

15 February 2021

Committee	Council
Date	Tuesday, 23 February 2021
Time of Meeting	6:30 pm

This is a remote meeting in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Members of the public will be able to view this meeting whilst it is in session by clicking on the link that will be available on the [Agenda publication](#) page immediately prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Agenda

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements from the Chair of the Meeting and/or the Chief Executive.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

4. MINUTES

1 - 13

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2021.



5. ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- a) To receive any questions, deputations or petitions submitted under Council Rule of Procedure.12.

(The deadline for public participation submissions for this meeting is 17 February 2021).

- b) To receive any petitions submitted under the Council's Petitions Scheme.

6. MEMBER QUESTIONS PROPERLY SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

To receive any questions submitted under Rule of Procedure 13. Any items received will be circulated on 22 February 2021.

(Any questions must be submitted in writing to Democratic Services by, not later than, 10.00am on 15 February 2021).

7. APPOINTMENT OF CIVIC HEADS FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

To recommend the appointment of Civic Heads for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

(a) Mayor

The decision was taken by Council in February 2020 to elect Councillor Andrew Reece as Mayor for 2020/21; however, in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 the Council did not make new appointments for 2020/21 with the previous arrangements remaining in place which now expire in May 2021. The Council is therefore now asked to confirm that Councillor Andrew Reece take office as Mayor for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

(b) Deputy Mayor

The decision was taken by Council in February 2020 to elect Councillor John Murphy as Deputy Mayor for 2020/21; however, in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 the Council did not make new appointments for 2020/21 with the previous arrangements remaining in place which now expire in May 2021. The Council is therefore now asked to confirm that Councillor John Murphy take office as Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Council is asked to consider and determine recommendations of a policy nature arising from the Executive Committee as follows:-

(a) Budget 2021/22

14 - 32

At its meeting on 3 February 2021 the Executive Committee considered the 2021/22 budget and **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

1. That a new budget of £9,270,575 be **APPROVED**.
2. That a Band D Council Tax of £129.36, an increase of £5.00 per annum, be **APPROVED**.
3. That the use of uncommitted reserves totalling £431,108 to support the base budget be **APPROVED**.
4. That the inclusion of growth items within the budget for 2021/22 be **APPROVED** as proposed in Appendix A to the report.
5. That the capital programme be **APPROVED** as proposed in Appendix B to the report.

(If a Councillor intends to move a Motion or Amendment in relation to the Council's annual budget, the text of the proposed Motion or Amendment must be submitted in writing to the Borough Solicitor by 9.00am on the working day preceding the day of the Council meeting).

(b) Interim Housing Strategy

33 - 115

At its meeting on 3 February 2021 the Executive Committee considered the Interim Housing Strategy and **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that it be **APPROVED**.

(Please note an amended version of the Strategy addressing typographical and consistency errors is attached).

9. COUNCIL TAX

The Council is asked to formally set the Council Tax for 2021/22.

(A report will be circulated prior to the meeting).

10. SEPARATE BUSINESS

The Chairman will move the adoption of the following resolution:

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

11. SEPARATE MINUTES

116 - 117

To approve the separate Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2021.

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.

**Head of Democratic Services
for Borough Solicitor**

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held remotely on Tuesday, 26 January 2021
commencing at 6:30 pm**

Present:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Deputy Mayor

Councillor G F Blackwell
Councillor A S Reece

and Councillors:

R A Bird, G J Bocking, C L J Carter, C M Cody, K J Cromwell, R D East, J H Evetts,
P A Godwin, M A Gore, D W Gray, D J Harwood, M L Jordan, J R Mason, H C McLain,
P D McLain, H S Munro, J W Murphy, P W Ockelton, C Reid, J K Smith, P E Smith,
R J G Smith, V D Smith, C Softley, R J Stanley, P D Surman, M G Sztymiak, S Thomson,
R J E Vines, M J Williams and P N Workman

CL.45 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 45.1 The Mayor advised that the meeting was being held under the emergency provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and, specifically, The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. The meeting was being broadcast live via the internet, it was not being recorded by the Council but, under the usual transparency rules, it may be being recorded by others.

CL.46 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 46.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Dean and E J MacTiernan.

CL.47 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 47.1 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.
- 47.2 There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

CL.48 MINUTES

- 48.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2020, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record.

CL.49 ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- 49.1 There were no items from members of the public.

CL.50 MEMBER QUESTIONS PROPERLY SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

CL.51

50.1 The following questions had been received from Councillor Ockelton to the Lead Member for Built Environment. The answers were given by the Lead Member for Built Environment, Councillor Gore, but were taken as read without discussion.

Question 1:

Could the Lead Member for Built Environment update Council on the planned consultation that was due to take place in January 2021 about the non-statutory A46 Route Options.

Answer 1:

The J9/A46 project, which aims to deliver a solution to the capacity issues of the A46 and its junction with the M5, is being led by Gloucestershire County Council, the Local Highway Authority. Current advice received from the County Council is that it is intended to submit the project proposal, when finally developed, to the Department for Transport (DfT) for funding from the Large Local Majors (LLM) fund. As part of this work, a non-statutory public consultation was scheduled for January 2021. This would have involved public consultation in respect of the preferred route options and their development. The consultation has, however, been postponed on the basis of a request from DfT that Highways England need more time to review the proposals. A new schedule is to be finalised but is currently expected to take place in early summer 2021.

Question 2:

Would the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment update Council on the 5 Year Housing Land supply? (5YHLS)

Answer 2:

The current five year land supply statement covering 2020/21 to 2024/25, available on the Council's website, confirms that the Council has a 4.35 year housing supply. Link to webpage provided. This figure takes into account houses that have already been delivered during the plan period.

https://tewkesburyborough-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/website_tewkesburyborough_onmicrosoft_com/EW6OiDUPBS1KnYRWkl-JF-kBvHLGHP6Lr6e42A1dlqiv3A?e=JNxNFG

Question 3:

Considering the confidence statement at the December Council meeting (08/12/20) re s106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy, can the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment please inform Council how confident she is that the priorities within that agenda item will be delivered in the period 2021/22 to 2024/25.

Answer 3:

The Infrastructure Funding Statement approved at Council on 8 December, sets out both reports on the income and expenditure of Community Infrastructure Levy and s106 contribution, as well as an infrastructure list.

The infrastructure list refers to 25 projects, without setting out any priorities between them, which the Council intends will be, or may be, wholly or partly funded by Community Infrastructure Levy. The infrastructure list will be reviewed at least on an annual basis.

Regarding s106 contributions, where explicit expenditure has not been set out within the relevant s106 obligation or undertaking, the process for the allocation of available s106 funds is that these are advertised on the Tewkesbury Borough Council website, social media and press release. Community organisations then complete an expression of interest (EOI), explaining how the funds will be spent and what difference it would make to the community. The decision on the award of funds is made by the Head of Development Services in consultation with the s106 Panel.

Question 4:

Could the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment give her assessment for the number of deliverable sites, for monitoring period 2020/21 to 2024/25?

Answer 4:

I am satisfied that the Council's assessment of deliverable sites for the 2020/21 to 2024/25 monitoring period, which is part of the current five year land supply statement already referred to, is robust.

50.2 The Mayor invited supplementary questions. The Member asked the following and answers were provided by the Lead Member for Built Environment.

Question:

The Lead Member for Built Environment stated that the revised consultation is expected to take place in early Summer 2021. We know from other comparables that Highways England consultations usually span a period of about four months with an additional period of three months for them to consider the consultation responses – so roughly seven months to enable a full and proper consultation. Assuming there is no slippage on the “early Summer” consultation (June) – and then we move forward seven months. That takes us to January 2022 – assuming no slippage. The Lead Member should be aware that nothing more can be done on the JCS Preferred Option Consultation until at least January 2022. However, that does not sit squarely with the way reports have been presented on the timetable. Would the Lead Member agree with the timeline I have suggested and inform Council of the implications this would have on the JCS process.

Answer:

The Lead Member for Built Environment advised that this was led by the County Council and the advice was detailed in the original response.

Question:

I take the information link given, however, as the Council has lost more appeals than it has won, should the Lead Member for Built Environment not take the advice of those planning inspectors, including our local plan inspector and government advice and stop using oversupply incorrectly and identify deliverable housing sites to cover those being discounted at this time.

Answer:

The Lead Member for Built Environment advised that all Members had received a briefing note on the Gotherington appeal and that was the current position.

Question:

I would be grateful if the Lead Member for Built Environment could inform me as to when the A38 A40 Gateway link road (£15.5 million as set out in the 8 December Council meeting, page 69) is likely to be started.

Answer:

The Lead Member for Built Environment undertook to ensure a written response was circulated.

50.3 The following questions had been received from Councillor Ockelton to the Leader of the Council (as Chair of the Planning Policy Reference Panel). The answers were given by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bird, but were taken as read without discussion.

Question 1:

Would the Leader of the Council, as Chair of the Planning Policy Reference Panel (PPRP), please update Council on the current state of the Joint Core Strategy Review.

Answer 1:

At Executive Committee on 6 January 2021 the Local Development Scheme was approved. This sets out the timetable for the JCS review:

- Issues & Options Consultation – Winter 2018/19.
- Preferred Options Consultation – Summer 2021.
- Pre-Submission Consultation – Winter 2022.
- Submission to the Secretary of State – Spring 2023.
- Examination – Summer 2023.
- Adoption – Winter 2023.

Question 2:

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) indicates that assessments should go further, and seek to evidence that completions are likely to be forthcoming, as Chair of the PPRP would the Leader of the Council update Members as to how robust the housing delivery is taking into account the requirements of the PPG.

Answer 2:

I am satisfied that the Council's assessment of deliverable sites for housing has been made in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the guidance within the PPG and is therefore robust.

Question 3:

Would the Leader of the Council please inform Council as to his understanding of the "Plan Led Process", as briefly as is possible, for the JCS.

Answer 3:

The Plan Led process for the JCS is that the Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (adopted December 2017) provides the overarching strategic plan for the area covered by the three Councils and sets out the housing requirements for each of the three Councils.

50.4 The Mayor invited supplementary questions. The Member asked the following and answers were provided by the Leader of the Council.

Question:

Why, as Chair of the PPRP, considering your last response, has the Leader of the Council cancelled the Working Group meetings quoting “the Working Group had no business to discuss”. Obviously, that is not true. Council Minutes from December 2017 states the Review would “move swiftly”. I am struggling to see what pace as we are now in 2021.

Answer:

The Leader of the Council advised that advice was given by Officers at the time that at that moment there was not sufficient work to be undertaken by the PPRP.

Question:

As the local plan has a lack of deliverable identified housing sites, how would the Leader of the Council suggest we meet the required housing numbers or is the Leader of the Council happy to continue the practise of allowing Developers to make those decisions at appeal.

Answer:

The Leader of the Council undertook to ensure a written response was circulated.

Question:

As Tewkesbury Borough Council has lost 64% of appeals, I would suggest that the strategic plan is demonstrably flawed. Would the Leader please inform Council, as the cost to the taxpayer of these appeals and what is his plan B.

Answer:

The Leader of the Council undertook to ensure a written response was circulated.

50.5

The following questions had been received from Councillor Bocking to the Lead Member for Built Environment. The answers were given by the Lead Member for Built Environment, Councillor Gore, but were taken as read without discussion.

Given the disastrous impact from development on the Innsworth Twigworth Longford ward and neighbouring areas, particularly with regard to flood impact where Decembers flooding (although not exceptional) led to some residents' homes being flooded for the first time, or the first time since the exceptional event in 2007. Consequently, I have several questions regarding flooding and the planning process that allowed this to happen and what measures can be taken to safeguard residents should it ever rain heavily again in these areas.

The questions are Ward specific but carry generic full borough implications within the answers they will generate and the methodology by which these answers are reached.

On 17 November 2020 the surface water drainage plan condition for the development of 74 dwellings at Yew Tree Farm in Twigworth was put before the Planning Committee and the Planning Committee decision on this site on surface water management was very narrowly passed only after the assurance was given that no extra water would go into the recently discovered, and not fully explored, Victorian culvert. For this to happen, as water is planned to be pumped uphill to the gully to remove it from site, the surface water currently must be using the gully at the same rate Pumping it there will generate and this would mean it:

- a) runs uphill from the site to the A38;
- b) that there would be no less evaporation from dramatically reducing the water surface area; and

- c) that an area that uses some soak away to control surface water will not have soak away amounts affected in anyway by being built upon.

Given all the information and the setting of attenuation volumes at around ½ a million litres of water the risk is significant.

The Lead Local Flood Authority has said in answer to subsequent questions that the sites surface water “would have flowed onto the A38” (which is uphill) and that answer is final.

Yew Tree farm specific questions:

Question 1:

Can you please confirm that all surface water on the site currently runs uphill from the site to the A38.

Answer 1:

Surface water does not run uphill. Following development, water will be pumped with an electrical pump from the attenuation ponds into the surface water culvert that runs under the A38 and discharges into the Hatherley Brook.

Question 2:

Can you also confirm that there would be no less evaporation from dramatically reducing the water surface area which currently pools across the entire site to just the attenuation ponds surface area, only a small fraction of what it is now.

Answer 2:

The evaporation reduces if the area reduces.

Question 3:

Can you confirm that an area that uses some soak away to control surface water will not have soak away amounts affected in anyway by being built upon.

Answer 3:

The area will be affected by being built on which is, of course, why there is a requirement for suitable drainage systems to be implemented on development sites.

Overall area questions

Question 1:

The local residents, supported by hydrology expert professor Ian Cluckie, have put together a document of flood evidence for the area but there is a delay in it being incorporated into official records due to what has been stated as funding issues, hence could all development in the Twigworth area be suspended while the community’s evidence on flooding is incorporated with Environment Agency data and then flood risk and mitigation is re-evaluated for the area taking all of it into account.

Answer 1:

No, the developers are carrying out works, for which they have in place the necessary planning permissions.

Question 2:

If a developer pumps water off site and it causes flooding or environmental damage elsewhere who is responsible for holding them to account and how are they held accountable.

Answer 2:

This is a civil matter between respective land/property owners.

Question 3:

I am led to believe that Gloucestershire County Council, through its Scrutiny Committee is setting up a scrutiny panel to look at flood mapping, flooding and the planning system, can we ensure that Tewkesbury Borough Council takes an active role with this panel and completes its own scrutiny review to feed into it.

Answer 3:

The County Council has confirmed that a full summary of the December flooding event will be presented to its Environment Scrutiny Committee in March 2021. The summary will be an assessment of the event, comparison of meteorological data, identification of worst hit areas and potential next steps for resilience building. Tewkesbury Borough Council Officers have been working with Gloucestershire County Council Officers to feed back on the impact and the role the Borough Council played in immediate response and initial assessment.

Question 4:

Given that there is the potential for other sites to emerge during the JCS review process how can we, as an authority, guarantee that a full cumulative impact assessment with regard to flooding, both pluvial and fluvial is carried out and fully assessed prior to any sites inclusion.

Answer 4:

A strategic flood risk assessment will be undertaken which will inform whether a site is included within the JCS. This will also consider cumulative impacts.

Question 5:

Because of the increase of flood risk currently being demonstrated in the Innsworth Twigworth Longford Ward and surrounding areas, since the adoption of the JCS and its subsequent impact on properties, who is legally liable should inaccurate conclusions and/or information, or faulty or out of date evidence be shown to be used concerning flood risk in firstly the JCS and secondly the Borough planning process and as the planning authority, what liability do we have if agreed mitigation is not completed to standard or timescales.

Answer 5:

Any legal liability could only be determined on the facts of any particular case.

The Local Planning Authority has a responsibility to ensure, through its planning policies and its determination of planning applications, that future developments are sustainable and do not increase flood risk elsewhere. Development Plans (JCS / Borough Plan) are adopted and individual applications determined following a statutory process that includes examination of the evidence available at that time.

If agreed mitigation, secured by way of planning conditions/obligations, is not completed in accordance with the approved details and at the right time, the Council will take steps as necessary and expedient to enforce any such conditions/obligations.

50.6 The Mayor invited supplementary questions. The Member asked the following and answers were provided by the Lead Member for Built Environment.

Question:

Given that Yew Tree farm's drainage condition only just passed in Planning Committee based on the assurance that no extra water would be having to use the only partially explored, and somewhat dilapidated, Victorian culvert under the A38, and this would have required the current water, (which is due to be pumped there

uphill after development) to be going there now, meaning the water must currently be flowing uphill and defying the scientific rules of evaporation and absorption - which the answers prove it does not. Consequently, could this development be put on hold until there is proof that this somewhat insubstantial culvert is capable of handling this now known about substantial extra volume of water in order to keep existing residents and indeed the A38 safe.

Answer:

The Lead Member for Built Environment undertook to ensure a written response was circulated.

Question:

Given that no developments in the area can be put on hold because of the existence of planning permission, it somewhat limits our options so should it be agreed by Council, Section 97 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that the Local Authority can revoke the planning "In exercising their functions under subsection (1) the authority shall have regard to the development plan and to any other material considerations." While the ins and outs of whether we go down this road is a debate for another time and not relevant here could you please explain what the actual process for the Council for revoking planning under this act is - a material consideration in this case could be flooding.

Answer:

The Lead Member for Built Environment undertook to ensure a written response was circulated.

Question:

Whilst I fully appreciate, we are all human and mistakes will be made, going forward what protections can we, as a local planning authority, put in place so that we can rectify decisions made under the influence of unclear or incorrect information.

Answer:

The Lead Member for Built Environment undertook to ensure a written response was circulated.

Question:

Following on from my questions on potential liability for this Council, and given that currently one developer has been pumping water off their site on a major scale into a local watercourse which is believed by some residents to have had significant impact on flooding, pollution etc. As we are currently not using any enforcement powers to stop this, who is liable if we stand by and do nothing and could we be held accountable for non-action in regard to a known issue.

Answer:

The Lead Member for Built Environment undertook to ensure a written response was circulated.

Question:

As the JCS has fallen seriously short in this area, can we as a Council or with our JCS partners retrospectively and immediately commission a cumulative flood impact assessment including both pluvial and fluvial flood risk as well as impacts from our neighbours and other known external influencing factors (as mentioned) and incorporate this into our development plans? And how can Members and the wider community be reassured that the disjointed approach currently being demonstrated will not be repeated.

Answer:

The Lead Member for Built Environment undertook to ensure a written response was circulated.

- 50.7 The following questions had been received from Councillor Jordan to the Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment. The answers were given by the Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Mason, but were taken as read without discussion.

Question 1:

It is understood that Gloucestershire County Council has an ambition to plant 1 million trees within the next 10 years.

Please can the Portfolio holder for the Clean and Green Environment confirm how many trees Tewkesbury Borough Council planted in 2020 and how many trees were cut down or died in the same year on Tewkesbury Borough Council land or other land over which he has any interest/authority.

Answer 1:

The Council's Tree Safety Management Policy requires that any tree felled on Council land must be replaced, ideally with the same species. Council records indicate that 12 trees were felled and replaced in 2020.

Question 2:

Given the importance of trees to our environment and taking into account issues such as Ash dieback, the Portfolio holder is also asked what Tewkesbury Borough Council's tree planting plans and ambitions are for the next decade.

Answer 2:

The Council's only approved tree management policy is the Tree Safety Management Policy which as previously highlighted requires a one-for-one replacement. The policy does not go further to outline plans to increase the number of trees being planted but the Council will take opportunities within specific projects to plant further trees where possible. The Council is also a partner in the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership which has produced a Gloucestershire Tree Strategy that includes a target, amongst others, of trees and woodlands covering at least 20% of the county by 2030.

- 50.8 The Mayor invited supplementary questions. The Member asked the following and answer was provided by the Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment.

Question:

Is the Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment able to put in place a timebound tree planting strategy to help address this emergency.

Answer:

The Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment undertook to ensure a written response was circulated.

CL.51 SCHEME OF MEMBER ALLOWANCES 2021/22

- 51.1 The report of the Head of Democratic Services, circulated at Pages No. 7-17, asked Members to determine a Scheme of Allowances to take effect on 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2022 having regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

51.2 The recommendation of the Panel was proposed and seconded. During the discussion which ensued, a Member thanked the Independent Remuneration Panel for its report and expressed the view that even with the recommended freeze on allowances, the Council would remain above the national average and given the very difficult and serious effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on so many residents in the Borough, it would be sensible to amend the scheme to introduce a 10% reduction across the Special Responsibility Allowances. This would result in a reduction of £7,147.50 in the total budget requirement which would offset the increase made last year. Other Members agreed with that view and accordingly the amendment was proposed and seconded. Upon being put to the vote the amendment was lost. Councillor C M Cody asked that her vote in favour of the proposal be recorded.

51.3 A recorded vote was requested and, upon receiving the appropriate level of support, voting on the proposal to accept the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel was recorded as follows:

For	Against	Abstain	Absent
R A Bird	C L J Carter	C Softley	M Dean
G F Blackwell	C M Cody		L A Gerrard
G J Bocking	D J Harwood		E J MacTiernan
K J Cromwell	M L Jordan		S A T Stevens
R D East	H S Munro		
J H Evetts	P W Ockelton		
P A Godwin	P E Smith		
M A Gore	R J Stanley		
D W Gray	M G Sztymiak		
J R Mason	S Thomson		
H C McLain	P N Workman		
P D McLain			
J W Murphy			
A S Reece			
C Reid			
J K Smith			
R J G Smith			
V D Smith			
P D Surman			

R J E Vines

M J Williams

51.4 With 21 votes in favour and 10 against, it was

RESOLVED That the Scheme of Allowances for 2021/22 remain unchanged and be as set out in Appendix 1 to the report in accordance with the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

CL.52 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

52.1 The report of the Head of Corporate Services, circulated at Pages No. 18-29, asked Members to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2021-22.

52.2 In proposing that the Pay Policy Statement be approved, the Lead Member for Organisational Development advised that, whilst the Council had always had such a statement, and the activities detailed within it formed part of the Council's business, in terms of transparency it was necessary for the Statement to be approved on an annual basis. The purpose of the Pay Policy Statement was to ensure clarity and accountability with regard to the Council's approach to setting pay and, as detailed in Paragraph 2.1 of the report, this included the method by which salaries and severance payments were determined, the remuneration of senior managers and the remuneration of the lowest level of posts within the Council. The systems, processes and policies which supported the statement were under continual review by the HR team and the statement itself had been scheduled into the team's work programme to ensure it came forward on an annual basis.

52.3 During the discussion which ensued, a Member queried whether the Council employed anyone on zero hours contracts. In response, the Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager explained that the Council did have some staff on casual contracts who were paid for the hours worked. However, this did not apply to many people so was not a significant part of the workforce. In terms of whether or not that should be included in the Pay Policy Statement, the Member was advised that zero hours contracts were one of a number of ways people could be employed by the Council but none of those were required to be included in the Pay Policy Statement. If the Council felt it necessary a paragraph could be included but there was no such obligation upon the Council in that regard.

52.4 Upon being proposed and seconded, it was

RESOLVED That the Pay Policy Statement 2021/22 be **APPROVED**.

CL.53 RECOMMENDATION FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Medium Term Financial Strategy

53.1 At its meeting on 6 January 2021, the Executive Committee had considered the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 and recommended to Council that it be adopted.

53.2 The report which was considered by the Executive Committee had been circulated with the Agenda for the current meeting at Pages No. 30-53.

53.3 The Chair of the Executive Committee proposed the recommendation and the Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management seconded it.

53.4 A brief discussion ensued during which a Member referred to Paragraph 1.2 of the Strategy and noted that, whilst she understood what was actually meant by the sentence 'These are unprecedented times for local government as it responds to the coronavirus pandemic and looks forward to a post Brexit future and a significant impact on the likely level of resources available for public spending in the long term', she felt it would be better to use the word 'faces' instead of 'looks forward to'. The Head of Finance and Asset Management understood the point being made and agreed that the sentence would be amended. Another Member thanked the Head of Finance and Asset Management for taking the time to explain the paper to her and was pleased to note at Paragraph 12.5 that by doing the right thing for the planet the Council was able to save money.

53.5 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED That, subject to the amendment of Paragraph 1.2 to replace the words 'looks forward to' with 'faces', the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 – 2025/26 be **ADOPTED**.

CL.54 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2021/22

54.1 The report of the Head of Democratic Services, circulated at Pages No. 54-56, set out the proposed Schedule of Meetings for 2021/22. Members were asked to adopt the Schedule as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

54.2 The Leader of the Council proposed the Schedule of Meetings as set out on the paper and it was seconded.

54.3 A Member noted that the Council meetings were spread across the year at different intervals and she queried why that was. In response, the Head of Democratic Services explained that the Council had previously made a decision that it did not require meetings on a monthly basis but there were certain events at specific times of the year that needed to be put into the Work Programme, as well as the recommendations from other Committees also feeding in, and this meant the meetings could not just be moved to different months and was the reason that some meetings were closer together than others. There followed a detailed discussion as to the timing of Council meetings going forward as they had been held at 6.30pm while taking place on Zoom but the Schedule of Meetings anticipated that they would move back to 6pm when meetings were once again being held face to face. A number of Members were of the view that 6.30pm was a better time for those that worked during the day and also for members of the public to attend; whereas others felt that 6pm had always worked in previous years and, in order to take account of the workload of Officers, seemed a sensible time to commence the meetings assuming things went back to normal. It was suggested that the Schedule as provided should be agreed at this stage and then could be reviewed in due course given it was not clear currently what would happen in terms of remote meetings going forward. Other Members felt it was clear that thought needed to be given to how to accommodate people that had difficulty attending meetings at 6pm and it was suggested that consideration needed to be given as to the best way to canvass opinion and make a sensible proposal as to whether a change was required.

54.4 Having been proposed and seconded, it was

- RESOLVED**
1. That the Schedule of Meetings for 2021/22, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be **ADOPTED**.
 2. That the Leader of the Council consider the issue of the timing of Council meetings in liaison with the other Group Leaders to determine whether there was a need for the timing of Council meetings to change once remote meetings end and the future of how meetings are to take place going forward was clear.

CL.55 ROYAL GARDEN PARTY

55.1 Attention was drawn to the Agenda which asked Members to note the cancellation of this year's Royal Garden Party due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

55.2 Accordingly, it was

- RESOLVED** That the cancellation of the Royal Garden Party for 2021 be **NOTED**.

CL.56 SEPARATE BUSINESS

56.1 The Mayor proposed, and it was

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

CL.57 SEPARATE MINUTES

57.1 The separate Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2020, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record.

CL.58 SEPARATE RECOMMENDATION FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ubico Contract Review

(Exempt – Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

58.1 At its meeting held on 6 January 2021 the Executive Committee had considered the extension of the Ubico contract and made a recommendation to Council. The Council considered that recommendation and agreed the extension of the Ubico contract.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	3 February 2021
Subject:	Budget 2021/22
Report of:	Head of Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Lead:	Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:

The proposed net budget totals £9.27 million and, after deducting government support and other financing streams, the resultant Council Tax requirement is £4.58 million giving a Band D Council Tax figure of £129.36.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

- i. a net budget of £9,270,575.
- ii. a Band D Council Tax of £129.36, an increase of £5.00 per annum.
- iii. the use of uncommitted reserves totalling £431,108 to support the base budget.
- iv. the inclusion of growth items within the budget for 2021/22 as proposed in Appendix A.
- v. the capital programme as proposed in Appendix B.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Council must set a balanced budget and a level of Council Tax necessary to meet its revenue needs, but it must be set at a level affordable to the taxpayer and within the parameters set by the government.

Resource Implications:

Set out in this report.

Legal Implications:

Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended places a duty on the Council, as Billing Authority, to calculate before 11 March 2021 its budget requirement for 2021/22.

Under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Section 151 Officer must report on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of making the appropriate calculations and of the adequacy of the Council's proposed financial reserves.

Risk Management Implications:

As set out within in the report.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Performance reports are presented to Members on a quarterly basis and include details of the revenue and capital budgets performance and updates on the use of reserves.

Environmental Implications:

None directly from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Council considered the Council's financial position as shown in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) at its meeting on 26 January 2021.
- 1.2** The MTFS outlines the budget pressures currently facing this Council now and in future years. It depicts the gap between the estimated net budget of the Council and the estimated funding available in order to finance that net expenditure. The deficit over the five years of the MTFS is estimated to be in the order of £7.4 million with a gap suggested in 2021/22 of approximately £2.2 million.
- 1.3** The production of the MTFS has this year included the relative content from the Spending Review and the details of the Local Government Finance Settlement. In summary, the headlines from these include:
- A one year only Spending Review period, covering 2021-22.
 - An inflationary increase to needs based central funding.
 - Confirmation of a one year delay to the Fair Funding Review and the implementation of a 75% Business Rates Retention Scheme.
 - The phased withdrawal of the New Homes Bonus scheme but with a commitment to consult on a replacement scheme.
 - A range of one off funding measures to support Councils in dealing with the impact of COVID-19 and to ensure that there is no reduction in Core Spending Power.
 - Continuation of the Council Tax threshold for District Councils being the higher of 2% or £5.
- 1.4** This report now brings together the general information on the financial climate with the detailed figures associated with the 2021/22 budget and the work undertaken by the Transform Working Group and makes a proposal for a balanced budget and resultant Council Tax. The proposal made is in light of the budget deficit for 2021/22 as a result of the impact of the previous bullet points and the detailed analysis of income and expenditure budgets for the next financial year.
- 1.5** Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Financial Officer (nominated Section 151 Officer) to make a statement to the Council on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of financial reserves. This statement is set out in section 11 of this report. The Council is under a statutory obligation to have regard to this when making its decision on the proposed budget.

- 1.6** In setting the budget for 2021/22, the Council has continued to provide the same level of service as in previous years and in many areas looks to provide an enhanced service. In addition, and despite the financial challenges facing the Council, including the loss of £1.25 million of New Homes Bonus funding, the proposed budget includes the addition of £416,850 of ongoing growth in our services and over £800,000 of one off growth to further support services and Council plan ambitions. The proposed budget is however reliant on the use of £431,108 of uncommitted Council reserves and a Council Tax increase of £5 per annum for a Band D property. There are no planned redundancies within the recommended budget.
- 1.7** The approval of the 2021/22 budget will mark the start of the process to set a balanced budget for 2022/23. Much will depend on the government providing clear information on proposed funding for local government in 2022/23 and beyond but the Council will also need to consider its expenditure plans over the medium term and look to align those plans with the likely level of resources available.

2.0 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2021/22

- 2.1** The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22 includes funding levels for Revenue Support Grant (RSG), Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG) and the Business Rates baseline funding. This is essentially the government's assessment of the needs based funding required to provide services within the Borough.
- 2.2** The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22 was announced on 17 December 2020. The settlement is subject to consultation which will end on 16 January 2021, with a final settlement expected at the end of January. The figures within the settlement are in line with expectations and Table 1 highlights the confirmed level of support for the next financial year.

Table 1

	2019/20	2020/21	2020/22
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cash levels			
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	23	23	23
Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG)	14	14	14
Business Rates baseline funding	1,815	1,846	1,846
Total	1,852	1,883	1,883
Change in funding (£)			
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	-259	0	0
Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG)	3	0	0
Business Rates baseline funding	39	31	0
Total	-217	31	0
Change in funding (%)			
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	-91.84%	0.00%	0.00%
Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG)	27.27%	0.00%	0.00%
Business Rates baseline funding	2.20%	1.71%	0.00%
Total	-10.49%	1.67%	0.00%

- 2.3** As can be seen from Table 1, the Council's core funding level in 2021/22 is on a par with that of the current year. An inflationary increase of 0.55%, being the CPI figure for September 2020, has been applied to RSG generating an uplift of £128 whilst an injection of funding into the RSDG has seen that increase by £679. The business rates multiplier for 2021/22 has been frozen by government, despite September's CPI figures, in an effort to support business during the pandemic. The inflationary increase would have seen a small uplift in the business rates baseline funding but that will not happen given the freeze on the multiplier and our baseline funding level will stay the same. The government is required to compensate local authorities for this decision by providing a section 31 grant of the equivalent value and that will be represented in the business rates retained income figures shown in section 4.
- 2.4** In addition to the needs based funding, the Provisional Settlement also outlined several new, one-off grants to support local authorities in 2021/22. The first of these is the Council Tax Support Grant with £670 million being allocated nationally. This is not a scheme whereby the funding is passed onto taxpayers facing hardship in the current financial climate, but is in fact intended to support Councils to deal with the increase in claimants for the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme arising from the impact of coronavirus. At the time of writing, Tewkesbury has seen a 40% increase in working age claimant caseload and, as a result of the increased Council Tax discount awarded, has seen a significant fall in the level of tax base growth expected – see section 7.7. This one-off grant is aimed at supporting that increased discount and the amount allocated to Tewkesbury is £93,201. Current government expectations are that claimant numbers should fall to normal levels for 2022/23 and therefore no grant will be required going forward.
- 2.5** The Lower Tier Services grant is also a new, one-off grant scheme with £111 million allocated nationally to support lower tier services in 2021/22. The grant takes its funding from the surplus within the New Homes Bonus scheme and effectively acts to ensure that no authority see its Core Spending Power reduce from the previous year as a result of changes in other areas of funding. As Tewkesbury Borough Council will see significant reductions in its New Homes Bonus (NHB) for 2021/22 – see section 3 – the Lower Tier Services Grant for Tewkesbury Borough Council totals £932,465. This grant offsets much of the loss being experienced in NHB but it must be stressed that currently the grant is only awarded for 2021/22 and there are no indications that it will continue beyond that year.
- 2.6** Other one off grant funding was also announced in the Provisional Settlement and includes the Tax Income Guarantee Scheme which will fund 75% of irrecoverable losses in both Council Tax and business rates for the 2020/21 year. The amount of the claim that will be made for these tax losses will be calculated at year end with the outturn figures for both Council Tax and business rates and compensation payments are expected to be made in January 2022. Given this, it is not possible to include an amount within the proposed budget and the receipt from this scheme will be treated as an in year gain rather than being part of the base budget. A further tranche of COVID-19 grant funding was also announced which will see Tewkesbury receive £424,927 in the first quarter of 2021/22. Again, this will not form part of the Council's base budget but will offset any additional expenditure or lost income as a result of Coronavirus in year.

2.7 The government's preferred measure of financial resources available to local government is called the Core Spending Power (CSP) and takes into account all of the grants referred to in the previous paragraphs, New Homes Bonus and Council Tax to forecast the level of total resources available to local government in the coming year. For upper tier authorities it also includes items such as the adult social care precept and the social care support grant. The headline figure for local government sees an increase of 4.5% or £2.2 billion in funding for 2021/22. This is largely made up of increases to Council Tax income (87% of the total) as the government assumes all Councils will make the decision to increase Council Tax by the maximum possible before referendum and an assumption of average growth in the tax base throughout the country. This continues a feature of recent settlements in that a greater burden for funding local government has been placed on the local taxpayer.

2.8 Tewkesbury's CSP forecast for 21/22 is somewhat less than the national average, standing at 0%, and only reaches 0% as a result of the new Lower Tier Services Grant and the assumption of Council Tax increases. Table 2 illustrates how Tewkesbury's CSP is calculated:

Table 2 – Tewkesbury's Core Spending Power

	2020-21	2021-22
	£ millions	£ millions
Settlement Funding Assessment	1.9	1.9
Compensation for under-indexing the rates multiplier	0.1	0.1
Council Tax Requirement excluding parish precepts	4.4	4.7
New Homes Bonus	3.8	2.5
Rural Services Delivery Grant	0.0	0.0
Lower Tier Services Grant	0.0	0.9
Core Spending Power	10.1	10.1
Increase (£)		0.0
Increase (%)		0.00%

2.9 Funding beyond 2021/22 is currently not known. The Spending Review in 2020 only provided for a one year funding settlement and it is hoped a multi-year settlement can be agreed as soon as possible in 2021. Similarly, the Fair Funding Review, which has again been delayed for a year, needs to be concluded and provide clarity on the method for allocating overall funding to individual local authorities.

3.0 NEW HOMES BONUS

3.1 The Provisional Settlement for 2021/22 has confirmed that New Homes Bonus (NHB) will be withdrawn over a three year period. This has widely been touted as the most likely direction the government would take on this funding stream for the last eighteen months and confirmation has now been received of the reduced value for 2021/22 and likely profile of reduction in the following two years.

3.2 For 2021/22, local authorities will receive NHB payments in respect of only three years rather than four:

- Years 8 and 9 (legacy payments for growth in previous years).
- Year 11 (payments earned based on data from October 2020 – no legacy payments associated with this year).

Year 10, which was first received in 2020/21, will not attract any legacy payments and therefore is withdrawn. Only one year of benefit has been derived from that particular year of growth rather than the usual four. This is particularly disappointing for Tewkesbury as year 10 was the biggest single year of bonus at £1.11 million.

For 2022/23, Tewkesbury will only receive NHB from the final year of Year 9 legacy payments. Year 8 will drop out after delivering four years of funding, whilst Year 11 has been announced for one year only i.e. no legacy payments.

3.3 For Year 11, which is based on growth between October 2019 and October 2020, the value of the NHB will be £644,982. This is significantly lower than previous years and reflects the slowdown in growth in the Borough as a result of Coronavirus and an increase in the number of empty properties. Table 3 details the projection of NHB over the medium term.

Table 3 – Projection of NHB

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 Projection	2023/24 Projection
Year 6	£0	£0	£0	£0
Year 7	£750,088	£0	£0	£0
Year 8	£898,713	£898,713	£0	£0
Year 9	£965,166	£965,166	£965,166	£0
Year 10	£1,148,789	£0	£0	£0
Year 11	£0	£644,982	£0	£0
Year 12	£0	£0	£0	£0
Year 13	£0	£0	£0	£0
	£3,762,756	£2,508,861	£965,166	£0
Variance (£)	£489,358	-£1,253,895	-£1,543,695	-£965,166
Variance (%)	14.94%	-33.32%	-61.53%	-100.00%

3.4 As can be seen from the table, the Council will receive £2.51 million in 2021/22 from the NHB scheme. This is a reduction of £1.25 million on the current levels. The table also forecasts the elimination of NHB over the following two years with reductions in finance of £1.54 million and then £0.96 million.

3.5 The Council's allocation in 2020/21 of £3.76 million enabled the base budget support of £2.81 million to continue whilst supporting a further £952,000 of 'one-off' uses. Given the reduction in NHB funding for 2021/22 of 33%, it will no longer be possible to support these one-off uses with NHB and, in addition, the core funding support will need to fall by nearly £302,000 to £2.51 million. This core budget support will therefore utilise 100% of the NHB available in 2021/22 and beyond.

- 3.6** Some of the one-off uses have been supported for a number of years and some are essential every few years. Examples of these uses include planning appeals, community grants, asset maintenance and the Borough Elections. Items such as planning appeals and the Borough Elections are unavoidable costs and will need to be brought inside the base budget in 2021/22 and the following years. Other items will need to be considered as growth items, either for ongoing funding as part of the base budget or as funded on a one-off basis only. Section 6 looks at the growth items recommended for inclusion within the overall budget for 2021/22.
- 3.7** Given that the government is only funding three years of NHB rather than the usual four years, the surplus within the NHB scheme, estimated at £278 million out of the £900 million allocation, would normally be returned to local government pro rata to the top slice of Revenue Support Grant that funds NHB. The government has opted not to follow this requirement of the system but has instead used the surplus to fund the new Lower Tier Services Grant of £111 million, 50% of the new Social Care grant at £150 million and also funded the inflationary uplift in needs based funding. This change in use for the surplus undermines confidence in the management of funding schemes and the settlement itself whilst allowing funding packages to be falsely represented as new. However, in Tewkesbury's case this has worked to its advantage with the £932,465 of Lower Tier Service grant being a far greater amount than would have been allocated through a normal NHB surplus redistribution.
- 3.8** Looking beyond the NHB scheme, the government is making very clear that it wants to replace NHB with something that is more "targeted". Any replacement is unlikely to distribute as much funding as the NHB currently does, or to be distributed in the same way, but at least there will be some financial reward for delivering housing growth in the coming years. A consultation document is expected early in 2021 which will give some idea of the likely replacement scheme with indications being that the new scheme will go live in 2022/23 and reduce some of the impact of known losses in the NHB scheme.

4.0 BUSINESS RATES RETENTION

- 4.1** In recent years Tewkesbury Borough has benefited from significant amounts of retained business rates income to support its base budget. The current year reflects this with a base budget estimate of £603,335 of retained income and a Business Rates Collection Fund distributable surplus of over £3.5 million, largely delivered from the release of provisions made in previous years. This position is in stark contrast to the substantial losses made in the early years of the retained business rates scheme.
- 4.2** As indicated earlier in this report, the government's intention to move the local authority sector as a whole to a 75% retention scheme from 1 April 2021 has now been delayed for a further year. In addition, the proposed reset of the system has also been postponed. Therefore, the calculation of the likely level of retention for 2021/22 has been made against the existing 50% retention scheme. The calculation has also needed to reflect the currently known impact of coronavirus on the business community and a forecast of further potential changes to the collectable debit as a result of additional properties becoming vacant, changes to valuations as a result of Material Change in Circumstances and an increase in write offs. As a result, the estimate of retained business rates income has fallen to £130,047.

- 4.3** In addition to the in budgeted in year retention, the Council budgets for the surplus or deficit arising on the Business Rates Collection Fund in the previous year. As would be expected in 2020/21, there has been a severe negative impact on rates collection as a result of the pandemic. A number of businesses have either not been required to pay rates in the year, have not been able to pay or have simply chosen to not yet pay. The collective impact of this is a substantial deficit of which Tewkesbury's share totals £4.65 million. However, this deficit will be matched out within our budget by a business rates reserve funded from s31 government grant intended to meet the cost of the retail relief provided. The overall impact on our budget is therefore nil.
- 4.4** In addition to our own, individual performance, Tewkesbury Borough has been a member of the Gloucestershire Pool which incorporates all Gloucestershire authorities and, through the inclusion of the County Council, results in a much reduced levy payment being applied, therefore generating higher levels of retained income within Gloucestershire. This increased retention is shared directly amongst the Councils and also with the Strategic Economic Development Fund in Gloucestershire. Section 151 Officers have risk assessed the proposed pool in 2021/22 and, despite the impact of coronavirus on forecast business rates, believe there is sufficient existing retention within the system to mitigate against the risk of losses materialising. Tewkesbury will therefore continue within the pool for 2021/22 and any additional retention delivered by the pool arrangements will be treated as a windfall bonus at the year end.
- 4.5** Whilst the government has again postponed the move to 75% retention and the system reset for another year, further delays cannot be ruled out given the impact of the pandemic and the withdrawal from the European Union.

5.0 COUNCIL TAX

- 5.1** Given the level of deficit for 2021/22, as described in later sections of this report, and the Medium term financial forecast of continued deficits, it is once again necessary to recommend an increase in Council Tax in order to balance next year's budget and improve the Council's financial footing as it looks towards future deficit reduction. It is recommended that a £5 per annum increase at Band D level, equivalent to 4.02%, is approved, generating an additional £177,000 of ongoing income to support the Council's core services.
- 5.2** The level of increase proposed is in line with the government's set threshold, of £5 or 1.99%, whichever is the higher, for determining whether a District Council Tax increase is excessive and should be put to a local referendum. Thresholds for other precepting bodies are:
- 1.99% for basic Council Tax and 3% for the Adult Social Care levy for upper tier authorities.
 - £15 for Police and Crime Commissioners (£10, £24 and £12 in preceding years).
 - There are again no thresholds for Town and Parish Councils.
- 5.3** The proposed increase will be the sixth year in succession that the Council will have increased the Council Tax. This follows the period from 2011 to 2016 where Tewkesbury decided to freeze its share of the Council Tax in order to support its taxpayers during tough economic times. The proposed increase would set the Band D Council Tax at £129.36 per annum and most likely keep the Council around the fifth lowest District Tax in England. The proposed tax would also keep the Council in the lowest quartile for Council Tax charges and would be approximately £43 lower than the lower quartile threshold and some £69 short of the average District Council for 2021/22.

5.4 The impact of this proposal on the Borough taxpayers is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4

Band	No. of properties	Percent of total	Annual Council Tax 20/21	Annual Council Tax 21/22	Annual Increase
A	6,613	15.53%	£82.91	£86.24	£3.33
B	6,716	15.77%	£96.72	£100.61	£3.89
C	11,926	28.01%	£110.54	£114.99	£4.44
D	6,209	14.58%	£124.36	£129.36	£5.00
E	5,458	12.82%	£152.00	£158.11	£6.11
F	3,475	8.16%	£179.63	£186.85	£7.22
G	1,988	4.67%	£207.27	£215.60	£8.33
H	200	0.47%	£248.72	£258.72	£10.00

5.5 The Council's recent record on Council Tax is shown below for information.

Table 5

Year	Council Tax £	Increase Pa £	Increase %
2011/12	99.36	0.00	0.00
2012/13	99.36	0.00	0.00
2013/14	99.36	0.00	0.00
2014/15	99.36	0.00	0.00
2015/16	99.36	0.00	0.00
2016/17	104.36	5.00	5.03
2017/18	109.36	5.00	4.79
2018/19	114.36	5.00	4.57
2019/20	119.36	5.00	4.37
2020/21	124.36	5.00	4.19

6.0 GROWTH

6.1 As part of the formation of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, a major exercise was undertaken this year to reveal the potential cost of growth that the Council could face over the next five years. Managers were asked to put forward growth requirements where there were service needs or where a Council Plan ambition needed funding. In addition, the exercise captured the areas of expenditure which have traditionally been funded from New Homes Bonus and the revenue impact from potential capital projects that may be required.

6.2 This exercise resulted in over £2.1 million additional cost being identified for 2021/22 with the majority being required on an ongoing basis. Given the financial constraints of the Provisional Settlement and the outlook for local government funding being uncertain, it is not possible to fund all of this requirement and difficult decisions have been made with regards to which requests will receive funding, which will be funded on an ongoing basis, which will be funded on a one-off basis, which will be funded from other sources and which cannot, unfortunately, be supported at all.

6.3 Appendix A details those growth requests and highlights those included within the budget proposal.

6.4 Despite the financial challenges, the budget proposal included £416,850 of ongoing growth and a further £827,500 of one off support. In addition to this, the COVID-19 Recovery Fund, previously allocated by Executive Committee, has supported a further £206,000 of proposals which will support service requirements in the current year and into 2021/22.

7.0 BUDGET PROPOSALS

7.1 The base estimates for the Council in 2021/22 have been compiled, including the proposed growth, and are detailed in table 6.

Table 6

	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Variance (£)	Variance (%)
Chief Executives unit	£269,060	£270,911	£1,851	0.69%
Corporate Services	£2,189,614	£2,473,907	£284,293	12.98%
Democratic Services	£776,824	£774,715	-£2,109	-0.27%
One Legal	£318,371	£325,477	£7,106	2.23%
Deputy Chief Executive	£187,539	£128,445	-£59,094	-31.51%
Development Services	£1,062,879	£1,218,309	£155,430	14.62%
Community Services	£4,296,508	£4,674,581	£378,073	8.80%
Finance and Assets	-£144,188	-£595,770	-£451,582	-313.19%
TOTAL	£8,956,607	£9,270,575	£313,968	3.51%

7.2 The estimates for 2021/22 include the following headlines:

- A reflection of the Chancellor's call for Public Sector pay restraint with estimates reflecting a pay freeze core principle with the exception of workers earning less than £24,000 per annum where a £500 uplift is included. Whilst this reflects the chancellor's call, and the funding within the provisional settlement, it should be noted that local government pay is subject to negotiations between Unions and the employers and these are yet to progress. Should agreement be reached which sees a settlement in excess of the Council's assumptions, funding from reserves will be required in 2021/22. Significant savings on the cost of employees have been derived from the amendment to our normal 2% uplift expectation.
- Additional salary savings expectations of £97,500 have been included reflecting expected savings from the senior management team and general turnover of staff.
- The Gloucestershire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) was revalued in 2019 and contribution rates set for the next three years. The amount which is required to repay the accumulated deficit has been reduced significantly within the valuation and as a result a further reduction of £196,000 is factored into our 2021/22 estimates. This results in the Council's annual contribution to the deficit falling to £1.465m, significantly reduced from £1.968m in 2019/20.
- An increased cost of £183,000 (4.5%) on the annual Ubico contract. Some of this increase was already known through the increased corporate recharge of £98,549 having previously been highlighted as an issue with previous contract sums. Other elements of the increase are related to inflationary pressures on employees and vehicles. In order to manage the cost of vehicle maintenance, it has been agreed to budget at an average cost for the final three years of the vehicle fleets useful life and use a newly established reserve to manage the risk of excess costs in the next two years. This new reserve is contained within the growth proposals. Overall, the contract sum for 2021/22 stands at £4.24m.

- A stretch target for garden waste income of £46,000 resulting in an overall forecast of £991,000 income from garden waste.
- The inclusion of two new commercial properties with gross annual rent in excess of £900,000.
- Reductions in costs derived from reduced business travel and climate change action plans.
- Reflection of very low interest rates throughout 2020/21 resulting in reduced investment income but also reduced borrowing costs. Additional borrowing costs, from the purchase of two new commercial properties, have also been added to the overall treasury position leading to a net increase in treasury costs of £123,000.
- Newly identified ongoing and one-off growth as detailed within Appendix A.

7.3 The finance available to fund the Net Budget Requirement is as follows:

Table 7

Financing stream	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	Variance (£)	Variance (%)
Revenue Support Grant	-£23,157	-£23,285	-£128	0.55%
Rural Services Delivery Grant	-£13,779	-£14,458	-£679	4.93%
Business Rates Baseline	-£1,846,233	-£1,846,233	£0	0.00%
Retained Business Rates	-£738,837	£4,519,103	£5,257,940	-711.65%
New Homes Bonus	-£3,762,756	-£2,508,861	£1,253,895	-33.32%
Collection Fund surplus	-£82,200	-£24,833	£57,367	-69.79%
Minimum Revenue Provision	£642,162	£882,413	£240,251	37.41%
Net Transfer to / (from) reserves	£1,263,185	-£4,649,020	-£5,912,205	-468.04%
Council Tax Hardship Fund	£0	-£93,201	-£93,201	-
Lower Tier Services Grant	£0	-£932,465	-£932,465	-
Total	-£4,561,615	-£4,690,840	-£129,225	2.83%
Service Expenditure b/fwd	£8,956,607	£9,270,575	£313,968	3.51%
Balance to be funded by Tax Payers	£4,394,992	£4,579,735	£184,743	4.20%

7.4 Table 7 highlights an increase in the financing streams available to fund the cost of services totalling £129,225 or 2.8%. This is largely as a consequence of the use of Council revenue reserves, totalling £431,108, which is necessary to provide a balanced budget for 2021/22. This is a one-off injection of funding and is matched off against the one off growth approved thereby creating no ongoing requirement. It is estimated that the Council will have approximately £2.4m left in its uncommitted balances following the likely deficit outturn position for the current year and the one off funding being utilised during 2021/22. This is a reasonably healthy position from which the Council will be able to support future year budgets or the structural changes required in order to be financially sustainable in the future.

7.5 Also included within the financing streams are:

- An increase in the Minimum Revenue Provision of £240,251 reflecting the increased borrowing undertaken in the current year.
- Contributions to the vehicle replacement reserve and commercial property reserve of £500,000 and £225,000 respectively.
- Use of £100,000 from the open spaces reserve to fund the enhanced resource requirement in grounds maintenance.
- £5.05m contribution from business rates reserves to meet the business rates collection fund deficit.

7.6 After deducting the financing streams from the net cost of services, the balance of expenditure to be funded by Council Tax Payers is £4,579,735 for 2021/22, an increase of £184,743 on the current year.

7.7 As highlighted previously, the growth of the Council’s tax base has been suppressed in comparison to previous years. Given the development taking place in the Borough, the average annual increase in the tax base has been 2.2% resulting in the number of Band D equivalents increasing by around 777 units. Whilst growth has taken place in 2020, albeit at reduced levels, the level of discount awarded through the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme has increased dramatically as the number of working age claimants has grown. The growth of circa 40% has resulted in a significant impact on the tax base although not to the extent seen in many local authorities where the tax base is actually reducing. The tax base for 2021/22 is 35,403.02 an increase of 62.14 Band D equivalents or 0.2%.

7.8 Table 8 highlights the movement on the tax base, the balance to be funded by tax payers and the corresponding tax increase required whilst table 9 breaks down the additional tax receipts between the tax base increase and the tax charge increase.

Table 8

	2020/21	2021/22	Variance
Balance to be funded by Tax Payers	£4,394,992	£4,579,735	£184,743
Tax base	35,340.88	35,403.02	62.14
Council tax @ Band D	£124.36	£129.36	£5.00

Table 9

Council tax raised through tax base increase	£7,727.73
Council tax raised through charge increase	£177,015.27
Additional council tax raised	£184,743.00

8.0 RISKS

8.1 The Council’s budget is prepared using best estimates for the level and timing of expenditure, budget & efficiency savings and available resources. However, a number of uncertainties exist which could have an impact on the budget of the Council:

- Government Support – the settlement is only provisional and is subject to change. Funding levels beyond 2021/22 are, as yet, unknown. A prudent view of future years funding has been included in the MTFP.
- Impact of Coronavirus – the budget has been prepared without estimation of both the cost of a continuation of the pandemic or an estimate of potential government support. It is hoped that there will be a reduced impact in 2021/22 and will be matched off by government funding but a more significant impact cannot be ruled out resulting in a call on Council reserves.
- Impact of Coronavirus – shortfalls in taxation receipts during 2021/22 will be reflected in collection fund deficits which will impact the 2022/23 budget.
- Business Rates – Until such time as the issues with backdated appeals have been resolved, accurately forecasting the level of business rate income is difficult. Provisions are made within the scheme to deal with expected bad debts and appeals but these may not be sufficient. The Council is also a member of the Gloucestershire Pool and so the performance of neighbouring authorities with regards to rates retention will impact on Tewkesbury’s overall retention.
- Interest rate forecasts – rates continue at a historically low level. The current base rate is 0.1%. Our Treasury estimates, informed by our advisors, are based upon a continuation of the current base rate but further cuts and a negative rate cannot be ruled out. Changes will affect both the level of return from investments but also

the cost of borrowing.

- Political and economic uncertainty – the estimates have been prepared based on a stable footing and normal operating conditions. Economic impacts from recession or exit from the European Union could have knock on-effects on the cost of goods and services, levels of income and costs arising from further requirements on local government.
- Budgetary control – whilst every effort is made by services to operate within their set budgets, in some circumstances, overspends are unavoidable.
- The cost of disposing of recyclate is significant and is subject to the market and the quality and quantity of materials collected. Best estimates of prices and tonnages have been made, reflecting the likely position, but this could be subject to significant change. Impact from this change will also affect the level of recycling credit income generated.
- A contract sum with our waste provider Ubico has been agreed for the new year. This is not a fixed sum and the Council is liable for any overspend occurred by the contractor.
- As previously indicated, there is currently no agreement with regards to the 2021 pay award. The budget therefore carries a risk that there is insufficient money within it to meet the agreement that will be made between the Unions and employers.
- New budgetary pressures may emerge e.g. the external funding of the Garden Town may not be agreed and delivered.

8.2 As detailed in the following section, the Council does hold reserves which can meet any unforeseen costs highlighted within the risks.

9.0 REVENUE RESERVES

9.1 As at 31 March 2020, the Council had earmarked reserves totalling £7.33 million. This is a reduction on the previous year and reflects the timing of costs and income associated with the Business Rates Collection Fund surplus. The surplus will be realised in 2020/21 and will fund the deficit created by the pandemic. In addition, and based on projections prior to the latest lockdown, it is estimated that a further £3 million will be added to the reserves of the Council, giving the Council over £10 million in its useable revenue reserves. The additional monies will replenish the MTFs fund to meet the call on reserves for 2021/22, as detailed earlier in the report, and provide funding to meet future financial challenges.

Other reserves exist to manage risk to the authority, such as the business rates reserve, whilst other reserves plan for future expenditure, such as the vehicle replacement reserve and the asset management reserve. The remainder of the reserves provide for service specific activities and in many cases are funded via external grant.

9.2 In addition, there is an uncommitted General Fund working balance of £800,000. This reserve was increased by £250,000 in June 2019 in recognition of how low it was in comparison to other District Councils. This was highlighted within CIPFA's Financial Resilience Index. This year's index suggests that this uncommitted balance is still low and should be increased should funds become available at the year end outturn.

9.3 The revenue reserves are reviewed and approved annually as part of the closure of accounts. A Financial Outturn report will be taken to Executive Committee in June to approve the reserves of the Council for 2021/22.

10.0 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 10.1** The current capital programme is shown at Appendix B and covers forward forecasts of the next five years.
- 10.2** The programme is reduced in size in comparison to previous year and totals £15.1 million over the five years. A pause on commercial property acquisition has been put in place pending a formal decision not to pursue any further commercial properties. This is in light of changes introduced by the government to public borrowing regulations, strong messaging about the appropriateness of commercial investment by the public sector and the obvious impact of the coronavirus impact on some sectors within the commercial property world. A formal report on this issue and the progress of the commercial portfolio will be brought to members at the earliest opportunity but in the meantime the balance of funding allocated, circa £6.6 million, will be removed from the capital programme.
- 10.3** Significant expenditure within the remaining programme includes the delivery of a bridge at Ashchurch to support the delivery of the Garden Town. This totals £8.1 million and is funded entirely from external grants. Also included in the programme is the re-provision of a large proportion of the vehicle fleet totalling £3.53 million and funded from revenue set aside. Historical levels of expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are projected throughout the programme and are financed entirely by government grant.
- 10.4** The capital programme also includes anticipated receipts and for the first time includes anticipated receipts from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). These estimates will be refined and extended over time and as spending plans become clear, these will need to be added to the programme.

11.0 STATEMENT OF CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 11.1** Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Financial Officer to make a statement on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of financial reserves when considering its budget and council tax. The Act requires Councillors to have regard to the report in making decisions at the Council's budget and Council Tax setting meeting.
- 11.2** The basis on which the budget for 2021/22 has been prepared has been set out very clearly in this report and the previous MTFs report. I am satisfied that the budgets for the General Fund and the Capital Programme have been based on sound assumptions.
- 11.3** The grant settlement for 2021/22 and the cost pressure on service areas have had a significant impact on the Council's finances and the current economic climate continues to challenge the financial affairs of the Council. The high level of uncertainty surrounding the future of local government finance also causes great difficulty. It is as a result of this continued uncertainty that the Council has had the good foresight in previous years to set aside uncommitted reserves to meet its financial challenges. The budget for 2021/22 now calls on those reserves in provide a balanced budget.
- 11.4** The potential impact of the withdrawal of New Homes Bonus coupled with a potential reset of the business rates retention system is likely to cause further significant financial challenges in the coming years. Action will need to be taken to ensure that in future years, the Council's spending plans are reduced to match the resources available.
- 11.5** The Council has a good record for only including in the budget income estimates that are deliverable. The Councils core expenditure requirements are well understood, budgeted for accordingly and delivered in accordance with the estimates. It is on this basis that I am satisfied the estimates are robust.
- 11.6** The requirement for financial reserves is acknowledged in statute. Section 32 and 43 of

the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires billing authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.

- 11.7** The Council's earmarked reserves are set in June of each year by the Executive Committee with scrutiny being undertaken on a quarterly basis by both the Executive Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The earmarked reserves contain specific project and service reserves as well as risk and forward management reserves. The overall level of reserves is considered to be good and places the Council in a low risk position as highlighted by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Financial Resilience Index.
- 11.8** The General Fund balance on its own is low when comparisons are made with other District Councils again as highlighted by CIPFA's Financial Resilience Index and, as already highlighted, will require additional monies being added to it at the earliest opportunity. However, in making judgement about the adequacy of reserves, bringing both allocated and unallocated reserves together gives assurance that the overall level of reserves is acceptable.
- 11.9** Overall, I am satisfied that the projected levels of reserves and balances held by the Council are adequate for the forthcoming year but will continue to review the position as necessary to ensure adequacy of reserves for future years.

12.0 CONSULTATION

- 12.1** Consultation on the budget has taken place with the Transform Working Group. In addition, a public and business consultation has taken place on general budgetary principles.

13.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 13.1** The proposal within this report is for the Council to increase Council Tax by £5 or 4.02%. In producing a balanced budget proposal, officers have considered a number of options for Council Tax. A summary of different levels of Council Tax is shown in the table below alongside the impact on the Council's on-going deficit.

Table 10 – Council Tax increase options

Council Tax 20/21	Council Tax 21/22	Increase	Increase	Ongoing income produced	Ongoing savings required
£124.36	£129.36	£5.00	4.02%	£177,015	£0
£124.36	£124.36	£0.00	0.00%	£0	£177,015
£124.36	£125.36	£1.00	0.80%	£35,403	£141,612
£124.36	£125.60	£1.24	1.00%	£43,900	£133,115
£124.36	£126.36	£2.00	1.61%	£70,806	£106,209
£124.36	£126.85	£2.49	2.00%	£88,154	£88,862
£124.36	£127.36	£3.00	2.41%	£106,209	£70,806
£124.36	£128.09	£3.73	3.00%	£132,053	£44,962
£124.36	£128.36	£4.00	3.22%	£141,612	£35,403

13.2 A range of options are available within the set thresholds. A decrease on the Council Tax has been ruled out given the financial outlook for the council, as has an excessive Council Tax increase as it is not believed that the public would vote in favour of an increase in excess of £5 in a local referendum.

13.3 It has been necessary to increase Council Tax by £5 in order to meet the deficit for 2021/22. Whilst lower Council Tax increases were considered, these added additional cost to the deficit and would need to be met by either ongoing savings or ongoing income. The use of one-off sums to replace an ongoing income stream is not considered prudent and only results in the need for ongoing savings to be postponed. The use of one-offs to support a budget should only be considered as a last resort.

13.4 The recommended increase in council tax is also made against the background of a £7m+ deficit over the next five years and the uncertainty about government policy for local government finance. This leaves the Council in a risky position and it is therefore of paramount importance that the Council takes the decision to increase financing streams within its control as and when it can and to their full extent.

14.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

14.1 In line with Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council on 26 January 2021.

15.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

15.1 The government has set down excessive Council Tax increase rules. Any increase in Band D Council Tax over a set limit will trigger a local referendum. The proposal for an increased Council Tax of £5 at Band D will mean that no referendum is required for Tewkesbury Borough.

16.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

16.1 No redundancies are included within the budget proposals for 2021/22 whilst a number of one off posts will be added to the establishment.

The contribution to the asset management reserve has been suspended for one year.

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

17.1 None directly arising from this report.

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

18.1 Changes may be required to the way services are provided in order to reduce costs. Service Managers are responsible for undertaking Equalities Impact Assessments for any changes they make to any services they provide and where appropriate, EIAs will have been undertaken.

19.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

19.1 Approval of Medium Term Financial Strategy – Council on 26 January 2021.

Background Papers:	Medium Term Financial Strategy.
Contact Officer:	Head of Finance and Asset Management Tel: 01684 272005
Appendices:	A - Growth proposals. B – 2020-25 Capital Programme Growth proposals.

Growth requests 2021/22

Section A Growth included in the base budget on an ongoing basis

Food waste additional round	£100,000	Capacity will be reached shortly. Full year cost of circa £135k
Food waste transfer station	£12,500	Need will be known in March and required from October. If required, £25k needed in full year
Fleet replacement - additional fund contribution for new food waste vehicle	£13,000	Increasing size of fleet requiring additional annual contributions
Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Scheme	£16,000	New requirement from DWP
IT licensing and cyber security	£44,000	Increasing cost of licensing arrangements and safeguarding the council from cyber threats
Materials Recycling Facility contract increase	£112,000	New contract awarded
Planning appeals	£50,000	Previously funded from NHB
External Audit costs	£6,350	Additional requirements on our external auditors
Vehicle maintenance annual costs	£55,000	Age of fleet requiring additional maintenance.
HR digitisation	£8,000	Licensing costs following implementation of 2 new systems
	£416,850	

Section B Growth included on a one off basis

Audit plan - IT auditor	£10,000	Specialist skill to enable the delivery of the internal audit plan
Revenues Inspection Officer	£21,500	Providing vital intelligence on changes to domestic and business properties in the Borough
Housing strategy	£20,000	4 year strategy requirement
Commercial waste strategy	£40,000	Pump priming for expected new strategy
Carbon Neutrality	£50,000	To provide an operational budget and external specialist support when required
Investment Reserve top up	£100,000	To enable capital purchases that don't attract an immediate financial return
Borough Development Reserve top up	£100,000	To support large scale developments within the Borough
In cab technology for waste and recycling vehicles	£150,000	Funding set aside for delivery of project subject to approval of business case
Joint Core Strategy costs	£60,000	Shared cost of assessment work required for 21/22
Grants Officer	£36,000	Continuation of role with a shared focus on Council grant applications as well as community grants
New depot facility - development of business case	£20,000	Joint working with CBC to explore possible relocation of depot facilities
Revenues & Benefits System upgrades	£15,000	Key system upgrade scheduled
Digital team	£75,000	To provide additional or extended support for the current Digital team
Ubico contract - new vehicle maintenance risk reserve	£80,000	To smooth the impact on the ongoing revenue budget
Business Transformation budget	£50,000	Operational budget for business transformation activities
	£827,500	

Section C Growth funded by alternative sources

Revenues Officers	£35,600	Funded from Covid Recovery Reserve to cover 12 month role
IT Officer	£42,000	Funded from Covid Recovery Reserve to cover 12 month role
s106 Officer	£42,000	Funded from Covid Recovery Reserve to cover 12 month role
Licensing team	£80,000	£86,900 funding from Covid Recovery Reserve to fund immediate requirements
Environmental Health Officer	£15,000	As above
IT plan - sinking fund	£50,000	Partly funded from capitalisation budget
ED&T Assistant	£26,000	To be funded from Additional Restrictions Grant
	£290,600	

Section D Growth not funded

Tourism strategy recommendations	£40,000	Await final strategy
Economic Development Strategy	£40,000	Postponed for 12 months
Accountancy officer	£50,000	Withdrawn given financial challenges
Asset maintenance requirements	£100,000	1 year holiday on contribution to sinking fund
Tewkesbury Town regeneration	£450,000	Postponed until finance is available and economic climate has settled
	£680,000	

Forecast Capital Programme 2019 - 2026

Scheme	2019/20 Outturn £	2020/21 Forecast £	2021/22 Forecast £	2022/23 Forecast £	2023/24 Forecast £	2024/25 Forecast £	2025/26 Forecast £	Total £
Council Projects								
<u>Land & Property</u>								
The Grange watercourse, Bishops Cleeve	29,929	0	21,358	0	0	0	0	51,287
Asset Management Plan	0	0	320,000	0	0	0	0	320,000
Ashchurch bridge project	0	0	2,766,000	5,366,465	0	0	0	8,132,465
	29,929	0	3,107,358	5,366,465	0	0	0	8,503,752
<u>Vehicles</u>								
Vehicle replacement programme	169,375	447,000	120,000	50,000	0	3,362,000	0	4,148,375
	169,375	447,000	120,000	50,000	0	3,362,000	0	4,148,375
<u>Equipment</u>								
Asset Capitalisation	92,343	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	0	592,343
Car park machines	0	117,000	0	0	0	0	0	117,000
Electric charging points	14,396	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,396
Public Services Centre refurbishment	2,859	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,859
ICT Strategy - Equipment	108,433	165,000	105,000	0	0	0	0	378,433
Noise Monitoring equipment	5,018	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,018
One Legal case management system	0	75,000	0	0	0	0	0	75,000
HR systems	0	0	18,965	0	0	0	0	18,965
	223,049	457,000	223,965	100,000	100,000	100,000	0	1,204,014
<u>Capital Investment Fund</u>								
Commercial property investment	0	19,624,000	0	0	0	0	0	19,624,000
	0	19,624,000	0	0	0	0	0	19,624,000
Capital Grants								
Old scheme capital grants	0	0	25,054	0	0	0	0	25,054
Community Grants Working Group	1,672	0	87,464	0	0	0	0	89,136
	1,672	0	112,518	0	0	0	0	114,190
Housing and Business Grants								
Disabled Facilities Grants	571,561	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	3,571,561
	571,561	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	3,071,561
Transformational projects requiring Capital Direction								
Digitisation strategy	32,337	0	0	0	0	0	0	32,337
Service reform feasibility work	0	40,000	0	0	0	0	0	40,000
	32,337	40,000	0	0	0	0	0	72,337
Community Infrastructure Levy funded works								
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Expenditure	1,027,923	21,068,000	4,063,841	6,016,465	600,000	3,962,000	500,000	36,738,229
GF Expenditure	1,027,923	1,444,000	4,063,841	6,016,465	600,000	3,962,000	500,000	17,114,229
Capital investments	0	19,624,000	0	0	0	0	0	19,624,000
	1,027,923	21,068,000	4,063,841	6,016,465	600,000	3,962,000	500,000	36,738,229
Anticipated Capital Receipts								
Right-to-buy receipts	20,751	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	140,751
Land Sales	115,000	66,000	0	0	0	0	0	181,000
Other receipts	5,949	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,949
Community Infrastructure Levy	27,117	856,000	1,386,845	2,567,808	2,600,640	1,563,840	1,500,000	10,502,250
Capital Receipts	168,817	942,000	1,406,845	2,587,808	2,620,640	1,583,840	1,520,000	10,829,950
Capital Resources required								
Capital Receipts	186,551	282,000	357,841	100,000	100,000	100,000	0	1,126,392
Capital Grants	571,561	550,000	3,586,000	5,866,465	500,000	500,000	500,000	11,574,026
Direct revenue financing	269,811	612,000	120,000	50,000	0	3,362,000	0	4,413,811
Borrowing - external	0	19,624,000	0	0	0	0	0	19,624,000
Capital resources consumed	1,027,923	21,068,000	4,063,841	6,016,465	600,000	3,962,000	500,000	36,738,229
Opening Capital Receipts	1,158,274	1,140,540	1,800,540	2,849,544	5,337,352	7,857,992	9,341,832	
Received in year	168,817	942,000	1,406,845	2,587,808	2,620,640	1,583,840	1,520,000	
Utilised in year	-186,551	-282,000	-357,841	-100,000	-100,000	-100,000	0	
Capital receipts available	1,140,540	1,800,540	2,849,544	5,337,352	7,857,992	9,341,832	10,861,832	

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	3 February 2021
Subject:	Interim Housing Strategy
Report of:	Acting Housing Services Manager
Corporate Lead:	Head of Community Services
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Housing
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

The current Housing Strategy 2017-2021 is due for renewal from April 2021. Due to work in relation to COVID-19 the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, took the decision to defer producing a full, new four-year strategy document until April 2022.

Officers have also been mindful of the recent publication of the Local Housing Needs Assessment, the emerging Domestic Abuse Bill and changes to planning approaches that would inform the future strategy. A strategy 'refresh' will ensure we have an interim strategy in place for one year for guidance and monitoring and also enable us to produce a more robust document into the following year. The refreshed strategy brings the document up to date in terms of legislative changes and housekeeping and is not fundamentally different to the original strategy in terms of substance. A new full strategy will be developed over the forthcoming 12 months. This approach has been endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as supporting to develop a full new strategy was originally in its work programme through a Task and Finish Working Group.

This report presents an Interim Housing Strategy for 2021-2022.

Recommendation:

The Executive Committee RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the Interim Housing Strategy be approved.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To ensure that the Council's Housing Strategy remains fit for purpose and provides a strategic document to guide Councillors and Officers in delivering our housing services.

Resource Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Legal Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Risk Management Implications:

In the face of complex housing challenges and significant growth comprehensive local housing strategies serve a key purposes. Local housing strategies provide a framework to draw together the many sources of funding and relevant policy strands into a single, coordinated strategy to tackle local housing challenges.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The housing strategy and the Key Performance Indicators are monitored by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the Council's performance tracker and by regular strategy progress updates.

Environmental Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The current Housing Strategy 2017-2021 is due for renewal from April 2021. Due to work in relation to COVID-19 the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, took the decision to defer producing a full, new four-year strategy document until April 2022.
- 1.2** There have however been a number of legislative changes that have resulted in changes to the way that housing allocations and homelessness are dealt with and this legislation needs to be reflected within the strategy.
- 1.3** This interim strategy has been prepared as a review from the 2017-21 strategy. The interim approach is appropriate as there are many changes both proposed and current in the housing and planning policy landscape as well as COVID-19 restrictions. These are yet to be fully resolved and impacts understood. A further comprehensive review is proposed in 2021/22 when it is anticipated matters will have settled.

2.0 INTERIM HOUSING STRATEGY

- 2.1** The Housing Strategy has been refreshed with legislation and policy brought up to date. The priorities have been reset to reflect current work and a new set of performance indicators have been produced.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1** An option to not refresh the strategy was dismissed as we need a functioning strategy to help guide and monitor our activities.
- 3.2** Completing a full review and delivering a brand new strategy for 2021 would not have been possible without affecting other areas of our service during an extremely challenging time.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1** The Lead Member for Housing was consulted in the development of the Interim Housing Strategy.

- 5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES**
- 5.1** The Council Plan 2020 – 2024.
The Joint Core Strategy.
Tewkesbury Borough Plan 2011 – 2031.
- 6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES**
- 6.1** Laying the foundations: a housing strategy for England 2011.
- 7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)**
- 7.1** None.
- 8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)**
- 8.1** None.
- 9.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)**
- 9.1** None.
- 10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS**
- 10.1** None.

Background Papers: None.

Contact Officer: Acting Housing Services Manager Tel: 01684 272162
Email: john.bryant@tewkesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: 1 – ‘At home in Tewkesbury Borough, Interim Housing Strategy for our Borough’ (Tracked changes shown).
2 – ‘At home in Tewkesbury Borough, Interim Housing Strategy for our Borough’ (Tracked changes off).

At home in Tewkesbury Borough

interim ~~A~~ housing strategy for our borough

2021-2022

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Tewkesbury Interim Housing Strategy 2021-22

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Foreword



Welcome to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing interim Strategy 2021-2022. This interim strategy has been prepared as a review from the 2017-21 strategy. The interim approach is appropriate as there are many changes both proposed and current in the Housing and Planning policy landscape as well as Covid restrictions and these are yet to be fully resolved and impacts understood. A further comprehensive review is proposed in 2022 when it is anticipated matters will have settled.

As Lead Member for Housing, I recognise how important it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives. Not only is housing important for the health and wellbeing of individuals and families, but it is an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the overall economic prosperity of the borough.

Foreword



~~Welcome to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing Interim Strategy 2021-2022. As Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment, I recognise how important it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives. Not only is housing important for the health and wellbeing of individuals and families, but it is an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the overall economic prosperity of the borough.~~

Under the Housing Acts of 1996 and 2002, and the Local Government Act 2003, Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Council is required to have a strategy in place to set out its vision for housing and how it will address homelessness across its administrative area. National and local policies guide the principles within this strategy.

~~This overarching strategy combines the housing, homelessness (Appendix 2) and tenancy (Appendix 3) strategies.~~ This document provides a clear direction and commitment for the delivery of a customer focused, efficient housing service. By having a single overarching strategy it should make it easier for our stakeholders to understand when as well as what we

intend to do to address housing issues and tackle homelessness ~~and when we hope to do it.~~

This strategy will enable the council to work effectively and with a range of partner organisations to actively support private sector landlords and tenants and maintain and improve all ~~dwelling stock~~ accommodation across the borough. We will need to work with our stakeholders to achieve our annual action plans and in doing so I am confident that the delivery of this strategy, through innovative approaches, will help the council to deliver the right mix of accommodation in the borough. ~~and to provide high quality housing advice and support to people when they need it.~~ The Council will provide high quality housing advice and support people when they need it to prevent and relieve homelessness.

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Providing our communities with a choice of affordable and private market housing, in an area where they want to live and work now and in the future, will contribute towards making Tewkesbury Borough a place where a good quality of life is open to all.



Councillor ~~Gill Blackwell~~ Derek Davies
~~Lead Member for Housing~~ Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment
Tewkesbury Borough Council

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~~10~~ **Appendices**

~~Appendix 1a: Our Local Evidence – Increasing Housing Supply~~

~~Appendix 1b: Our Local Evidence – Homelessness Prevention~~

~~Appendix 1c: Our Local Evidence – Specific Housing Needs~~

~~Appendix 1d: Our Local Evidence – Improving the Health and Well-being of Local People~~

~~Appendix 2: Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy~~

~~Appendix 3: Tenancy Strategy~~

1 Introduction and background

The Housing Strategy ~~2021-2022~~~~2017-2024~~ has a key part to play in delivering the council's overarching vision¹ for the residents and communities of Tewkesbury Borough:

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

Quality housing is fundamental to the health and well-being of our communities and ensures the borough remains a thriving one where people want to live, work and visit. Tewkesbury Borough Council recognises that access to quality affordable housing underpins the success of our area and all of the overarching corporate priorities.

The Council Plan ~~2020-2024~~~~2016-2020~~ identifies housing as a key priority. The plan commits to create a 'sustainable place' to meet the needs of our growing population.

The housing objectives are set out as follows:

- 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 ~~because;~~

~~*“We recognise how important it is important for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing services that make a real difference to their lives. it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives.”*~~

“Not only is housing important for the health and well-being of residents it is also an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the economic prosperity of the borough.”

Only with the right supply of homes to meet the housing needs of local people can we achieve our vision of sustainable communities supported by economic growth.

The Council Plan has other key policies on Sustainable Environment and Garden Communities both of which will impact on our housing plans.

The Climate Emergency Declaration under Sustainable Environment calls for:

- “Review and update of our plans in relation to environmental sustainability and carbon management “

This could have wide ranging effects upon new build housing construction standards as well as existing housing stock refurbishment requirements. In practice this will be effectively

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pursued on new build schemes when the Government issues new Building Regulation Guidance and when the JCS Plan Review has in place planning policy to support these changes. Existing housing stock refurbishment depends upon Government initiatives such as the Green Deal Grant regime and the forthcoming De-carbonisation grants aimed at large stock holders such as Housing Associations.

The Garden Communities will deliver large scale housing numbers for the Borough with a wide range of housing types and tenures as well as new employment and leisure opportunities in new sustainable communities. However, the delivery of the housing elements of this scheme is still some way off. This is because the proposal has yet to pass through the formal Local Plan stages.

In order to meet this vision, the Tewkesbury Borough Council housing priorities are: for the next five years are to:

- ◆ **— Increase the supply of sustainable 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.**

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The housing strategy is an overarching strategic document. It takes account of the principal principle national and local issues that are likely to affect Tewkesbury Borough in the foreseeable future. Although the effects of Covid 19 and The EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement are not fully understood at this time. It sets out our housing challenges and explains how we intend to address these issues through four key priorities. Key objectives are detailed within each of the priority areas with targets and outcomes for delivering these objectives will be detailed annually in the action plan. ~~Key objectives are detailed within each of the priority areas with targets and outcomes for delivering these objectives will be detailed annually in the action plan.~~

The Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2021 can be found in Appendix 2 and the Tenancy Strategy 2017-2021 can be found in Appendix 3.

2 The local context

2.1 Our profile

Tewkesbury borough is spread across 160 square miles and despite its predominately rural nature it also includes growing communities on the fringes of Gloucester City and the town of Cheltenham. The eastern part of the borough lies within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which accounts for 8.5% of our district².

Flooding is a natural feature of the borough particularly in relation to the River Severn which runs down the western edge of the area and ~~-constraints creates constraints~~ regarding flood plain³. These constraints and the AONB can make development of new homes and other buildings and infrastructure difficult in the borough. However, the borough is at the heart of the economic engine of Gloucestershire, including four junctions of the M5 motorway and has excellent national transport links making it an area of significant growth.

~~The borough's population is roughly 92,599 with just over 42,000 households. The borough's population is roughly 85,800 with just under 40,000 households.~~ There are 50 parish and town councils (includes parish meetings) covering the borough ranging in size from 3,062 households to as small as 574 households. Information from What Homes Where 2013⁴, a toolkit to help local authorities assess their housing needs shows us some of these key population issues⁵.

Assuming current population trends continue, the ONS projections⁶ for the next 25 years suggest that the population in Tewkesbury Borough will reach 93,400 by 2025 and 100,400 by 2037. The district's growth rates are higher than those predicted for Gloucestershire and England in the short, medium and long term⁷.

The dominating feature of the projected trend for Tewkesbury Borough is a sharp increase in the number of older people (aged 60 and over) to 2033. Projections for children and young people indicate slower growth, while the working-age population is expected to show little change in the long term. There continues to be an increase in one person households with this household type projected to overtake all others by 2033. Couples on their own and small families increase at a relatively steady rate but larger family growth remains small. Other households include couples with adult children living at home, friends living in a property and so on, are predicted to decline⁸.

In 2015, 11.8% of the housing stock in Tewkesbury Borough was affordable housing (owned by housing associations). The percentage increase in the actual number of all dwellings in Tewkesbury Borough from 2009 to 2015 is 7%; the market stock as increased by 7% and the housing association stock has increased by 9.5%. The extent of housing growth across Tewkesbury Borough has been beneficial for our households in need. ~~However~~ ~~However,~~ the affordable housing ~~dwelling stock~~ [accommodation](#) in Tewkesbury Borough has only increased by 0.1% since 2010.

The majority of the borough's housing stock is owner-occupied and is generally in good condition. ~~However the~~ ~~However, the~~ stock is skewed towards larger more expensive

properties. Tewkesbury Borough as a whole is generally an affluent area; ~~however~~ however, this can mask pockets of significant inequality. As an example, housing in Tewkesbury borough is relatively expensive against national and regional averages with the East of the borough having the highest values given its proximity to the AONB. ~~Isbourne~~The ward ~~with the highest property values has the highest~~ has an average house price of £490,996, with detached properties fetching over £600,000⁹. Compared against data from the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)¹⁰ where the borough has 2 lower super output areas – ~~Tewkesbury Priors Park 2 and Tewkesbury Priors Park 3~~. Both perform poorly on employment, education, skills and training, and income deprivation affecting children. ~~Tewkesbury Priors Park 3~~A further area also performs poorly on income deprivation affecting older people.

The growth in income levels has not kept pace with the increases in property values meaning that many people are priced out of owner occupation the borough. While income growth in Tewkesbury Borough is in line with the rest of England, the average house price increase has been more significant at 2.96 times the values 15 years ago. The income to house price ratio for Tewkesbury Borough in 2013/14 was higher than Gloucestershire overall, the South West and England.

Both private and social housing rents are becoming more unaffordable to our residents. From 2008/09 to 2014/15 private sector rents have increased by 15% and social sector rents have also increased by a substantial 35%¹¹.

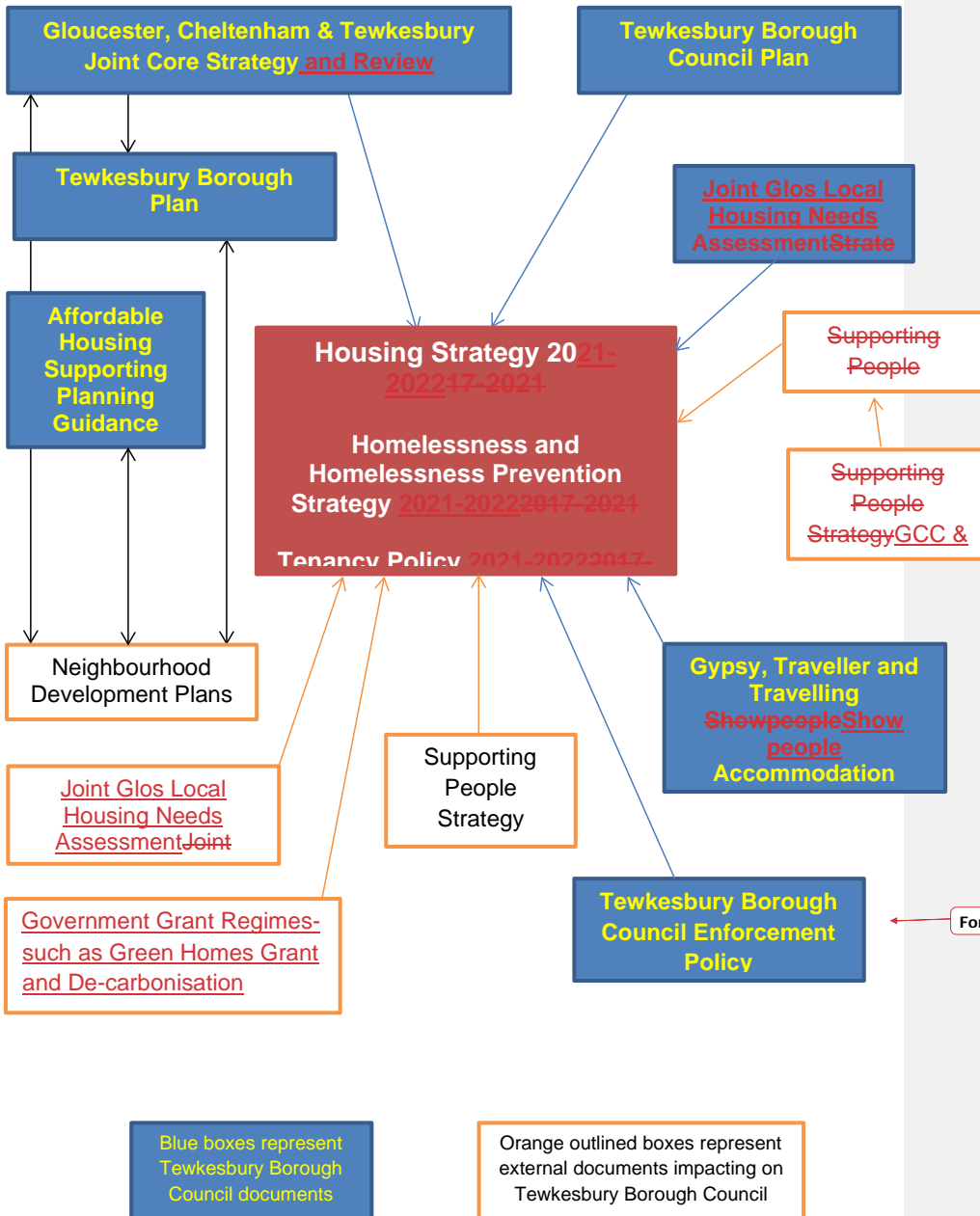
2.2 Statutory requirements

Under the ~~Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2018~~ ~~Homelessness Act 2002~~¹², the Council is required to publish a strategy setting out how it will address homelessness in its administrative area. ~~The~~Our Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy ~~2021-2022~~2017-2021 can found in Appendix 2.

The Localism Act 2011¹³ places a duty on all local authorities to produce a tenancy strategy, setting out what housing associations should take into consideration when making decisions about their individual tenancy policies. ~~The Government White Paper on Social Housing (November 2020) currently out to consultation will likely make this process more transparent for tenants. Our Tenancy Strategy is a separate document which should be read in conjunction with this document.~~Our Tenancy Strategy can be found in Appendix 3.

2.3 Where the Housing Strategy fits

The following diagram shows where the Housing Strategy fits with other key Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire county-wide strategic-level documents:



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3 Policy context and key challenges

We continue to be guided by the National Strategy¹⁴ along with new legislation, such as the ~~Housing & Planning Act 2016~~ Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and other government policies and initiatives such as the NPPF which stresses the planning importance of new housing. ~~Since 2011, there have been several~~ These key government initiatives impact on our housing services in Tewkesbury Borough. ~~key government initiatives impacting on our housing services in Tewkesbury Borough.~~

3.1 Increasing housing supply

3.1.1 Universal housing provision

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS)¹⁵ partners will, through the Strategy and emerging Local Plans¹⁶, deliver sufficient housing supply to meet the universal housing provision and economic growth needs of the borough.

~~Section 4.2 of Appendix 1a evidences our resident's ability to access the housing market and how important it is for the council to consider and provide for the whole market to meet their needs.~~ Section 4.2 of Appendix 1a evidences our resident's ability to access the housing market and how important it is for the council to consider and provide for the whole market to meet their needs. It is clear that government supported schemes and affordable housing home ownership are extremely popular and needed by our residents, but with these options being ~~less than~~ less than 12% of all sales in the borough the opportunities particularly for younger people to get on the housing ladder are limited.

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3.1.2 Government manifesto to increase home ownership

Whilst there is still some focus on rented housing, home ownership is the government's driver for housing at present believing more homes will be built, particularly ~~First~~ Starter Homes, in the near future which has now replaced the earlier concept of Starter Homes of the previous administration.

The government manifesto to provide more homes and more homes for sale for young people has meant a new ~~their~~ First Homes concept. ~~Starter Homes initiative being brought in via the Housing and Planning Act 2016. This is a~~ A vision of 'discounting' new homes prices by up to ~~320%~~ and possibly 50% in areas of high house prices with the discount protected in perpetuity. The proposal has been out for consultation and a consultation report has been prepared (Feb 2020). ~~and at the time writing~~ The sector is now waiting for the decision as to how this product will work in reality. If ~~First~~ Starter Homes are to be considered affordable housing in the future, this will affect the council's current position of what we can provide on-site on new developments particularly impacting the rented element. The effects of the proposal are not known at the moment as final detailed proposals are awaited. However, the Local Housing Needs Assessment 2019 makes it very clear that housing need in the Borough cannot be entirely met by home ownership alone as a model. ~~The affects will need to be fully assessed as part of a new Strategic Housing~~

~~Market Assessment¹⁷ (SHMA) alongside other affordable housing products and the impact of benefit changes (to be discussed later) to ensure the needs of our borough are met.~~

Recent development in key locations has significantly increased the supply of affordable homes including shared ownership and shared equity products ensuring that there are opportunities for lower incomes households to buy a home of their own.

In the June 2014 Financial Stability Report¹⁸, the Bank of England announced measures to cut the risk of a damaging house price bubble emerging by limiting the number of high-risk mortgages. Mortgage lenders must limit the proportion of mortgages at loan to income multiples of 4.5 and above to no more than 15% of their new mortgages. However, at the Conservative Party Conference in October 2020 the Prime Minister announced plans for a state backed mortgage offer of up to 95% to encourage further home ownership particularly amongst the young. The scheme has yet to be released to the market.

~~Whilst mortgages remain restricted, Given this restriction on mortgages,~~ Tewkesbury Borough's income to house price ratio, ~~may make~~ it difficult for first time buyers to ~~get on~~ the property ~~market~~ ladder. This ~~is likely to result~~ in the out-migration of young people in the lower income brackets of our borough and encourages people to commute into Tewkesbury Borough for work, while living in areas where housing is cheaper outside of the borough and in more urban areas.

3.1.3 Right to Buy extension

Further to the government home ownership ambition, a pilot commenced in November 2015 of 5 housing associations was undertaken to extend the Right to Buy to their tenants. The outcome to date has shown that just with 48,000 potential sales found that only "a shade under 16,000 of the 48,000 households were allowed to buy under the pilot once the exemptions were applied" and 1.6% (790) households made formal applications to buy their home¹⁹. Applications for the pilot from tenants of the housing associations closed in October 2016; in September 2016, almost a year after the pilot was launched, were sales going through. According to Inside Housing²⁰ this was an unconfirmed figure of 8 sales. In essence the government intends for 1.3million housing association tenants in England to receive Right to Buy and 3 years for the housing associations or local authority (where applicable) to start building a new home for each one sold under the new policy²¹.

3.1.4 Effects on affordable housing of the economic downturn

The economic downturn of 2008 saw a reduction in affordable housing delivery as schemes became unviable to deliver. Viability negotiations with developers meant that very low or zero affordable housing was provided and the loss was felt until delivery gained momentum again in 2012. Now, after –some years of a successful housing market, house building and affordable housing delivery have regained traction. But, the future is mired in holds some uncertainty given the economic effects of Covid and the impact of EU exit on the housing sector labour force and general economic performance. Currently, stamp duty relief until March 2021 and existing housing consents are providing a short boom to the housing market and delivery of affordable housing under older s106 agreements already in place.

Appendix 1a section 2 shows the delivery of new affordable homes in the borough from 2010 when planning permissions previously granted during and post-2008 economic downturn were coming to fruition. It is not until 2013 that we see increases in delivery. In the six year period 2010-2016 there has been 26% affordable housing of all new build delivery. However just 11.8% of the homes in Tewkesbury Borough is owned by a housing association as affordable housing. According to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Final 2014²² (SHMA) this figure should be nearer 20%.

3.1.5 Delivering affordable housing

Tewkesbury Borough Council has a target to deliver 40% (35% on strategic sites) affordable housing in accordance with the emerging JCS plan on all market-led development within the Borough. However, the government continues to reduce planning obligations on Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) developers to incentivise development of new homes through a policy of zero affordable housing contributions on small sites of 10 or less dwellings or sites of less than 1000sqm unless in a designated area (for Tewkesbury Borough this is AONB only)²³.

The council seeks to work with developers and housing associations to provide housing for sale within affordable levels, giving considering local incomes and house prices. At present a new-build first sale shared ownership²⁴ share for an applicant cannot exceed 75% of the property's full market value. Typically, on first sale the share sold is more likely to be between 35% and 50% of the property's full value depending on the area of the borough.

The Government are consulting on allowing the sale portion to fall to as low as 10% but Housing Associations have expressed concern that this may not be a mortgageable asset from the bank and building society viewpoint so that there may be a practical difficulty in delivery.

Evidence from the LHNA 2019 SHMA informs us of the most suitable mix of tenures across a development. However, like all policies regarding planning obligations, we negotiate the percentage of affordable housing that can be delivered considering viability as well and as suitable tenure mixes, and house types as well as accessibility for disability. The council will continue a flexible approach to new development in the borough to ensure that new homes can be delivered within suitable timescales to meet our corporate objectives as well as delivering our housing planning policies of the JCS and Local Plan.

3.1.6 Challenges for the affordable housing sector

The rent cap affects housing associations where the rents on their rented properties are to be at local housing allowance (LHA) and will need to be considered in terms of rented housing products. A realistic percentage of rented housing on new developments will need to be established, possibly on a site-by-site basis, so that the affordable housing provision on-site is indeed affordable to local people. This may mean specific house sizes are required to be set at particular rents levels i.e. within the LHA.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012²⁵ is the borough's most significant legislative change impacting on our approaches for meeting housing need. For example, those on low incomes are struggling to find suitable low cost housing as the Localism Act brought in affordable rents. ~~Housing associations are unable to draw down government grant for social rented housing (rented at around 55% of open market rent) and are to seek affordable rent~~ (up to 80% of open market rent, inclusive of service charge). While this generates more income for housing associations, our residents in housing need now require more money towards their housing costs, often not fully met by the current housing benefit levels. The council seeks to negotiate rent levels at planning stage but this must be agreed based on the development viability. For a time grants were not available for the more affordable social rented housing from Homes England. However, this funding has now recently been re-instated in the latest Homes England funding package updated December 2020.

[Homes England funding programmes - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/homes-england-funding-programmes)

~~Tewkesbury Borough Council's housing services team are working with the revenues and benefits team to identify and contact all residents who are currently claiming discretionary housing payments (DHP) to cover the financial shortfall in their rent through under occupation. This work will be ongoing to support residents to find alternative ways of 'topping up' their rent or to support them to move to a more affordable property and/or suitably sized home.~~

We continue to monitor the effects of the under-occupation charge, commonly known as the 'bedroom tax', brought in by the Welfare Reform Act where social housing tenants who are under-occupying a property are charged a rate to pay for the extra room. This is 14% of net rent for one spare bedroom or 25% for two or more spare bedrooms. In reality the charge saw a smaller number of households than anticipated move to more suitably sized accommodation with the majority of those affected by the charge able to afford to remain in their home and pay the charge.

Increasing income for housing associations and initiating more housing building by them ~~has been~~ has been contradicted by the requirement to reduce their rents by 1% per annum in each of the ~~next~~ four years with effect from 1 April 2016. The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016²⁶ requires housing associations to comply with maximum rent requirements for new tenancies. This has placed pressure on housing associations to reduce their costs and has for some limited their capacity. Many Housing associations are committed to their new-build programmes whilst others ~~have~~ are ~~reduced~~ ing theirs. There has been a noticeable increase of the merging of Housing Associations to create larger bodies that have more flexible funding arrangements in place as a result. Smaller housing associations whose income is significantly affected by the 1% rent reduction are likely to seek opportunities such as partnering with other housing associations to deliver new homes and small rural and in-fill development.

3.1.7 Environmental impacts of new homes

During our consultation period it was brought to our attention that Tewkesbury Borough Council needs to have an awareness of the potential improvements in construction by incorporating flood resilience measures where appropriate, for example reflecting the

Environment Agency flood zones. It is therefore necessary to fully understand the requirements for new homes as well as providing support for communities when they are flooded. It will be for the Council's Flood Risk Management Group to determine measures in new housing development and the planning process; ~~however~~ it is the vision of this document that all possible support will be given to such wider priorities of Tewkesbury Borough Council and its communities.

3.1.8 Private rented sector and empty homes

The council recognises that the private rented sector is growing and will continue to do so in a growing area like Tewkesbury Borough; it will also support the borough to meet its housing needs. The council takes its statutory enforcement role seriously and where landlords are not meeting the standards required will deliver a robust service as described above. This is particular important that the Council can now discharge its homelessness duty into the private rent sector (~~see Appendix 2: Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy~~). Ensuring such homes are available and appropriate and that the tenancy can be sustained is, therefore, increasingly important.

However, whilst a large proportion of the environmental health team's time is spent on enforcement this is only to deal with a small proportion of the worst private rented housing. Enforcement should only need to be a last resort. We wish to place a larger emphasis on the proactive role the council will play in helping landlords in the early stages. This is in particular for owners where being a landlord is not their core business, or reluctant landlords such as those who inherit a property but do not wish to sell it. The council will promote sources of advice that are available to landlords, existing private tenants and residents considering private renting.

The council will work with the other Gloucestershire district councils to promote the 'Fit to Rent' common accreditation scheme for landlords and letting agents across Gloucestershire. ~~Sign-up to the scheme has been low and so the environmental health team shall promote the scheme and the benefits of accreditation.~~

Crucially, prospective tenants need to be made aware of the advantages of selecting a property owned by an accredited landlord or managed by an accredited letting agent. The environmental health team aims to maximise the number of inspections of properties owned by accredited landlords so that they can be given advice on the improvements that could be made.

Further to new-build housing, the council's environmental health team works closely with partners on initiatives handling operational (enforcement) actions to bring empty homes back into use. Most empty homes brought back into use will become private sector homes. The team will aim to ensure that each property achieves the highest standard. Enforcement options will include the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under the Housing Act 2004²⁷, Empty Dwelling Management Orders, enforced sale and compulsory purchase orders (CPO).

3.2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

Local housing authorities have a statutory duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness. (see: Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) (as outlined in the Housing Act 1996²⁸ as amended). The Act modifies and extends existing homelessness protection in a number of key ways:

1. Improved advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness
2. Extension of the period 'threatened with homelessness'
3. Introducing new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people, regardless of priority need and intentionality
4. Introducing assessments and personalised housing plans, setting out the actions housing authorities and individuals will take to secure accommodation
5. Encouraging public bodies to work together to prevent and relieve homelessness through a duty to refer

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The Council's housing services team undertakes enquiries to assess what duties and assistance can be offered to those seeking help. Our focus is to work with our clients to prevent their homelessness wherever possible. If we are unable to prevent homelessness, the council has further statutory duties to secure accommodation for eligible vulnerable homeless households.

Our focus will be on preventing homelessness wherever possible and our joint interventions with our Council colleagues and partners are likely to include:

- Establishing if households are entitled to exemptions from welfare reform changes
- Advising residents of changes and the personal impact on their household
- How they can avoid financial hardship
- Offer financial advice and advice on the benefits of securing employment, and
- Working with the financial inclusion partnership to offer temporary assistance through discretionary housing payments, advice and assistance on arrears, working with housing providers to avoid possession proceedings.

Changes associated with welfare reform are likely to continue throughout the lifetime of this strategy and we will continue to take a proactive approach to identifying cohorts and clients. We will work with our partners and affected groups to offer early resolution to affordability issues. Those most likely to be affected will be:

- Those under-occupying affordable rented housing
- Those under 35 in unaffordable private rented, affordable rented housing, in supported accommodation, or at risk of homelessness.
- Those likely to be affected by the reduction of the benefit cap
- Those in affordable rents (rents set at 80% of the market rent) who may be affected by unaffordability following the implementation of the welfare reform changes.

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The challenges facing Tewkesbury Borough Council, the implications of the above changes and further analysis of homelessness and homelessness prevention can be found in Appendix 2: Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy. It outlines our commitment, priorities and objectives to meet the needs of those threatened with homelessness within Tewkesbury Borough. Actions to be taken are detailed as part of this overarching document and can be found in Section 8.

•

~~The challenges facing Tewkesbury Borough Council, the implications of the above changes and further analysis of homelessness and homelessness prevention can be found in Appendix 2: Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2021. It outlines our commitment, priorities and objectives to meet the needs of those threatened with homelessness within Tewkesbury Borough. Actions to be taken are detailed as part of this overarching document and can be found in Section 8.~~

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3.3 Meeting the needs of specific groups

3.3.1 Requirements for accommodation assessments

Many information sources have been used to assess housing needs and supply including the ~~Gloucestershire Housing Needs Assessment 2019~~~~Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)~~; the housing register for rented affordable housing, the housing register for affordable home ownership schemes, MAIDeN (Gloucestershire Information Observer) and nationally available databases such as the census, Office of National Statistics and Land Registry.

The Borough Council is required to undertake several assessments; a ~~Local Housing Needs Assessment~~~~Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)~~ and a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA) as per the National Planning Policy Framework²⁹ (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance³⁰ (PPG).

The planning policy for traveller sites (~~see: NPPF 2019 para 61~~)³⁴ is one that supports provision such as rural exception sites to meet the housing and accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople. However the ~~updated~~~~updated~~ 2015 policy changes ~~se~~ the definition of these groups for planning purposes. Under the JCS the council's requirement for additional pitches and plots ~~_~~ to the year 2031 has now reduced owing to households in Tewkesbury Borough not meeting the new definition. We will continue to have an accommodation need for households who do not meet the definition and be required to provide suitable sites. These households ~~will~~ who do not meet the definition will have their needs assessed through the ~~Local Needs assessment~~~~SHMA~~. Those who do meet the definition will continue to have their accommodation needs assessed through the GTTSAA, ~~including the~~ ~~accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople~~.

~~The accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople are evidenced in Appendix 1c section 7, page 12.~~

The ~~Local Needs Assessment~~ ~~SHMA~~ assesses our Borough-wide housing and accommodation needs and we work with our neighbouring authorities ~~in Cheltenham and Gloucester~~ as our housing market areas ~~cross-cross~~ administrative boundaries. The most recent assessment was published in 2019³² and identifies the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period. The ~~Local Needs Assessment~~~~SHMA~~ has ~~guided~~~~sed~~ us in our requirements for rented and shared ownership affordable housing. ~~However, the government is proposing further wide ranging changes with First Homes, reduced percentage sales for shared ownership and more encouragement to discounted home sales and custom build houses. It will be an on-going concern to see how these initiatives impact upon housing need in the Borough and the wider affordability challenges these initiatives address, however it does not consider more detailed aspects of the sector that are emerging. Further to changes from central government we now require a new assessment in order to meet housing needs against the initiatives. As a county we will continue to work together to appoint consultants in 2017 to address additional areas in the SHMA such as:~~

◆ ~~The future impact of welfare reform~~

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- ~~Affordability of the tenures~~
- ~~Specialist housing and care for older people and people with disabilities~~
- ~~Self-Build~~
- ~~Starter Homes~~
- **Accommodation needs of non-travelling gypsies and travellers**

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3.3.2 Larger families

The benefit cap for larger families will impact on the willingness of housing associations to develop larger family properties. This has already been noted in ongoing new developments where at the planning stage a 6-bed home was negotiated but at the build stage, the council and the housing association involved agreed to change the property to a smaller home. The members of staff involved from both organisations were unable to find a large family with a suitable level of income to move into the property. Many large households opted to remain in their current home and over-occupy so they can continue to afford their rent.

Welfare reform is likely to cause financial hardship for many residents on low incomes in our borough throughout the lifetime of this strategy. Homeless charities such as Crisis and Homeless Link are reporting that reductions in benefit levels associated with welfare reform, and changes in the way that benefits are paid through Universal Credit are increasing the risk of homelessness³³. We are committed to mitigating the impact of welfare reform on financially vulnerable households in the borough to reduce the risk of homelessness.

3.3.3 Financial inclusion

The rationale behind welfare reform is to incentivise work and reduce the cost of welfare³⁴. Households will be exempt from many of the most impactful reforms if they are in employment. Resolving financial hardship and preventing homelessness will inevitably involve supporting affected households to understand how the reforms will impact on them. Tewkesbury Borough Council is a key partner in the borough-wide Financial Inclusion Partnership to encourage households into employment wherever possible.

We are committed to identifying cohorts of clients likely to be affected by forthcoming reforms with a view to early intervention with partners in the Financial Inclusion Partnership. The partnership ~~has recently~~ commissioned research by Policy in Practice³⁵ on the projected cumulative impact of Welfare Reform within the borough with a view to identifying individuals and cohorts of residents likely to be significantly affected.

Evidence from the Policy in Practice research can be found in Appendix 1b where the impact of welfare reform has been analysed for Tewkesbury Borough and includes:

- The under occupation charge
- Local housing allowance
- The benefit cap at £26,000 and the new lower cap of £20,000 as at November 2016
- The profile of households capped
- Changes to benefit for young people
- The removal of the WRAG premium (work related activity group)

- Housing benefit capped at local housing allowance (LHA) rates for social rents
- The LHA freeze
- Removal of the Housing Benefit Family Premium
- The impact of universal credit
- The cumulative impact of welfare reform.

The housing services team are committed to working with our council colleagues in revenues and benefits and partners namely the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), housing associations, support providers, and Citizens Advice Bureau to identify the vulnerable cohorts and work with the affected households to resolve these difficulties. Our strong working relationships within the Tewkesbury Borough Financial Inclusion Partnership will be invaluable in managing the effects of welfare reform.

Revenues and benefits teams can offer temporary support to those affected by welfare reform changes with Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to prevent financial hardship whilst alternative, more permanent solutions are sought. However, this must only be an intervening measure as the DHP funding is not long-term and is likely to diminish over time. Tenants must seek to find employment or increase working hours to enhance their income to afford rents.

We will work with our colleagues in the revenues and benefits team, the DWP and housing associations to identify affected households and offer sustainable solutions. We will also work with housing associations operating within Tewkesbury Borough to establish how they can continue to meet the housing needs of those households unable to meet their housing needs through affordable housing products.

3.3.4 Older People

Population changes will present an increasing challenge for the borough in relation to additional pressure on health and social care and the need for more specialist accommodation. There is also evidence that a number of homes in both the social/affordable rented sector and market sector are currently under-occupied, particularly in rural areas.

The Care Act 2014³⁶ includes housing as a fundamental component. The Act looks at the suitability of accommodation for those at home receiving care and support. The Act and the accompanying regulations and guidance outline how housing can support a more integrated approach of particular note:

- A duty to promote well-being.
- Housing not just the 'bricks and mortar' but also includes housing related support.
- Housing must be considered as part of the household's assessment process
- Information and advice should reflect housing options, as part of a universal service offer
- Care and support is to be delivered in an integrated way with cooperation with partner bodies, including housing services.

Tewkesbury Borough offers 40 retirement homes, sheltered housing and extra care housing accommodating 1,004 [dwellings-properties](#) along with 25 care homes of 798 units of accommodation. Of the care homes, 12 are specific for older people (aged 55 and over), with the remaining accommodating any person with care needs and for people with specific disabilities.

Tewkesbury Borough will see significant growth in its older population and accommodation needs for this group are likely to change. For example, as we live healthier for longer our accommodation needs become different where we stay more active and mobile for longer and seek a more suitable home for our lifestyle. 36.47% of the Homeseeker Plus waiting list state that their vulnerability is worsened by their housing situation. Of this, a quarter (around 180 households) is over 60 years old.

Care homes are typically single bed units; there are few that are for couples or sharing. For many people having a disability and/or care need means living away from their family and friends in specialist housing; for some this is a necessity to receive around the clock care and support. For others their care needs can be and are being met in the family home but this often results in the home being unsuitable. More and more adaptations are required to existing homes across all tenures to ensure homes are suitable.

~~Gloucestershire County Council provide commissioning services for Disabled Facilities Grants. The countywide home improvement agency, Safe at Home, is funded by the six Gloucestershire district authorities, Gloucestershire County Council and the Gloucestershire NHS Trust, to assist clients with major works to their properties, focussing on providing services and assistance to elderly and vulnerable clients. Whilst this is the contracted countywide home improvement agency, the Council provides information on other agencies and surveyors in the local area that can help to support and assist applicants with major works to their properties, focussing on providing services and assistance to elderly and vulnerable clients. The current contract has been extended until 2017 and at the time of writing, partners are considering priorities for future delivery.~~ Providing adaptations is seen as particularly important given the possible health implications, care and support costs of residents not obtaining essential disabled adaptations in a timely fashion. However, it is essential that delivery of this aspect of the private sector housing service is integrated with all other aspects. We therefore work across services to assess housing need and whether a move to more appropriate accommodation is required.

3.3.5 People with a disability

Government statistics³⁷ show that people with disabilities have a poorer quality of life with a “substantially higher proportion of individuals who live in families with disabled members live in poverty, compared to individuals who live in families where no one is disabled.”

Barriers to employment and education are improving but remain significant as there is “a 30.1 percentage point gap between disabled and non-disabled people, representing over 2 million people” and that disabled people “are around 3 times as likely not to hold any qualifications

compared to non-disabled people, and around half as likely to hold a degree-level qualification”.

In terms of housing these statistics say that “Although the gap in non-decent accommodation has closed over recent years, 1 in 3 households with a disabled person still live in non-decent accommodation. 1 in 5 disabled people requiring adaptations to their home believe that their accommodation is not suitable”.

With 2.5% of the housing waiting list requiring a ground floor, wheelchair property with specific adaptations, we must work with partners across the housing, health and social care sectors to consider how these homes will be built.

We must also consider the challenges faced when working with the house-building sector, particularly larger house-builders, when affordable housing that is outside of the norm is requested as part of Section 106 agreements. The Council often has to negotiate reduced overall affordable housing contributions in order to build specialist housing due to the costs associated.

3.3.6 Rural affordable housing

The Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) state that:

“The lack of suitable affordable housing in Gloucestershire is a serious problem for many people who are forced to move home out of the countryside and into our larger towns and cities. The movement of people away from their roots has a major impact on rural communities in Gloucestershire, both socially and economically.”³⁸

The council’s work with GRCC is to facilitate rural exceptional housing whereby under exceptional circumstances development can be brought about to meet a specific need i.e. affordable housing need, in a village, parish or a specific area.

For a rural local authority where housing in villages and small communities (fewer than 3,000 population) comes through on small sites, the government’s small sites policy may come into effect and the Council cannot negotiate on-site affordable housing. This results in less affordable homes for local communities.

Whilst planning policies will aim to maximise affordable housing delivery, the council must continue to facilitate rural exceptional housing development to meet local needs. There are numerous struggles that face the council in bringing about rural affordable housing including, sourcing suitable developable land with a willing land owner, building relationships with local representatives such as parish councils, and funding such a project.

~~Seventeen-Sixteen~~ of our 50 parishes in Tewkesbury Borough have zero affordable housing at this time ~~;- this is over a third.~~ In 19 parishes ~~there are less fewer~~ than 1% of dwellings ~~that~~ are affordable ~~housing~~. The council is aspiring to deliver more homes in rural areas so that these communities continue to thrive. ~~See Appendix 1c, section 6, page 11 for a full table of the 40 most rural parishes in Tewkesbury Borough and the percentage of affordable housing stock.~~

There are numerous benefits to rural development including retaining young families in the area to support the local economy, schools and keeping families closer together as well as enabling those wishing to downsize to remain in the village in more suitably sized accommodation.

Housing associations are essential in delivering small-scale rural development and have shown continued commitment to Tewkesbury Borough in recent years and engagement through the Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership³⁹.

[Tewkesbury Borough Council has made great progress with a programme of Housing Needs Surveys conducted at a parish level. Identifying the housing needs of our communities is vital to help ensure the right properties are delivered where they are needed most. We encourage feedback and discussion from all parts of a community to hear their views, dispel common myths and misconceptions and highlight the benefits of rural affordable housing.](#)

[GRCC have now set up a Community Led Housing Hub that can provide advice and support to communities interested in having a greater part in housing development. We will continue to inform local community groups about Community Led Housing as we acknowledge the benefits of these locally led schemes. We will also continue to offer funding to our Registered Social Landlord partners to support rural housing deliver through our commuted sums.](#)

3.3.7 *Asylum seekers and refugees*

Tewkesbury Borough is a partner within the Gloucestershire Syrian Resettlement Programme and has worked with our partners Severn Vale Housing, [now Bromford Housing](#), and GARAS (Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) to provide accommodation for vulnerable families in our borough. We will continue to meet our commitment to this group during the lifetime of this strategy.

3.4 Improving the health and well-being of local people

3.4.1 *More than bricks and mortar*

The Housing Strategy must address more than bricks and mortar; more than simply the number of homes. Tewkesbury Borough Council understands the importance of building communities as well as homes. The Joint Core Strategy not only deals with the housing development but also the infrastructure and economic development of the ~~three~~ districts of Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester.

Here in Tewkesbury Borough the Council's community development team works from a 'place' perspective; a way of engaging with our communities as well as supporting them to achieve their potential and reduce dependency on the council and other public services. ~~We~~ want our communities to thrive and feel empowered ~~to do so~~ for themselves. We truly want Tewkesbury Borough to be a place where a good quality of life is open for all. [This is also something we pursue with our preferred Registered Housing Associations and we expect them to be concerned and supportive of the communities they build and manage.](#)

We will ensure our residents are well supported to enable them to live life to the fullest and it starts with good quality housing.

3.4.2 *Stock condition and fuel poverty*

The condition of the existing housing stock is important to ensure that residents are living in decent, safe accommodation which is suited to their needs. The condition of the housing stock is important to ensure that the increase in net housing stock through growth is not offset by a reduction in the number of existing homes which are habitable. Equally it is necessary to mitigate against the potential unintended consequence of growth that poor quality private sector housing leads to migration from existing communities into more attractive new housing developments leading to low demand neighbourhoods.

Living in poor condition, cold, damp homes that are not suitable for a household's needs have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of the occupiers. When accidents and illness occur because homes are not fit, it has an impact on a person's ability to participate in work, education, social and other activities and consequently impacts on social care services and the NHS.

The significant shift in emphasis on home owners being responsible for repairs to their properties has to be reflected in this Strategy. The majority of home owners will, therefore, be offered no more than self-help to secure home improvements. Nevertheless, the Council recognises that there will be situations where support is necessary and appropriate for vulnerable home owners.

The council's environmental health service offers advice that aims to demonstrating to a private landlord the works that are needed to avoid enforcement action being taken against them, for landlord accreditation and or for the property to be accepted onto a Local Letting Agency; they also provide an owner of an empty home with details of the works necessary to put the property in a state suitable for letting or that are likely to affect the sale price of the property.

The Council will take appropriate action against landlords and home owners as appropriate in accordance with the Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy⁴⁹. This includes a period of informal action to encourage a landlord to take action voluntarily.

In the main the council will refer enquirers to the Gloucestershire Warm and Well energy advice helpline for general advice on how to save energy in the home. This service is currently provided by Severn Wye Energy Agency.

The Environmental Health team will establish the suitability or otherwise of the property in regards to condition, affordable warmth and space. If the householder raises a potential need for disabled adaptations details shall be referred to Gloucestershire County Council's Adult and Children Social Care, Customer Contact Centre for assessment.

3.4.3 *Houses in multiple occupation*

There are thought to be exceptionally few houses in multiple occupation (HMO) requiring mandatory licensing in Tewkesbury Borough. Progressing licenses has, therefore, not been a priority to date. Nevertheless, the Council now recognises it should pursue owners operating a licensable HMO illegally.

Where a HMO requiring a license comes to the attention of the Council, the Environmental Health team ~~will~~ send a standard application pack to the owner.

There also needs to be some preparation for any possible future changes in HMO licensing and therefore the Council ~~aims will be aiming~~ to identify all HMOs in the borough.

~~3.4.4 Going the extra mile~~

~~The Gloucestershire Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Project⁴⁴ will engage with 1,100 people over three years until December 2019 to support the county's most vulnerable adults into work, training or education. The project will identify potential work related opportunities for its Gloucestershire participants.~~

~~Target participants are women, individuals with addictions, over 50's, rural residents, people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, carers, black and minority ethnic residents, homeless applicants, people with mental health issues, and unemployed residents.~~

~~The Council will ensure that all possible participants in the borough are signposted to GEM to receive the support they require.~~

~~3.4.5 3.4.4 Supporting residents affected by welfare reform and helping people into work~~

~~Housing associations~~Registered Providers ~~have been~~will be impacted by the 1% rent reduction and have been reviewing business plans. Non-essential services and some community work for example could be affected as housing associations cut back. This is not the case for all and may not affect Tewkesbury Borough social housing tenants greatly, however we must be prepared for possible impacts on housing association tenancy support services.

The Council is increasingly reliant on working in partnership with housing associations with stock in our borough to respond to welfare reform changes. ~~The impact is fully discussed in Housing Strategy Appendix 2 and associated evidence in Appendix 1b.~~

The Council will be working proactively with ~~housing associations~~Registered Providers and other partners to support residents not only into work and ~~to seek employment, but to~~ opportunities ~~to gain qualifications and so on, and so on, to~~ help them gain the skills and confidence they need to ~~be~~ active and productive members of their communities.

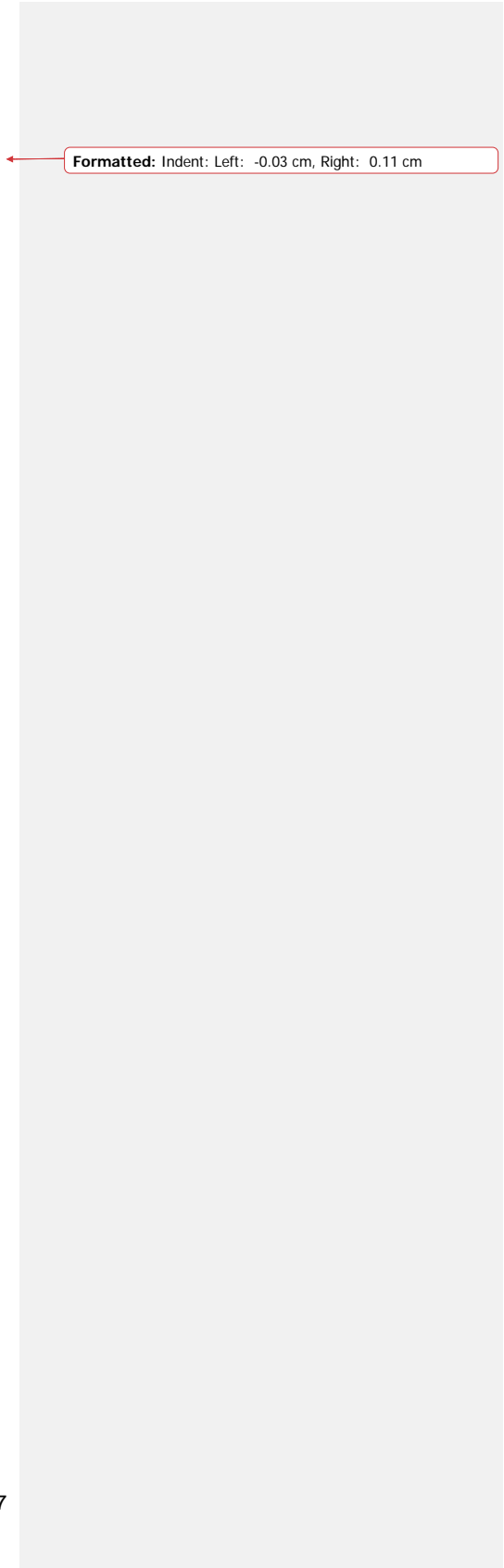
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4 Key Challenges

4.1 Increasing Housing Supply

- Robustness of affordable housing policies in the Tewkesbury Borough Plan that manage home ownership products as well as rented.
- Rent levels and sales values that ensure viability for developers and affordability for our residents.
- Meeting the number of new affordable homes needed.
- The possible reduction in affordable housing stock through the Voluntary Right to Buy (the extension to the Right to Buy for housing associations)
- Empty homes across the borough that should be brought into productive use.
- [Quality private sector rented accommodation](#)
- [Land opportunities for rural developments](#)
- [Higher costs of rural development](#)
- Support for both landlords and tenants in the private sector.

4.2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

- Intervention at the earliest possible stage for households in crisis and ensuring they access our services
- ~~Achieving the GOLD Standard in homeless prevention to give a cost-effective and excellent service to those facing housing difficulties~~
- Working with residents and partners to mitigate the effects of Welfare Reform on tenancy affordability
- Improving choice for residents facing homelessness by improving access to the private rented sector
- Addressing the needs of home owners following the removal of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.
- Lack of local alternatives to Bed & Breakfast -(B&B)
- Limited number of accommodation spaces available for households
- Expense of emergency accommodation/ short term accommodation
- Supporting specific groups to access suitable emergency accommodation
- Supporting households with poor tenancy history to find a sustainable solution
- Lack of temporary accommodation within the borough
- Solutions for single households with dual diagnosis/multiple needs
- Continued use of the social housing sector for discharging homelessness duty
- Sourcing sustainable housing solutions for care leavers and young people under 35.
- Discharging Homeless duties to those affected by welfare reform
- ~~Implement changes~~[Continue meeting obligations](#) associated with the ~~forthcoming~~ Homelessness Reduction ~~Bill~~[Act](#)

4.3 Meeting the needs of specific groups

- Affordability of housing for low-income households and households affected by Welfare Reform

- Housing large families in affordable accommodation.
- Seeking appropriate accommodation for gypsies and travellers.
- Housing those with very specific housing needs including disability and mobility issues.
- Housing older people as the population ages.
- Meeting the housing needs of our rural communities.
- Understanding, supporting and meeting the demand and need for self/custom-build and Starter Homes.
- Meeting the housing needs of refugees and asylum seekers

4.4 Improving the health and well-being of local people

- How tenants and leaseholders of affordable housing can deal with issues themselves as non-essential services lessen.
- Working with private landlords to provide suitable housing that meet basic standards.
- Ensuring homes are suitably kept warm.
- Meeting the needs of those in houses of multiple occupation and licensing such properties where appropriate.
- Energy saving, particularly for those on low incomes ensuring they are not paying too much in energy costs for their home.
- Providing appropriate support for non-working households to mitigate welfare reform.

5 Addressing the challenges

~~5.1 These challenges will be addressed during the lifetime of the Strategy. These challenges will be addressed during the lifetime of the Strategy. Key priorities and objectives have been drawn from these challenges, see Section 6 overleaf.~~

~~5.15.2 Following consultation on these priorities and objectives, we believe that Tewkesbury Borough Council is in a good position to address the challenges. Key priorities and objectives have been drawn from these challenges, see Section 6 overleaf.~~

~~5.2 Following consultation on these priorities and objectives, we believe that Tewkesbury Borough Council is in a good position to address the challenges its housing and related services face over the next 5 years.~~

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6 Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing Strategy 2017-2024 Key Priorities

From this work we have concluded that there are 4 key priorities for Tewkesbury Borough Council; under each priority there are objectives to focus on for the next 25 years.

65

Priority 1: Increasing the supply of housing

- 1.1 Encouraging new developments to meet the aims of the Joint Core Strategy.
- 1.2 Using financial sums from development to fund the building of more specialist and affordable homes.
- 1.3 Bring empty homes back into use across the Borough.
- 1.4 Maximise the opportunities of the private rented sector.

Priority 2: Prevent homelessness

- 2.1 Improve the proactive homelessness prevention programme.
- 2.2 Review the provision of temporary accommodation.
- 2.3 Stop Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for homeless households except in emergencies.
- 2.4 Continue to meet the obligations of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Priority 3: Meet the housing needs of specific groups

- 3.1 Consider and act on the outcomes of our accommodation assessments to assess our communities' needs.
- 3.2 Promote and facilitate rural affordable housing development.
- 3.3 Work with the health and social care sectors to provide effective housing-related support for vulnerable people.
- 3.4 Evaluate the provision of accommodation-based support for specific groups.
- 3.5 Work with partners to facilitate appropriate accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers as legislation and policy requires.

Priority 4: Improving the health and well-being of local people

- 4.1 Work with private landlords to ensure their properties meet basic standards and support them to improve the condition of their properties.
- 4.2 Continue working with and supporting schemes that provide advice and assistance to vulnerable households to help them reduce fuel costs and promotes safety through the installation of minor adaptations in the home.
- 4.3 Work with our partners to actively encourage individuals to take up education, employment or other activities to support independence and create a sense of worth.

7 Monitoring our Strategy

This Strategy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the ~~Lead Member for Housing Portfolio Holder~~. Annual action plans will be agreed by Executive Committee with annual reporting to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review of achievements and future challenges.

Our annual action plan will be updated regularly and will be made ~~publically~~publicly available on the council's [housing webpages](#)⁴². This will ensure that all our stakeholders can see the progress we are making and when new actions are being taken to achieve our objectives.

Our action is to be shaped annually (calendar year) to be pro-active as well as re-active to the changing needs of our community and challenges facing us when new government policies are implemented.

We want our Housing Strategy to be as flexible as possible so that we can continue to take action where necessary and start new actions when appropriate. ~~to do so over the 5-year strategy period.~~

Each of the 4 priorities are referenced with the letter P and the priority number i.e. Priority ~~14~~ is P1. Each action to be achieved is then numbered (in no particular order) with a number to get the ID reference i.e. P1.1; P1.2 and so on. All actions have a deadline date ~~to befor~~achievement~~ed~~.

Section 8 overleaf details the action plan for the first year of the Strategy ~~during the 2017 calendar year~~; there is at least one action for each objective.

8 Interim Housing Strategy Action Plan Year One: 2017 (Previous Action Plan) to be amended or deleted.

This Interim Housing Strategy Action Plan ~~for 2017~~ has been created ~~by Tewkesbury Borough Councillors with officer support and with guidance from the consultation responses~~ to prioritise areas of work for the next 12 months. This action plan identifies specific steps Tewkesbury Borough Council needs to take in order to achieve the priorities and objectives of the Housing Strategy during the next year. ~~one of the strategy.~~

Priority 1 Increase the supply of housing

ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P1. 1	Investigate how <u>Registered Providers can be encouraged to consider</u> alternative construction methods <u>and deliver homes to a high build standard can deliver new affordable housing on council owned land</u>	Objective 1.1	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	Input from: Property Services Development Management Severn Vale Housing Society Registered Providers	March 2022 July 2017
P1. 2	Establish detailed affordable housing policies for the Tewkesbury Borough local plan	Objective 1.2	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	Input from: Planning Policy Development Management	July 2017
P1. 3	Produce a guidance note <u>and bid pro forma</u> that determines <u>assists with</u> the use of commuted sums (financial contributions in lieu of on-site affordable housing) and seek Executive Committee approval	Objective 1.3	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	Input from: Democratic Services Housing Services Manager Development Management	March 2017 September 2021
P1. 4	Identify long term empty homes and evaluate their potential benefit to the council's housing service.	Objective 1.4	Environmental Health Manager	Input from: Revenues and Benefits Housing Services	December 2017
P1. 5	Use a range of enforcement actions to bring vacant properties back into use	Objective 1.4	Environmental Health Manager	Input from: Revenues and Benefits Housing Services	December 2017

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P1. 6	Evaluate potential for additional promotional activities with private sector landlords to boost availability of homes in the borough.	Objective 1.5	Environmental Health Manager	Input from: Revenues and Benefits Housing Services	December 2017
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Commented [JB2]: Remove as SW work has not led to PRS gains

Priority 2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P2. 1.	Improve advice process in prevention paperwork to incorporate to assist in supporting customers while working remotely including personalised action plans that agree include customer actions.	Objective 2.1	Housing Services Manager	None	June 2017 <u>September 2021</u>
P2. 2.	Contact all housing associations and private landlords who have worked with us to prevent homelessness to develop an eviction/prevention protocol	Objective 2.1	Housing Services Manager	None	June 2021 <u>2017</u>
P2. 3.	Develop solutions for homeowners with special housing needs in mortgage difficulty	Objective 2.1	Housing Services Manager	Input from: — Housing association partners — Financial resources need to be identified	April 2018
P2. 4.3.	Improve housing services website and include a landlord advice section	Objective 2.1	Housing Services Manager	None	June 2021 <u>September 2017</u>
P2. 5.4.	Update the housing services housing options/homelessness form and investigate online solutions to support this	Objective 2.1	Housing Services Manager	None <u>Input from IT services / Business Transformation</u>	June 2017 <u>September 2021</u>
<u>P2. 5.</u>	<u>Reduce the use of private bed and breakfast accommodation except in emergencies.</u>	<u>Objective 2.4</u> <u>Objective 2.5</u>	<u>Housing Services Manager</u>	<u>Input from: Housing association partners Wider homelessness pathway (County)</u>	<u>March 2022</u>

Commented [JB3]: Remove as very few homeowner approaches

P2 6.	<u>Work with county local authority partners to find solutions for high risk/high support/multiple needs homeless households</u>	Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5	Housing Services Manager	<u>Input from:</u> <u>Partner local authorities for multi-authority solution</u> <u>Other agencies and accommodation providers</u>	<u>Explore funding solutions by March 2021</u>
P2. 6.	<u>Work with local authority partners on Gold Standard Programme and achieve 60% in peer review</u>	Objective 2.2	Housing Services Manager	None	September 2017
P2. 7.	<u>Introduce an early intervention protocol for tenants affected by welfare reform including transitional support and assistance to find work</u>	Objective 2.3	Housing Services Manager	<u>Input from:</u> <u>Financial Inclusion Partnership</u> <u>Council's revenues and benefits</u> <u>Department for Work and Pensions</u> <u>Housing associations</u> <u>Citizen's Advice Bureau</u> <u>Going the Extra Mile Project</u> <u>Greensquare Support</u>	July 2017

Commented [JB4]: Remove as 'Gold Standard' and NPSS now defunct

Commented [JB5]: Change to wider focus on 'Tenancy Ready' programme?

Commented [JB6]: Remove as although Welfare Reform still affects affordability this is now imbedded rather than as part of changes to the benefits system.

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Priority 2 – Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention (continued)

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ID-ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline*
P2. 8	<u>ReduceStop the use of private bed and breakfast accommodation except in emergencies.</u>	Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5	Housing Services Manager	<u>Input from:</u> <u>Housing association partners</u> <u>Wider homelessness pathway (County)</u>	<u>March 2022</u> <u>April 2018</u>
P2. 9	<u>Procure cost effective temporary accommodation within Tewkesbury Borough for accepted households with poor tenancy histories who are difficult to rehouse including properties suitable for households with mobility needs</u>	Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5	Housing Services Manager	<u>Input from:</u> <u>Housing association partners</u>	April 2018

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Commented [JB7]: Absolutely key for the future but could be deferred to next strategy.

P2. 10	Work with county local authority partners to find solutions for high risk/high support/multiple needs homeless households	Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5	Housing Services Manager	Input from: Partner local authorities for multi-authority solution <u>Other agencies and accommodation providers</u>	<u>Explore/Find funding solutions by April 2018</u> <u>March 2021</u>
P2. 11	Implement changes associated with the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Bill	Objective 2.1 Objective 2.2 Objective 2.3 Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5	Housing services Manager	To be identified	To be determined by the progress of the Bill.

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Priority 3 Meeting the housing needs of those who need it most

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ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P3. 1	Commissioning, along with the district councils in Gloucestershire and other partners as appropriate, Strategy Housing Market Assessment	Objective 3.1	Planning Policy Manager	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	December 2017
P3. 2	Support the Evaluate/evaluation of the accommodation needs of Travellers and Non-Travellers (as determined by the 2016 updated Gypsy Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA))	Objective 3.1	Planning Policy Manager	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	December 2017 / March 2022
P3. 3	Establish a local connection policy that ensures rural affordable housing development, via rural exception, is prioritised for the needs of the local community.	Objective 3.2	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	Input from: Rural Housing Enabler	In line with the Borough Plan affordable housing policy development timetable
P3. 4	Establish a strategic managers group consisting of housing, health and social care. Continue to play an active role in the Housing with Care Project Board to build relationships and create a joined-up way of working to better support vulnerable residents.	Objective 3.3	Housing Services Manager	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	December 2017 / March 2022
P3. 5	Profile accommodation-based support that the council has access to in the county.	Objective 3.4	Housing Services Manager	Input from: Supporting People (Gloucestershire County Council)	December 2017

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Commented [JB9]: LHNA completed

Commented [JB10]: New assessment process currently beginning.

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Commented [JB12]: Change to maintaining participate in Housing with Care Project Board. Not really for monitoring though?

Commented [JB13]: Access to ABS is through County START network.

Priority 4 Improving the health and well-being of local people

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ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P4. 1.	Encourage landlords wanting to work with the council on improving housing standards and be better trained to provide quality accommodation and management. Maintain and promote the "Fit to Rent" Landlord Accreditation Scheme for landlords wanting to work with the council and be better trained to provide quality accommodation and management.	Objective 4.1	Environmental Health Manager	Environmental Health team & Housing Services team Input from all Gloucestershire districts (partners in the scheme)	December 2017 March 2022
P4. 2.	Work in partnership with district colleagues to commission a 'Stock Condition Survey' Work with RP's and partners to offer advice and assistance with grants, loans and support services (e.g. handyman services) to vulnerable and older people to help insulate, adapt and maintain homes.	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	All Gloucestershire districts Warm and Well contract and partnership agreement, agency services agreement / contract	December 2017 March 2022
P4. 3.	Respond within 3 working days to customer complaints about housing conditions.	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	Environmental Health team	December 2017 March 2022
P4. 4.	Reduce poor quality housing by taking appropriate action to deal with identified Housing Health and Safety Rating System Category 1 hazards.	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	Environmental Health team	December 2017 March 2022
P4. 5.	Current warm & well contract expires in March 2022. Review performance of current provider and participate in joint procurement with other Gloucestershire LAs Carry out the actions within the Strategy for	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	Gloucestershire Affordable Warmth Partnership	As per Strategy action plan March 2022

	Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire Action for Affordable Warmth 2013–2018				
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Priority 4 Improving the health and well-being of local people (continued)

ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P4. 6.	Regulate the standards of larger houses in multiple occupation and caravan sites by enforcing mandatory license conditions	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	Environmental Health team Housing Benefit team	December 2017 March 2022
P4. 7.	To work with the council's community development team to ensure all council services are signposting explore how housing applicants supported by Tewkesbury Borough Council can benefit from residents to the 'Going the Extra Mile' Project	Objective 4.3	Tewkesbury Navigator Housing Services Manager	Funded through GEM Funding Housing Services Team	June 2021 ← Ongoing to September 2019

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Glossary of key terms

This glossary is intended to cover all terms within the Housing Strategy ~~2021-22~~2017-2021 documentation. The Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy Appendix 3 provides its own Glossary of Terms to complement.

Affordable Homes Programme	DCLG funding that is available for Housing associations and house builders via the Homes and Communities Agency to increase the supply of Affordable Housing and specialist housing in England. Programmes are normally over a 3 year period with set target dates for drawing down grant and new-build completion. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homes-england-funding-programmes https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/affordable-homes-programme-2015-to-2018-guidance-and-allocations
Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Full definition as per National Planning Policy Framework 2012 or any successor document https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
Affordable rent levels	Rented housing provided by a housing association subject to a rent of up to 80% of local market rents (inclusive of any Service Charge where applicable)
Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document M: Access to and use of buildings (and associated volumes and corrections) or any successor document	Building regulation in England to ensure that people are able to access and use buildings and their facilities https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m
Category 2 Housing	Optional requirement M4(2) – Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable dwellings https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m
Category 3 Housing a) Adaptable and b) Accessible	Optional requirement M4(3) – Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m
Code for Sustainable Homes – now abandoned	The Code was the national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. The Code aimed to reduce our carbon emissions and create homes that were more sustainable. This policy was withdrawn on 27 th March 2015.
Compulsory purchase order (CPO)	A legal function in the United Kingdom and Ireland that allows certain bodies which need to obtain land or property to do so without the consent of the owner.
Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	A UK Government department established to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area. Responsibilities include driving up housing supply, increasing home ownership, devolving powers and budgets to boost local growth in

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	England, supporting strong communities with excellent public services.
Empty Dwelling Management Order	Empty Dwelling Management Orders: guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/empty-dwelling-management-orders-guidance
Gloucestershire Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Project	The project will be managed by Gloucestershire Gateway Trust (GGT) on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). The Gloucestershire GEM Project will aimed to engage with 1,100 people over three years from October 2016 and will focus on people who face challenges in getting into work, and support them to move closer towards education, training, volunteering or employment.
Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA)	A document to provide an evidence base to enable authorities to comply with their requirements to gypsies, travellers and show people under the Housing Act 2004, the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012 and 2015.
The Homelessness Reduction Act	The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 The Homelessness Reduction Act ('the Act') came into force in April 2018.1 The Act modifies and extends homelessness protection in a number of key ways.
Homeseeker Plus	Homeseeker Plus is our choice based lettings system for letting social housing. It is a partnership formed between all six local Councils in Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire District Council and many of the Housing Associations and social landlords operating in the area. Note: formerly known as Gloucestershire Homeseeker
Homes England - formerly known as Homes & Communities Agency (HCA)	The national housing and regeneration agency for England, with a capital investment budget https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-and-communities-agency
Houses of multiple occupation (HMOs)	As per government definition https://www.gov.uk/private-renting/houses-in-multiple-occupation
Housing associations	As defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008; also known as Registered Providers or Registered Social Landlords
Housing Benefit	Financial support to pay a tenant's rent if they are on a low income.
Housing & Planning Act 2016	Legislation that made de changes to housing policy and the planning system that include s Starter Homes; Extension of the Right to Buy; Sale of high value social housing; Improvements to the private rented housing sector; Self-build duty on local authorities; Planning policy for traveller sites. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/22/contents/enacted
Local Housing Needs Assessment	Glos. Local Housing Needs Assessment 2019. This document has replaced the former SHMA (see below) and details the district housing needs which feeds into the

	planning process both in policy and development control terms under legal s.106 agreements.
Lifetime Homes Standard	The Lifetime Homes standard is a set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/ .
Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	LHA is used to calculate the amount of Housing Benefit for tenants who rent privately.
Low cost home ownership	The collective term for home ownership products under the Affordable Housing definition.
National Planning Policy Framework	"The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied" https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf
National Planning Practice Guidance	Guidance to assist practitioners in the use of the NPPF http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012 and updated 2015.	Sets out the Government's planning policy for traveller sites https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites
Rural exceptional housing development	Where, particularly in rural areas, a local need for affordable housing can be clearly demonstrated, and cannot be met in other way; exceptionally the council may permit residential development in accordance with the appropriate housing policies and the NPPF planning guidance.
Social rent levels	Rents that are set by the housing association in accordance with the formula set by the Homes and Communities Agency (or its successor body)
Strategic Housing Market Assessment Strategic Housing Market Assessment – SHMA. Now replaced by Local Housing Needs Assessment (see above)	The SHMA assessed the District housing needs and fed into the planning system. A document that assesses the district's full housing needs and is the first step in the process of developing local plans as set out in the Planning Policy Guidance http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/stage-5-final-evidence-base/#paragraph_045
Warm and Well Scheme	Warm & Well can ensure older people stay safe and warm, whether they live in their own home or a rented property, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes. This will keep fuel costs down and reduce the risk of health problems linked to the cold http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/article/106393/Gloucestershire-Warm--Well---Energy-saving-grants-keep-older-people-safe-in-winter

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Endnotes

- 1 Tewkesbury Borough Council Plan 2016-2020 <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/tewkesbury-borough-council-plan>
- 2 Cotswold AONB <http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/userfiles/factsheet-1.pdf>
- 3 Environment Agency; Tewkesbury Borough flood map for planning <https://goo.gl/PwsxmY>
- 4 What Homes Where, 2013 <http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/userfiles/factsheet-1.pdf>
- 5 Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1a, Section 2, Chart 1, Page 6
- 6 2012-Based Sub-national Population Projections, Office for National Statistics
- 7 Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1a, Section 2, Chart 3, Page 7
- 8 Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1a, Section 2, Chart 2, Page 7
- 9 Average house price for all properties over the period June 2015-May 2016; Source Land Registry via Local Insight, OCSI
- 10 IMD data and maps can be found here https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/viewpage.aspx?c=page&page=Deprivation_Maps2015
- 11 Rents are covered in full in Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b Section 8.
- 12 Homelessness Act 2002 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/section/1>
- 13 Localism Act 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>
- 14 Laying the foundations: a housing strategy for England 2011 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/laying-the-foundations-a-housing-strategy-for-england--2>
- 15 The Joint Core Strategy is a partnership between Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, and Tewkesbury Borough Council, formed to produce a coordinated strategic development plan to show how this area will develop during the period up to 2031 <http://www.gct-jcs.org/>
- 16 The Tewkesbury Borough Plan is the development plan solely for Tewkesbury Borough <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/tewkesbury-borough-plan/?rq=Tewkesbury%20Plan>
- 17 A Strategic Housing Market Assessment or SHMA is a technical study intended to help local planning authorities understand how many homes will be needed in a given period.
- 18 Bank of England, Financial Stability Report 2014 <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/Documents/fsr/2014/fsrfull1406.pdf>
- 19 Shorthand Social Case Study on the pilot housing association Right to Buy Extension <https://social.shorthand.com/insidehousing/jydttxO6P/the-right-to-buy-extension>
- 20 Inside Housing article "First tenants purchase homes under Right to Buy pilots" <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/first-tenants-purchase-homes-under-right-to-buy-pilots/7016750.article>
- 21 Memorandum for the House of Commons, Committee of Public Accounts, Department for Communities and Local Government, Extending the Right to Buy <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Memorandum-extending-the-right-to-buy.pdf>
- 22 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment Final 2014 can be found in the housing section of the council's webpage Strategies and Policies <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/strategies-and-policies>

- 23 National Planning Policy Guidance; Planning Obligations Para 31 <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/planning-obligations/planning-obligations-guidance/>
- 24 Section 1 and Section 4 of the Capital Funding Guide for Shared Ownership details the main features of the scheme and the rent and service charge element <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/capital-funding-guide/11-shared-ownership>
- 25 Welfare Reform Act 2012 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents>
- 26 Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/contents/enacted>
- 27 Housing Act 2004 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/contents>
- 28 Housing Act 1996 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/contents>
- 29 National Planning Policy Framework <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- 30 Planning Practice Guidance <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/>
- 31 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites>
- 32 Gloucestershire SHMA <http://tewkesbury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1907#SHMA>
- 33 Fair welfare campaign <http://www.homeless.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/policy-and-lobbying-priorities/fair-welfare-campaign>
- 34 Welfare Reform 2.0 - Long-term solutions, not short-term savings <https://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/welfare%20reform%20point%200.pdf>
- 35 The cumulative impact of welfare reform in Tewkesbury Borough
- 36 The Care Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted/data.htm>
- 37 Figures published in 2014 by the Office for Disability Issues Department for Work and Pensions <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disability-facts-and-figures>
- 38 Gloucestershire Rural Community Council <http://www.grcc.org.uk/affordable-rural-housing/affordable-rural-housing>
- 39 Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership <http://www.grcc.org.uk/affordable-rural-housing/gloucestershire-rural-housing-partnership->
- 40 The Tewkesbury Borough Council Corporate Enforcement Policy can be found in the housing section of the council's webpage Strategies and Policies <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/strategies-and-policies>
- 41 More information can be found in the Autumn 2016 newsletter <http://www.gloucestershiregatewaytrust.org.uk/images/pdfs/GGC%20Community%20Partners%20News%20Autumn%202016.pdf>
- 42 The council's housing webpages: <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/housing-strategy>

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At home in Tewkesbury Borough interim housing strategy for our borough

2021-2022



Tewkesbury Interim Housing Strategy 2021-22



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Foreword



Welcome to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing interim Strategy 2021-2022. This interim strategy has been prepared as a review from the 2017-21 strategy. The interim approach is appropriate as there are many changes both proposed and current in the Housing and Planning policy landscape as well as Covid restrictions and these are yet to be fully resolved and impacts understood. A further comprehensive review is proposed in 2022 when it is anticipated matters will have settled.

As Lead Member for Housing, I recognise how important it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives. Not only is housing important for the health and wellbeing of individuals and families, but it is an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the overall economic prosperity of the borough.

Under the Housing Acts of 1996 and 2002, the Local Government Act 2003, Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 the Council is required to have a strategy in place to set out its vision for housing and how it will address homelessness across its administrative area. National and local policies guide the principles within this strategy.

This document provides a clear direction and commitment for the delivery of a customer focused, efficient housing service. By having a single overarching strategy it should make it easier for our stakeholders to understand when as well as what we intend to do to address housing issues and tackle homelessness.

This strategy will enable the council to work effectively and with a range of partner organisations to actively support private sector landlords and tenants and maintain and improve all accommodation across the borough. We will need to work with our stakeholders to achieve our annual action plans and in doing so I am confident that the delivery of this strategy, through innovative approaches, will help the council to deliver the right mix of accommodation in the borough. The Council will provide high quality housing advice and support people when they need it to prevent and relieve homelessness.

Providing our communities with a choice of affordable and private market housing, in an area where they want to live and work now and in the future, will contribute towards making Tewkesbury Borough a place where a good quality of life is open to all.

Councillor Gill Blackwell
Lead Member for Housing
Tewkesbury Borough Council

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1 Introduction and background

The Housing Strategy 2021-2022 has a key part to play in delivering the council's overarching vision¹ for the residents and communities of Tewkesbury Borough:

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

Quality housing is fundamental to the health and well-being of our communities and ensures the borough remains a thriving one where people want to live, work and visit. Tewkesbury Borough Council recognises that access to quality affordable housing underpins the success of our area and all of the overarching corporate priorities.

The [Council Plan 2020-2024](#) identifies housing as a key priority. The plan commits to create a ‘sustainable place’ to meet the needs of our growing population.

The housing objectives are set out as follows:

- 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

It is important for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing services that make a real difference to their lives.

Not only is housing important for the health and well-being of residents it is also an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the economic prosperity of the borough.

Only with the right supply of homes to meet the housing needs of local people can we achieve our vision of sustainable communities supported by economic growth.

The [Council Plan](#) has other key policies on [Sustainable Environment and Garden Communities](#) both of which will impact on our housing plans.

The Climate Emergency Declaration under Sustainable Environment calls for:

“Review and update of our plans in relation to environmental sustainability and carbon management “

This could have wide ranging effects upon new build housing construction standards as well as existing housing stock refurbishment requirements. In practice this will be effectively pursued on new build schemes when the Government issues new Building Regulation Guidance and when the JCS Plan Review has in place planning policy to support these

changes. Existing housing stock refurbishment depends upon Government initiatives such as the Green Deal Grant regime and the forthcoming De-carbonisation grants aimed at large stock holders such as Housing Associations.

The Garden Communities will deliver large scale housing numbers for the Borough with a wide range of housing types and tenures as well as new employment and leisure opportunities in new sustainable communities. However, the delivery of the housing elements of this scheme is still some way off. This is because the proposal has yet to pass through the formal Local Plan stages.

The housing strategy is an overarching strategic document. It takes account of the principal national and local issues that are likely to affect Tewkesbury Borough in the foreseeable future. Although the effects of Covid 19 and The EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement are not fully understood at this time. It sets out our housing challenges and explains how we intend to address these issues through four key priorities. Key objectives are detailed within each of the priority areas with targets and outcomes for delivering these objectives will be detailed annually in the action plan.

2 The local context

2.1 Our profile

Tewkesbury borough is spread across 160 square miles and despite its predominately rural nature it also includes growing communities on the fringes of Gloucester City and the town of Cheltenham. The eastern part of the borough lies within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which accounts for 8.5% of our district².

Flooding is a natural feature of the borough particularly in relation to the River Severn which runs down the western edge of the area and creates constraints regarding flood plain³. These constraints and the AONB can make development of new homes and other buildings and infrastructure difficult in the borough. However, the borough is at the heart of the economic engine of Gloucestershire, including four junctions of the M5 motorway and has excellent national transport links making it an area of significant growth.

The borough's population is roughly 92,599 with just over 42,000 households. There are 50 parish and town councils (includes parish meetings) covering the borough ranging in size from 3,062 households to as small as 574 households. Information from What Homes Where 2013⁴, a toolkit to help local authorities assess their housing needs shows us some of these key population issues⁵.

Assuming current population trends continue, the ONS projections⁶ for the next 25 years suggest that the population in Tewkesbury Borough will reach 93,400 by 2025 and 100,400 by 2037. The district's growth rates are higher than those predicted for Gloucestershire and England in the short, medium and long term⁷.

The dominating feature of the projected trend for Tewkesbury Borough is a sharp increase in the number of older people (aged 60 and over) to 2033. Projections for children and young people indicate slower growth, while the working-age population is expected to show little change in the long term. There continues to be an increase in one person households with this household type projected to overtake all others by 2033. Couples on their own and small families increase at a relatively steady rate but larger family growth remains small. Other households include couples with adult children living at home, friends living in a property and so on, are predicted to decline⁸.

In 2015, 11.8% of the housing stock in Tewkesbury Borough was affordable housing (owned by housing associations). The percentage increase in the actual number of all dwellings in Tewkesbury Borough from 2009 to 2015 is 7%; the market stock as increased by 7% and the housing association stock has increased by 9.5%. The extent of housing growth across Tewkesbury Borough has been beneficial for our households in need. However, the affordable housing accommodation in Tewkesbury Borough has only increased by 0.1% since 2010.

The majority of the borough's housing stock is owner-occupied and is generally in good condition. However, the stock is skewed towards larger more expensive properties. Tewkesbury Borough as a whole is generally an affluent area; however, this can mask pockets of significant inequality. As an example, housing in Tewkesbury borough is relatively expensive against national and regional averages with the East of the borough having the highest values given its proximity to the AONB. The ward with the highest property values has an average house price of £490,996, with detached properties fetching over £600,000⁹. Compared against data from the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)¹⁰ where the borough has 2 lower super output areas. Both perform poorly on employment, education, skills and training, and income deprivation affecting children. A further area also performs poorly on income deprivation affecting older people.

The growth in income levels has not kept pace with the increases in property values meaning that many people are priced out of owner occupation the borough. While income growth in Tewkesbury Borough is in line with the rest of England, the average house price increase has been more significant at 2.96 times the values 15 years ago. The income to house price ratio for Tewkesbury Borough in 2013/14 was higher than Gloucestershire overall, the South West and England.

Both private and social housing rents are becoming more unaffordable to our residents. From 2008/09 to 2014/15 private sector rents have increased by 15% and social sector rents have also increased by a substantial 35%¹¹.

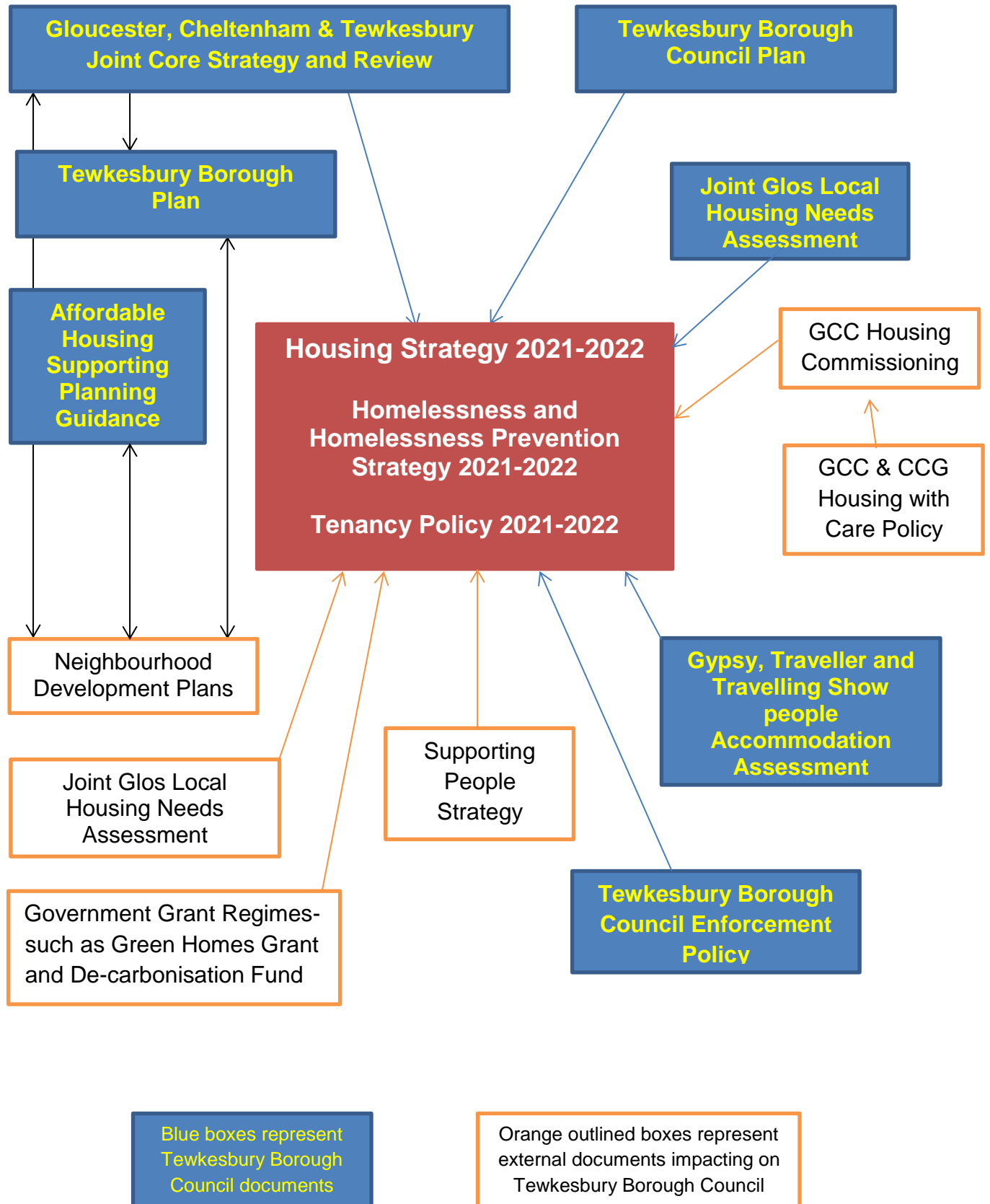
2.2 Statutory requirements

Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and [Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities](#) 2018, the Council is required to publish a strategy setting out how it will address homelessness in its administrative area. The Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2021-2022 can found in Appendix 2.

The Localism Act 2011¹³ places a duty on all local authorities to produce a tenancy strategy, setting out what housing associations should take into consideration when making decisions about their individual tenancy policies. The Government White Paper on Social Housing (November 2020) currently out to consultation will likely make this process more transparent for tenants. Our Tenancy Strategy is a separate document which should be read in conjunction with this document.

2.3 Where the Housing Strategy fits

The following diagram shows where the Housing Strategy fits with other key Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire county-wide strategic-level documents:



3 Policy context and key challenges

We continue to be guided by the National Strategy¹⁴ along with new legislation, such as the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and other government policies and initiatives such as the NPPF which stresses the planning importance of new housing. These key government initiatives impact on our housing services in Tewkesbury Borough..

3.1 Increasing housing supply

3.1.1 Universal housing provision

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS)¹⁵ partners will, through the Strategy and emerging Local Plans¹⁶, deliver sufficient housing supply to meet the universal housing provision and economic growth needs of the borough.

Section 4.2 of Appendix 1a evidences our resident's ability to access the housing market and how important it is for the council to consider and provide for the whole market to meet their needs. It is clear that government supported schemes and affordable housing home ownership are extremely popular and needed by our residents, but with these options being less than 12% of all sales in the borough the opportunities particularly for younger people to get on the housing ladder are limited.

3.1.2 Government manifesto to increase home ownership

Whilst there is still some focus on rented housing, home ownership is the government's driver for housing at present believing more homes will be built, particularly First Homes, in the near future which has now replaced the earlier concept of Starter Homes of the previous administration.

The government manifesto to provide more homes and more homes for sale for young people has meant a new First Homes concept . This is a vision of 'discounting' new homes prices by up to 30% and possibly 50% in areas of high house prices with the discount protected in perpetuity. The proposal has been out for consultation and a consultation report has been prepared (Feb 2020). The sector is now waiting for the decision as to how this product will work in reality. If First Homes are to be considered affordable housing in the future, this will affect the council's current position of what we can provide on-site on new developments impacting the rented element. The effects of the proposal are not known at the moment as final detailed proposals are awaited. However, the Local Housing Needs Assessment 2019 makes it very clear that housing need in the Borough cannot be entirely met by home ownership alone as a model.

Recent development in key locations has significantly increased the supply of affordable homes including shared ownership and shared equity products ensuring that there are opportunities for lower incomes households to buy a home of their own.

In the June 2014 Financial Stability Report¹⁸, the Bank of England announced measures to cut the risk of a damaging house price bubble emerging by limiting the number of high-risk mortgages. Mortgage lenders must limit the proportion of mortgages at loan to income

multiples of 4.5 and above to no more than 15% of their new mortgages. However, at the Conservative Party Conference in October 2020 the Prime Minister announced plans for a state backed mortgage offer of up to 95% to encourage further home ownership particularly amongst the young. The scheme has yet to be released to the market.

Whilst mortgages remain restricted, Tewkesbury Borough's income to house price ratio makes it difficult for first time buyers to get on the property ladder. This results in the out-migration of young people in the lower income brackets of our borough and encourages people to commute into Tewkesbury Borough for work, while living in areas where housing is cheaper outside of the borough and in more urban areas.

3.1.3 Right to Buy extension

Further to the government home ownership ambition, a pilot commenced in November 2015 of 5 housing associations was undertaken to extend the Right to Buy to their tenants. The outcome to date has shown that just with 48,000 potential sales found that only "a shade under 16,000 of the 48,000 households were allowed to buy under the pilot once the exemptions were applied" and 1.6% (790) households made formal applications to buy their home¹⁹. Applications for the pilot from tenants of the housing associations closed in October 2016; in September 2016, almost a year after the pilot was launched, were sales going through. According to Inside Housing²⁰ this was an unconfirmed figure of 8 sales. In essence the government intends for 1.3million housing association tenants in England to receive Right to Buy and 3 years for the housing associations or local authority (where applicable) to start building a new home for each one sold under the new policy²¹.

3.1.4 Effects on affordable housing of the economic downturn

The economic downturn of 2008 saw a reduction in affordable housing delivery as schemes became unviable to deliver. Viability negotiations with developers meant that very low or zero affordable housing was provided and the loss was felt until delivery gained momentum again in 2012. Now, after some years of a successful housing market, house building and affordable housing delivery have regained traction. But, the future holds some uncertainty given the economic effects of Covid and the impact of EU exit on the housing sector labour force and general economic performance. Currently, stamp duty relief until March 2021 and existing housing consents are providing a short boom to the housing market and delivery of affordable housing under older s106 agreements already in place.

3.1.5 Delivering affordable housing

Tewkesbury Borough Council has a target to deliver 40% (35% on strategic sites) affordable housing in accordance with the JCS plan on all market-led development within the Borough. However, the government continues to reduce planning obligations on Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) developers to incentivise development of new homes through a policy of zero affordable housing contributions on small sites of 10 or less dwellings or sites of less than 1000sqm unless in a designated area (for Tewkesbury Borough this is AONB only)

The council seeks to work with developers and housing associations to provide housing for sale within affordable levels, considering local incomes and house prices. At present a new-build first sale shared ownership share for an applicant cannot exceed 75% of the property's full market value. Typically, on first sale the share sold is more likely to be between 35% and 50% of the property's full value depending on the area of the borough. The Government are consulting on allowing the sale portion to fall to as low as 10% but Housing Associations have expressed concern that this may not be a mortgageable asset from the bank and building society viewpoint so that there may be a practical difficulty in delivery.

Evidence from the LHNA 2019 informs us of the most suitable mix of tenures across a development. However, like all policies regarding planning obligations, we negotiate the percentage of affordable housing that can be delivered considering viability and suitable tenure mixes, house types as well as accessibility for disability. The council will continue a flexible approach to new development in the borough to ensure that new homes can be delivered within suitable timescales to meet our corporate objectives as well as delivering our housing planning policies of the JCS and Local Plan.

3.1.6 Challenges for the affordable housing sector

The rent cap affects housing associations where the rents on their rented properties are to be at local housing allowance (LHA) and will need to be considered in terms of rented housing products. A realistic percentage of rented housing on new developments will need to be established, possibly on a site-by-site basis, so that the affordable housing provision on-site is indeed affordable to local people. This may mean specific house sizes are required to be set at particular rents levels i.e. within the LHA.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012²⁵ is the borough's most significant legislative change impacting on our approaches for meeting housing need. For example, those on low incomes are struggling to find suitable low cost housing as the Localism Act brought in affordable rents. (up to 80% of open market rent, inclusive of service charge). While this generates more income for housing associations, our residents in housing need now require more money towards their housing costs, often not fully met by the current housing benefit levels. The council seeks to negotiate rent levels at planning stage but this must be agreed based on the development viability. For a time grants were not available for the more affordable social rented housing from Homes England. However, this funding has now recently been re-instated in the latest Homes England funding package updated December 2020.

[Homes England funding programmes - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

We continue to monitor the effects of the under-occupation charge, commonly known as the 'bedroom tax', brought in by the Welfare Reform Act where social housing tenants who are under-occupying a property are charged a rate to pay for the extra room. This is 14% of net rent for one spare bedroom or 25% for two or more spare bedrooms. In reality the charge saw a smaller number of households than anticipated move to more suitably sized

accommodation with the majority of those affected by the charge able to afford to remain in their home and pay the charge.

Increasing income for housing associations and initiating more housing building by them has been contradicted by the requirement to reduce their rents by 1% per annum in each of the four years with effect from 1 April 2016. The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016²⁶ requires housing associations to comply with maximum rent requirements for new tenancies. This has placed pressure on housing associations to reduce their costs and has for some limited their capacity. Many Housing associations are committed to their new-build programmes whilst others have reduced theirs. There has been a noticeable increase of the merging of Housing Associations to create larger bodies that have more flexible funding arrangements in place as a result.

3.1.7 Environmental impacts of new homes

During our consultation period it was brought to our attention that Tewkesbury Borough Council needs to have an awareness of the potential improvements in construction by incorporating flood resilience measures where appropriate, for example reflecting the Environment Agency flood zones. It is therefore necessary to fully understand the requirements for new homes as well as providing support for communities when they are flooded. It will be for the Council's Flood Risk Management Group to determine measures in new housing development and the planning process; it is the vision of this document that all possible support will be given to such wider priorities of Tewkesbury Borough Council and its communities.

3.1.8 Private rented sector and empty homes

The council recognises that the private rented sector is growing and will continue to do so in a growing area like Tewkesbury Borough; it will also support the borough to meet its housing needs. The council takes its statutory enforcement role seriously and where landlords are not meeting the standards required will deliver a robust service as described above. This is particularly important that the Council can now discharge its homelessness duty into the private rent sector. Ensuring such homes are available and appropriate and that the tenancy can be sustained is, therefore, increasingly important.

However, whilst a large proportion of the environmental health team's time is spent on enforcement this is only to deal with a small proportion of the worst private rented housing. Enforcement should only need to be a last resort. We wish to place a larger emphasis on the proactive role the council will play in helping landlords in the early stages. This is in particular for owners where being a landlord is not their core business, or reluctant landlords such as those who inherit a property but do not wish to sell it. The council will promote sources of advice that are available to landlords, existing private tenants and residents considering private renting.

The council will work with the other Gloucestershire district councils to promote the 'Fit to Rent' common accreditation scheme for landlords and letting agents across Gloucestershire.

Crucially, prospective tenants need to be made aware of the advantages of selecting a property owned by an accredited landlord or managed by an accredited letting agent. The environmental health team aims to maximise the number of inspections of properties owned by accredited landlords so that they can be given advice on the improvements that could be made.

Further to new-build housing, the council's environmental health team works closely with partners on initiatives handling operational (enforcement) actions to bring empty homes back into use. Most empty homes brought back into use will become private sector homes. The team will aim to ensure that each property achieves the highest standard. Enforcement options will include the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under the Housing Act 2004²⁷, Empty Dwelling Management Orders, enforced sale and compulsory purchase orders (CPO).

3.2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

Local housing authorities have a statutory duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness. (see: Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) The Act modifies and extends existing homelessness protection in a number of key ways:

- 1. Improved advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness**
- 2. Extension of the period ‘threatened with homelessness’**
- 3. Introducing new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people, regardless of priority need and intentionality**
- 4. Introducing assessments and personalised housing plans, setting out the actions housing authorities and individuals will take to secure accommodation**
- 5. Encouraging public bodies to work together to prevent and relieve homelessness through a duty to refer**

The Council’s housing services team undertakes enquiries to assess what duties and assistance can be offered to those seeking help. Our focus is to work with our clients to prevent their homelessness wherever possible. If we are unable to prevent homelessness, the council has further statutory duties to secure accommodation for eligible vulnerable homeless households.

Our focus will be on preventing homelessness wherever possible and our joint interventions with our Council colleagues and partners are likely to include:

- Establishing if households are entitled to exemptions from welfare reform changes
- Advising residents of changes and the personal impact on their household
- How they can avoid financial hardship
- Offer financial advice and advice on the benefits of securing employment, and
- Working with the financial inclusion partnership to offer temporary assistance through discretionary housing payments, advice and assistance on arrears, working with housing providers to avoid possession proceedings.

Changes associated with welfare reform are likely to continue throughout the lifetime of this strategy and we will continue to take a proactive approach to identifying cohorts and clients. We will work with our partners and affected groups to offer early resolution to affordability issues. Those most likely to be affected will be:

- Those under-occupying affordable rented housing
- Those under 35 in unaffordable private rented, affordable rented housing, in supported accommodation, or at risk of homelessness.
- Those likely to be affected by the reduction of the benefit cap
- Those in affordable rents (rents set at 80% of the market rent) who may be affected by unaffordability following the implementation of the welfare reform changes.

The challenges facing Tewkesbury Borough Council, the implications of the above changes and further analysis of homelessness and homelessness prevention can be found in Appendix 2: Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy. It outlines our commitment, priorities and objectives to meet the needs of those threatened with homelessness within Tewkesbury Borough. Actions to be taken are detailed as part of this overarching document and can be found in Section 8.

3.3 Meeting the needs of specific groups

3.3.1 Requirements for accommodation assessments

Many information sources have been used to assess housing needs and supply including the Gloucestershire Housing Needs Assessment 2019 the housing register for rented affordable housing, the housing register for affordable home ownership schemes, MAIDeN (Gloucestershire Information Observer) and nationally available databases such as the census, Office of National Statistics and Land Registry.

The Borough Council is required to undertake several assessments; a Local Housing Needs Assessment and a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Accommodation Assessment (GTTSA) as per the National Planning Policy Framework²⁹ (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance³⁰ (PPG).

The planning policy for traveller sites(see: NPPF 2019 para 61)is one that supports provision such as rural exception sites to meet the housing and accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople. However the updated 2015 policy changes the definition of these groups for planning purposes. Under the JCS the council's requirement for additional pitches and plots to the year 2031 has now reduced owing to households in Tewkesbury Borough not meeting the new definition. We will continue to have an accommodation need for households who do not meet the definition and be required to provide suitable sites. These households who do not meet the definition will have their needs assessed through the Local Needs assessment. Those who do meet the definition will continue to have their accommodation needs assessed through the GTTSA, including the accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.

- **The Local Needs Assessment assesses our Borough-wide housing and accommodation needs and we work with our neighbouring authorities in Cheltenham and Gloucester as our housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The most recent assessment was published in 2019and identifies the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period. The Local Needs Assessment guides us in our requirements for rented and shared ownership affordable housing. However, the government is proposing further wide ranging changes with First Homes, reduced percentage sales for shared ownership and more encouragement to discounted home sales and custom build houses. It will be an on-going concern to see how these initiatives impact upon housing need in the Borough and the wider affordability challenges these initiatives address.**

3.3.2 Larger families

The benefit cap for larger families will impact on the willingness of housing associations to develop larger family properties. This has already been noted in ongoing new developments where at the planning stage a 6-bed home was negotiated but at the build stage, the council and the housing association involved agreed to change the property to a smaller home. The members of staff involved from both organisations were unable to find a large family with a

suitable level of income to move into the property. Many large households opted to remain in their current home and over-occupy so they can continue to afford their rent.

Welfare reform is likely to cause financial hardship for many residents on low incomes in our borough throughout the lifetime of this strategy. Homeless charities such as Crisis and Homeless Link are reporting that reductions in benefit levels associated with welfare reform, and changes in the way that benefits are paid through Universal Credit are increasing the risk of homelessness. We are committed to mitigating the impact of welfare reform on financially vulnerable households in the borough to reduce the risk of homelessness.

3.3.3 *Financial inclusion*

The rationale behind welfare reform is to incentivise work and reduce the cost of welfare. Households will be exempt from many of the most impactful reforms if they are in employment. Resolving financial hardship and preventing homelessness will inevitably involve supporting affected households to understand how the reforms will impact on them. Tewkesbury Borough Council is a key partner in the borough-wide Financial Inclusion Partnership to encourage households into employment wherever possible.

We are committed to identifying cohorts of clients likely to be affected by forthcoming reforms with a view to early intervention with partners in the Financial Inclusion Partnership. The partnership commissioned research by Policy in Practice on the projected cumulative impact of Welfare Reform within the borough with a view to identifying individuals and cohorts of residents likely to be significantly affected.

Evidence from the Policy in Practice research can be found in Appendix 1b where the impact of welfare reform has been analysed for Tewkesbury Borough and includes:

- The under occupation charge
- Local housing allowance
- The benefit cap at £26,000 and the new lower cap of £20,000 as at November 2016
- The profile of households capped
- Changes to benefit for young people
- The removal of the WRAG premium (work related activity group)
- Housing benefit capped at local housing allowance (LHA) rates for social rents
- The LHA freeze
- Removal of the Housing Benefit Family Premium
- The impact of universal credit
- The cumulative impact of welfare reform.

The housing services team are committed to working with our council colleagues in revenues and benefits and partners namely the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), housing associations, support providers, and Citizens Advice Bureau to identify the vulnerable cohorts and work with the affected households to resolve these difficulties. Our strong working relationships within the Tewkesbury Borough Financial Inclusion Partnership will be invaluable in managing the effects of welfare reform.

Revenues and benefits teams can offer temporary support to those affected by welfare reform changes with Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to prevent financial hardship whilst alternative, more permanent solutions are sought. However, this must only be an intervening measure as the DHP funding is not long-term and is likely to diminish over time. Tenants must seek to find employment or increase working hours to enhance their income to afford rents.

We will work with our colleagues in the revenues and benefits team, the DWP and housing associations to identify affected households and offer sustainable solutions. We will also work with housing associations operating within Tewkesbury Borough to establish how they can continue to meet the housing needs of those households unable to their meet their housing needs through affordable housing products.

3.3.4 Older People

Population changes will present an increasing challenge for the borough in relation to additional pressure on health and social care and the need for more specialist accommodation. There is also evidence that a number of homes in both the social/affordable rented sector and market sector are currently under-occupied, particularly in rural areas.

The Care Act 2014 includes housing as a fundamental component. The Act looks at the suitability of accommodation for those at home receiving care and support. The Act and the accompanying regulations and guidance outline how housing can support a more integrated approach of particular note:

- A duty to promote well-being.
- Housing not just the 'bricks and mortar' but also includes housing related support.
- Housing must be considered as part of the household's assessment process
- Information and advice should reflect housing options, as part of a universal service offer
- Care and support is to be delivered in an integrated way with cooperation with partner bodies, including housing services.

Tewkesbury Borough offers 40 retirement homes, sheltered housing and extra care housing accommodating 1,004 properties along with 25 care homes of 798 units of accommodation. Of the care homes, 12 are specific for older people (aged 55 and over), with the remaining accommodating any person with care needs and for people with specific disabilities.

Tewkesbury Borough will see significant growth in its older population and accommodation needs for this group are likely to change. For example, as we live healthier for longer our accommodation needs become different where we stay more active and mobile for longer and seek a more suitable home for our lifestyle. 36.47% of the Homeseeker Plus waiting list state that their vulnerability is worsened by their housing situation. Of this, a quarter (around 180 households) is over 60 years old.

Care homes are typically single bed units; there are few that are for couples or sharing. For many people having a disability and/or care need means living away from their family and

friends in specialist housing; for some this is a necessity to receive around the clock care and support. For others their care needs can be and are being met in the family home but this often results in the home being unsuitable. More and more adaptations are required to existing homes across all tenures to ensure homes are suitable.

Gloucestershire County Council provide commissioning services for Disabled Facilities Grants. The Council provides information on agencies and surveyors in the local area that can help to support and assist applicants with major works to their properties, focussing on providing services and assistance to elderly and vulnerable clients.. Providing adaptations is seen as particularly important given the possible health implications, care and support costs of residents not obtaining essential disabled adaptations in a timely fashion. However, it is essential that delivery of this aspect of the private sector housing service is integrated with all other aspects. We therefore work across services to assess housing need and whether a move to more appropriate accommodation is required.

3.3.5 *People with a disability*

Government statistics³⁷ show that people with disabilities have a poorer quality of life with a *“substantially higher proportion of individuals who live in families with disabled members live in poverty, compared to individuals who live in families where no one is disabled.”*

Barriers to employment and education are improving but remain significant as there is *“a 30.1 percentage point gap between disabled and non-disabled people, representing over 2 million people”* and that disabled people *“are around 3 times as likely not to hold any qualifications compared to non-disabled people, and around half as likely to hold a degree-level qualification”*.

In terms of housing these statistics say that *“Although the gap in non-decent accommodation has closed over recent years, 1 in 3 households with a disabled person still live in non-decent accommodation. 1 in 5 disabled people requiring adaptations to their home believe that their accommodation is not suitable”*.

With 2.5% of the housing waiting list requiring a ground floor, wheelchair property with specific adaptations, we must work with partners across the housing, health and social care sectors to consider how these homes will be built.

We must also consider the challenges faced when working with the house-building sector, particularly larger house-builders, when affordable housing that is outside of the norm is requested as part of Section 106 agreements. The Council often has to negotiate reduced overall affordable housing contributions in order to build specialist housing due to the costs associated.

3.3.6 *Rural affordable housing*

The Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) state that:

“The lack of suitable affordable housing in Gloucestershire is a serious problem for many people who are forced to move home out of the countryside and into our larger towns and

cities. The movement of people away from their roots has a major impact on rural communities in Gloucestershire, both socially and economically."³⁸

The council's work with GRCC is to facilitate rural exceptional housing whereby under exceptional circumstances development can be brought about to meet a specific need i.e. affordable housing need, in a village, parish or a specific area.

For a rural local authority where housing in villages and small communities (fewer than 3,000 population) comes through on small sites, the government's small sites policy may come into effect and the Council cannot negotiate on-site affordable housing. This results in less affordable homes for local communities.

Whilst planning policies will aim to maximise affordable housing delivery, the council must continue to facilitate rural exceptional housing development to meet local needs. There are numerous struggles that face the council in bringing about rural affordable housing including, sourcing suitable developable land with a willing land owner, building relationships with local representatives such as parish councils, and funding such a project.

Sixteen of our 50 parishes in Tewkesbury Borough have zero affordable housing at this time. In 19 parishes fewer than 1% of dwellings are affordable housing. The council is aspiring to deliver more homes in rural areas so that these communities continue to thrive.

There are numerous benefits to rural development including retaining young families in the area to support the local economy, schools and keeping families closer together as well as enabling those wishing to downsize to remain in the village in more suitably sized accommodation.

Housing associations are essential in delivering small-scale rural development and have shown continued commitment to Tewkesbury Borough in recent years and engagement through the Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership

Tewkesbury Borough Council has made great progress with a programme of Housing Needs Surveys conducted at a parish level. Identifying the housing needs of our communities is vital to help ensure the right properties are delivered where they are needed most. We encourage feedback and discussion from all parts of a community to hear their views, dispel common myths and misconceptions and highlight the benefits of rural affordable housing.

GRCC have now set up a Community Led Housing Hub that can provide advice and support to communities interested in having a greater part in housing development. We will continue to inform local community groups about Community Led Housing as we acknowledge the benefits of these locally led schemes. We will also continue to offer funding to our Registered Social Landlord partners to support rural housing deliver through our commuted sums.

3.3.7 Asylum seekers and refugees

Tewkesbury Borough is a partner within the Gloucestershire Syrian Resettlement Programme and has worked with our partners Severn Vale Housing, now Bromford Housing, and GARAS (Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) to provide

accommodation for vulnerable families in our borough. We will continue to meet our commitment to this group during the lifetime of this strategy.

3.4 Improving the health and well-being of local people

3.4.1 More than bricks and mortar

The Housing Strategy must address more than bricks and mortar; more than simply the number of homes. Tewkesbury Borough Council understands the importance of building communities as well as homes. The Joint Core Strategy not only deals with the housing development but also the infrastructure and economic development of the three districts of Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester.

Here in Tewkesbury Borough the Council's community development team works from a 'place' perspective; a way of engaging with our communities as well as supporting them to achieve their potential and reduce dependency on the council and other public services. We want our communities to thrive and feel empowered to do for themselves. We truly want Tewkesbury Borough to be a place where a good quality of life is open for all. This is also something we pursue with our preferred Registered Housing Associations and we expect them to be concerned and supportive of the communities they build and manage.

We will ensure our residents are well supported to enable them to live life to the fullest and it starts with good quality housing.

3.4.2 Stock condition and fuel poverty

The condition of the existing housing stock is important to ensure that residents are living in decent, safe accommodation which is suited to their needs. The condition of the housing stock is important to ensure that the increase in net housing stock through growth is not offset by a reduction in the number of existing homes which are habitable. Equally it is necessary to mitigate against the potential unintended consequence of growth that poor quality private sector housing leads to migration from existing communities into more attractive new housing developments leading to low demand neighbourhoods.

Living in poor condition, cold, damp homes that are not suitable for a household's needs have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of the occupiers. When accidents and illness occur because homes are not fit, it has an impact on a person's ability to participate in work, education, social and other activities and consequently impacts on social care services and the NHS.

The significant shift in emphasis on home owners being responsible for repairs to their properties has to be reflected in this Strategy. The majority of home owners will, therefore, be offered no more than self-help to secure home improvements. Nevertheless, the Council recognises that there will be situations where support is necessary and appropriate for vulnerable home owners.

The council's environmental health service offers advice that aims to demonstrating to a private landlord the works that are needed to avoid enforcement action being taken against

them, for landlord accreditation and or for the property to be accepted onto a Local Letting Agency; they also provide an owner of an empty home with details of the works necessary to put the property in a state suitable for letting or that are likely to affect the sale price of the property.

The Council will take appropriate action against landlords and home owners as appropriate in accordance with the Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy This includes a period of informal action to encourage a landlord to take action voluntarily.

In the main the council will refer enquirers to the Gloucestershire Warm and Well energy advice helpline for general advice on how to save energy in the home. This service is currently provided by Severn Wye Energy Agency.

The Environmental Health team will establish the suitability or otherwise of the property in regards to condition, affordable warmth and space. If the householder raises a potential need for disabled adaptations details shall be referred to Gloucestershire County Council's Adult and Children Social Care, Customer Contact Centre for assessment.

3.4.3 Houses in multiple occupation

There are thought to be exceptionally few houses in multiple occupation (HMO) requiring mandatory licensing in Tewkesbury Borough. Progressing licenses has, therefore, not been a priority to date. Nevertheless, the Council now recognises it should pursue owners operating a licensable HMO illegally.

Where a HMO requiring a license comes to the attention of the Council, the Environmental Health team will send a standard application pack to the owner.

There also needs to be some preparation for any possible future changes in HMO licensing and therefore the Council aims to identify all HMOs in the borough.

3.4.4 Supporting residents affected by welfare reform and helping people into work

Registered Providers have been impacted by the 1% rent reduction and have been reviewing business plans. Non-essential services and some community work for example could be affected as housing associations cut back. This is not the case for all and may not affect Tewkesbury Borough social housing tenants greatly, however we must be prepared for possible impacts on housing association tenancy support services.

The Council is increasingly reliant on working in partnership with housing associations with stock in our borough to respond to welfare reform changes.

The Council will be working proactively with Registered Providers and other partners to support residents not only into work and to seek employment, but to opportunities to gain qualifications and so on, to help them gain the skills and confidence they need to be active and productive members of their communities.

4 Key Challenges

4.1 Increasing Housing Supply

- Robustness of affordable housing policies in the Tewkesbury Borough Plan that manage home ownership products as well as rented.
- Rent levels and sales values that ensure viability for developers and affordability for our residents.
- Meeting the number of new affordable homes needed.
- The possible reduction in affordable housing stock through the Voluntary Right to Buy (the extension to the Right to Buy for housing associations)
- Empty homes across the borough that should be brought into productive use.
- Quality private sector rented accommodation
- Land opportunities for rural developments
- Higher costs of rural development
- Support for both landlords and tenants in the private sector.

4.2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

- Intervention at the earliest possible stage for households in crisis and ensuring they access our services
- Working with residents and partners to mitigate the effects of Welfare Reform on tenancy affordability
- Improving choice for residents facing homelessness by improving access to the private rented sector
- Addressing the needs of home owners following the removal of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.
- Lack of local alternatives to Bed & Breakfast (B&B)
- Limited number of accommodation spaces available for households
- Expense of emergency accommodation/ short term accommodation
- Supporting specific groups to access suitable emergency accommodation
- Supporting households with poor tenancy history to find a sustainable solution
- Lack of temporary accommodation within the borough
- Solutions for single households with dual diagnosis/multiple needs
- Continued use of the social housing sector for discharging homelessness duty
- Sourcing sustainable housing solutions for care leavers and young people under 35.
- Discharging Homeless duties to those affected by welfare reform
- Continue meeting obligations associated with the Homelessness Reduction Act

4.3 Meeting the needs of specific groups

- Affordability of housing for low-income households and households affected by Welfare Reform
- Housing large families in affordable accommodation.
- Seeking appropriate accommodation for gypsies and travellers.
- Housing those with very specific housing needs including disability and mobility issues.
- Housing older people as the population ages.

- Meeting the housing needs of our rural communities.
- Understanding, supporting and meeting the demand and need for self/custom-build and Starter Homes.
- Meeting the housing needs of refugees and asylum seekers

4.4 Improving the health and well-being of local people

- How tenants and leaseholders of affordable housing can deal with issues themselves as non-essential services lessen.
- Working with private landlords to provide suitable housing that meet basic standards.
- Ensuring homes are suitably kept warm.
- Meeting the needs of those in houses of multiple occupation and licensing such properties where appropriate.
- Energy saving, particularly for those on low incomes ensuring they are not paying too much in energy costs for their home.
- Providing appropriate support for non-working households to mitigate welfare reform.

5 Addressing the challenges

- 5.1 These challenges will be addressed during the lifetime of the Strategy. Key priorities and objectives have been drawn from these challenges, see Section 6 overleaf.
- 5.2 Following consultation on these priorities and objectives, we believe that Tewkesbury Borough Council is in a good position to address the challenges.

6 Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing Strategy 2021-2022 Key Priorities

From this work we have concluded that there are 4 key priorities for Tewkesbury Borough Council; under each priority there are objectives to focus on for the next 2 years.

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Priority 1: Increasing the supply of housing

- 1.1 Encouraging new developments to meet the aims of the Joint Core Strategy.
- 1.2 Using financial sums from development to fund the building of more specialist and affordable homes.
- 1.3 Bring empty homes back into use across the Borough.
- 1.4 Maximise the opportunities of the private rented sector.

Priority 2: Prevent homelessness

- 2.1 Improve the proactive homelessness prevention programme.
- 2.2 Review the provision of temporary accommodation.
- 2.3 ~~Stop~~ Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for homeless households except in emergencies.
- 2.4 Continue to meet the obligations of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Priority 3: Meet the housing needs of specific groups

- 3.1 Consider and act on the outcomes of our accommodation assessments to assess our communities' needs.
- 3.2 Promote and facilitate rural affordable housing development.
- 3.3 Work with the health and social care sectors to provide effective housing-related support for vulnerable people.
- 3.4 Evaluate the provision of accommodation-based support for specific groups.
- 3.5 Work with partners to facilitate appropriate accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers as legislation and policy requires.

Priority 4: Improving the health and well-being of local people

- 4.1 Work with private landlords to ensure their properties meet basic standards and support them to improve the condition of their properties.
- 4.2 Continue working with and supporting schemes that provide advice and assistance to vulnerable households to help them reduce fuel costs and promotes safety through the installation of minor adaptations in the home.
- 4.3 Work with our partners to actively encourage individuals to take up education, employment or other activities to support independence and create a sense of worth.

7 Monitoring our Strategy

This Strategy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Lead Member for Housing.. Annual action plans will be agreed by Executive Committee with annual reporting to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review of achievements and future challenges.

Our annual action plan will be updated regularly and will be made publicly available on the council's [housing webpages](#)⁴². This will ensure that all our stakeholders can see the progress we are making and when new actions are being taken to achieve our objectives.

Our action is to be shaped annually (calendar year) to be pro-active as well as re-active to the changing needs of our community and challenges facing us when new government policies are implemented.

We want our Housing Strategy to be as flexible as possible so that we can continue to take action where necessary and start new actions when appropriate.

Each of the 4 priorities are referenced with the letter P and the priority number i.e. Priority 1 is P1. Each action to be achieved is then numbered (in no particular order) with a number to get the ID reference i.e. P1.1; P1.2 and so on. All actions have a deadline date for achievement.

Section 8 overleaf details the action plan for the first year of the Strategy; there is at least one action for each objective.

8 Interim Housing Strategy Action Plan

This Interim Housing Strategy Action Plan has been created to prioritise areas of work for the next 12 months. This action plan identifies specific steps Tewkesbury Borough Council needs to take in order to achieve the priorities and objectives of the Housing Strategy during the next year.

Priority 1 Increase the supply of housing

ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P1. 1.	Investigate how Registered Providers can be encouraged to consider alternative construction methods and deliver homes to a high build standard	Objective 1.1	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	Input from: Property Services Development Management Registered Providers	March 2022
P1. 2.	Produce a guidance note and bid pro forma that assists with the use of commuted sums (financial contributions in lieu of on-site affordable housing) and seek Executive Committee approval	Objective 1.3	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	Input from: Democratic Services Housing Services Manager Development Management	September 2021

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Priority 2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P2. 1.	Improve advice process to assist in supporting customers while working remotely including personalised plans that agree customer actions.	Objective 2.1	Housing Services Manager	None	September 2021
P2. 2.	Contact all housing associations and private landlords who have worked with us to prevent homelessness to develop an eviction/prevention protocol	Objective 2.1	Housing Services Manager	None	June 2021

P2.	3.	Improve housing services website and include a landlord advice section	Objective 2.1	Housing Services Manager	None	September 2021
P2.	4.	Update the housing services housing options/homelessness form and investigate online solutions to support this	Objective 2.1	Housing Services Manager	Input from IT services / Business Transformation	September 2021
P2.	5.	Reduce the use of private bed and breakfast accommodation except in emergencies.	Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5	Housing Services Manager	Input from: Housing association partners Wider homelessness pathway (County)	March 2022
P2	6.	Work with county local authority partners to find solutions for high risk/high support/multiple needs homeless households	Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5	Housing Services Manager	Input from: Partner local authorities for multi-authority solution Other agencies and accommodation providers	Explore funding solutions by March 2021

Priority 3 Meeting the housing needs of those who need it most

ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P3.	1. Support the evaluation of the accommodation needs of Travellers and Non-Travellers (as determined by the 2016 updated Gypsy Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSA))	Objective 3.1	Planning Policy Manager	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	March 2022
P3.	2. Continue to play an active role in the Housing with Care Project Board to build relationships and create a joined-up way of working to better support vulnerable residents.	Objective 3.3	Housing Services Manager	Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer	March 2022

Priority 4 Improving the health and well-being of local people

ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P4. 1.	Encourage landlords wanting to work with the council on improving housing standards and be better trained to provide quality accommodation and management.	Objective 4.1	Environmental Health Manager	Environmental Health team & Housing Services team	March 2022
P4. 2.	Work in partnership with district colleagues to commission a 'Stock Condition Survey'	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	All Gloucestershire districts	March 2022
P4. 3.	Respond within 3 working days to customer complaints about housing conditions.	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	Environmental Health team	March 2022
P4. 4.	Reduce poor quality housing by taking appropriate action to deal with identified Housing Health and Safety Rating System Category 1 hazards.	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	Environmental Health team	March 2022
P4. 5.	Current warm & well contract expires in March 2022. Review performance of current provider and participate in joint procurement with other Gloucestershire LAs	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	Gloucestershire Affordable Warmth Partnership	March 2022

Priority 4 Improving the health and well-being of local people (continued)

ID ref	Action	Objective to which the action contributes	Responsible Person	Required resources	Deadline
P4. 6.	Regulate the standards of larger houses in multiple occupation and caravan sites by enforcing mandatory license conditions	Objective 4.2	Environmental Health Manager	Environmental Health team Housing Benefit team	March 2022
P4. 7.	To explore how housing applicants supported by Tewkesbury Borough Council can benefit from the 'Going the Extra Mile' Project	Objective 4.3	Housing Services Manager	Housing Services Team	June 2021

Glossary of key terms

This glossary is intended to cover all terms within the Housing Strategy 2021-22 documentation. The Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy Appendix 3 provides its own Glossary of Terms to complement.

Affordable Homes Programme	DCLG funding that is available for Housing associations and house builders via the Homes and Communities Agency to increase the supply of Affordable Housing and specialist housing in England. Programmes are normally over a 3 year period with set target dates for drawing down grant and new-build completion. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homes-england-funding-programmes
Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Full definition as per National Planning Policy Framework 2012 or any successor document https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
Affordable rent levels	Rented housing provided by a housing association subject to a rent of up to 80% of local market rents (inclusive of any Service Charge where applicable)
Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document M: Access to and use of buildings (and associated volumes and corrections) or any successor document	Building regulation in England to ensure that people are able to access and use buildings and their facilities https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m
Category 2 Housing	Optional requirement M4(2) – Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable dwellings https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m
Category 3 Housing a) Adaptable and b) Accessible	Optional requirement M4(3) – Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m
Code for Sustainable Homes – now abandoned	The Code was the national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. The Code aimed to reduce our carbon emissions and create homes that were more sustainable. This policy was withdrawn on 27 th March 2015.
Compulsory purchase order (CPO)	A legal function in the United Kingdom and Ireland that allows certain bodies which need to obtain land or property to do so without the consent of the owner.
Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	A UK Government department established to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area. Responsibilities include driving up housing supply, increasing home ownership, devolving powers and budgets to boost local growth in England, supporting strong communities with excellent public services.
Empty Dwelling Management	Empty Dwelling Management Orders: guidance

Order	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/empty-dwelling-management-orders-guidance
Gloucestershire Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Project	The project will be managed by Gloucestershire Gateway Trust (GGT) on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). The Gloucestershire GEM Project aimed to engage with 1,100 people over three years from October 2016 and will focus on people who face challenges in getting into work, and support them to move closer towards education, training, volunteering or employment.
Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA)	A document to provide an evidence base to enable authorities to comply with their requirements to gypsies, travellers and show people under the Housing Act 2004, the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012 and 2015.
The Homelessness Reduction Act	<p>The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017</p> <p>The Homelessness Reduction Act ('the Act') came into force in April 2018.¹ The Act modifies and extends homelessness protection in a number of key ways.</p>
Homeseeker Plus	Homeseeker Plus is our choice based lettings system for letting social housing. It is a partnership formed between all six local Councils in Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire District Council and many of the Housing Associations and social landlords operating in the area. Note: formerly known as Gloucestershire Homeseeker
Homes England - formerly known as Homes & Communities Agency (HCA)	The national housing and regeneration agency for England, with a capital investment budget https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-and-communities-agency
Houses of multiple occupation (HMOs)	As per government definition https://www.gov.uk/private-renting/houses-in-multiple-occupation
Housing associations	As defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008; also known as Registered Providers or Registered Social Landlords
Housing Benefit	Financial support to pay a tenant's rent if they are on a low income.
Housing & Planning Act 2016	Legislation that made changes to housing policy and the planning system that included Starter Homes; Extension of the Right to Buy; Sale of high value social housing; Improvements to the private rented housing sector; Self-build duty on local authorities; Planning policy for traveller sites. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/22/contents/enacted
Local Housing Needs Assessment	Glos. Local Housing Needs Assessment 2019. This document has replaced the former SHMA (see below) and details the district housing needs which feeds into the planning process both in policy and development control terms under legal s.106 agreements.

Lifetime Homes Standard	The Lifetime Homes standard is a set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/ .
Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	LHA is used to calculate the amount of Housing Benefit for tenants who rent privately.
Low cost home ownership	The collective term for home ownership products under the Affordable Housing definition.
National Planning Policy Framework	" <i>The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied</i> " https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf
National Planning Practice Guidance	Guidance to assist practitioners in the use of the NPPF http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012 and updated 2015.	Sets out the Government's planning policy for traveller sites https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites
Rural exceptional housing development	Where, particularly in rural areas, a local need for affordable housing can be clearly demonstrated, and cannot be met in other way; exceptionally the council may permit residential development in accordance with the appropriate housing policies and the NPPF planning guidance.
Social rent levels	Rents that are set by the housing association in accordance with the formula set by the Homes and Communities Agency (or its successor body)
Strategic Housing Market Assessment –SHMA. Now replaced by Local Housing Needs Assessment (see above)	The SHMA assessed the District housing needs and fed into the planning system.
Warm and Well Scheme	Warm & Well can ensure older people stay safe and warm, whether they live in their own home or a rented property, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes. This will keep fuel costs down and reduce the risk of health problems linked to the cold http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/article/106393/Gloucestershire-Warm--Well---Energy-savinggrants-keep-older-people-safe-in-winter

Endnotes

- 1 Tewkesbury Borough Council Plan 2016-2020 <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/tewkesbury-borough-council-plan>
- 2 Cotswold AONB <http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/userfiles/factsheet-1.pdf>
- 3 Environment Agency; Tewkesbury Borough flood map for planning <https://goo.gl/PwsxmY>
- 4 What Homes Where, 2013 <http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/userfiles/factsheet-1.pdf>
- 5 Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1a, Section 2, Chart 1, Page 6
- 6 2012-Based Sub-national Population Projections, Office for National Statistics
- 7 Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1a, Section 2, Chart 3, Page 7
- 8 Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1a, Section 2, Chart 2, Page 7
- 9 Average house price for all properties over the period June 2015-May 2016; Source Land Registry via Local Insight, OCSI
- 10 IMD data and maps can be found here https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/viewpage.aspx?c=page&page=Deprivation_Maps2015
- 11 Rents are covered in full in Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b Section 8.
- 12 Homelessness Act 2002 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/section/1>
- 13 Localism Act 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>
- 14 Laying the foundations: a housing strategy for England 2011 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/laying-the-foundations-a-housing-strategy-for-england--2>
- 15 The Joint Core Strategy is a partnership between Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, and Tewkesbury Borough Council, formed to produce a coordinated strategic development plan to show how this area will develop during the period up to 2031 <http://www.gct-jcs.org/>
- 16 The Tewkesbury Borough Plan is the development plan solely for Tewkesbury Borough <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/tewkesbury-borough-plan/?rq=Tewkesbury%20Plan>
- 17 A Strategic Housing Market Assessment or SHMA is a technical study intended to help local planning authorities understand how many homes will be needed in a given period.
- 18 Bank of England, Financial Stability Report 2014 <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/Documents/fsr/2014/fsrfull1406.pdf>
- 19 Shorthand Social Case Study on the pilot housing association Right to Buy Extension <https://social.shorthand.com/insidehousing/jydttxO6P/the-right-to-buy-extension>
- 20 Inside Housing article "First tenants purchase homes under Right to Buy pilots" <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/first-tenants-purchase-homes-under-right-to-buy-pilots/7016750.article>
- 21 Memorandum for the House of Commons, Committee of Public Accounts, Department for Communities and Local Government, Extending the Right to Buy <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Memorandum-extending-the-right-to-buy.pdf>
- 22 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment Final 2014 can be found in the housing section of the council's webpage Strategies and Policies <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/strategies-and-policies>
- 23 National Planning Policy Guidance; Planning Obligations Para 31 <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/planning-obligations/planning-obligations-guidance/>
- 24 Section 1 and Section 4 of the Capital Funding Guide for Shared Ownership details the main features of the scheme and the rent and service charge element <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/capital-funding-guide/11-shared-ownership>
- 25 Welfare Reform Act 2012 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents>
- 26 Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/contents/enacted>
- 27 Housing Act 2004 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/contents>
- 28 Housing Act 1996 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/contents>
- 29 National Planning Policy Framework <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- 30 Planning Practice Guidance <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/>
- 31 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites>
- 32 Gloucestershire SHMA <http://tewkesbury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1907#SHMA>
- 33 Fair welfare campaign <http://www.homeless.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/policy-and-lobbying-priorities/fair-welfare-campaign>

- 34** Welfare Reform 2.0 - Long-term solutions, not short-term savings
<https://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/welfare%20reform%20%20point%200.pdf>
- 35** The cumulative impact of welfare reform in Tewkesbury Borough
- 36** The Care Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted/data.htm>
- 37** Figures published in 2014 by the Office for Disability Issues Department for Work and Pensions
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disability-facts-and-figures>
- 38** Gloucestershire Rural Community Council <http://www.grcc.org.uk/affordable-rural-housing/affordable-rural-housing>
- 39** Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership <http://www.grcc.org.uk/affordable-rural-housing/gloucestershire-rural-housing-partnership->
- 40** The Tewkesbury Borough Council Corporate Enforcement Policy can be found in the housing section of the council's webpage Strategies and Policies <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/strategies-and-policies>
- 41** More information can be found in the Autumn 2016 newsletter
<http://www.gloucestershiregatewaytrust.org.uk/images/pdfs/GGC%20Community%20Partners%20News%20Autumn%202016.pdf>
- 42** The council's housing webpages: <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/housing-strategy>

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