall be liable for the consequences of any use made of this Report other than that for which it was prepared by Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners for the Client unless Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners provides prior written authorisation for such other use and confirms in writing that the Report is suitable for it. It is acknowledged by the parties that this Report has been produced solely in accordance with the Client's brief and instructions and without any knowledge of or reference to any other parties' potential interests in or proposals for the Project.

Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners accepts no responsibility for comments made by members of the community which have been reflected in this report.

AVISON
YOUNG

WITH

Allies and Morrison

Hydrock 



Garden Community Supplementary Planning Document (draft): Consultation Statement

1. Introduction

1.1 This statement is the 'Consultation Statement' for the Cyber Central Garden Community Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. This statement sets out how the public and other stakeholders will be consulted upon the SPD. Following the consultation period, this statement will be expanded to summarise the comments received during the consultation period, including details of how the issues raised have been dealt with in working towards a final SPD for adoption.

2. Town and Country Planning Regulations

2.1 The SPD is produced in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The relevant regulations relating to the consultation process are explained below.

- Regulation 12: Regulation 12(a) requires the Council to produce a consultation statement before adoption of the SPD, this must set out who was consulted, a summary of the issues raised, and how these issues were incorporated in to the SPD.
- Regulation 12(b) requires the Council to publish the documents (including a 'consultation statement') for a minimum 4 week consultation, specify the date when responses should be received, and identify the address to which responses should be sent.
- This statement is the 'Consultation Statement' for the SPD as required by Regulation 12(a). The document also sets out information about the consultation as required by Regulation 12(b). Following the consultation period, as the SPD progresses towards adoption, the 'Consultation Statement' will be expanded to recognise involvement by outside bodies and public participation during this consultation period.
- Regulation 13: Regulation 13 stipulates that any person may make representations about the SPD and that the representations must be made by the end of the consultation date referred to in Regulation 12. This consultation statement sets out this requirement.
- Regulation 35: Regulation 12 states that when seeking representations on an SPD, documents must be made available in accordance with Regulation 35. This requires the Council to make documents available by taking the following steps:
 - Make the document available at the principal office and other places within the area that the Council considers appropriate;
 - Publish the document on the Council's website.

3. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

3.1 This consultation statement has been prepared within the context of the SCI's of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury councils and reflects the 2012 Regulations, set out above. The relevant SCI's set out how the councils will consult and involve people in the preparation of local plans, including Supplementary Planning Documents. Consultation on the draft SPD is being carried out in line with the principles of the adopted SCI.

4. Early Consultation

4.1 The aims and objectives, and design principles within the draft SPD have been the subject of early discussions and consultations with key stakeholders, partners and the wider local community as part of a collaborative approach. This engagement has included:

- Internal officer working group - comprising officers from across Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council with a remit to consider, advise and inform the emerging SPD, This group has fed into the drafting of the SPD.
- Engagement with Homes England technical specialists' team.
- Engagement with stakeholders including NHS, County Education, Gloucestershire Highways, Wildlife and Wetlands Trust, GCHQ, infrastructure providers. Informal engagement has taken place together with an evening workshop on 3rd September 2019. 32 people attended the workshop representing the following groups:

BAE Systems, Bamboo Technology Group, Boddington Parish Council, Cheltenham Borough Homes, Cheltenham churches, Cheltenham Borough Council, Church of England, First LEP, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucester Local Nature Partnership, Hester's Way Neighbourhood Plan Forum, Hester's Way Partnership, local residents, Police, Stagecoach West, Swindon Parish Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Uckington Parish Council, University of Gloucestershire and, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust.

- Four community drop in events were held at the following times and locations;
 - 11th September, 12:30-3pm at Hester's Way Community Centre
 - 11th September, 3:30-5:30pm at Springbank Community Centre
 - 19th September, 1-3:30pm at Tewkesbury-Cheltenham West Community Fire Station
 - 19th September, 4:30-7:30pm at Gloucestershire College

4.3 A total of 210 people attended across the four public engagement events. The feedback from the engagement so far has been invaluable in shaping the design process. From the feedback received during this stage of public engagement, the masterplan has been amended in the following ways:

- Emphasis on green spaces close to the existing community - the plan has been altered following drop-in events with local residents who were supportive of a new park close to the Springbank neighbourhood.
- Impact of traffic and car parking - aiming for the new development to have enough car parking to serve the employment and residential areas. Sustainable transport modes including improved bus networks and cycle networks will also contribute to improving access and reducing the reliance on the private car.
- Spreading the impact of employment - although the focus for the employment area will be to the south of the SPD area, close to GCHQ, conversations have highlighted the

opportunity to focus some employment space with good access to the new road to J10 of the M5.

- Integration - comments have strengthened the focus on delivering links and shared facilities for new and existing residents.
- Response to climate change emergency – opportunity to be innovative.

This engagement has helped to shape the current draft for formal consultation.

5. Consultation Information

5.1 Consultation on the SPD is being carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The SPD and this Consultation Statement will be made available for inspection by the public for a five week period between Monday 13th January 2020 and 5pm Monday 17th February 2020. A copy of the SPD and this consultation statement is available to view at:

consult.cheltenham.gov.uk/consult.ti/cybercentral/

5.2 Copies of the draft SPD and consultation statement are available to view on the Council's website at: **consult.cheltenham.gov.uk/consult.ti/cybercentral/**

5.3 Further information is available by contacting the Planning Policy team by email at planningpolicy@cheltenham.gov.uk

5.4 As part of the consultation, a 'targeted' e-mail will be sent to relevant individuals, organisations and bodies advising of forthcoming consultation.

5.5 The consultation period runs from Monday 13th January 2020 and any person can make representations on the draft SPD before 5.00p.m on Monday 17th February 2020.

5.6 Public engagement sessions have been scheduled on the dates, times and locations shown below. These face to face engagement sessions will offer the opportunity to meet with the consultancy team and officers to discuss any elements of the draft SPD.

Thursday 23rd January:

- 12:30 - 3:30pm at Springbank Community Centre
- 4:30 - 7:30pm at Hesters Way Community Centre

Saturday 1st February:

- 10:30am - 1:30pm Regents Arcade
- 2:30 - 5:30pm at Cheltenham West Community Fire Station

5.7 Copies of the SPD will be available to view at both Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council offices during normal working hours throughout the consultation period.

5.8 Representations on the draft SPD can be made:

- **Via Commonplace online community platform**
<https://cybercentral.commonplace.is/> (will be live in line with consultation dates)
- **By e-mail to** planningpolicy@cheltenham.gov.uk
- **In writing to Planning Policy Team, Cheltenham Borough Council, Municipal Offices, Promenade, Cheltenham, GL50 9SA**

Commonplace online community platform is the preferred method of contact. Should you choose to write, the preferred method of contact is by email. Please keep you communication focussed to changes you are looking for to inform the final version of the SPD.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Referendum
Report of:	Head of Development Services
Corporate Lead:	Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Built Environment
Number of Appendices:	Four

Executive Summary:

Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to advise and assist communities in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans, often referred to as 'Neighbourhood Plans' or by the acronym 'NDP'. The Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended, set out the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities including deciding the action to be taken on receipt of a report and recommendations from the Independent Examiner of a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Examiner's Report (Appendix 1) on the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan was received on 20 November 2019.

The Examiner has recommended that "subject to the modifications recommended", the Neighbourhood Plan "should proceed to a Referendum".

The modifications proposed have been considered by Borough Council Officers and the consideration of the recommendations, and resulting amendments, have been shared with the Parish Councils (Appendix 2) which have formally recommended that all of the modifications are accepted (Appendix 3).

Recommendations:

- 1. That the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Development Plan, modified according to the Examiners recommended amendments, is formally approved to progress to Community Referendum, ascribed by Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended.**
- 2. That authority is delegated to the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Built Environment, to make any necessary minor amendments prior to referendum.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Examiner has recommended that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan, if modified as recommended, meets the 'Basic Conditions' required and should proceed to 'Referendum'.

The Borough Council must consider each of the Examiner's recommendations and publish a 'Decision Statement' on whether the amended plan meets the 'Basic Conditions' and if it should progress to a 'Referendum'.

Within 56 days of the publication of the 'Decision Statement', the Borough Council must organise a Referendum on any plan or order that it has determined meets the 'Basic Conditions'.

Resource Implications:

Additional financial contributions are currently available from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to help us meet our obligations.

If the plan is judged to meet the 'Basic Conditions' there will be human resource implications as we are required to arrange the Referendum; and, subject to the results of the Referendum, bring the plan into force within another 56 days of a successful Referendum.

The resource implications are corporate including Development Services, Community Development, Financial Services and One Legal. However, at the Referendum stage the greatest demand will be on Democratic Services.

Legal Implications:

The Council has a duty to undertake this work under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the Localism Act 2011, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended and the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012, as amended.

Risk Management Implications:

The decision on progressing a Neighbourhood Plan, that has successfully passed Independent Examination is the statutory duty of Tewkesbury Borough Council as Local Planning Authority. However, the consideration and recommendation of the Parishes which has prepared the Plan, referred to in the legislation as the 'Qualifying Body', has been sought to reassure Members that the plan, as modified according to the Examiner's recommendations, is still supported by those who have prepared it.

Providing all of the recommended modifications are accepted by the Qualifying Body and the Local Planning Authority, the Examiner concluded that this will then satisfy the Basic Conditions and Tewkesbury Borough Council has an obligation, under Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act, to arrange a Referendum, unless the Examiner's recommended modifications and/or conclusions are to be challenged.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Since the 'Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) (Amendment) Regulations 2016' came into force on 1 October 2016, the Referendum must be held within 56 days of the Decision Statement being published, following the expiry of the call-in period for this Executive Committee meeting.

Environmental Implications:

The implications for biodiversity, habitats, energy usage, waste and recycling or protected species have been considered by the Qualifying Body, with the assistance of the Borough Council, as required by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 The planning system helps decide what gets built, where and when. It is essential for supporting economic growth, improving people's quality of life and protecting the natural environment. The government's intention is to give local communities a greater say in planning decisions that affect them by providing the opportunity to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan if they wish. Neighbourhood planning was introduced in the Localism Act 2011 with specific legislation including the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended.

1.2 There are five key stages to neighbourhood planning:

Stage 1 – Defining the Neighbourhood Area and apply to the Borough Council to have it formally designated.

Stage 2 – Preparing the Plan includes a number of activities including public consultation undertaken by the Neighbourhood Planning Group, submission of a draft plan, as a proposal to the Borough Council and then the Borough Council undertaking its own public consultation.

Stage 3 – With the agreement of the Qualifying Body (Parish Council), the Borough Council is required to appoint an independent examiner to check that it meets the basic standards required. It is when the Examiner publishes their final report that the Borough Council must consider any recommendations of changes to be made so that the plan meets the basic conditions and formally decide whether to send the plan to Referendum.

Stage 4 – The Borough Council is responsible for organising a referendum of those people in the Neighbourhood Area who are entitled to vote in local elections.

Stage 5 – If more than 50% of people voting in the referendum support the plan then the Borough Council must bring it into legal force.

2.0 MOVING FORWARD TO REFERENDUM

2.1 On receiving the report of the Independent Examiner, the Borough Council must publish the report; this was done on the Council's website on 22 November 2019.

2.2 If the decision of the Committee is to send the plan to Referendum, the Council is then required to publish a decision statement which will include:

“The decision and the reasons for it” which may be –

- The Council is not satisfied with, and has decided to refuse, the plan proposal as it is not considered to meet the basic conditions and/or would not even with modification;
- The Council is satisfied that the plan meets the basic conditions, or will with modification, and an explanation of the actions to be taken and modifications made in response to the Examiners report; and

- “whether to extend the area to which the referendum is (or referendums are) to take place”.

2.3 The decision to refuse a plan proposal can only be made on the following grounds:

- If the Council is not satisfied that the plan proposal meets the basic conditions;
- If the Council does not believe that with modification the plan proposal can meet the basic conditions;
- If the Council considers that the plan proposal constitutes a repeat proposal; and
- If the Council does not believe that the Qualifying Body is authorised or that the proposal does not comply with that authorisation.

2.4 The conclusion of the Examiner’s report (Appendix 1) was that the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the recommended modifications, does meet the basic conditions. Officers of the Borough Council have considered the modifications and are satisfied with Examiner’s conclusions (Appendix 2). The modifications have also been considered by the Parish Councils who have also confirmed that the modifications should be accepted (Appendix 3). Therefore it is recommended that that amended Neighbourhood Plan (Appendix 4) is approved to progress to a Referendum.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 As this is a statutory function no other options have been considered.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 Consultation has been undertaken in order to legally comply with the requirements of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended. In addition to public engagement throughout the process of preparing the plan the regulations require two statutory six week periods of consultation in the second stage of the process:

- Under Regulation 14 the Qualifying Body is required to consult; and
- Under Regulation 16 the Council is required to consult on the plan submitted as a plan proposal (under Regulation 15) and forward the responses to the Independent Examiner for consideration.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 Tewkesbury Borough Council Plan 2016 – 2020.
Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 Additional financial contributions are currently available from the Department of Communities and Local Government to help us meet our obligations.

If the plan is judged to meet the 'Basic Conditions' there will be human resource implications as the Council is required to arrange the Referendum; and, subject to the results of the Referendum, bring the plan into force within another 56 days of a successful Referendum.

The resource implications are corporate including Development Services, Community Development, Financial Services and One Legal. However, at the Referendum stage the greatest demand will be on Democratic Services.

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

8.1 Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver, as part of the Local Plan for the area, the sustainable development they need.

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

9.1 The neighbourhood planning process requires evidence of involvement by hard to reach groups. This is a matter that the Qualifying Body preparing the plan have addressed and reported on to the Examiner in their Consultation Statement, which is a requirement for examination alongside a Basic Conditions Statement and the Plan as a proposal itself.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 Decision of Council to delegate to the Executive Committee the authorisation for Neighbourhood Plans to go to Community Referendum – 20 September 2016.

Background Papers: None.

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Email: matthew.barker@teWKesbury.gov.uk

Appendices:

- 1 Examiners Report on the Churchdown & Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan (November 2019).
- 2 Local Planning Authority Consideration of the Examiners recommended modifications.
- 3 Confirmation from the Churchdown and Innsworth Parish Councils that they accept the proposed amendments.
- 4 Amended/Referendum Version of the Churchdown & Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan.

Independent Examiner's Report of the
Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood
Plan

Author

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Planning Consultant

NPIERS Examiner

CEDR accredited mediator

5th November 2019

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SECTION 2

Summary

As the Independent Examiner appointed by Tewkesbury Borough Council to examine the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan, I can summarise my findings as follows:

- 1. I find the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan and the policies within it, subject to the recommended modifications does meet the Basic Conditions.*
- 2. I am satisfied that the Referendum Area should be the same as the Plan Area, should the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan go to Referendum.*
- 3. I have read the Churchdown and Innsworth Consultation Statement and the representations made in connection with this subject I consider that the consultation process was robust and that the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies reflect the outcome of the consultation process including recording representations and tracking the changes made as a result of those representations.*
- 4. I find that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan can, subject to the recommended modifications proceed to Referendum.*
- 5. The Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Area is within the area covered by Tewkesbury Borough Council. The relevant Development Plan, at the time of my examination was comprised of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury (JCS) 2011-2031 (adopted 2017) and the saved policies of the Tewkesbury Local Plan 2006.*

SECTION 3

Introduction

1. Neighbourhood Plan Examination.

My name is Deborah McCann and I am the Independent Examiner appointed to examine the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan.

I am independent of the qualifying body, I do not have any interest in the land in the plan area, and I have appropriate qualifications and experience, including experience in public, private and community sectors.

My role is to consider whether the submitted Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions and has taken into account human rights; and to recommend whether the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to Referendum. My role is as set out in more detail below under the section covering the Examiner's Role. My recommendation is given in summary in Section 2 and in full under Section 5 of this document.

The Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan has to be independently examined following processes set out in the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The expectation is that the examination of the issues by the examiner is to take the form of the consideration of the written representations. However, there are two circumstances when an examiner may consider it necessary to hold a hearing. These are where the examiner considers that it is necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue or to ensure a person has a fair chance to put a case. Having read the plan and considered the representations I concluded that it was not necessary to hold a Hearing.

2. The Role of Examiner including the examination process and legislative background.

The examiner is required to check whether the neighbourhood plan:

- *Has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body*
- *Has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated for such plan preparation*
- *Meets the requirements to*
 - i) *specify the period to which it has effect;*
 - ii) *not include provision about excluded development; and*
 - iii) *not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and that*

- *Its policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.*

The examiner must assess whether a neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

As an independent Examiner, having examined the Plan, I am required to make one of the following recommendations:

1. The Plan can proceed to a Referendum

2. The Plan with recommended modifications can proceed to a Referendum

Where a policy does not meet the Basic Conditions or other legal requirement I may, on occasion, need to delete wording, including potentially an entire plan policy and/or section of text, although I will first consider modifying the policy rather than deleting it. Where a policy concerns a non-land use matter, advice in the Planning Practice Guidance states “Wider community aspirations than those relating to development and use of land can be included in a neighbourhood plan, but actions dealing with non-land use matters should be clearly identifiable. For example, set out in a companion document or annex.” As such, when considering the deletion of any non-land use matters from the plan, I will consider if I can make a modification to place the relevant proposed actions in a non-statutory annex to the plan, dealing with ‘Wider Community Aspirations’. I will not generally refer back to parties on these detailed revisions. I will make modification either in order to meet the Basic Conditions, to correct errors or provide clarification. However, the focus of my examination, as set out in legislation is relatively narrow, I must focus on compliance with the Basic Conditions. The main purpose of a neighbourhood plan is to provide a framework for the determination of planning applications, policies in a plan which have elements which either seek to control things which fall outside the scope of the planning system or introduce requirements which are indiscriminate in terms of the size of development or are overly onerous and would not meet the Basic Conditions. In these circumstances it will be necessary to make modifications to the plan. In making any modifications I have a duty to ensure that the Basic Conditions are met however I am also very careful to ensure, where possible that the intention and spirit of the plan is retained so that the plan, when modified still reflects the community’s intent in producing their neighbourhood plan.

3. The Plan does not meet the legal requirements and cannot proceed to a Referendum

3.1 I am also required to recommend whether the Referendum Area should

be different from the Plan Area, should the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan go to Referendum.

3.2 In examining the Plan, I am required to check, under Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, whether:

- the policies in the Plan relate to the development and use of land for a designated Neighbourhood Area are in line with the requirements of Section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*
- the Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to specify the period for which it has effect*
- the Plan has been prepared for an area designated under the Localism Act 2011 and has been developed and submitted for examination by a qualifying body.*

3.3 I am also required to determine whether the Plan complies with the Basic Conditions, which are that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan:

- Has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;*
- Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
and*
- Is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the area.*

There is now an additional Basic Condition to be considered. Since the 28th of December 2018, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Such 2 para 1 has stated:

"In relation to the examination of Neighbourhood Plans the following basic condition is prescribed for the purpose of paragraph 8(2)(g) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act-

The making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017."

The Plan must also not breach, and otherwise be compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.

Tewkesbury Borough Council will consider my report and decide whether it is satisfied with my recommendations. The Council will publicise its decision on whether or not the plan will be submitted to a referendum, with or without

modifications. If the Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to a referendum, then 28 working days' notice will be given of the referendum procedure and Neighbourhood Plan details. If the referendum results in more than half those voting (i.e. greater than 50%), voting in favour of the plan, then the Council must "make" the Neighbourhood Plan a part of its Development Plan as soon as possible. If approved by a referendum and then "made" by the local planning authority, the Neighbourhood Plan then forms part of the Development Plan.

SECTION 4

The Report

1. Appointment of the Independent examiner

Tewkesbury Borough Council appointed me as the Independent Examiner for the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan with the agreement of Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Group

2. Qualifying body

I am satisfied that Churchdown Parish Council is the Qualifying Body.

3. Neighbourhood Plan Area

The Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated in June 2013 under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (part2 S6). The area covers the administrative boundaries of the Parishes of Churchdown and Innsworth and the Qualifying Body have confirmed that there are no other neighbourhood plans covering the designated area.

4. Plan Period

The Plan identifies the period to which it relates as 2018 to 2031. This period should be clearly stated on and within the Plan and accompanying documents ensuring that there is consistency throughout.

5. Tewkesbury Borough Council Regulation 15 Assessment of the Plan.

Churchdown and Innsworth Parish Councils, the Qualifying Body, submitted the plan to Tewkesbury Borough Council for consideration under Regulation 15 on the 5th April 2019. The Council has made an initial assessment of the submitted Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting documents and is satisfied that these comply with the specified criteria.

6. The Consultation Process

The Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted for examination with a Consultation Statement which sets out the consultation process that has led to the production of the plan, as set out in the regulations in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Statement describes the approach to consultation, the stages undertaken and explains how the Plan has been amended in relation to comments received. It is set out according to the requirements in Regulation 15.1.b of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012):

(a) It contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Plan;

(b) It explains how they were consulted; (c) It summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and

(d) It describes how these issues and concerns were considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

Having examined the documents and considered the focus of the Neighbourhood Plan I conclude that the consultation process was adequate, well conducted and recorded.

A list of statutory bodies consulted is included in the Consultation Statement.

7.Regulation 16 consultation by Tewkesbury Borough Council and record of responses.

Tewkesbury Borough Council placed the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan out for consultation under Regulation 16 from Monday 24th June to Tuesday 27th of August 2019.

A number of detailed representations were received during the consultation period and these were supplied by the Council as part of the supporting information for the examination process. I considered the representations, have taken them into account in my examination of the plan and referred to them where appropriate.

8.Site Visit

I carried out an unaccompanied site visit to familiarise myself with the Neighbourhood Plan Area on the 3rd of October 2019.

9. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

The Qualifying Body have produced a Basic Conditions Statement. The purpose of this statement is to set out in some detail how the Neighbourhood Plan as submitted meets the Basic Conditions. It is the Examiner's Role to take this document into consideration but also take an independent view as to whether or not the assessment as submitted is correct.

I have to determine whether the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan:

- 1. Has regard to national policies and advice*
- 2. Contributes to sustainable development*
- 3. Is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the appropriate*

Development Plan

4. *Is not in breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.*
5. *There is now an additional Basic Condition to be considered. Since the 28th of December 2018, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Such 2 para 1 has stated:*

"In relation to the examination of neighbourhood development plans the following basic condition is prescribed for the purpose of paragraph 8(2)(g) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act—

The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017."

Documents brought to my attention by the Borough Council for my examination include:

- *Churchdown & Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan - Reg 16 March 2019 (pdf, 16MB)*
- *Character Area Good Practice Guide, May 2018 (pdf, 2.10MB)*
- *SEA HRA Screening Determination July 2018 (pdf, 172KB)*
- *Basic Conditions Statement March 2019 (pdf, 1.6MB)*
- *Basic conditions NPPF January 2019 compliance confirmation, May*
- *Evidence List April 2019 (pdf, 161KB)*

Comment on Documents submitted

I have received representation that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement was tested against the 2012 NPPF not the Feb 2019 NPPF (as updated). Having considered the Basic Conditions Statement Compliance Confirmation Statement and the Plan I am satisfied that the Basic Conditions Statement does reflect the 2019 NPPF and therefore meets the legal requirements in this respect.

Paragraph 1.5, Page 3 of the Basic Conditions Statement states the following:

"Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC), as the local planning authority, has prepared the Plan, which covers the two parish areas of Churchdown and Innsworth. This was designated in June 2013." The plan has been prepared on behalf of the Qualifying Body by the Neighbourhood Plan Group. This statement should be corrected.

I am satisfied having regard to these documents and other relevant documents, policies and legislation that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan does, subject to the recommended modifications, meet the Basic Conditions.

10.Planning Policy

10.1. National Planning Policy

National Policy guidance is in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At the time of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan the relevant NPPF was the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)February 2019 (as updated).

To meet the Basic Conditions, the Plan must have “regard to national policy and advice”. In addition, the NPPF requires that a Neighbourhood Plan “must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan”.

The Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan does not need to repeat national policy, but to demonstrate it has taken them into account.

I have examined the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan and consider that, subject to modification, the plan does have “regard for National Policy and Advice” and therefore the Plan, subject to modification does meet the Basic Conditions in this respect.

10.2. Local Planning Policy- The Development Plan

Churchdown and Innsworth is within the area covered by Tewkesbury Borough Council. The relevant Development Plan, at the time of my examination was comprised of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury (JCS) 2011-2031 (adopted 2017) and the saved policies of the Tewkesbury Local Plan 2006.

4.10.1. National Planning Policy

4.10.3 To meet the Basic Conditions, the Plan must have “regard to national policy and advice”. National Planning Policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (updated) and the supporting guidance.

4.10.4 The Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Neighbourhood Plan does not need to repeat these national policies, but to demonstrate it has

taken them into account.

4.10.5 I have examined the and consider that, subject to modification, the plan does have “regard for National Policy and Advice” and therefore the Plan, subject to minor modification does meet the Basic Conditions in this respect.

4.11 Local Planning Policy- The Development Plan

4.11.1 5. The Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Area is within the area covered by Tewkesbury Borough Council. The relevant Development Plan, at the time of my examination was comprised of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury (JCS) 2011-2031 (adopted 2017) and the saved policies of the Tewkesbury Local Plan 2006.

4.11.2 To meet the Basic Conditions, the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Neighbourhood Plan must be in “general conformity” with the strategic policies of the development plan.

The NPPF 2019 (updated) states:

“20. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision¹² for:

a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;

b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);

c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and

d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

4.11.3 *Neighbourhood Plans should only contain non-strategic policies. The NPPF 2019(updated) states:*

“Non-strategic policies

28. Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.

29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.”

4.11.4 *Should there be a conflict between a policy in a neighbourhood plan and a policy in a Local Plan, section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy, which is contained in the last document to become part of the development plan.*

4.11.5 *The distinction between strategic and non-strategic policies is important because of the relationship with Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Plans only have to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan (Localism Act 2011, Schedule 4B, s7 (2)(e)) When made, neighbourhood plan policies take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the local plan, where they are in conflict.*

4.11.6 *Planning Policy Guidance paragraph 41-076-20140306 sets out that:*

“Strategic policies will be different in each local planning authority area. When reaching a view on whether a policy is a strategic policy the following are

useful considerations:

- *whether the policy sets out an overarching direction or objective*
- *whether the policy seeks to shape the broad characteristics of development*
- *the scale at which the policy is intended to operate*
- *whether the policy sets a framework for decisions on how competing priorities should be balanced*
- *whether the policy sets a standard or other requirement that is essential to achieving the wider vision and aspirations in the Local Plan*
- *in the case of site allocations, whether bringing the site forward is central to achieving the vision and aspirations of the Local Plan*
- *whether the Local Plan identifies the policy as being strategic”*

11. Other Relevant Policy Considerations

11.1 European Convention on Human Rights (ECMR) and other European Union Obligations

As a ‘local plan’, the Neighbourhood Plan is required to take cognisance of the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC.

Tewkesbury Borough Council carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening exercise in July 2018 in consultation with relevant statutory bodies and confirmed that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan did not require a SEA under European Directive 2001/42/EC.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Tewkesbury Borough Council carried out a Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening in July 2019 in consultation with Natural England and confirmed that the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017(d).

11.2 Sustainable development

Paragraphs 7 to 14 of the NPPF (Feb 2019 as updated) identify the components of sustainable development, and how planning applications and local plans can meet these requirements.

The Basic Conditions Statement sets out how the neighbourhood plan addresses the requirement to achieve sustainable development.

My conclusion is that the principles of Sustainable Development required in the NPPF have been taken into account in the development of the plan and its policies and where issues have been identified they were addressed by revisions to the document prior to submission. I am satisfied that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan subject to the recommended modifications addresses the sustainability issues adequately.

The Neighbourhood Plan is required to take cognisance of the European Convention of Human Rights and to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998.

I am satisfied that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan has done so.

I am therefore satisfied that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions on EU obligations.

11.3 Excluded development

I am satisfied that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan does not cover County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure such as highways and railways or other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

11.4 Development and use of land

I am satisfied that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan, subject to modification covers development and land use matters.

11.5 General Comments

Planning Guidance on preparing neighbourhood plans and policies is clear, it states:

“A policy in a neighbourhood plan should be clear and unambiguous. It should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of

the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared.

Neighbourhood planning can inspire local people and businesses to consider other ways to improve their neighbourhood than through the development and use of land. They may identify specific action or policies to deliver these improvements. Wider community aspirations than those relating to development and use of land can be included in a neighbourhood plan, but actions dealing with non-land use matters should be clearly identifiable. For example, set out in a companion document or annex.”

In order to provide clarity and to ensure that the policies in the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan meet the Basic Conditions it has been necessary for me to make modifications to a number of policies. This includes modifications where policies have sought to introduce controls outside the scope of the planning system or where existing policy already sets out the scope of control.

*As I have found it necessary to modify a number of policies it may also be necessary to modify the supporting text within the plan to align with the modified policies, where this is necessary. The details of these modifications are set out within my comments on the related policies. My comments on policies are in *blue* with the modified policies in *red*.*

12. The Neighbourhood Plan Vision, Strategic Aims and Policies

12.1 VISION Statement

Neighbourhood Area Vision Statement

The following overarching vision has been developed for Churchdown and Innsworth over the next 13years:

‘In 2031, the parishes of Churchdown and Innsworth will be a prosperous area with excellent amenities for all ages and with a distinctive green character defined by its orchards and water features. It will value its community, its business and retail capabilities, and community events, providing people with a supportive and sustainable environment where people can live, work, rest and play. Pedestrians and cyclists will feel safe and traffic will be managed to minimise its impact. There will be a range of jobs and housing to support and maximise choices for residents, and excellent public services across education, healthcare and leisure for all residents. The green and blue environment will continue to be protected, cherished and enhanced as the area is recognised for the quality of its natural and built environment and its distinctiveness from Gloucester and Cheltenham.

The aims and objectives of the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan are set out on pages 23 to 25 of the Plan.

COMMENT

I am satisfied that the Churchdown and Innsworth NDP vision, aims and objectives were developed from the consultation process and that the policies within the plan reflect the vision, aims and objectives.

CHURCHDOWN AND INNSWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

POLICY CHIN1: PARKING TO SUPPORT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

a. for new residential developments (use class c3), the following minimum parking standards shall apply for the provision of off-road parking:

- 1-bed dwelling1 off-road car parking space*
- 2-bed dwelling2 off-road car parking spaces*
- 3-bed dwelling2 off-road car parking spaces*
- 4-bed dwelling3 off-road car parking spaces*
- 5+ bed dwelling4 off-road car parking spaces*

b. parking should be provided on-plot, preferably to the side of the dwelling and preferably not in front of the building line. only where it has clearly been demonstrated that such provision is not possible or appropriate will alternative layouts be considered but are still expected to be off-street provision should take into account the size of modern cars.

c. on major developments (as defined in the nppf), a 0.25 space per dwelling allowance should be made for visitor parking off plot to avoid the potential for these spaces to be taken up by residents for their own use.

d. the design of on-street parking is encouraged to follow the 'green streets' concept to integrate street parking with green infrastructure and water drainage

COMMENT

Although Neighbourhood Plans can set local parking standards this policy is seeking to set a minimum parking standard which requires a higher parking ratio than set out in national planning guidance. Any

additional requirement placed on developers must be balanced against the national policy objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. I have not been provided with any evidence which supports this higher standard. In addition, I have received representation that point b. of the policy is inflexible and could have significant implications for residential layouts. On balance, I consider this policy too prescriptive and inflexible and in order to meet the Basic Conditions, it should be modified as follows:

POLICY CHIN1: PARKING TO SUPPORT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

a. For new residential developments (use class c3), the following parking standards for the provision of off-road parking should be achieved where possible:

- 1-bed dwelling1 off-road car parking space*
- 2-bed dwelling2 off-road car parking spaces*
- 3-bed dwelling2 off-road car parking spaces*
- 4-bed dwelling3 off-road car parking spaces*
- 5+ bed dwelling4 off-road car parking spaces*

b. Parking provision should be well designed, contribute to a high-quality environment and not contribute to cluttered and unsafe streets. Parking should be provided on-plot in the first instance and where this is not possible, on specifically allocated parking bays. Parking spaces should be designed to take into account of the size of modern cars and use permeable surface materials.

c. For major developments (as defined in the nppf), the provision of off plot visitor parking at a ratio of 0.25 space per dwelling is encouraged.

d. the design of on-street parking should follow the 'green streets' concept to integrate street parking with green infrastructure and water drainage

POLICY CHIN2: LAYOUT AND APPEARANCE OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Proposals for new development or the redevelopment of existing buildings

should contribute towards the local distinctiveness of Churchdown and Innsworth. They should demonstrate high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and architecture that respects and responds positively to the best examples of the Neighbourhood Area's character, as described in the Churchdown and Innsworth Character Area – Good Practice – Assessment Guide.

B. New development is also encouraged to integrate positively received local design features and avoid negatively received local design features, as shown in Appendix A.

C. New development should use existing natural features to define the boundaries between properties and on the edge of the site.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

POLICY CHIN3: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. New residential development proposals should demonstrate how they retain the environmental setting of Churchdown and Innsworth. Development should incorporate a range of green features into built design proposals - in particular, the provision of green spaces, verges, trees and hedgerows and orchard planting such as fruity streets, espaliers, forage trails, pocket orchards and community orchards.

B. Green corridor connections should be made between existing and new orchards and to other green infrastructure.

C. Boundary treatments are particularly important to the setting of development. Residential proposals must demonstrate how the boundaries between properties and public space enhance the environmental setting. Boundary treatments must be appropriate to ensure they are long lasting.

D. The use of soft edges to footpaths and permeable surfacing will be strongly supported.

COMMENT

I have received representation that this policy is overly prescriptive and inflexible. The policy does not make clear that differing requirements

will be appropriate for differing scales of development. For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be modified as follows:

POLICY CHIN3: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. New residential development proposals should demonstrate how they retain and where possible enhance the environmental setting of Churchdown and Innsworth. Proposals should include a range of green features appropriate to the size and scale of the development - in particular, the provision of green spaces, verges, trees and hedgerows and orchard planting such as fruity streets, espaliers, forage trails, pocket orchards and community orchards.

B. Where possible Green corridor connections should be made between existing and new orchards and to other green infrastructure.

C. Boundary treatments are particularly important to the setting of development. Residential proposals should include details of boundary treatments and other means of enclosure and demonstrate how the boundaries between properties and public space will enhance the environmental setting. Boundary treatments must be appropriate to ensure they are long lasting.

D. The use of soft edges to footpaths and permeable surfacing will be strongly supported.

POLICY CHIN4: PROVISION OF LEISURE FACILITIES

A. Proposals to provide new leisure facilities to serve the community of Churchdown and Innsworth will be strongly supported. These proposals must be of a scale commensurate with the site and its surroundings, particularly in terms of the built form, traffic generation and parking.

B. In particular, the provision of the following will be strongly supported:

i. new football pitches to appropriate playing standards; and

ii. improvements to existing cricket pitches, new cricket pitches and provision of supporting facilities, including changing rooms, a pavilion, bar and function room.

C. The location of the new facilities must be generally accessible by foot/bicycle and within or adjacent to the existing built up area of Churchdown

and Innsworth.

D. Such provision as part of the strategic allocations will be strongly supported.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

POLICY CHIN5: PROVISION OF PLAY FACILITIES

A. Proposals to provide additional play facilities to serve the community of Churchdown and Innsworth will be strongly supported.

B. To support the play needs of the new population, provision of Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) is encouraged. This could be new provision or an extension to existing play provision at John Daniels Playing Field and Oakhurst Close. Provision will be expected to demonstrate that it provides a wide range of play equipment which addresses the needs of children of all ages.

C. To support the needs of older children, the provision of infrastructure to support wheeled sports (such as BMX track/dirt jumps and a scooter/skate park) is encouraged. Such provision should ideally be located close to any existing or new NEAP provision identified in CHIN5(B).

D. The provision of a large pond or small lake for the enjoyment of the community on any of the strategic allocations will be supported.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

POLICY CHIN6: PROTECTION OF CHURCHDOWN PARK LOCAL GREEN SPACE

Churchdown Park, as shown on the Policies Map, is designated as a Local Green Space. Proposals for built development on Churchdown Park will not be permitted unless the proposal is of a limited nature and it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of the park.

COMMENT

The NPPF states:

99. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

100. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

101. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.”

I am satisfied that Churchdown Park meets the NPPF requirements and I have been provided with an additional document which sets out that the necessary consultation with the owner/s has taken place.

It has also been brought to my attention by Tewkesbury Borough Council that the policies map and Fig. 5.1 is inaccurate in relation to the boundary of the park. This boundary should be reviewed and corrected as necessary.

For clarity Policy CHIN6 should be re named and the policy modified as follows:

POLICY CHIN6: Local Green Space Designation.

Churchdown Park, as shown on the Policies Map, is designated as a Local Green Space. Proposals for built development on Churchdown Park will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

POLICY CHIN7: PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Provision of the following community facilities will be strongly supported:

- *Burial space.*
- *Allotments and community growing spaces.*

All strategic allocations will be expected to make provision for allotments.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy

POLICY CHIN8: BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

A. All new residential, commercial and community properties within the Neighbourhood Plan area should be served by a superfast broadband (fiber optic) connection. This should be installed on an open-access basis with the realistic future-proof upgrade capability.

B. The only exception will be where it can be demonstrated, through consultation with NGA Network providers, that this would not be either possible, practical or economically viable. In such circumstances sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date on an open access basis.

C. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how matters relating to broadband connectivity for new development – particularly residential, commercial and community properties – will be addressed through the use of Connectivity Statements.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy

POLICY CHIN9: PROVISION FOR WILDLIFE IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals (particularly residential developments), that incorporate into their design features which encourage local wildlife to thrive will be strongly supported.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

POLICY CHIN10: ORCHARDS, HEDGEROWS AND VETERAN TREES

Development must ensure that it does not have a significant detrimental impact on existing orchards, including those identified in Appendix C. In particular, development proposals will be expected to retain hedgerows and veteran trees, including veteran Perry pear trees. This is particularly important where the loss of any such features would result in harm to or loss of irreplaceable habitats.

COMMENT

I have received representation that there may be inaccuracies in the orchards identified in Appendix C. The orchards in question are:

GLOS3085, GLOS3089 and GLOS3079

I requested clarification on the status of these orchards from Tewkesbury Borough Council and received the following response:

“GLOS3085

This site does appear on the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) database, but it is noted as a historic site that is not likely to fruit.

On the site wide masterplan approved for the Innsworth strategic allocation (18/00123/CONDIS) the site is not shown as an orchard and instead as a neighbourhood centre for the development. Replacement orchard provision is to be made elsewhere as part of the development.

GLOS3089

This site remains on the PTES database as an orchard.

On site, there remains a small orchard/tree belt running alongside the buildings associated with Innsworth House Farm that corresponds with the location of GLOS3089 on the NDPs Appendix C map.

GLOS3079

This site remains on the PTES database as an orchard.

However - on the site wide masterplan approved for the Innsworth strategic allocation (18/00123/CONDIS) the site is not shown as an orchard and is instead largely covered by an attenuation pond. Replacement orchard provision is to be made elsewhere as part of the development.”

The plan at Appendix C should be amended to remove GLOS3085, and GLOS3079 and in order to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be modified as follows:

POLICY CHIN10: ORCHARDS, HEDGEROWS AND VETERAN TREES

Development should ensure that it does not have a significant detrimental impact on existing orchards, including those identified in Appendix C. In particular, development proposals will be expected, where possible to retain hedgerows and veteran trees, including veteran Perry pear trees. This is particularly important where the loss of any such features would result in harm to or loss of irreplaceable habitats.

POLICY CHIN11: BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

A. Existing water courses should be enhanced through new development, by sensitively managing drainage and providing attenuation features on-site, such as SuDS, to minimise new volumes into the water course, particularly from agricultural land.

B. New developments should adopt a blue infrastructure approach to the design of water and flood management, enhancing the provision of wetland habitat for wildlife and thus opportunities for the enjoyment of wildlife close to where people live. New developments should include an imaginative and varied range of water features, including swales with standing water all year round, ponds and pond complexes of varying sizes and designs, reed beds/rushes/grasses and enhancement for character species such as water voles and dragonflies.

C. Brooks should be protected and enhanced for the benefit of wildlife.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

POLICY CHIN12: FLOOD MITIGATION

A. Due to the levels of flood risk (fluvial and surface water) in Churchdown and Innsworth, development proposals are expected to demonstrate that they will not worsen the existing risks to the drainage network through the use of effective modern solutions. For surface water drainage, this means demonstrating that all reasonable and sustainable options have been considered in accordance with the surface water hierarchy.

B. New development which is required to deliver flood mitigation measures and an accompanying ongoing management plan must ensure that this management plan includes the following:

- i. Details of how the scheme will be professionally serviced in perpetuity.*
- ii. What resources will be required and how these will be provided to maintain good level of flood defence, water storage, enhancements to the landscape and wildlife habitat, as appropriate (and specifically meeting the requirements of Policy CHIN11).*
- iii. Opportunities for safe access, leisure and participation by local people to care for and enhance the scheme (and specifically meeting the requirements of Policy CHIN11).*

C. Existing open watercourses should not be culverted. Where feasible, opportunities to open up culverted watercourses should be sought to reduce the associated flood risk and danger of collapse whilst taking advantage of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure, as required by Policy CHIN11.

COMMENT

Point c of the policy does not provide flexibility for circumstances where it may be necessary to culvert an existing watercourse.

Paragraph 6.31 should be revised to make reference to the Tewkesbury and Water Management SPD 2018.

For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions point c. should be modified as follows:

C. Existing open watercourses should not be culverted, except where essential to provide access. Where feasible, opportunities to open up culverted watercourses should be sought to reduce the associated flood risk and danger of collapse whilst taking advantage of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure, as required by Policy CHIN11.

POLICY CHIN13: VIEWS TO AND FROM CHOSEN (CHURCHDOWN) HILL

Any development should maintain the local character of the landscape and not result in any loss or diminution in aesthetic value of views to or from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill.

COMMENT

Although there is reference in the Plan to the importance of Chosen (Churchdown) Hill and views to and from it to the community and there are a number of photographs included these are not marked on any accompanying maps. The views identified should be marked and appropriately identified on the policies map. The wording of the policy is also imprecise and subjective, it is difficult to understand how this would be applied in the determination of a planning application. For clarity the policy should be modified as follows:

POLICY CHIN13: VIEWS TO AND FROM CHOSEN (CHURCHDOWN) HILL

Chosen (Churchdown) Hill is a prominent visual landmark of ecological, historic and recreational importance. Development proposals should maintain the local landscape character as identified in the Joint Core Strategy Landscape Characterisation Assessment and Sensitivity Analysis 2013. Proposals which have a negative impact on views to or from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill as identified on Fig ? will be resisted.

POLICY CHIN14: PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE MOVEMENT ROUTES

A. To ensure that people can travel safely to the shops, public transport facilities, schools and other important facilities and amenities serving Churchdown and Innsworth, all new developments should ensure safe pedestrian and cycle access to link up with existing footways and cycleways that directly serve the Movement Routes shown on the Policies Map.

B. Priority is given to proposals which appear most likely to encourage cycling and walking as an alternative to driving.

C. Developer contributions (principally in the form of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts) will be used to pay for these enhancements.

D. Development will be expected to mitigate impacts on Movement Routes and provide a strategy to mitigate the impact of additional traffic movements on the safety and flow of pedestrian access. This should be addressed through a Transport Assessment where this is required as part of a planning application.

COMMENT

This policy imposes a blanket requirement on all new development regardless of size or type. CIL contributions are dealt with under separate legislation and dealt with by the Local Planning Authority and cannot form part of a land use policy within a Neighbourhood Plan. If the Qualifying Body wish to include a priority project list setting out how any CIL contributions the Parish Council receive will be spent this should be included in a separate section of the Neighbourhood Plan. For clarity and to meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be modified as follows:

POLICY CHIN14: PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE MOVEMENT ROUTES

It is essential that people can travel safely to the shops, public transport facilities, schools and other important facilities and amenities serving Churchdown and Innsworth. Where appropriate new developments should ensure safe pedestrian and cycle access and where achievable link up with existing footways and cycleways that directly serve the Movement Routes shown on the Policies Map.

A. Proposals should be designed to encourage cycling and walking as an alternative to driving.

B. Development proposals should, where necessary be supported by a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement which assesses the impact on Movement Routes and provides a strategy to mitigate the impact of additional traffic movements on the safety and flow of pedestrian access.

POLICY CHIN15: PROVISION OF CIRCULAR WALKING ROUTE

In order to provide improvements for access and leisure purposes, proposals to provide a dedicated walking route around the parishes of Churchdown and Innsworth will be supported.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

POLICY CHIN16: HIGHWAY CAPACITY AT KEY ROAD JUNCTIONS

All Transport Assessments (for larger sites) or Transport Statements (for smaller sites) - as required by Para 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework - should address to the satisfaction of the highway authority the

cumulative transport impact on road junctions, in particular including the following, identified on the Policies Map:

a. B4063 Cheltenham Road East with Innsworth Lane and Parton Road

b. Pirton Lane and Cheltenham Road East

c. Pirton Lane and Station Road

d. Albemarle Road and Brookfield Road

e. Pirton Lane and Winston Road

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

SECTION 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

- 1. I find that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.*
- 2. The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure such as highways and railways or other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.*
- 3. The Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one Neighbourhood Area and there are no other Neighbourhood Plans in place within the Neighbourhood Area.*
- 4. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening, meet the EU Obligation.*
- 5. The policies and plans in the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the recommended modifications would contribute to achieving sustainable development. They have regard to national policy and to guidance, and generally conform to the strategic policies of the Development Plan, currently the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury (JCS) 2011-2031 (adopted 2017) and the saved policies of the Tewkesbury Local Plan 2006.*
- 6. I therefore conclude that the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan subject to the recommended modifications can proceed to Referendum.*

Deborah McCann BSc MRICS MRTPI Dip Arch Con Dip LD

Planning Consultant

NPIERS Examiner

CEDR accredited mediator

5th of November 2019

Appendix 2: Tewkesbury Borough Council’s consideration of the Examiner’s recommendations

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Policy	Examiners Recommendation	LPA Consideration	Action
<p>Policy CHIN1</p>	<p>Proposed amended text to Policy CHIN1:</p> <p>POLICY CHIN1: PARKING TO SUPPORT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>“A. For new residential developments (use class c3), the following parking standards for the provision of off-road parking should be achieved where possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1-bed dwelling 1 off-road car parking space •2-bed dwelling 2 off-road car parking spaces •3-bed dwelling 2 off-road car parking spaces •4-bed dwelling 3 off-road car parking spaces •5+ bed dwelling 4 off-road car parking spaces <p>B. Parking provision should be well designed, contribute to a high quality environment and not contribute to cluttered and unsafe streets. Parking should be provided on-plot in the first instance and where this is not possible, on specifically allocated parking bays. Parking spaces should be designed to take into account of the size of modern cars and use permeable surface materials.</p>	<p>Modification accepted</p>	<p><u>Modification to Policy CHIN1 to read:</u></p> <p>POLICY CHIN1: PARKING TO SUPPORT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>A. For new residential developments (Use Class C3), the following minimum parking standards shall apply for the provision of off-road parking <i>should be achieved where possible:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-bed dwelling 1 off-road car parking space • 2-bed dwelling 2 off-road car parking spaces • 3-bed dwelling 2 off-road car parking spaces • 4-bed dwelling 3 off-road car parking spaces • 5+ bed dwelling 4 off-road car parking spaces <p>B. <i>Parking provision should be well designed, contribute to a high quality environment and not contribute to cluttered and unsafe streets. Parking provided on-plot preferably to the side of the dwelling and preferably not in front of the building line in the first instance and where this is not possible, on specifically allocated parking bays. Only where it has clearly been demonstrated that such provision is not possible or appropriate will alternative layouts be considered but are still expected to be off street. Provision Parking spaces should be designed to should take into account the size of modern cars and use permeable surface materials.</i></p> <p>C. <i>For On major developments (as defined in the NPPF), the provision of off plot visitor parking at a ratio of a</i></p>

	<p>C. For major developments (as defined in the nppf), the provision of off plot visitor parking at a ratio of 0.25 space per dwelling is encouraged.</p> <p>d. the design of on-street parking should follow the 'green streets' concept to integrate street parking with green infrastructure and water drainage."</p>		<p>0.25 space per dwelling allowance should be made for visitor parking off plot to avoid the potential for these spaces to be taken up by residents for their own use <i>is encouraged.</i></p> <p>D. The design of on-street parking should follow the 'green streets' concept to integrate street parking with green infrastructure and water drainage.</p>
Policy CHIN3	<p>Proposed amended text to Policy CHIN3:</p> <p>A. "New residential development proposals should demonstrate how they retain and where possible enhance the environmental setting of Churchdown and Innsworth. Proposals should include a range of green features appropriate to the size and scale of the development - in particular, the provision of green spaces, verges, trees and hedgerows and orchard planting such as fruity streets, espaliers, forage trails, pocket orchards and community orchards.</p> <p>B. Where possible Green corridor connections should be made between existing and new orchards and to other green infrastructure.</p> <p>C. Boundary treatments are particularly important to the setting of development. Residential proposals should include details of boundary treatments and other means of enclosure and demonstrate how the boundaries between properties and public</p>	Modification accepted	<p><u>Modification to Policy CHIN3 to read:</u></p> <p>POLICY CHIN3: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>A. New residential development proposals should demonstrate how they retain <i>and where possible enhance</i> the environmental setting of Churchdown and Innsworth. Development should incorporate a range of green features into built design proposals <i>Proposals should include a range of green features appropriate to the size and scale of the development</i> - in particular, the provision of green spaces, verges, trees and hedgerows and orchard planting such as fruity streets, espaliers, forage trails, pocket orchards and community orchards.</p> <p>B. <i>Where possible</i> green corridor connections should be made between existing and new orchards and to other green infrastructure.</p> <p>C. Boundary treatments are particularly important to the setting of development. Residential proposals must demonstrate <i>should include details of boundary</i></p>

	<p>space will enhance the environmental setting. Boundary treatments must be appropriate to ensure they are long lasting.</p> <p>D. The use of soft edges to footpaths and permeable surfacing will be strongly supported.”</p>		<p><i>treatments and other means of enclosure and demonstrate</i> how the boundaries between properties and public space <i>will</i> enhance the environmental setting. Boundary treatments must be appropriate to ensure they are long lasting.</p> <p>D. The use of soft edges to footpaths and permeable surfacing will be strongly supported.</p>
Policy CHIN6	<p>Proposed amended text to Policy CHIN6:</p> <p>“Churchdown Park, as shown on the Policies Map, is designated as a Local Green Space. Proposals for built development on Churchdown Park will only be permitted in very special circumstances.”</p>	Modification accepted	<p><u>Modification to Policy CHIN6 to read:</u></p> <p>POLICY CHIN6: PROTECTION OF CHURCHDOWN PARK LOCAL GREEN SPACE</p> <p>Churchdown Park, as shown on the Policies Map, is designated as a Local Green Space. Proposals for built development on Churchdown Park will not be permitted unless the proposal is of a limited nature and it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of the park <i>only be permitted in very special circumstances.</i></p>
Policy CHIN10	<p>Proposed amended text to Policy CHIN10:</p> <p>“Development should ensure that it does not have a significant detrimental impact on existing orchards, including those identified in Appendix C. In particular, development proposals will be expected, where possible to retain hedgerows and veteran trees, including veteran Perry pear trees. This is particularly important where the loss of any such features would result in harm to or loss of irreplaceable habitats.”</p>	Modification accepted	<p><u>Modification to Policy CHIN10 to read:</u></p> <p>POLICY CHIN10: ORCHARDS, HEDGEROWS AND VETERAN TREES</p> <p>Development must ensure that it does not have a significant detrimental impact on existing orchards, including those identified in Appendix C. In particular, development proposals will be expected, <i>where possible,</i> to retain hedgerows and veteran trees, including veteran Perry pear trees. This is particularly important where the</p>

			loss of any such features would result in harm to or loss of irreplaceable habitats.
Policy CHIN10 Appendix C Map	Proposed amendment to the map at Appendix C 'Location of historic and existing orchards' to remove the identification of orchards at GLOS3085 and GLOS3079.	Modification accepted	Appendix C map amended to remove reference to orchards at GLOS3085 and GLOS3079.
CHIN12	Proposed amended text to Policy CHIN12: C. "Existing open watercourses should not be culverted, except where essential to provide access. Where feasible, opportunities to open up culverted watercourses should be sought to reduce the associated flood risk and danger of collapse whilst taking advantage of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure, as required by Policy CHIN11."	Modification accepted	<u>Modification to Policy CHIN12 to read:</u> POLICY CHIN12: FLOOD MITIGATION C. Existing open watercourses should not be culverted, <i>except where essential to provide access</i> . Where feasible, opportunities to open up culverted watercourses should be sought to reduce the associated flood risk and danger of collapse whilst taking advantage of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure, as required by Policy CHIN11.
CHIN12 Para 6.31	Para 6.31 should be revised to make reference to the Tewkesbury Flood and Water Management SPD 2018.	Modification accepted	<u>Modification to Para 6.31 to read:</u> 6.31 Additionally, <i>a revised and updated</i> the Tewkesbury Flood and Water Management Supplementary Planning Document <i>was</i> adopted in 2013 <i>has been reviewed and updated in accordance with national policy and guidance 2018</i> .
CHIN13	Proposed amended text to Policy CHIN13: "Chosen (Churchdown) Hill is a prominent visual landmark of ecological, historic and recreational importance. Development proposals should maintain the local landscape character as	Modification accepted	<u>Modification to Policy CHIN13 to read:</u> <u>POLICY CHIN13: VIEWS TO AND FROM CHOSEN (CHURCHDOWN) HILL</u>

	<p>identified in the Joint Core Strategy Landscape Characterisation Assessment and Sensitivity Analysis 2013. Proposals which have a negative impact on views to or from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill as identified on Fig ? will be resisted.”</p> <p>The views referenced in the proposed amended policy text should be identified on a map.</p>		<p>Any development should maintain the local character of the landscape and not result in any loss or diminution in aesthetic value of views to or from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill. Chosen (Churchdown) Hill is a prominent visual landmark of ecological, historic and recreational importance. Development proposals should maintain the local landscape character as identified in the Joint Core Strategy Landscape Characterisation Assessment and Sensitivity Analysis 2013. Proposals which have a negative impact on views to or from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill as identified on the map at Figure 6.2 will be resisted.</p> <p>An additional map is provided at Figure 6.2 to show the locations of the views.</p>
CHIN14	<p>Proposed amended text to Policy CHIN14:</p> <p>A. It is essential that people can travel safely to the shops, public transport facilities, schools and other important facilities and amenities serving Churchdown and Innsworth. Where appropriate new developments should ensure safe pedestrian and cycle access and where achievable link up with existing footways and cycleways that directly serve the Movement Routes shown on the Policies Map.</p> <p>B. Proposals should be designed to encourage cycling and walking as an alternative to driving.</p> <p>C. Development proposals should, where necessary be supported by a Transport</p>	Modification accepted	<p><u>Modification to Policy CHIN14 to read:</u></p> <p>POLICY CHIN14: PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE MOVEMENT ROUTES</p> <p>A. <i>It is essential that people can travel safely to the shops, public transport facilities, schools and other</i> To ensure that people can travel safely to the shops, public transport facilities, schools and other important facilities and amenities serving Churchdown and Innsworth. <i>Where appropriate</i> all new developments should ensure safe pedestrian and cycle access to link up with existing footways and cycleways that directly serve the Movement Routes shown on the Policies Map.</p> <p>B. Proposals should be designed Priority is given to proposals which appear most likely to encourage cycling and walking as an alternative to driving.</p>

	<p>Assessment or Transport Statement which assesses the impact on Movement Routes and provides a strategy to mitigate the impact of additional traffic movements on the safety and flow of pedestrian access.</p>	<p>C. Developer contributions (principally in the form of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts) will be used to pay for these enhancements.</p> <p>D. C. Development proposals should, where necessary, be supported by a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement which assesses the impact on Movement Routes and provides a strategy to mitigate the impact of additional traffic movements on the safety and flow of pedestrian access. will be expected to mitigate impacts on Movement Routes and provide a strategy to mitigate the impact of additional traffic movements on the safety and flow of pedestrian access. This should be addressed through a Transport Assessment where this is required as part of a planning application.</p>
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Subject: FW: Neighbourhood Plan

From: Churchdown Parish Clerk [REDACTED]

Sent: 11 December 2019 12:46

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Neighbourhood Plan

CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL

Hi Matt

The changes of the Independent Examiner were approved last night as follows :

322.1 It was proposed , seconded and **RESOLVED** that the conclusions and changes proposed by the Independent Examiner be accepted.

I will send the final plan over tomorrow by WeTransfer - just doing a map for the photographs !

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]
Miss Geraldine Connor

Clerk

Churchdown Parish Council

Council Offices, Parton Road, Churchdown GL3 2JH
[REDACTED]

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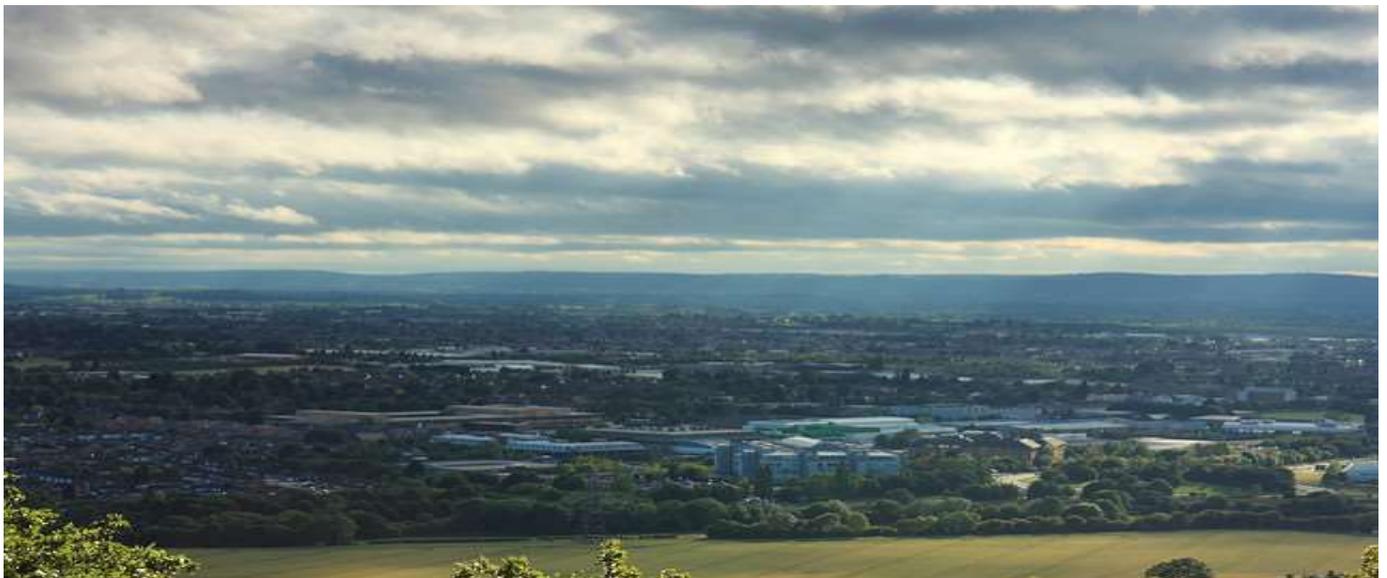
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Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2031



**Submission
(Regulation 16)
Version**



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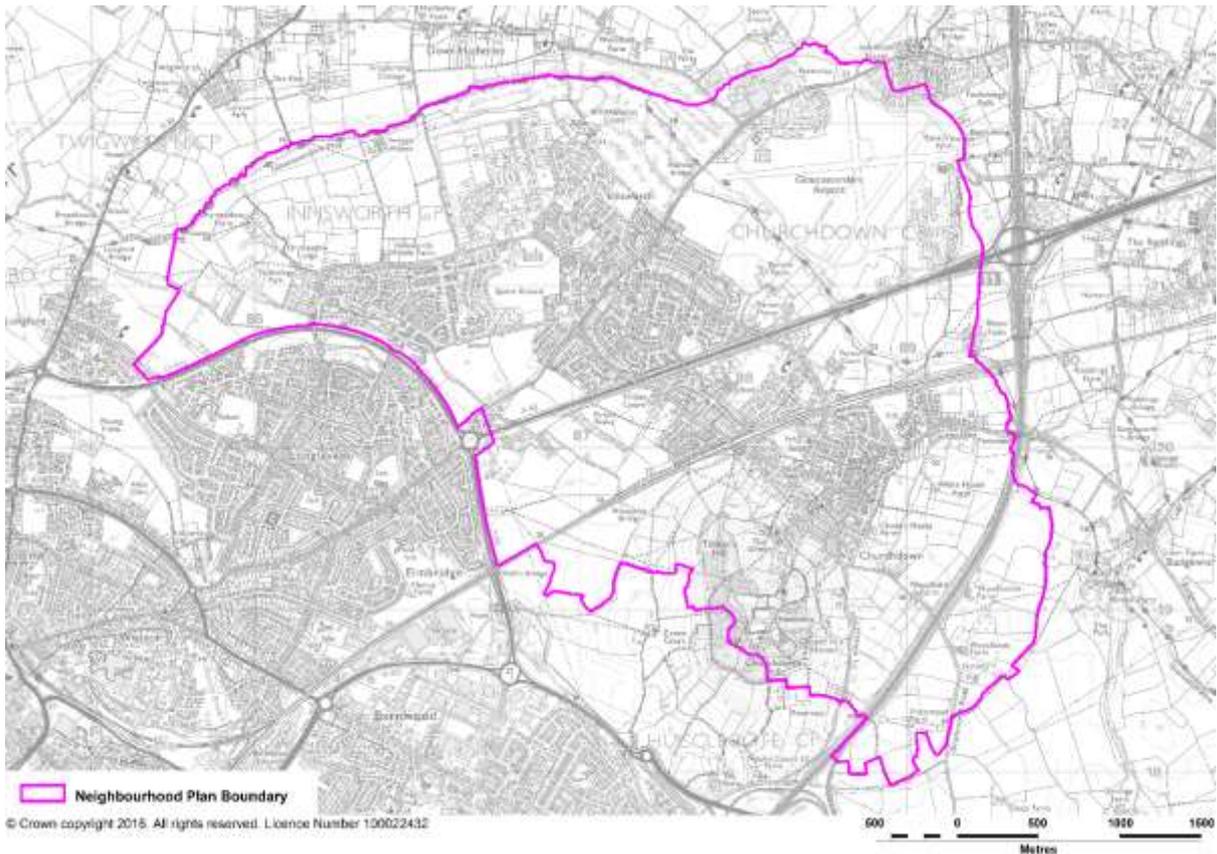
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is the Neighbourhood Plan for the parishes of Churchdown and Innsworth. It represents one part of the development plan for this area over the period 2018 to 2031, the other parts being the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan.
- 1.2 Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC), as the local planning authority, designated a single Neighbourhood Area for the whole of the two parish areas of Churchdown and Innsworth in June 2013 to enable Churchdown and Innsworth Parish Councils to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. It has been prepared by the community through the Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (CINPSG).
- 1.3 The map in Figure 1.1 below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which reflects the administrative boundary of the two parishes.
- 1.4 The Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended. The CINPSG has prepared the Neighbourhood Plan to establish some key objectives for the future of life in the parishes and to set out how those objectives will be realised through planning and guiding land use and development change over the plan period 2018 to 2031.
- 1.5 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within both parishes and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the parishes. The process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Churchdown and Innsworth's residents, businesses and community groups.
- 1.6 Each section of the Neighbourhood Plan covers a different topic. The local context is provided in Section 2 and the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan in Section 3. Sections 4 to 7 then provide the various policies:
- Section 4: Built Environment and Design
 - Section 5: Community Infrastructure
 - Section 6: Natural Environment
 - Section 7: Movement of People
- 1.7 Under each heading in these sections there is the justification for the policies presented which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. The policies themselves are presented in the coloured boxes in Sections 4 to 7. It is these policies against which planning applications will be assessed. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text.
- 1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan is accompanied by a Policies Map, shown in Section 9 at the end of the document.

Figure 1.1: Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan area



Source: Ordnance Survey licence no. 100022432

National policy

1.9 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies (para 29).

Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently (para 30).

Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development (para.125).”

1.10 Further guidance on the practical application of these matters is provided in national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Consultation

- 1.11 Below is a summary of all consultation activities undertaken by the CINPSG.
- 1.12 In February 2013 Churchdown Parish Council, in consultation with Innsworth Parish Council, made the application to designate the Neighbourhood Plan area, consisting of the whole of the Parishes of Churchdown and Innsworth. The public were kept informed of the progress of the application through the local community magazine and the press.
- 1.13 In January 2014 a leaflet explaining the Neighbourhood Plan process and inviting residents to an informational meeting at the GL3 Community Hub (conveniently situated for residents of both parishes) was delivered to all households and businesses in Churchdown and Innsworth. The meeting was held on 6th February 2014 and attended by approximately 50 people. Volunteers from both parishes came forward to serve on a Steering Group which met for the first time on 25th February 2014.
- 1.14 The Steering Group then conducted a widespread community engagement exercise from 8th May to 20th August 2014, after which a review was carried out, and it was then extended to 26th September to ensure that all gaps were plugged. The engagement included the following elements: displays and boxes for comments at key locations throughout both Parishes, attendance at community events by Steering Group Members, availability of a questionnaire on the website for public to submit comments, talks at meetings of local groups, schools and sheltered housing complexes. A great effort was made to make the engagement comprehensive, so that it reached all sectors of society and all ages. Posters were put up throughout the area, and banners outside key locations, e.g. the Library. The questionnaire used throughout was a simple one, which asked just three questions – ‘what do you like about Churchdown and Innsworth?’; ‘what don’t you like?’; and ‘what would you like to see?’ It was well received by the public, although it was found that talking to people face to face resulted in much better engagement than by using the website. Over 1,100 questionnaires were completed, which were analysed and a report produced.



Consultation event, August 2014

- 1.15 The Steering Group then formed five theme groups: Community Infrastructure, Children and Young People, Built Environment, Natural Environment & Movement of People. Each Theme Group studied the Community Engagement responses relevant to their Theme and went on to carry out further consultation using a variety of methods. For example, for Built Environment a document was produced illustrating different housing styles and asking residents, young and old, to say which ones they liked or didn't like and why. For Children and Young People, similarly, large posters were drawn up showing different types of play equipment and, again, asking which they preferred and the reasons for this. The Theme Groups carried

out this work over the period December 2014 to May 2015, at the end of which they produced summaries of key points. From these summaries the draft Plan policies were produced.



Consultation on Built Environment with children from Parton Manor Junior School, March 2015

2 LOCAL CONTEXT

Profile of the Churchdown and Innsworth community today

Local infrastructure

- 2.1 Churchdown is a relatively large Parish, located in a semi-rural environment; close to the city of Gloucester but surrounded on three sides by open countryside. Churchdown borders Imjin Barracks and the parish of Innsworth to the north west.



View of Churchdown from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill

- 2.2 The Parish is unusual in having two centres. The older (Brookfield or "village") centre is in Church Road near St Andrew's Church; the more modern centre is in St John's Avenue near St John's Church. Each centre has a parade of shops, and there are additional supermarkets on Parton Road and Cheltenham Road East. The Parish Council offices are located in mid-Churchdown between the two centres.



Churchdown Parish Council Offices

- 2.3 Churchdown is well provided for in terms of variety of shops and facilities - doctors' surgery, dentist, chiropodist, pharmacist, optician, hairdressers, newsagents, library, Post Office, residential care home and sheltered housing, funeral director, day nursery, petrol station, three public houses, restaurants with take-away, fish and chip shop and coffee shops, three supermarkets, and veterinary practices. In addition, the community is home to the Gloucestershire Airport, a sizeable industrial estate and a number of car dealerships.
- 2.4 The previous premises of the doctors' surgery had long been recognised by local residents as inadequate for the population it served. A brand new, state-of-the-art surgery on Old Parton Road was opened in early 2018. The surgery lies approximately between the two centres of Churchdown, St Johns Avenue and Blacksmith Lane. Public transport is provided by an hourly service from Cheltenham and Gloucester, dropping off a short walk away in Parton Road. It also has excellent parking facilities. There is a pharmacy adjacent to the surgery premises



New Churchdown Surgery, Old Parton Road

- 2.5 The Jet Age Museum located adjacent to Gloucestershire Airport is a major tourist attraction and the Airport itself is the ninth busiest general aviation airport in the country.



Gloucestershire Airport at night

- 2.6 St Bartholomew's Church on the top of Chosen (Churchdown) Hill is a Grade I listed building and an important landmark in the Parish.



St Bartholomew's Church on Chosen (Churchdown) Hill

- 2.7 There is a burial ground on top of Chosen (Churchdown) Hill, which is much admired for the beauty of the location, but which is running out of space, particularly for full interments. Churchdown Parish Council has been looking for more burial land for some time, but without success.
- 2.8 In addition there are a number of community centres - Churchdown Community Centre, the GL3 Community Hub and the Churchdown Club, plus a Scout hut, rugby club with bar, and five churches (four of which have church halls). The Parish Council offices are located in Churchdown Park.



Churchdown Community Centre, Parton Road

- 2.9 The GL3 Community Hub was taken over by a local charity of the same name on a community asset transfer from Gloucestershire County Council and has a sports hall for community use. It runs both junior and senior youth clubs.



GL3 Community Hub, Cheltenham Road East

- 2.10 There are several schools - one primary, two infant and two junior, along with two large secondary schools. There are sports halls available for public use at the senior schools, but no dedicated leisure centre. There is a longstanding wish of the residents for a swimming pool, but it is recognised that the latter is difficult to achieve.
- 2.11 There are a total of eight parks/play areas, varying in size, two allotment sites (both of which have waiting lists) and various sports pitches for football, rugby, rounders (informal) and cricket. There is an outdoor gym at Tudor Mead Park. The Churchdown Club provides facilities for bowling and tennis.



Allotments, Churchdown Park

- 2.12 The facilities for the Cricket Club are recognised to be inadequate, as the pitch is of poor quality (as judged by the local league), and the pavilion consists of changing rooms, with limited social facilities. It is a longstanding ambition of the Club to have a club house with a bar and which can serve as a focal point for the community, as is found in many villages.
- 2.13 Evidence from community engagement shows that the parks are a strength of Churchdown and much appreciated by residents, young and old, for recreation, play and dog walking. Children and young people have given very clear and strong views as to the type of play areas which they would like to see in new developments, ie, larger parks with exciting and challenging play equipment.



Overview of Churchdown Park during ponds construction, showing field, MUGA, skatepark

2.14 The most popular park is Churchdown Park which has been very well developed and maintained by the Parish Council and provides a play area, pocket wood, allotments, state of the art skatepark, multi-use games area (MUGA), dirt jump track, football pitches, nature reserve, community orchard and ponds complex/nature area. It is used for educational activities and community events and serves as a focus in a community which lacks a 'town centre'. Churchdown Park has won a number of awards:

- Action for Market Towns South Winner, Environment & Culture category 2012 - the Re-creation of Churchdown Park' (primarily for the skatepark);
- Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) Gloucestershire 2013 "for creating and managing a new landscape feature of wildlife ponds and reed beds completing an outstanding example of a comprehensive range of amenities for local people in Churchdown"; and
- Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association winner of large playground of the year, 2013.



Camp Imjin personnel doing pond planting

2.15 It is considered that this park could serve as an exemplar for development of new parks in the neighbourhood plan area.



Water lilies in Churchdown Park Ponds



Broad bodied chaser at Churchdown Park Ponds



Day in the Park, 2013



Churchdown Park Play Area

- 2.16 The National Cycle Network Route NCN41 runs through the parish and is much enjoyed by residents and visitors alike, particularly for getting to work in Cheltenham or Gloucester, and for trips to the Airport to watch the planes and visit the pub there.



Public Right of Way – Glevum Way and National Cycle track NCN 41 through Churchdown Park

- 2.17 There are many public rights of way (PROWs) which are enjoyed by residents and visitors, and walking is clearly an important leisure activity for many people.



PROW through Chapel Hay Rec and a leafy path/wildlife corridor PROW by Golf Course: credit Ann Smith

- 2.18 Innsworth is a smaller parish with its own identity but with fewer facilities. Innsworth, like Churchdown, is split into two halves - the military housing side which ends at the junction of Ward Avenue and Swallow Crescent, and also Thompson Way again with Swallow Crescent.
- 2.19 It contains Imjin Barracks, the home of HQ of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC). This has some sports facilities and allotments for the use of military personnel. If the public want to use the facilities they must seek permission and pre-book and sign in to the Camp, which deters easy use. Additionally, permission for the public to use the facilities can be withdrawn at any time. There is also a play area open to all at Tandey Walk and a field at Roberts Road with sports pitches and a pavilion, and which the public use for walking, though again permission can be withdrawn for this.



Entrance to Imjin Barracks, Innsworth Lane

- 2.20 Innsworth has a parade of shops at Kestrel Parade, including newsagent, hairdresser and takeaway, and a former NAAFI shop on Innsworth Lane.



Innsworth – shops at Kestrel Parade

- 2.21 Innsworth has a community hall with a good size sports hall and a play area at Rookery Road. The Parish Council has an office at the Hall.



Innsworth Community Hall, Rookery Road

- 2.22 The settlement also has an infant school, a junior school and day nurseries as well as a community building belonging to Imjin Barracks.
- 2.23 There is a Technology Park which is an important source of employment, though there is some concern about access by heavy lorries on Innsworth Lane.
- 2.24 There are some who feel that Innsworth is something of a 'poor relation' to Churchdown due to the lack of facilities. Innsworth does not have a church, burial ground, pub, allotments, large park, community football pitches (other than at the schools) or a wide range of shops and services. A planned development at land on Drymeadow Lane is at least an opportunity to attempt to address this situation.
- 2.25 Interest has been expressed in having a combined 'Innsworth with Churchdown' Cricket Club with changing rooms, bar and function room. This may be most appropriately provided in Innsworth due to the lack of a public house in the parish.

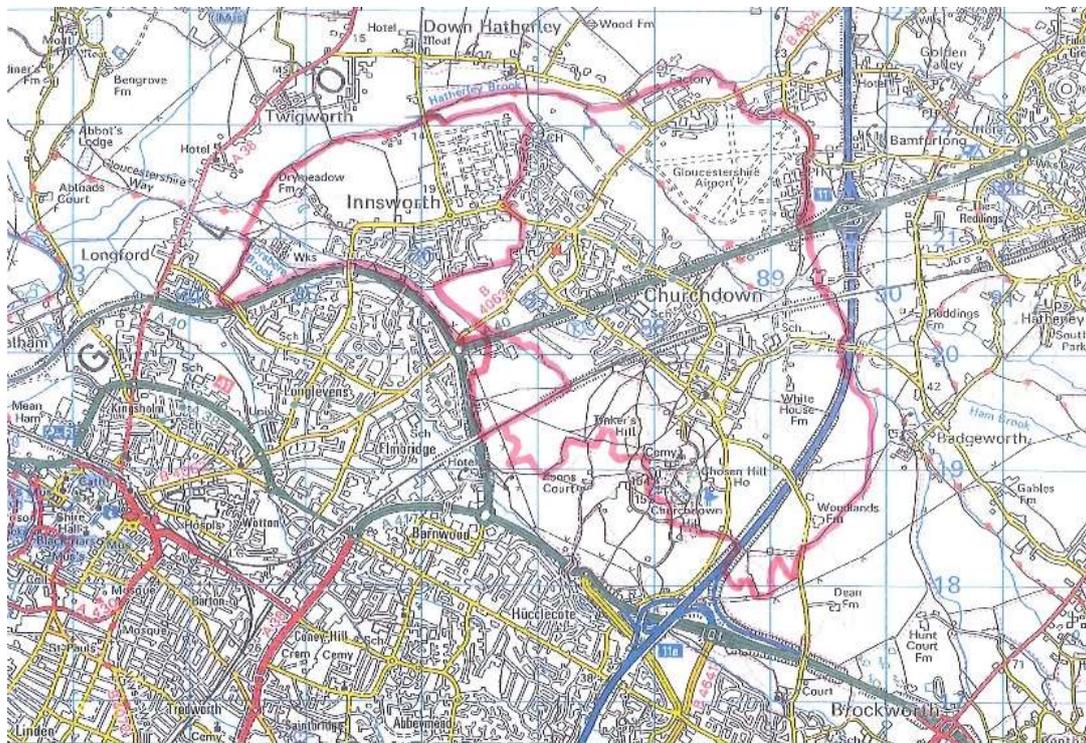
- 2.26 Residents of Innsworth enjoy having countryside nearby and use the public rights of way extensively for recreation.



Innsworth countryside characterised by flat open fields and historic perry pear trees

- 2.27 It is clear that residents of both parishes value the respective identities of their villages and the community feel which they want to be maintained. Their separation from Cheltenham and Gloucester is an important part of this. This is shown in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Map showing separation of Churchdown and Innsworth from Cheltenham and Gloucester



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Produced using ESRI (UK)'s MapExplorer 2.0 - <http://www.esriuk.com>

Environment

- 2.28 The natural environment is a defining characteristic of the Churchdown and Innsworth area. Residents of both parishes cherish the peace and tranquillity provided by the green setting, as well as the opportunities it provides for recreation and learning, accessible and close to where people live and work.



Mature historic hedgerow, B4063 (Cheltenham Road East) offers screening from traffic and wildlife habitat, green corridor and visual amenity

- 2.29 Chosen Hill (also known as Churchdown Hill) rises above Churchdown and is the site of an 11.5 hectare nature reserve. The Hill commands good views over the scarp and the Severn Vale and there is a network of paths for walkers. Covered reservoirs were constructed on the Hill in the 1940s and 1950s, and there is an Iron Age fort known as Churchdown Hill Camp below the main reservoir.



View from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill. Credit: Ann Smith

- 2.30 Innsworth is the location of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site is one of a very small number of unimproved neutral grasslands remaining in the Severn Vale. The vegetation is a good example of old ridge and furrow grassland traditionally managed for hay with aftermath grazing. There is a good range of grass and herb species.

- 2.31 The brooks form an important feature of the natural environment, adding to ecological diversity, and interest for walkers, particularly as public rights of way often run alongside.



Norman's Brook runs along Brickhampton Golf Course and into Innsworth – an important habitat for character species such as water voles

- 2.32 Both parishes lie less than one kilometre away from the boundary of the National Landscape Area of the Severn Vale. The latter's Strategic Nature Area is characterised by a 'flat pastoral landscape of the Severn floodplain', which includes grazing marsh and wet grassland. Old orchards also form a strong part of the traditional landscape character of the area. The nearby Twigworth and Maisemore Strategic Nature Areas (SNAs) have targets for the management, restoration and creation of a number of English List Priority Habitats, including meadows, orchards, ponds and reedbeds.
- 2.33 The natural environment is a particularly strong theme of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Natural Environment Green Infrastructure Plan 2016 was prepared by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust ('Wild Service') to inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. Residents of all ages have expressed great pleasure in having access to countryside and open spaces. They clearly value 'greenness', want to be able to see wildlife, and consider this part of the character of the area, which they want to be maintained. New development should take account of this.



View up to Chosen (Churchdown) Hill. Credit: Ann Smith

2.34 Some of the natural environment consists of small sites and green features, such as individual veteran trees providing homes for wildlife, and remaining pockets of traditional orchards and ponds which are a special habitat which were once abundant in Churchdown and Innsworth. These are still visible in place names, such as Parton Farm and Pirton Brake which are names indicating the importance of perry trees and perry orchards historically. Orchards and ponds have historically been a defining characteristic of the Neighbourhood Area and help to give character and distinctiveness to the locality.



Relic orchard Parton Manor. Credit: Ann Smith



Churchdown Perry pears at Home Farm Credit: Ann Smith

2.35 The Natural Environment section of the Neighbourhood Plan goes into more detail about the ways in which these landscape features – orchards and ponds – can be integrated into new development in the area to reflect and strengthen the local built and natural heritage.



Fruity hedge, Churchdown. Credit: Ann Smith



Churchdown Park ponds. Credit: water21.org.uk

2.36 The natural environment in Churchdown and Innsworth is also characterised by a number of strategically important sites which are important for both wildlife and people. Innsworth Meadow SSSI is a site protected from development because of its value to wildlife, and the Neighbourhood Plan sets out how development plans in this part of Innsworth represent an opportunity to enhance this important site of ecological value.



*Veteran horse chestnut tree, Chosen (Churchdown) Hill.
Credit: Ann Smith*



*View of Chosen (Churchdown) Hill from John Daniels Playing Field.
Credit: Ann Smith*

- 2.37 Other sites which provide a home to nature, which are also accessible to people for recreation and learning are highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan, including Chosen (Churchdown) Hill and Churchdown Hill Meadows, and Churchdown Park with its award-winning pond complex and community orchard.
- 2.38 Other large sites include the wildlife corridors, Norman's and Hatherley Brooks (with unimproved grassland alongside), within Gloucestershire Airport and within Brickhampton Golf Course.



Grassland and meadow by brook, Gloucestershire Airport. Credit: Ann Smith

Local planning policy

- 2.39 The key planning policies are provided by the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011 to 2031 (adopted in 2017) and some 'saved' policies of the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan to 2011 (adopted in 2006).
- 2.40 In particular, the JCS allocates land at Innsworth and South Churchdown for development. Whilst a Neighbourhood Plan cannot determine 'strategic' planning policy, it can influence the detailed 'local' matters and it is many of these matters that the Neighbourhood Plan policies are seeking to address through the development of both strategic sites. This offers a significant opportunity to address many of the issues raised by the community regarding life in Churchdown and Innsworth, and so the intention is to use the Neighbourhood Plan to achieve this.
- 2.41 There are a number of policies in the JCS which are of direct relevance to the Neighbourhood Plan, because the Neighbourhood Plan needs to be in general conformity with them. These are:
- Policy SD3: Sustainable Design and Construction
 - Policy SD4: Design Requirements
 - Policy SD5: Green Belt
 - Policy SD6: Landscape
 - Policy SD8: Historic Environment
 - Policy SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - Policy SD15: Health and Environmental Quality
 - Policy INF1: Transport Network
 - Policy INF2: Flood Risk Management
 - Policy INF3: Green Infrastructure
 - Policy INF4: Social and Community Infrastructure
 - Policy INF6: Infrastructure Delivery
 - Policy INF7: Developer Contributions
 - Policy SA1: Strategic Allocations Policy
 - Policy A1: Innsworth and Twigworth
 - Policy A2: South Churchdown

3 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN OBJECTIVES

Challenges for Churchdown and Innsworth

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the communities of Churchdown and Innsworth. In summary these challenges are:
- Ensuring that strategic developments identified in the JCS at Innsworth and South Churchdown are integrated into the existing communities of Churchdown and Innsworth so that they do not function as separate places.
 - Ensuring that the strategic developments do not look and feel like ‘bolt-ons’ to the existing community by embracing the best examples of local design and layout.
 - Recognising that alternatives to the private car as a means of travel need to be provided for and their use encouraged. In particular, this relates to cycling and walking.
 - Ensure that the growth in population arising from new development does not put an unacceptable strain on existing community infrastructure; instead, new development should, where necessary, contribute to the expansion of community infrastructure to address needs.
 - Protect the significant biodiversity assets in the parishes, provide new green and blue infrastructure and provide new accessible green space for the growing population.
- 3.2 Many of these challenges have been brought into focus by the number of strategic developments that will come forward over the plan period. These strategic developments have been identified in the JCS and consist of:
- Land at Innsworth – to include approximately 1,300 residential units and 9.1 hectares of employment land
 - Land at South Churchdown – to include approximately 1,100 residential units and 17.4 hectares of employment land

Vision

- 3.3 The following overarching vision has been developed for Churchdown and Innsworth over the next 13 years:

‘In 2031, the parishes of Churchdown and Innsworth will be a prosperous area with excellent amenities for all ages and with a distinctive green character defined by its orchards and water features. It will value its community, its business and retail capabilities, and community events, providing people with a supportive and sustainable environment where people can live, work, rest and play. Pedestrians and cyclists will feel safe and traffic will be managed to minimise its impact. There will be a range of jobs and housing to support and maximise choices for residents, and excellent public services across education, healthcare and leisure for all residents. The green and blue environment will continue to be protected, cherished and enhanced as the area is recognised for the quality of its natural and built environment and its distinctiveness from Gloucester and Cheltenham.’



Parton Manor, Churchdown, c 1900, showing distinctive orchardscape and pondscape

Aims and Objectives

- 3.4 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:

Built Environment and Design
Aims: <i>'A mix of well-designed and well laid out development that is integrated into the settlement of Churchdown and Innsworth in a way that minimises the impact on the natural environment' and provides new habitat for wildlife.'</i>
<p>Objective: To ensure that Churchdown and Innsworth remain distinct settlements, separated physically and visually from one another and visually from Gloucester and Cheltenham through well designed and landscaped green infrastructure.</p> <p>Objective: To create comfortable residential environments, that improve community well-being and enhance the quality of the urban and rural environment they sit within.</p> <p>Objective: To integrate specific measures within the design and layout of the built environment to support wildlife and to provide opportunities for it to thrive.</p>
Community Infrastructure
Aims: <i>'A cohesive community consisting of well connected neighbourhoods having a range of leisure and social facilities for all ages, making best use of the area's qualities and the energy of the community, ensuring that children can choose to walk safely to school, shops and other community facilities and providing easily accessible, good quality green spaces as a priority, the green spaces to be equipped with high quality equipment and facilities which truly meet the needs of users, especially children and young people.'</i>
Objective: To maximise leisure opportunities for all ages by identifying what is needed and where.

Objective: To ensure easy access for pedestrians and cyclists to leisure facilities.

Objective: To identify mechanisms for delivering new and improved facilities in appropriate locations to meet demand and to ensure that delivery is carried out in accordance with stated needs.

Objective: To ensure high quality broadband connectivity for all residents, businesses and community uses.

Natural Environment

Aims: *'A high quality natural environment with a built character that protects and enhances the natural landscape and multi-benefit green and blue spaces which support people and wildlife'*

Objective: To protect and enhance key views.

Objective: To improve public access to neighbourhood level natural green and blue spaces, and the wider countryside.

Objective: To protect and enhance natural assets within the urban and rural environment, from the individual building scale up to the landscape scale, and to create new and imaginative green and blue habitats to foster greater ecological diversity and reflect the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the Severn Vale

Objective: To reinstate old ponds and create new ponds and pond complexes.

Objective: To provide a blue environment which maximises the opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement, flood alleviation, recreation and community use.

Objective: To protect and enhance locally distinctive habitats including orchards, particularly Perry Pear Orchards, and ponds for ecological value and natural water management.

Objective: To ensure adequate flood mitigation (fluvial and surface water) measures are in place.

Objective: To incorporate a wide range of orchard habitats from the individual fruit tree to fruity streets, pocket orchards, community orchards and working orchards for fruit production.

Objective: To protect veteran trees within new development sites by incorporating these landscape icons into existing and new public open spaces and green infrastructure, for both wildlife and amenity benefits.

Objective: To promote connectivity between habitats by creating wildlife corridors and protecting existing hedgerows for the enhancement of biodiversity.

Objective: To provide for character species of fauna and flora including, but not limited to: water voles, dragonflies, bats, yellowhammers, house sparrows, swifts, local varieties of orchard fruits.

Movement

Aims: *'A community which is accessible and safe for walking and cycling, has good public transport and a safe and efficiently functioning road network'*

Objective: To ensure the new development supports the vision by providing cycling and walking connectivity to the existing network and the existing settlement

Objective: To promote walking, cycling and public transport as first choice modes for all residents and to ensure that the infrastructure and services supporting these modes are in place.

Objective: Develop a circular footpath/cycle track in the Churchdown and Innsworth area to improve movement and for the general enjoyment and wellbeing of the community.

Objective: To ensure new development adequately mitigates highway issues at key junctions.

4 BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND DESIGN

- 4.1 Given the amount of growth and change that they will bring, ensuring that the strategic developments identified in the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) are integrated into the existing community is vital. Whilst Churchdown and Innsworth will change, it is important that the new residents are able to feel part of the local community and that the developments at Innsworth and South Churchdown do not function as separate places.
- 4.2 Churchdown and Innsworth each have a distinct character, shaped by their respective histories. Over recent years there has been a range of development, some which has been successful and well received, whilst some has been recognised as of poor quality or failing to integrate successfully into the existing community because of its design and lack of connectivity to the rest of the settlement and/or between developments built in phases. It will be important that development of the strategic allocations addresses this.



Padlocked fence, a jarring element, Apple Tree Close/Highgrove Estate, Churchdown



Lack of connectivity between Southfield and Westfield developments, Churchdown – the opportunity was lost here to make a path between the two developments

- 4.3 There are a number of important aspects that should shape development coming forward, including the strategic developments:
- Layout
 - Appearance
 - Landscaping and Environment
 - Connectivity between developments built in phases.
- 4.4 Policy SD10 of the JCS requires residential development to,

“...achieve the maximum density compatible with good design, the protection of heritage assets, local amenity, the character and quality of the local environment, and the safety and convenience of the local and strategic road network.”

Layout

- 4.5 Many new estates experience problems with parking, resulting in on-street parking which is a potential hazard for pedestrians attempting to cross the street, particularly at junctions. It also impedes traffic flow and detracts from the appearance of the area.



Examples of parking problems, Rookery Road, Innsworth:

In the left-hand picture, the verge has been badly damaged and stone laid by householder to try to make a parking surface, which spoils the grass verge and detracts from street scene.

In the right-hand picture, the grass verge has been removed and laid to stone, which is untidy. The car has been forced to park on the footpath due to the narrowness of the road, which could create a hazard on the bend.

- 4.6 This would be avoided if sufficient space were allocated to allow vehicles to park on land attached to the house, or allocated parking bays were provided in parking courts or courtyards. Alternatively, providing some on street parking perpendicular to the road would be an efficient way of providing parking spaces and would also widen the street vista.



Examples of good design for parking: Housing adjacent to Prince of Wales Sports Stadium, Cheltenham

- 4.7 Garages which are remote from the houses are to be avoided as they can become unkempt and detract from the street scene and become a site for fly tipping.



Swallow Crescent garages, Innsworth – fly tipping



Garages, Westover Court, Churchdown



Dilapidated garages at Swallow Crescent, Innsworth



Graffiti on garages at Swallow Crescent, Innsworth

4.8 In the images below, the Manor Farm development is an example of where parking has been provided perpendicular to the houses, which does widen the street scene, but the slabs are unattractive (as shown in the right hand photo of the Highgrove Estate, Churchdown), therefore care must be taken to provide proper hardstanding but with good landscaping.



Parking Bays to front of houses, with good landscaping, Manor Farm, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham



Parking bay framed by trees, Manor Farm, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham



A good example of a concealed, rear parking courtyard with brick feature, Highgrove Estate, Churchdown



Highgrove Estate, Churchdown (good space provision for cars but inadequate hardstanding materials)

4.9 In order to minimise the impact of on-street parking on pedestrian safety and to maximise the potential of what is traditionally 'inactive' space, development is encouraged is to integrate street parking with green infrastructure and water drainage systems. The 'Green Streets' concept is a stormwater management approach that incorporates vegetation and engineered systems (e.g., permeable pavements) to slow, filter, and cleanse stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g. streets). Green streets are designed to capture rainwater at its source, where rain falls. This differs from a traditional street which is designed to direct stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces into storm sewer systems (gutters, drains, pipes) that discharge directly into surface waters, rivers, and streams.



EXISTING



OPPORTUNITY



IMPLEMENTATION

Examples of permeable paving (credit: EPA: A Conceptual Guide to Effective Green Streets)

POLICY CHIN1: PARKING TO SUPPORT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. For new residential developments (Use Class C3), the following parking standards for the provision of off-road parking should be achieved where possible:

- 1-bed dwelling 1 off-road car parking space
- 2-bed dwelling 2 off-road car parking spaces
- 3-bed dwelling 2 off-road car parking spaces
- 4-bed dwelling 3 off-road car parking spaces
- 5+ bed dwelling 4 off-road car parking spaces

B. Parking provision should be well designed, contribute to a high-quality environment and not contribute to cluttered and unsafe streets. Parking should be provided on-plot in the first instance and where this is not possible, on specifically allocated parking bays. Parking spaces should be designed to take into account of the size of modern cars and use permeable surface materials.

C. For major developments (as defined in the NPPF), the provision of off plot visitor parking at a ratio of 0.25 space per dwelling is encouraged.

D. The design of on-street parking is encouraged to follow the 'Green Streets' concept to integrate street parking with green infrastructure and water drainage.

Appearance

- 4.10 Good design can make the difference between a high quality and successful development and a mediocre or unsuccessful one. Development at any scale and location should make a positive contribution to providing better places for people. The quality of the local environment can also play a crucial role in the economic success of an area.
- 4.11 The existing community identified various matters which they felt were important in ensuring that the strategic developments provide good quality development and feel part of Churchdown and Innsworth. In particular, there were concerns that many less successful examples of local developments and those elsewhere were overly dense and felt cramped. This relates not only to the proximity of the individual properties but also the way streets are laid out and how green and public open spaces are interspersed. Often, whilst the development is not considered to be dense based on the total number of dwellings per hectare, a poor layout makes them feel dense.
- 4.12 Two particular estates were identified by the existing community that were felt to represent examples of good practice in housing design and layout, which had resulted in the creation of a more positive community feel. These are:
- The Highgrove estate of approximately 700 dwellings, located off Highgrove Way, together with the adjacent Tudor Close of approximately 70 dwellings.
 - The estate located to the south of the Churchdown Community Centre.
- 4.13 Character Area Assessments have been prepared for each estate¹. Whilst development proposals may not necessarily be located near to these Character Areas, development is still expected to demonstrate how it

¹ These are contained in the *Churchdown and Innsworth Character Area – Good Practice – Assessment Guide*.

will incorporate the aspects of this character which will help to ensure that new development is in keeping with the best examples of development in Churchdown and Innsworth.

- 4.14 One particular issue of importance regarding residential development on greenfield sites is the importance, where possible, of retaining and using natural features to delineate properties.
- 4.15 In addition to these areas that show good character and should inform development across the Neighbourhood Area, engagement with the community identified further features which were considered to represent good design.
- 4.16 Residents prefer developments with modelled facades, for example projecting single/two storey bays and porches, together with a mix of materials – brick (including variegated brick), render and timber boarding, for example. Timber boarding is present in some old buildings (see Appendix A – old elm boarding) and use of this in new build would be a locally distinctive design feature.



Rustic farmhouse style with mix of materials The Green, Churchdown



Modelled façade on modern house, Parton Road, Churchdown

- 4.17 Residents did not like flat fronted houses, tall and narrow houses, the chalet style, ‘60’s boxes’ and terraced housing, and also did not like “modern style” community buildings with barrelled or flat roofs.
- 4.18 It is important to take into account the design and character of existing dwellings when developing adjacent land, to avoid incongruity.



Chalet style houses are visually unappealing against the background of a large rectangular block of flats, Rookery Road, Innsworth

- 4.19 Provision should be made for wheelie bins so that they can be placed in a concealed area as they are detrimental to the street scene.
- 4.20 These matters are further articulated in Appendix A.

POLICY CHIN2: LAYOUT AND APPEARANCE OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- A. Proposals for new development or the redevelopment of existing buildings should contribute towards the local distinctiveness of Churchdown and Innsworth. They should demonstrate high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and architecture that respects and responds positively to the best examples of the Neighbourhood Area’s character, as described in the Churchdown and Innsworth Character Area – Good Practice – Assessment Guide.**
- B. New development is also encouraged to integrate positively received local design features and avoid negatively received local design features, as shown in Appendix A.**
- C. New development should use existing natural features to define the boundaries between properties and on the edge of the site.**

Landscaping and Environment

- 4.21 An important part of any development is its setting. Green spaces, verges, trees and mixed hedgerows creating colour variation are part of the character of Churchdown and Innsworth.
- 4.22 Soft edges to footpaths and permeable surfacing could help to provide a more natural boundary between public areas and private space. In addition, the application of open front boundaries creates a good impression of space, where the back of the pavement meets a lawn, for example.



Open front boundaries are low maintenance, and present open, uncluttered appearance, Chaffinch Close, Innsworth



Picket fences give crowded appearance, Falcon Close, Innsworth

- 4.23 Rear and side boundaries adjacent to public space should be formed from robust materials such as brick, rather than timber fencing which is both easily damaged and can look weather worn within a short space of time.
- 4.24 As well as the protection of existing orchards, the creation of new orchards is seen by the community as an important way to retain arguably the most iconic historical biodiversity asset within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Within this context the creation of new orchards is seen as an important part of the strategic scale of growth that is planned for the area.

- 4.25 The creation of new orchards is supported by the Joint Core Strategy (Policy SD9).
- 4.26 The communities of Churchdown and Innsworth regard the proposed strategic allocation sites as opportunities to create new community orchards. Historically, orchards have been located throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area, for example at Parton Farm, Parton Manor, Parton Court, Home Farm, Brockworth Road and Innsworth Lane.



Newly planted espalier fruit trees at award winning Applewood development, Cashes Green, Stroud



Use of fruit cordons/espaliers to form a boundary (Days Cottage)



Espalier design features: Credit Sue Gibson

- 4.27 Local distinctiveness could be enhanced by using orchard fruit trees throughout larger scale development. Use of these trees could be integrated into the landscape design, including boundary treatments. Careful selection of suitable species and varieties is important and advice should be sought from Gloucestershire Orchard Trust. The Applewood development at Cashes Green, Stroud serves as an exemplar for this approach.
- 4.28 These matters are further articulated in Appendix B.

POLICY CHIN3: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- A. New residential development proposals should demonstrate how they retain and, where possible enhance, the environmental setting of Churchdown and Innsworth. Proposals should include a range of green features appropriate to the size and scale of the development - in particular, the provision of green spaces, verges, trees and hedgerows and orchard planting such as fruity streets, espaliers, forage trails, pocket orchards and community orchards.**
- B. Where possible Green corridor connections should be made between existing and new orchards and to other green infrastructure.**
- C. Boundary treatments are particularly important to the setting of development. Residential proposals should include details of boundary treatments and other means of enclosure and demonstrate how the boundaries between properties and public space will enhance the environmental setting. Boundary treatments must be appropriate to ensure they are long lasting**
- D. The use of soft edges to footpaths and permeable surfacing will be strongly supported.**

5 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.1 Over time, the growth in infrastructure has not kept pace with the growth in population of Churchdown and Innsworth. This particularly applies to community infrastructure. The Parish Councils have been successful at delivering new community infrastructure that has been needed, the most striking example of which is Churchdown Park. This has won a number of awards for its large play area, skatepark and its pond scheme, as documented in Section 2.
- 5.2 Additionally, the local community have been very successful in providing community centres with meeting rooms and large halls for social events/sporting use, ie, Churchdown Community Centre, Innsworth Community Hall and GL3 Community Hub (the latter having been transferred to charitable ownership from the County Council on a community asset transfer).
- 5.3 However, the strategic scale of growth planned for the area means that a considerable amount of new infrastructure also needs to be provided. This includes in particular sports facilities, public green spaces and play facilities.

Sports facilities

- 5.4 Engagement with local sports clubs as part of the Neighbourhood Plan has shown that there is a need for more football pitches for youth football and additional cricket pitches for adult and youth cricket.
- 5.5 The existing outdoor sports pitches in the Neighbourhood Plan area are particularly well used, especially for cricket. Churchdown Cricket Club has a shortage of space at the John Daniels Playing Field to be able to accommodate the players that it has. The pitch has been given a poor rating by the local league. The Club reports that many local cricketers have no choice but to play at clubs outside the local area. Additionally, the Pavilion does not have a bar or social facilities, which is a major drawback for the Club which seeks to develop and improve its facilities. There is no room to expand the Pavilion at the John Daniels Playing Field and the car parking is also very limited there. A new facility with bar and function room is needed. An ideal location for this would be on the strategic allocation at Innsworth as this would bring together the two parishes and serve as a focal point in the community of Innsworth, which does not have a pub. An alternative may be to enlarge John Daniels Playing Field which is adjacent to the South Churchdown strategic allocation.



Pavilion, John Daniels Playing Field

- 5.6 Such a facility could be shared with the local football clubs – Churchdown Panthers (youth) and Churchdown Parish FC (adults) – representing a year-round facility. In particular, Churchdown Panthers is a very successful youth football club and is growing. It has a shortage of pitches to meet the increasing

demand for youth football. Increasingly the club is finding it difficult to manage fixtures for a range of youth ages (which require different sized pitches as children get older).

- 5.7 The strategic developments represent one possible opportunity to address this need, whilst recognising that such provision must address the needs arising from growth. In this regard it may be more appropriate, where possible, to integrate new facilities alongside existing provision. The JCS Infrastructure Delivery Plan² identified a need for between 6 and 8 playing pitches³ (for football, rugby, hockey and cricket) over the plan period to 2031 to address the additional needs.

POLICY CHIN4: PROVISION OF LEISURE FACILITIES

- A. Proposals to provide new leisure facilities to serve the community of Churchdown and Innsworth will be strongly supported. These proposals must be of a scale commensurate with the site and its surroundings, particularly in terms of the built form, traffic generation and parking.**
- B. In particular, the provision of the following will be strongly supported:**
- i. new football pitches to appropriate playing standards; and**
 - ii. improvements to existing cricket pitches, new cricket pitches and provision of supporting facilities, including changing rooms, a pavilion, bar and function room.**
- C. The location of the new facilities must be generally accessible by foot/bicycle and within or adjacent to the existing built up area of Churchdown and Innsworth.**
- D. Such provision as part of the strategic allocations will be strongly supported.**

Play facilities

- 5.8 The needs of children and young people were very clearly expressed in the community engagement. They stated a strong preference for large parks with exciting and challenging play equipment, eg, large multi-play units, large climbing frames and zip wires, along with space to run around. The children wanted variety, to be able to use their imagination and pieces of equipment large enough to use with many friends at the same time. The overall favourite park was Churchdown Park (which is large, and has many different areas/features, including a play area, a pocket wood – “the forest” - a MUGA, a skatepark, dirt jumps, a football field and ponds area/nature areas). Therefore small play areas with very limited range of play equipment suitable only for very young children should be avoided as children clearly get bored with them very quickly and they are inadequate for their needs. Suggestions for facilities at a large park included a MUGA, football pitches, running track, and tennis courts.
- 5.9 Children and young people further expressed an interest in nature, wildlife and animals, and an interest in water play. They stated a liking for the ponds at Churchdown Park and a desire for an aquarium, beaches, ponds and a lake. This could be provided by having a large pond/small lake as part of any new park provision. The Innsworth and Twigworth strategic allocation (A1) would be an ideal location for such provision.

² Arup (2014) *JCS Infrastructure Delivery Plan*, for Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council & Tewkesbury Borough Council

³ Table 40 of JCS Infrastructure Delivery Plan report

- 5.10 Churchdown is well provided for in terms of other play areas and parks: Chapel Hay Recreation Ground at the “top” end of the village, St John’s Play Area on the St John’s estate in mid Churchdown, John Daniels Playing Field which has a play area, Zinnia Close Play Area on the Coriander Drive estate and Tudor Mead Park (including a play area and gym equipment) on the Highgrove estate. Churchdown Parish Council has done an excellent job of providing and maintaining these areas, Additionally, there is a play area and mini football field at Oakhurst Close in mid Churchdown close to the A40 which has been transferred to the ownership of Churchdown Parish Council (from the Borough Council).
- 5.11 However it is clear that Churchdown Park is the favourite, due to the variety and range of its facilities.
- 5.12 Innsworth has limited play space, so the new development is an excellent opportunity to provide new play space and to create a local park which can be a focal point for recreation in the same way that Churchdown Park is for Churchdown.



Rookery Road Play Area, Innsworth Road

- 5.13 The play equipment at Rookery Road in Innsworth comprises basketball net and hardstanding, small MUGA, baby swings, multiplay unit, nest swing, slide, balancing beam and small climbing frame. Equipment for under 4 year olds was added in 2018, consisting of a pirate ship and other play items.
- 5.14 The equipment is in fair condition and is well used but the play area is small (approximately 1,600m²) and cramped and there is no room for informal games. It is a play area only, rather than being a proper park for leisure and recreation such as walking. Similarly, there is a play area at Luke Lane with multiplay units, swings and mini football field (a total of approximately 2,000m²) but again there is no area for general recreation and leisure.



Play Area and mini football pitch, Luke Lane

- 5.15 Another play area is located at Shamrock Close. This is in poor condition and is not well located, being to the rear of houses, not well overlooked and lacking a sense of security and safety. Churchdown Parish Council has taken over this play area from Tewkesbury Borough Council and has begun a programme of improvement.

- 5.16 Dog walking is tolerated on the MOD sports field at Roberts Road, but this does not fulfil the need for a community park for Innsworth which provides a range of leisure opportunities, is owned and managed by the community and serves as a focal point within the settlement.
- 5.17 The strategic developments represent one possible opportunity to address this need, whilst recognising that such provision must address the needs arising from growth. In this regard it may be more appropriate, where possible, to integrate new facilities alongside existing provision. The JCS Infrastructure Delivery Plan⁴ identified a need for between 1.3ha and 1.6ha⁵ of play space over the plan period to 2031 to address the additional needs.
- 5.18 Evidence from the success of the Churchdown Park play facilities is that this is better provided with a smaller number of larger play areas, e.g. Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) which serve all needs rather than small Local Areas for Play (LAPs) that only serve a limited age range.
- 5.19 It is considered that the provision of a NEAP at each of the strategic allocations would be the best way of addressing play needs. The best way of addressing this at the strategic allocation at South Churchdown would be to extend the existing play areas at John Daniels Playing Field and Oakhurst Close to provide a wider range of larger, more exciting play equipment to complement the smaller, more local play equipment which is there at present.
- 5.20 There is a stated desire from young people of Innsworth for a place to ride their bikes, but not necessarily a BMX track. Any such provision would be most appropriately provided as part of the strategic allocation at Innsworth as there is no other available space elsewhere in Innsworth and this would serve to improve provision for young people in the area. Further consultation should be done with children and young people to define the requirement.
- 5.21 The community engagement throughout the neighbourhood area demonstrated the popularity of the skatepark at Churchdown Park and requests were made for further provision, particularly for riding of scooters. It is suggested that any new provision for skating/skateboarding should not be a replication of the facility of Churchdown Park, but should be complementary to it, such as a street-skating area.

POLICY CHIN5: PROVISION OF PLAY FACILITIES

- A. Proposals to provide additional play facilities to serve the community of Churchdown and Innsworth will be strongly supported.**
- B. To support the play needs of the new population, provision of Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) is encouraged. This could be new provision or an extension to existing play provision at John Daniels Playing Field and Oakhurst Close. Provision will be expected to demonstrate that it provides a wide range of play equipment which addresses the needs of children of all ages.**
- C. To support the needs of older children, the provision of infrastructure to support wheeled sports (such as BMX track/dirt jumps and a scooter/skate park) is encouraged. Such provision should ideally be located close to any existing or new NEAP provision identified in CHIN5(B).**
- D. The provision of a large pond or small lake for the enjoyment of the community on any of the strategic allocations will be supported.**

⁴ Arup (2014) *JCS Infrastructure Delivery Plan*, for Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council & Tewkesbury Borough Council

⁵ Table 45 of JCS Infrastructure Delivery Plan report

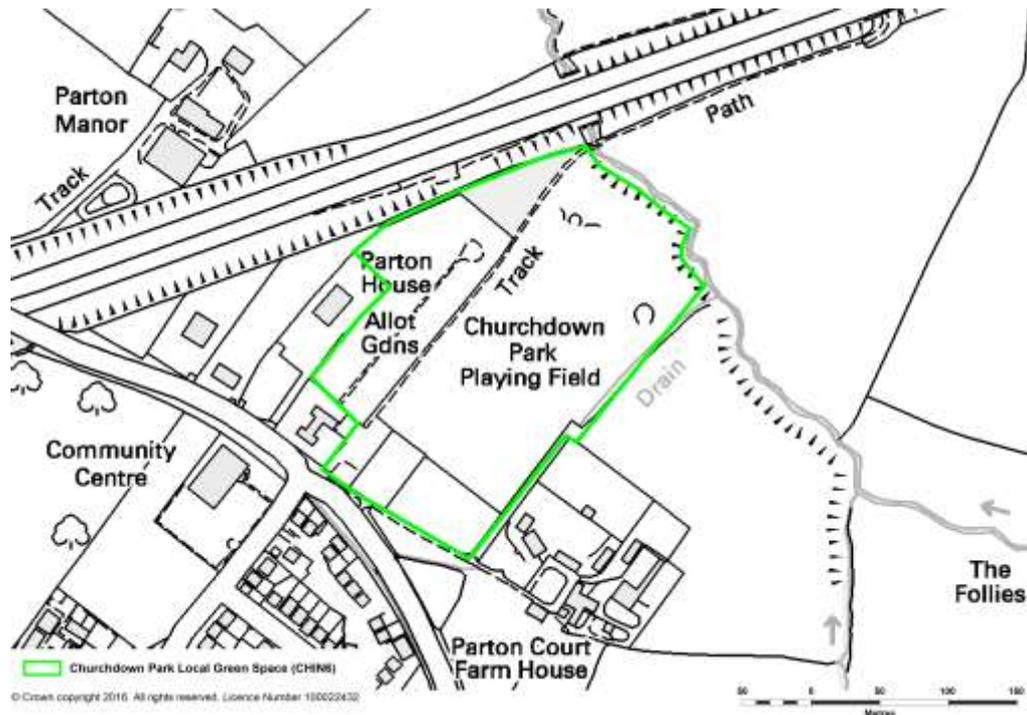
Local Green Spaces

- 5.22 Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to the local community. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 100 of the NPPF says that Local Green Spaces should only be designated where the green space is:
- *"in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
 - *demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
 - *local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."*
- 5.23 Churchdown Park is considered to meet these criteria. The Park is located in mid Churchdown close to areas of housing and the Community Centre and the new Medical Centre and is easily accessible from the old village and Cheltenham Road East end, plus from Pirton Lane via Meads Alley.
- 5.24 It is demonstrably special due to the variety and quality of facilities – the MUGA, state of the art skatepark, large play area, pocket wood, football pitches with changing facilities, dirt jumps, ponds area, nature reserve, allotments, tree plantations and community orchard. Additionally, it has won a number of awards as summarised in Section 2.



- 5.25 The Park is local in character and is used mainly by residents, though the skatepark attracts users from afar. It is not extensive, being just over 3.5 hectares.

Figure 5.1: Map showing extent of Churchdown Park



- 5.26 Only limited development on these designations will be permitted in order to enhance their function. An example could include improvements to changing room facilities at sports pitches or enhancement of a play area. In making a judgement on what constitutes 'limited' development, the expectation is that the amount of built development should only take up a small minority of the land area and that it should be ancillary to the function of the local green space in question.

POLICY CHING6: PROTECTION OF CHURCHDOWN PARK LOCAL GREEN SPACE

Churchdown Park, as shown on the Policies Map, is designated as a Local Green Space. Proposals for built development on Churchdown Park will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

Community facilities

Burial space

- 5.27 There is an existing burial ground on Chosen (Churchdown) Hill which is available for residents of both Churchdown and Innsworth, but which has limited space and it is estimated that it will be full in terms of full interments in about 15 years. There are local churches: one has an old churchyard with limited space and only serves part of Churchdown (and not Innsworth); the other only has a memorial garden and does not have an area for full interments. The growing population means that new burial space is vital and its provision as part of any of the strategic allocations will be strongly supported.

Allotments

- 5.28 Churchdown has two allotment sites with a total of 130 allotments (not all full size) and has a waiting list of 5 people as of April 2018. This is despite all allotment spaces that become available being halved in size in order to cope with demand. In turn this has resulted in allotment holders stating that the allotments are

not large enough. Again, the growing population means there will be additional need for allotments and their provision as part of each of the strategic allocations is required.

POLICY CHIN7: PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Provision of the following community facilities will be strongly supported:

- Burial space.
- Allotments and community growing spaces.

All strategic allocations will be expected to make provision for allotments.

Communications

- 5.29 The modern economy is changing and increasingly needs good communications infrastructure as a basic requirement. Increasing numbers of people are working from home, with many being self-employed. Commonly this will be in service activities that simply require access to a computer and a broadband connection.
- 5.30 The area is already served by superfast broadband, provided by Virgin Media. However, many properties are not yet able to receive it and additional funding is needed to address this. Many in the community that are not yet connected to superfast broadband have reported poor broadband speeds. This a fundamental constraint to the continuing expansion of self-employed activity for those working from home or from a small office.
- 5.31 Whilst BT has an obligation to provide a landline to every household in the UK and developers are expected to want to facilitate high speed broadband provision otherwise their developments will be substantially less marketable, there have been instances where developers have not contacted Next Generation Access (NGA) Network providers early enough in the process for fibre and ducting to be laid, or they have a national agreement with a cable provider that is not active in the area, leaving new housing developments with little or no connections.
- 5.32 The Fastershire project was established as a partnership between Gloucestershire County Council and Herefordshire Council to overcome the market's failure to provide high speed broadband in hard to reach areas of both counties. It uses funding from a range of local, central and European government funding sources to match private sector funds and deliver the infrastructure required to increase the availability of high speed broadband. The project has developed a strategy to increase the availability of fast broadband across the two counties. Whilst this project will help to speed up provision, it is important that developers work with the appropriate providers to ensure superfast broadband connections are provided to all types of new development.
- 5.33 'Connectivity Statements' are to be encouraged when planning applications are submitted for new developments, including but not limited to commercial, retail and residential premises. Connectivity Statements can address such matters as:
- the intended land use and the anticipated connectivity requirements of the development;
 - known nearby data networks and their anticipated speed;
 - realistic assessments of connection potential or contribution to any such networks.
- 5.34 Wherever possible and desirable, additional ducting should be provided that also contributes to a local access network for the whole community. All ducting installations should comply with the current relevant best practice
- 5.35 Policy CHIN8 seeks to ensure that all new housing, community and commercial development in the neighbourhood area is connected to superfast broadband. This supports the recognition in JCS Policy INF6 that broadband is a key part of the infrastructure network which is required to support new development.

POLICY CHIN8: BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

- A. All new residential, commercial and community properties within the Neighbourhood Plan area should be served by a superfast broadband (fibre optic) connection. This should be installed on an open-access basis with the realistic future-proof upgrade capability.
- B. The only exception will be where it can be demonstrated, through consultation with NGA Network providers, that this would not be either possible, practical or economically viable. In such circumstances sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date on an open access basis.
- C. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how matters relating to broadband connectivity for new development – particularly residential, commercial and community properties – will be addressed through the use of Connectivity Statements.

6 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 6.1 Residents of Churchdown and Innsworth value its rural, village feel, and appreciate access to the surrounding countryside which is characteristic of this area of the Severn Vale. The main concern of the community is for the protection and enhancement of existing green and blue spaces, including accessible natural green spaces important for active lifestyles and quality of life, and terrestrial and water-based habitats which are important for Churchdown and Innsworth's distinctive flora and fauna. Connectivity between sites of ecological value, using green corridors, enhances the multi-benefits for wildlife and enhances public access through the provision of active travel routes, which in turn enhances the benefits for human health and wellbeing.
- 6.2 Much of the importance of the natural environment to local residents stems from the fact that the area has a particularly rich network of habitats. It is less than a kilometre away from the Severn Vale National Character Area and shares some of its characteristics. The Severn Vale is characterised by a flat pastoral landscape of the Severn floodplain. It holds a significant proportion of the county's coastal and floodplain grazing marsh and wet grassland, and is a major wintering ground for important populations of swans, geese, ducks and wading birds. Old orchards also form a strong part of the traditional landscape character of the area.
- 6.3 The Severn Vale National Character Area is made up of landscape-scale blocks of land called Strategic Nature Areas (SNAs). The two SNA areas which are located less than a kilometre away from the area of the Neighbourhood Plan are Twigworth SNA and Maisemore SNA. Both of these SNAs have identified targets, opportunities and constraints. The SNA targets for both areas include the management, restoration and creation of the following priority habitats: lowland meadows, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, traditional orchards, ponds (particularly pond complexes), wet woodland, hedgerows, arable field margins, and reedbeds.



Frogfurlong Hedge, Innsworth. Credit: Ann Smith



Innsworth Lane veteran pear trees. Credit: Ann Smith

- 6.4 Innsworth Meadow Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located within the Maisemore SNA and is protected and designated.
- 6.5 Churchdown (Chosen) Hill, a Key Wildlife Site, is a valued green infrastructure asset for the residents of Churchdown and Innsworth, and people enjoy having views to the Hill from where they live. Churchdown Hill Meadows is also a Key Wildlife Site and is a valuable natural resource for the area.



View of Chosen (Churchdown) Hill. Credit: Ann Smith



Chosen (Churchdown) Hill bluebell woodland. Credit: GWT

6.6 Mature trees, hedges, ponds, orchards, meadows in open spaces and gardens are particularly important. The existing ponds in Churchdown Park are very popular and further provision is encouraged, accompanied by wildflowers and trees. Young people enjoy studying the pond animals and other wildlife, so education and recreation is an important benefit of this.



Veteran Corsican pines, Cheltenham Road East, a distinctive landscape feature. Credit: Ann Smith



Churchdown Park ponds Credit: Gemma Jerome



Yellow Loose Strife June 2013. Credit: Colin Twissell



Ragged Robin June 2013. Credit: Colin Twissell

6.7 One of the defining features of Churchdown and Innsworth is its orchards. The existing and historic remnant orchards and veteran fruit trees are part of Churchdown's landscape character (eg, Home Farm historic perry orchard, Parton Farms, Dry Meadow Lane with its old pear trees in hedgerows, Elmbridge Court). The community consider it vital that they are protected and opportunities to create more are taken. The Churchdown Tree Trail is appreciated by residents and fruit forage trails could be added for people and wildlife.



Churchdown Community Orchard. Credit: Gloucestershire Orchard Trust



Crushing apples at junior school to make juice. Credit: Gloucestershire Orchard Trust



Heritage Cooking Apple which is unique to Churchdown (Charles Martell's Glos Apple Pomona). Credit: Alan Watson



Pear trees on Roberts Road, Innsworth. Credit: Ann Smith

- 6.8 For maps showing the location of traditional and relic orchards and individual veteran fruit trees, see Appendix C.
- 6.9 With much development planned for the area, there is a danger that the rich network of habitats will be under threat. Well planned development is capable of retaining and enhancing these networks, as recognised by the NPPF. However, there are many issues, both at a strategic and 'local' practical scale that need addressing.

Design for wildlife

- 6.10 At the strategic scale, the importance of retaining habitats and designing development to incorporate and link up to existing wildlife corridors is paramount to the viability of protected species.
- 6.11 At the local scale, the design of individual buildings and of neighbourhood scale green and open spaces, including private gardens, will help to ensure that many of the species that are in Churchdown and Innsworth can not only survive but thrive. This is crucially in line with the national planning guidance for achieving net biodiversity gain through all new development. Examples include:

- Designing houses and neighbourhood scale green and blue features so that there is space for wildlife. For example, at the individual building scale, incorporating integral bird and bat boxes under the eaves of the new houses, or creating artificial nests sited in places away from windows and doors, can create vital new roosting sites to support populations of birds and bats.



Integral bird and bat boxes and hedgehog friendly fencing

- Boundaries between dwellings can be made hedgehog friendly by including pre-cut holes for hedgehogs to more effectively move across neighbourhoods to forage.
- New planting schemes can support bees and other pollinators by including nectar-rich plants. Tenants in new housing developments can be encouraged to adopt a wildlife-friendly approach to gardening through inclusion of educational literature in 'home-information' packs.
- Veteran trees should also be incorporated into landscaping in new developments and protected from damage by fencing or provision of circular hedging. This can make a very attractive feature and focal point for a public open space. Even dead trees can be retained safely in this way.



Good examples of veteran tree retention and protection, making a striking focal point in public open space, Coopers Edge, Brockworth

- 6.12 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) can be designed and managed to include soft, green landscaping features and wetland habitats, providing opportunities to enjoy wildlife close to where people live. Information about the multi-benefits of SuDS can be included in ‘home information’ packs in new development, or in on-site interpretation in open and green spaces, to encourage understanding and engage community members in supporting its long-term management.

POLICY CHIN9: PROVISION FOR WILDLIFE IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals (particularly residential developments), that incorporate into their design features which encourage local wildlife to thrive will be strongly supported.

Orchards, hedgerows and veteran trees

- 6.13 Traditional orchards are a priority habitat in the Severn Vale. In particular, perry orchards have historic significance for the parishes of Churchdown and Innsworth. There are a number of historical orchards (1845-1945) and existing orchards within the parish boundaries – these are shown in Appendix C.
- 6.14 There is a traditional orchard at Elmbridge Court Farm which is of particular concern as it could be surrounded by new employment development and become isolated. It is important to provide sufficient green infrastructure around it, and corridors to connect it to other green areas.
- 6.15 The Churchdown Community Orchard is considered to be a great success. This orchard is managed and maintained by community volunteers and the proposed orchards would be managed on the same basis, creating opportunities for environmental education.



Churchdown Community Orchard. Credit: Gemma Jerome

- 6.16 Apart from orchards, the considerable number of hedgerows and veteran trees are an important feature of the landscape and should be retained as part of development.

POLICY CHIN10: ORCHARDS, HEDGEROWS AND VETERAN TREES

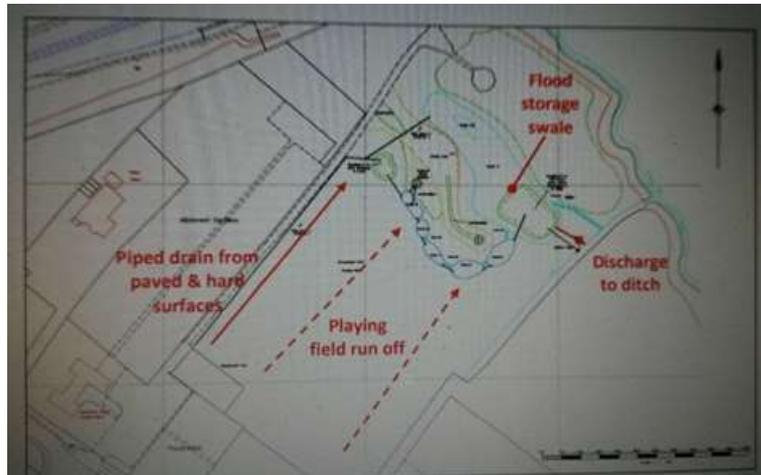
Development should ensure that it does not have a significant detrimental impact on existing orchards, including those identified in Appendix C. In particular, development proposals will be expected, where possible, to retain hedgerows and veteran trees, including veteran perry pear trees. This is particularly important where the loss of any such features would result in harm to or loss of irreplaceable habitats.

Water courses and flooding

- 6.17 The landscape character of the Neighbourhood Plan area, in close proximity to the Severn floodplain, indicates the importance of water in maintaining wetland, marsh and wet woodland habitat. Strategic management of the water courses running through the area, in particular Hatherley Brook and Norman's Brook, is key to ensuring these blue corridors continue to provide vital habitats for wildlife and enhance the overall quality of the environment by minimising run-off from agricultural land and sensitively designing drainage and water catchment in all new developments to enhance water quality and prioritise attenuation of water on-site.
- 6.18 The main water courses running through the Neighbourhood Plan area are shown in Appendix D.
- 6.19 There have been sightings of water voles at Norman's Brook, and as a European Protected Species, managing the water courses throughout the parishes for the enhancement of habitat for water voles would have benefits to many other species, and improve the environmental quality more generally for the enjoyment of residents.
- 6.20 Where possible, water courses and wetland habitats, ponds and pond complexes should be created, preserved and improved. When appropriate, access to water courses for wildlife educational purposes is encouraged; however, the priority for management of blue features throughout the Parish area is for the provision of high quality habitat to support wildlife
- 6.21 SuDS included in all new developments should include green, soft landscaping features and enhance the multi-benefits of attenuation of water on-site, rather than encouraging water to be channelled off site and into existing water courses, thus negatively impacting on their quality. This approach will require high

quality design of green and blue features, and long-term management of these features will be included in development proposals to ensure sustainability.

- 6.22 The ponds at Churchdown Park are an excellent example of a well designed scheme which provides for flood alleviation, purification of water by use of reedbeds, creation of habitat and a focal point for recreation. This very successful scheme could be used as an exemplar for development of more ponds and pond complexes in the Neighbourhood Plan area.



Purpose of ponds scheme. Credit: Water 21

- 6.23 Although not located within the Neighbourhood Area, the Horsbere Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme which is at the foot of Chosen (Churchdown) Hill on the Barnwood side serves as an excellent example of a flood alleviation scheme which has been well designed and is of great benefit to wildlife including rare species of birds. It is jointly managed by the Environment Agency and the local authority (in this case Gloucester City Council). The latter takes responsibility for managing part of the site as a nature reserve to benefit the local community and wildlife around the area). Local community groups also play a valuable role in enhancement and management of the site. A similar scheme and management approach could be implemented at A1 in Innsworth and the Parish Council will work with the appropriate bodies to deliver such a scheme.



Horsbere Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme

- 6.24 Where water courses flow through development sites, on-site design of SuDS and other natural water management features could enhance opportunities for strategic SuDS at the landscape scale. For example,

stream features within a development should be maintained and enhanced, including meanders, backwaters, pools and riffles, braiding and the presence of woody debris where not a flood risk. This is in line with 'rural SuDS' approaches being pioneered in Stroud District, Gloucestershire.



*Balancing 'pond', Highgrove Estate, Churchdown –
A pleasant spot but a missed opportunity to have a pond as focal point*

POLICY CHIN11: BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

- A. Existing water courses should be enhanced through new development, by sensitively managing drainage and providing attenuation features on-site, such as SuDS, to minimise new volumes into the water course, particularly from agricultural land.
- B. New developments should adopt a blue infrastructure approach to the design of water and flood management, enhancing the provision of wetland habitat for wildlife and thus opportunities for the enjoyment of wildlife close to where people live. New developments should include an imaginative and varied range of water features, including swales with standing water all year round, ponds and pond complexes of varying sizes and designs, reed beds/rushes/grasses and enhancement for character species such as water voles and dragonflies.
- C. Brooks should be protected and enhanced for the benefit of wildlife.

6.25 Churchdown and Innsworth suffered greatly in the large-scale flooding event of 2007 in Gloucestershire and to a lesser extent in 2008, 2009 and 2014.



*Brookfield Road at junction with
Brookfield Lane, 2007*



*Brookfield Lane,
2007*

Credit (both photos): Leo Fletcher



Field next to M5 motorway, off Brookfield Road,
containing a public right of way, 2007



Down Hatherley Bridge, Frogfurlong Lane,
January 2008

Credit (both photos): Bill Whelan

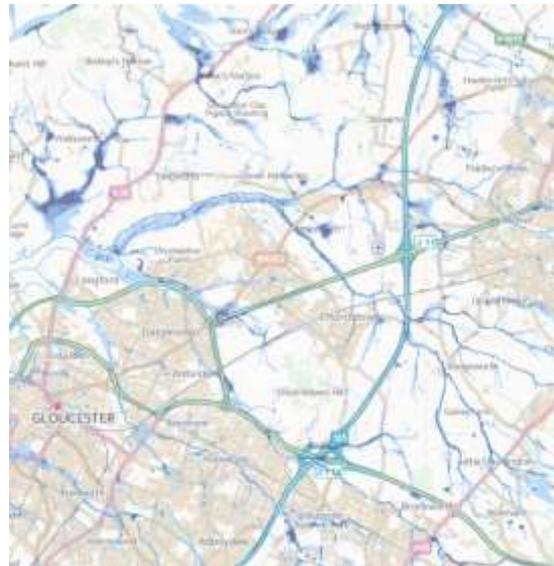
- 6.26 The Neighbourhood Plan Area does contain areas of identified fluvial and surface water flooding, as shown in Figures 6.1 and 6.2. These mainly follow the route of the Horsbere Brook, Norman's Brook and Hatherley Brook. Within the existing community there are particular flooding problems associated with the John Daniels Playing Field and Pirton Fields. Such problems frequently interrupt community activities, with playing pitches regularly flooded.

Figure 6.1: Fluvial flood zones



Source: Environment Agency

Figure 6.2: Surface water flood zones



Source: Environment Agency

- 6.27 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that flooding and surface water runoff are properly managed so as to minimise risk of serious flooding events which threaten both people and property.



House in Rookery Road, vicinity of Nightingale Croft, July 2007, sandbagged



Driveway to house in Rookery Road and car park for Nightingale Croft in Innsworth flooded, 2007

- 6.28 Policy INF2 of the JCS on flood risk management requires new development to incorporate suitable Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), where appropriate, to manage surface water drainage. These mitigation measures are expected to be fully funded over the lifetime of the development by developers, including provision for ongoing maintenance.
- 6.29 It is important that these principles are adopted by development so that it can properly manage flood risk and, where possible, contribute to a reduction in existing flood risk. A common example of a measure which provides a short-term solution but is often seen to have detrimental impacts over the long term is culverting of open watercourses. Culverts often become blocked and reduce the effectiveness of the watercourse in diverting water during significant rainfall events (such as in 2007, 2009 and 2014).



Innsworth viewed from the west with A38 in the foreground, 16th February 2014 (credit: Innsworth Parish Council)

- 6.30 Much work has been done since that time by the relevant authorities and agencies with respect to flood alleviation, not least the long overdue maintenance work on local ditches and watercourses.



*Flooding in Churchdown on the Golden Valley A40 by-pass between Gloucester and Cheltenham,
20th July 2007 (credit: Gloucester Citizen)*

- 6.31 Additionally, a revised and updated Tewkesbury Flood and Water Management Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in 2018.

POLICY CHIN12: FLOOD MITIGATION

- A.** Due to the levels of flood risk (fluvial and surface water) in Churchdown and Innsworth, development proposals are expected to demonstrate that they will not worsen the existing risks to the drainage network through the use of effective modern solutions. For surface water drainage, this means demonstrating that all reasonable and sustainable options have been considered in accordance with the surface water hierarchy.
- B.** New development which is required to deliver flood mitigation measures and an accompanying ongoing management plan must ensure that this management plan includes the following:
- i. Details of how the scheme will be professionally serviced in perpetuity.
 - ii. What resources will be required and how these will be provided to maintain good level of flood defence, water storage, enhancements to the landscape and wildlife habitat, as appropriate (and specifically meeting the requirements of Policy CHIN11).
 - iii. Opportunities for safe access, leisure and participation by local people to care for and enhance the scheme (and specifically meeting the requirements of Policy CHIN11).
- C.** Existing open watercourses should not be culverted except where essential to provide access. Where feasible, opportunities to open up culverted watercourses should be sought to reduce the associated flood risk and danger of collapse whilst taking advantage of opportunities to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure, as required by Policy CHIN11.

- 6.32 The following community actions have been identified as important. These will be taken forward by the Parish Councils:
- Promote flood prevention through commenting on and challenging proposed developments which could increase flood risk.
 - Ensure publicly funded car parks and areas of hard standing incorporate permeable surfaces.
 - Support community initiatives both within the Neighbourhood Area and in the locality to effectively support water management, eg, by retrofitting ponds and encouraging the use of permeable materials.
 - Develop an appropriate monitoring and maintenance programme in respect of existing culverts within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, including lobbying of relevant authorities to ensure clearance of debris and vegetation as and when required.
- 6.33 The Parish Councils also wish to state their commitment to working with the relevant authorities and agencies to achieve:
- reporting of accurate, detailed and up to date information on flooding events, whether caused by river flooding or surface water flooding;
 - provision of specific measures to mitigate risk of flooding in respect of both new and existing development, using public funds and developer contributions;
 - effective maintenance of flood alleviation measures/SUDs.

Important views

- 6.34 The high quality environment that is part of Churchdown and Innsworth is best appreciated from Churchdown (Chosen) Hill. The community was very clear as part of the engagement on the Neighbourhood Plan, that the view to and from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill was greatly valued. This is not to say that there are no other views of importance to the community, but that Chosen (Churchdown) Hill provides one of the best views and backdrops to Churchdown and also to parts of Innsworth.
- 6.35 As is noted on p25 of the Joint Core Strategy Landscape Characterisation Assessment and Sensitivity Analysis 2013⁶, 'Chosen Hill is a prominent visual landmark of ecological, historic and recreational importance. Residential development has not significantly encroached to the foot of the hill, with only Churchdown abutting the area.' It goes on to say that 'Chosen Hill is a distinct landscape feature visible from all surrounding landscape. *Views from the hill can be locally interrupted by woodland, the covered reservoirs and the church but are generally panoramic and extensive.*'

⁶ Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council (2013) *Joint Core Strategy Landscape Characterisation Assessment and Sensitivity Analysis*



View of Chosen (Churchdown) Hill from Pirton Lane, Churchdown (Credit: Ann Smith)



View from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill towards Brockworth (Credit: Ann Smith)



View of Chosen (Churchdown) Hill and St Bartholomew's Church from Brockworth Road, Churchdown (Credit: Ruth Warne)

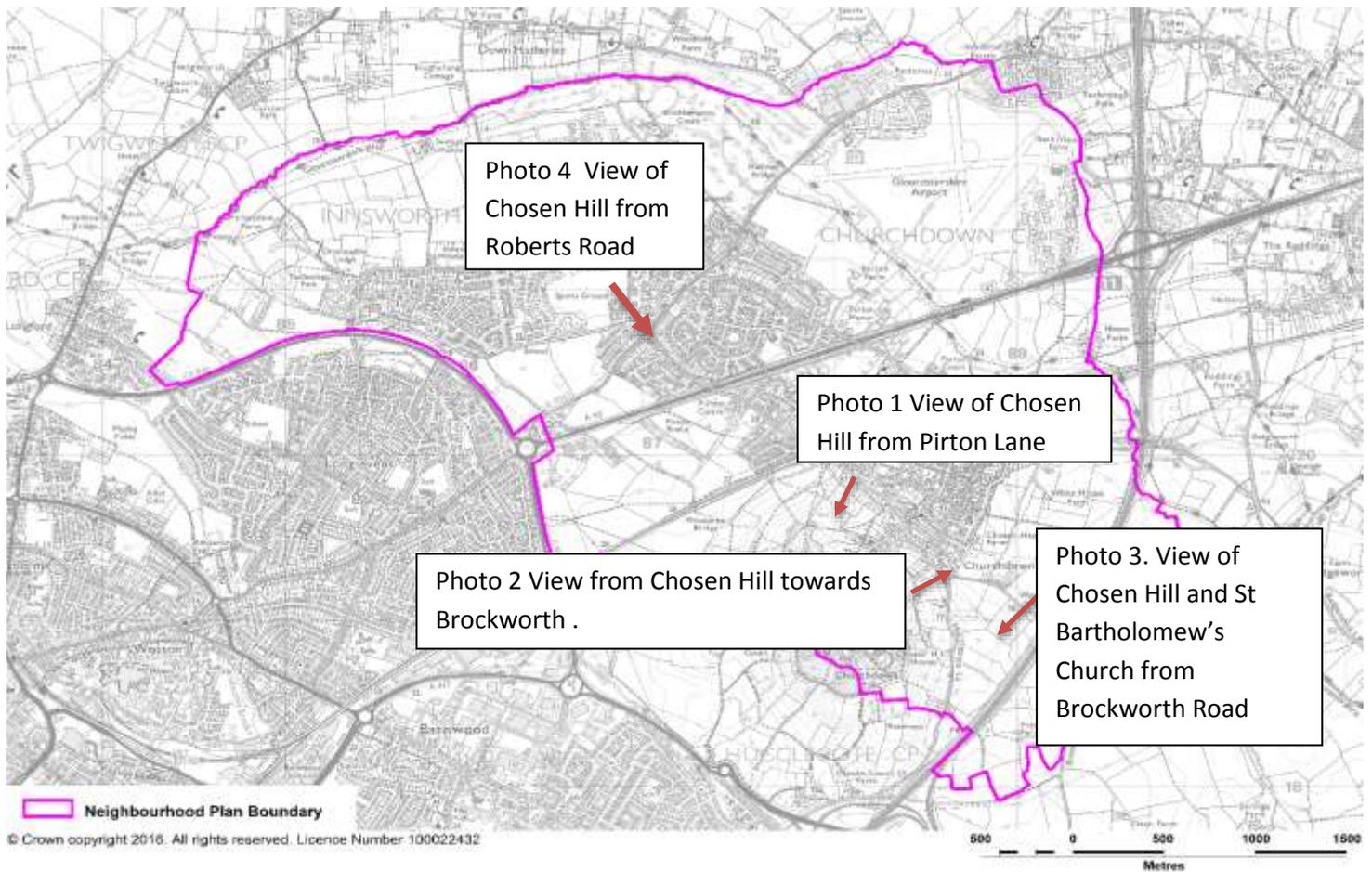


View of Chosen (Churchdown) Hill from Roberts Road, Innsworth (Credit: Ruth Warne)

POLICY CHIN13: VIEWS TO AND FROM CHOSEN (CHURCHDOWN) HILL

Chosen (Churchdown) Hill is a prominent visual landmark of ecological, historic and recreational importance. Development proposals should maintain the local landscape character as identified in the Joint Core Strategy Landscape Characterisation Assessment and Sensitivity Analysis 2013. Proposals which have a negative impact on views to or from Chosen (Churchdown) Hill as identified on the map at Figure 6.2 will be resisted.

Figure 6.1 – Views to and from Chosen (Churchdown Hill)



7 MOVEMENT

- 7.1 There is a recognition within the community of Churchdown and Innsworth that the growth in population means that more concerted efforts need to be made to travel by means other than the car. Without this, the existing traffic situation will become exponentially worse. This brings with it the related problems of air pollution, and CO₂ and NO_x emissions.
- 7.2 There is a need for people to make more of their journeys by public transport and also, in particular, on foot and by bicycle. Short distance trips within the community can particularly be made in this way. To encourage more people to do this, there need to be good, safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists which represent a credible alternative to travel by car.



Sustrans Cycle Route NCN41, bottom of Churchdown Park



The 'Ash Path' - an important route between Churchdown and Innsworth



The public right of way running parallel to the golf course and Tudor Mead Park – a pleasant walking route

7.3 Particular issues raised by the community as to why they don't walk or cycle as much as they could were:

- Footpaths are not kept clear and maintained, and are often used by cyclists, making pedestrians feel unsafe.
- Cycle routes are not maintained to a high standard and when hedge cutting is done the brash is not removed causing a hazard and inconvenience to cyclists whose tyres are frequently punctured. This acts to deter use of cycle paths.
- Cycle routes, including those in the National Cycle Network, are frequently interrupted at points on the road network where the dangers for cyclists are highest.
- There are insufficient dedicated pedestrian crossings in the right locations.



Flooding in NCN41 underpass under A40



Steep slope with chippings which can puncture tyres - NCN41 underpass under A40



A narrow 'urban' path makes pedestrians feel unsafe



The only crossing between the traffic lights along Cheltenham Road East

Cycling and walking



Glevum Way and NCN41 at entry to Churchdown Park

7.4 To inform the Neighbourhood Plan as to the best possible solutions, Sustrans was commissioned to undertake a 'Movement of People' study. This identified the key corridors of movement for people shown in Figure 7.1. This was not only within Churchdown and Innsworth but also to the larger centres of Cheltenham and Gloucester.

7.5 Key routes and locations for improvement are described below:

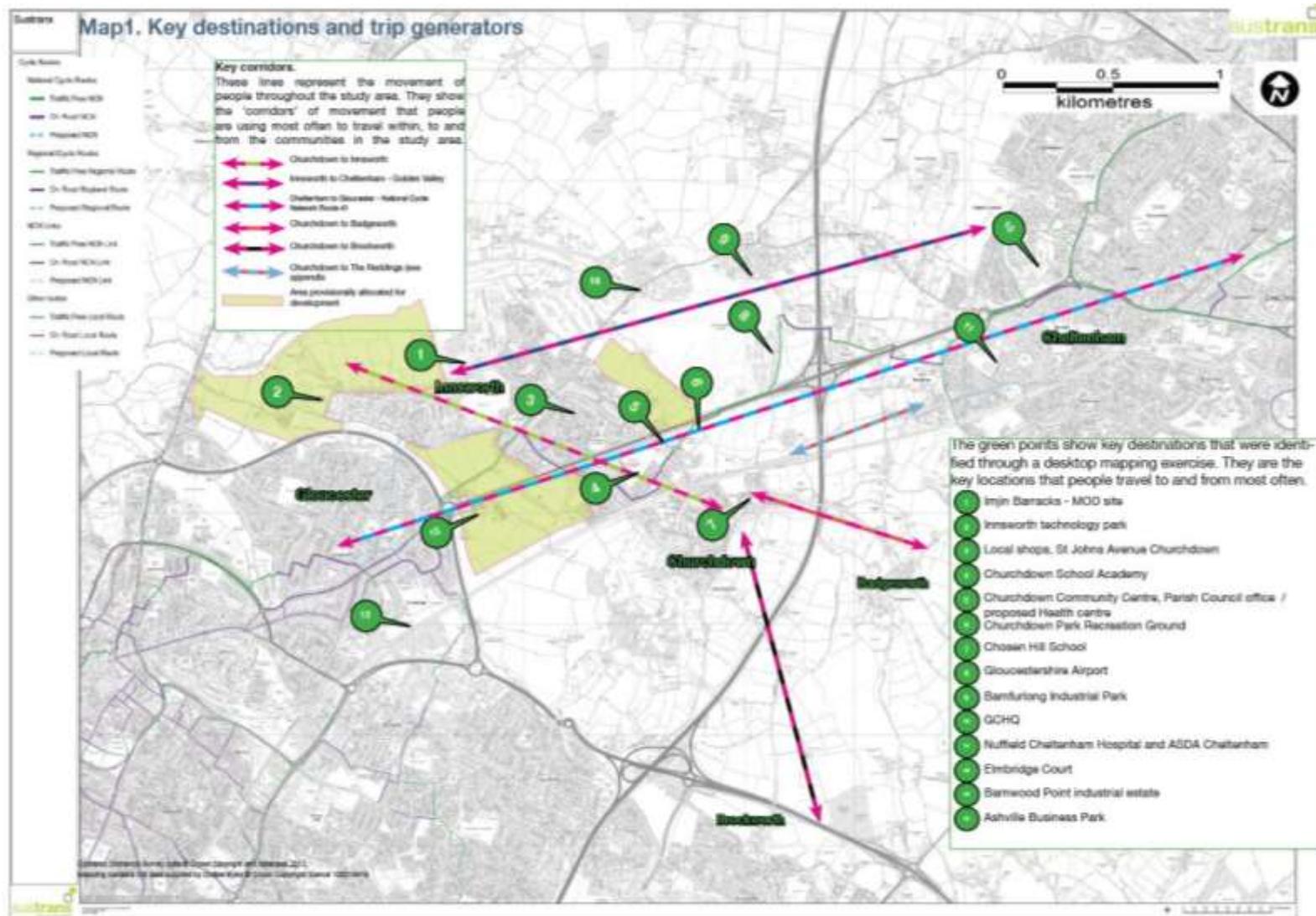
a. Upgrade the Ash Path

The existing 'Ash Path' (ECN66 – 'Whelan's Way') from Luke Lane to Parkside Close provides a valuable traffic-free route between Churchdown and Innsworth, where it connects with existing quiet roads to the Innsworth Technology Park. To make it all-weather, it should be upgraded and widened to a sealed surface 3 metres wide, and with lighting (designed for low impact on wildlife) for safety and security after dark. There is already an existing access point to Parkside Close, and the Ash Path could link the proposed new housing development to Innsworth and Churchdown. This has been costed by Sustrans at between £150,000 and £200,000.

b. Cycle track on Innsworth Lane

Innsworth Lane is an obvious direct link to Innsworth Technology Park and Longlevens, but it is 40 mph. There is room to construct a cycle path along this route, which would also relieve congestion expected from the proposed Innsworth housing development.

Figure 7.1: Key corridors of movement

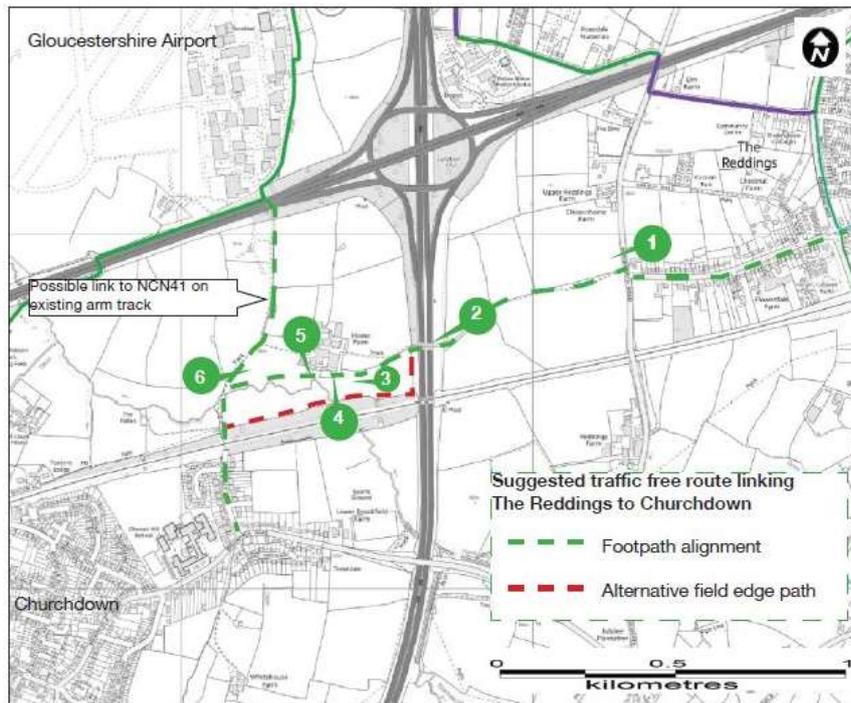


Source: Sustrans (2016) *Movement of People*, for Churchdown and Innsworth Neighbourhood Plan Group

c. Churchdown to Cheltenham via the Reddings

This would be a direct traffic-free route between Churchdown and The Reddings, and thence to Cheltenham. The present route via the airport and Bamfurlong Lane is circuitous, and has 50 mph traffic, as does the alternative via Brookfield Lane and Badgeworth Lane. This direct route would be much safer, and especially valuable to children at Chosen Hill School who live in The Reddings. It would use a farm traffic bridge over the M5 and follow the route of a public footpath. This route could also link to the airport via the A40 underpass (see Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2: Suggested traffic-free route linking The Reddings to Churchdown



Source: Sustrans 2016

d. Elmbridge Court to Arle Court along the A40

The proposed Elmbridge Court Park & Ride will have cycle access to Gloucester. This is an opportunity to create a direct link between Pirton Lane and the Park & Ride. A new path could be built along the field boundary south of the A40 to Pirton Lane. East of there, the path would be on Highways England (HE) land. It could link to Churchdown School Academy, where the existing pathway could be widened through to Station Road. There is an existing route through Churchdown Park and alongside the A40, which is already well used. However, to bring it up to modern standards, it needs a new all-weather sealed surface, removal of barriers and gates, and easing of the slope on the northern side of the underpass below the A40. There can also be links to Churchdown Village, through the proposed housing development to Pirton Lane near John Daniels Way (A2).

e. Innsworth to Cheltenham Golden Valley, along B4063

The B4063 is a natural route between Churchdown, Ashville Business Park, Bamfurlong Industrial Park, and the Golden Valley roundabout. But the B4063 is 50 mph, busy, and suffers congestion during rush-hour, so a cycle route would ease congestion and benefit the 94 bus. There is space for a traffic free route along the edge of the carriageway, with traffic and cyclists separated by a verge.

7.6 For each of these corridors, specific opportunities for improvements to the existing infrastructure were identified with a view to encouraging more people to walk or cycle for their daily journeys to school, to

work and for trips to local services. As a result, a number of key routes and specific improvements have been identified which will improve the potential for greater levels of walking and cycling. For any new development which does come forward – in particular the strategic allocations – safe footpath and cycle path access must be provided to link in with these key routes. Without this, new developments will be isolated from the footway and cycleway network and will therefore become car-dependent estates.

- 7.8 Where improvements are needed, contributions received from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be used to part-fund these and lever in match funding from other sources.

POLICY CHIN14: PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE MOVEMENT ROUTES

A. It is essential that people can travel safely to the shops, public transport facilities, schools and other important facilities and amenities serving Churchdown and Innsworth. Where appropriate, new developments should ensure safe pedestrian and cycle access and, where achievable, link up with existing footways and cycleways that directly serve the Movement Routes.

C. Proposals should be designed to encourage cycling and walking as an alternative to driving.

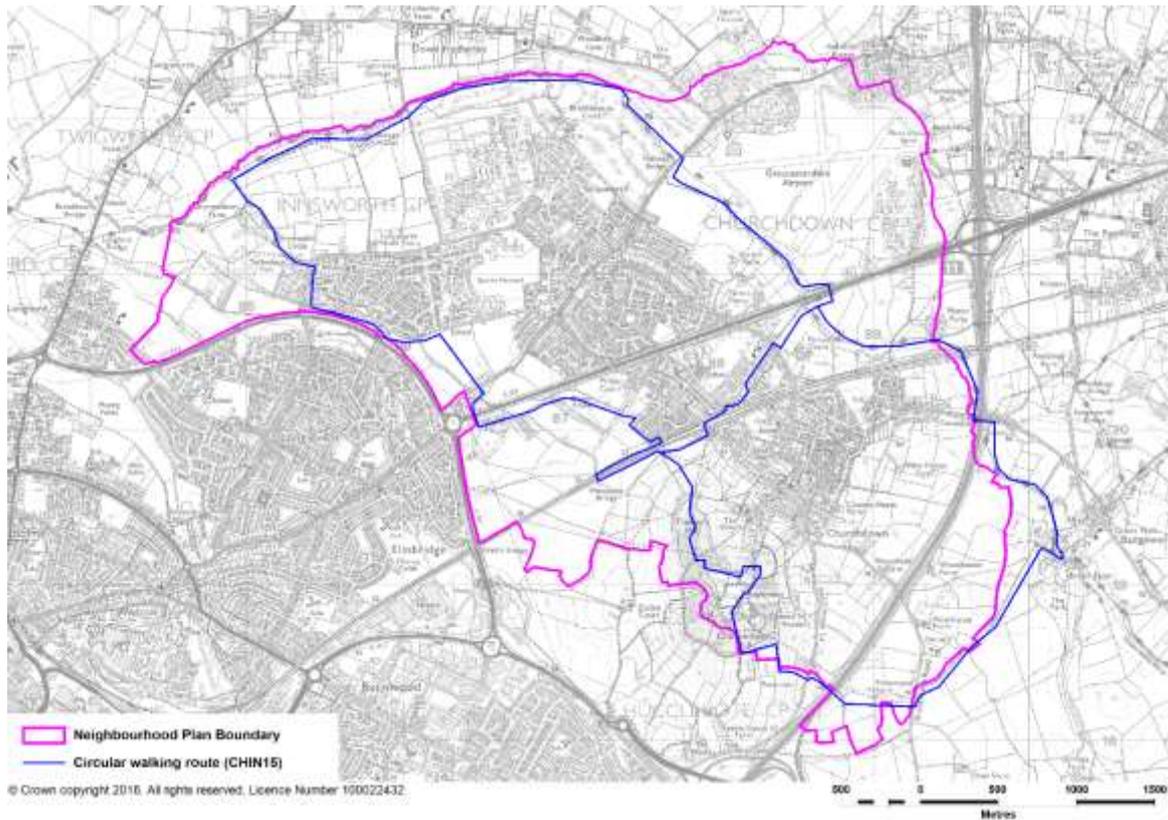
D. Development proposals should, where necessary, be supported by a Transport Assessment or Transport Strategy which assesses the impact on Movement Routes and provides a strategy to mitigate the impact of additional traffic movements on the safety and flow of pedestrian access.

Priority is given to proposals which appear most likely to encourage cycling and walking as an alternative to driving.

Circular walking route

- 7.9 A common theme raised by the community was that walking routes should also be for pleasure. This links in strongly with the Environmental theme of the Neighbourhood Plan, with many people identifying that there should be more opportunities to enjoy Churchdown and Innsworth's rich natural environment.
- 7.10 Work with the community identified a broad route for a circular walk that would take in some of the key natural features of the area. This will also help to integrate the strategic developments into the wider environment. The location of the circular walk is shown in Figure 7.3.

Figure 7.3: Proposed route circular walk



Source: Sustrans 2016

- 7.11 In taking this forward, it will be important to work with voluntary groups, which are seeking to improve off-road networks across the wider area.
- 7.12 Funding will come from a number of sources. These include grants from organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, through the Local Transport Plan and other funding streams available through Gloucestershire County Council (as the highways authority) and through developer contributions.

POLICY CHIN15: PROVISION OF CIRCULAR WALKING ROUTE

In order to provide improvements for access and leisure purposes, proposals to provide a dedicated walking route around the parishes of Churchdown and Innsworth will be supported.

Highways

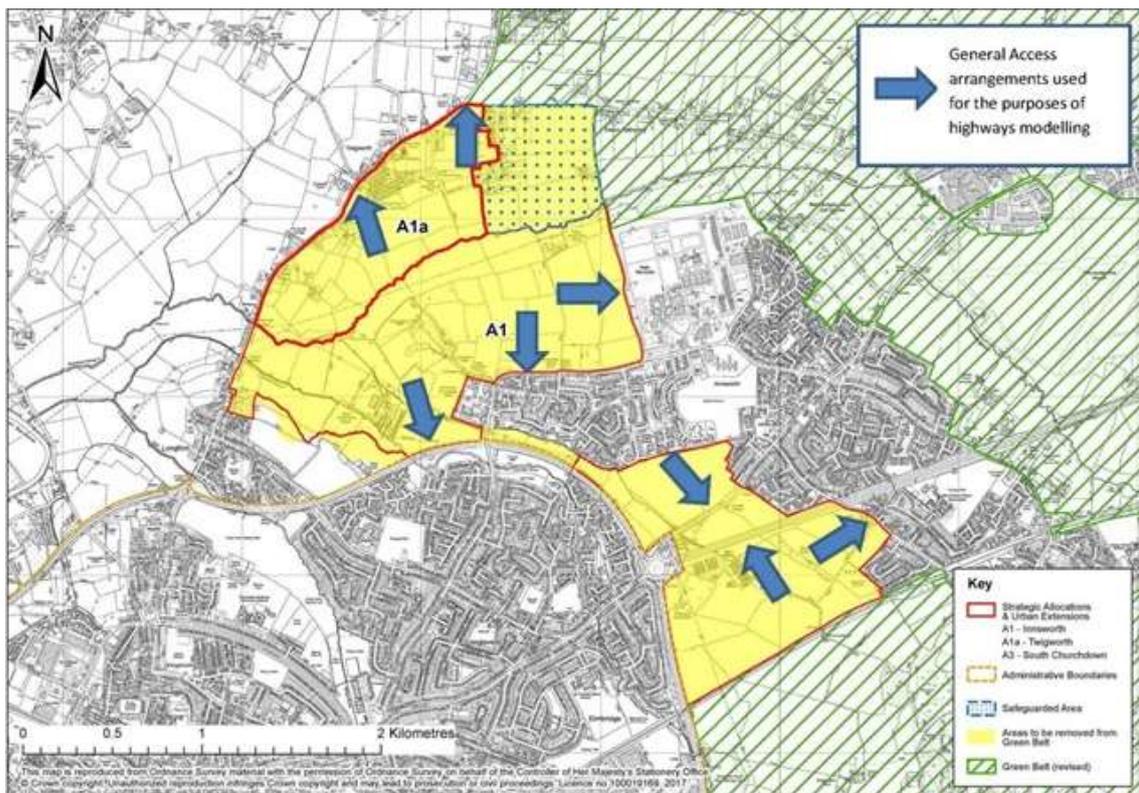
- 7.13 The location of the Neighbourhood Area between the major settlements of Gloucester and Cheltenham means that it is easily accessible to a number of strategic road routes. These include the M5 motorway (with both junctions 11 and 11a adjacent to the boundary of the Area), the A40 (which runs directly through the Area), the A417 (which links the M5 and A40 immediately to the west of the Area) and the A38 (which runs to the west and north towards Tewkesbury). As a result of these linkages however, significant volumes of traffic travel through and close to the Area, which often results in congestion, particularly at the major junctions. For the residents of Churchdown and Innsworth, making anything other than a local journey by

car almost certainly requires using one of these strategic routes and therefore facing the congestion which is created mainly by traffic seeking to access either Gloucester or Cheltenham.

- 7.14 This is reinforced by the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP), which identifies these routes as 'national links' in its Link and Place Spectrum. These are defined as strategic routes whose function is for traffic only and which have 'mainly no community interaction'. Only the B4063 (Cheltenham Road East) and Innsworth Lane are classified as 'suburban links' which are busy routes serving residential and commercial areas, characterised as creating 'more significant interactions between highway users and place'. The LTP encourages communities to use the Link and Place Spectrum to inform the development of neighbourhood plans.
- 7.15 One of the major challenges for the delivery of the strategic allocations in the JCS will be the management of vehicular traffic accessing both these strategic routes ('national links') and the key local routes ('suburban links'), particularly at peak periods. Work undertaken to inform the development of the JCS⁷ looked at a number of key junctions on the strategic network, including the A40/A38, the A40 Elmbridge roundabout and the M5 junction 11 (with the A40). All of these were identified as operating at capacity in 2014. The JCS was declared sound and adopted in 2017 on the basis that the package of transport measures identified would adequately mitigate the impacts of the growth created by the delivery of the strategic allocations on the road network.
- 7.16 Policy A1 in the JCS requires the strategic allocation at Innsworth and Twigworth to:
- deliver primary vehicle access from the A38 and Innsworth Lane;
 - explore the delivery of a new main junction onto the A40;
 - explore the potential for a highway link through both the Innsworth and Twigworth sites linking the A38 and A40.
- 7.17 Policy A2 in the JCS requires the strategic allocation at South Churchdown to:
- deliver primary vehicle accesses from the B4063 Cheltenham Road East and Pirton Lane;
 - explore the potential for a new access junction to the site from the A40.
 - These are shown in Figure 7.4 below:

⁷ Atkins (2014) *Joint Core Strategy: JCS Model Output Report v7*, for Gloucestershire County Council

Figure 7.4: Location and access points for the strategic allocations



Source: JCS Transport Strategy

- 7.18 The creation of these new junctions will provide access to and from the strategic allocations for residents and businesses. It will also provide access for other users, with the result being an expected increase of vehicular traffic on many of the routes through the Neighbourhood Plan Area, including these suburban links.
- 7.19 Engagement with the community to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan identified that most people considered the morning peak to be the worst time of day as regards congestion. Many people identified a major factor being the two large senior schools in Churchdown, with a great number of students travelling in from the surrounding area.
- 7.20 The following concerns were identified during community engagement in 2014 and confirmed by a survey of 120 residents in September 2017:
- Volume of traffic throughout the parishes, but particularly on the following roads:
 - Cheltenham Road East (B4063)
 - Innsworth Lane
 - Pirton Lane
 - Parton Road (blocking access to St John's Ave)
 - Albemarle Road
 - Drews Court
 - Brookfield Road
 - Station Road

- Congestion at the Hare and Hounds junction (B4063 Cheltenham Road East with Innsworth Lane and Parton Road)
 - School traffic around Chosen Hill and Churchdown Schools (the senior schools)
- 7.21 The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base supported this, identifying the B4063 Cheltenham Road East as one of the routes where, as a result of congestion, traffic speeds were most significantly reduced, particularly at peak periods, when compared with the speed limits for the road.
- 7.22 As a result, four particular junctions have been identified at which significant volumes of traffic are experienced, particularly during the morning peaks when many people are taking children to the schools in the Area. In light of the proposed locations for strategic growth, coupled with other growth already in the planning pipeline and likely to come forward in the Area over the plan period, there is the potential for unacceptable impacts at the following junctions:
- B4063 Cheltenham Road East with Innsworth Lane and Parton Road (Hare and Hounds junction) – one of the key suburban links identified in the LTP Link and Place Spectrum.
 - Pirton Lane and Cheltenham Road East
 - Pirton Lane and Station Road
 - Albemarle Road and Brookfield Road
 - Pirton Lane and Winston Road
- 7.23 When proposals on sites within the Area come forward, it will be particularly important that they are able to demonstrate that they will not have a severe detrimental impact on any road junctions, including the five identified junctions.
- 7.24 In order to consider the cumulative impacts, any Transport Assessment or Transport Statement will need to provide a common methodology that relates to previous assessments or statements.

POLICY CHIN16: HIGHWAY CAPACITY AT KEY ROAD JUNCTIONS

All Transport Assessments (for larger sites) or Transport Statements (for smaller sites) - as required by Para 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework - should address to the satisfaction of the highway authority the cumulative transport impact on road junctions, in particular including the following, identified on the Policies Map:

- a. B4063 Cheltenham Road East with Innsworth Lane and Parton Road
- b. Pirton Lane and Cheltenham Road East
- c. Pirton Lane and Station Road
- d. Albemarle Road and Brookfield Road
- e. Pirton Lane and Winston Road

- 7.25 The Parish Councils are committed to working with the relevant authorities and agencies, as specifically recognised in the Gloucestershire LTP policies. to identify priorities for enabling development (Policy LTP PD 4.5) and to address road safety (Policy LTP PD 4.6). For the communities of Churchdown and Innsworth, the priorities are that the following are addressed:

- Undertake detailed investigations to properly understand the likely amount of extra traffic generated by new developments – Policy LTP PD 4.4 (Maximising investment in the highway network) and Policy LTP PD 4.5 (Enabling development).
- Identify and develop specific measures (engineering, enforcement and/or education, as appropriate) to improve the roads, traffic management and improvements to public transport, using public funds and developer contributions. This includes exploring measures to reduce congestion resulting from school traffic, including increased use of alternatives to the car – Policy LTP PD 4.5 (Enabling development) and Policy LTP PD 4.6 (Road safety).
- Identify and develop specific measures to reduce traffic speeds in residential areas – Policy LTP PD 4.6 (Road safety) and Policy LTP PD 4.8 (Pedestrians).
- Improve the capacity and traffic flow of the Hare and Hounds junction as a priority project – Policy LTP PD 4.4 (Maximising investment in the highway network). This should include consideration of widening of Parton Road at the junction.
- Improve the maintenance of roads and identify priorities for improvements.

8 NON-POLICY ACTIONS

Table 8.1: Non-land use issues to be addressed

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies	Supporting partners
Built Environment and Design			
Damage to grass verges and grassed areas from vehicles	Educate drivers and enforce against car owners where possible	GCC, Police	Parish Councils
	Installation of bollards and/or fencing	GCC, TBC, Severn Vale, or other land owner	Parish Councils
	Design to deter vehicle access to grassed areas	TBC	GCC
Shopping areas poorly maintained	Encourage owners of shop premises at Kestrel Parade and St John's Ave to clean up and keep the area well maintained (to include lining of parking bays)	Parish Councils	TBC
	Design for low maintenance in new build, paved areas in front of shops to be in public ownership	TBC	
Perceived lack of suitable accommodation for old people	Ensure a range of suitable accommodation is provided for old people, including bungalows.	TBC	Housing associations, Parish Councils
Improve use of renewables	Identify initiatives and actions to encourage wider use of renewable energy options by domestic and business users	TBC	Parish Councils
Community Infrastructure			
Lack of Bank	Support any initiative(s) for reinstatement of a bank.	TBC	Parish Councils
Litter	Provision of more bins in appropriate locations	Parish Councils	TBC
	Sustain and/or increase frequency of litter picking and collection	TBC	
Dog mess	(1) Provision of more dog bins in appropriate locations	Parish Councils	TBC Parish Councils, schools
	(2) Education of public to pick up dog mess	TBC	
	(3) More signs and enforcement against irresponsible dog owners	Parish Councils, TBC	
Overgrown vegetation on footpaths	Raise awareness of householders' statutory responsibilities, promote enforcement action as necessary	Parish Councils	GCC
Maintenance and improvement of parks and play areas	(1) Presence of litter – provision of more bins/more frequent litter picks/educate people to take litter home.	Parish Councils	TBC
	(2) Grass cutting – increase frequency and pick up cut grass where appropriate (ie, areas of high recreational use, eg, for ball games), but note that certain areas are mown less frequently, such as meadows.	Parish Councils	

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies	Supporting partners
	(3) Make improvements to the environmental quality of Innsworth Park.	Innsworth Parish Council	
Community Events	Explore opportunities to meet expressed wishes for village fete/events/street parties/events “throughout Churchdown” (not just at Churchdown Park)	Parish Councils, community organisations	TBC
Community Events	Identify demand for community events in Innsworth	Innsworth Parish Council	TBC
Shortage of places for Catholic primary school education	Explore opportunities for increasing number of school places (specific request from St Mary’s School)	GCC, Clifton Diocese	St Mary’s School
Insufficient activities for CYP	Promote activities and clubs for children, particularly in Innsworth	Parish Councils, community centres, Churches	TBC
Lack of pub in Innsworth	Explore opportunities for establishment of a pub in Innsworth	TBC, developers	Parish Councils
Lack of police station and insufficient police/PCSO presence	Investigate options to improve police presence, lobby for neighbourhood policing to be reinstated.	Parish Councils	Police
Long standing desire for swimming pool	Provision of a swimming pool in the neighbourhood area not considered achievable, there are swimming pools within 15 minutes’ drive time. Alternative is provision of swimming lessons and leisure trips for CYP by schools and Parish Councils/CYP organisations in school holidays	Schools	Parish Councils, CYP orgs (e.g. Scouts/Guides)
Limited range of shops	Explore opportunities to increase the number and range of local shops in both Churchdown and Innsworth	TBC	Parish Councils
Lack of village centre in Churchdown	Promote any initiatives to create village centre in mid Churchdown	Parish Councils	TBC
Desire for a Church in Innsworth	Investigate possibility of establishing a Church in Innsworth	Church authorities	TBC, Parish Councils
Concern for future of fishing lake in Innsworth	Protect the fishing lake; investigate options for provision of more facilities for fishing	TBC	Developers, Parish Councils
Desire for train station	Support any proposals for reinstatement of station in Churchdown or provision of a Parkway Station	Parish Council	GCC, TBC
Improved facilities for sport and fitness	Support any initiatives for provision of better facilities for sport, eg, MUGA (e.g., at Tudor Mead), running track, basketball courts, tennis courts. Explore potential for better use of school sports facilities outside of school hours. Assess demand for additional outdoor exercise equipment.	Parish Councils	TBC, developers, grant funders
Burial land	Identify options and pursue any options for purchase of burial land.	Parish Councils	GCC
General upkeep	Foster a sense of civic pride	Parish Councils	TBC

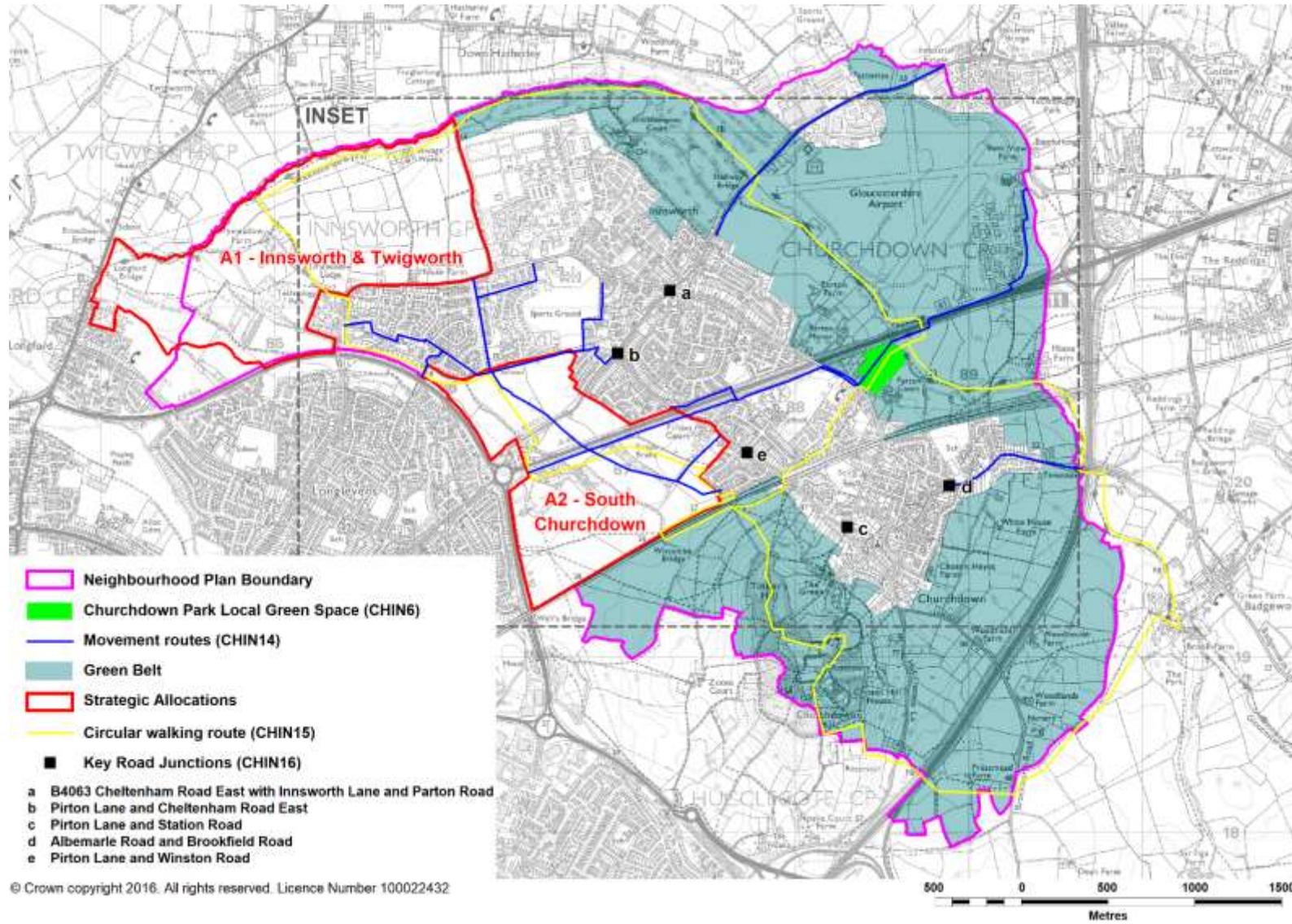
Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies	Supporting partners
Improve community action and cohesion	Support volunteer groups and organisations, eg, grants, publicity, networking	Parish Councils	Community Centres
Natural Environment			
Desire for community garden, meadow, flowers, sensory garden and tree planting, including woods	Explore opportunities for more planting of flowers and trees in parks and on grass verges, including use of bee friendly plants. Organise community planting days. Maintain and enhance existing areas of planting at Churchdown Park. Develop new areas of planting. Identify site(s) to establish new woodland	Parish Councils	TBC, Ubico, GWT. Community groups
Loss of orchards (a key feature of Severn Vale Nature Area)	Promote establishment of orchards of varying sizes on public land and in private gardens, using rootstock appropriate to the plot size.	Conservation charities	Parish Councils, TBC
Desire for more hedgerow planting	Identify opportunities for planting more hedgerows	Parish Councils	TBC, GWT, developers
Loss of ponds (waterscape is key feature of Severn Vale Nature Area)	Encourage creation of more ponds and pond complexes by householders	Conservation charities (inc Pond Conservation Trust)	Parish Councils, TBC
Loss of habitat and threat to insect life	Provision of insect, bee, butterfly houses Education of public in appropriate management of private gardens. Sensitive management by Councils of public land to meet needs of wildlife. Encouragement to farmers to leave arable field margins for insects and birds	Conservation charities Conservation charities GCC, TBC, Parish Councils Glos FWAG	Parish Councils, TBC
Desire for Nature Reserve	Investigate possibilities for establishment of nature reserve, to be dog free, or include a dog free area	Parish Councils	TBC, GCC, GWT
Unattractive entrances to senior schools	Encourage well designed landscaping	Parish Councils	Schools, GCC, TBC
Provision of green space/amenity land on new business parks for recreation for workers	Encourage provision of well designed green space within new business parks, to include areas of planting, orchards ("Helping Hands" days)	Parish Councils	TBC, Developers
Regular cleaning of drains	Press for more regular clearing of drains to ensure network is adequate and does not result in flooding.	Parish Councils	GCC
Movement			
Overgrown footpaths impede walking	Report to appropriate owner/authority for action (being mindful of nesting season) Lobby for adequate funding to address cutbacks on Public Rights of Way	Parish Councils Parish Councils	GCC, TBC GCC, TBC

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies	Supporting partners
Paths on Chosen (Churchdown) Hill are worn and at times impassable due to mud	<p>Press for adequate maintenance</p> <p>Provide assistance to voluntary groups</p> <p>Consider ways to improve some footpaths, eg, hard surfacing and work with partners to achieve this.</p>	<p>Parish Councils</p> <p>Parish Councils</p> <p>Parish Councils</p>	<p>GCC, landowners</p> <p>Friends of Churchdown Hill</p> <p>GCC</p>
Footpaths (pavements) – poor surface	Review condition of footpaths, work in partnership with Parish Councils to identify areas requiring resurfacing.	GCC	Parish Councils
Cycle lane maintenance	Ensure proper maintenance of cycle lanes	GCC	Parish Councils
Review of existing cycle routes	Review of cycle routes, especially NCN41 by County Council with a view to improving.	GCC	Parish Councils
Road surfacing	Review condition of road surfaces and lobby central government for increased funding to ensure long lasting repairs are effected	GCC	Parish Councils
Traffic calming and safety issues	Identify areas where traffic is speeding and lobby County Council to take appropriate action (eg, signage, engineering). Suggested areas for attention are Springwell Gardens, Parton Road, Pirton Lane, Sandycroft Road, Marleyfield Way, Drews Court, Innsworth Lane)	Parish Councils	GCC, Police
Insufficient parking	Review of grass verges to identify possible locations where parking bays could be made, particularly in Innsworth	Parish Councils	GCC, land owners
Illegal/Anti-social parking	Enforcement of parking/waiting restrictions, education of drivers with regards to anti-social parking, especially outside schools	Police	Parish Councils
White lining of Roads	Conduct review of existing lining, then review at regular intervals, and refresh as required.	GCC	Parish Councils
Traffic calming	Undertake review of speed limits as considered necessary, especially in and close to the strategic allocations. Parish Councils to lobby GCC as appropriate.	Parish Councils	GCC
Volume of school traffic	Support any initiatives to reduce volume of school traffic, e.g. car sharing	Parish Councils	GCC, schools
Air pollution from vehicular traffic	Lobby TBC/GCC to undertake monitoring of air pollution levels at key locations and to take action as appropriate	Parish Councils	TBC, GCC
HGV traffic	Undertake monitoring of HGV traffic and lobby GCC to review restrictions and implement new ones as appropriate	Parish Councils	GCC
Pedestrian crossings	<p>(1) Investigate possibility of converting zebra crossing outside Tesco, Cheltenham Road East to a light controlled crossing</p> <p>(2) Consider installation of pedestrian crossing on Pirton Lane for pedestrians crossing from Chosen Way to Winston Road</p>	<p>GCC</p> <p>GCC</p>	<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Parish Council</p>
Frequency of bus service	Review frequency of 97/98 service, especially in the morning, with a view to increasing the	Stagecoach	GCC, Parish Councils

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies	Supporting partners
	service, especially on Station/Parton Road for easier access to new Medical Centre. Buses now run every 20 instead of 30 minutes between 9.10 am and 7.40 pm , Monday to Friday , and operate on an hourly business later into the evening. There will be two extra buses on Sundays: one in the morning, and another in the evening. Bus Service frequency & times should be monitored .		
Overspill of stones/gravel from householders' driveways causing hazard to pedestrians and cyclists	Advise householders regarding importance of having works done to correct specification.	TBC	County, Parish Councils
Children and young people			
Expressed wishes to see more animals and birds	Explore opportunities for establishment of nature reserve(s) Arrange trips to zoos, safari parks, farms and St James City Farm	Parish Councils Parish Councils, Schools, Community Orgs	TBC, GCC
Future of GL3 Community Hub	Sustain activities for CYP at the Hub	Parish Councils	TBC, GCC, grant funders
Desire for scooter park	Conduct research to define the requirement and consider providing a scooter park either at existing park or at new park within strategic allocation	Parish Councils	TBC, developers, GPFA, grant funders
Desire of teenagers for biking facility	Conduct research to define the requirement and consider providing a biking facility (eg, dirt track, BMX track) within existing park or at new park within strategic allocation	Parish Councils	TBC, developers, GPFA, grant funders
Desire for water park and fountain	Consider provision of water play area within existing park or at new park within strategic allocation	Parish Councils	TBC, developers, GPFA, Grant funders
Desire for sculpture/statues	Consider installation of public art	Parish Councils	TBC, Schools
Desire for newer play equipment/ improved play areas	Survey existing equipment and consider provision of new play equipment	Parish Councils	TBC, developers, grant funders
Desire for "exciting" play equipment	Consider provision of adventure playground, zipwire and/or other equipment which is exciting for children	Parish Councils	TBC, developers, grant funders

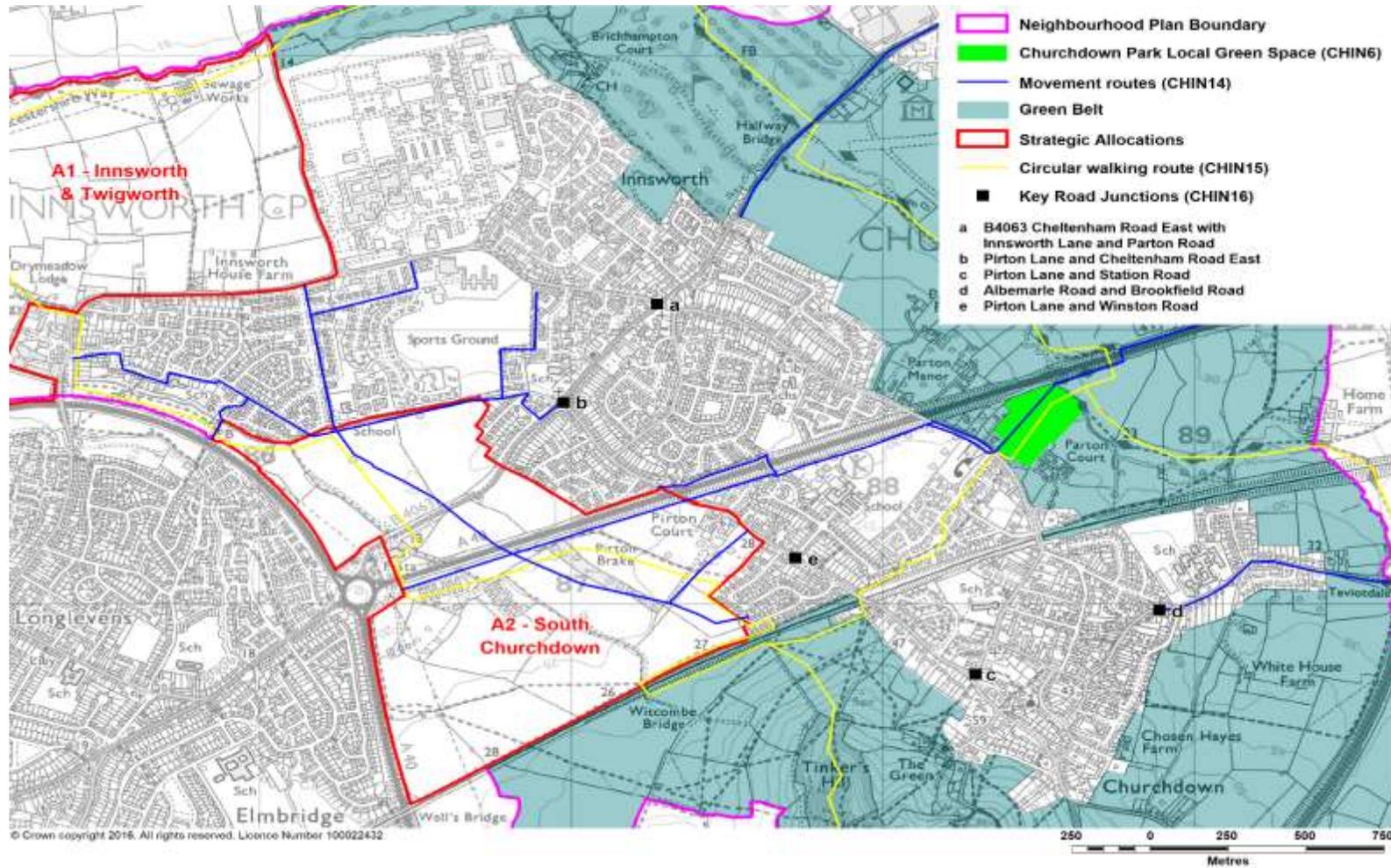
9 POLICIES MAPS

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10 INSET MAP

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Glossary

- **Community Infrastructure Levy** - A charge per square metre on the net additional floor area constructed on a site. CIL charges can be differentiated in a number of different ways, with the most common way being by type of development, eg, residential, retail, commercial, etc. CIL pays for the additional cost burden to the Council and the community of the building, such as health, education, roads, library, open spaces, waste and other services. Parishes with a Neighbourhood Plan can keep 25% of CIL to spend as they choose on addressing the needs arising from growth.
- **Fruity street** – Incorporation of fruit trees, particularly in a linear arrangement, into urban landscaping (whether public or privately owned), for the benefit of people and wildlife.
- **Forage trail** – Inclusion of trees, shrubs and other plants bearing edible fruits and nuts for people and wildlife to pick and eat.
- **Infrastructure** - A broad term to describe the things which make places acceptable for people to live in. Services to land include road and utilities such as power and water; services to people include schools, GP surgeries, community facilities etc.
- **NPPF** - National Planning Policy Framework, a document that sets out national planning policy. All neighbourhood plans must have due regard to it.
- **Pocket orchard** – A small orchard situated on a patch of spare ground.
- **Swale** - Drainage pond for surface water.

Appendix A Examples of good and bad design and particular design features

The following photos show the houses which scored the highest in respect of their design (out of a total of 40 designs):



Modern House, Parton Road, Churchdown



Estate type houses, Highgrove Estate, Churchdown



Rustic farmhouse style, The Green, Churchdown



Estate type house, Highgrove, Churchdown



Large detached house, Innsworth Lane, Innsworth



Modern House, Morley Avenue



Westfield Estate, St John's Avenue, Churchdown



Sandycroft Road, Churchdown

People were clearly flexible as to whether the house looked modern or more traditional, though there is a clear preference for pitched roofs. They expressed a preference for variety and that the new houses be in keeping and have character and not be like “rabbit hutches”. There was a liking for red brick (but not too dark), render, timber and Tudor style. Most of the houses chosen had attractive greenery around them. There was a liking for wood effect used as a feature, some symmetry and not too “fussy” in appearance. There is a clear delineation between public and private space. There is clearly no objection to estate type houses. The styles range from mock Tudor to half-rendered, fully rendered and brick, but all present a ‘softer’ front to the road by having the facades broken up by lean-to single storey porches and/or bay windows, etc.

Residents did not like flat fronted houses, tall and narrow houses, the chalet style, ‘60’s boxes’ and terraced housing, and also did not like modern style community buildings with barrelled or flat roofs.



Churchdown Community Centre, Parton Road



60's chalet style, Yew Tree Way area



Innsworth Community Hall, Rookery Road



Westfield estate, St John's Ave, Churchdown



Pirton Lane, Churchdown



Churchdown Day Nursery, Parton Road



The Hive, Innsworth



Albemarle Road, Churchdown

Looking at these photos there is an absence of 'softening features'. The façade is flat or relatively flat, sometimes with dominant square shapes. The face that is presented to the public realm is quite harsh, with a literal absence of relief.

The photograph below shows a new build on Cheltenham Road East, which was not included in the consultation on built environment, but which many people have subsequently remarked is unattractive due to the flat façade.



New build flat façade, gives dull appearance, Cheltenham Road Estate

Illustrated below are houses in Innsworth which originally had flat facades, but to which porches were added which give interest.



Later addition of porches to relieve flat façade, Innsworth Lane, Innsworth

Comments were made during the consultation that people do not like tall and narrow houses which can be oppressive, cut out light and there is often no landscaping, but this does not have to be the case. In the example below, this block of flats is in a corner, where it does not impinge on others.



Manor Farm, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham

Provision should be made for wheelie bins so that they can be placed in a concealed area as they are detrimental to the street scene.



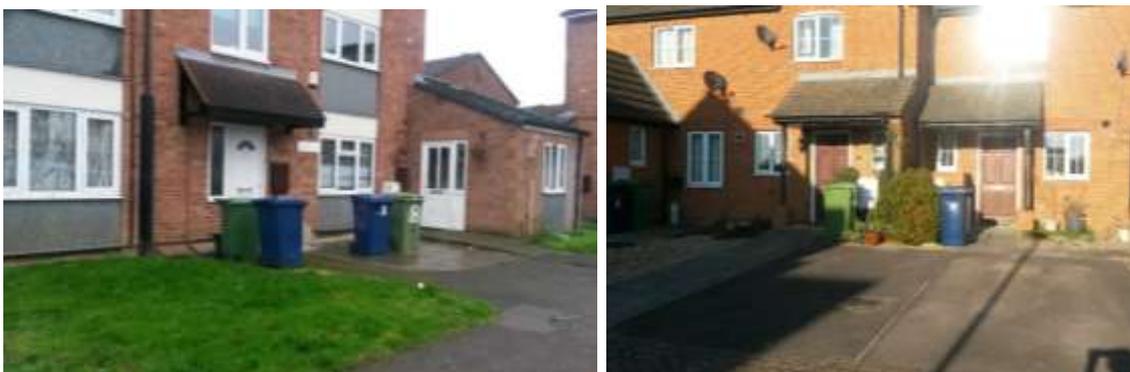
Lovely street scene, wheelie bins detract, Bader Ave Estate, Churchdown



Row of wheelie bins, Highgrove estate mars street scene



Good design for concealing wheelie bins, Tandey Walk, Innsworth, and Oldbury Orchard, Churchdown



Wheelie bins evident at Coriander Drive and Tudor Close, Churchdown



New development (Westfield), Churchdown where wheelie bins are concealed

Local design features

Variegated brick is found in some older buildings in the area, eg, Woodlands Farm, Pirton Court and has been replicated in some newer ones, eg, houses on the old garage site at the junction of Cheltenham Road East and Sandycroft Road, and on development of the old garage site at junction of Church Road and Brookfield Road. The variegated brick is characteristic of not just the Neighbourhood Area but further afield and results from the clay used for the bricks which was dug locally (eg, at the field adjacent to the junction of Brockworth Road and Barrow Hill – the clay varies between yellow, red and blue lias). The use of variegated brick is widespread throughout Churchdown and Innsworth, it has a pleasing, rustic appearance. Use in new build would enhance the character of Churchdown, reflect its history and providing a unifying “motif” for the new developments.



Variegated brick at Sweetbriar House, Chapel Hay Lane



Variegated brick used in new wall, Pirton Lane



Good example of new build using variegated brick and good landscaping, Church Road



Woodlands Farm - old farmhouse rebuilt using old variegated brick and new. Very characteristic of the local brick made from clay dug out in field nearby (Brockworth Road, Churchdown)



Close up of variegated brick at Woodlands Farm



Variegated brick used in new build at Pirton Meadow



Close up of variegated brick at Pirton Meadow



Old Post Office, Brookfield Road



Old Farm House, Brookfield Road



Old Bakery, Church Road



The Plocks, Albemarle Road



Variegated brick used for house and boundary wall, Innsworth Lane



Pirton Court, red brick and render



Pirton Court – old farm buildings with steeply pitched roofs, small windows



New Build, Pirton Meadow, opposite old buildings of Pirton Court, the new design reflects the older farm buildings and is pleasing



Innsworth House Farm – traditional farm building with steeply pitched roofs, small windows and elm boarding

In Innsworth, brick and white/off-white render contrast red features such as tiles and roofs. The contrasting red and white is pleasing and the red lifts the appearance of the houses.



Characteristic red and white/off white, use of red tiles lifts the appearance, Mottershead Drive, Innsworth (housing for military families)



Contrast light render with red roofs and brick, Innsworth (newer private housing)



Pleasing contrast between red brick and render, and feature red brickwork around door contrasts with white render, Innsworth (older semis, private housing)



Mix of brick and render, Nightingale Croft (Severn Vale Housing Association)

Elm boards



Sweetbriar House, Chapel Hay Lane, built in style of old farm buildings as shown below – use of variegated brick and replica elm boards in style of old farm building



Original Farm Buildings, now Sweetbriar House with variegated brick, and mix of materials including timber, stone and brick





Elm boarding on farm building at Pirton Court, Pirton Lane (credit: R Warne)

Appendix B Landscaping in residential developments

An important part of any development is its setting. Green spaces, verges, trees and mixed hedgerows creating colour variation are part of the character of Churchdown and Innsworth.



Contrasting colour, size and shapes of hedges, Innsworth Lane, Innsworth



Mixed hedging brightens the street scene, Bader Avenue estate



Variety of colour in hedging, St John's Ave Estate, Churchdown



Creative landscaping at Highgrove Estate, Churchdown with shaped evergreen shrubs

Soft edges to footpaths and permeable surfacing could help to provide a more natural boundary between public areas and private space. In addition, the application of open front boundaries creates a good impression of space, where the back of the pavement meets a lawn, for example.



Varied landscape features, including some wildness, gives interest, Highgrove Way Estate, Churchdown



Wildness give informal, relaxed feel, Highgrove Way Estate, Churchdown



Trees provide wildness and shade, Old Parton Road



Walls bordering public space give cramped, stark and cluttered appearance, Grove Road area, Churchdown



Open front boundaries are tidy and give an impression of neatness and space, Bader Avenue estate, Churchdown



Use of hedging for boundary is appealing, Tudor Close, Churchdown



Traditional front boundary hedge, softens street scene and provides privacy, Rookery Road, Innsworth



Open boundary to public space, effective use of space, Westfield Court, Churchdown

Rear and side boundaries adjacent to public space should be formed from robust materials such as brick, rather than timber fencing which is both easily damaged and can look weather worn within a short space of time.



Good use of brick at side of property, robust, has endured well, Bader Avenue Estate, Churchdown



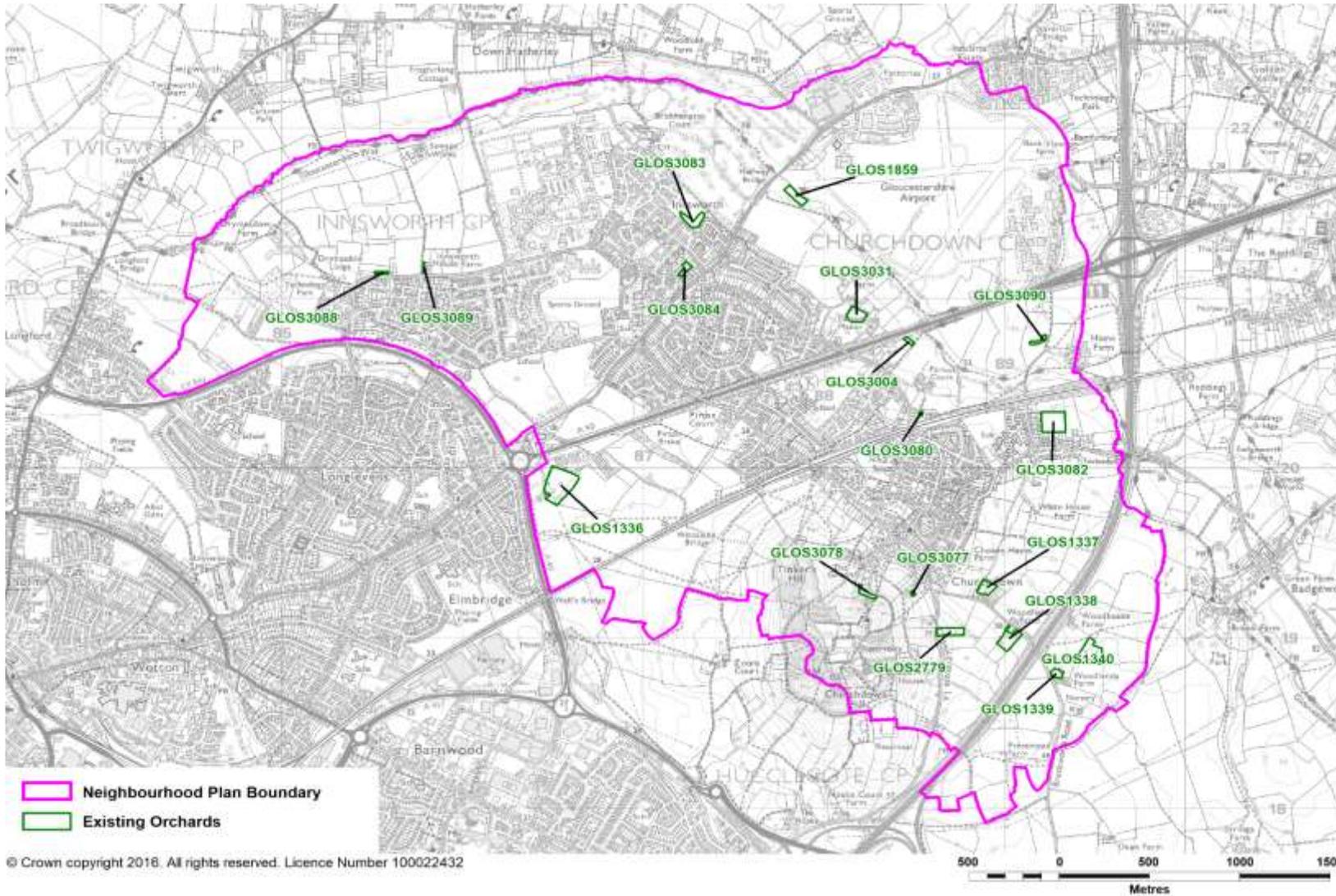
Wooden fence (and wheelie bin) mars the street scene, Bader Ave Estate



Dilapidated and mismatched fences, Innsworth

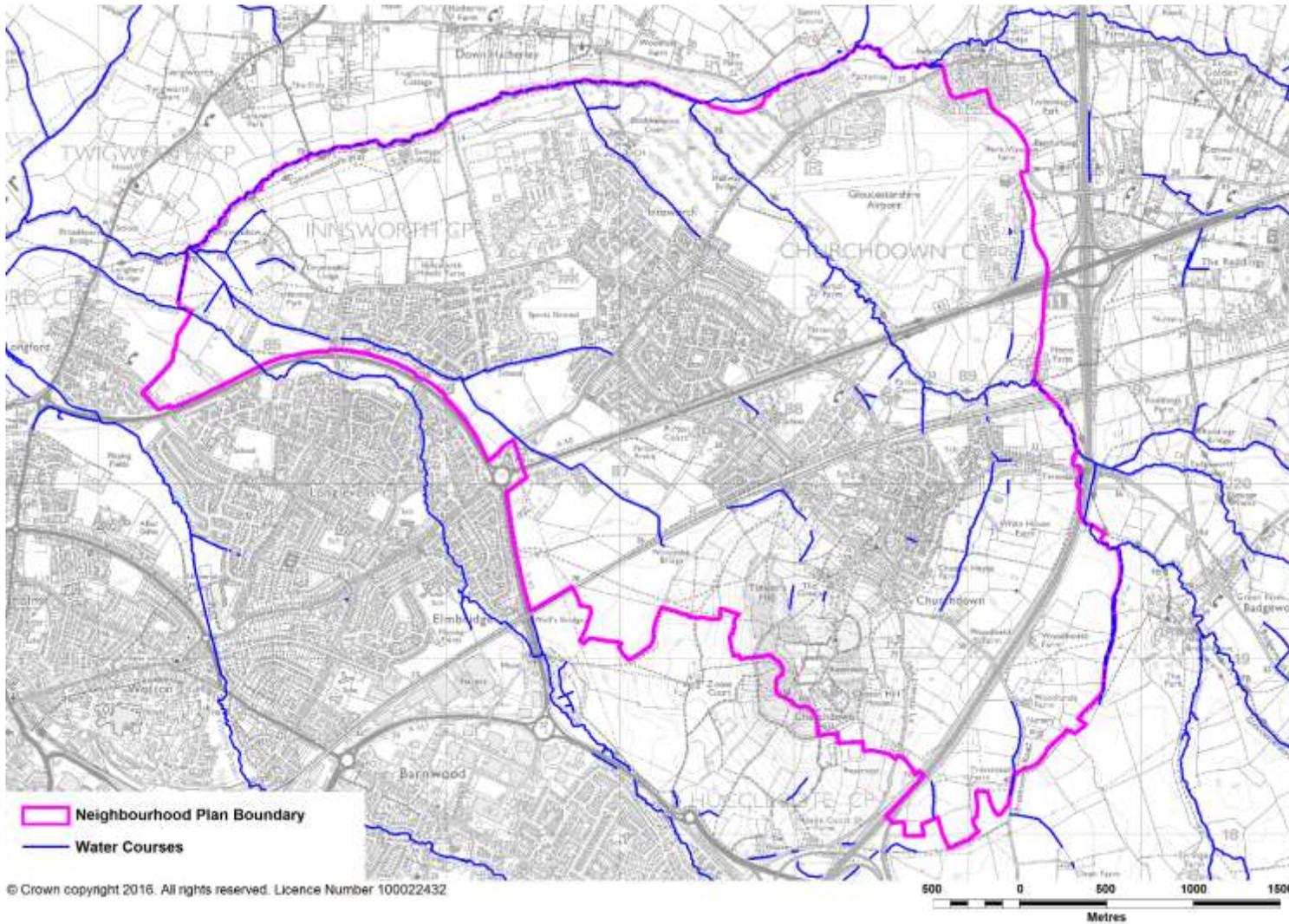
Appendix C Location of historic and existing orchards

Source: Peoples Trust For Endangered Species



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Appendix D Location of watercourses



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