



## Objectives and Terms of Reference

### *Management Group*

The Management Group comprises the chairman and vice-chairmen of the Forum and the leaders of the Working Groups, advised by a Secretariat provided by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council comprising the Head of Democratic Services and the Secretary Mike McGeary. The Management Group holds regular meetings ahead of meetings of the whole Forum, at which the Working Groups co-ordinate their work and plan the agenda of future meetings. Where necessary the members agree on issues requiring the approval of the Forum before being submitted to the Council. To contact the Management Group or the Working Groups in the first instance please email Mike McGeary at [mike.mcgeary@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:mike.mcgeary@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

### *Finance and General Working Group*

The Group responds to TWBC's calls for consultation on finance matters. Once a year the Group responds to the Annual Council budget, commenting on matters such as the proposed rate of council tax, use of reserves to meet shortfalls in revenue, the disposal of property, proposed cuts in services etc.

When necessary, we also comment on other finance related matters, such as council tax rebate for single occupancy, council tax on vacant properties, and rebate for low income occupiers.

Whilst in the matters quoted above, we are reactive, on other matters appertaining to finance, we are pro-active. We have been in such matters as transport and education, and the financial implications of major Council commitments.

### *Transport Working Group*

The Transport Working Group is working towards the unparished area of RTW having a transport network which is less reliant on the private car, with better infrastructure and investment to encourage more walking, cycling and public transport, especially for shorter journeys. Poor transport policy, inadequate infrastructure, and low levels of investment are key issues affecting the quality of life for residents, workers and visitors of all ages and mobility.

The problems and solutions are local and should be decided within the unparished area. However, the impact of transport issues in RTW extends beyond the unparished area, and the Transport Working Group's areas of interest and concern include traffic circulation around the town as well as traffic circulation and congestion within the town, on-street and off-street car parking, walking and cycling, and public transport.

### *Planning Working Group*

The main objectives of the Group are: to maintain an effective strategy looking forward at least five years to help secure the general *planning* and development aims of the Town Forum for Royal Tunbridge Wells; to maintain regular dialogue with persons, businesses and organisations responsible for formulating or delivering planning services and developments affecting the town, including TWBC and KCC; to prepare reports and responses to public consultations on planning and development issues and to report back regularly on these to the Chairman and to the Town Forum.

The Group scrutinises applications for major developments in the unparished area, engaging with relevant parties and responding thereon at the earliest opportunity. We aim for excellence in design and planning of the built environment, removal of 'grot spots', and the preservation and enhancement of our parks, other green spaces in and around the town, and the links between them. The Group undertakes relevant research, and writes reports responding in particular to reviews of the TWBC Local Plan and the Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents associated with it.

### *Culture Working Group*

The Group was set up to monitor and contribute to the Council's plans to create a "Cultural and Learning Hub" out of the two buildings (and workshops) that currently contain the library, museum and adult education centre. This project has been the subject of bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Arts Council and is currently substantially, although not fully funded. Further to this initial objective, the Group will also observe and comment on the Council's proposals to create a new theatre in the town whilst considering the future of the current Assembly Hall. These latter proposals are inextricably linked to the future of the Town Hall, the Police Station, and the Council offices, and the Group will collaborate with other Groups in responding to these.

### *Leisure and Tourism Group*

The Group aims to:

- recognise Tourism and Leisure as an important sector in the RTW economy, both in bringing visitors to town and supporting the town as a 'good place to live'; encourage the development of a long term strategy to improve and diversify facilities and services for residents and visitors;
- seek to benefit businesses and employment
- co-operate with other Groups of the RTW TF and businesses and organisations in working towards the promotion and marketing of the town.

## *Water in the Wells Group*

The Group aims to:

- promote the importance of Tunbridge Wells' spa history and its unique brand based on water, health, and leisure;
- represent this to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and to residents, businesses and visitors alike;
- seek opportunities to locate water-themed installations in Tunbridge Wells and surrounding communities;
- work with developers to make them aware of the Water in the Wells objectives;
- work with other RTW Town Forum Working Groups to enhance the public environment of the town;
- and to put in place a long term strategy for the installation, financing and maintenance of water-themed features in public places.