

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Council Meeting – 16 January 2013

To receive the following recommendations to the Council from the Executive.

(i) Councillor John Williams

(a) Council Tax Base 2013/2014

The Executive has recently considered the Council Tax Base for the Borough and for each Parish for the 2013/2014 financial year.

The Tax Base has to be calculated for each financial year and is used to determine the Band D Council Tax for the year.

In addition to the requirements set out in previous regulations, the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 require the Tax Base to be adjusted to take into account the effect of Council Tax Support discounts awarded under local Council Tax Reduction Schemes and for premiums charged on long-term empty properties.

The Tax Base which has to be set between 1 December and 31 January each year will also be notified to the County Council, the Police Authority, the Fire Authority and to each of the parishes for their own tax setting purposes.

The Council Tax Base is effectively an estimate of the number of Council Tax dwellings in a billing authority's area. The calculation this year also reflects the recently approved changes relating to Class A Exemptions, Class C Exemptions, Long term empty properties premium and removal of Second Homes discount.

In addition, a reduction for the cost of Council Tax Support has been included in the Tax Base. This reduction has the effect of reducing Council Tax income for Taunton Deane and the major precepting authorities. The Government announced in mid-December that this reduction in funding for the "cost" of Council Tax Support should also be attributed to Parish Precepts and Special Expenses.

Within the Provisional Finance Settlement for the Council, the Government has included funding for Council Tax Support that includes a proportion related to Parishes and Special Expenses. It is therefore proposed to pass on a proportion of this funding to Parishes and Special Expenses to reflect their reduction in funding as a result of Council Tax Support, even though there is no legal requirement to do so.

A relevant share of funding has been calculated based on the Tax Base reduction attributable to Council Tax Support in each parish multiplied by their 2012/2013 Band D Charge. This had produced the following funding requirement:-

	£	£
Total Funding within Provisional Settlement		638,270

Less:		
Allocation to Parish and Town Councils	42,260	
Allocation to Unparished Area Budget	6,500	
Relevant Share for Parishes and Unparished Area		48,760
Amount retained by TDBC to offset Council Tax reduction		589,510

The Parishes have been notified of the expected funding allocation and are setting their precepts taking into account this additional allocation.

The non-collection rate (or provision for losses on collection) has been estimated at 1.75%. This is an increase compared to 2012/2013 (1.0%) and reflected increased risks under the local Council Tax Support system, other welfare reforms and continuing wider economic pressures on household incomes.

The recommended Tax Base for 2013/2014 is 37,280.60 Band D Equivalents. This is lower than the Base for 2012/2013 (41,216.39) mainly reflecting the introduction of Council Tax Support discounts within the calculations (-4,314.03).

It is **recommended** that:-

- The calculation of the 2013/14 Council Tax Base for the whole and parts of the area be approved;
- In accordance with the Local Authority (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Taunton Deane Borough Council as its 2013/2014 Tax Base for the whole area for the year shall be **37,280.60** and for the parts of the area listed below shall be:-

Parish Area	Tax Base	Parish Area	Tax Base
Ash Priors	81.46	Neroche	239.15
Ashbrittle	86.74	North Curry	692.23
Bathealton	84.83	Norton Fitzwarren	903.16
Bishops Hull	1,052.00	Nynehead	165.34
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	1,021.90	Oake	317.34
Bradford on Tone	285.01	Otterford	165.11
Burrowbridge	196.21	Pitminster	435.08
Cheddon Fitzpaine	598.80	Ruishton/Thornfalcon	574.63
Chipstable	129.81	Sampfard Arundel	121.94
Churchstanton	342.98	Staplegrove	708.57
Combe Florey	116.50	Stawley	132.17
Comeytrowe	1,967.11	Stoke St Gregory	356.14
Corfe	132.02	Stoke St Mary	198.25
Cotford St Luke	752.62	Taunton	14,115.83
Creech St Michael	937.95	Trull	992.02
Durston	58.64	Wellington	4,290.56
Fitzhead	113.55	Wellington (Without)	293.61
Halse	139.03	West Bagborough	154.78
Hatch Beauchamp	249.16	West Buckland	424.77

Parish Area	Tax Base	Parish Area	Tax Base
Kingston St Mary	424.73	West Hatch	136.11
Langford Budville	225.54	West Monkton	1,077.78
Lydeard St Lawrence/ Tolland	199.03	Wiveliscombe	1,027.90
Milverton	562.51	Grand Total	37,280.60

- (c) The policy to pass on the relevant share of funding to Parishes and the Unparished Area on the basis described above as a result of the Tax Base reduction attributable to Council Tax Support be approved; and
- (d) The authority to approve the Council Tax Base in future years be delegated to the Executive.

(b) Business Rates Retention and the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 for 2013/2014

The Executive has also recently considered a report concerning the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 (NNDR1) for 2013/2014.

This return includes the Estimated Net Rate Yield for 2013/2014, which is to be used for budget setting purposes, and will determine the budget amount for business rates income kept by Taunton Deane Borough Council, Somerset County Council and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority under the new Business Rates Retention system, which is to be introduced in April 2013.

Although the final Business Rates Retention Regulations have not yet been enacted through Parliament, the Government has provided a Return form template to enable billing authorities to prepare the information required.

A provisional NNDR1 has already been returned to the Government and the final form is needed to be returned by 31 January 2013 certified by the Chief Finance Officer. A copy of the final NNDR1 form is attached to these recommendations as an Appendix.

The NNDR1 is essentially the net business rates income forecast for 2013/2014. The forecast takes into account the Rateable Value of the number of hereditaments (business premises) as at 30 September 2012. This provides the Gross Calculated Rate Yield – the total amount of business rates owed by businesses which is then adjusted for Mandatory and Discretionary Reliefs.

The gross yield is then reduced/offset by cost of collection and allowance for bad debts.

A further relevant adjustment relates to Renewable Energy Schemes whereby 100% of business rates yield – for schemes that commence on or after 1 April 2013, or the amount of increase in yield for existing schemes on or after 1 April 2013 – can be retained wholly by the Council. However, for budget purposes in 2013/2014 this is assumed to be nil.

The above calculations provide the Net Rate Yield before transitional arrangements and rate retention.

The key information needed for business rates retention and budget setting is the Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements. This has been estimated at £38,695,316 for 2013/2014.

Under the Business Rates Retention Draft Regulations, as confirmed by a Policy Statement issued by Government, the Net Rate Yield will be shared as follows:-

	%	£
Share paid to Central Government	50	19,347,658
Share retained by Taunton Deane Borough Council	40	15,478,126
Share passed to Somerset County Council	9	3,482,578
Share passed to Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	1	386,953
Net Rate Yield		38,695,316

In accordance with the Provisional Finance Settlement for 2013/2014, a large proportion of the share retained by Taunton Deane will be paid to the Government in the form of a Tariff, to fund a system of tariffs and top ups.

The final amount to be retained by the Council will be in accordance with the Council's Start-up Funding Assessment for 2013/2014, as issued with the Finance Settlement. This will be included in the forthcoming budget setting reports.

It is **recommended** that:-

- a) The attached NNDR1 Return with a Net Rate Yield of £38,695,316 for 2013/2014 excluding transitional arrangements be approved; and
- b) The authority to approve the NNDR1 and Net Rate Yield in future years be delegated to the Executive.

(c) Corporate Business Plan 2013/2014 to 2015/2016

At its last meeting, the Executive considered the development of a three year Corporate Business Plan to replace the Council's Corporate Strategy. A copy of the draft Business Plan is attached to these recommendations.

The Business Plan has been developed after detailed consultation work with Councillors and all political groups and following an external peer review by the Local Government Association (LGA).

The 'Where do we want to be in the future' section of the Business Plan describes the Council's Vision and three Corporate Aims together with the strategic actions required over the next three years to deliver these aims. The actions are deliberately high level and will be interpreted into more detailed and specific work programmes. Many of the actions have been designed to address the issues identified as a result of the LGA's peer review.

The new Vision and three Corporate Aims, are as follows:-

Vision: Taunton Deane is known nationally as a quality place that is growing and developing sustainably, with a vibrant economic, social and cultural environment.

Aim 1: Quality sustainable growth and development;

Aim 2: A vibrant economic environment; and

Aim 3: A vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment.

The Corporate Business Plan also includes a 'Transformed Council' section which details three further objectives required to make the Council fit for purpose, address funding pressures and set a long term balanced, sustainable budget. These objectives therefore underpin the Council's ability to achieve the Corporate Aims.

The three objectives under this section are:-

- Achieving financial sustainability;
- Transforming services; and
- Transforming the way we worked.

There are particular areas of work in this section that are seen as early priorities to progress in the next financial year as a matter of urgency. These projects will be further scoped and costed and brought back for Member consideration in the Spring with a request for funding. These four projects are:-

Asset Management – Commissioning a specific piece of work to review how Taunton Deane can use assets more commercially including disposal of poor performing assets and identification of invest to save opportunities.

Accommodation and Customer Access – Commissioning a project to make recommendations on meeting the Council's future accommodation needs, including the future of The Deane House. This work will need to consider customer access and increasing financial pressures.

Streamlined, modern services – Commissioning work to introduce business process re-engineering reviews to a programme of Council services. These reviews should lead to services becoming more customer focussed, streamlined and efficient and should deliver financial savings. The commission should include training to officers in the organisation to allow it to build the skills to roll this out widely across other services.

Marketing and Promotion – Commissioning some work to help develop and deliver a clear marketing strategy for Taunton Deane that defines Taunton's niche and unique selling point.

There is another action within the Business Plan that needs to be progressed as a matter of urgency and is identified as the most critical recommendation from the LGA Peer Review.

This relates to **Service Prioritisation and savings targets** which needs to be approved in early 2013/2014. It is intended to invite the LGA to facilitate a workshop with Members in early 2013 to agree a profile of services with associated budgets that collectively are affordable for the Council in its medium-term financial plan.

This will need to meet the aspirations of Councillors in terms of their service priorities but by necessity will involve a considerable cut in spending in service areas to be affordable over the business plan period. Once a costed service profile has been agreed, this will be reviewed annually and adjusted to take account of the success of other initiatives, such as those listed above.

In the circumstances, it is **recommended** that:-

- (a) The Vision, Corporate Aims and the eleven objectives of the draft Business Plan be endorsed;
- (b) The commitment to prioritise and fund the four projects set out above be approved in principle, on the understanding that further detail will be brought back to Scrutiny and the Executive with full scoping and costs;
- (c) It be agreed that work should proceed in developing a detailed delivery plan to map out how this Business Plan will be delivered. This will be shared with Scrutiny and the Executive; and
- (d) It be also agreed that work should proceed to organise the proposed Local Government Association's facilitated Councillor workshops to develop a costed service profile that will describe how a medium-term balanced budget will be achieved. The final version will need to be approved by Full Council.

(ii) Councillor Mark Edwards

Introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Full Council has previously agreed to progress the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in Taunton Deane and approved a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS) for consultation.

Consultation on the PDCS, which took place during the summer, resulted in approximately 20 responses being received, mostly from developers and agents.

The next stage in the process is to publish a Draft Charging Schedule (DCS), taking account of the comments which have been received. There would be a further opportunity for people to make representations prior to the Schedule being submitted for independent Examination. The CIL could then be adopted, providing a mechanism to collect contributions towards the provision of strategic infrastructure.

The timescale for progressing CIL is now as follows:-

- Publication of Draft Charging Schedule: Friday 1 February 2013;
- Formally approach The Planning Inspectorate with a request for an examination: early-February 2013;
- Period for representations: 1 February – 15 March 2013;
- LDF Steering Group/Portfolio Holder sign-off: w/c 18 March 2013;
- Submission to the Examiner: w/c 25 March 2013;
- Examination: May-June 2013; and

- Adoption: July-August 2013.

As a result of the consultation responses, a number of changes have been incorporated into the Charging Schedule prior to its publication as the 'Draft' that will eventually be submitted for examination. The Executive noted that it was also intended to publish a policy for payment of CIL by instalments. However, the wording of this policy is still being refined.

The proposed CIL rates have been derived from viability assessments that allow for the proportion of affordable housing set out in the adopted Core Strategy (25%). The affordable housing is assumed to be 45% social rent, 15% affordable rent and 40% intermediate. This will provide some reassurance that the introduction of CIL will not put the delivery of affordable housing at risk.

It is **recommended** that the Draft Charging Schedule – a copy of which is attached to these recommendations - and the proposed Charging Zones be approved for public consultation.



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

**NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN 1
NNDR1 2013-14**

Please e-mail to : nndr.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct authority name.

Please check the figures shown in the cells with a blue border and enter your own figures if you disagree with those suggested.

**A provisional version of the form should be returned to the Department for Communities and Local Government by
Monday 7 January 2013**

The final version of this form, including a signed copy, must also be sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government by
Thursday 31 January 2013

Select your local authority's name from this list:

Tameside
Tamworth
Tandridge
Taunton Deane
Teignbridge
Telford and the Wrekin

Check that this is your authority :

Taunton Deane

Check that this is your E Code :

E3333

Local authority contact name :

--

Telephone number of local authority contact :

--

Fax number for local authority contact :

--

E-mail address of local authority contact :

--

Ver 1.3

1. Number of hereditaments on the rating list on 30 September 2012	3,757
2. Aggregate rateable value on the rating list on 30 September 2012	£ 101,419,865
GROSS CALCULATED RATE YIELD	£
3. Enter line 2 x small business non-domestic rating multiplier (0.462)	46,855,977.63
MANDATORY RELIEFS	
Small business rate relief	£
4. Additional yield generated to finance the small business rate relief scheme	709,531.95
5. Cost of small business rate relief for properties within billing authority area	2,529,606.78
6. Net cost of the small business rate relief (Line 5 minus Line 4)	1,820,074.83
7. Cost of relief to charities	3,200,213.40
8. Cost of relief to Community Amateur Sports Clubs	46,399.84
9. Cost of relief for rural general stores, post offices, public houses, petrol filling stations and food shops	30,757.62
10. Cost of relief for partly occupied premises	0.00
11. Cost of relief for empty premises	890,938.36
12. Total mandatory reliefs (Sum of lines 6 to 11)	5,988,384.05
DISCRETIONARY RELIEFS	
13. Cost of relief to charities	35,187.25
14. Cost of relief to non-profit making bodies	30,760.95
15. Cost of relief to Community Amateur Sports Clubs	0.00
16. Cost of relief for rural general stores, post offices, public houses, petrol filling stations and food shops	7,224.74
17. Cost of relief to other rural businesses	9,451.36
18. Other Section 47 reliefs (Localism Act discounts)	0.00
19. Total discretionary reliefs (Sum of lines 13 to 18)	82,624.30
20. Gross Rate Yield after reliefs (Line 3 minus lines 12 & 19)	40,784,969.28
21. Estimate of 'losses in collection'	239,442.12
22. Allowance for Cost of Collection	163,257.23
23. Special Authority Deductions - City of London Offset	0.00

NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN 1 2013-14		Taunton Deane
Ver 1.3		
Section 2		
Enterprise Zones		
24. Estimated level of discount to be awarded in 2013-14		£ 0.00
25. Estimated value of non-domestic rates in the Enterprise Zone area in 2013-14	0.00	
26. Enterprise Zone baseline	0.00	
27. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14 (Line 25 minus line 26)		0.00
New Development Deals		
28. Estimated value of non-domestic rates in the New Development Deals area in 2013-14	0.00	
29. New Development Deals baseline	0.00	
30. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14 (Line 28 minus line 29)		0.00
Renewable Energy Schemes		
31. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14		0.00
32. Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements and rate retention (Line 20 minus the sum of lines 21 to 23, 27, 30 & 31)		40,382,269.93
Rate retention adjustments		
33. Estimate of the change in rateable value between 1 October 2012 and 30 September 2013		461,416.47
34. Estimate of the change in receipts as a result in the change in rateable value (line 33 times the multiplier)		213,174.41
This equates to a percentage change of	0.45	
35. Local authority's estimate of adjustment due to appeals		1,900,128.68
36. Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements but after rate retention adjustments (Line 32 plus lines 34 and minus line 35)		38,695,316.00
Section 3		
Transitional arrangements		
37. Addition revenue received because reduction in rates have been deferred	187,786.78	
38. Revenue foregone because increase in rates have been deferred	116,139.50	
39. Net cost of transitional arrangements (Line 38 minus line 37)		-71,647.28
40. Net Rate Yield after transitional arrangements and rate retention (Line 36 minus line 39)		38,766,963.00

NNDR Summary for : Taunton Deane	
These figures show the percentage shares of the NNDR you estimate your authority will collect in 2013-14. They are based on line 36. See the <i>Tier Split</i> tab for full information	
	£
Amount of NNDR to be paid to central government	19,347,658.00
Amount to be retained by Taunton Deane under the rates retention scheme	15,478,126.00
Amount to be passed to Somerset	3,482,578.00
Amount to be passed to Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	386,953.00

Certificate of Chief Financial Officer

I certify that the entries in lines 3, 12, 19, 20, 36, 39 and 40 of this form are the best I can make on the information available to me and that the figures given in lines 1 and 2 used in the calculating the amount shown in lines 36 and 40 are, to the best of my knowledge and belief those shown in the rating list for my authority as at 30 September 2012, subject to any order made before 15 January 2013 under the Local Government Act 1972 implementing boundary changes. I also certify that the authority has made proper arrangements for securing efficiency and effectiveness in relation to the collection of non-domestic rates. I also certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that any amount included as legal costs in line 22 and discretionary relief in line 24 meet the conditions set out in the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013.

Chief Financial Officer :

Date :

TDBC Corporate Business Plan – Contents

(Version 08/1/13)

ANNEX 1

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Foreword

Welcome to our Corporate Business Plan 2013 to 2016.

To be written

Recent Past

Plans for future

Still hold longer term growth ambitions but shift focus in the interim

Challenging financial context the Council is working in and future funding gap

LGA inspection

New Focus

Signed: Leader of the Council & Chief Executive

Purpose of Corporate Business Plan:

The Corporate Business Plan is intended for our staff, councillors, residents and partner organisations.

It sets out our overall vision and aims for the area and how we will deliver these. It also describes our approach to the internal transformation needed to ensure the Council is sustainable, affordable and fit for purpose during a period of greater demand for services but lesser resource to deliver them.

The Corporate Business Plan will form the basis for future budget setting and service delivery.

Taunton Deane Borough – At a Glance

The following section provides the local context of Taunton Deane including issues and challenges particular to the borough. These issues have been considered when setting the future direction within this Business Plan.

Geography

The borough of Taunton Deane is mainly rural with a Population of 110,000, largely concentrated in the County town of Taunton and in Wellington. The borough covers 462 sq km of outstanding landscape, extending from the Somerset Levels along the River Tone, with the Quantock hills to the north and the Blackdown hills to the South.

The main centres of population are Taunton (66,000) and Wellington (13,000). The borough also has major rural centres at Wiveliscombe and Bishops Lydeard and a number of minor rural centres and smaller villages.

Demographics: The age profile of Taunton Deane shows an under-representation in 20-39 year olds compared to the England average but a much higher proportion of over 65s which is expected to increase by a further 69% to 2030. There is also expected to be a big increase in the number of over 90's during the same time period

Health: When compared nationally, we enjoy good standards of health in Taunton Deane, although our average life expectancy is slightly lower than the other Districts. Deprivation is a key factor to health and average life expectancy varies by 10 years (75 to 85) between the most deprived and least deprived wards, with significant differences in prevalence of circulatory diseases, lung cancer and liver disease.

Deprivation: We have one neighbourhood in the most deprived 5% in the country and a further three in the most deprived 10% in the country. Although issues of deprivation are experienced across the Deane, these are concentrated in North Taunton, Taunton East and parts of Wellington.

Economy – residents are well qualified compared to elsewhere in Somerset and nationally. Employment rates are high, although long-term unemployment of young people is high and worsening. Growth areas are currently in private education and health sectors. 39% of the workforce are in the public sector.

Businesses – Two thirds of businesses employ fewer than 5 people. In recent years, the number of business 'births' has decreased whilst business 'deaths' has increased. Since 2009, business deaths outnumber births.

Housing – Average weekly earnings are lower than County and national average, whereas house prices are high meaning that affordability is an issue. 10.7% of households are on our housing register – the highest proportion in Somerset. We currently have nearly 3,500 households on the housing register.

Private Sector Housing – This accounts for around 85% of stock, although an estimated 41% do not meet the Decent Homes Standard and 25% of occupants live in fuel poverty.

Homelessness – We are seeing an increase in the number of people for whom we have an accepted duty of homelessness.

Growth: – we are an identified area for accommodating growth previously through being a Principle Urban Area and then a National Growth Point. Our Core Strategy was found 'sound' and has employment-led plans for 17,000 new homes and 11,900 new jobs by 2028. The main area of growth is Monkton Heathfield and we have a major town centre regeneration programme including a strategic employment site at Firepool and plans to improve Taunton's retail offer. As with other parts of the country, we have struggled recently in our regeneration ambitions due to the challenging economy.

Hinkley C: - The proposed expansion of Hinkley Point nuclear power station is expected to impact on housing with an influx of workers. This will create an opportunity to attract workers and affiliated businesses to locate in Taunton Deane and spend within the local economy. However it will also create an upward pressure on rent levels and a reduction in available supply. This is expected to be exacerbated by the Welfare Reform plans and result in increased homelessness applications and pressure on benefits. We are working with EDF to find solutions to mitigate this.

The Council – At a Glance

Staffing – We employ 568 TDBC staff in total

Councillors – We have 56 councillors with a Conservative administration but no overall control (28 Cons; 23 Lib Dems; 3 Lab; 2 Ind)

Directly provided services - Housing; Environmental Health, Planning, Street Cleansing; Parks and Open Spaces; Economic Development and Project Taunton.

Housing Service - Housing is a significant part of the Council's business with a stock of around 6,000 dwellings, 1,500 garages, shops, meeting halls and land, with an annual capital programme of £5.5m to improve and maintain stock. We have a 30 year self-financing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan as well as General Fund Housing responsibilities such as Housing Options, Private Sector Housing and Enabling.

Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) - We have a large in-house DLO which focuses on street cleansing, building maintenance (especially on our housing stock); grounds maintenance (parks and open spaces); and highways maintenance.

Partnerships - We have a number of established partnerships

- **South West One** which runs services such as: Revenues and Benefits, Customer Services, Finance, HR, Property, Procurement; Design and Print. We have 131 TDBC staff seconded into this organisation.
- **Somerset Waste Partnership** - Waste collection and recycling
- **Tone Leisure** – Charitable Trust managing sports centres, swimming pools and other leisure facilities and providing health development and active lifestyles work in the borough.
- **Somerset County Council (SCC)** - we work closely with SCC and have recently contracted our parking services responsibilities to them. Close partnership working with SCC is vital for work such as Health and Wellbeing, Troubled Families, Customer Access, Deprivation and Planning. It is especially important in realising our growth ambitions with reliance on SCC to support and deliver infrastructure needed to underpin growth, such as improvements to the A358.
- There are a range of other important partnerships, such as the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership; Building Control; South West Audit Partnership

The Taunton Deane Partnership (TDP). The TDP is the strategic partnership for the area that addresses key community issues that require a multi-agency approach. It includes representation from TDBC, the County Council, Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Health and the Voluntary and Community Sector, as well as education and the private sector.

It has an agreed focus of work for 2012/13 of:

- Delivery of Priority Areas Strategy
- Delivery of the Troubled Families agenda for Taunton Deane
- Local Health and Wellbeing focus

Further information on how we will work in partnership in the future with our range of partners is shown at **Appendix A**.

National Direction for Local Government

The Government has made considerable policy changes to the way local government should work. These include Big Society and Localism; Open Public Services; Community Leadership; Community Right to Challenge; plus a raft of other changes from the Localism Act.

There have also been significant changes to local government financing which include substantial funding cuts and the introduction of new incentives for Councils to encourage housing and business growth into their areas. Alongside this has been the introduction of Welfare Reform. These changes introduce opportunities as well as considerable threats, uncertainty and risks. The Council has been considering these in setting and preparing our Business Plan.

Further details of these policy and financing changes are detailed in **Appendix B**. The Financial position is further explained in the 'Finance and capacity' section.

Our Vision for Taunton Deane

“A quality place”

Taunton Deane is known nationally and locally as a quality place that is growing and developing sustainably, with a vibrant economic, social and cultural environment.

Taunton Deane Borough Council recognises the vital role it must play in achieving this vision, and will provide quality services and prioritise resources to enable and facilitate this. This business plan will outline our key strategic priorities. The following business principles and core values underpin and support our vision.

Our key ‘business principles’

Quality Services – ensuring the delivery of accessible, quality services that provide good value for money (either as direct providers or through partnership)

Customer Driven – we will put the needs of our customers at the heart of all that we do

A dynamic organisation – innovative, forward-looking and focussed on results

Environmentally Responsible – we will minimise the environmental impact from our operations

Our Core Values

We have developed a set of four Core Values with staff and Councillors. These reflect our fundamental beliefs as an organisation and guide how we deal with our staff, customers and partners. These are:

Integrity – we will be honest, do what is right and stick to it

Fairness – we will consistently treat everyone as an equal, respecting their individual needs and abilities

Respect – we will always show respect for everyone

Trust – we will show trust and confidence in our staff and customers

High Level Principles

In September 2011, the Council agreed a set of High Level Principles to apply to future ways of working. These covered our approach to Commerciality, Fees and Charges, Capital, Devolving responsibility and other areas. These are shown in **Appendix C**.

Where are we now?

To help with our business planning process we took part in a corporate 'Peer Challenge' exercise in September 2012. This was an external 'health-check' undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the feedback has informed this business plan and our improvement and learning. Some of the key messages from this review are included in the following information.

The good news...

Both the area and the council already enjoy many strengths and qualities that put us in an excellent position to achieve our vision and corporate priorities.

A summary of our key strengths

As an area	As a Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality public realm (e.g. Castle Green) • Good levels of affordable housing are being delivered • A very clean & attractive environment and a great place to live and work • The county town of Taunton is a great strategic location for businesses enjoying geographical advantages • Culture & heritage • A strong independent retail sector and 'local brands' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well regarded council with good officer & Member relationships and well regarded by partners • A positive culture, supportive style of working and good staff morale • A good track record of substantial financial savings and income generation over the past 3 years (£5m) • An ambitious council • Open to new ways of delivering services and partnership-working • Successful internal transformation of the DLO, with significant financial savings • HRA Housing – 30 year business plan with financial 'headroom' to enable investment • A strong cross party political commitment to growth • External Audit results are generally positive with unqualified accounts and Value for Money assessments

The not such good news!

We recognise there are key areas and issues that we must improve

A summary of areas for improvement

The area	The Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing of the borough and commercial engagement at a regional and national level could be strengthened – it is challenging for a smaller council to gain a higher profile nationally • National economic recession has led to fragility in the economic base of Taunton / struggling businesses • Areas of severe deprivation (within Taunton and rural areas) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council's current ambitions currently outstrip revenue & capital resources • Partnership-working is not as well developed and co-ordinated as it could be (eg engagement with the business community, & other public-sector bodies) • Decision-making process is too protracted, and Scrutiny function needs strengthening • Slow progress in developing & implementing an Asset Management Plan • A more commercial mindset needs to be developed across the council

Opportunities and threats

A summary of the key opportunities and threats that may impact on the achievement of our vision and objectives is shown below.

Our priorities and action plans will be designed to exploit these opportunities and deal with the threats.

Opportunities - these could have a positive impact on our objectives

The area	The Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger links between the council's priorities on targeting Deprivation and promoting Growth (eg skills training, increased employment levels & additional income for the local economy) • A clear strategy for delivering more high quality public realm • Hinkley Point - strong demand for high quality housing in Taunton, and other economic & social opportunities (eg for local businesses) • SCC are working in partnership to bring in superfast broadband to rural areas of Somerset including Taunton Deane. They are also working with the LEP to improve transport links on the strategic road network • Businesses are able to make a greater contribution to promoting growth by targeted marketing of the borough and commercial engagement at a regional & national level • Taunton can exploit its strategic location and define its niche & unique selling point to promote inward business investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Customer Access to redefine the way we interact with customers • Better management and rationalisation of council assets (eg council offices) • More modern & efficient ways of working (including 'lean' processes) • Explore new income generation opportunities and embed a more commercial mindset & awareness (benefitting from the learning of the DLO & Housing business experience) • TDBC and Southwest One are committed to promoting partnership development - an important opportunity for TDBC & partners to ensure success for the contract • Exploring new & innovative ways of supporting leadership development, staff skills & competency • Consider 'invest to save' opportunities to obtain service efficiencies, transformation & improvements • Streamline the decision-making process and strengthen the Scrutiny function to enable the council to make difficult decisions • HRA Business Plan has £16m financial 'headroom' to invest in housing

Threats - these could have a negative impact on our objectives

The area	The Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of growth expectations (planned development within Core Strategy) is not guaranteed • Anticipated funding shortfall of over £30m for infrastructure to deliver the growth programme • Non delivery of flood protection schemes • Hinkley Point – threat of increased housing demand & pressure on affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council is facing a serious imminent funding gap (£2.1m by 2015/16) requiring a reduction of its net budget of nearly 25% • The future sustainability of local government in Somerset, with current funding pressures affecting each Council

Where do we want to be in the future?

Our Vision: ‘A quality place’

Taunton Deane is known nationally and locally as a quality place that is growing and developing sustainably, with a vibrant economic, social and cultural environment.

To achieve our vision of ‘a Quality Place’, we have broken this down into three corporate aims.

- Quality sustainable growth and development
- A vibrant economic environment
- A vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment

These corporate aims have a number of objectives listed beneath them and a high-level strategic action plan that shows how we will achieve them over the next three years:

Quality sustainable Growth & Development:

Obj 1	Facilitate a significant increase in the number, quality and range of available houses within the Borough, including the highest achievable proportion of affordable housing
Obj 2	Delivering the infrastructure necessary to bring forward development opportunities

Strategic Action Plan: Quality and Sustainable growth and Development

What? (the key activities & projects)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
Quality housing growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the development industry to maximise land supply in sustainable locations • Facilitate delivery of the sustainable urban extensions by close working with the development industry • Support for communities in the delivery of neighbourhood planning • Adoption of the Site Allocations Document 	Annual review 2013 onwards 2012 onwards 2014/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of a five year land supply in sustainable locations across the Borough • Houses being built, Transport / road infrastructure agreed. Employment land being marketed and developed. • Appropriate assistance is provided to communities to allow them to deliver Neighbourhood Plans • Identify sites for a range of housing including Executive housing for which demand is expected to increase
Affordable housing & HRA Social Housing Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Social Housing Development Fund to build new homes for social rent (target 20) • Produce on-going programme of new development to deliver regular stream of new properties to the HRA each year 	July 2014 On-going	Provision of new social housing managed by the Council Increased social housing provision

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore methods by which HRA resources can be maximised to increase investment in new homes • Strategically manage all HRA assets to fully utilise opportunities for new development • Delivery through the Affordable Housing Development Partnership (TDBC & Housing Associations) • Ensure sufficient supply of affordable and suitable private- rented sector housing to meet demand 		<p>Maximum value for money for tenants</p> <p>Increase supply of social housing</p> <p>Annual plan of affordable housing delivery targets reached.</p> <p>Improved conditions of housing stock to ensure affordable decent living conditions for vulnerable households (e.g. thermal efficiency; appropriate adaptations). Initiate projects to tackle empty homes and continue incentives for landlords to let suitable properties in Taunton Deane</p>
<p>Firepool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of infrastructure • Re-focus existing master-plan 	<p>2014</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2014/15</p>	<p>Northern Inner Distribution Road (NIDR) completed providing access to the whole site.</p> <p>Boulevard delivered.</p> <p>Next phase of development takes place</p>
<p>Flood alleviation solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for implementation of agreed solution approved by the Council 	<p>2013</p> <p>Beyond 2014</p>	<p>Plan designed and approved by the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Funding sources investigated and delivery timescale agreed</p>
<p>Public realm improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a programme of events 	<p>2013</p>	<p>Co-ordinated annual events plan in public spaces developed with the Taunton Town Centre Company, other cultural partners and the business community to maximise the potential of new and existing public spaces.</p>
<p>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the CIL process 	<p>2013</p>	<p>An effective and robust CIL process. Maximise income.</p> <p>Ensure key infrastructure is funded and delivered.</p>

A vibrant economic environment	
Obj 3	Improving the perception of Taunton as a regional centre of economic growth and a place to do business – attracting new businesses whilst supporting existing ones
Obj 4	Increasing the economic activity within the Borough including the number and value of jobs

Strategic Action Plan: A vibrant economic environment

What? (the key activities & projects)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
Marketing & promotion of Taunton <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver a clear marketing strategy that defines Taunton's niche and 'unique selling point' Maximise the conversion rate of new business enquiries into actual investment 	2013	Marketing and delivery plan to include attracting inward investment and visitors.
Taunton town centre retail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the changing retail market in Taunton and plan accordingly 	2013	To develop a strategy to meet the retail demand in Taunton and to allocate sites accordingly.
Stimulate inward business investment and growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest resources to enhance our approach to national & regional marketing to attract inward investment Ensuring sufficient employment land is available in locations attractive to businesses Develop relationship and profile with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and its key stakeholders 	2012 2013 2013 2013	Deliver a new inward investment web site. Identify the location of a strategic employment site within the Site Allocations Planning document. Work with Developers to bring forward employment land at Monkton Heathfield. Achieve Enterprise Area status from the LEP
Local business development & support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of business requirements within the Borough Annual plan of targeted support for local business approved. Annual programme of events intended to stimulate networking and local sourcing opportunities 	2013	Better understand of the requirements of local businesses from the Council Provide better targeted support Programme of events tailored to provide required support for businesses

A vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment	
We will have a real sense of community in our areas of deprivation and strong partnerships that deliver projects that benefit the community and improve their quality of life.	
Taunton Deane will be highly regarded for its clean, attractive and vibrant street scene with a strong leisure and cultural emphasis.	
Obj 5	Working with partners to encourage strong, informed and active communities
Obj 6	Working with partners to improve the lives of our most vulnerable households
Obj 7	Facilitating and supporting cultural and leisure opportunities
Obj 8	Maintaining clean streets, good quality parks, open spaces and leisure and cultural facilities

Strategic Action Plan: A vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment

What? (the key activities & projects)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
<p>Work with Taunton Deane Partnership (TDP) to deliver key priorities for the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Areas Strategy & action plan • Health & Wellbeing strategy • Troubled Families project 	<p>Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing</p>	<p>Deliver the objectives and outcomes of the Priority Areas Strategy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encourage strong, informed and active communities - improve access to services, information and advice - improve the lives of our most vulnerable households - improve the look and feel of the local area <p>Reduce Health inequalities in Taunton Deane and address agreed health issues such as Active Lifestyles and dealing with Dementia.</p> <p>Work with 182 families over 3 years to improve levels of worklessness, anti-social behaviour and school attendance</p> <p>Improved coordination of public sector working with vulnerable families in Taunton Deane, resulting in reduced cost</p>
<p>Leisure & cultural development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a new swimming pool • Prioritise leisure and cultural provision and support accordingly • Support cultural development through the Taunton Cultural Consortium • Brewhouse development monitored and supported • Co-ordinated Events plan agreed and approved on annual basis 	<p>Summer 2015 Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing 2013</p>	<p>A new Swimming Pool</p> <p>Through partnership working, Taunton is well provided for with leisure and cultural provision and attracts inward investment</p> <p>Maintain the Brewhouse Theatre and support its extension and enhancement</p> <p>The borough will have a reputation for high quality venues and as an easy place to organise events on public open spaces</p>

<p>Street Scene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise and re-focus the programme of work 	<p>2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Street cleansing programme supports Business Plan priorities including the needs of businesses, not only in the town centres but also on adjoining public realm spaces that promote the area as a whole, making it a better place to invest, work and rest. • Public toilet provision and maintenance will also be altered to ensure that the night time economy, including any evening events, is better supported.
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A transformed Council

To enable the Council to successfully deliver the priorities described above, we recognise we have to be more proactive and radical with service and council transformation, and reinvent ourselves in the face of huge financial pressures. We will respond to the looming funding gap through a combination of planned efficiencies, service cuts and service transformation, whilst continuing to provide quality services.

To achieve our vision of 'a Quality Place', we have broken this down into three further objectives for the next three years each having a high-level strategic action plan to show how we will deliver them.

Obj 9	<p>Achieving financial sustainability</p> <p>Looking at new ways of balancing the budget to address our serious financial challenges. We will ensure this business plan works closely with our Medium-Term Financial Plan (3-5 year) aligning council priorities with the resources to deliver these.</p>
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Strategic Action Plan: Achieving financial sustainability

What? (the key activities)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
<p>Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the MTFP regularly to reflect the latest high-level financial forecasts for the Council Refresh MTFP following Member prioritisation review and other changes – report to Corporate Scrutiny 	<p>Feb 2013 On-going</p> <p>Summer 2013 and ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure Members continue to be briefed on the financial forecasts for the Council – across all funds. This will support effective decision-making (for reshaping the organisation) To ensure the financial plans are continually updated to reflect the latest information on Government funding, and financial policy changes being implemented (e.g. localisation of business rates)
<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme</p> <p>The Council will safely implement a new Council Tax Reduction Scheme – starting on 1st April 2013</p>	<p>April 13</p>	<p>To implement a new local scheme that meets the Council's aspirations to support the community but within the reduced funding available from Government – thereby protecting the Council's overall financial exposure and risk.</p>
<p>Localisation of Business Rates</p> <p>Undertake financial modelling and risk assessments to determine impact on MTFP and develop appropriate monitoring arrangements</p>	<p>April 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make sure the Council's financial plans adequately reflect the changing world of local government finance. To ensure the Council is prepared for the changes ahead and any system or resourcing changes are actioned.
<p>Business Rates Pooling in Somerset</p> <p>Consider business case and associated governance for Business Rates pooling in Somerset, and make recommendations</p>	<p>Feb 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the Council doesn't miss any opportunity for growth in Business Rates to be kept locally

<p>accordingly. To ensure the financial plans reflect the “most likely” position resulting from pooling in Somerset.</p>		
<p>Welfare Reform To ensure the Council is fully prepared for the forthcoming changes in the Welfare Reform agenda.</p>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the community through the significant changes ahead • To support the staff through the significant period of change – in terms of service delivery and roles. • To ensure all Council services are sighted on the changes ahead and make adequate plans for their services.
<p>Financial Strategy The existing Financial Strategy will need to be completely refreshed to reflect the emerging Business Plan priorities and aspirations. The document will develop once the Council has clarity on priorities and areas for disinvestment. It will reflect:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plans for savings programmes • transformation programmes • policies on level of Reserves • policies on Earmarked Reserves • latest Govt funding arrangements • predicted impact of Welfare Reform on our services and community. • any approved IT Strategy • any approved Asset Management Plans aspirations and priorities • any approved Workforce Development Plan • any approved IDP and associated CIL funding forecasts agreed with the Council and Partners <p>The document will set specific targets to show how the Council will achieve a sustainable budget over the coming 3 years (2014/15 to 2016/17).</p>	July 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the Council has a clear financial strategy to resolve the current forecast budget gaps. • To ensure the Councillors have a clear programme of change and transformation to support the aspirations and priorities of the Business Plan
<p>Asset Management Commission specialist work to review our approach to asset management and explore ‘Invest to save’ opportunities. Implement recommendations from review.</p>	April 2013	<p>To ensure maximum return from council assets. Service efficiencies and improvements obtained. Significant savings made to help address the council’s funding gap.</p>
<p>Strategic procurement Engage with the SW1 Strategic Procurement Service (SPS) to identify opportunities for savings through procurement</p>	Ongoing	Achieve agreed procurement savings targets

Obj 10	Transforming services We are open to new ways of delivering services and recognise we need a radical re-think and review of all Council services. This means: what we do, who does it, how we do it and to what standard, what we should do less of or stop doing altogether
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Strategic Action Plan: Transforming services

What? (the key activities)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
Service Reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To design a programme of service reviews across the organisation to streamline services and reduce inefficiencies, whilst ensuring they remain customer-focussed Implement a programme and monitor progress building savings into the MTFP 	<p>April 2013</p> <p>March 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure we are driving out any inefficiencies – thereby reducing cost. To challenge why we do things To ensure the customer is always considered as part of service design
Prioritisation of services & clarification of aspirations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree a profile of services with associated budgets that collectively are affordable 	<p>April 2013</p>	<p>This will need to meet the aspirations of councillors in terms of their service priorities but by necessity will involve a considerable cut in spending in some service areas to be affordable over the business plan period.</p>
Accommodation and Customer Access Commission a project to make recommendations on meeting the Council's future accommodation needs, including the future of Deane House. This work will need to consider customer access & increasing financial pressures.	<p>Commence April 2013</p>	<p>Improved Customer Access and use of Deane House and other officer based buildings</p>
Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) transformation Continue the agreed transformation plan for the DLO, and consider the potential relocation of the Council's depot	<p>On-going summer 13</p>	<p>Monitoring of planned milestones and successful delivery of transformation programme outcomes. Decision made on depot relocation</p>

Obj 11	Transforming the way we work Although we have a good track record of internal transformation (eg recently with the DLO & Housing services), we recognise that we need to learn from this and do more to transform other service areas
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Strategic Action Plan: Transforming the way we work

What? (the key activities)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
Developing Our Commercial Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing Financial Awareness skills, and a focus on Value for Money (VFM) throughout the organisation to ensure Managers understand their service costs and income (and the sensitivities) 	<p>Dec 13</p>	<p>To ensure managers make decisions that are financially sound.</p> <p>To ensure that "finance" and "vfm" has a higher profile in the organisation.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify best practice in other organisations and bring forward learning & good practice initiatives to TDBC services. Research income generation powers and opportunities progressed by other local authorities. 	<p>May 13</p> <p>May 13</p>	<p>To make sure we are up to date with new initiatives and can learn new ways of bringing a commercial approach to local authority services.</p> <p>To ensure TDBC is aware of all opportunities for charging for services so as to maximise income.</p>
<p>Partnership management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen and exploit existing partnership relationships (SCC, Health, Education, business community, other public sector bodies, parishes & town councils) Review resourcing requirement to provide effective skilled “retained” client functions for core corporate services. Make recommendations to Members re requirement and funding Continue to develop partnership working with SW1 	<p>Feb 13</p>	<p>Better delivery of the objectives of this business plan through closer partnership working</p> <p>To ensure we have the necessary resource level and skills to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively manage our partnership relationships; and provide strategic direction to those services delivered by Partners; provide effective performance management and challenge to Partners on service delivery. <p>Ensure the success of the contract</p>
<p>Learning & development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> leadership & staff development will focus on skills to enable effective service transformation (eg ‘lean processes’, project management, coaching, partnership working) Implement Workforce Plan Exploit transferable learning opportunities (internal services & external partners) Develop robust Councillor appraisals 	<p>Dec 2013</p>	<p>More efficient, customer-focussed and commercially aware staff.</p> <p>The right people, with the right skills in the right place at the right time.</p> <p>Work with Councillors to agree a programme of development (linked with the work on the Member Charter).</p>
<p>A performance-focussed culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective performance & risk management processes Understand the ‘Value for Money’ profile of council services and develop benchmarking 	<p>On-going</p> <p>2013/14</p>	<p>Effective Performance & Risk Management leadership (Managerial & Political) and systems are developed and consistently applied throughout the organisation (Strategic, Programme / Projects, & Operational), enabling informed decisions (ie in allocating resources), service improvements, and ensuring good governance & internal control.</p>
<p>Effective scrutiny and decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current structure and arrangements for decision-making Provide greater focus and support for Scrutiny 	<p>Apr 2014</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline council decision-making A more informed policy steer, with better and sharper decision-making

How are we going to get there?

'A quality place'

To ensure that our vision for 'a quality place' is achieved, we have already developed some key strategies around growth and regeneration, these are:

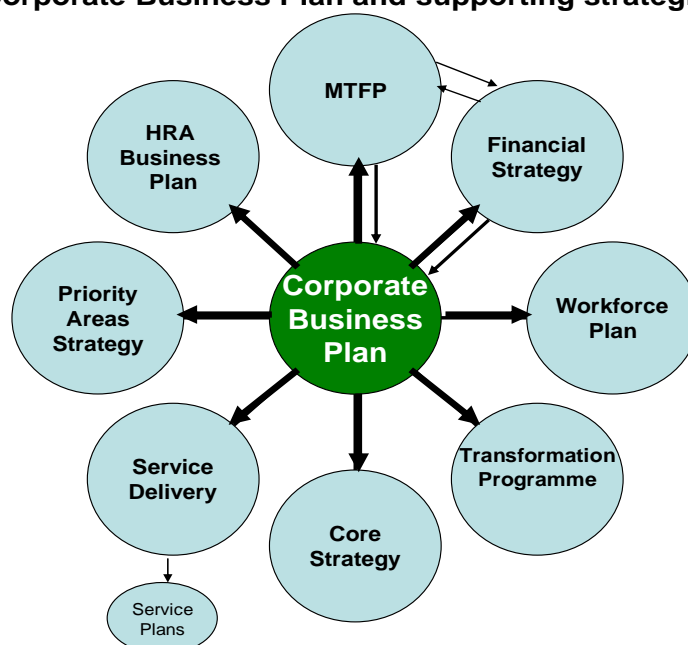
- Core Strategy
- Growth strategic delivery plan (2012 – 2015)
- Priority Areas Strategy

A transformed council

The key documents to help us steer the transformation of council services, the way we work and achieve financial sustainability are:

- Corporate change programme (major projects)
- Workforce Plan (Appendix F)
- Medium-term financial plan (5 years)
- Asset management Plan
- Southwest One five-year plan
- ICT Strategy
- Housing (HRA) Business Plan
- Service Plans

TDBC Corporate Business Plan and supporting strategies / plans



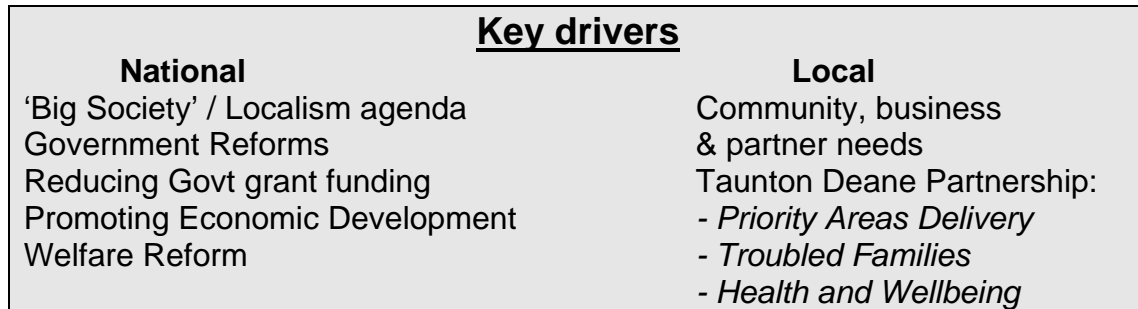
Equalities

We are committed to the promotion of equality and diversity in our communities. An Equalities Impact Assessment for this Business Plan is published on the TDBC website. The Business Plan has been developed at a strategic level – delivery plans will be subsequently developed through service and project planning which will include more detailed Equality Impact Assessments, which will also be published on the website. Further details of our approach to equalities are shown at **Appendix D**.

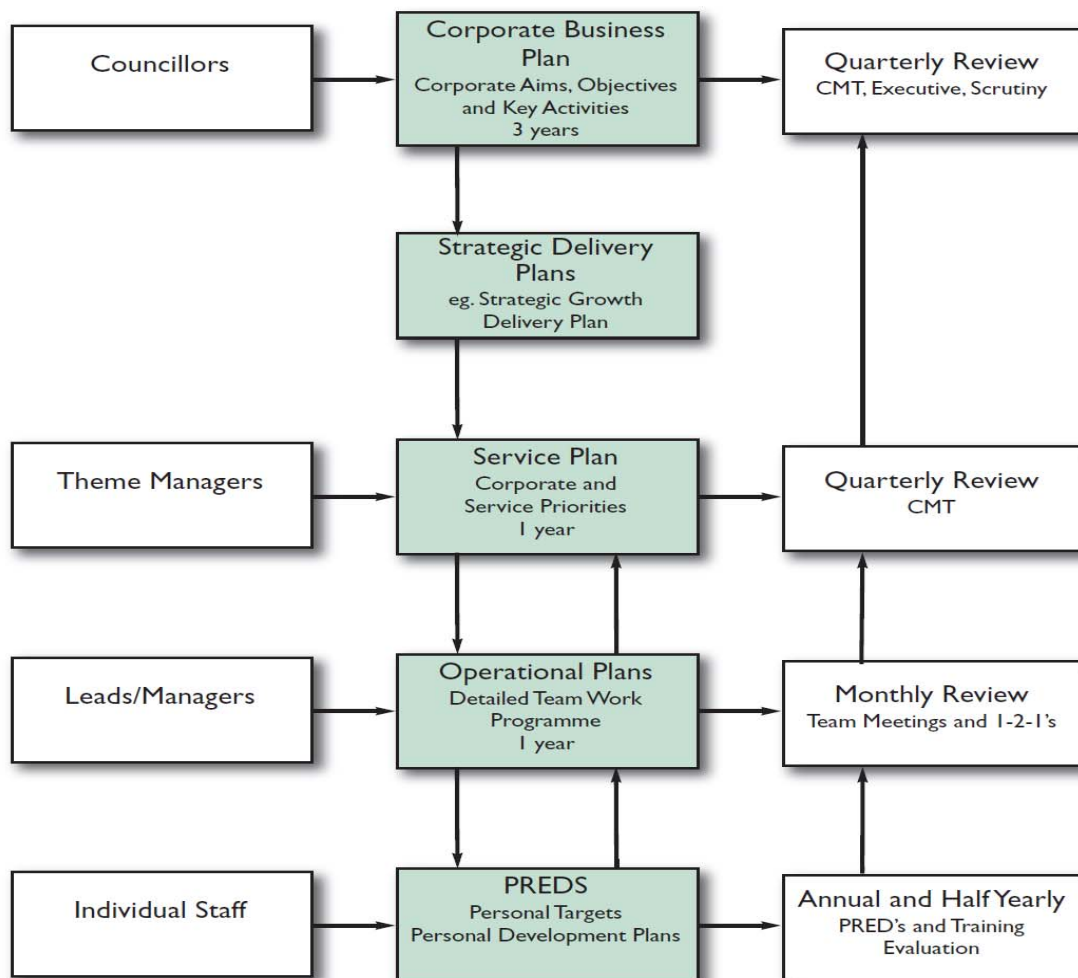
Making sure it happens - managing performance and risk

The Council has robust performance and risk management arrangements in place to ensure the objectives in the Business Plan are delivered and that delivery is properly monitored by Councillors through the appropriate committees.

The Performance Management Framework is shown in the 'Golden Thread' diagram below



The Golden Thread



A more comprehensive overview of the Councils Performance and Risk Management arrangements are shown at **Appendix E**.

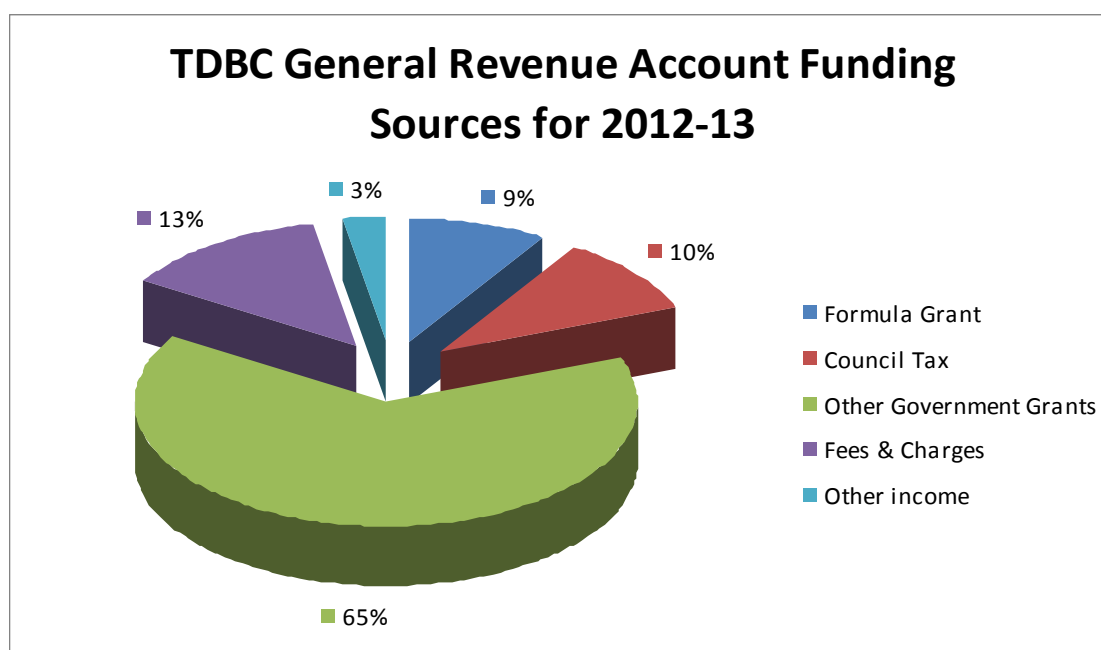
Finance and Capacity

The Council's finances are grouped under General Fund services and also, as a local authority landlord, under Housing Revenue Account (HRA) services. General Fund services are funded through fees, charges, specific and general government grants, and council tax. The HRA is a ring-fenced account which is funded mainly by Rent income from local authority housing tenants.

General Fund

Income – Where does the money come from?

The Council's General Fund currently has an annual income of **£59.7m** which comes from a range of sources shown in the following chart.



Formula Grant - A general funding allocation from government based on need

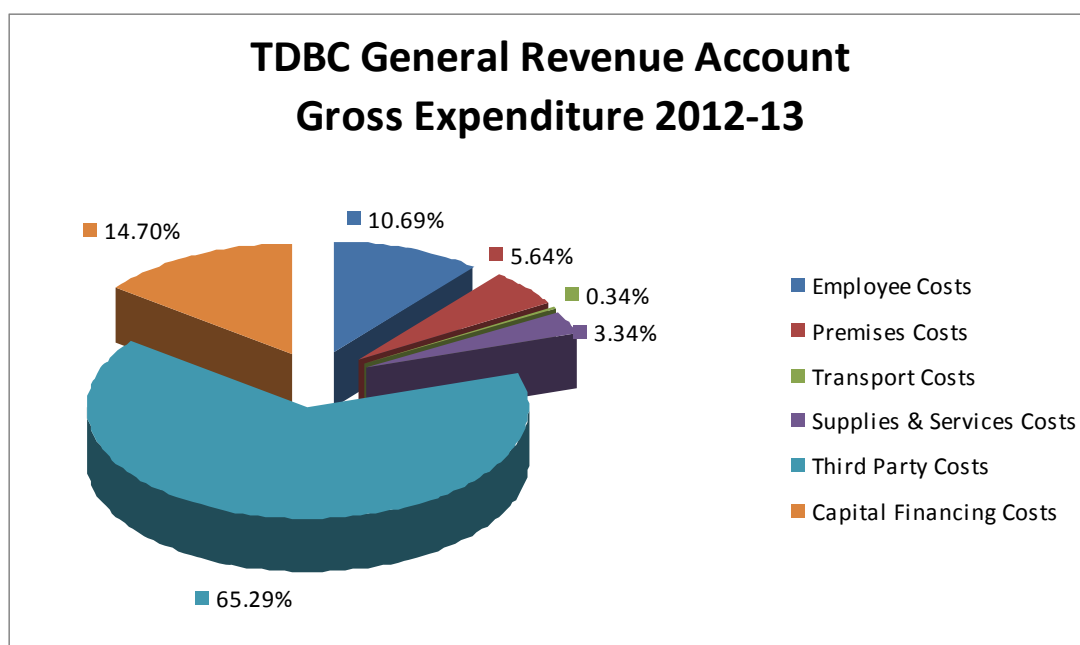
Council Tax - Provides around 10% of the Council's funding. TDBC's Council tax charges have been in the lowest quartile compared to all English Districts for the last 5 years (2012/13 = £136 based on average 'Band D' tax bill)

Other Government Grants - Government subsidy towards Housing Benefits and Council Tax Benefits comprises the vast majority of the 'other government grants' segment above. Other grants and contributions include New Homes Bonus, Supporting People Funding, Council Tax Freeze Grant and other smaller grants

Fees & Charges -The Council generates income through charging for specific services such as car parking, planning, building control, cemeteries and crematorium and garden waste recycling. Some fees are set centrally and some locally.

Expenditure – How is the money spent?

The Council's gross total expenditure in General Fund services is **£59.7m** of which **£13.9m** is net expenditure. This is broken down across the following main areas:



By far the largest area of spend is Benefits paid to local claimants, which is mainly funded by Government subsidy. This accounts for the vast majority of the third party cost segment in the above chart.

The key areas of expenditure (over £1m) on services are:

- Waste collection and recycling - £2.9m
- Regulatory Services (housing standards, pollution reduction; food safety, public conveniences etc) - £2m
- Recreation and Sport (swimming pools and sport centres; outdoor sports and recreation; Sports Development etc) - £1.7m
- Housing Advice, Enabling and Strategy - £1.3m
- Housing Benefits Administration - £1.2m

Other key areas of spend include Corporate and Democratic costs (general costs of running the council); Open Spaces; Economic Development and Regeneration and Street Cleansing.

The Medium Term Financial Plan

The Council prepares a rolling 5-Year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to project the financial position of the Council, taking into account expenditure, income, inflation and funding forecasts, investment plans, and financial risks. The following table provides a summary of the Council's latest MTFP position as at September 2012, which shows an increasing budget gap based on current services levels and currently identified spending pressures.

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k
TDBC Forecast Net Expenditure	11,428	11,843	12,523	12,986	13,400
Forecast Formula Grant	4,917	4,439	4,301	4,301	4,301
Forecast Council Tax	5,740	5,913	6,091	6,275	6,464
Forecast Resources Available	10,657	10,352	10,392	10,576	10,765
Predicted Budget Gap – Cumulative	771	1,491	2,131	2,410	2,635

Since the 2010 Spending Review the financial position of the Council has changed drastically. The government has moved to address the national debt position by reducing funding for public services. The wider implications of the economic climate are also having an impact on demand for services. There are also significant changes to the way local councils are funded, with core funding streams moving to a basis that places a strong emphasis on housing and business growth rather than the current method based on an assessment of need.

The 2010 Spending Review resulted in proposed 28% funding cuts (nationally) to local government over a four year period. In reality, for this Council, general grant funding has been reduced by almost 25% (£1.6m) in the first two years since the Spending Review, and we are currently preparing for a further 20% (£1m) cut over the next two years up to 2014/15. It is uncertain what will happen with funding levels over the longer term but it is generally acknowledged that there is a strong possibility that cuts may continue beyond 2014/15.

Local circumstances indicate there will be additional pressures to budgets through decreasing income (from car parks, building control, licensing, benefits administration, and other areas); increased demand on services (such as benefits) and inflation.

Our MTFP forecast predicts that by the end of the three-year business plan period, the Council will have a budget funding gap of £2.1m per year if it continues to operate at its existing level. This gap will rise to £3.4m by 2020/21 if no action is taken to balance the budget.

The workforce plan

The workforce plan describes how our workforce can anticipate and respond to the demands of the community and the transformation of the Council. It is critical to the success of organisational and cultural change.

The plan take account of the way the authority will develop over the next three years, the changing needs of our communities and the financial pressures the Council will continue to face.

It considers the workforce skills and knowledge we require, our approach to people management and how we will bridge identified skills gaps.

The Workforce Plan can be seen at **Appendix F**.

How can we afford it? Balancing the Budget

The Council faces a real challenge to produce a balanced budget and address the £2.1m projected funding gap over the next three years. A major piece of work that must closely follow this Business Plan is for Councillors to undertake a service prioritisation and financial profiling exercise that explicitly describes which services will be future priorities and which won't. This will need to include significantly reduced service budgets that collectively accounts for the £2.1m gap, thus giving the Council a balanced budget in the medium term. A budget profiling workshop facilitated by the LGA will be organised for early 2013.

An initial financial modelling of services has been undertaken, using ranking of service priorities taken from responses to a Councillor questionnaire in July 2012. This has provided a rudimentary model that shows how service cuts could look in the future if none of the other measures in this section were addressed and if Councillors were unable to develop a more refined prioritisation model. The financial model is attached as **Appendix G**.

Other measures to deliver a sustainable Council and to help deliver the £2.1m budget gap described above, includes:

Reducing Costs and increasing income – The Business Plan has prioritised streamlining services and reducing costs in its 'Transformed Council' section. These include reviewing our asset base and asset management; investing in business process re-engineering; and reviewing Customer Access. It plans to increase income through encouraging its services to become more commercially-minded and seek better income opportunities.

Council Tax - The Council has the option to provide local taxpayers' with a choice to increase tax above a minimum defined by the Secretary of State (the higher of 2% or £5 per Band D household in 2013/14) via a Referendum. Council tax income is currently £5.6m (around 10% of the Council's total income for General Fund services). Each 1% increase generates additional income of around £56k per year.

Government Grant - funding for services will be strongly linked to growth (Business Rates, New Homes Bonus), therefore agreeing priorities that support growth should help to maintain and potentially increase funding.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – this will generate funding to invest in local infrastructure and has the potential to develop into a key funding stream. We have identified around £50m of infrastructure required to deliver planned growth in the Taunton Deane Core Strategy. CIL will partly cover this however there will be a sizeable gap between funding available and cost of infrastructure required. This shortfall will place pressure on identifying other funding sources, such as New Homes Bonus to help bridge the gap.

Fees & Charges – A High Level Principle agreed by Council was that Fees & Charges keep pace with inflation. This income can be volatile and therefore the Council will need to ensure prudent estimates of demand and income are used for financial planning and budgeting.

New Homes Bonus – currently £392k per year of New Homes Bonus grant is included in the annual budget to maintain services. Total income is currently £1m per year (2012/13), and has the potential to increase to £2m-£3m per year if the current housing growth trend continues in Taunton Deane. As this funding resource grows it will become increasingly important for the Council.

Business Rates – Funding from Business Rates is changing from April 2013. We are uncertain what the level of funding will be, however the assumption within the current MTFP is that the baseline level of funding will reduce as the Government achieves its national Treasury targets. The Council's funding will be directly linked to business growth in future. Business decline is a real financial risk that could see funding reduce.

Reserves

The Council has general reserves of £3.1m (September 2012). The minimum agreed reserve balance is currently £1.25m, although the S151 Officer plans to review this minimum balance during 2012/13 in light of the increased financial risks faced by the Council under the localism agenda with a likely increase recommended. The Council still has the opportunity to use 'surplus' reserves to fund 'invest to save' initiatives or to fund one-off key strategic projects that help deliver the business plan.

Capital Investment

The council does not have unallocated capital reserves and government investment in this area is expected to be low. Money to invest in new capital projects will mainly come from capital receipts or borrowing. Borrowing should only take place after a business case has been drawn up and agreed with any ongoing revenue implications fully recognised.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

2012/13 is the first year of operation for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) under the new 'Self Financing' regime introduced under the Localism agenda. The council prepared very well for this change and in February 2012 approved a new **HRA Business Plan** 2012-2042. As a 30-Year plan, this provides a long term perspective on the Housing Service and its priorities.

The HRA is a 'ring-fenced' account that will operate as a 'business' in its own right. All expenditure on HRA services will be funded through income generated within the service – largely from rents on council owned dwellings.

The HRA Business Plan will be subject to an annual review, and contains the following strategic objectives

- Securing a long term future for our housing service
- Tackling deprivation and sustainable community development
- Investing in our housing stock, regeneration and affordable housing
- Climate change

It is important to ensure the Corporate Business Plan and HRA Business Plan priorities are complementary and are interlinked where relevant.

Recent enhancements of the Right to Buy system gives the Council the option to retain a greater proportion of Right to Buy receipts, with an obligation to invest in new affordable housing. The Council will need to consider the impact of such funding streams when deciding its investment priorities.

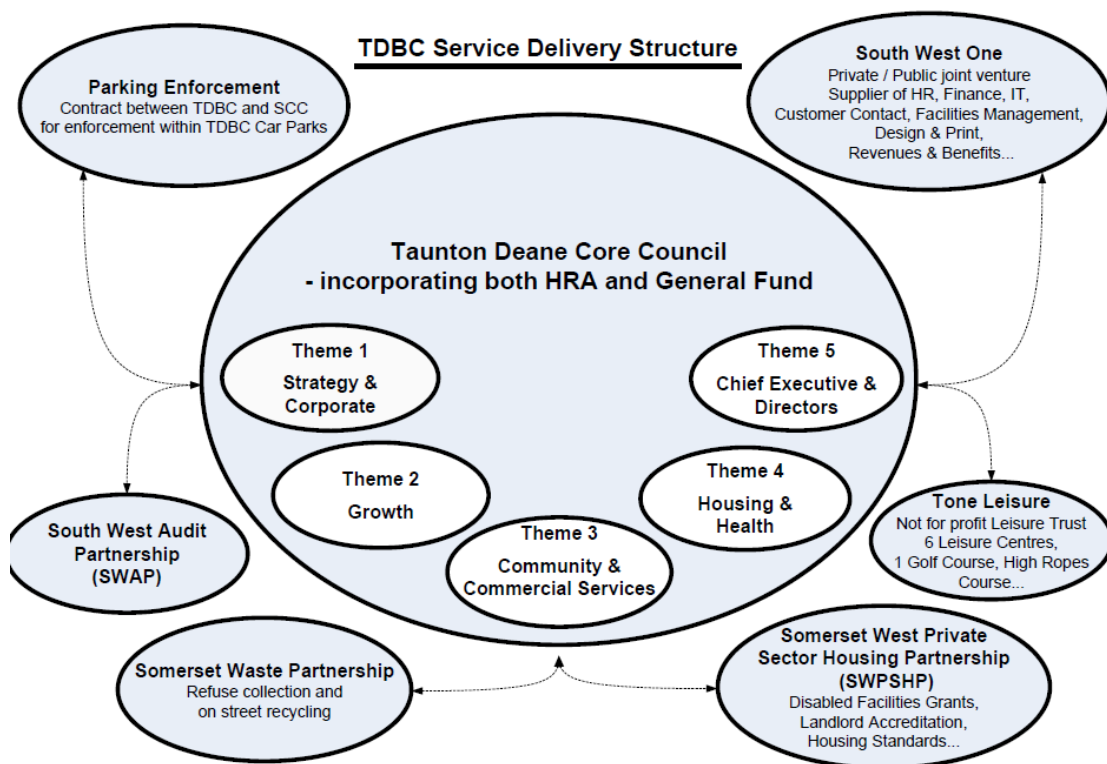
Appendix A: Community and Partnerships

The Council recognises that working in partnership is critical for its future success in meeting the aims of this business plan. Our future working with partnerships will encourage

Community Leadership – we plan to continue to work closely with partners through the Taunton Deane Partnership to take forward work on the Priority Areas Strategy, Troubled Families and Health and Wellbeing.

Service Delivery - We will continue to work with Southwest One to provide back office and support services to 2017, although we need to begin now to plan beyond this period.

We will also continue with other successful service partnerships, some of which are shown in the following diagram of cliented partnerships:



Service Sharing - We will be open to opportunities to share services with suitable partners such as neighbouring local authorities

Open Communication - We will seek the views and input from our partners on our Corporate Business Plan and in future annual reviews.

Appendix B: Government Policy direction for Local Government

The following overview of policy direction from Central Government describe the 'local government landscape' and the responsibilities that we are expected to embrace in our future working:

Big Society and Localism: Empower local people and communities and devolve power down from central government to local government and beyond. Encourage voluntary work and support the voluntary and community sector.

The Council has good links with the parish councils through its parish liaison officer and does not believe there is sufficient appetite from the local communities or parish councils to run services and this is often due to funding, capacity and expertise. However it strongly supports the voluntary and community sector and has a track-record of funding and supporting it.

Open Public Services: To adopt an 'open commissioning ethos'. "actively encouraging new providers, of all sizes and from all sectors, to deliver public services". "We want, where possible, to give people direct control over neighbourhood services directly to communities, or by giving neighbourhood groups democratic control over them" (Open Public Services White Paper)

The Council does not believe there is sufficient appetite within neighbourhoods and local communities to pursue this as a policy

Community Leadership: Provide community leadership, working with partners, the voluntary and community sector, private sector and communities to jointly tackle the real issues that affect them.

The Council has a strong track-record of providing community leadership through its work with the Taunton Deane Partnership and its focus on deprivation through its Priority Areas Strategy. Other good examples include Tone Leisure's work on Healthy Lifestyles; as well as our approach to climate change, affordable housing, broadband and other community priorities. Health and Wellbeing is becoming increasingly important and the Council will lead on this locally, in close liaison with the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Community Right to Challenge: Duty to consider expressions of interest from voluntary and community organisations and parish councils to bid to run council services.

This is a legislative requirement and we will respond to any expressions of interest as required.

Supporting Businesses and Local Economy: The government has made it clear that local government has an important role to play in supporting local businesses and encouraging growth and this is reflected in a range of legislative changes such as the NPPF, business rate retention, the introduction of LEPs, discretionary business rate relief and other measures.

Economic Development has been flagged as a priority for the business plan and we want to embrace and support local businesses and for Taunton Deane to be seen as 'open for business'. The Council has recently adopted a Growth Strategic Delivery Plan that has five objectives around attracting businesses, increasing economic activity, increasing supply of housing, delivering infrastructure and developing cultural and leisure facilities to attract inward investment. We are also actively engaging with the LEP and continue to seek opportunities for regional growth funding for Taunton Deane.

Welfare Reform: Includes the introduction of Universal Credit; caps on housing benefit; localised council tax benefit (with a 10% reduction in overall budget); Replacement of disability living allowance with personal independence payment; an increase to the minimum age (35) for individuals able to claim housing benefit; and a cap on benefits where under-occupation occurs.

These introduce an increased risk to the council through:

- potential increased demand for services e.g. housing advice, homelessness, benefits, etc
- less income through reduced demand for chargeable discretionary services
- increased debt risk and potential reduction in income collection rates

We are currently consulting on changes to our Council Tax Benefit scheme and will monitor changes in demand for services resulting from Welfare Reform. We will respond accordingly.

Changes in Financial Policy

In addition to the Spending Review, there is a lot of change underway that will

- impact on how local councils are funded in future
- influence demand on services
- increase financial and other risks

Business Rates Retention Scheme

Under the Government's Local Government Resource Review the way councils are funded is changing, with the introduction of a new Business Rates Retention scheme from April 2013. This means that local council's will be able to retain a proportion of additional business rates generated through local business growth, but also means the council would receive less funding if business growth stands still or declines. This change will place a strong incentive for local councils to encourage business growth to protect and potentially increase funding levels. The national economic picture indicates that business growth is very low nationally and the 'local context' section showed that business deaths currently outnumber births. Therefore this risk of further funding reductions during this Business Plan period remains high.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The current scheme of Council Tax Benefits, which is fully-funded by central government, is to be replaced with a local scheme from April 2013. The national funding for council tax is being cut by 10%, and in future this council will receive a fixed grant which means this Council, together with other Somerset authorities, will be at risk if the cost of the local scheme exceeds the grant provided.

New Homes Bonus

This grant has been described as “a powerful fiscal incentive for local authorities delivering new housing” (Government Housing Strategy). The amount of grant available will be determined by the number of new houses plus empty homes brought back into use in the Borough. Growth in affordable housing brings additional financial benefit as part of the grant. Enabling housing growth, including growth in affordable housing, will therefore be a key driver in funding growth through this mechanism.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Council is currently consulting on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule which sets out the rates at which CIL will apply and the types of development which will be liable to pay it. The requirement to invest in local infrastructure and the amount of funding generated through CIL, will be fundamentally linked to growth. The amount of funding will therefore be variable and the timing and amounts will be uncertain. Financial plans will need to take into account this risk.

Appendix C: High Level Principles

In September 2011, the Council agreed a set of High Level Principles to apply to future working. These were:

Corporate Priorities – The four existing corporate priorities were still considered relevant and should remain a focus for the Council.

Staff Terms and Conditions – The Council should remain within national terms and conditions and only review those that fall outside of this

Staff Benefits – This identified certain staff benefits which could be reviewed and those which should not be and it prioritised transport related benefits as the initial starting point for review.

Devolving Responsibility – It identified that work was required to understand whether any appetite existed for parish councils to run services, before this agenda would be progressed

Increasing Commerciality – The Council should operate on a more commercial basis and explore setting up a trading company in the longer term

Fees and Charges – Fees and charges should always be increased to match inflation, except under exceptional circumstances. Higher charges should be set where benchmarking shows this is reasonable although we should avoid being the highest chargers in the region.

Capital Strategy – The Council should be clear on its spending priorities and aim to set aside a proportion of capital to invest in capital schemes that provide a revenue return.

Appendix D: Equalities

The Equality Act 2010 seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against because of certain characteristics. These are known as 'protected characteristics' and there are nine in total. They are:

- Age - Disability - Sex - Gender reassignment - Marriage and civil partnership	- Pregnancy and maternity - Race - Religion or Belief - Sexual Orientation
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The Act imposes both a General Duty and two Specific Duties on the Authority.

The General Duty

The General Duty has three strands which are to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The Specific Duties

There are two requirements under the Specific Duties:

1. Publish Information - Sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the equality duty across its functions, including
 - Workforce data
 - Evidence of Equality Impact Analysis
 - Details of data and evidence used considering Equality issues
 - Details of engagement undertaken while considering Equality issues
2. Prepare and publish equality objectives. Our published objectives are:

Objective 1: Councillors will fully consider the equality implications of all decisions that they make.

- a) Ensure that 100% of reports that go to the Council Executive have accompanying Equality Impact Assessments.
- b) Provide equality and diversity awareness training to 100% Councillors on Scrutiny Panels, Planning Committees and Executive
- c) Make sure that 95% of all councillors have received equality and diversity awareness training.

Objective 2: Information about the protected characteristics of our service users should be used in the planning and delivery of services.

a) Service areas will publish profiles every two years which describe the protected characteristics of their service users in order to inform service delivery.

Objective 3: Actions are taken to identify and to reduce or remove any inequalities faced by employees.

a) Ensure 100% of employees are contacted annually to ensure their employee equalities monitoring data is up to date

b) Where cases of bullying and harassment arise, we undertake to consult with staff and trade unions to identify and treat the causes.

Appendix E: Managing Performance and Risk

Performance Management

The Corporate Business Plan provides the overall framework and direction for the Council, and is very important for translating the priorities of the community into objectives for delivery by the Council and its partners.

In addition to the strategic priorities outlined in this Business Plan, each council service (or 'Theme') also has its own plan setting out key objectives, ie the focus of work with performance targets and how progress is measured against them.

To ensure that we make progress in achieving our objectives (strategic, programme/projects, and operational), the Corporate Business Plan and Theme/Service Plans are monitored as follows:

Corporate Performance 'Scorecard'

(published quarterly on the TDBC website)

This is reviewed each quarter by the Corporate Management Team – it allows us to monitor whether we are on track / on budget, and to take corrective action where areas of under-performance are identified.

It is then reported to Councillors (through the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, to the Executive).

NB - The 'scorecard' includes all the key objectives, targets & measures, and includes the following areas of the Council's business:

- Strategic priorities (eg 'Growth & Development')
- Service Delivery
- Managing Finances
- 'Results' Change Programme / Key projects
- Key partnerships (ie Southwest One, Somerset Waste partnership, Tone Leisure)
- Corporate 'health' (eg People/HR issues; Corporate Governance)

Theme/Service Plans & Scorecards

These are 'living' documents that are monitored & reviewed, updated & amended throughout the year by Theme Managers and the Corporate Management Team. They are also used to inform Councillors (ie Portfolio Holders / Shadow Portfolio Holders) and Staff of progress against service objectives & targets.

Staff (individual & team) objectives

All employees are set individual (& team) objectives which links their individual contribution to service delivery aims and the Council's strategic priorities. The Personal Review & Employee Development ('PRED') process is used to monitor progress of employee objectives & development.

Risk Management

We live in an ever changing world and to cope we all manage risk – both in our personal lives and in the business (& public sector) environment. To successfully achieve our goals, we need to accept that risk exists, be realistic, and plan to build the future for Taunton Deane that we desire, rather than

simply hoping that success will occur. We also recognise that if we are to achieve our goals – we cannot try to avoid risk completely.

Our aim is to improve internal control and support better decision-making through a good understanding of risks and the overall risk exposure that exists at a particular time.

Effective risk management helps us manage the business and achieve the objectives outlined in this Business Plan. TDBC has adopted a risk management policy & strategy which describes a systematic application of principles, approach and processes that enable us to identify and assess risks, and then plan and implement responses to those risks.

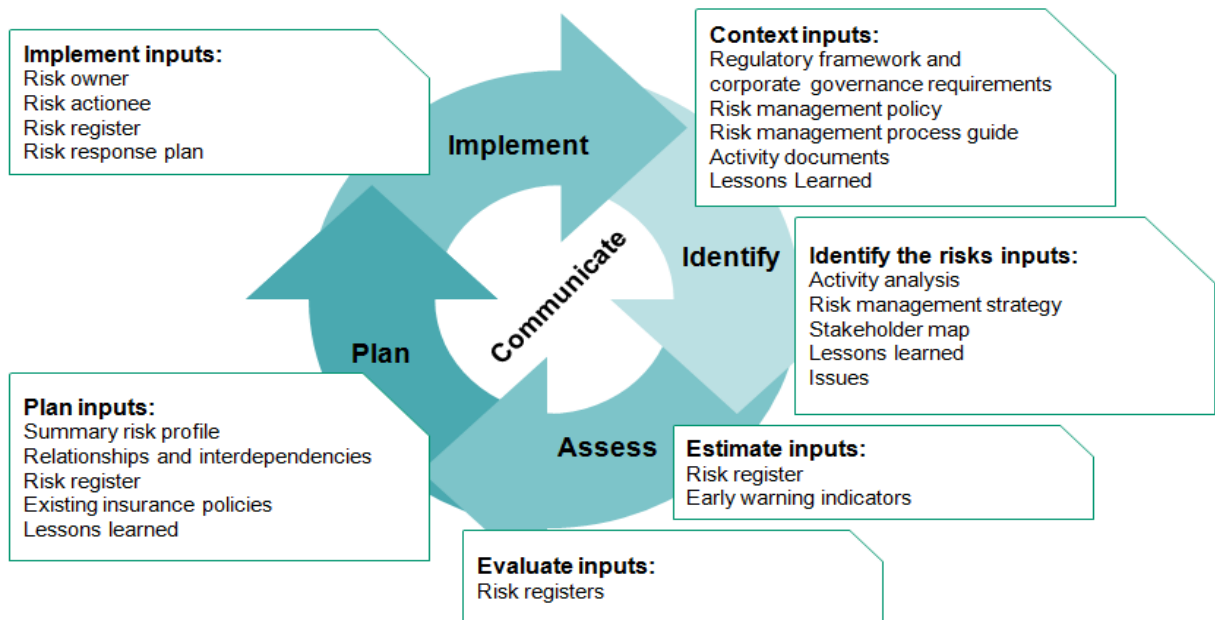
Risk Registers are in place at all levels of the organisation - Strategic, Programme/Project, and Operational. The Corporate Management Team & Theme/Service/Project Managers review these risk registers regularly and the highest risk areas are targeted and escalated for management action at the appropriate level.

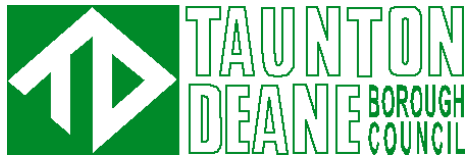
The Corporate Governance Committee receives 6-monthly reports on the progress of risk management within the Council.

Diagram summarising the risk management process:

The management of risk process steps

The output of each process step provides most of the inputs to the next process step. The output of the implement step is a Risk progress report.





Taunton Deane Borough Council

Workforce Plan 2013/15

Contents

1. Introduction: What is workforce planning? Why are we doing it?
2. Taunton Deane Profile
3. TDBC – Our Direction and the Future
4. What are the challenges for workforce planning?
5. Addressing the challenges

Foreword

Welcome to our Workforce Development Plan for 2013/15.

This plan predominantly applies to the core council workforce not our secondees in SW One. However, as we approach the second half of the 10 year agreement and as some national initiatives will impact on both core council and SW1, these have been reflected in this Plan.

SW One will have their own workforce plan which combines the whole workforce in that organisation and will be based on their business strategy and current and future workforce needs

To meet the changing needs and demands the people we employ are key to the success of this authority and its partners. We need to ensure that we have “the right people, with the right skills in the right place at the right time” and this plan seeks to address and provide action to ensure that we do this.

1. Introduction:

What is Workforce Planning? Why are we doing it?

Taunton Deane Borough Council’s service delivery like any other organisation’s is provided through the people it employs. It is vital that we consider our most important asset in our business planning and this plan seeks to provide a framework to address this.

By making people management integral to our strategic thinking we can ensure that we have a workforce that can deliver our changing service needs and it is vital for workforce planning to be truly effective that the Council provides clarity on its priorities and the level of services that it wishes to deliver..

The workforce plan will consider:

- The way the authority will develop over the next three years as a result of government policy drivers, efficiency savings and in response to the kind of Council we want to be and the needs of our community.
- The workforce skills and knowledge we will need to respond effectively to the challenges we face.
- Our current workforce, its makeup, knowledge and current state of health and wellbeing.
- How we will prioritise the people management actions to bridge the identified skills gaps that we have.

It can be seen that this plan cannot exist in isolation; it must become integral to the process of our organisational development. In particular how our workforce can lead and respond to the demands of our

community. This plan must be a fluid document that can respond to changing priorities, as it is critical to the success of organisational and cultural change.

We will continue to develop the plan as circumstances demand and in response to the Council's changing agenda which will mean monitoring the plan and updating an annual programme of actions.

2. Taunton Deane Profile

The Business Plan sets out the local context of Taunton Deane in the 'Taunton Deane Borough – At a Glance' section and therefore this has not been replicated in the Workforce Plan.

In addition to this Workforce Plans often contain significant amounts of statistical data on which decisions have been made. Although this plan uses such data it has not been replicated within the plan itself.

In Workforce Planning decision making we will use:

- the Taunton Deane BC Equalities Information Part 1 – A Profile of Taunton Deane;
- the Quarterly Economic Bulletin;
- ONS data;
- regular staff surveys (eg stress, Travel Plan and Staff Attitudes)
- feedback from initiatives such as 'Peer Review', customer satisfaction surveys and feedback, Audit Reports, Investors in People Standard etc; and from April 2013
- the new Quarterly Staffing Report developed by SW1.

This approach will ensure we are using data consistently within the organisation and not directing additional resources to data collection where this is already undertaken.

Organisational Structure

In 2008 the Council commenced a thorough review of the 'core council' which saw the implementation of Thematic Working to support the priorities of the Council.

The original aim of Core Council Review was to introduce a new structure and new ways of working that would enable the Core Council to:

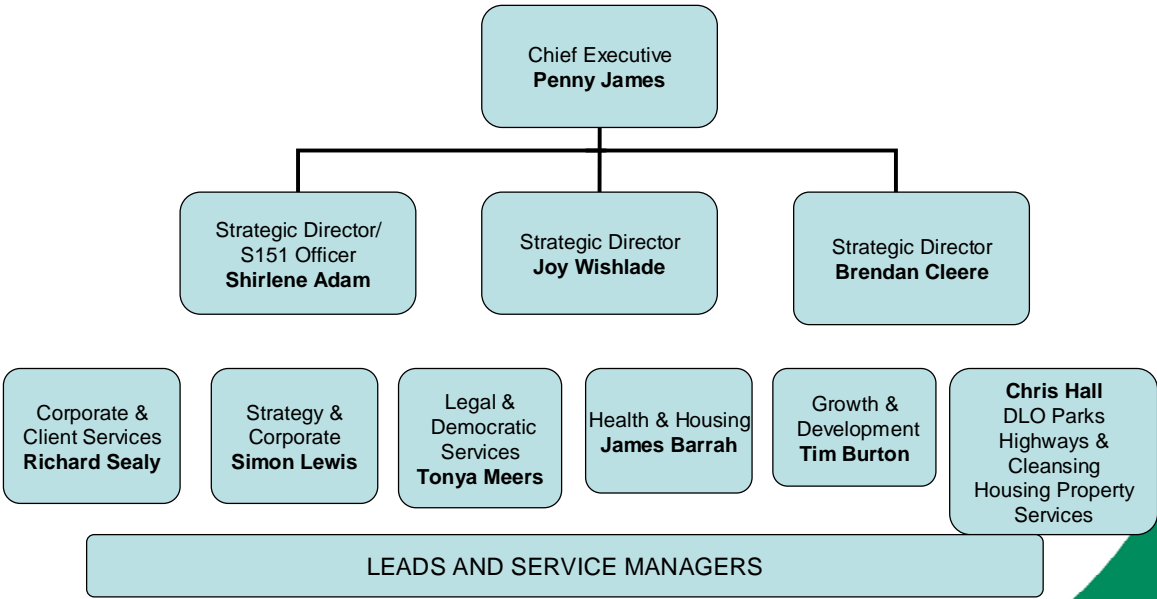
- Be fit for purpose, delivering our vision, widened roles and new ways of working
- Deliver substantial efficiency savings for 2009/10 and beyond.

Proposals for new ways of working and a new structure for the Core Council were approved by Full Council on 17th February 2009 and subsequent reports which concluded with a review of the Corporate Management Team in 2012.

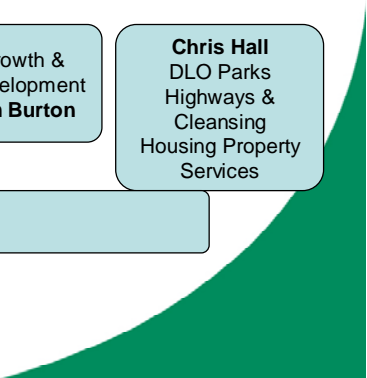
A diagram of the overall Core Council structure is set out below.



CORPORATE MANAGEMENT



11.1.2011



3. TDBC – Our Direction and the Future

To be successful the workforce plan must be able to meet the needs of our known objectives and the changing requirements placed upon local government. The public spending cuts and other initiatives affecting Local government as articulated in the Business Plan will affect the way our services are delivered, however we will still require a workforce that can be recruited, developed and retained to meet and anticipate the changes to come.

This plan is now an integral part of the Business Plan because it is the Council's principle policy document. It establishes the Council's ambitions and the main outcomes it wants to achieve. It also provides an important lead for service planning, resource allocation and budget setting. It also provides the full context in which the Council will operate.

4. What are the Challenges for Workforce Planning?

- Preparing for further cost savings through job reduction and employee costs reduction in a planned way using the current data to assess possible impact; developing redeployment in the organisation as an acceptable option and by undertaking a skills audit;
- Ensuring that the action above is done in support of the Transforming Services actions as set out in the Business Plan;
- Developing capacity in a lean organisation through
 - flexible working,
 - skills training including 'multi-skilling' in the DLO,
 - leadership development,
 - a resourced Business Process Re-engineering, Lean Methodology approach.
 - Re-invigorating Project Management through training and an appropriate methodology;,
- Developing capacity and providing efficiencies (both financial and non financial) in partnership with West Somerset Council and other organisations;
- Ensuring that any devolvement of responsibilities to parish councils, that may be developed, is consistent with the Business Plan and Workforce Plan
- Developing and retaining talent – in an increasingly threatened, insecure and reward reduced job environment and ensuring that this talent is directed to priority areas. Using coaching to support both management and staff development which can also be used to develop keys areas such as commerciality,
- Managing and planning for an aging workforce ensuring that the organisation uses flexible retirement in an appropriate way and ensures that succession planning is developed;
- Addressing some of the equality imbalances in the workforce and ensuring that appropriate monitoring data is in place; Improving the understanding of managers and staff on their equalities obligations for the organisation and under legislation
- Continuing to reduce absence levels whilst maintaining staff morale and wellbeing – continued action on staff survey results and development of the Employee Assistance Programme to support staff and managers
- Maintaining high level leadership skills in a rapidly moving environment experiencing a radical change to how it provides services either independently or in partnership;
- Developing the PRED processes to support staff in meeting the aims of the organisation and their development whilst supporting managers to address poor performance issues and succession planning issues where these exist;
- Developing processes for knowledge transfer and learning to enable the organisation to benefit (eg commercialism, business support, Business Process Re-engineering, procurement etc)
- Reviewing HR Policies, Communications and Staff Engagement to ensure they are effective and aligned to the Business Plan

and that all managers and employees are clear on the standards of behaviour that the Council expects

- Maintaining focus on Investor in People actions to ensure that processes are aligned to the Business Plan and support employees/managers. Prior to reassessment undertaking a review of the appropriateness of liP against other customer focussed standards;
- Addressing the options for the end of the ten year SW1 contract to ensure that the organisation is appropriately structured to deliver services;
- Managing the impact of legislative changes such as the Localism Act (eg Right to Challenge) and the Welfare Reform Act;

5. Addressing the Challenges

To be developed as the business plan develops to ensure that all actions are linked to priorities of the Council

An integrated approach will also need to be taken with Member Services Development to ensure that the leadership of the Council and community deliverables are aligned. We need to ensure that we are fostering and growing community leadership.

An action plan detailing the key initiatives to support the challenges identified in this report will be needed – possibly referring to other plans and strategies to avoid duplication and encourage simplicity and integration. It is a continuous process under review as the internal and external agenda develops.

“the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time”

Appendix G: Illustrative Modelling of future service budgets required to close Budget Gap if no other measures are undertaken.

	2012/13 Budget £k	2013/14 Estimate £k	2014/15 Estimate £k	2015/16 Estimate £k	3-Year Movement	
					£k	%
Economic Development	428	428	428	428	0	0.0%
Waste and Recycling	2,945	2,945	2,945	2,945	0	0.0%
Housing Standards	829	829	829	829	0	0.0%
Housing Benefits Admin	451	451	451	451	0	0.0%
Planning Policy	383	383	383	383	0	0.0%
Housing Advice	730	730	730	730	0	0.0%
Food Safety	384	384	384	384	0	0.0%
Homelessness	330	330	330	330	0	0.0%
Open Spaces	865	824	786	752	-114	-13.1%
Housing Enabling	385	367	350	335	-51	-13.1%
Development Management	671	639	609	583	-88	-13.1%
Street Cleansing	680	648	618	591	-89	-13.1%
Corporate & Democratic Core	1,423	1,356	1,292	1,236	-187	-13.1%
Housing Strategy	117	112	107	102	-15	-13.1%
Project Taunton	396	377	360	344	-52	-13.1%
Landscape	295	281	268	257	-39	-13.1%
Tone Leisure	758	722	688	659	-100	-13.1%
Health & Safety (Regulatory)	58	55	53	51	-8	-13.1%
Outdoor Sports & Recreation	334	318	303	290	-44	-13.1%
Heritage	283	270	257	246	-37	-13.1%
Tourism & TIC	166	158	150	144	-22	-13.1%
Licensing	23	22	21	20	-3	-13.1%
Private Sector Housing	31	30	28	27	-4	-13.1%
Public Conveniences	281	255	231	210	-71	-25.3%
Sports Development	598	543	492	447	-151	-25.3%
Pollution Reduction	330	299	271	246	-83	-25.3%
Dog Wardens	80	73	66	60	-20	-25.3%
Pest Control	41	38	34	31	-10	-25.3%
Highways & Transport Services	103	93	85	77	-26	-25.3%
Community Safety	223	203	184	167	-57	-25.3%
Community Development	95	86	78	71	-24	-25.3%
Arts & Public Entertainment	172	156	142	128	-44	-25.3%
Building Control	155	141	127	116	-39	-25.3%
Land Charges	19	17	15	14	-5	-25.3%
Shopmobility	77	70	63	57	-19	-25.3%
Voluntary & Community Sector Grants	200	182	165	149	-51	-25.3%
Climate Change	64	58	53	48	-16	-25.3%
Flood Defence	265	241	218	198	-67	-25.3%
Revenues Services	831	755	684	621	-211	-25.3%
Benefits	-136	-142	-148	-153	-17	-12.1%
Parking Services	-2,364	-2,467	-2,564	-2,651	-287	-12.1%
Cemeteries & Crematorium	-598	-624	-649	-671	-73	-12.1%
Allotments	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-12.1%
Investment Properties	-59	-62	-64	-67	-7	-12.1%
Non Distributed Costs	141	141	141	141	0	0.0%
Total Service Costs	13,486	12,715	11,995	11,355	-2,131	-15.8%
Budget Gap - Annual		771	720	640		
Budget Gap - Cumulative		771	1,491	2,131		

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Community Infrastructure Levy

Draft Charging Schedule

January 2013

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Draft Charging Schedule

Introduction

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced under the Planning Act 2008 and is defined in the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended 2011). Local authorities in England and Wales can elect to charge CIL on new developments.

CIL takes the form of a charge per square metre of additional floorspace (new build or extensions) and can be charged on most new development. There are exemptions for charitable organisations and affordable housing, together with some size thresholds for non-residential uses. Domestic extensions, together with non-residential development resulting in the creation of less than 100 sq m of net additional floorspace, are not liable for CIL.

The introduction of CIL is seen as necessary in part because, from April 2014, the ability to pool planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), will be restricted. It will therefore become difficult to deliver larger scale items of infrastructure such as schools, swimming pools and transport schemes, where pooling of numerous individual planning contributions is often necessary. Section 106 agreements will continue to be used to deliver some infrastructure (as will Section 278 for highways), but this will largely be restricted to site-specific mitigation and for providing affordable housing.

The money raised through CIL will be used to deliver infrastructure that is needed to support the proposals set out in the Council's Core Strategy and the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan.

Evidence to support the proposed levels of CIL

The evidence to support this Draft Charging Schedule is available on the Council's website at www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil. Other links are given at the end of this document. The viability appraisal to support the proposed charges has been prepared on behalf of the Council by Three Dragons and Peter Brett Associates.

The viability appraisal looks at notional and actual housing development sites in Taunton Deane, and also considers non-residential uses. It recommends rates of CIL that can be charged without putting the majority of development proposed at risk. The evidence indicates that for residential development, CIL would not render the majority of development unviable in most of Taunton Deane. For non-residential uses the only type of development which could support CIL and remain viable, at present, is retailing outside the town centres of Taunton and Wellington.

The Proposed Levy

The Draft Charging Schedule attached has been prepared in accordance with Part 11 of the Town and Country Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). The Council has sought to strike a balance between ensuring appropriate development comes forward and the impact of CIL on development viability. It has also sought to balance costs between aspects of site-specific infrastructure which will continue to be secured through Section 106 planning obligations and those that will be funded through CIL.

The CIL rates proposed are set out in the Draft Charging Schedule. An assessment of the viability of development in different parts of the Borough has been carried out by the Council's consultants to determine what level of CIL could be charged without affecting the viability of most development. The Regulations recognise that the CIL charge may make some development unviable and that CIL should not be set at such a low rate as to ensure that every development remains viable.

Viability evidence suggests that there is no scope to charge CIL on residential development within Taunton town centre and in Wellington (urban area and urban extensions), nor on retail development within Taunton and Wellington town centres. Employment development in the Borough is also not able to support CIL.

Once CIL is adopted, the charging rates proposed will be indexed to account for inflation using a nationally recognised index. The charges will be regularly reviewed to take account of changes in viability, and any proposed changes to the Charging Schedule will be submitted for further examination.

CIL Relief

The CIL Regulations provide for full relief from the CIL charge for any part of a development which is affordable housing (and includes social and affordable rent and shared ownership). Charity landowners will also benefit from relief provided that the development is to be used for charitable purposes. If a development is initially granted CIL relief and then circumstances change, there is a claw-back period of 7 years within which the development will become liable for CIL. Relief can also be given in exceptional circumstances, subject to the Council publishing a policy to this effect. Such exceptional circumstances will only apply where there is a Section 106 planning obligation in place that has costs greater than the chargeable amount and where the addition of CIL would make the development unviable; additionally the amount of relief granted must not be sufficient to qualify as notifiable state aid under EU law.¹ The fact that an application may be unviable is unlikely, in itself, to constitute an exceptional circumstance in terms of the CIL Regulations. However, the Council will give further consideration to what might constitute exceptional circumstances prior to the introduction of CIL and if appropriate will publish a policy covering these.

Payment of CIL

CIL is payable on commencement of development. However, the Council invited views at the Preliminary Draft stage as to whether there should be a policy to allow payment of CIL by instalments. As a result of views received, the Council has now prepared an instalments policy which is being published alongside this Draft Charging Schedule.

¹ The current de minimis threshold is €200,000 (€100,000 for undertakings in the road transport sector) over a rolling three year fiscal period. Community Infrastructure Levy Relief Information document published by CLG.

Relationship between CIL and Section 106 agreements

Provision for Section 106 agreements will remain, but from April 2014, under Regulation 123, the ability to pool contributions from developers via S106 to deliver larger items of infrastructure will be substantially curtailed. The Council's intention is that CIL will be used to deliver larger strategic items with S106 retained only for direct mitigation of site-specific impacts.

Under Regulation 123, the Council will also need to prepare a list setting out the types of infrastructure that it intends to fund through CIL, prior to the adoption of its Charging Schedule. CIL cannot be used as well as Section 106 to deliver the same piece of infrastructure. The Regulation 123 list will be published in advance of the introduction of CIL.

CIL for local communities

It is likely that the Council will be required to pass a proportion of CIL receipts to parish councils for use on infrastructure identified as important by the local community. The Government indicated early in 2013 that this proportion would be set at 25% of the receipts within a community having a neighbourhood plan in place, and a maximum of £100 per household elsewhere.

Next Steps

The CIL Regulations require the Council to carry out two stages of consultation on the proposed CIL Charging Schedule. The Preliminary Draft was the subject of consultation between 29th June and 27th July, 2012.

Taking account of comments received on the Preliminary Draft, the Council is now publishing a Draft Charging Schedule for examination in the summer of 2013. This will be available for people to make representations between 1st February and 15th March. The Draft Charging Schedule, together with the representations received, will then be submitted to the Examiner prior to an examination being held.

Your Views

We would like to receive any comments you may have on the CIL Draft Charging Schedule.

Comments should be put in writing and sent to:

Policy (Planning and Development)
Taunton Deane Borough Council
The Deane House
Belvedere Road
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 1HE

e-mail: talkingtomorrows@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Links

Report to Executive 16th January 2013: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil

Report to Executive 20th June 2012: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil

CIL Viability Appraisal: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil

Taunton Deane Borough Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan:

<http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/irj/go/km/docs/CouncilDocuments/TDBC/Documents/Forward%20Planning/Evidence%20Base/IDP.pdf>

Taunton Deane Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule

This charging schedule has been prepared in accordance with Part 11 of the Town and Country Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended by the 2011 Regulations). It is supported by local evidence regarding infrastructure requirements and the impact of the levy on the viability of development, as set out in the consultants' reports. These can be found on the Council's website as part of the Core Strategy and CIL Evidence Base (see links on previous page).

Levy Rates

The rates below will be charged against the gross internal floor area of:

- All new dwellings
- All other development exceeding 100 sq m in size

Development Uses	Levy (per sq m)
Residential Development in Taunton, including urban extensions	£70
Residential Development in Taunton town centre	£0
Residential Development in Wellington, including urban extensions	£0
Residential Development outside Taunton and Wellington	£125
Retail Development in Taunton and Wellington town centres	£0
Retail development outside Taunton and Wellington town centres	£140
All other development	£0

How the CIL charge will be calculated

In accordance with the Regulations, where applicable the Council will issue a Liability Notice that states the chargeable amount on grant of planning permission or as soon as possible after the grant of planning permission. The Council will calculate the amount of CIL chargeable using the formulae set out in the Regulations.

Full details of the way in which CIL will be calculated, together with an overview of CIL and the full Regulations, can be found on the CLG website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government>.