



A G E N D A

Wednesday 23 November 2016 at 6.30 pm
Council Chamber, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS

Annual General Meeting

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Voting entitlement for member organisations** (Pages 1 - 2)
- 3 **Minutes of the 2015 AGM** (Pages 3 - 4)
The minutes of the Annual General Meeting dated 26 November 2015 are attached. These were submitted to the Town Forum meeting on 28 January 2016 for noting, so are presented here for approval.
- 4 **Proposed amendments to the Town Forum's Constitution** (Pages 5 - 20)
The Management Committee have reviewed the Town Forum's Constitution and wish to propose some amendments. A 'tracked changes' copy of the Constitution is attached, showing all of the proposed changes. Appendix A is a 'clean' copy, showing what that amended version would look like.

The principal amendment is within section 3 – voting entitlement – where it is proposed that TWBC town ward members should no longer have any voting rights in the Forum's business, apart from Annual General and Extraordinary General meetings. This should assist town ward members in avoiding any conflict of interest charges where, through taking part in a vote at a Town Forum meeting, they might have 'fettered their discretion' ahead of a formal TWBC committee discussion.

All other changes set out are considered to be minor and to reflect more accurately the Town Forum's working practices.

RECOMMENDED – That the revised Constitution be agreed, for immediate implementation.

- 5 **To receive a report from the Chairman on the Town Forum's activities over the past year** (Pages 21 - 22)
- 6 **To elect a Chairman and Deputy Chairmen 2016/17** (Pages 23 - 26)

General Meeting

- 7 **Membership changes**
 - a Membership applications (for noting)
 - b Changes of representatives (for information)
- 8 **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 September 2016** (Pages 27 - 36)
- 9 **Actions from previous meeting, held on 22 September 2016**

- 10 Update report from the Leader of the Council (10 mins)**
- 11 TWBC's draft budget and its draft corporate priorities for 2017/18 (10 mins)** (Pages 37 - 56)
Lee Colyer, TWBC's Director of Finance and Corporate Services, has provided the attached report on the Borough Council's draft budget for 2017/18. He will present this report at the meeting and respond to Town Forum member questions. Mr Colyer will also introduce the Borough Council's draft corporate priorities for 2017/18, (attached). Both the draft budget and the draft corporate priorities will be the subject of formal public consultation after 1 December.
- 12 Tunbridge Wells Cultural and Learning Hub (20 mins)**
At the last meeting, the Town Forum discussed a paper prepared by Linda Lewis, the Chairman of the Culture Working Group, in which she had set out what the group considered to be the most important components of the proposed Cultural and Learning Hub. With some modifications, which had been discussed and agreed by the Town Forum, this paper was formally submitted to TWBC.

Paul Taylor (Director of Change and Communities), Kevin Hetherington (Head of Communities and Wellbeing) and Jo Wiltcher (Museum Manager) will be present at the meeting to provide an update on progress with the Cultural and Learning Hub. The project has made significant progress in recent months and the above staff will report on key milestones such as the procurement of the architect and design team and will take questions on the development of the project.
- 13 Aircraft noise - an update report from TWAANG (10 mins)**
The Tunbridge Wells Anti-Aircraft Noise Group (TWAANG) last made a presentation to the Town Forum in January this year, providing an update on their campaign. At that meeting, Irene Fairbairn and Angus Stewart from TWAANG gave an informative presentation on the key elements of the 'Independent Arrivals Review Team' report. It was agreed by the Forum to await the response of the Gatwick Airport authorities before re-considering the issue. Mrs Fairbairn and Mr Stewart will provide an update report.
- 14 Loss of murals at Tunbridge Wells railway station (5 mins)**
Michael Holman will provide an update on this issue.
- 15 A vision for Royal Tunbridge Wells (5 mins)**
Mark Booker will explain how the Management Committee intends to assist the Borough Council in assessing its priorities for the unparished area within the Local Plan.
- 16 Reports from the Town Forum Working Groups (5-10 mins each)** (Pages 57 - 60)
(a) Tourism and Leisure – A member of this working group, will present an update report.
(b) Transport Strategy – Jane Fenwick, Acting Chairman of this working group, will present the attached update report.
(c) Planning and Development – Mark Booker, Chairman of this working group, will provide a verbal update report.
(d) Water in the Wells – Michael Holman, Chairman of this working group, will present the attached update report.
(e) Finance and Other Issues – David Wakefield, Chairman of this working group, will provide a verbal update report.
(f) Culture – Linda Lewis, Chairman of this working group, will provide a verbal update report.

17 Any other business (5 mins)

Date of the next meeting

Dates of meetings proposed for 2017 (starting at 6.30pm):

Thursday 19 January

Thursday 23 March

Thursday 11 May

Thursday 20 July

Thursday 14 September

Wednesday 29 November

(Thursday 18 January 2018)

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TOWN FORUM – VOTING ENTITLEMENT OF MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

AT THE AGM, 2016

Organisations/ward members who have achieved at least 3 attendances during 2015/16 (= 50% of meetings) including Sept 2016: (34 out of 41 active groups)

Benhall Mill Road Land Association

Beulah Road Residents' Association

Boyne Park Residents' Association

Calverley Park Crescent Association

Calverley Park Gardens Residents' Association

Calverley Park Residents' Association

Camden Park Residents' Association

Camden Road Guild

Clarence Road Users' Association

Culverden Residents' Association

Friends of the Commons

Friends of Grosvenor and Hilbert Park

Friends of the Museum, Library and Art Gallery

Friends of Trinity Churchyard

Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery

Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery

Grantley Court Residents' Association

Hawkenbury Village Association

Inner London Road Residents' Association

Kingswood Residents' Association

Poona Road Residents' Association

Residents First

Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society

Sherborne Close Management Committee

Agenda Item 2

St John's Road Residents' Association

Telephone House Neighbours' Association

The Avenues Residents' Association

The Friends of the Grove

Trinity Theatre

Tunbridge Wells Bicycle User Group

Tunbridge Wells Over 50s Forum

Tunbridge Wells Puppetry Festival

Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association

Warwick Park Residents' Association

Ward members (8):

Barbara Cobbold

Lawrence Heasman

Peter Lidstone

Tracy Moore

Catherine Rankin

James Scholes

Don Sloan

Chris Woodward

Organisations that will not be able to vote at the AGM, as they have not been able to meet the attendance requirement set out in the Constitution: (7)

Ward members: (11)



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 26 November 2015

Attended: Bob Atwood, Sally Balcon, David Barnett, Adrian Berendt, Lorna Blackmore, Mark Booker, Stephen Bowser, David Bushell, Cllr Mrs Barbara Cobbold, Adrian Cory, John Cunningham, Jane Fenwick, Allan Gooda, Michaela van Halewyn, Tim Harper, Dorothea Holman, Michael Holman, Bill Kern, Kyrios Kyriacou, Brian Lippard, Katharina Mahler-Bech, Paul Mason (sub), Marguerita Morton, Cllr Tracy Moore, Chris Morris, Altan Omer, Cllr Catherine Rankin, Cllr James Scholes, Cllr Don Sloan, Anne Stobo, Alastair Tod (Chairman), David Wakefield (sub), Mary Wardrop, Denise Watts, Dr Philip Whitbourn (sub), Pat Wilson and Cllr Chris Woodward

TWBC officers present: Adam Chalmers (Head of Partnerships and Engagement), Jane Clarke (Head of Policy and Governance) and Mike McGeary (Democratic Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were reported from: Caroline Auckland (sub), Cllr Bob Backhouse, Cllr Ronen Basu, Cllr Peter Bulman, Michael Doyle, Shauna Dupuy, Alex Green, Cllr Lawrence Heasman, Ann Hughes-Wilson (sub), Sue Kaner, Claire Luxford, Cllr David Neve, Angela Phillips (sub), Nick Pope, Cllr David Scott and Cllr Lynne Weatherly.

2. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS ENTITLED TO VOTE

The Democratic Services Officer had circulated a list of organisations which had achieved the required level of attendance at meetings to be able to vote at the AGM, as determined by the Town Forum's Constitution.

3. MINUTES OF THE 2014 AGM

The minutes of the 2014 AGM, held on 27 November 2014, were submitted. It was noted that these had been presented to the January 2015 meeting, where they had been noted.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the AGM, held on 27 November 2014, be approved.

4. REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN ON THE TOWN FORUM'S ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST YEAR

The Chairman of the Town Forum for 2014/15, Alastair Tod, summarised his report on the work of the Forum over the past year, which was a requirement of its Constitution.

Dr Tod began by thanking the Chairmen and members of each of the six working groups for the excellent work they had completed during the past 12 months,

including the production of well-argued responses to the Borough Council's consultation strategies and policies. He urged other members of the Forum to volunteer their time and efforts to join a working group, to maintain this high standard of work.

The Chairman also referred to the Town Forum's Constitution. He emphasised the importance of representation by many of the town's residents' associations and also of interest groups. Dr Tod felt that this combination could, on occasions, produce a conflict of interests, as could be the case through town ward councillors also being full voting members of the Town Forum. Dr Tod believed that this possible conflict was untidy and might at some future point make it difficult for the Town Forum to establish a particular position, should it need to, on significant matters.

Dr Tod also wished to place on record his thanks to the Borough Council for their continued hospitality and support for the Town Forum, as well as all the members of the Forum for their constant engagement and interest.

RESOLVED – That the Chairman's report on the work of the Town Forum for 2014/15 be accepted.

5. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR 2015/16

Jane Clarke summarised a report, which set out the election process for the appointment of a Chairman and two Deputy Chairmen of the Town Forum.

Ms Clarke explained that there had been one nomination for the position of Chairman and only one for the two Deputy Chairmen positions, as follows: Chairman – Alastair Tod; Deputy Chairman – Alex Green. These nominations were endorsed unanimously.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That Alastair Tod be formally declared re-elected to serve as Chairman for 2015/16, until the date of the 2016 AGM;
- (2) That Alex Green be formally declared re-elected to serve as one of the Deputy Chairmen for 2015/16, until the date of the 2016 AGM;

The meeting concluded at 6.55pm.

Constitution of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

Name

Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

Town Forum's office

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS

1. Purpose of the Town Forum

1.1 To enable residents of the unparished area of the Borough of Tunbridge Wells (“the ~~T~~own”) to play an active role in localism and shaping the future of the ~~T~~own, ensuring that their views on ~~T~~own matters are ~~forcefully- effectively~~ conveyed to ~~Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) and to Borough Councillors for the unparished areas public~~ and other relevant bodies, elected representatives and, where appropriate, local residents.

1.2 Forum members will normally endeavour to achieve this by:

- ~~assessing issues within, or affecting, the unparished area of the Borough of Tunbridge Wells town, and working with other agencies, as if appropriate, to initiateing and developing both strategic and operational proposals, and making recommendations for consideration by, and response from, to~~ TWBC, Kent County Council, ~~or~~and any other relevant bodies;
- seeking responses to these proposals and recommendations;
- reviewing and responding to consultative documents and proposals from TWBC, or from any other body, that will or may affect the ~~unparished areatown~~;
- encouraging ~~the establishment of new~~ residents’ associations and other representative bodies to join the Forum, and promoting the establishment of new residents’ associations in the ~~unparished areatown~~;
- encouraging ~~member organisations~~residents to contribute their own views to the Forum and to participate in additionally outside the Forum process to relevant consultations ~~processes; and by where necessary outside the Forum~~;
- and by working for the benefit of the residents of the unparished area in any way that ~~it~~they sees fit.

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~~Support from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council~~

~~Where necessary, the Town Forum's proposals and recommendations will be submitted by the Chairman to representative(s) of TWBC, KCC or any other body on behalf of the Forum. In such cases Councillor Members will be responsible for ensuring that the Town Forum is kept informed both of progress and of opportunities to attend Council and/or other relevant meetings.~~

2. Membership of the Town Forum

2.1 Core membership of the Forum ~~will~~ shall comprise:

- ~~Borough~~ councillors representing ~~constituents in the unparished area of the Borough of Tunbridge Wellswards in the town, subject to the voting limitation in 3.1.3 below;~~
- Residents' ~~A~~associations in the ~~unparished area of the Borough of Tunbridge Wells town;~~
- other voluntary or not for profit organisations representing residents' interests which are open to residents of the ~~unparished areatown but~~ subject to the following conditions:

i) Any voluntary or not for profit organisation that ~~is able to~~ demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Chair ~~either~~ that the majority of its membership comprises residents of the ~~unparished areatown~~ or that one of its main purposes is to work in the interests of residents of the ~~T~~town may apply to become a member of the Forum;

ii) Alternatively, the Town Forum may, by majority vote, allow organisations which cannot satisfy these criteria to become members of the Town Forum under whatever conditions may be considered by the Forum to be desirable;

~~2.1.1 Residents' associations or other e~~Organisations wishing to be considered for membership should apply in the first place to the Town Forum Chair or Secretary. Applications ~~must~~should include a statement giving reasons for wishing to join and a ~~statement of setting out~~ the aims and objectives of the organisation; ~~together with an indication of the size and residence status of their membership.~~

~~2.1.2 Organisations wishing to join shall submit such evidence of their constitution and membership as may be required.~~

2.2 Representatives of Town Forum member organisations

~~2.2.1~~ Member organisations must nominate ~~ONE~~a named representative who is entitled to attend the Town Forum and speak ~~and vote~~ on their behalf. A second named representative who is authorised to deputise in all matters for the first named representative may ~~also~~ be nominated.

~~2.2.2~~ The Town Forum may co-opt individuals with ~~particularrelevant~~ knowledge, skills, expertise ~~and/or~~ interest ~~orand~~ may invite individuals and/or organisations to attend particular meetings where appropriate to the agenda. In addition, officers of TWBC and other bodies may be asked to present material ~~in person~~, give guidance or ~~to~~ respond to enquiries from the Town Forum. Neither co-optees nor invitees shall have voting rights.

~~2.2.3~~ The Town Forum shall be open, transparent, apolitical and accountable; it shall ensure that all interests have a voice where ~~necessaryappropriate~~, and that hard to reach groups are appropriately represented and engaged.

2.3 Others in attendance

~~On occasions e~~Other residents of the ~~unparished area of the Borough of Tunbridge Wellstown may wishare welcome~~ to attend ~~Forum meetings, and they are welcome to do so~~ but must ~~first~~ register their presence with the Town Forum Secretary. They have no right to vote but may, at the discretion of the Chair, speak and ask ~~a specific~~ questions.

3. Voting entitlement

3.1 Member Organisations

3.1.1 At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or and Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) each attending member organisation and Borough Councillor shall be entitled to a single vote.

3.1.2 In order to secure entitlement to a vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or any EGM for executive positions or on membership proposals which have been brought to the Forum at a General or Extraordinary General Meeting it is an absolute requirement that one or other the named representative of the a member organisation or their substitute should shall have attended a total of at least 50 percent of possible meetings that could have been attended in the previous twelve 12 months. This percentage shall be pro rata for organisations joining part-way through the year. The minutes of the Forum's meetings will shall be taken as conclusive evidence of this attendance.

3.1.3 At ordinary meetings of the Forum, attending member organisations only shall be entitled to vote, on the basis of a single vote per organisation.

3.1.4 Councillor members shall be eligible to vote at the AGM and any EGM if they have attended at least 50 percent of possible meetings that could have been attended in the previous twelve months. This percentage shall be pro-rata for councillors elected and joining part-way through the year. The minutes of the Forum's meetings shall be taken as conclusive evidence of this attendance.

Councillor members

Councillor members are each entitled to a single vote at both General and Extraordinary General Meetings but to be eligible to vote at the AGM they must have attended at least 50 percent of possible meetings that could have been attended in the previous twelve months. This percentage shall be pro-rata for Councillors elected and joining partway through the year (through a by-election for example). The minutes of the Forum's meetings will be taken as conclusive evidence of this attendance.

4. Role and reporting responsibilities of Town Forum Members

4.1 Representatives of Town Forum member associations are expected to:

- represent the views of their ward/association or membership organisation and to report back to them any developments and initiatives of the Town Forum; and
- identify ways in which their members can contribute to the work of the Town Forum.

4.2 In order to ensure compliance with the above reporting responsibilities, representatives of Forum members shall, when required:

- provide a statement of confirm the aims and standing of their member organisations and re-confirm annually;
- demonstrate communication between themselves and the members of their organisations – this may be whether by copies of newsletters, or of meeting minutes, or any other mechanism appropriate to each member organisation evidence; and
- submit to the Town Forum Secretary evidence of the appointment a copy of the Annual General Meeting minutes, or similar, at which of the named Forum

representative(s) ~~was/were authorised~~ to attend the Forum ~~on behalf of the membership organisation~~.

4.3 A list of member organisations, representatives and officers of the Town Forum and its ~~sub-working~~ groups is available from the Secretary and is published on the Town Forum's website, www.townforum.org.uk.

5. Management of the Town Forum

5.1 The Town Forum shall be administered by a Management ~~Committee~~Group. This shall be made up of:

5.1.1 ~~Three~~ Officers elected at the AGM:

- the Chair, who must be a named representative of a member organisation; and
- ~~one or~~ two Deputy Chairs, at least one of whom must be ~~at the~~ named representative ~~from of~~ a member organisation.

5.1.2 The ~~chairs~~leaders of the working groups.

~~3.5.2~~— In addition, the Management ~~Committee~~Group may co-opt onto the ~~Committee~~Group ~~(for up to one year in the first instance and~~ in an advisory and non-voting capacity) up to three other ~~members of the Town Forum~~individuals whom it considers will help to fulfil the aims of, or have some ~~valuable~~ expertise to contribute to, the Town Forum.

5.3 The Management ~~Committee~~Group shall meet before each plenary meeting of the Town Forum and at least three members, including the Chair and one Deputy, must be present in order that a Management ~~Committee~~Group meeting may take place.

5.4 The Chair and both Deputy Chairs shall be elected annually and ~~will only be eligible to~~shall serve a maximum of two ~~consecutive~~ terms in any one office unless a majority of eligible voting Forum members agrees to ~~allow~~ a further term of office. It is not intended that a Deputy Chair ~~will~~shall automatically become Chair.

5.5 Voting at Management ~~Committee~~Group meetings shall be by a show of hands, and if there is a tied vote then the Chair shall have a second vote.

5.6 The Management ~~Committee~~Group shall have the power, by majority vote, to recommend the removal of any member of the ~~Committee~~Group for good and proper reason. The reasons for the removal shall be given to Town Forum members at the next available Town Forum meeting.

~~5a6~~ Working Groups

6.1 Working groups will take ownership of specific issues and projects as ~~decided~~ agreed ~~by with~~ the Town Forum ~~eChairman~~ and ~~mManagement~~ ~~committee~~Group. These ~~Wworking~~ Ggroups ~~will~~shall reflect the strategic direction of the Town Forum at ~~that any~~ time, and ~~will~~may change in ~~scope and~~ membership over time.

6.2 Working Ggroups ~~will~~shall comprise a ~~chairman~~leader and at least four others ~~comprising~~ Town Forum ~~Mmembers~~ and ~~non-parished area Councillors~~. ~~An ideal Working Group size will be five~~. Other persons from ~~Town Forum membership organisations and the~~ wider population ~~in Tunbridge Wells, of the town~~ may be co-opted to contribute expertise as decided by the ~~chairman~~leader of ~~thea~~ ~~Wworking~~ Ggroup.

The Town Forum ~~eChairman~~ and ~~vice-chairmen~~ Deputy Chairs may ~~also sit on~~ attend working groups to monitor progress and facilitate co-ordination.

6.3 The ~~W~~working ~~G~~group ~~chairman~~ leader ~~will~~ shall be responsible for ensuring progress on the issues at hand, shall liaise with the Town Forum ~~e~~Chairman, and ~~will~~ report to the Town Forum for each plenary meeting.

6.4 Working groups ~~will~~ may undertake research, write reports and draft consultation responses and speak to relevant officials and interested parties ~~on specific areas of interest~~. They ~~will~~ shall keep the Town Forum membership informed ~~(primarily by email)~~ of progress and seek their input into their work.

6.5 The output of working groups ~~will~~ shall be that of the Town Forum and therefore the Town Forum ~~e~~Chairman and ~~m~~Management ~~committee~~ Group ~~will~~ shall have final approval before submission or publication of working group documents.

67. Duties of the Officers

7.1 The Chair ~~man~~ supported by up to two ~~vice~~ Deputy eChair ~~men~~ s ~~will~~ shall:

1. Establish priorities for the Town Forum and set clear outcomes;
2. Support, encourage and co-ordinate the work of the ~~W~~working ~~G~~groups to ensure the development of constructive proposals from the Town Forum;
3. ~~Seek to widen~~ Secure representation from all areas of the ~~t~~own not already represented or engaged in the Town Forum;
4. Promote the collective voice of the Town Forum to the wider public in Tunbridge Wells ~~through print media, the Town Forum website and social media~~;
5. Regularly liaise with TWBC staff, TWBC Leader and ~~C~~councillors on matters of interest to the Town Forum ~~and seek from them and provide to them more information relevant to the un-parished area; encourage greater engagement with Councillors of the un-parished areas~~;
- 5-6. Encourage greater engagement with councillors representing the town;
- 6-7. Encourage Town Forum members to work together on common issues, and promote ~~greater~~ accountability of Town Forum representatives ~~with~~ to their member organisations.
- 7-8. Chair ~~Plenary~~ meetings of the Town Forum.

7.2 In addition, ~~where~~ should one ~~is not~~ be provided for this purpose by TWBC, the Chair of the Forum ~~will~~ shall appoint a Secretary who ~~will~~ shall not be a part of the Management ~~Committee~~ Group. The duties of the Secretary shall be to:

- keep a list of member organisations, their two nominated representatives and their attendance record;
- prepare, in consultation with the Management ~~Committee~~ Group, the agenda for meetings of the ~~(Management) Committee~~ Group and the Forum;
- take and keep minutes of all such meetings;
- collect and circulate relevant information within the Forum;
- provide relevant information for uploading to the Town Forum website; ~~and~~
- and facilitate communication with relevant TWBC officers.

78. Meetings of the Town Forum

5

Proposed A amended: 273 November 20146

8.1 Annual General Meeting

8.1.1 The Forum shall hold an ~~Annual General Meeting (AGM)~~, normally in ~~October~~the autumn.

8.1.2 All member organisations shall be given at least three weeks' notice of the AGM and shall be entitled to attend and vote in accordance with the section in the Constitution above entitled **Voting entitlement**. Notice of AGM and EGM will include notice of motions and will be provided either in writing or electronically, ~~according to the preferred means of the individual representative~~.

8.1.3 The business of the AGM shall include:

- receiving a report from the Chair on the Town Forum's activities over the year;
- electing a ~~Management Committee Chair~~; and up to two Deputy Chairs;
- and considering any other matters ~~including normal agenda items~~ as may be required.

8.1.4 At least one third of nominated representatives who satisfy the voting entitlement requirements must be present for the ~~Annual General Meeting~~, or any other General or Extraordinary General Meeting, to take place.

8.2 Election process

8.2.1 Election of officers of the Town Forum at the AGM shall be by a show of hands or by secret ballot if so requested by one third of those present and entitled to vote; the elections shall be chaired by a member of the Management ~~Committee Group~~ who is not standing for an executive position. If no such person is available, then by majority vote of eligible voting representatives an Election Chair ~~will~~shall be agreed from among Town Forum members. In the event of a tied vote in the election of officers, the Election Chair shall have the casting vote.

8.2.2 Nominations for the Chair and Deputy Chair positions ~~must~~shall be submitted to the Secretary at least two weeks before the AGM and must be accompanied by a short statement setting out what they want to achieve during their period of office. The statement ~~will~~shall be circulated to Forum members prior to the AGM along with the agenda.

8.2.3 Candidates for the officer posts ~~will~~shall be announced at the AGM and shall be formally proposed and seconded at the AGM by representatives entitled to vote in the election. Each candidate will be asked to present a short overview of their objectives for their putative term of office.

8.3 General Meetings

~~There shall be not more than six plenary mMeetings of the Forum, including the AGM, each year; shall normally be held at two-monthly intervals; all members shall be entitled to attend and vote in accordance with the sSection 3 above in the Constitution above entitled Voting entitlement.~~

8.4 Extraordinary General Meeting

An ~~Extraordinary General Meeting~~ may be called by the Management ~~Committee Group~~ or by a minimum of ~~fifteen~~15 Forum members ~~s organisations~~ to discuss an urgent

matter. The Secretary shall give all members ~~s organisations fourteen~~ 14 days' notice of any ~~Extraordinary General Meeting~~ together with notice of the business to be discussed. All members shall be entitled to attend and vote in accordance with ~~the sSection 3 above in the Constitution above entitled Voting entitlement.~~

89. Servicing of the Town Forum

TWBC shall provide administrative support and make facilities available to the Town Forum for meetings.

910. Publicity

Dates, agendas and minutes of meetings and reports of working groups shall be posted on the Town Forum website.

101. Timing and Location of Town Forum Meetings

The Town Forum ~~will~~shall endeavour to ensure that meetings are held at a convenient time and in a place easily accessible for its members.

112. Changes to the Constitution

Changes to this Constitution can only be made at an AGM or EGM and must be agreed by at least two-thirds of those eligible representatives present.

123. Dissolution

The Forum may be wound up at any time if agreed by two-thirds of those eligible representatives present and voting at any AGM or EGM.

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Constitution of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

Name

Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

Town Forum's office

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS

1. Purpose of the Town Forum

1.1 To enable residents of the unparished area of the Borough of Tunbridge Wells (“the town”) to play an active role in localism and shaping the future of the town, ensuring that their views on town matters are effectively conveyed to public and other relevant bodies, elected representatives and, where appropriate, local residents.

1.2 Forum members will normally endeavour to achieve this by:

- assessing issues within, or affecting, the town, and with other agencies, if appropriate, initiating and developing strategic and operational proposals, and making recommendations to TWBC, Kent County Council, and any other relevant bodies;
- seeking responses to these proposals and recommendations;
- reviewing and responding to consultative documents and proposals from TWBC, or from any other body, that will or may affect the town;
- encouraging residents’ associations and other representative bodies to join the Forum, and promoting the establishment of new residents’ associations in the town;
- encouraging residents to contribute their own views to the Forum and to participate in relevant consultations where necessary outside the Forum;
- and by working for the benefit of the residents of the unparished area in any way that they see fit.

2. Membership of the Town Forum

2.1 Core membership of the Forum shall comprise:

- Borough councillors representing wards in the town, subject to the voting limitation in 3.1.3 below;
- Residents' associations in the town;
- other voluntary or not for profit organisations representing residents' interests which are open to residents of the town subject to the following conditions:

i) Any voluntary or not for profit organisation that demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Chair that the majority of its membership comprises residents of the town or that one of its main purposes is to work in the interests of residents of the town may apply to become a member of the Forum;

ii) Alternatively, the Town Forum may, by majority vote, allow organisations which cannot satisfy these criteria to become members of the Town Forum under whatever conditions may be considered by the Forum to be desirable;

2.1.1 Organisations wishing to be considered for membership should apply in the first place to the Town Forum Chair or Secretary. Applications should include a statement giving reasons for wishing to join and setting out the aims and objectives of the organisation;

2.1.2 Organisations wishing to join shall submit such evidence of their constitution and membership as may be required.

2.2 Representatives of Town Forum member organisations

2.2.1 Member organisations must nominate a named representative who is entitled to attend the Town Forum and speak and vote on their behalf. A second named representative who is authorised to deputise in all matters for the first named representative may also be nominated.

2.2.2 The Town Forum may co-opt individuals with relevant knowledge, skills, expertise or interest and may invite individuals and/or organisations to attend particular meetings where appropriate to the agenda. In addition, officers of TWBC and other bodies may be asked to present material in person, give guidance or respond to enquiries from the Town Forum. Neither co-optees nor invitees shall have voting rights.

2.2.3 The Town Forum shall be open, transparent, apolitical and accountable; it shall ensure that all interests have a voice where appropriate, and that hard to reach groups are appropriately represented and engaged.

2.3 Others in attendance

Other residents of the town are welcome to attend Forum meetings, but must register their presence with the Town Forum Secretary. They have no right to vote but may, at the discretion of the Chair, speak and ask questions.

3. Voting entitlement

3.1 Member Organisations

3.1.1 At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) each attending member organisation and Borough Councillor shall be entitled to a single vote.

3.1.2 In order to vote at the AGM or any EGM the named representative of a member organisation or their substitute shall have attended at least 50 percent of possible meetings that could have been attended in the previous 12 months. This percentage

shall be pro rata for organisations joining part-way through the year. The minutes of the Forum's meetings shall be taken as conclusive evidence of this attendance.

3.1.3 At ordinary meetings of the Forum, attending member organisations only shall be entitled to vote, on the basis of a single vote per organisation.

3.1.4 Councillor members shall be eligible to vote at the AGM and any EGM if they have attended at least 50 percent of possible meetings that could have been attended in the previous twelve months. This percentage shall be pro-rata for councillors elected and joining part-way through the year. The minutes of the Forum's meetings shall be taken as conclusive evidence of this attendance.

4. Role and reporting responsibilities of Town Forum Members

4.1 Representatives of Town Forum member associations are expected to:

- represent the views of their association or membership organisation and to report back to them developments and initiatives of the Town Forum; and
- identify ways in which their members can contribute to the work of the Town Forum.

4.2 In order to ensure compliance with the above responsibilities, representatives of Forum members shall, when required:

- confirm the aims and standing of their member organisation;
- demonstrate communication between themselves and the members of their organisation whether by copies of newsletters, of meeting minutes, or any appropriate evidence; and
- submit to the Town Forum Secretary evidence of the appointment of the named representative(s) to attend the Forum.

4.3 A list of member organisations, representatives and officers of the Town Forum and its working groups is available from the Secretary and is published on the Town Forum's website, www.townforum.org.uk.

5. Management of the Town Forum

5.1 The Town Forum shall be administered by a Management Group. This shall be made up of:

5.1.1. Officers elected at the AGM:

- the Chair, who must be a named representative of a member organisation; and
- one or two Deputy Chairs, at least one of whom must be the named representative of a member organisation.

5.1.2. The leaders of the working groups.

5.2 In addition, the Management Group may co-opt onto the Group in an advisory and non-voting capacity up to three other individuals who it considers will help to fulfil the aims of, or have some expertise to contribute to, the Town Forum.

5.3 The Management Group shall meet before each plenary meeting of the Town Forum and at least three members, including the Chair and one Deputy, must be present in order that a Management Group meeting may take place.

5.4 The Chair and both Deputy Chairs shall be elected annually and shall serve a maximum of two consecutive terms in any one office unless a majority of eligible voting Forum members agrees to a further term of office. It is not intended that a Deputy Chair shall automatically become Chair.

5.5 Voting at Management Group meetings shall be by a show of hands, and if there is a tied vote then the Chair shall have a second vote.

5.6 The Management Group shall have the power, by majority vote, to recommend the removal of any member of the Group for good and proper reason. The reasons for the removal shall be given to Town Forum members at the next available Town Forum meeting.

6 Working Groups

6.1 Working groups will take ownership of specific issues and projects as agreed with the Town Forum Chair and Management Group. The working groups shall reflect the strategic direction of the Town Forum at any time, and may change in membership over time.

6.2 Working groups shall comprise a leader and at least four other Town Forum members. Other persons from the wider population of the town may be co-opted to contribute expertise as decided by the leader of a working group. The Town Forum Chair and Deputy Chairs may attend working groups to monitor progress and facilitate co-ordination.

6.3 The working group leader shall be responsible for ensuring progress on the issues at hand, shall liaise with the Town Forum Chair, and report to the Town Forum for each plenary meeting.

6.4 Working groups may undertake research, write reports and draft consultation responses and speak to relevant officials and interested parties. They shall keep the Town Forum membership informed of progress and seek their input into their work.

6.5 The output of working groups shall be that of the Town Forum and therefore the Town Forum Chair and Management Group shall have final approval before submission or publication of working group documents.

7. Duties of the Officers

7.1 The Chair supported by up to two Deputy Chairs shall:

1. Establish priorities for the Town Forum and set clear outcomes;
2. Support, encourage and co-ordinate the work of the working groups to ensure the development of constructive proposals from the Town Forum;
3. Seek to widen representation from all areas of the town not already represented or engaged in the Town Forum;

4. Promote the collective voice of the Town Forum to the wider public in Tunbridge Wells;
5. Regularly liaise with TWBC staff, TWBC Leader and councillors on matters of interest to the Town Forum;
6. Encourage greater engagement with councillors representing the town;
7. Encourage Town Forum members to work together on common issues, and promote accountability of Town Forum representatives to their member organisations.
8. Chair meetings of the Town Forum.

7.2 In addition, should one not be provided for this purpose by TWBC, the Chair of the Forum shall appoint a Secretary who shall not be a part of the Management Group. The duties of the Secretary shall be to:

- keep a list of member organisations, their two nominated representatives and their attendance record;
- prepare, in consultation with the Management Group, the agenda for meetings of the Group and the Forum;
- take and keep minutes of all such meetings;
- collect and circulate relevant information within the Forum;
- provide relevant information for uploading to the Town Forum website;
- and facilitate communication with relevant TWBC officers.

8. Meetings of the Town Forum

8.1 Annual General Meeting

8.1.1 The Forum shall hold an AGM, normally in the autumn.

8.1.2 All member organisations shall be given at least three weeks' notice of the AGM and shall be entitled to attend and vote in accordance with the section in the Constitution above entitled **Voting entitlement**. Notice of AGM and EGM will include notice of motions and will be provided either in writing or electronically.

8.1.3 The business of the AGM shall include:

- receiving a report from the Chair on the Town Forum's activities over the year;
- electing a Chair and up to two Deputy Chairs;
- and considering any other matters as may be required.

8.1.4 At least one third of nominated representatives who satisfy the voting entitlement requirements must be present for the AGM, or any other General or Extraordinary General Meeting, to take place.

8.2 Election process

8.2.1 Election of officers of the Town Forum at the AGM shall be by a show of hands or by secret ballot if so requested by one third of those present and entitled to vote; the elections shall be chaired by a member of the Management Group who is not standing

for an executive position. If no such person is available, then by majority vote of eligible voting representatives an Election Chair shall be agreed from among Town Forum members. In the event of a tied vote in the election of officers, the Election Chair shall have the casting vote.

8.2.2 Nominations for the Chair and Deputy Chair positions shall be submitted to the Secretary at least two weeks before the AGM and must be accompanied by a short statement setting out what they want to achieve during their period of office. The statement shall be circulated to Forum members prior to the AGM along with the agenda.

8.2.3 Candidates for the officer posts shall be announced at the AGM and shall be formally proposed and seconded at the AGM by representatives entitled to vote in the election. Each candidate will be asked to present a short overview of their objectives for their putative term of office.

8.3 General Meetings

Meetings of the Forum, including the AGM, shall normally be held at two-monthly intervals; all members shall be entitled to attend and vote in accordance with Section 3 above.

8.4 Extraordinary General Meeting

An EGM may be called by the Management Group or by a minimum of 15 Forum members to discuss an urgent matter. The Secretary shall give all members 14 days' notice of any EGM together with notice of the business to be discussed. All members shall be entitled to attend and vote in accordance with Section 3 above.

9. Servicing of the Town Forum

TWBC shall provide administrative support and make facilities available to the Town Forum for meetings.

10. Publicity

Dates, agendas and minutes of meetings and reports of working groups shall be posted on the Town Forum website.

11. Timing and Location of Town Forum Meetings

The Town Forum shall endeavour to ensure that meetings are held at a convenient time and in a place easily accessible for its members.

12. Changes to the Constitution

Changes to this Constitution can only be made at an AGM or EGM and must be agreed by at least two-thirds of those eligible representatives present.

13. Dissolution

The Forum may be wound up at any time if agreed by two-thirds of those eligible representatives present and voting at any AGM or EGM.

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Chairman's Annual Report 2016

The Town Forum's year has been dominated by two major issues.

The first was the Council's Site Allocations proposals, a major step towards replacing the 2006 Local Plan. We gave evidence at the Public Hearings, broadly supporting the proposals but regretting the lack of specific policies for the Areas of Change, and the downgrading at a late stage of an Area of Change (the Union House area abutting the Pantiles), removing the obligation to master-plan the Area. The massive Union House development has still not passed planning but proposals for two adjacent sites are now coming forward.

The process of generating a new Local Plan was overtaken by a new assessment of housing `need` directed by central Government. This more than doubled the number of houses to be built in the borough, and national policy required the Council to show at any time a supply of land for about 3500 houses. This could only be done through the Local Plan-making process, so before completing work on the previous cycle the Council had to embark on new Local Plan studies. We felt that this left the Council meanwhile powerless to decide any case where housing numbers were an issue. Members of the Forum had useful briefings from the planners on this and related issues.

The second matter which commanded much of our time was the Council's proposal for a new civic complex in Mount Pleasant to replace the 1930s Town Hall and Assembly Hall, together with transformation of the existing Library, Museum, Art Gallery and Adult Education Centre into a cultural `Hub`. Significant steps were taken with both during the year, and we appreciated the efforts made to keep us and other stakeholders informed about them. We applaud the objective of creating a `Hub` and hope that some of the skills present in Forum members can be brought to bear on the shaping of a major community asset.

On the rest of the civic project we broadly welcomed the principle of transforming the public face of the Council and creating a purpose-built theatre, although some members questioned whether the possibilities for adapting the present buildings at reasonable cost have been fully explored. As chairman I reported on this project and suggested three conditions for the Forum's support of the initiative: that the design and environmental impact of the new buildings should be worthy of such a major step; that the funding should be assured and affordable; and that the present listed civic buildings should be substantially preserved in an appropriate use.

The Forum approved this report, noting that assurance on these points would be needed before final commitment is made. We believe the case for replacing the present Town Hall depends on the new civic centre being more than a more efficient replacement for the existing offices and Council suite, and it should provide the full range of Gateway services and facilities for public events and local organisations. We await hearing about this as the specification is developed. In this and in other cases we need more feedback from the

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Council that the Forum's findings and proposals, often the fruit of much careful study, have been taken on board.

As I reported last year the Management Group recognises the potential for a Town Council, with a statutory role and wider representation. Proposed changes at the Borough level, including partnerships and the transfer of responsibilities from KCC, make this step seem inevitable in due course while demanding to achieve, and we have decided not to pursue this at present. But we have reviewed our constitution to reflect the way the Forum now works, and to remove some anomalies, of which the principal one was that it was drafted to give councillors for town wards a vote in the Forum. We don't often vote and we value the role of councillor members in our discussions, but felt for them to have a vote in what is essentially a dialogue between the town and the Council was inconsistent.

The work of the Forum is largely conducted by the six Working Groups: Culture, Finance, Leisure and Tourism, Planning, Transport, and Water in the Wells. I am grateful for the efforts of the leaders of the Groups, as well as to their members; it is a tribute to the vitality of the Forum that altogether more than forty members take part in the Groups. During the year these have led the Forum's response on issues including Parking and Active Travel, on the development of the Urban Design Framework and Fiveways, and taken the initiative on encroachment on pavements, and the replacement of the station murals. We have also heard and responded to presentations on aircraft noise, Twenty's Plenty, and the Calverley Grounds Adventure Play area.

The Forum is supported and serviced by the Borough Council and I pay personal tribute to the conscientiousness and patience of the staff involved. We are also fortunate to have developed excellent relations with a number of town ward members, and the Leader of the Council, whose updates on current issues are a feature of our meetings. With the idea of strengthening this relationship further and developing the Forum's informal influence we are shortly repeating the experiment of a round-table meeting between the Management Group and selected councillors.

Last year I promised to upgrade the website and improve our public relations. This work is proceeding and we have now added a Twitter and Facebook presence.

Finally, at the end of my term of office I extend my thanks to all members of the Forum and the Borough Council staff who have supported it and me personally, and my good wishes to my successor.

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

23 November 2016

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMEN

Introduction

- (1) The Town Forum is administered by a Management Committee of ‘three officers’ elected at the AGM, together with the chairs of the working groups. The ‘three officers’ are the Chairman and two Deputy Chairmen.
- (2) This report sets out the current situation regarding nominations for the election of the Chairman and the two Deputy Chairmen at the Annual General Meeting.

Management Committee

- (3) The Town Forum’s Constitution specifies the following regarding the annual election of its Management Committee (section 5):

Three officers elected at the AGM:

- the Chair, who must be a named representative of a member organisation; and
- two Deputy Chairs, at least one of whom must be a named representative from a member organisation.

Nominations submitted

- (4) At the specified deadline for the submission of nominations (i.e. 9 November), the following nominations had been submitted:

Chairman – Adrian Berendt (Tunbridge Wells Bicycle User Group) – if successful, this election as Chairman would be for a first term of office.

Deputy Chairmen – (a) Alex Green (Trinity Theatre) – this re-election, if successful, would be for a third term of office. The Town Forum’s Constitution says that: “The Chair and both Deputy Chairs shall be elected annually and will only be eligible to serve a maximum of two terms in any one office unless a majority of eligible voting Forum members agree to allow a further term of office.” Thus a third term of office is permissible, subject to the agreement of the majority of persons voting at the AGM.

NB – only one nomination received.

- (5) As required by the Constitution, each nominee has provided a supporting statement, setting out what they hope to achieve during their period of office. These are attached.

Voting eligibility

- (6) The Constitution states that at least one third of nominated representatives who satisfy the voting entitlement requirements must be present for the AGM to take place and for the officers therefore to be elected.
- (7) 34 out of the 41 active organisations within the Town Forum have met the necessary attendance requirements (i.e. have attended at least 50% of Town Forum meetings across the year) and their representatives will be entitled to vote.

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- (8) Eight TWBC ward members have also achieved the minimum meeting attendance requirement.

RECOMMENDED -

- (1) That Adrian Berendt be elected to serve as Chairman of the Town Forum for 2016/17, until the date of the AGM in November 2017;
- (2) That Alex Green be re-elected to serve as one of the two Deputy Chairmen for 2016/17, until the date of the AGM in November 2017.

Jane Clarke
Head of Policy and Governance
E-mail:
jane.clarke@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

Phone: 01892 554407

Mike McGeary
Democratic Services Officer
E-mail:
mike.mcgeary@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

Phone: 01892 554105

Appended: each candidate's supporting statement

Nomination for Chairman:

Adrian Berendt

I am pleased to put myself forward as candidate for the position of Chair of the Town Forum for 2016/17.

I am a long-term resident of the town, having lived in Queen's Road since 1993. My children have all grown up in Tunbridge Wells and have either been, or still are, at St. Gregory's School. As I now work part-time, as Finance Director of a training and learning provider in South East London, I am able to devote time and energy to developing the work and role of the Town Forum.

If elected, I would like to build on the excellent work of the past chairs. Members of the Town Forum will already be aware of my interests in transport and road safety, in particular how we can get more people walking and cycling for their daily journeys – Active Travel in the current parlance – and I am the campaign coordinator for 20's Plenty for Tunbridge Wells. During my year in office, I would like the Town Forum:

- To work closely with the Borough as it formulates its Local Plan to develop a clear(er) and coherent vision for the future of the whole town. Whilst such work will not be completed in a year, the increasing housing and transport pressures on Royal Tunbridge Wells make it imperative that we make an immediate start.
- To widen its membership to obtain representation from those areas of the town and sections of the community that are currently under-represented.
- To have closer and deeper engagement with the borough and county councillors representing the town wards.
- To use the success of a 20 mph zone in St. John's by pressing for a roll-out of "20's Plenty" across all residential streets in the town.

I continue to represent the Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group, formed to make Tunbridge Wells a bicycle friendly town.

Nomination for one of the two Deputy Chairmen posts:

Alex Green

Having now been a Deputy Chair for almost 24 months I would like to put myself forward to be re-nominated as a candidate for Deputy Chairman of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum.

Having grown up and lived as a resident of Tunbridge Wells for the majority of my life I am keen for the town to prosper as a successful town and believe that from my role as a senior manager of a local community venue in the centre of the town, I can work with the Forum to help contribute to the vitality of the town. I am excited at the prospect of continuing to provide my time, knowledge and experience to work with the management group of the Town Forum to assist it in whatever way possible as it continues to link together resident and other local groups in their mission to represent the views of local people.

In addition to my work with the management group I have been a committed member of three of the RTWTF working groups and hope to continue offering valuable input and support. Externally, I believe my position at Trinity has allowed me to build links and networks across the town with a variety of bodies including becoming a director of the new

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Town Centre Business Partnership (Tunbridge Wells Together), a group which I believe would be useful for the Town Forum to be closely linked into.

If I am re-elected as Deputy Chair I would find it a pleasure to continue to help support its efforts to help make Tunbridge Wells prosper and become the best town it can be.



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

Thursday 22 September 2016

Attended: Sally Balcon, David Barnett, Adrian Berendt, Lorna Blackmore, Mark Booker, Beverley Brown, Cllr Peter Bulman, David Bushell, Cllr Mrs Barbara Cobbold, Deborah Cooper (sub), John Cunningham, Andy England, Jane Fenwick, Alex Green, Tim Harper, Dorothea Holman, Michael Holman, Sue Kaner, Linda Lewis, Cllr Peter Lidstone, Brian Lippard, Helen Mitcham, Chris Morris, Altan Omer, Nick Pope, Cllr Catherine Rankin, Cllr James Scholes, Cllr Don Sloan, Alastair Tod (Chairman), Mary Wardrop, Denise Watts, Philip Whitbourn (sub) and Pat Wilson

TWBC officers present: Stephen Baughen (Development Manager), Jane Clarke (Head of Policy and Governance) and Mike McGeary (Democratic Services Officer)

Also present: Pedro and Mavis Marrero, Cllr Alan McDermott (Deputy Leader and Portfolio-holder for Planning and Transportation), Cllr David Jukes (Leader of the Council), Cllr Jane March (Portfolio-holder for Tourism, Leisure and Economic Development), David Rose and David Scott

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were reported from: Caroline Auckland, Cllr Ronen Basu, Stephen Bowser, Cllr Ben Chapelard, Michael Doyle, Kyrios Kyriacou, Katharina Mahler-Bech, Cllr Tracy Moore, Charles Pope, Tim Tempest, David Wakefield, Cllr Lynne Weatherly and Cllr Chris Woodward

2. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Mike McGeary reported that the Town Forum's Management Committee had approved an application for membership which had been submitted by Tunbridge Wells Together (the business-led town centre management organisation), adding that its representative would be the Town Centre Manager, Rachel Jenman.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman, Alastair Tod, made the following announcements:

(a) Chairmanship of the Culture Working Group – Mr Tod advised that the Management Committee had confirmed Linda Lewis's appointment as Chairman of the Culture Working Group.

(b) Town Forum's Constitution – Mr Tod also advised that the Management Committee would be proposing a number of amendments to the Town Forum's Constitution at the AGM in November. He added that a 'tracked changes' version of the document – highlighting where changes were being proposed – would be circulated in advance of the AGM. He advised that the amendments were being proposed to bring the document in line with the actual practices of the Forum.

(c) Promotion of the Town Forum – Mr Tod said that the Town Forum now had both a Facebook and a Twitter presence. He added that details of how to access these would be circulated to members shortly.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting dated 21 July 2016 were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2016 be approved.

5. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5 TWBC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Mr McGeary advised that the Town Forum's request to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider adding "a study of the importance of taking a co-ordinated approach in project planning, such as has been illustrated in the next phase of the public realm scheme" had been considered by the Committee at its 15 August meeting. (The 'co-ordinated' approach is reference to the need to take a wider look at the implications of such projects in terms of highways, traffic flow etc.)

Mr McGeary said that the topic had been added to the Committee's work programme, alongside other, shortlisted, items which had been presented.

6. UPDATE REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Cllr David Jukes, Leader of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, provided the following update on issues of general interest:

(a) Proposals for a new theatre, offices and car park – Cllr Jukes advised that the investigative work undertaken had shown that there were significant technical difficulties – relating to the topography of the site – in achieving the required scale of the proposed car park under Calverley Grounds. As a result, he said, the architects had been asked to look at alternative solutions that also addressed the access and egress aspects.

Cllr Jukes added that discussions were also continuing with various theatre operators, all of whom to date had said that (i) a 1200-seat theatre was an ideal size and (ii) they would be interested in managing a new theatre on this site, for a 10-year period and on a reducing subsidy basis.

Cllr Jukes said that the withdrawal of prospective tenants for sharing the new office building had meant that the project could develop at a pace which better-suited the Council. He added that there was already a good level of interest being shown in the new office space that would become available, even before formal marketing took place.

Finally, Cllr Jukes said that: (i) modifications to the overall scheme would result in some savings over the original estimated cost; and (ii) meetings were scheduled to take place with all key stakeholder groups later in the year, to discuss the details and invite feedback.

Jane Fenwick asked if it were possible for further details to be given on what the alternative car parking provision might look like. Cllr Jukes said that the likelihood was that this would be limited just to underneath the new offices, with access and egress via Mount Pleasant Avenue. He added that: (i) this would therefore remove

any impact on Grove Hill Road and Grove Hill House in particular; and (ii) there would be replanting of trees to replace those lost as a result of the change in design.

- (b) Fiveways** – Cllr Jukes reiterated his concerns which had existed from the start of this scheme over certain elements of the standard of work. He added that remedial work should have started by this point but this had been delayed because of emergency work carried out to the gas supply network. Because of concerns about the impact of the emergency work on the remedial programme, Cllr Jukes said that Gary Stevenson, TWBC's Head of Environment and Street Scene, had negotiated for the 'remedial contractor' to make good the gas repair reinstatement and to back-charge the gas company.

Cllr Jukes also advised that repair work to the Millennium Clock was in progress.

Brian Lippard asked if it were possible for a press release to be issued, stressing that the cost of the remedial work was being met by KCC and not the Borough Council, in order to clarify any misunderstanding that might still exist. Cllr Jukes advised that the recent article in the Times of Tunbridge Wells had set out the facts clearly but added that he would be happy to discuss the details direct with any of those who had written letters of opposition to the press.

- (c) Cultural and Learning Hub** – Cllr Jukes advised that architects had now been appointed to begin design work on this scheme, in preparation for the Heritage Lottery Fund stage 2 submission next summer.

- (d) St John's Road** – Cllr Jukes said that this Council-managed scheme had now been completed on time and within budget, resulting in a mix of retail units and apartments for rent, together with a properly-surfaced and marked out car park. He said that the standard of the units was of particular note.

Pat Wilson asked for details of the occupational terms of the retail and residential units. Cllr Jukes confirmed that all of the units were for letting, thereby ensuring continuing revenue income for the Council.

- (e) Cinema site** – Cllr Jukes reported that the Council was working closely with the new owners of this site and was looking forward to learning more at the next stakeholder sessions, planned in early October.

At the Chairman's invitation, a number of other topics were raised with the Leader of the Council:

(i) Andy England felt it was important to ensure the exterior of the Town Hall building did not suffer from deterioration, either with its current use or after the new offices had been built. He suggested that some form of after-dark lighting of its public facades would greatly enhance its appearance and assist with civic pride. Cllr Jukes agreed with the suggestion. He also said that he was keen on seeing the union flag flying on more occasions, to boost the sense of civic pride.

Cllr Jukes extended the scope of the point by saying that, as part of the Cultural and Learning Hub, he wanted to see the impressive low-relief sculpture above the entrance to the Library and Museum fully restored.

(ii) Michael Holman advised that the water feature which Berkeley Homes had agreed to incorporate into the (former) hospital site development on Mount Ephraim was almost complete, with the top and the bottom sections in place. He asked whether it would be possible to hold a celebratory event, formally to

welcome completion of the feature. Cllr Jukes said that he was aware of the formal switching on of the feature the following week and undertook to advise Mr Holman on further news.

Cllr Scholes supported the proposal to publicise the opening of the water feature, Mr Holman adding that this could be welcome news from which the whole town might benefit.

(iii) Philip Whitbourn referred to the article in the most recent Local magazine, specifically the timing of the public consultation on a masterplan for the civic complex and whether this related to the existing Town Hall site. Cllr Jukes clarified that the masterplan process related to the existing Town Hall site, adding that the public consultation would begin in November. Cllr Jukes invited Dr Whitbourn to make an appointment to view the documents in his office, where he could explain in more detail.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked the Leader of the Council for his helpful update and for answering so many detailed questions on the topics.

There were no specific actions points arising from this report.

7. PAVEMENTS – ENCROACHMENT, CLUTTER AND ENFORCEMENT IN THE TOWN CENTRE

Stephen Baughen, TWBC's Development Manager, had been invited to advise Town Forum members on the Borough Council's role and duties in respect of alleged encroachment onto the public highway/pavement by traders in the town centre.

Mr Baughen began by pointing out that KCC also had a role to play, as the local highway authority, in issuing licences for the placing of 'A-boards' and 'tables and chairs' licences. He then described the policy followed by TWBC Planning Services, first of all for the area considered to be the curtilage of premises, then outside that area.

Mr Baughen advised that the placing of tables, chairs and other items within the curtilage of business premises e.g. cafes and restaurants – where the use of such items were ancillary to the main activity of the building – did not normally require planning permission.

If the placing of tables and chairs took place beyond the curtilage of the building, Mr Baughen advised that planning permission was normally required, as it represented a 'change of use' of the land. He added that a number of factors were then taken into account in arriving at a decision as to whether planning consent could be granted.

Mr Baughen also explained what the Planning Services' role was in respect of enforcement, where issues of possible encroachment had been drawn to their attention. Under these circumstances, he advised, a site visit would be undertaken and a number of factors taken into account, such as the width of the pavement, the pedestrian flow, whether it was in a conservation area or in front of a listed building.

Mr Baughen said that experience had shown that, where use of the pavement beyond the curtilage of a business was considered to be unacceptable, informal action – through persuasion or the threat of enforcement notices – was the most effective course to follow. He added that formal enforcement notice action was a further option, although this was often a lengthy process, because of the possibility of an appeal being lodged.

Mr Baughen provided the background to two key 'outside seating' situations in the town centre, where detailed discussion with either the individual business (Pizza Express in the High Street) or collectively with the traders (the Pantiles Traders' Association) had led to a satisfactory outcome. In the first example, he advised that this had required a formal planning application process to be followed. He also provided an update on the situation with the CAU restaurant in Mount Pleasant Road, where a planning application to limit their outdoor seating to 2.5m from the building was due to be considered by the Planning Committee the following week.

The Chairman then opened up the issue for debate.

- Brian Lippard raised the issue of the agreement with the Pantiles traders, specifically during a 'non-festival' period and whether tables and chairs were allowed on the covered colonnade section. Mr Baughen advised that if the tables and chairs were within land that was considered to be the curtilage of the premises, then this would be considered ancillary to the business and no planning application would be required.

Mark Booker acknowledged the logic of the response given but queried whether it was acceptable for the public right of way which existed through the colonnaded section of the Pantiles to be blocked in this way.

Tim Harper felt that the role of the Borough Council in encouraging the Pantiles traders to develop a solution was to be commended. He considered the outcome to have been very successful.

- Andy England asked if it would be feasible for the Borough Council to be in control of issuing permits for tables and chairs, adding that he felt that this was an issue which would police itself. He also suggested that aluminium public wcs, as in use in Worcester, be introduced in Tunbridge Wells.

On the first issue, Mr Baughen said that, currently, only KCC could issue permits for 'tables and chairs' licences. He added that, if the situation required planning consent, it was more effective to have a standard approach in place, as was currently the practice, and that, if permission were formally given, that in itself produced effective self-regulation. On the issue of aluminium wcs, Mr Baughen said that this would be a matter for the Head of Environment and Street Scene to consider initially, in consultation with councillors.

- Denise Watts said that the Over Fifties Forum had recently invited its members to say what aspects of the town centre caused them the most irritation. The answer, she said, was the proliferation of obstacles on the pavements, especially 'A-boards'. She said that many elderly people were feeling increasingly unsafe with the street scene, adding that when the issue of 'A-boards' was taken up with KCC, there was an unhelpful response given.

Mr Baughen accepted the point. He advised that, while national guidance said that the presence of 'A-boards' delivered benefits to businesses, it was important to strike the right balance. He added that his service liaised closely with KCC and he undertook to discuss these concerns with them, to see if the county could look again at the worst areas, where 'A-boards' were considered to be causing a particular problem.

- John Cunningham said that he was satisfied with the regulations at they were applied and he welcomed the 'café culture' that now existed. His greatest

concern, he added, was the policing of encroachment onto pavements. He felt that the Borough Council should be more proactive in having staff regularly walking through the town centre and identifying where problems existed and having authority delegated by KCC to take immediate action.

Mr Baughen acknowledged the point. He added that, although the Borough Council did not have sufficient staff resources to undertake such a role on a frequent basis, he would see if the compliance officers within the Planning Service could undertake some routine inspections on an occasional basis. He added that, if specific concerns were drawn to the attention of the Borough Council, they would always be investigated and the premises owners contacted.

- Dorothea Holman asked if it were feasible to publicly display at the specific site the terms under which tables and chairs and 'A-boards' had been authorised, so that the public could quickly determine if the items were being set out in compliance with the licence. Mr Baughen undertook to discuss this suggestion with the compliance officers.

Mr Baughen was thanked for his helpful and informative presentation and for responding to the many points raised. There were no specific action points arising from this item.

8. TUNBRIDGE WELLS RAILWAY STATION – LOSS OF MURALS

Michael Holman reported on the loss of the murals – painted by Brian Barnes – at Tunbridge Wells railway station. He advised that he had written to Southeastern, seeking to learn what had happened to the murals and had also spoken to their customer relations officers. He said that the railway company had advised that the bars which had been holding the murals up were in need of replacement and, during the course of that work, the murals had been damaged beyond repair.

Mr Holman reminded the meeting of the significance of the murals, which announced to visitors that Tunbridge Wells had a long and rich spa town heritage. He sought the Town Forum's support to write formally to Southeastern (London and South Eastern Railway Limited) to: (i) register the Forum's deep concern at the loss of the murals; and (ii) support efforts made by 'Refresh Tunbridge Wells' to work closely with Southeastern to agree how these murals can be replaced with art work having the same impact; he suggested that mosaics might be a suitable format.

Stephen Baughen provided an update on the formal 'development management' position regarding the murals. He advised that the railway company would not have been required to submit any form of planning or listed building consent application for the initial work. He added that he would consider the issue further but it was very unlikely that similar consent would need to be sought for any replacement art work.

RESOLVED – That the Town Forum fully supports 'Refresh Tunbridge Wells' in its proposed response to (i) register the Forum's deep concern over the loss of the murals and (ii) its suggested way forward in working with the railway company to replace these with art work of a similar impact.

9. CAR PARKING – TWBC'S REVIEW OF CHARGES

Adrian Berendt reported on TWBC's intention to carry out formal public consultation on its car park charges. He summarised the main elements of the proposal and invited Town Forum members to comment, either individually to the Borough Council or through the Transport Strategy Working Group by e-mailing him. Mr Berendt added

that, ahead of the start of the formal consultation process, he had been pleased to note that the Borough Council had listened – and responded positively – to the issues raised by the Working Group.

Pat Wilson commended Mr Berendt’s summary report. He drew attention to a separate proposal which the Borough Council was considering, namely to reduce the amount of free on-street parking. He described this parking as an asset, the loss of which would be harmful to the town and its residents and visitors.

Councillor Bulman said that he had welcomed the much-improved second report which had been submitted to the Planning and Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board, which provided the necessary evidence to support the proposals. However, he also said that he was left with some reservations, based upon what he felt was some misleading evidence and, more significantly, the plan to increase residents’ parking permits from £60 per annum to £80. As a result, Councillor Bulman said that he was unable to support the overall proposals, unless some amelioration was offered to those most adversely affected.

Councillor Lidstone said that, while the proposals had some progressive elements, his main concern was also the increased cost of residents’ parking permits.

Andy England said that he was in favour of the introduction of parking meters in the town centre, although this did not form part of TWBC’s proposals.

The Chairman said that the Borough Council was under a legal duty to use income generated from on-street charges/enforcement on transport-related activity, whereas off-street receipts could be used to support general Council expenditure. Councillor Scholes said that the vast majority of all income was invested in operating and maintaining the Borough Council’s car parks.

Jane Fenwick said that Town Forum members would be notified as soon as the Borough Council began its formal public consultation process. Adrian Berendt, in reiterating his call for views to be expressed, recommended that Town Forum members read the report on the proposals which had been approved by the Cabinet on 22 September as the basis of the public consultation.

There were no other action points arising from this report.

10. CULTURAL AND LEARNING HUB

Linda Lewis advised that her Culture Working Group members felt there would be significant advantages to be had from the early engagement of Town Forum and other key stakeholders in the development of the Cultural and Learning Hub, a factor which would also benefit the wider community. She presented her paper which had been circulated with the agenda, setting out what the Working Group felt were the most important components of the Hub and the reasons why.

Dr Philip Whitbourn was invited to summarise his accompanying paper, which provided both an historical and architectural perspective and further justification for the elements felt vital for incorporating into the Hub building.

Dr Whitbourn said that he was supportive of the Hub proposal and the joining of the two listed buildings to form a single complex. He felt that this would provide much-improved facilities and a strong focus for the community and cultural life of the town and act as a major contribution to the promotion of the area as a serious tourist destination.

Mark Booker complimented Mrs Lewis and her Working Group for the clear and concise report circulated. He asked whether it might be appropriate to ask the Town Forum to endorse the paper, as a statement of the Forum's position on the Hub.

Pat Wilson supported this suggestion but was concerned about the Gateway element, which Dr Whitbourn felt should have no place in the Hub and instead be relocated into the Council offices.

Cllr Scholes said that he had originally proposed locating Gateway services within the Hub, in order to save the operational costs of a separate facility. He added that he also saw some operational benefits in terms of attracting visitors to the cultural centre.

Dorothea Holman accepted that argument but said that she felt that there would be a different skill set required of Hub staff from the demands that Gateway officers faced.

Dr Whitbourn acknowledged the point raised by Cllr Scholes. He said that there was wide support for the Hub scheme and he was keen that there should be a strong business case for it. In view of what had been discussed, he suggested some form of caveat be agreed at this juncture, to the effect that the Town Forum would prefer the Gateway functions to be provided from the Town Hall but that, if this affected the viability of the Hub scheme, then the Forum might wish to review its position, based upon further details.

Alex Green said that the inclusion of Gateway services might be a condition of some element of the external funding for the scheme, adding that this needed to be checked.

Mrs Lewis thanked all of the contributors. She added that she had been aware that, at a slightly earlier stage, a proposal had been considered by the Borough Council of a trust being set up to operate the Hub, after an initial start-up period. She wondered what impact this would have on the future of Gateway services being based in the Hub.

The answer to that particular point was not known but Dr Whitbourn said that this illustrated the need for further information, at an early stage. Dr Holman added that this also brought into focus the importance of the Friends of the Museum, Library and Art Gallery in discussions over the future operation of the Hub.

RESOLVED – That, subject to clarification of the significance of the Gateway element and its effect on the viability of the scheme, the Culture Group's formal response be endorsed.

11. WORKING GROUPS

Update reports were made from the working groups as follows:

Tourism and Leisure – Alastair Tod advised that the Working Group was making progress on the production of some heritage trails, with accompanying guidance leaflets, which would be linked to specific building plaques. He added that a proposal on this initiative would be submitted to the Borough Council in due course.

Transport Strategy – Jane Fenwick drew attention to her Working Group's update report, which had been circulated with the agenda.

Mrs Fenwick drew attention to the proposal for a **20mph zone** in the St John's area, the scheme being funded by Cllr Oakford through his KCC grant. She advised that this proposal was currently being consulted upon and she urged members to respond.

Sally Balcon asked how this would be enforced. Adrian Berendt said that there was a strong expectation that self-compliance would take place, adding that speed cushions would be placed along Newlands Road, which was where the worst examples of speeding took place.

Cllr Rankin said that she was very impressed with this proposal, adding that the strong will of the local community would be an important force in support of the scheme's self-enforcement.

Brian Lippard asked if the emergency services had been consulted for their views on this scheme. Mr Berendt advised that this would have been an automatic part of Kent Highways' consultation process.

Cllr Lidstone said that the 20mph zone was a progressive scheme, which he fully supported. He added that it was also significant in efforts to reduce congestion along the St John's Road, which was welcome.

Mark Booker hoped that the scheme would be successful and maybe extended to other parts of the town in due course. On that specific point, Cllr Scholes said that the implementation of 20mph zones was very expensive, so he did not expect a rapid expansion of the number. In support of that view, Mr Berendt advised that the estimated cost of the St John's scheme was approximately £40k.

Alastair Tod felt that the large scale of the scheme was particularly impressive.

On other matters within the remit of the Working Group, Lorna Blackmore added that a survey of **hackney carriage use** was also currently taking place.

Planning and Development Strategy – Mark Booker, Chairman of this Working Group, reported on a number of key planning-related topics, details of which were circulated in his update report. He drew attention to the following parts of his report:

(i) **Landscape character area assessments** – Mr Booker said that TWBC was inviting residents to submit their photos of 'cherished' local landscapes, which would feed into the preparation of the evidence base for the new Local Plan, specifically a revision of the Landscape Character Area Assessments.

(ii) **Site Allocations Development Plan Document** – Mr Booker said that, having had its Site Allocations DPD approved by the Planning Inspector, the Borough Council had now received notification of an application for a judicial review made by a developer whose site had not been included in the document. Mr Booker added that he had learnt that the approved DPD would remain in force until the courts had decided whether the judicial review was valid. He added that the worst-case scenario which the Council faced was having to re-write some elements of the document, which might also have an impact on the current review of the Local Plan.

(iii) **'Call for sites' response** – Mr Booker said that, following the discussion at the previous meeting of the Town Forum, the draft response to TWBC's 'call for sites' consultation process had been strengthened and formally submitted. He reported that the Borough Council was now looking at the option of encouraging land owners of small (i.e. no more than 0.5 of an acre) to come forward with planning applications for development, adding that a comprehensive list of all sites would be available on the website in due course.

Mr Booker also advised that the Borough Council was still awaiting a response to its bid for funding to assist with examining the case for the establishment of a garden village. Linked with that, he said that a press release had been issued by the Town

Forum, calling for a moratorium on development beyond the Site Allocation numbers while TWBC examines whether a garden village can be developed outside the Green Belt and AONB.

Water in the Wells Working Group – Michael Holman, Chairman of this Working Group, provided a verbal update report. He advised that Altan Omer, a member of the Group, had visited both Knight's Wood and Royal Wells Park, to view progress on the two water features.

Mr Holman said that the Group also welcomed (i) progress with the heritage trail in Grosvenor and Hilbert Park and (ii) the reference to water features within Dr Whitbourn's report on the Cultural and Learning Hub. He added that Water in the Wells would also be discussing the issue of water features with the new owners of the cinema site – Altitude – when their next public exhibition took place early the following month.

Finance and Other Issues – There were no specific issues to report on.

Culture – Linda Lewis, Chairman of this Working Group, advised that discussions had been held with John-Jackson Almond, the new Director of the Assembly Hall Theatre, to which members of the Tourism and Leisure Working Group had also been invited. She said that the focus of the meeting had been on Mr Almond's vision and aims for the Assembly Hall Theatre and its replacement.

RESOLVED – That the progress reports be accepted.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) **Calverley Grounds – play area** – Nick Pope reported that the organisers of the proposed play area had now reached 25% of their funding target, with a number of other fund-raising events scheduled. He added that the scheme benefitted from having a leading designer and a 'top recognition piece' as key components.
- (b) **Friends of the Commons** – Sally Balcon advised that the Friends group was closely monitoring the situation of having a rough sleeper living on the Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons.
- (c) **Tunbridge Wells circular walk booklet** – Cllr Rankin advised that there was a need to update the details of the Tunbridge Wells circular walk and she invited interested ramblers and others to come forward with information on where changes had occurred. She added that consideration was being given to re-publishing it as an on-line version, which was felt to be of greater use.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 23 November 2016 at 6.30pm (AGM, followed by 'ordinary' meeting)

The meeting concluded at 8.52pm.

Finance and Governance Cabinet Advisory Board

8 November 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

No

Draft Budget 2017/18

Final Decision-Maker	Cabinet
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr. Paul Barrington-King, Finance and Governance
Lead Director	Lee Colyer, Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Head of Service	Jane Fineman, Head of Finance and Procurement
Lead Officer/Report Author	Lee Colyer, Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendation to the final decision-maker:

1. That Cabinet comments on the draft budget and identifies any areas that they believe need to be strengthened or where there are omissions; and
2. That, subject to the above recommendation, Cabinet agrees the draft budget for public consultation.

This report relates to the following Five Year Plan Key Objectives:

- A Prosperous Borough
- A Green Borough
- A Confident Borough

The Council's budget involves the allocation of financial resources to deliver the Council's Key Objectives.

Timetable	
<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Management Board	26 October 2016 (verbal update)
Discussion with Portfolio Holder	31 October 2016
Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board	8 November 2016
Cabinet	1 December 2016

Draft Budget 2017/18

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

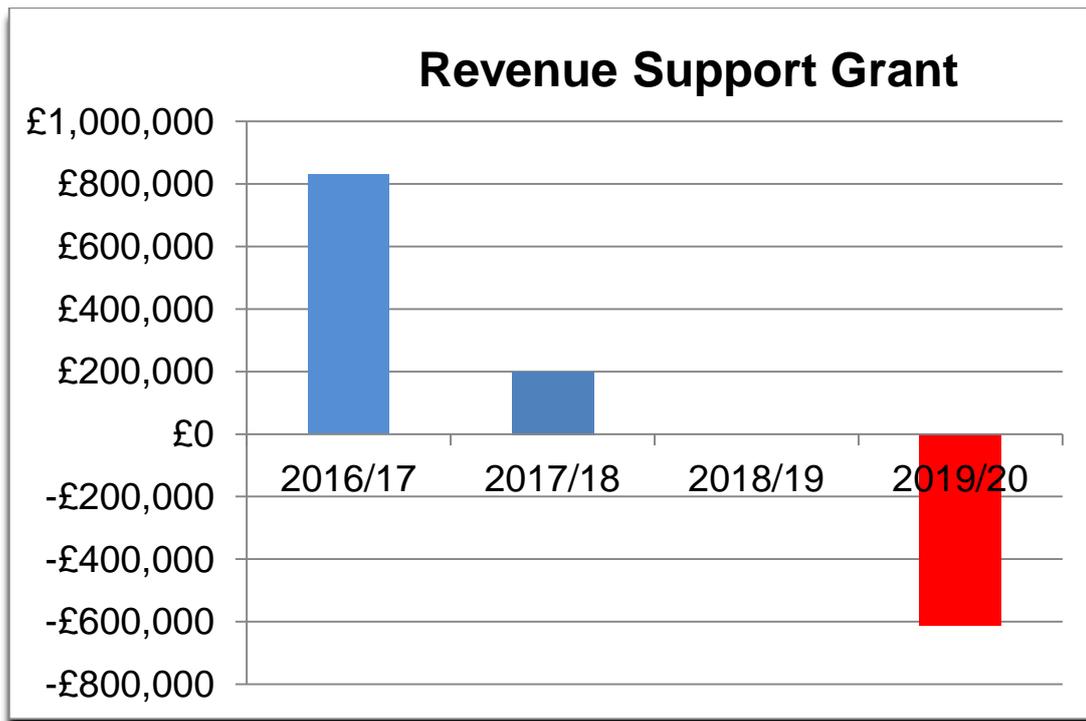
- 1.1 This report outlines the assumptions that have been built into the draft budget for 2017/18.
 - 1.2 The draft budget still has a funding gap of £642,000 which is an improvement of £67,000 on the previously reported projection. However, if left unmanaged this would increase to an annual deficit of £1.2 million by 2021/22, which would need to be funded from new income, further cost reductions or from reserves.
 - 1.3 For 2017/18 Revenue Support Grant for this Council is expected to be cut from £830,000 to £200,000 before disappearing altogether in 2018/19. This will bring the total reduction in central government support for local services to £4.6 million since 2010.
 - 1.4 The draft budget is a projection and following approval it will be published on to the Council's consultation portal.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Cabinet received the first report leading to the setting of the 2017/18 budget at the meeting on 4 August 2016 entitled Budget Projection and Strategy which had also been considered by the Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board. This was followed by a Budget Update report on 27 October 2016.

Four-Year Settlement Offering

- 2.2 On 12 October 2016 Full Council agreed to accept the Government's offer of a four-year funding settlement and submitted the required efficiency plan. There are still a number of uncertainties surrounding the four-year offer but the Revenue Support Grant element published for this Council is shown below.



Autumn Statement

- 2.3 The Government will issue the Autumn Statement on 23 November 2016. A verbal update will be provided on any issues which will impact on the Council's budget following this announcement.

Government consultations

- 2.4 The Government has issued a large number of consultations which have the potential substantially to impact on the budget for 2017/18 and the Council's financial standing over the medium-term. The major ones are summarised below:

- LG Finance Settlement 2017/18 technical consultation issued 15 September 2016;
- Self-sufficient Local Government: 100% Business Rates Retention issued 5 July 2016;
- Business Rates Reform Fair Funding Review: Call for evidence on Needs and Redistribution issued 5 July 2016; and
- New Homes Bonus 'sharpening the incentive' issued 17 December 2015 closed 10 March 2016 - the results of this consultation are still awaited.

New Homes Bonus Strategy

- 2.5 Following the decision in 2016/17 to use the New Homes Bonus (NHB) to resource the Development Programme the Council is using all £1.8 million NHB in the base budget. The NHB scheme is likely to change with fewer years of new housebuilding being taken into account. In the short term this may not actually result in less NHB if housebuilding continues at a higher rate than during the past six years. Regardless of the amount of NHB awarded it is

proposed to set an upper limit of £1.8 million being used within the base revenue budget. NHB above this amount will be transferred into the Capital and Revenue Initiatives Reserve to help fund future capital programmes.

- 2.6 Over time the reliance on NHB in the revenue budget will be reduced to limit the exposure to this form of growth incentive scheme coming to an end.

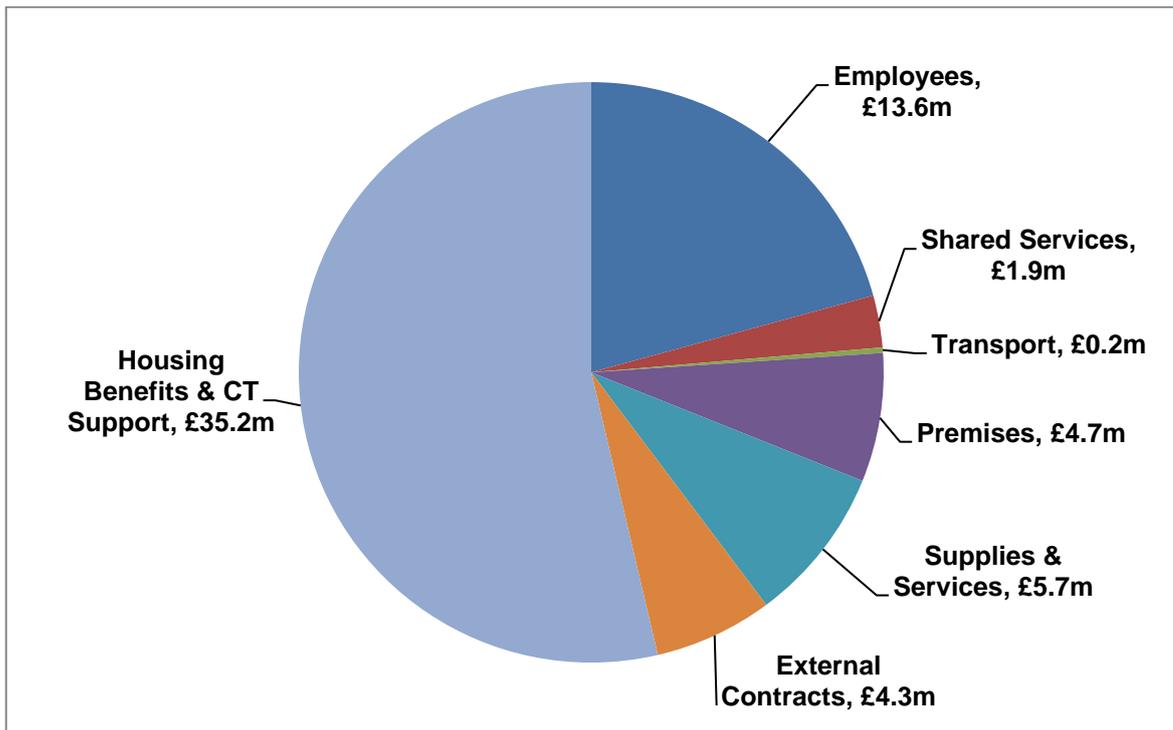
Retention of 100 per cent of Business Rates

- 2.7 The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that local government will retain all revenue from business rates by 2020. This is welcome news and one which this Council has been calling for over many years. However, it is important to understand that it is local government overall that by 2020 will be able to keep all the revenues from business rates, not individual councils. There will still be a system of distributing business rates from economically successful areas such as Tunbridge Wells to other parts of the country whose public expenditure exceeds the amount they generate from business rates. This Council will still only be guaranteed the amount set out in the four-year funding settlement currently £2.2 million of the £52.6 million collected.
- 2.8 The proposals consulted on would allow individual councils to keep a share (currently 40 per cent for this Council) of the extra business rates from new growth over the existing baseline after the impact from appeals. So there is now a stronger financial incentive to encourage development and grant planning permission for new business growth.
- 2.9 From 2018/19 this Council will not receive any Revenue Support Grant so the challenge is to grow the business rate base sufficiently to fund essential and valued local services in the Borough.
- 2.10 The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has recently published the draft rateable values to be used in the calculation of business rate bills from April 2017. It is important to understand that whilst rateable values have increased on average by six per cent in the Borough this does not financially benefit the Council. Business rates are fiscally neutral at a national level and the Government will rebalance the share of business rates so that individual councils still receive the same amount from business rates as they currently did before the revaluation.

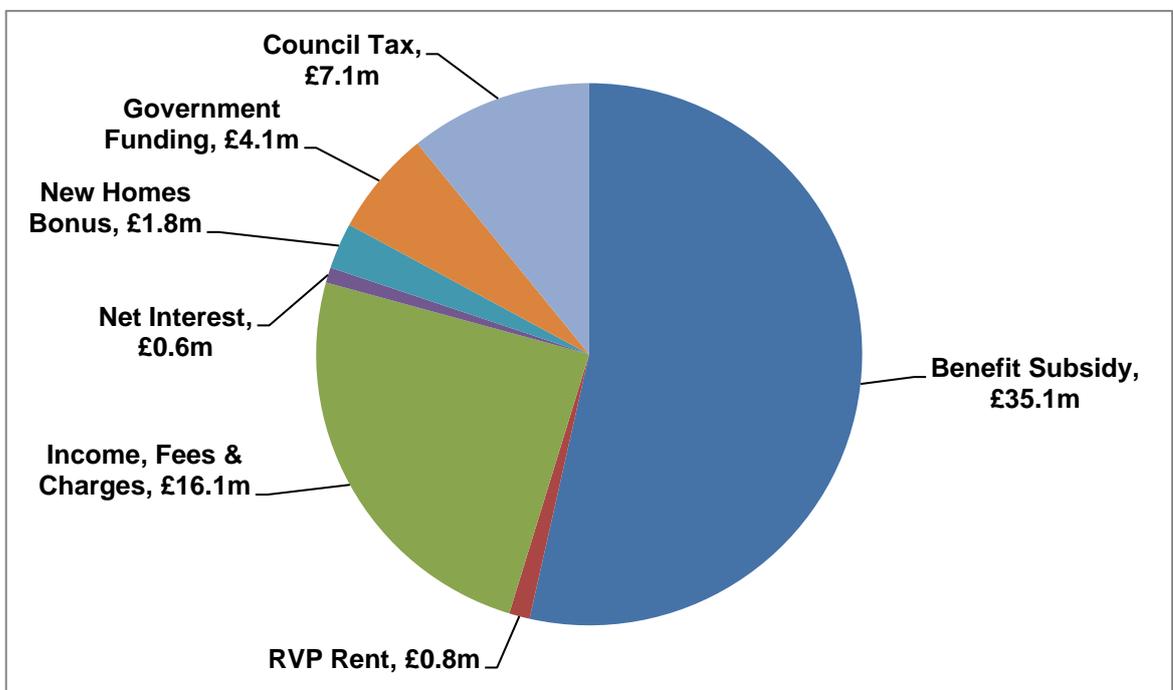
Budget Breakdown

- 2.11 The Council provides a diverse range of services across the Borough which currently cost £65.6 million. The services are provided either by contractors, through partnership with other councils or by directly employing staff. As at 30 June 2016 the Council employed 272 FTEs (full time equivalents). The following pie charts show the current revenue expenditure and how this is funded.

2016/17 Revenue Expenditure



2016/17 Revenue Funding



2.12 A further subjective breakdown of the budget per cost centre for 2016/17 is available on the Council's website:
http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/105206/Codebook-2016-17.pdf

Latest Budget Projection 2017/18

- 2.13 The latest budget projection has been developed using broad assumptions on how various types of costs and income will look when the budget is built up using detailed estimates in January.
- 2.14 There are still some uncertainties that will impact on the budget for 2017/18. Notwithstanding these, portfolio-holders have been busy with their directors/heads of service in trying to identify efficiency options and ideas to reduce the cost of services or to increase income. These ideas are listed in Appendix A for discussion.
- 2.15 The Council has already taken difficult decisions since 2008, which have mitigated the impact of the financial and economic crisis. But the culture of innovation and rigorous reduction combined with income optimisation will need to continue and there are likely to be further strategic decisions required. The Council is now on a firm financial footing and has an embedded culture of change and efficiency from which to face the challenges ahead.
- 2.16 Provided all the corporate savings and budget work streams are delivered then there is still a funding gap at this stage. The major changes over the current year are summarised in the table below.

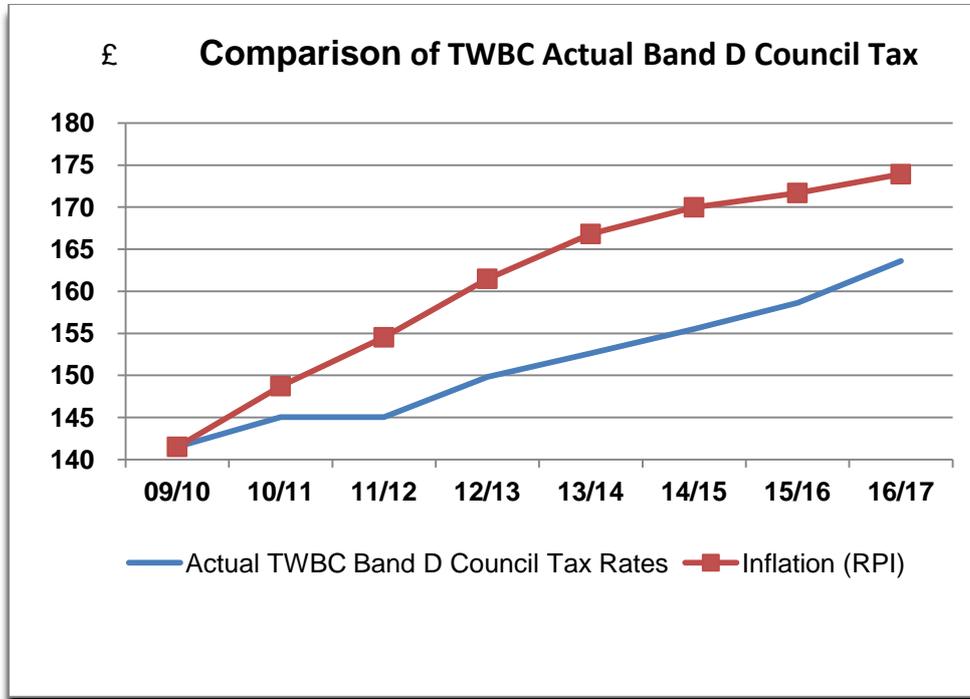
Cut in Government Grant	830
Loss of income from centralising local land charges	270
Government apprentice levy	50
Extra costs of temporary housing (B&B)	40
Lower interest on cash deposits	50
Repay grant volatility reserve	159
Increase in Business Rates from revaluation 2017	50
Council Tax increase of £5	(290)
Proposed efficiencies	(400)
New banking contract	(17)
Fees and charges above the MTFS target	(24)
Changes to Council Tax Support Scheme	(76)
Increase in car parking charges	TBC
Use of general reserves	0
Funding Shortfall	642

Council Tax Strategy

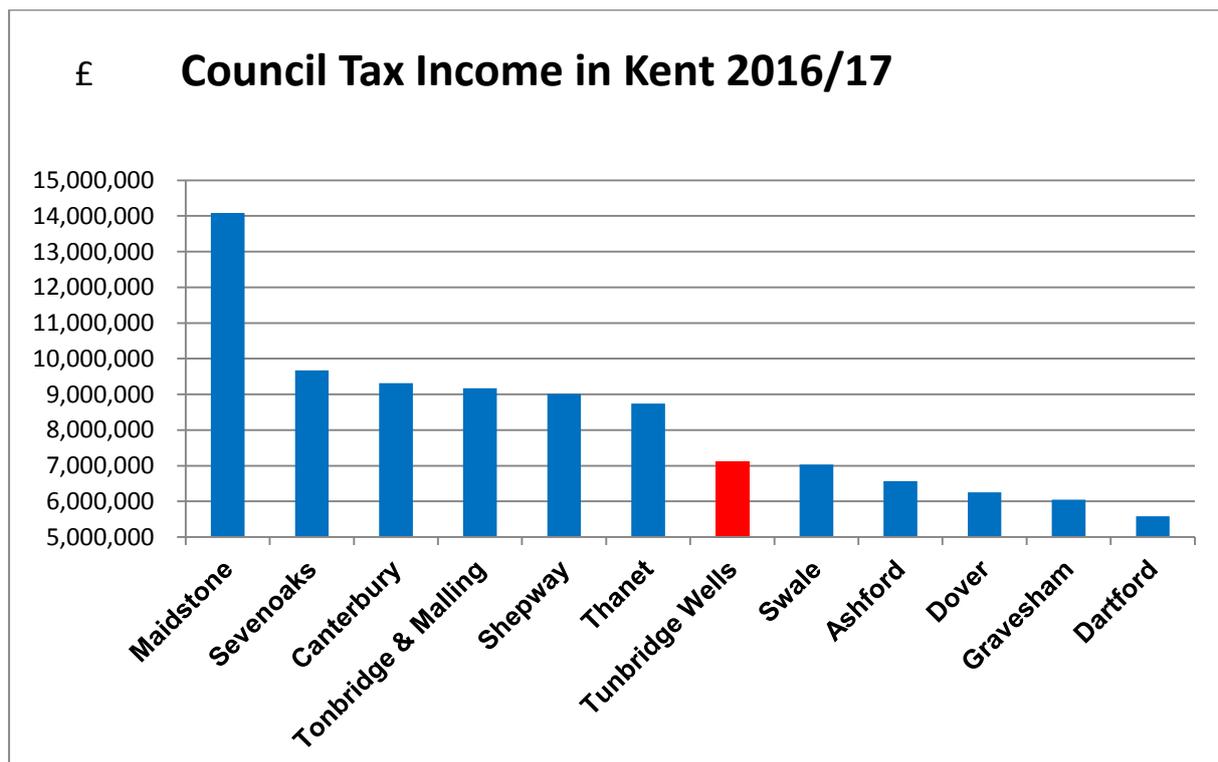
- 2.17 One source of funding for the provision of local services is council tax. This Council has historically had a policy of very low council tax levels and the strategy is for council tax to increase up to the threshold for triggering a referendum.
- 2.18 For the remainder of this Parliament the Government has allowed the most efficient authorities such as this Council to be able to increase council tax up to £5.00 a year, indeed the Government assumes this Council will do so in their

assessment of this Council's available financial resources. It will be for Full Council in February 2017 to decide the level of Council Tax.

2.19 The following graph shows that since 2009/10 council tax has been cut in real terms compared to inflation and was frozen in 2011/12.



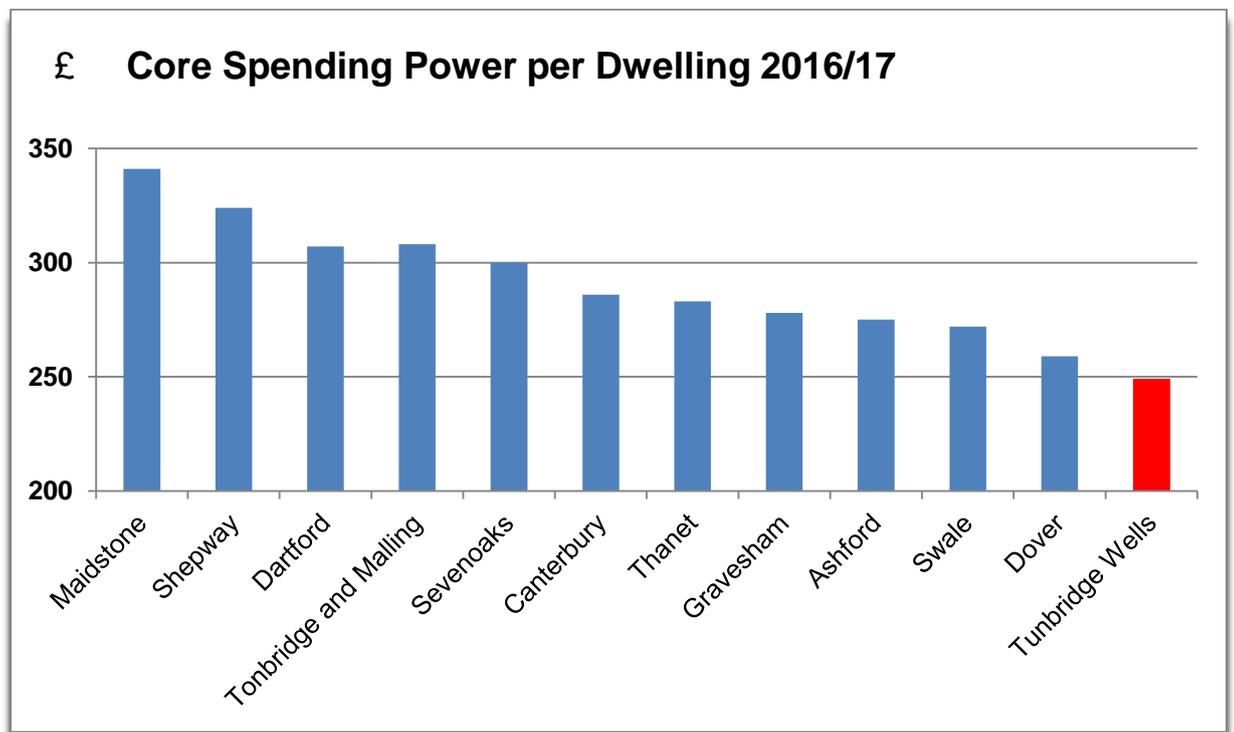
2.20 The graph below shows the comparison across Kent of the amount of income raised through council tax for 2016/17.



2.21 The basic amount of Council Tax in the Borough is currently £163.61 (45p a day) which is the fourth lowest in Kent. By way of example if Sevenoaks and Maidstone Councils freeze their council tax every year and this Council agrees an increase up to the capping limit every year then it would take 8 years and 17 years respectively for the TWBC rate to reach the level charged by these councils.

Spending Power

2.22 The Government has developed a universal benchmarking indicator called 'Spending Power' to enable comparisons between councils of the income they receive from national and local tax payers. This indicator appears to be the best available for identifying how much funding each council receives per household to provide local services. The graph below shows that using the Government's own calculation TWBC has by far the lowest spending power in Kent at just £249 per household (£263 in 2015/16).



2.23 This graph explains why despite being very efficient (as evidenced by the external auditor's unprecedented sixth clean Annual Audit Letter) and delivering excellent value for money (2015 Residents' Survey) this Council still faces financial challenges to set a balanced budget. In addition any budget gap will widen as more services that generate an income are nationalised (Local Land Charges) and those that cost money are localised (business rate appeals).

User Pays Principle

2.24 With operating costs and taxation driving up expenditure it will be necessary to recover these costs from the user of those services rather than all council tax payers.

- 2.25 In November 2016, Cabinet will consider the 'fees and charges' report for areas which are not dictated by central government. The budget projections have assumed for modelling purposes that the total income from the charges set out in the report is achieved.

Car Parking Charges

- 2.26 Car Parking charges have not increased for a number of years and, with demand exceeding supply and increased costs, a consultation is underway on a new schedule of charges. The report will be considered by Cabinet in December 2016.

Staff savings and efficiencies

- 2.27 Directors/ Heads of Services and Portfolio Holders have been busy trying to identify further efficiency options to reduce the cost of their services and to increase income; these currently total £400,000.

Digital Transformation

- 2.28 It is not possible to keep working harder and faster with fewer resources and still provide safe, effective services. The Council will need to find new ways of working smarter and deliver services in a more digitally efficient form which meets with the way the public now interact with service providers. The Council has a Digital Services and Transformation Team in place to improve operational delivery and transform the way that services are provided. Details of these projects are reported quarterly to Cabinet and the resulting efficiencies will be incorporated in the budget setting process.

Budget Calculations and Adequacy of Reserves

- 2.29 When the budget is set in February the Council's Section 151 Officer must give his view on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves.
- 2.30 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2012/13 to 2016/17 (MTFS) was agreed by Full Council on 22 February 2012 and projected the financial impact of the Council's current and proposed policies in the short and medium term. This report and the projections in Appendix B will form part of the MTFS for 2017/18 to 2021/22 which is also on this agenda.
- 2.31 It is important to recognise that there are a number of factors that can affect some budgets and where variances could be significant requiring closer budget management; these areas include:

Risk Area	Management
Planning Inquiry Costs	Whilst the primacy of planning is paramount, decisions taken by the Planning Committee can lead to formal planning inquiries which have the potential for substantial costs to arise which are not budgeted for.
Business Rates Retention Scheme	Part of the Council's government grant is now linked to the amount of business rates in the Borough. However, the Government has also transferred the liability for business rate appeals already in the system. To help mitigate the impact of appeals the Council maintains a Grant Volatility Reserve and is part of a Kent Business Rate Pool.
Economic Conditions	The majority of the Council's income is derived from sources which are subject to the prevailing economic conditions. Economic conditions can also alter the demand for Council services and those provided by partners and the voluntary sector.
Employee Costs	The move to local pay offers some protection but a watching brief is still required especially regarding the vacancy factor. Changes to pensions, national insurance and the introduction of an apprentice levy have been included where known but such further changes can have a significant cost. Demand for some professionals exceeds supply and this is exacerbated by the higher salaries available in London and parts of the private sector.
Welfare Reform	Dependant on rent levels, unemployment rates and the huge uncertainty surrounding much of the legislative changes from Welfare Reform.
Parking Income	Dependant on usage and the economic environment.
Planning and Building Control Income	Dependant on the economy and the impact of legislative changes which limit the full recovery of the cost of providing these services.
Crematorium Income	Dependant on mortality rates.
Contracts	Dependant on inflation indices and a competitive market.
Utilities	Global supply and demand plus above inflation price rises.
Land Charges	The Infrastructure Bill was approved, paving the way for Local Land Charges to be centralised into a single computer system. No details of timeframe or how the Land Registry will provide the service have been released.
Investment Returns	New cash deposits are dependent on interest rates and levels of balances. Property investments are dependent on the type of asset and rental demands.

Targeted Options to Reduce Net Expenditure	Assumes that savings identified are delivered and there are no unintended consequences.
Capital Receipts	Capital is tied up in non-operational assets which if released will help to reduce the use of cash reserves to fund the capital programme.
Government Policy and Announcements by Ministers	There has been a significant increase in volume of legislation and announcements which can undermine strategic planning and compromise budget assumptions.

Capital and Revenue Reserves

2.32 The Medium Term Financial Strategy maintains the following as an adequate level of reserves:

	Minimum
General Reserves (Revenue)	£2.0 million
Capital Receipts	£2.0 million

2.33 The reserves and balances are currently forecast to meet the above levels although maintaining this position relies on delivering not just a balanced budget in 2017/18 but a sustainable budget for the future.

2.34 In addition to the revenue and capital budget, the Council has earmarked reserves which form part of the Budget and Policy Framework and are available to fund the specific purpose of the reserve in accordance with the virement procedure rules. The projected balances of these reserves are shown below:-

Reserves	Opening Balance 1/4/2016	Movements in Reserves 2016/17	Forecast Closing Balance 31/03/2017
	£000's	£000's	£000's
General Fund	7,951	108	8,059
Earmarked Reserves	10,052	(7,983)	2,069
Capital Grants & Contributions	1,133	0	1,133
Capital Receipts Reserve	1,000	0	1,000
Total Reserves	20,136	(7,875)	12,261

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 The budget-setting process is well rehearsed and has largely been successful in delivering a balanced budget and engaging with the public. There may be other alternatives but ultimately the Council must produce a budget which meets its statutory responsibilities.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To agree the content and recommendations of the report to set a balanced budget that will meet the Council's priorities.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Council already has a wealth of information from previous budget consultation exercises and residents' surveys, the most recent being undertaken in 2015.
- 5.2 Early public engagement is essential to arrive at suitable feedback which can be developed in time to be incorporated within the budget. A well-rehearsed process of public engagement will be used. Already an article has been published in the Local magazine which is delivered free to every household in the Borough, seeking views on how the Council should set a balanced budget.
- 5.3 This is the third report in the process of setting the 2017/18 budget and builds on the previous views and recommendations of the Finance and Governance Cabinet Advisory Board and Cabinet.
- 5.4 The above will form an overall picture of prioritisation. Cabinet proposals for savings and growth will be tested through consultation.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The draft budget will be placed onto the Council's consultation portal with responses included in the final report to Cabinet and Full Council in February 2017.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off (name of officer and date)
Legal including Human Rights Act	The Five Year Plan and budget form part of the Council's Policy Framework.	Head of Legal Partnership
Finance and other resources	This report forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Staffing establishment	Where savings proposals impact on staff then this will be managed in accordance with Human Resources policies.	Head of HR

Risk management	An assessment of the risk factors underpinning the budget will accompany the final budget report. The Strategic Risk Register also includes a risk on funding streams which is being monitored by Cabinet and the Audit and Governance Committee.	Head of Audit Partnership
Environment and sustainability	The budget has regard to the environmental sustainability priorities within the Five Year Plan.	Sustainability Manager
Community safety	The budget has regard to the community safety priorities within the Five Year Plan.	Community Safety Manager
Health and Safety	The budget has regard to the Health and Safety obligations and priorities within the Five Year Plan.	Health and Safety Advisor
Health and wellbeing	The budget has regard to the health and wellbeing priorities within the Five Year Plan.	Healthy Lifestyles Co-ordinator
Equalities	Changes to service delivery may impact on equalities; however heads of service will ensure that an equality assessment is in place where this has been identified.	West Kent Equalities Officer

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Five Year Budget projections
- Appendix B: Budget work streams

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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5 YEAR BUDGET PROJECTIONS

APPENDIX A

Year	Annual (Surplus) / Deficit	Explanation	
	£000s		
0	2016/17	-	Balanced without use of general reserves
1	2017/18	642	Cut to government grant
2	2018/19	1,426	Zero government grant
3	2019/20	2,116	Negative government grant
4	2020/21	1,351	Increase share of business rate income
5	2021/22	1,213	Increase share of business rate income
NET 5 YEAR (SURPLUS)/ DEFICIT		6,748	IMPACT ON THE GENERAL FUND

Major Assumptions

- 1 These projections assume Council Tax increase by £5 a year.
- 2 Fees and Charges income is forecast to increase by 3% each year.
- 3 Existing Car Park Income is frozen.
- 4 New Homes Bonus of £1.8m continues to be received regardless of changes.
- 5 Business Rates retained income grows at £200k each year from 2020/21

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BUDGET WORK STREAMS Appendix B

Cost Reductions

£000s

1	Efficiency	Reduced electricity costs in RVP from LED lighting	(20)
2	Efficiency	In-house operation of the Ice Rink	(5)
3	Efficiency	Community Safety savings from events support	(5)
4	Digital	Reduced publications	(10)
5	Contracts	New stationery and paper contract	(10)
6	Contracts	Trade waste collection	(13)
7	Contracts	Higher sports centre income from the upgrade	(30)
8	Community Support	Agreed reduction to multi-year grants	(9)
9	Community Support	Removal of Housing Grant	(6)

Total Non-Staff Savings (108)

10	Staffing	Reductions subject to internal HR policies	(292)
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Total Efficiencies (400)

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A PROSPEROUS BOROUGH	
Our Five Year Plan: To achieve growth and shape our local economy by enhancing the built environment within our thriving town centres and rural settlements	
Devolution	
1	Work with KCC and neighbouring authorities to secure the best deal for local people by devolving and joining up services including public health, waste and recycling and highways.
Making the Borough a key destination for businesses	
2	Continue to develop opportunities for business to locate and grow in Tunbridge Wells by making employment land available, as identified in the new Local Plan.
3	Continue to develop our Local Plan and to work with Town and Parish Councils and developers to secure suitable and sustainable sites to meet our housing requirements and to ensure they are supported by the necessary infrastructure.
4	Continue to dispose of non-performing assets and invest the proceeds in income-generating projects or schemes.
Making the Borough a key destination for visitors	
5	Submit a Stage 2 HLF and Arts Council bid for the Cultural & Learning Hub and submit a planning application.
6	Continue to develop a scheme for a new Theatre that is fit for the future, new offices and associated car parking adjacent to Calverley Grounds and work up a scheme to give the Civic Complex a viable economic use whilst respecting its heritage.
7	Improve and increase the provision of car parking within the town.
Tackling congestion	
8	Work with KCC to deliver the projects set out in our Local Transport Plan, to secure further funding to alleviate congestion and to promote 20mph schemes and reduce pollution.
Ensuring provision of greater educational opportunities locally	
9	Explore with partner the possibility of providing a university or FE facility in Royal Tunbridge Wells.
10	Work with KCC and the developer to deliver a new primary school in Hawkenbury.

A CONFIDENT BOROUGH	
Our Five Year Plan:	
To remain a safe place to live, work and visit where communities enjoy good health, are adequately housed and resilient to the challenges they may encounter	
Enabling the delivery of community facilities	
11	Continue to enable and assist Town Councils, Parish Councils and community groups to develop their own plans to provide amenities within their local areas.
Enabling empowered communities	
12	Support the health of residents by improving sport and active recreation opportunities, including parks/green space, and contribute towards the Health Inequalities Action Plan.
A GREEN BOROUGH	
Our Five Year Plan:	
To remain a clean and beautiful place to live, work and visit, as a result of the continued effort put in to protect the quality of the local environment	
Enhancing our parks and open spaces	
13	Develop and deliver Phase 2 of the Public Realm works around the civic centre using external Local Growth Fund money.

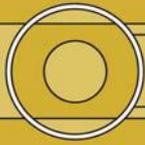
Report of the Transport Working Group to the Town Forum 23rd November 2016

Members: Jane Fenwick (chair), Lorna Blackmore, Pat Wilson, Peter Perry, Adrian Berendt, Katharina Mahler Bech, David Wakefield, Sally Balcon, Jennifer Hemmings, David Scott and Cllr Peter Lidstone (St John's).

The TWG last met on 4th October 2016. TWG has undertaken the following:

1. Attended the JTB held on Monday 17th October. (a) Subsequently liaised with Jennifer Hemming about next steps to reduce traffic travelling at speed and HGVs using **Calverley Park Gardens** to avoid using the A264 and the Royal Oak pub crossroads. (b) **Crescent Road Refuge:** Jane Fenwick met KCC officer, Michael Hardy on Friday 28th October on site to discuss the optimum location for the proposed pedestrian refuge, its design and consequential upgrades including repainting hatching marks and adding SLOW signs on the road surface. The design is being progressed and the expectation is that it will be completed within this financial year.
2. **CAU pavement grab:** Following concern that CAU had not reduced its pavement dining area to that permitted by TWBC, Alastair Tod was asked to express our concern to officers. He did so. We understand that the matter was in hand in TWBC and that the outside dining area is now compliant.
3. **TWBC Draft Parking Charges Review:** TWG responded to the revised Review document in full. A revised Draft Parking Charges Review has been published. The TWG intends to seek an early meeting with the TWBC Parking Department to take some matters forward in discussion with officers.
4. **Transport principles for RTW:** This group continues to develop its ideas including a project evaluation procedure to help assess the benefit of proposed transport improvements before adoption. This transport principles project will help to support the development of a transport environment and vision for the town centre's pedestrian, cyclists and drivers.
5. TWG members attended the developer consultations for Town Forum on the **Cinema Site** and **Hawkenbury** housing development to raise concerns with the developers on vehicle and pedestrian access, cycling, parking and public transport provision.
6. The TWG will prepare a response for the **A26 cycle route** consultation recently announced.

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ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM



WATER IN THE WELLS WORKING GROUP

REPORT TO THE TOWN FORUM 23 NOVEMBER 2016

No major issues of planning or principle have arisen since our last Town Forum Meeting on 22 September, so I will limit this report to individual sites where there has been some development. The Working Group met on 27 September and 15 November.

1. **KNIGHTS WOOD:** The triangular water feature on the town square is now operational with lights, small spouts and flowing water. The surrounding area has been attractively paved and grassed, but is still fenced off. We are awaiting details from Dandara of an official 'opening' ceremony. Nineteen Wiesbaden cycle stands have been delivered by their designer and manufacturer, Bernd Brusberg, and are awaiting installation.
2. **ROYAL WELLS PARK:** Water in the upper section is flowing well and relatively free of leaves. Work continues apace on the central section. We do not have a date for the connection of the three individual sections.
3. **OWLSNEST WOOD:** The developers are still in discussion with TWBC Planning Office. It is still their intention to refurbish the lake in the section of the site just below Notcutts Garden Centre on Tonbridge Road.
4. **THE BELVEDERE (Former ABC Cinema site):** At both public consultations with Altitude Real Estate Ltd we have made strong representations, both written and oral, for the incorporation of a major water feature in this central site. As far as we can tell, these representations have been widely supported. In one of the latest plans a curved water wall has been shown on the corner of Mount Pleasant and Church Road set diagonally across from the steps of the Town Hall.
5. **ARRIVA BUS DEPOT:** A consultation was held by PegasusLife on 20 October. Representations were made for a water feature in this key new development at one of the main entry points to the town centre.
6. **HAWKENBURY (Berkeley Homes Ltd):** Following submission of a planning application on 28 October a special consultation for the Town Forum Management Group was held on 3 November. At the meeting with representatives of Berkeley Homes we were assured that the development would be designed to fit the topography. The three attenuation ponds would remain wet throughout the year and would not be allowed to dry out during the summer.

(November 2016, Michael Holman, Chairman, Water in the Wells WG)

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