

Annual Review

April 2009 - March 2010



Tamworth
Borough Council

Tamworth Borough Council

“ Our Pledge
We will improve the reputation of Tamworth...
...for everyone ”

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Foreword

Welcome to the Annual Review of Tamworth Borough Council for the financial year April 2009 to March 2010.

The review highlights the Council's key achievements and activities in 2009 and 2010; its successful delivery of services, providing Tamworth tax payers with value for money.

Tamworth - Worth its weight in Saxon gold

World class heritage, a national festival featuring some of the UK's top music acts, a wealth of other leading events and attractions, and the biggest recent historical find along one of the best infrastructures in the country – **Tamworth truly has a past to be proud of, a present to shout about and a future to look forward to.**

Why? Because of the power of the people and the place and their inextricable link with Tamworth's story – a fact recognised and reflected in all that we do and plan to do as a Council, Place Shaper and Community Leader.

We know our continuing success can only go from strength to strength and we will achieve this by working more closely than ever before with residents, those people at the very heart of our community. The combination of people and places

means we can work towards inspiring residents to take a leading role in shaping their future; a prosperous future, now and for generations to come.

By encouraging people to become ambassadors for our borough and working within communities, not only can we continue to be proud of our much sought after history and heritage, we are creating the foundations for a prosperous future any town would envy; a borough to be proud of.

Success is not new to Tamworth or the Council. Talking about it and sharing it is! Now, boosted by the confidence and pride to do so, we are well placed to share our successes, acknowledge our achievements and celebrate the efforts of all who have contributed.

Ultimately, we aim to share our successes with others, and to make everyone living in, working in and visiting Tamworth proud of **our people, our places and our prosperity.**



Vision and Values

Every year, we review our vision, priorities and values to make sure that the services we are delivering and projects we support continue to meet the needs of Tamworth, its residents and its businesses. To help make these decisions, we use the results of our citizen consultation and engagement activities such as Tamworth Listens.

For 2009 – 2010, our vision was unchanged, while the respective order of our housing and profile priorities was reversed:

Vision

By 2020, Tamworth will be an ideal place to live, work and raise your family in the Heart of England

Corporate priorities

1. Working with others, we will actively tackle the cause and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour.
2. Working with others, we will create and maintain a clean and green environment.
3. Working with others, we will provide a vibrant and prosperous town centre.
4. Working with others, we will improve housing standards for the people of Tamworth.
5. Working with others, we will continue to raise our positive profile within the Heart of England.
6. Working with others, we will improve health and education standards for the people of Tamworth.

Value for money remained at the heart of everything we do – and remained a challenge in the context of the Government's efficiency agenda.

Other challenges for the future included:

- Continuing to help our communities deal with the effects of the economic downturn.
- Helping secure individuals' and businesses' economic well-being.
- Continuing to improve access to and quality of services.
- Continuing to Make Equalities Real in Tamworth (MERIT)
- Expanding services to reduce and prevent homelessness.
- Delivering the outcomes of the master plan for the town centre.
- Continuing to preserve and enhance the borough's attractions and heritage.
- Continuing to promote healthy lifestyles by increasing access to sport, recreation and information.
- Making educational achievement a realistic aspiration for all and engaging with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) opportunity
- Better understanding our customers' needs
- Responding to our communities' poor perception of the Council and its partners as local public service providers.
- Improving the Council's capacity to deliver its services through investment and partnership.



“ Our activities are aligned to our corporate priorities; targeted and on track to deliver – indeed to exceed expectations! ”

Celebrating successes

It would be impossible to list all of our achievements over the year, but highlights include: giving tenants more choice over where they live; a new improved domestic waste management service; Heritage Lottery funding for improvements to our castle; a top quartile benefits service; our equalities framework awarded level three status; Tamworth in Bloom Silver Gilt ; securing £100M to build schools for Tamworth's future; neighbourhood-led environmental campaigns to improve localities; not to mention our award winning CCTV centre.

To these we must add our major, innovative review of Tamworth as a place and the Council's lead role in driving this forward. More than just a snapshot of the borough; it means we can understand what our residents think about Tamworth and more importantly, why. This exciting piece of work has already brought people, business and partnerships together to look at challenges we may face and to tackle them – together.

Videos available on 

- Place Project

Confidence

Our performance over the last 12 months has been consistently strong – The facts speak for themselves; we are performing well against our own indicators and those set out by central government.

But we are constantly learning and moving things forward. For 2010/11, we have revised our Corporate Priorities to be in line with our new Place and Localities strategy.

Our performance framework is now dedicated around 'Tamworth the Place'.

Videos available on 

- Locality Working

All our work relates back to people, meaning residents can see the results where it matters – directly in their communities.

By working in localities and recognising our many strengths, we are in a much more secure place than we were 12 months ago. Further community engagement activity is developing public confidence in the services we and our partners provide.

Moreover, our confidence is growing as we become more positive. With a heightened sense of our role and responsibilities we have rightly assumed the position as the leading authority and commentator on issues which affect Tamworth.

working together } for a greener future

A new joint waste management arrangement with Lichfield District Council will produce almost half a million pounds a year in savings while delivering an improved service to every single household across the borough. The savings will help protect other services affected by anticipated cuts in Government support.

Priorities

People, places and prosperity are at the very heart of all our work. To ensure everyone across the authority recognises this, we have realigned our corporate objectives to embrace this and ensure it is a priority, both at a strategic and operational level.

The well-being of our borough is of paramount importance, and, as you would expect, we take our responsibilities very seriously. All of our objectives aim to ensure people see a difference in where they live and how they can live their lives. This policy is supported by our financial strategy – In brief: we are putting our money where our mouth is.

Successes in the face of adversity

Across the country, businesses and organisations have faced a number of challenges over the last two years.

The economic downturn has led to the majority of organisations in the UK having to rethink how they operate. This has resulted in revised short and long term responses to the world's current financial situation.

Local authorities are no different. They are having to provide the same range of services with less money – with the potential of further cuts to come.

Tamworth Borough Council is not alone in having to deal with the consequences of the Icelandic banking collapse – the largest in economic history – and the uncertainties around central government's approach to supporting those affected.

At the same time, public expectations of what their local council should provide remain the same, if not higher.

Faced with such national difficulties, the Council has taken prompt action to safeguard services. We have agreed a plan with central government to spread the burden of our debt over 20 years, effectively ensuring current levels of business. We have recognised that the

joint working/shared service approach provides the most secure and cost effective route to sustaining front line services.



A bright future

Individuals' financial security and economic stability is as important as that of local businesses, local organisations and even ourselves. The Council and its partners are constantly working to smooth the potentially troubled futures of many of our residents, local businesses and organisations in times to come.

With a revised Compact Agreement as a secure framework for joint working across public and voluntary sectors, a range of innovative local services have been implemented to support local people through the challenges and uncertainties arising from the recession. TamCAN surgeries, Mortgage Protection and other financial inclusion initiatives add value to the existing services provided by both sectors.

The Council's successes over the past 12 months leave it in a more secure position financially, with a positive outlook and a renewed sense of its role and responsibilities as place leader.

The place as a whole is well set to meet its 2020 aspiration, as the Council's new priorities, Place Plan, Local Development Framework, Economic Development and Enterprise activities come together.

Council led! A bright future indeed!

Tamworth strikes gold



Last summer, metal detector enthusiast Terry Herbert made an amazing find which has continued to dominate news headlines worldwide.



Just outside Tamworth – the ancient capital of Mercia – Terry discovered the largest haul of Saxon treasure ever found, now known as 'the Staffordshire Hoard'.

Made up of more than 1,600 individual pieces and valued at £3.3 million pounds, we quickly joined the campaign to keep the hoard in the Midlands, highlighting the importance of the find not only for the region, but Tamworth's important history. As a result, we are confident we will be exhibiting important pieces of the hoard in the future; playing an active part in the 'Mercian Trail'.



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More highlights from the past year

More choice for tenants

We know giving people a choice over where they live is very important to people's well being, and Tamworth residents are no different.

The community, personal circumstances and access to services are just some of the factors people take into account when choosing a home; which is why we wanted to be able to give people more choice than ever before.

Since we introduced our 'Choice Based Lettings' scheme, 90 per cent of tenants have told us the new service is easier to understand. In addition the new way of working has meant we have housed almost 500 people, our refusal rates have fallen and we have reduced turnaround times.



Art 'going underground'

Rather than let graffiti become a problem in Tamworth's underpasses, the Borough Council worked with an artist to (in effect) make them canvasses, and encouraged youngsters to take 'art underground'. The youngsters then took charge of the underpasses, giving a sense of ownership and pride; dispelling some of the myths around anti social behaviour.

So far, 20 underpasses have been given a makeover, and more are in the

pipeline. While this was initially a Borough Council project, we are now working with the Youth Service and co-fund the cost of the artist and the materials. The Probation Service are also involved in cleaning and painting the walls before the artist and teenagers get creative.



Council takes a 'Walkabout'

Communities want to know what activities their Council is carrying out, how it affects where they live and what impact projects could have on where they live.

One of the best ways to do this is to talk to the community, in their community. Our Estate Walkabouts do just that. These events were advertised through a radio campaign, leaflet drop, online and in the local press.

Not only were we more visible. Our residents could talk to us firsthand about any issues which may have arisen. They also got to hear about and influence our plans and priorities – and those of our partners.



You said - We did

Our Corporate Plan described how our communities informed the priorities we established for 2009/10.

We have a vast array of case studies demonstrating that – in contrast to other years – we have arrived. We are delivering. We are outcome focused and we are successful!

Read the Corporate Plan 2009/10 on our website www.tamworth.gov.uk

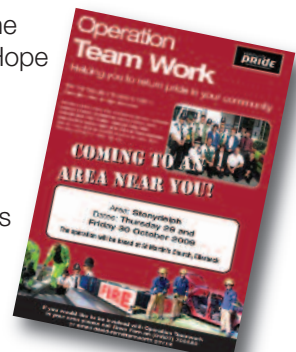
I came away from the (Turnaround) project feeling really inspired.

Vic Hogg, Deputy Director General, Crime and Policing Group, June 2009

Working with others, we will actively tackle the cause and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Council has a long standing leadership of the Community Safety Partnership. This is regarded by many as the best in Staffordshire. The Council contributes to the CSP's activities, with its street warden ambassadors providing daily neighbourhood engagement, recurring Operation Teamwork offensives on 'hotspots' of crime and antisocial behaviour issues, and the enforcement of parking legislation being the most visible outcomes.

More recently, the opening of the Hope Centre and the adoption of the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy are examples of the



Council's commitment to the less visible safety issues.

Videos available on 

- Street Wardens

Working with others, we will create and maintain a clean and green environment.

Performance against the basket of indicators for this priority recovered in 2009. The evidence of improvement in this area is supported by the work to re-structure the Environmental Health and Regulatory service, the improved award of Silver Gilt to Tamworth for its floral displays, the sustained cleansing of underpasses in the town with the engagement of neighbourhoods, and other cleansing activities prompted by Operation Teamwork. To these add our partnership with the Environment Agency resulting in the creation of nature reserve activities for youngsters and the achievement of nature reserve status for one area of the borough. Note also a visible reduction in congestion in the town centre with the Council's adoption of Civil Parking Enforcement.

Videos available on 

- Tamworth in Bloom – Silver Gilt
- Underpass cleansing



Working with others, we will provide a vibrant and prosperous town centre.

The floral displays in the Town Centre are impressive, and consequently Tamworth's Silver Gilt award is something for the community to be proud of. Likewise, the multitude of outdoor events throughout the year is serving to put Tamworth on the map and bring in significant revenue. The success of events such as the music festival are coming to the attention of local leisure providers, recognising the potential for Tamworth as a centre for leisure in the heart of England – indeed in the UK. The Norman Castle is a symbol of the Town's heritage. With the interest created by the Staffordshire Hoard, there is no better time to use the castle to celebrate Tamworth's story; making the connection with Tamworth's present and Tamworth's aspirations: looking back with pride and looking forward with optimism. The Council's sponsorship of Tamworth's Place Branding has taught us much. Recognising our communities' issues with the Town Centre offer, the need for the retail development proposed by Henry Boot is paramount.

Videos available on 

- Tamworth in Bloom – Silver Gilt
- Place project
- Outdoor Events evaluation

Working with others, we will improve housing standards for the people of Tamworth.

There is a wealth of examples of above target performance in this priority area over the past year. For example, 555 cases of homelessness prevented, more than 50 per cent reduction in the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families with children, and households in temporary accommodation falling from 65 in 2007 to just 1 in 2009.

Landlord Services has invested greatly in improved performance management, with the results accessible on the Council's website. The Council is well-prepared to offer Choice Based Lettings in an accessible and cost effective manner. Engagement with the community through Estate Walkabouts may be responsible for the high levels of satisfaction with the caretaking service evidenced through the Tell Us scheme. Consistently achieving targets for the removal of fly tipping, graffiti and litter on estates has reduced response repair costs and is a good example of a VFM initiative of which there are many more to report.

Videos available on 

- Choice Based Lettings
- Estate Walkabouts

See the Performance on the Council's website.




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Working with others, we will continue to raise our positive profile within the Heart of England.

The 2008 Place Survey results rang alarm bells. We needed to understand why, despite good performance, Tamworth's people did not value the Council's contribution to the place. Research by place specialists has resulted in a greater understanding of 'why' and greater engagement by all sectors with the issues and the challenges ahead. The Council recognises the opportunity to develop council offerings better attuned with 'the place'. This work has coincided with the development of localities working and the discovery of the Staffordshire Hoard. If locality working ensures public services fit for all in every area of the borough, then Place Branding makes an identity of this with Tamworth as a place to be. Community pride and external image united. The development of the Town Centre retail offer and the Castle will coincide with the growing reputation of the town's outdoor events programme and the existing reputation regionally and nationally of local assets such as the Snowdome, Ventura Retail Park, Drayton Manor Park, The Belfry and the Alrewas National War Memorial.

Videos available on 

- Place Project
- Tamworth in Bloom – Silver Gilt
- Locality Working
- Outdoor Events evaluation

Working with others, we will improve health and education standards for the people of Tamworth.

It is recognised that the Council does not have a direct responsibility for health and education. A revised priority for 2010/11 reflects this, while acknowledging the Council's part in health and education outcomes.

Accordingly, we celebrate the contribution made by the Council in this priority area – in our support of the Children's Trust and effective use of Spearhead monies; in our funding of numerous posts concerned with children and health; in the work by our street wardens with children in local schools; in the Castle staff's award for teaching of children; in supporting the plans for Building Schools for the Future; in our sponsorship of the Modern Apprentice Scheme (such as Greenskills Apprenticeships); in GP referrals to the Tamworth Activity Centre.



Finally, the Council has a commitment to its legal and ethical framework and to providing value for money.

The Standards Board for England has given Tamworth a green status for its governance arrangements. Our continued accreditation under ISO 20000 and 27001 serves to improve confidence in the Council's guardianship of customers' personal information. We are now a Level 3 accredited council under the Local Government Equalities

Our Auditor's Opinion:

The Council's understanding of its costs and performance has enabled it to become more efficient. It buys in quality services and supplies. It makes good use of consultation to understand its communities'

Framework. SOCITM have adjudged our website to be '2 Stars', with 'very good design and information' and every likelihood of gaining level 3 next year. Our Benefits service levels rank with the best.

A great service all round.

Benefits service user

The Integrated Contact Management Centre continues to generate efficiencies and improved levels of customer access, with customer satisfaction averaging 99%. For the financial year 2009/10, the Council reported savings of £1.89M. A further contributor to this figure in future years will be the new shared arrangement for waste and recycling between Tamworth and Lichfield districts. Other highlights include our successes in reducing the Council's carbon footprint, and development of councillors' skills.

Videos available on 

- Waste Management
- Choice Based Lettings
- Estate Walkabouts
- Place Project
- Locality Working

Our Councillors

Tamworth Borough Council consists of 30 Councillors in 10 wards. Following the local authority election in May 2009, the Council was made up of 24 Conservative, 5 Labour and 1 Independent councillors. There were no by-elections during the course of the year. Click here to see the list of councillors at 31st March 2010.



It's official – our integrated contact management centre receives more compliments than complaints about the Council's services.

Summary Accounts 2009/10¹

Financial Performance

The Revenue account below shows the cost of running Council Services between April 2009 and March 2010, where the money came from to finance those costs along with the surplus at the year end.

Tamworth Borough Council budgeted to make a deficit of £1.51m in 2009/10. The year-end position was a deficit of £0.39m.

The improvement in the Council's estimated financial position arose mainly from extra income from a VAT refund, savings in contingency budgets and additional Government grants. The Council's general fund balances at 31st March 2010 was reduced by the in year deficit to £4.72m.

Income and Expenditure Account

	£m
Central Services	0.6
Cultural, Environmental & Planning	8.9
Highways, Roads & Transport	0.1
Local Authority Housing	0.1
Other Housing Services	1.3
Corporate & Democratic Core	1.4
Other Costs	0.2
Net Cost of Services	12.6
Trading Undertakings	(1.6)
Interest Paid	1.6
Interest Received	(1.0)
Appropriations & Internal Accounting	(0.7)
Amount to be met from Government Grants & Local Tax Payers	10.9
Council Tax	(3.4)
General Government Grants	(1.6)
Non-Domestic Rates	(5.5)
Net General Fund Surplus	(0.4)
Balance on 1st April	5.1
Balance on 31st March	4.7

¹ The Council's Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Accounting Code of Practice. For the purposes of this summary some simplifications have been made to provide more meaningful information. The Council's 2009/10 accounts have been audited by an auditor appointed by the Audit Commission. The auditor has issued an unqualified opinion of the Council's full accounts for 2009/10.

A full copy of the Council's 2009/10 audited accounts is on the Council's website www.tamworth.gov.uk and available for inspection at Marmion House. Please contact the Corporate Director, Resources on 01827 709252 for further details.

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Capital Expenditure

During 2009/10 the Council spent £5.65m on capital works and capitalised £3.386m relating to the impairment of Icelandic investments. The majority of expenditure related to improvement, enhancement or ongoing construction works. Fixed asset acquisitions in the year include the purchase of IT Equipment (software & hardware); costs associated with the expansion of the Waste Management and Recycling Scheme; the relocation of the Skate Park and the enhancements to the CCTV System.

There were no significant disposals during the year.

	£m
Council Dwellings	4.2
Other Land & Buildings	0.0
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	0.5
Community Assets	0.0
Housing & Other Grants	0.4
Investment Properties	0.1
Assets under Construction	0.3
Software	0.1
Icelandic Banking Impairment Capitalisation	3.4
	9.0
Financed by:	
Capital Receipts	1.0
Government Grants & Other Contributions	0.6
Revenue/ Reserves	3.5
Supported Borrowing	0.5
Supported Borrowing Icelandic Impairments	3.4
Unsupported Borrowing	0.0
	9.0

Housing Revenue Account

The overall revenue financial position relating to council housing shows a surplus for the year of £0.83m. This equates to an underspend of £0.70m when compared to the approved budget for the year, mainly due to lower housing repair contract expenditure, a reduction in interest costs and lower than expected cost recharges. This has resulted in an increase in housing revenue account balances from £3.83m to £4.66m to be carried forward to 2010/11.

	£m
Income from Rents & Charges	(16.4)
Expenditure	16.5
Net Interest paid	1.2
Appropriation & internal accounting	(2.2)
Net surplus	(0.9)
Balance on 1 April	3.8
Balance on 31 March	4.7

Balance Sheet - what the Council owns, owes or is owed

31 March 2009 £m		31 March 2010 £m
219	Buildings, Land & Assets Owned by the Council	233
4	Money Owed to the Council	3
(7)	Money Owed by the Council	(9)
18	Investments	17
(19)	Pension Liability	(39)
(23)	Long Term Debt	(20)
192	Total	185
	Financed by:	
7	Reserves	7
9	Revenue Balances	10
4	Capital Income not yet used	3
191	Capital Finance & Revaluation of Assets	204
(19)	Pension Reserve	(39)
192	Total	185

Challenges for the future

Within the Council's 2020 vision, and after due consultation, we have amended the corporate priorities for 2010/11, making them more outcome focused and specifically measurable.

Vision

By 2020, Tamworth will be an ideal place to live, work and raise your family in the Heart of England.

Corporate Priorities

1. Working with local people and partners we will make our communities safer, more confident and better places to live.

Objectives:

- a) By 2015, incidents of crime and ASB will have reduced as a result of interventions by the Police and Tamworth Borough Council
- b) By 2015, the % of people expressing a fear of crime will have reduced due to the actions of the Police and Tamworth Borough Council
- c) By 2015, the number of people involved in community initiatives aimed at building stronger, safer places to live will have increased

2. Working with local people and others we shall develop and maintain an environment that reflects the needs of the future while conserving the uniqueness of our past.

Objectives:

- a) By 2015, the % of people in Tamworth who perceive the town is kept clean and free from litter will have increased from 42% to 65%

- b) By 2015, Tamworth Borough Council will have increased the hectares of land in active conservation management from 101.55 to 188.23
- c) By 2015, Tamworth Borough Council will reduce the tonnage of CO2 emitted from its estate and operations by 5% from the 2008/09 baseline of 8335 tonnes

3. Working with others we will develop and vibrant and prosperous town.

Objectives:

- a) To deliver the Town Centre Master Plan by 2026 / To develop a Place Brand by 2015 / To produce a Locality Plan for the Town Centre by 2012/13
- b) By 2015, the number of businesses showing employment growth will have increased year on year / The number of new businesses trading beyond 3 years of start up will have increased

4. Working with local people and partners we will improve housing choice and address housing needs for the people of Tamworth.

Objectives:

- a) 30% of all new homes delivered will be affordable
- b) Undertake an allocations policy impact assessment, lettings plan and housing market assessment each year
- c) Implement a Housing & Health Strategy by 2011 / Deliver 100% the housing capital programme each year / 100% of disabled adaptations and grants delivered in line with service standards

5. Working with others we will promote Tamworth as good for business, great to visit and welcoming to all.

Objectives:

- a) By 2015, we will increase the number of accredited landlords from 9 to 60 / By working with partner organisations improve opportunities for Tamworth residents to learn, develop skills attractive to local employers and to increase aspiration
- b) To establish Tamworth as the ancient capital of Mercia and retain access to the Staffordshire Hoard / To establish a Place Marketing Steering Group by 2010

6. Actively support those responsible for the improvement of health and education standards in Tamworth.

Objectives:

- a) By 2015, the percentage of adults engaging leisure, sport and lifestyle activity will have increased from 18% to 25% / The percentage of households living in fuel poverty will have decreased from 10% in 2009 to 5% in 2015

7. To be accountable, approachable and visible.

Objectives:

- a) Increase the percentage of residents year on year who express satisfaction with council services / Increase the number of Staff & Members attending training / Maximise revenue collection rates and the processing of claims.
- b) By 2015, we will increase the percentage of people who feel they have influenced decision making in their communities
- c) The Council will secure accreditation to national indicators of excellence / Increase the Council's visibility within the Community

Tamworth Borough Council

Annual Review: April 2009 - March 2010

Contact Us

To provide feedback specifically on the form and content of this Annual Review, please email richard-halsall@tamworth.gov.uk.

For more information about Tamworth Borough Council visit our website at www.tamworth.gov.uk or pick up a copy of our residents magazine, Talkback.

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This document can be made available in other languages, large print or Braille.

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