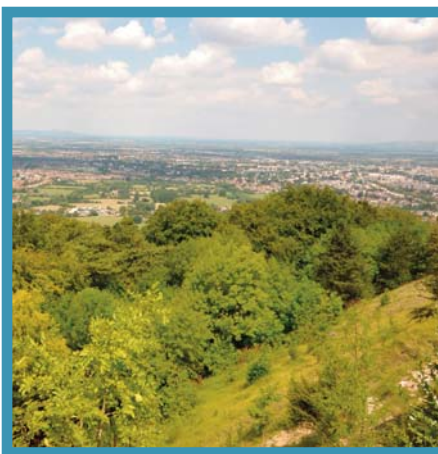


Tewkesbury Borough



Council Plan 2016-20



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Foreword

We are pleased to introduce the Council Plan 2016 to 2020. This document is a statement of intent to drive forward our vision:

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

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

- Finances and resources
- Economic development
- Housing
- Customer-focused services

The next four years are set to be both exciting and challenging. For a relatively small council we have big ambitions. We continue to face unprecedented financial challenge, which means we are focusing closely on transforming the way we deliver our services and adopting a more commercial approach to income generation, so that we can continue to provide excellent value for money. Our council tax is one of the lowest in the country and has been for many years, so we are experts in doing more with less.

Our Council Plan recognises that there is more of a role for councils than just operational service delivery and the future for Tewkesbury Borough is around issues such as infrastructure, skills and housing delivery. We have a vital role to play in helping to shape our place. We pride ourselves in being agile and flexible and despite the financial challenges; we have maintained our essential role in stewarding our 'place'.

By remaining focused on our priorities we can ensure we use our resources effectively to improve the quality of life for our communities. We work extremely well with others and have taken radical steps to bring together our public sector partners to share our building and our vision for our communities. The focus and commitment of the council's staff, councillors and partners will enable us to overcome the challenges ahead and make our vision and priorities a reality.

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

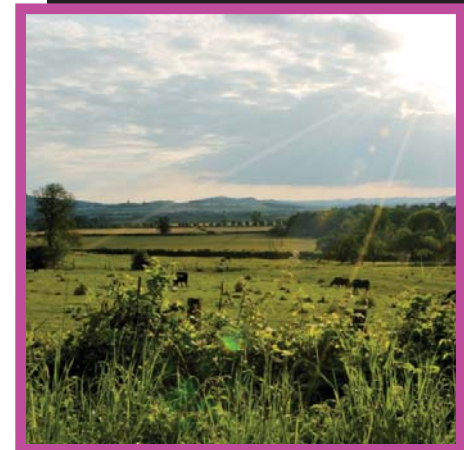
This plan builds upon the success of our previous plan. You will see that we have already made a number of achievements under each of our previous priority themes, and these can be found on pages 11-13.



Councillor Robert Vines
Leader of the Council and
Councillor Dave Waters
Deputy Leader of the Council

Tewkesbury Borough

Our borough is predominantly rural and located in the north of the county extending southwards beyond Gloucester and Cheltenham. The eastern part of the borough lies within the Cotswold AONB. Our population is roughly 85,800 made up of 39,064 households spread across 160 square miles. It has an excellent location at the heart of the M5 corridor.



Despite its apparent rural character, the borough includes a wide range of economic activity ranging from large multinationals to micro businesses. The borough is an established centre for high quality manufacturing and home to some world class high tech aero engineering firms. The diverse and contrasting range of settlements provides a high quality environment in which to live and this, combined with its excellent strategic location, makes it an ideal area for economic and business growth.



A snapshot of Tewkesbury Borough

- The borough has a population of around 85,800, with Office for National Statistics (ONS) projections of 93,400 by 2025 and 100,400 by 2037.
- Projections suggest the number of people aged 65 and above will increase to 500 (from 420 per year) per year between 2012 and 2037.
- The proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population rose from 1.4% to 2.5% between 2001 and 2011 (lower than the county and national %). 'White Other' population has more than doubled between 2001 and 2011, from 940 to 2,410.
- There are around 3,900 VAT registered businesses accounting for around 14% of the county total and growth over the last five years has been the highest in Gloucestershire. The diverse economy supported some 42,000 employees in 2014.
- The borough has a highly skilled workforce that reflects the nature and demand of a high tech manufacturing and service base, which is projected to grow.
- The manufacturing sector accounted for the largest proportion of total employment in Gloucestershire, which was 23% in 2014.
- The current employment rate of 16-64 year olds is 83.7%, higher than the county rate of 79.2% and the national rate of 72.7%.
- Claimant unemployment is 0.9% which is below the county average of 1.0% and the national rate of 1.8%.
- Life expectancy is slightly higher than the county average, and significantly higher than the national average.
- 16.5% of residents (13,523) reported having a long term health problem or disability, broadly in line with the county average and below the regional and national average.
- Two thirds of the borough are ranked within the 40% least deprived areas in England, accounting for 65% of the population. The borough has small pockets of deprivation ranked in the top 20% deprived areas nationally.
- The borough experiences crime rates much lower to the overall rates for England and Wales, south west region and Gloucestershire county.



Our vision and values 2016-20

Our vision is to make:

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

Our values

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

✓ Puts customers first

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

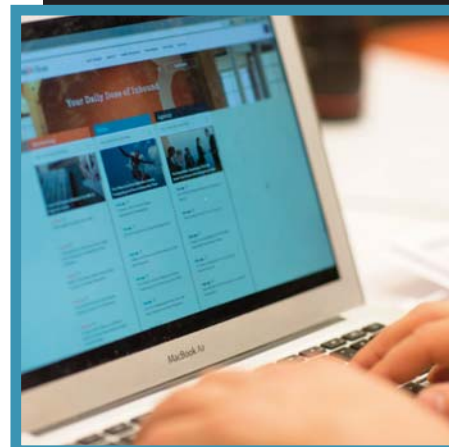
✓ Is positive about working with others

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

✓ Values our employees

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

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



Our priorities and objectives 2016-20

● Finances and resources

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

● Economic development

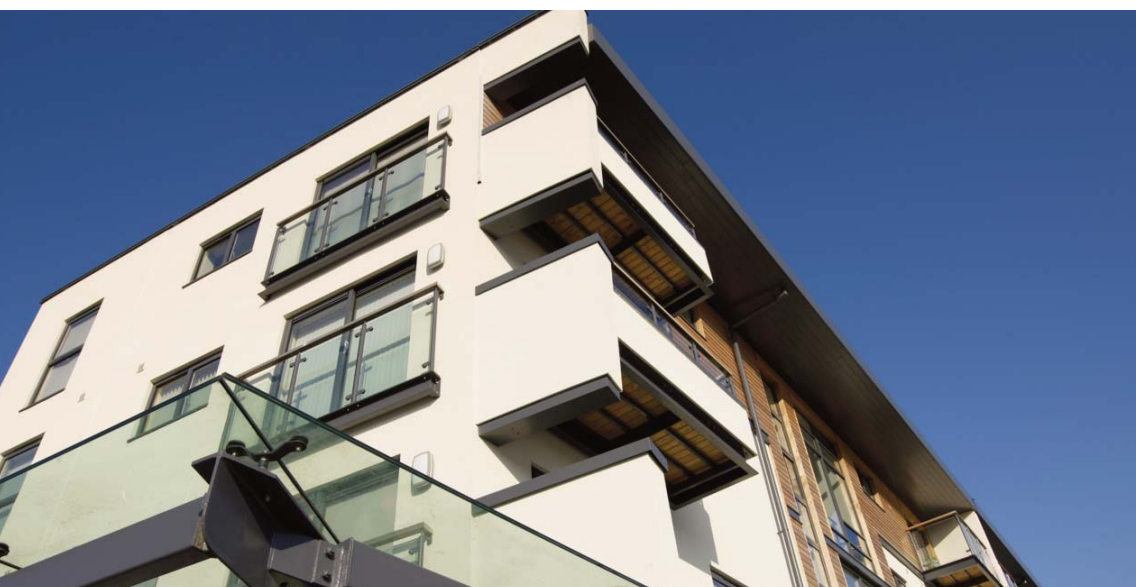
- Be the primary growth engine of Gloucestershire's economy.
- Identify and deliver employment land within the borough, in accordance with the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Tewkesbury Borough Plan.
- Maximise the growth potential of the M5 junctions within the borough.
- Deliver regeneration for Tewkesbury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

● Housing

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

● Customer-focused services

- Maintain and improve our culture of continuous service improvement.
- Develop our customer service ethos to ensure that we deliver to the needs of residents.
- Further expansion of the Public Services Centre (bring in other partners).
- Improve and expand our partnerships both public and private sector and explore opportunities to do this.
- To improve customer access to our services and service delivery through digital methods.



Why this is a priority

The council has to manage with less money at the same time as seeing costs rise and demand on some services increase. It is therefore important we deliver services which maximise value for money, sustainability and efficiencies. The challenge is to simultaneously transform our services while growing our way out of austerity. Our risk appetite therefore needs to be less risk adverse and include the opportunity to look at and invest in commercial activities.

To deliver this priority our objectives and actions are:

- **Start on the path to being financially independent of the government's core grants.**
 - a) Deliver the council's transformation programme.
 - b) Implement a Fees and Charges Strategy to maximise return in the medium term.
- **Maintain a low council tax.**
 - a) Produce a medium term strategy which ensures that council tax remains in the lowest quartile nationally.
- **Investigate and take appropriate commercial opportunities.**
 - a) Develop a programme of commercial projects, including developing an entrepreneurial-type culture for councillors and staff.
 - b) Produce a business case alongside partner authorities for the formation of a housing development company.
 - c) Undertake a review of the discretionary trade waste service to ensure it is operating on a viable commercial level.
- **Use our assets to provide maximum financial return.**
 - a) Ensure value-for-money procurement of a new waste and recycling fleet.
 - b) Deliver the council's asset plan.



Why this is a priority

Local government has historically been seen as a service delivery organisation but the future of the borough is about factors like infrastructure, skills and housing. We therefore need to be more of a place shaper. The borough is well placed to secure economic growth and we want our local economy to thrive and prosper and provide jobs that people want. Attracting new investment and retaining and strengthening existing business is key to ensuring the future prosperity of the borough.

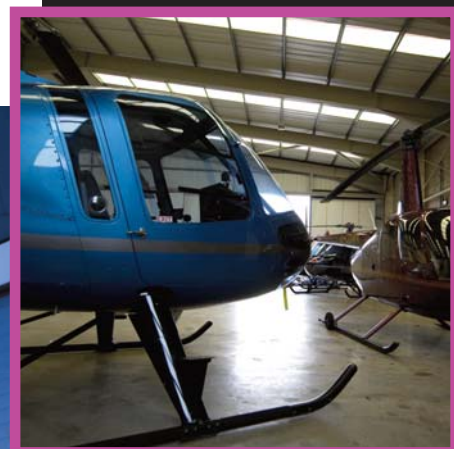
To deliver this priority our objectives and actions are:

- **Be the primary growth engine of Gloucestershire's economy.**
 - a) Carry out an economic assessment within the borough.
 - b) Produce, deliver and launch a new Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.

- **Identify and deliver employment land within the borough**
 - a) Produce an employment land review of sites within the borough.
 - b) Allocate and deliver employment land through the JCS and Tewkesbury Borough Plan.

- **Maximise the growth potential of the M5 junctions within the borough.**
 - a) Produce a vision for the J9 area.
 - b) Work with our partners, including the JCS partners and the LEP, to promote the M5 Growth Zone.
 - c) Work with partners to build a case for an all-ways M5 junction 10.

- **Deliver regeneration for Tewkesbury town.**
 - a) Put in place a plan to regenerate Spring Gardens, following the opening of the new leisure centre.
 - b) Work with Tewkesbury Regeneration Partnership to progress projects that regenerate Tewkesbury Town.



Why this is a priority

We 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 well-being of residents it is also an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the economic prosperity of the borough.

To deliver this priority our objectives and actions are:

- **Increase the supply of suitable housing across the borough to support growth and meet the needs of our communities.**
 - a) Continue working with our partner councils to ensure the Joint Core Strategy is adopted.
 - b) Develop the Tewkesbury Borough Plan.
 - c) Support Neighbourhood Development Plans across the borough where communities bring them forward.
 - d) Utilise new tools available under the Housing and Planning Bill.
- **Achieve a five year supply of land.**
 - a) Ensure adequate land is allocated within the Joint Core Strategy and Tewkesbury Borough Plan to meet housing need.
 - b) Continue to promote sustainable development throughout the borough.
- **Deliver the homes and necessary infrastructure to create new sustainable communities in key locations.**
 - a) Monitor annually the delivery of homes within the borough.
 - b) Work with partners, infrastructure providers and developers to progress the delivery of key sites.
- **Deliver affordable homes to meet local need.**
 - a) Develop a new Housing and Homelessness Strategy for 2016-2020.
 - b) Deliver 150 affordable homes each year.
 - c) Work in partnership to prevent residents becoming homeless



Why this is a priority

One of our core values is that we will put the needs of our customers at the heart of what we do and listen to what they say. We want to provide the best possible service to all of our customers, particularly in terms of resolving queries at the first point of contact. Digital technology is changing our customers' expectations and we want them to be able to access our services when and where they need it, and we want to join up with our partners to make access to our services easier.

To deliver this priority our objectives and actions are:

- **Maintain and improve our culture of continuous service improvement.**
 - a) Deliver phase two of the planning and environmental health service reviews.
 - b) Consider our approach to enviro-crimes, with a particular focus on fly-tipping and dog fouling.
- **Develop our customer service ethos to ensure that we deliver to the needs of residents.**
 - a) Adopt and promote customer care standards to further improve the quality of service our residents receive.
 - b) Roll out a programme of customer services training for staff across the council.
- **Further expansion of the Public Services Centre (bring in other partners).**
 - a) Work with partners to investigate the potential for a reception refurbishment and integrated customer services team.
 - b) To let out the top floor of the Public Services Centre.
- **Improve and expand our partnerships both public and private sector and explore opportunities to do this.**
 - a) Continued delivery of the proposed One Legal expansion.
 - b) With partners, develop and implement a programme for financial inclusion.
 - c) Work with partners to improve digital links between public services to make life simpler for customers.
- **To improve customer access to our services and service delivery through digital methods.**
 - a) Develop and deliver a Digital Strategy.
 - b) Develop and roll out a new website to reflect our commitment to excellent online services.



Keeping our performance on track

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

We also have an excellent track record in relation to the low number of complaints we receive. Positive reports continue to be received from the Local Government Ombudsman with no complaints upheld against the council and formal complaints received to do with our services remain low in number. A six monthly complaints report of the number of complaints received, trends etc are reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

As reported through our previous Council Plan we were really buoyed by the feedback received following our corporate peer challenge in November 2014. Facilitated by the Local Government Association, the peer review team concluded we should have much to be proud of and referred to the council 'punching above its weight' at a local, regional and national level. We have not remained complacent and have a formally approved action plan which will ensure further improvements. This is also monitored by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a six monthly basis.

We look forward to reporting our success factors over the span of the Council Plan (2016-2020) which builds upon the success of our previous plan.

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

Graeme Simpson, Group Manager, Corporate Services
phone: 01684 272002 email: graeme.simpson@tewkesbury.gov.uk



Our achievements 2012-2016

These include;



Use resources effectively

- During the life span of the previous plan we froze council tax - (Band D council tax of £99.36, lowest in county, fifth lowest in England).
- Through rationalisation of our office accommodation we now benefit from an income stream in the order of £160,000 per annum.
- A £1.2m office refurbishment was completed in September 2014, providing a sustainable and fit for purpose Public Services Centre building.
- Through new processes, our Revenues and Benefits team has saved approximately £120,000 and processing times for new benefit claims are now in the top quartile nationally.
- Effective from August 2013, an organisational review was undertaken which created savings in excess of £500,000.
- A very successful corporate peer challenge undertaken by the Local Government Association in November 2014 concluded the council 'punches above its weight' locally, regionally and nationally.



Promote economic development

- We have a massive growth agenda. We secured significant funding to support this. For example, in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, we were awarded £1.36m capacity funding to deliver some of our most important development sites.
- We have worked with partners to support nearly 900 businesses through start-ups, training and mentoring initiatives, seminars, networking events and enterprise clubs. We have also provided a £50,000 business support grant for each year of the previous Council Plan.
- We secured a flood grant of £475,000 from the Department for Business, Innovation and skills (BIS) to support resilience.
- Working in partnership with the Forest of Dean District Council we have made a successful bid to LEADER European Rural Development Programme totalling £1.4 million.
- In 2013/14, we were winners of the Cotswold Tourism Gold Award for our Vintage and Modern Campaign.
- The proposed Joint Core Strategy supports new jobs up to 2031 and employment land.



Our achievements 2012-2016

✓ **Improve recycling and care for the environment**

- We launched a self-service portal for our garden waste renewal scheme. Nearly, 15,000 customers subscribe to the service.
- Flood Support Grant Scheme and Repair and Renewal Grant Scheme- following the 2014 floods we secured grant funding to support affected business and domestic premises. Over £500,000 grants were awarded.
- The council is now formally a member of the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee. Also, effective from 1 April 2015, the council joined Ubico. (Ubico is a local authority owned company specialising in environmental services to the public sector)
- We refreshed the Volunteer Litter Picking Scheme which has over 150 committed volunteers. We have held a series of re-induction events, an annual thank you event, issue a six monthly newsletter and have issued new equipment.
- We have helped sustain a healthy recycling rate of 52%, which is in the top quartile nationally.
- The Flood Risk Action Plan is almost complete with over £500,000 spent on the plan.
- In early 2016 we completed the waste services review and have now started the process of procuring a new vehicle fleet.



✓ **Provide customer focussed community support**

- Developing our Public Services Centre - Job Centre Plus joined us in April 2014 the first such arrangement in the country. Severn Vale Housing, Gloucestershire Fire Brigade and Gloucestershire Rural Community Council also joined during the course of 2014.
- Our new £7.5 million leisure centre will open on 30 May 2016.
- We met our Families First three year target (to engage with 90 families by March 2015) in early 2014. Over 60 families have been 'turned around'.
- We have adopted a 'Place' approach to working with our communities, with the borough split into three areas.
- We provide support to neighbourhood planning of which there are now 11 designated neighbourhood areas across 15 parishes.
- We agreed on-going support to the Citizens Advice Bureau of £50,000 which assisted over 1,400 residents per year, providing advice on issues such as benefits, debt, employment, housing and relationships.
- We have introduced a new post of community funding officer - a great opportunity to help signpost community groups to external funding sources.
- We are undertaking a review of our complaints framework with a new system to be implemented in April 2016.



Our achievements 2012-2016



Develop housing relevant to local needs

- We submitted our Joint Core Strategy (JCS) to the Secretary of State in November 2014 – a significant achievement given the complexities in developing the strategy. The strategy is currently under examination by the Planning Inspectorate.
- The JCS is supported with the development of a Tewkesbury Borough Plan.
- Our Disabled Facility Grant Scheme supports over 100 grants per year, exceeding £600,000 per year.
- With other Gloucestershire districts we were successful in obtaining £3.2 million grant funding for The Warm and Well Central Heating Fund.
- In 2015/2016 we estimate to deliver 205 new affordable homes, the largest number delivered since 2007/08. We have exceeded our affordable homes target – the target is an average of 100 homes over a three year period. 130 were delivered in 2012/13, 155 in 2013/14 and 145 in 2014/15.



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front cover	Stoke Orchard Community Centre View over borough from Devil's Chimney Brockworth
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