

## **Community Scrutiny Committee**

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Community Scrutiny Committee to be held in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 27 April 2017 at 18:15.

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### **Agenda**

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of the Community Scrutiny Committee held on 7 March 2017 (attached).
- 3 Public Question Time.
- 4 Declaration of Interests  
To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
- 5 Report on Dog Waste Bins. Report of the Deane Helpline General Manager and Open Spaces Manager. (attached).  
Reporting Officer: Richard Burge
- 6 Proposed Garden Town Plan for Taunton. Report of The Planning Policy Manager. (attached).  
Reporting Officer: Nick Bryant
- 7 Proposed Response to the Housing White Paper. Report of the Planning Policy Manager. (attached).  
Reporting Officer: Nick Bryant
- 8 Community Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan - details of forthcoming items to be considered by the Community Scrutiny Committee and the opportunity for Members to suggest further items (attached)

Bruce Lang  
Assistant Chief Executive

02 June 2017

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions.

There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions.

Speaking under “Public Question Time” is limited to 4 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate.

Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, if a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chairman will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

This is more usual at meetings of the Council’s Planning Committee and details of the “rules” which apply at these meetings can be found in the leaflet “Having Your Say on Planning Applications”. A copy can be obtained free of charge from the Planning Reception Desk at The Deane House or by contacting the telephone number or e-mail address below.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room.

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An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter.

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### **Community Scrutiny Committee Members:-**

Councillor S Coles	(Chairman)
Councillor L Lisgo, MBE	(Vice-Chairman)
Councillor J Blatchford	
Councillor D Cossey	
Councillor T Davies	
Councillor M Floyd	
Councillor J Gage	
Councillor R Lees	
Councillor S Martin-Scott	
Councillor H Prior-Sankey	
Councillor S Ross	
Councillor R Ryan	
Councillor N Townsend	
Councillor P Watson	
Councillor D Webber	

## **Community Scrutiny Committee – 7 March 2017**

Present: Councillor Ms Lisgo (Vice-Chairman)(In the Chair)  
Councillors Mrs Blatchford, Davies, Gage, R Lees, Mrs Prior-Sankey, Ryan, Townsend and Watson

Officers: Chris Hall (Assistant Director – Operational Delivery), Alison North (Community Leisure Manager), Tim Child (Asset Manager), Jan Errington (Project Manager), Richard Burge (Open Spaces Manager – Deane DLO), Marcus Prouse (Democratic Services Officer – Scrutiny) and Clare Rendell (Democratic Services Officer).

Also present: Councillors Aldridge, Berry, Booth, Mrs Herbert, Horsley and Mrs Warmington.  
Peter Bunday (Deputy Managing Director – GLL), Jon Argent (National Partnerships Director – GLL), Juliette Dickinson (Regional Director, South West and Wales – GLL) and James Curry (Regional Head of Service, South West and Wales – GLL).

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm).

### **8. Apologies**

The Chairman (Councillor Coles) and Councillors Ross and Mrs Floyd.

### **9. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community Scrutiny Committee held on 7 February 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed.

### **10. Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Ms Lisgo declared personal interests as a Trustee of North Taunton Partnership and as a user of GLL's Feelgood Factory. Councillor Gage declared a personal interest as a Member of the Board for GLL. Councillor Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as a member of St James Church, a Member of Somerset County Council, a member of the 'Home Stop' Scheme at Taunton Association for the Homeless and as her spouse was a user of the CCTV Service. Councillor Townsend declared a personal interest as his business was located in Coal Orchard. Councillor Watson declared a personal interest as a Member of Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council.

### **11. Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) Performance Report**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the provision of leisure services within Taunton Deane which were now provided by GLL. As approved by Members, GLL would continue to report the performance of the leisure services every six months.

The report provided an overview on the performance of GLL and other leisure related matters. This included GLL's detailed performance and data which covered:-

1. Financial Performance against Business Plan;
2. Utilisation Performance;
3. Asset Management GLL and Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC);
4. Customer Feedback;
5. People;
6. Marketing;
7. Health and Safety;
8. Energy Management; and
9. Sports and Healthy Lifestyle

GLL were a social enterprise and charitable leisure trust and continued to work in partnership with TDBC to operate the Council's leisure facilities and deliver some health and sports development within the District. The funding agreement and leases had all been transferred from Tone Leisure to GLL which enabled a seamless merger with no changes to the services Tone Leisure had provided to the Council since 2003.

GLL was formed in the early 1990's and had grown to be a major provider of leisure services within the charitable social enterprise sector. The company operated over 200 leisure centres nationwide through a growing network of regional hubs which operated a diverse range of services across a variety of health, fitness, sport, library, arts and cultural facilities. GLL employed approximately 10,000 members of staff and had a turnover of approximately £250,000,000. Overall GLL were the largest leisure operator in the UK with a continued growth.

GLL had four core pillars at the heart of business. These were:-

- Better Service;
- Better People;
- Better Communities; and
- Better Business.

### **Better Service**

GLL continued to use the net promoter score to measure customer satisfaction within the Taunton Deane area. At the end of 2015 the Taunton Deane contract stood at a credible 43%. At the end of 2016 this had dropped to 36% for the year. The 7% reduction was disappointing, but was predominantly linked to the new swimming facilities at Blackbrook and changes to the systems and programmes used across the contract. Blackbrook's score had fallen 23% from 49% to 26% at the end of 2016.

GLL had completed an extension to the aerobics studio at Blackbrook's Leisure Centre in October 2016. This extension had increased the class capacity by up to 15 spaces.

During Quarter 4, there were 74 accidents in the Taunton Deane Partnership. This was 14 less than the same period last year. There were two RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) injuries and one insurance claim for damage to a property which adjoined Vivary Golf Course.

Taunton Deane's compliance target was 90%. The majority of the sites in the District were achieving these targets. Blackbrook Leisure Centre had some work to do to catch up with the other sites. This work would be focused on by the new General Manager.

### **Better People**

New employment opportunities had arisen with the opening of a new swimming pool at the Blackbrook Leisure Centre. A total of 23 new staff had been employed to support the operation of these new facilities.

Sickness records for 2016 were 2.7% which was just below the 3% target.

As the GLL South West and Wales region developed, various new regional roles would be recruited to support all partnerships which included Taunton Deane. This included Project Managers, a Regional Facilities Manager, Community Sports Manager and Regional Business Manager. Recruitment had already commenced for some of these roles.

### **Better Communities**

GLL continued to support Project Wellington. It had held a fun day in partnership with TDBC, Knightstone, Get Set services and the Wellington ONE team.

GLL had held community engagement sessions in Vivary Park in partnership with TDBC and Knightstone to support those affected by the loss of the play area due to the Creechbarrow Road project.

GLL had facilitated learning disability sessions in partnership with Future4 Resource Centre, Roman Road. Through funding received from Somerset Skills and Learning, 16 adults with learning difficulties from Six Acres Future4 Centre had enjoyed six weeks of swimming at Blackbrook Leisure Centre and health/nature walks in their local community. Staff at the centre continued to support these service users. The next stage of the project would see more learners experience trampolining and zumba.

GLL had attended the National Older People's Day event at the Brewhouse Theatre attended by 300 older people. Tailored products for older customers were promoted on the day. Activities included health walks, walking football, forever active and Nordic walking.

GLL had a beginners ladies running group at three of the main leisure centres in the District called 'This Girl Can Run'. Many of these ladies were new to exercise and running. Attendance was approximately eight ladies per group each week. Some of the ladies had started with a target of running 5km and had now completed the Taunton 10km.

### **Better Business**

Following on from the opening of the new swimming pool and spa at Blackbrook Leisure Centre, there had been a big focus on the new business streams at this site. Catering and swimming had performed on or above expectations. GLL recognised that it would take time to develop and grow an affordable spa in this area.

Following a review of the tennis membership offered in Taunton Deane and GLL's desire for the tennis offered to be focused on bringing more people of all abilities into the sport, some new memberships had been agreed for 2017.

There had been some funding challenges at the Taunton Academy in the last few years as the school struggled to increase their student intake. GLL were informed in September 2016 that the school would no longer use Wellsprings Leisure Centre for its physical education programme. This had left a £30,000 hole in the site budgets. Meetings had been held which included TDBC officers, the Richard Huish Trust and GLL. Some additional funding had been secured from the local Diocese to support the physical education programme for at least 12 months.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included:-

- Concern was raised about the number of accidents that had occurred and the performance levels, in particular at the Blackbrook Leisure Centre.  
*Accident levels had improved with increased health and safety levels. Members were reminded that the number of accidents were for six centres and over a time frame of three months. Blackbrook's performance had fallen but this was due to a lot of changes in the leisure management system. The figures were low but there was strong commitment to bring them back in line with the contract score.*
- With the increased number of disabled athletes using sports centres, were there plans to improve the facilities for such users?  
*The GLL Foundation Programme recognised the increased profile of the Paralympics and Special Olympics. They realised that accessibility was an issue and had made significant improvements at Blackbrook with inclusive fitness and equal access.*
- Concern was raised about the relationship issues between Taunton Academy and Wellsprings Leisure Centre.  
*Taunton Academy had experienced challenges with their finances but work had been carried out to fund the project. In the long term, they aspired to return to their previous standard.*
- The spa at Blackbrook was taking a while to become established. What steps were being taken for the use to be improved?  
*It was difficult for local authorities to compete with private spas. However, over the last 3-4 weeks, the spa had improved. The weekly target income was £2460 and they had achieved £2983.*
- Concern was raised about the money the Council was spending to subsidise some of the projects.  
*GLL expected the Council to want best value for money. The Council's contract stipulated how much and what projects were subsidised.*
- Feedback was given on operational and maintenance issues at some of the centres. This would be fed back to local managers to be rectified.
- Information would be distributed on the Community Foundation and the social impacts from the local projects. This would be fed back through the Weekly Bulletin.
- The Committee gave formal thanks to GLL and the Tone Leisure Board for its performance update.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

## 12. Supported Housing Property Options Review

Considered report previously circulated, which presented the findings from a review on the sheltered and extra care properties and the development of a new aspirational property standard which provided information on stock performance and condition.

The report set out a proposed approach to stock rationalisation, options appraisal and importantly how TDBC could achieve the key elements of the standard incrementally over the 30 year Business Plan.

In 2015 the Council undertook a review of supported housing in response to the changing environment and the need to make sure the Council was providing the right service and suitable accommodation in the future. The aims of the review were:-

- Achieving and maintaining a high level of tenant satisfaction;
- Providing housing that was attractive to older people to want to move in to;
- Meeting the local demand for people over 60 years of age; and
- Supporting people to maintain their independence and social networks of family and friends.

The Council recognised that it was essential that the buildings themselves were fit for purpose, were somewhere that tenants would want to live, met their needs and were financially sustainable.

The review considered the following:-

- Future demand for the properties;
- Stock condition;
- The new Supported Housing Property Standard;
- Appraisal of properties against the Standard;
- Stock performance (through Savills analysis);
- Investment required to meet the Standard;
- How the Council prioritised works over the 30 years;
- Smarter Solutions; and
- Options Appraisals of five low performing schemes.

Details of the review were:-

**Stock Profile** -There were 980 dwellings of which 586 were flats and 394 were bungalows. Almost 50% of flats were on the first floor without access to a lift. This was not suitable for those with mobility needs.

**Stock Condition** - The estimated investment needed for the next 30 years was £26,300,000 (excluded inflation). The average future investment need per sheltered unit over 30 years was £26,884. The sheltered stock was generally in fair condition, but the provision of general amenities was relatively basic, there was poor access, there was work needed to the common areas and there was no dementia friendly signage or colour schemes.

**Financial Performance** - The average net present value of the 30 year operating cash flows for sheltered stock was £14,267, which was 13% lower than the average for TDBC stock. Bungalows scored the highest and flats the lowest. Flats were less likely to reach the aspirational standard.



**Non-Financial Performance** - Each scheme also included a non-financial and social sustainability analysis. Indicators were not specific to sheltered housing but were still relevant.

**Stock Rationalisation** - The aim was to improve the stock profile, swap in more suitable stock and swap out less suitable stock.

**Options Appraisal** - This was to explore opportunities to invest or develop stock and to identify poor performing stock due to financial, non-financial or aspirational standards.

**Aspirational Standard** - This had been developed by colleagues and tenants together. It reflected tenants' priorities and national good practice. It encompassed accessibility, condition, security, location and proximity to amenities.

**Approach.** Not all the schemes involved would have to meet the full Standard or would be made fully accessible. Work would be realistic, affordable and achievable. Schemes would be appraised against the Standard and agreed priorities.

**Essential Planned Works.** These would be carried out through the Capital Programme, Existing Budget and the HRA Business Plan.

**Other Priorities.** The high priorities that were discussed were related to access (paths, doors and positioning) and also health and safety with suitable locks.

Details of what needed to happen next included:-

1. Survey the stock;
2. Refine the scheme matrix;
3. Refocus the capital programme;
4. Integrate the voids process and lettable standard;
5. Develop assessment framework;
6. Options appraisals for low scorers;
7. Adapted properties review;
8. Sheltered Lettings Policy review;
9. Set the rationalisation plan in motion; and
10. Carry out annual reviews.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included:-

- Concern was raised that all top floor flats would be allocated to younger tenants, which could cause social problems.  
*A 'common sense' approach would be used. It was deemed acceptable to place vulnerable younger tenants (those with learning difficulties, etc.) in these types of properties, as it was better to have the properties occupied than empty. Officers would do their best to allocate these properties appropriately.*
- Sheltered properties were exempt from the right to buy scheme. This was based on the designation of the property and the registered need of the tenant.
- It was confirmed that the Disabled Facilities Grant was administered through Somerset County Council and would be assessed by an occupational therapist and based on the tenants' eligibility.
- Concern was raised about the lack of maintenance carried out at the sheltered complexes in the District, which could lead to health and safety issues. This was passed on to the Open Spaces Manager who was present at the meeting and he would feed back to his team to get this rectified.
- How would the work in the review be programmed?

*Certain work was included in the Capital Programme. Works with a health and safety implication would be prioritised and repairs would be dealt with on an ad hoc basis as needed. Not all work would be able to be carried out on one property at the same time. Some contractors would be specialised in one trade. Officers would have to be mindful of what works tenants would allow to be carried out.*

- Would the Aspirational Standard be relevant in 30 years?  
*The Standard would be reviewed periodically. This was an organic process, so would be evolved over time.*

**Resolved that:-**

- (1) The Council's new approach to smarter use of its stock to make it fit for purpose in the future for older people through stock rationalisation and ensuring that suitable components used for sheltered and extra care housing were fitted in a way appropriate to the needs of vulnerable older people be noted. This new approach was consistent with the Asset Strategy principles agreed through the Business Plan Review in 2016; and
- (2) The Executive be recommended that the Standard, as an aspirational standard, should be implemented as and when affordable, focusing on the attributes as prioritised.

**13. Dog Waste Bins**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the current arrangements for the provision, maintenance and emptying of dog waste bins in Taunton Deane, their funding and locations.

The Deane DLO's Parks and Open Spaces Department were responsible for the installation and emptying of dog bins. The budget for this service was held by the Environmental Health Department who acted as the client.

Across the Borough a total of 201 public use dog waste bins were in operation. The allocation of the dog waste bins were split between internal customers, which were departments within the Council, and external customers, which were County and Parish Councils and other organisations. From 1 April 2017, internal bins which were emptied on behalf of the Council, were scheduled to be emptied 3 times a fortnight, additional external bins were emptied twice a week.

The cost for an internal bin to be supplied and installed was £345, which was the same as an external bin. However, the cost to empty an internal bin was £2.80 compared with £2.64 for an external bin.

It had become clear that this charge had not been increased at a rate to match the cost and had resulted in an under recovery of £832 per year. This would be corrected and all external customers who currently paid for this service, would be written to and advised of the increase to £2.80 per visit. The option to reduce the frequency the bins were emptied for Parish Councils could be offered to offset the increase to retain the service in case additional funding was not available.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included:-

- Concern was raised that there was information missing from the report. The dog bins in the Unparished areas were not listed.
- Members were in agreement that the cost to empty the external bins should be brought in line with the internal bin cost.
- Members requested that the extra information was collated and the report brought back to the Committee at a future date.

#### **14. Community Scrutiny Forward Plan**

Submitted for information the proposed Forward Plan of the Community Scrutiny Committee.

During the discussion of this item, Members requested that the following be added onto the Forward Plan:-

- Somerset Community Council to give an update on Village and Community Agents.
- The Police to be invited to attend to give the Committee an update.
- Health and Wellbeing Workshops, requested better understanding of Members roles.
- The Meeting Halls item needed clarification.
- Concern on doors that were fitted in the Council's housing stock and the poor workmanship.

**Resolved** that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 9.05 p.m.)

## **Usual Declarations of Interest by Councillors**

### **Community Scrutiny Committee**

- Councillors Coles - Member of Somerset County Council and Member of Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service.
- Councillor Ms Lisgo - Trustee of North Taunton Partnership and User of Tone Leisure's Feelgood Factory.
- Councillor Prior-Sankey - Member of Somerset County Council and Member of the 'Home Stop' Scheme at Taunton Association for the Homeless.
- Councillor Watson - Member of Bishops Lydeard Parish Council.
- Councillor Townsend - His Business Offices are located in Coal Orchard.
- Councillor Martin-Scott - Trustee to Bishops Fox's Educational Foundation and Trustee to Trull Memorial Hall.
- Councillor Steve Ross - Member of the Somerset Waste Board and a Director of the Wiveliscombe Area Partnership.
- Councillor John Gage - Member of the Board for Tone Leisure.

# Taunton Deane Borough Council

## Community Scrutiny Committee – 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017

### Dog Waste Bins

This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Patrick Berry

Report Author: Richard Burge – Open Spaces Manager, Deane DLO

#### 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report aims to update the Committee on the current arrangements for the provision, maintenance and emptying of Dog Waste Bins in Taunton Deane, their funding and locations.

#### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are requested to note the report.

#### 3 Risk Assessment

##### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Income from external sources to cover the costs of installation, maintenance and emptying of Dog Waste Bins may not be sufficient to cover costs.	25	1	25
Mitigation measures: Increases will be applied to bring external customers into an equal position to internal customers and cover costs.	5	1	5

- 3.1 The scoring of the risks identified in the above table has been based on the scoring matrix. Each risk has been assessed and scored both before the mitigation measures have been actioned and after they have.

#### 4 Background to the Report

- 4.1 Cllr Prior-Sankey requested a report on Dog Bins be brought to Community Scrutiny with support from Cllr Coles. The information requested included the number of bins in operation and their locations, the costs of purchasing and maintaining them, the frequency and cost of emptying and which organisations fund them.
- 4.2 The DLO's Parks & Open Spaces department is responsible for the installation and emptying of Dog Bins. The budget for this service is held by the Environmental Health Department who act as the Client.

- 4.3 Some internal departments and external organisations have decided to supplement the provision of Dog Waste Bins in their areas of responsibility and privately fund the purchase, installation and collection of additional bins.

## 5 Breakdown of Locations & Ownership

- 5.1 Across the borough a total of 235 Public Use Dog Waste Bins are in operation. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 'Internal' bins emptied on behalf of the Council are scheduled to be emptied three times per fortnight, additional 'External' bins are emptied twice per week.

Owner	Number of Bins	Number of Collections
<b>Internal</b>		
Environmental Health	170	13260
TDBC OS	5	390
HOUSING	3	234
Heritage & Landscape	2	156
Community Development	1	78
<b>External</b>		
Parish	45	4368
Somerset County Council	8	832
National Trust	1	104

Appendix 1 shows how many bins are in each area, their locations and ownership. A summary of locations is below.

Area	TDBC Bins	Additional Bins
BISHOPS HULL	10	11
BISHOPS LYDEARD	2	2
BLACKDOWN	1	2
BRADFORD ON TONE	2	0
CHEDDON FITZPAINE	0	1
COMEYTROWE	7	0
COTFORD ST LUKE	6	3
KINGSTON ST MARY	0	1
LANGFORD BUDVILLE	0	2
MILVERTON	1	3
MONUMENT	1	4
NEROCHE	1	0
NORTH CURRY AND STOKE ST GREGORY	1	3
NORTON FITZWARREN	10	2
RUISHTON AND CREECH	6	4
STAPLEGROVE	7	0
TAUNTON BLACKBROOK AND HOLWAY	12	0
TAUNTON EASTGATE	7	1
TAUNTON FAIRWATER	10	0

TAUNTON HALCON	12	3
TAUNTON KILLAMS AND MOUNTFIELD	5	0
TAUNTON LYNGFORD	10	2
TAUNTON MANOR AND WILTON	16	1
TAUNTON PYRLAND AND ROWBARTON	9	0
TRULL	0	3
WELLINGTON EAST	5	2
WELLINGTON NORTH	3	3
WELLINGTON ROCKWELL GREEN AND WEST	13	4
WEST MONKTON	11	6
WIVELISCOMBE AND WEST DEANE	3	1

## 6 Costs

6.1 TDBC Funded Bins: 171

Supply & Installation of Bin: £345

Emptying of bins: £2.85 per visit

This is a cost only charge based on the time taken by the Open Spaces Team.

6.2 Privately Funded Bins: 64

Supply & Installation of Bin: £345

Emptying of bins: £2.85 per visit

It became clear during the research for this report that this charge had not been increased at a rate to match cost and resulted in an under recovery of £832 per year. This has been corrected and all private customers currently paying for this service have been written to advising them of the increase to £2.85 per visit.

## 8 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities

7.1 The Parks & Open Spaces department's management of Dog Waste bins contribute to the corporate priorities and includes a modest financial contribution to central recharges and to the budget position as part of the overall income generated by the department.

## 8 Finance / Resource Implications

8.1 The financial implications are given in this report.

## 9 Legal Implications

9.1 There are no implications in respect of this report.

## 10 Environmental Impact Implications

10.1 There are no implications in respect of this report.

## 11 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications

11.1 There are no implications in respect of this report.

## **12 Equality and Diversity Implications**

12.1 There are no implications in respect of this report.

## **13 Social Value Implications**

13.1 There are no implications in respect of this report.

## **14 Partnership Implications**

14.1 There are no implications in respect of this report.

## **15 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

15.1 There are no implications in respect of this report.

## **16 Asset Management Implications**

16.1 There are no implications in respect of this report.

## **17 Consultation Implications**

17.1 There are no implications in respect of this report.

### **Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny - Yes**
- **Executive – No**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency:** On demand

### **Contact Officers**

Name	<b>Richard Burge</b>	Name	<b>Chris Hall</b>
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Email	r.burge@tauntondeane.gov.uk	Email	c.hall@tauntondeane.gov.uk

### **Risk Scoring Matrix**



<b>Likelihood</b>	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
<b>Impact</b>							

<b>Likelihood of risk occurring</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description (chance of occurrence)</b>
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

TDBC Dog Bin Locations 2017

Owner	Ward	Parish	Area	Location	Emptyings	Easting	Northing
BISHOPS HULL							
Heritage & Landscape	Bishops Hull 1	Bishops Hull CP	Netherclay	Entrance to field area by Silk Mills Road	2	320,638.80	125,188.00
Parish	Bishops Hull 2	Bishops Hull CP	Netherclay	Lane next to Netherclay House	2	320,496.40	124,987.50
EPT	Bishops Hull 3	Bishops Hull CP	Bishops Hull Playing Field	By children's play area	1.5	320,437.10	124,692.70
EPT	Bishops Hull 4	Bishops Hull CP	Bishops Hull Playing Field	Lane off Morgans rise	1.5	320,414.10	124,531.30
EPT	Bishops Hull 5	Bishops Hull CP	Gillards Open Space	Footpath off of Jarmyns	1.5	320,585.00	124,476.80
EPT	Bishops Hull 6	Bishops Hull CP	Gillards Open Space	Off Waterfield Drive	1.5	320,577.70	124,305.20
EPT	Bishops Hull 7	Bishops Hull CP	Heron Drive	Juction with Wren Close	1.5	321,048.00	124,754.80
EPT	Bishops Hull 8	Bishops Hull CP	Heron Drive	Rear entrance to SCAT by gate	1.5	321,154.80	124,776.30
EPT	Bishops Hull 9	-	Galmington playing field	Entrance of Musgrove Road	1.5	321,263.70	124,202.90
EPT	Bishops Hull 10	-	Galmington playing field	Halfway down park	1.5	321,240.40	124,082.20
EPT	Bishops Hull 11	-	Galmington playing field	Far side of park	1.5	321,349.80	123,985.80
SCC TDBC OS	Bishops Hull 12	Bishops Hull CP	Silk mills park and ride	Footpath to left behind building	2	320,883.20	125,548.30
SCC TDBC OS	Bishops Hull 13	Bishops Hull CP	Silk mills park and ride	Footpath to right behind building	2	320,892.10	125,423.30
SCC TDBC OS	Bishops Hull 14	Bishops Hull CP	Silk mills park and ride	Centre behind mound rear of building	2	321,029.00	125,471.20
SCC TDBC OS	Bishops Hull 15	Bishops Hull CP	Silk mills park and ride	To right alongside fence	2	321,086.10	125,401.10
SCC TDBC OS	Bishops Hull 16	Bishops Hull CP	Silk mills park and ride	Alongside water to left	2	321,374.80	125,361.40
SCC TDBC OS	Bishops Hull 17	Bishops Hull CP	Silk mills park and ride	Roughmoor side of park	2	321,345.30	125,489.10
TDBC OS	Bishops Hull 18	Bishops Hull CP	Longrun Meadow	Near Willow Catherderal	2	321758.5	125176.7
EPT	Bishops Hull 19	Bishops Hull CP	Chaffinch Close	End of road	1.5	320,931.40	124,649.30
Parish	Bishops Hull		Frethery Road		2		
Parish	Bishops Hull		Kingslake		2		
BISHOPS LYDEARD							
Parish	Bishops Lydeard 1	Bishops Lydeard CP	Bishops Lydeard	Bottom of Darby Way - Pound Lane	2	317,082.50	130,244.00
Parish	Bishops Lydeard 2	Bishops Lydeard CP	Bishops Lydeard	Quantock View	2	317,010.80	129,519.40
EPT	Bishops Lydeard 3	Bishops Lydeard CP	Bishops Lydeard	Hither Mead by bridge	1.5	317,067.60	129,218.20
EPT	Bishops Lydeard 10	Ash Priors CP	Ash Priors Common	On main road to right on corner	1.5	315,086.40	128,922.70
BLACKDOWN							
EPT	Blackdown 1	Pitminster CP	Blagdon Hill	Howleigh Lane	1.5	320,951.50	118,825.60
Parish	Blackdown 2	Pitminster CP	Blagdon Hill	By pavillion in playing field	2	321,073.20	119,170.40
Parish	Blackdown 3	Pitminster CP	Blagdon Hill	Far side of playing field	2	321,097.60	119,067.30
BRADFORD ON TONE							
EPT	Bradford on Tone 1	Bradford on Tone CP	Back Lane	Near Rectory	1.5	317,372.30	122,914.90
EPT	Bradford on Tone 2	Oake CP	Oake	Lane by School	1.5	315,364.70	125,625.10
CHEDDON FITZPAINE PC							
Parish		Cheddon Fitzpaine CP	Waterleaze	End of road by the canal	2	324,857.70	126,235.46
COMEYTROWE							
EPT	Comeytrowe 1	Comeytrowe CP	Galmington Open Space	Park at bottom of Glasses Mead	1.5	320,805.90	123,462.50
EPT	Comeytrowe 2	Comeytrowe CP	Galmington Open Space	Claremont Drive	1.5	320,965.80	123,480.80
EPT	Comeytrowe 3	Comeytrowe CP	Galmington Open Space	Bottom of Essex Drive	1.5	321,250.90	123,647.40
EPT	Comeytrowe 4	Comeytrowe CP	Pennys Field	By school	1.5	321,479.50	123,707.20
EPT	Comeytrowe 5	Comeytrowe CP	Pennys Field	College Way entrance	1.5	321,603.20	123,676.70
EPT	Comeytrowe 6	Comeytrowe CP	Scafell Close	Behind No.35	1.5	321,191.50	123,361.70
EPT	Comeytrowe 7	Comeytrowe CP	Comeytrowe Open Space	End of College Way	1.5	321,054.20	122,831.80
COTFORD ST LUKE							
EPT	Cotford St Luke	Cotford St Luke CP	Cotford St luke	North Villa's park	1.5	317,089.03	127,366.22
EPT	Cotford St Luke	Cotford St Luke CP	Cotford St Luke	Burge Crescent on green by pond	1.5	316,467.60	127,295.70
EPT	Cotford St Luke	Cotford St Luke CP	Cotford St luke	Juction of Burge Crescent and Graham Way	1.5	316,599.40	127,389.40
EPT	Cotford St Luke	Cotford St Luke CP	Cotford St Luke	Glenville View play area	1.5	316,775.40	127,272.00
EPT	Cotford St Luke	Cotford St Luke CP	Cotford St Luke	Graham Way by school entrance	1.5	316,802.50	127,148.90
EPT	Cotford St Luke	Cotford St Luke CP	Cotford St Luke	Junction of Dene Road and Aneline Court	1.5	317,061.10	127,120.90
PARISH	Cotford St Luke	Cotford St Luke CP	Cotford St luke	T4/23 on Dene Road,	2		
PARISH	Cotford St Luke	Cotford St Luke CP	Cotford St luke	Burial Ground	2		
PARISH	Cotford St Luke	Cotford St Luke CP	Cotford St luke	At the foot bridge over the culvert at Burge Crescent	2		
KINGSTON ST MARY							
PARISH	Staplegrove	Kingston St Mary CP	Lodes Lane	By the church	2		
LANGFORD BUDVILLE							
Parish	Bradford-On-Tone	Langford Budville CP		Just pass the school	2		
Parish	Bradford-On-Tone	Langford Budville CP		On the common	2		
MILVERTON AND NORTH DEANE							
EPT	Milverton and North Deane 1	Milverton CP	Milverton	Bartletts Lane opposite carpark	1.5	312,289.80	125,666.80
Parish	Milverton and North Deane 2	Milverton CP	Milverton	St Michaels Hill	2	312,124.00	125,925.40
Parish	Milverton and North Deane 3	Milverton CP	Milverton	Burgage Viewing area	2	311,837.40	126,040.80
Parish	Milverton and North Deane 4	Milverton CP	Milverton	Station Road entrance to Saw Mill	2		
MONUMENT							
EPT	Monument 1	West Buckland CP	West Buckland Playing Field	Beside village hall to the right	1.5	317,552.90	120,555.80
Parish	Monument 2	West Buckland CP	Opposite Lee Park	Near motorway bridge	1	317,668.10	120,067.70
National Trust	Monument 3	Wellington Without CP	Wellington Monument	Entrance by car park	2	314,272.60	116,783.70
Parish	Blackdown 2	Pitminster CP	Blagdon Hill	By pavillion in playing field	2	321,073.20	119,170.40
Parish	Blackdown 3	Pitminster CP	Blagdon Hill	Far side of playing field	2	321,097.60	119,067.30
NEROCHE							
EPT	Neroche Ward 1	Hatch Beauchamp CP	Village Road	Hatch Beauchamp	1.5	330,140.00	120,453.30
NORTH CURRY AND STOKE ST GREGORY							
EPT	Stoke St Gregory 1	Stoke St Gregory CP	Stoke St Gregory	Entrance to playing field	1.5	334,626.11	127,235.46
PARISH	North Curry		North Curry	Just by the shool	2		
PARISH	North Curry		North Curry	Bottom of playing field	2		
PARISH	North Curry		North Curry	Fosse Lane by the church	2		
NORTON FITZWARREN							
EPT	Norton Fitzwarren 1	Norton Fitzwarren CP	Norton Fitzwarren Playing Fields	Stembridge Way	1.5	319,183.10	126,042.10
Parish	Norton Fitzwarren 2	Norton Fitzwarren CP	Station Road	On bridge	2	319,489.50	125,682.40
EPT	Norton Fitzwarren 3	Norton Fitzwarren CP	Blackdown View	Top of Blackdown View to rear of church	1.5	319,677.00	126,065.10
Parish	Norton Fitzwarren 4	Norton Fitzwarren CP	B3227 Entrance to village on corner		2	320,116.60	125,908.10
EPT	Norton Fitzwarren 5	Norton Fitzwarren CP	Burnshill Drive	End of drive	1.5	320,077.60	126,230.90
EPT	Staplegrove 1	Staplegrove CP	Nash Green Open Space	Far end of Nash Green	1.5	320,812.00	126,250.70
EPT	Staplegrove 2	Staplegrove CP	Hudson Way Park	In park by school	1.5	321,125.40	125,993.60
EPT	Staplegrove 3	Staplegrove CP	Hudson Way Park	By childrens play area	1.5	321,109.80	126,156.00
EPT	Staplegrove 4	Staplegrove CP	Gipsy Lane	By entrance to Taunton Vale Hockey Club	1.5	321,769.90	126,246.80
EPT	Staplegrove 5	Staplegrove CP	Gipsy Lane	Off Corkscrew Lane	1.5	321,896.90	126,662.30
EPT	Staplegrove 6	Cheddon Fitzpaine CP	Pussy Cat Lane	Entrance to lane/top of Cheddon Road	1.5	323,045.30	127,281.70
EPT	Staplegrove 7	Kingston St Mary CP	Leach's Field	Behind bungalows far end of road	1.5	321,958.10	129,575.95
RUISHTON AND CREECH							
EPT	Ruishton and Creech 1	Creech St Michael CP	Creech St Michael	Hyde Lane, footpath in field by primary school	1.5	327,035.20	125,872.20
Parish	Ruishton and Creech 2	Creech St Michael CP	Creech St Michael	Hyde Lane, on junction of Arundells Way	2	327,146.60	125,825.60
EPT	Ruishton and Creech 3	Creech St Michael CP	Creech St Michael	Opposite No.12 Arundells Way	1.5	327,079.00	125,762.10
Parish	Ruishton and Creech 4	Creech St Michael CP	Creech St Michael	Bottom of Vicarage Lane	2	327,467.52	125,564.61
EPT	Ruishton and Creech 5	Creech St Michael CP	Creech St Michael	Under canal bridge	1.5	327,284.71	125,508.87
EPT	Ruishton and Creech 6	Ruishton CP	Ruishton	Cheats Road, by parish notice board	1.5	326,566.40	124,990.40
EPT	Ruishton and Creech 7	Ruishton CP	Ruishton	Bushy Cross Lane, near turning to Coronation Close	1.5	326,488.30	124,634.30
SCC	Ruishton and Creech 8	Ruishton CP	Blackbrook Park & Ride	By bus stop on main road	2	325952.6	124713.3
SCC	Ruishton and Creech 9	Ruishton CP	Blackbrook Park & Ride	To rear	2	325906.1	124483.5
PARISH	Ruishton and Creech			Bull Street - River/Turnpoint	2		
STAPLEGROVE							
EPT	Staplegrove 1	Staplegrove CP	Nash Green Open Space	Far end of Nash Green	1.5	320,812.00	126,250.70
EPT	Staplegrove 2	Staplegrove CP	Hudson Way Park	In park by school	1.5	321,125.40	125,993.60



EPT	Staplegrove 3	Staplegrove CP	Hudson Way Park	By childrens play area	1.5	321,109.80	126,156.00
EPT	Staplegrove 4	Staplegrove CP	Gipsy Lane	By entrance to Taunton Vale Hockey Club	1.5	321,769.90	126,246.80
EPT	Staplegrove 5	Staplegrove CP	Gipsy Lane	Off Corkscrew Lane	1.5	321,896.90	126,662.30
EPT	Staplegrove 6	Cheddon Fitzpaine CP	Pussy Cat Lane	Entrance to lane/top of Cheddon Road	1.5	323,045.30	127,281.70
EPT	Staplegrove 7	Kingston St Mary CP	Leach's Field	Behind bungalows far end of road	1.5	321,958.10	129,575.95
TAUNTON BLACKBROOK AND HOLWAY							
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 1 - Leycroft Park	-	Blackbrook Open Space	Behind school	1.5	324,609.61	124,451.13
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 2 - Leycroft Park	-	Blackbrook Open Space	Middle	1.5	324,909.21	124,448.62
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 3 - Leycroft Road	-	Blackbrook Open Space	Blackbrook Way end near play area	1.5	325,051.99	124,471.30
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 4	-	Amber Mead	By children's play area	1.5	324,804.54	124,364.58
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 5	-	Shakespeare Avenue	End of road by school entrance	1.5	324,230.10	124,063.40
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 6	-	Holway Green	By children's play area	1.5	324,383.70	123,999.40
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 7	-	Holway Green	End of Haywood Road	1.5	324,408.50	123,870.80
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 8	-	Holway Green	Path from Upper Holway Road	1.5	324,339.70	123,830.60
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 9	-	Hillyfields Open Space	Bottom of Fields End along stream	1.5	324,051.20	123,556.10
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 10	-	Celandine Mead Open Space	Alder Close	1.5	324,691.80	123,415.70
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 11	-	Celandine Mead Open Space	Rowan Drive	1.5	324,565.40	123,307.30
EPT	Taunton Blackbrook and Holway 12	-	Celandine Mead Open Space	Top by allotments and childrens play area	1.5	324,417.10	123,240.00
TAUNTON EASTGATE							
EPT	Taunton Eastgate 1	-	Priory Bridge Road car park	By river bridge	1.5	323,111.20	125,212.60

HOUSING	Taunton Eastgate 2	-	Duke Street	Entrance to flats by garages	2	323,155.80	124,728.70
EPT	Taunton Eastgate 3	-	Victoria Park	Entrance by Hugo Street	1.5	323,368.80	124,758.70
EPT	Taunton Eastgate 4	-	Victoria Park	Path from Victoria Gate car park	1.5	323,443.40	124,741.50
EPT	Taunton Eastgate 5	-	Victoria Park	By the Pavilion	1.5	323,488.70	124,821.90
EPT	Taunton Eastgate 6	-	Victoria Park	Off Somerset Place	1.5	323,642.70	124,895.10
EPT	Taunton Eastgate 7	-	Victoria Park	Path from Priory Avenue	1.5	323,494.00	124,986.00
EPT	Taunton Eastgate 8	-	Mount Street	Cycle track to South Road	1.5	323,085.00	124,073.30
TAUNTON FAIRWATER							
EPT	Taunton Fairwater 1	-	Greenway Road	Entrance to Cinder Track	1.5	322,216.50	125,957.90
EPT	Taunton Fairwater 2	-	Greenway Avenue, Recreation Ground	Alongside Leslie Avenue	1.5	322,215.99	125,724.40
EPT	Taunton Fairwater 3	-	Greenway Avenue, Recreation Ground	Entrance by Greenway Avenue	1.5	322,312.70	125,753.60
EPT	Taunton Fairwater 4	-	Greenway Avenue, Recreation Ground	Off Cyril Street	1.5	322,277.00	125,635.70
EPT	Taunton Fairwater 5	-	Roughmoor Crescent	By Richmond Road	1.5	321,744.70	125,406.90
EPT	Taunton Fairwater 6	-	Roughmoor Close	On entrance to walkway	1.5	321,771.80	125,200.10
EPT	Taunton Fairwater 7	-	French Weir	Far end past toilets	1.5	322,058.40	124,953.00
EPT	Taunton Fairwater	-	French Weir	Entrance by Cleveland Road	1.5	322,213.70	124,800.80
EPT	Taunton Fairwater	-	French Weir	Walkway by Weir	1.5	322,056.90	124,774.40
EPT	Taunton Fairwater	-	French Weir	Off Turner Road	1.5		



TAUNTON HALCON					
EPT	Taunton Halcon 1	-	Victoria Park	Off Leycroft Road	1.5 323,749.70 124,999.46
EPT	Taunton Halcon 2	-	Wheatley Crescent	By subway	1.5 323,725.60 125,183.30
EPT	Taunton Halcon 3	-	Baldwin Road	By childrens play area	1.5 323,858.30 125,053.00
Community Development	Taunton Halcon 4	-	Viridor Green	Entrance to BMX track	2 324,083.70 125,259.20
HOUSING	Taunton Halcon 5	-	Crossways	End of road by flats	2 324,438.30 125,292.70
EPT	Taunton Halcon 6	-	Hamilton Gault Playing Field	Entrance Opp Roman Road	1.5 324,095.50 124,801.90
EPT	Taunton Halcon 7	-	Hamilton Gault Playing Field	Near fire station	1.5 324,088.60 124,703.60
EPT	Taunton Halcon 8	-	Hamilton Gault Playing Field	Hamilton Road side near car park	1.5 324,329.00 124,850.30
EPT	Taunton Halcon 9	-	Hamilton Gault Playing Field	Near skate ramps	1.5 324,363.80 124,727.10
EPT	Taunton Halcon 10	-	Lisieux Way	Footpath by Master Thatcher	1.5 324,396.30 124,396.90
EPT	Taunton Halcon 11	-	Laxton Road/Bramley Road	End of Junction	1.5 324,962.80 125,295.50
EPT	Taunton Halcon 12	-	Blenheim Road	Green Area at bottom of road	1.5 325,045.20 125,212.90
HOUSING	Taunton Halcon 13	-	Laxton Road/Barrow Drive	Behind garages	2 325,192.30 125,257.90
EPT	Taunton Halcon 14	-	Laxton Road/Allington Close	On green area at end of Allington Close	1.5 325,209.84 125,138.92
EPT	Taunton Halcon 15	-	Newton Road	Near Community Centre	1.5 325,076.20 124,891.10
TAUNTON LYNCFORD WARD					
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 3		Lyngford Park	Near entrance by library	1.5 323,389.50 126,431.70
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 4		Lyngford Park	Children's play area	1.5 323,425.80 126,370.00
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 5		Lyngford Park	Lyngford Road	1.5 323,475.20 126,258.20
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 2		Grange Drive	Walkway between flats	1.5 323,112.50 125,974.40
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 1		Enmore Road	Grass area/corner of road	1.5 322,656.50 126,227.20
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 7		Priorswood Park	By car park	1.5 323,825.90 126,112.80
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 8		Priorswood Park	Bottom of park	1.5 323,989.00 126,208.40
Heritage & Landscape	Taunton Lyngford 11		Obridge Walk	Children's Wood	2 323,533.00 125,371.30
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 9		Obridge Walk	End of Plais Street	1.5 322,978.40 125,513.10
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 10		Obridge Walk	Walkway behind old railway works	1.5 323,283.90 125,503.00
EPT	Taunton Lyngford 6		Adcombe Road	Behind garages Fairfield Road	1.5 323,950.30 126,591.60
TDBC OS	Taunton Lyngford 12		Messingham Park	To end of Road	2 323,586.52 125,614.16
TAUNTON KILLAMS AND MOUNTFIELD					
EPT	Taunton Killams and Mountfields 1	-	Mountfields Road	End of road by footpath	1.5 323,540.10 123,084.50
EPT	Taunton Killams and Mountfields 2	-	Killiams Drive	On footpath by river	1.5 323,538.70 122,779.80
EPT	Taunton Killams and Mountfields 3	-	Killiams Avenue Open Space	On footpath by river	1.5 323,561.08 122,587.50
EPT	Taunton Killams and Mountfields 4	-	Greenlands	By stream	1.5 323,831.90 123,463.60
EPT	Taunton Killams and Mountfields 5	-	Celandine Mead	Footpath behind houses by play area	1.5 324,221.40 122,867.50
TAUNTON PYRLAND AND ROWBARTON WARD					
EPT	Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton 2	-	Cinder Track	Off Turner Road	1.5 322,244.50 126,419.50
EPT	Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton 2	-	Wellsprings Park	Bottom of Park	1.5 322,520.10 126,373.80
EPT	Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton 2	-	Wellsprings Park	Halfway	1.5 322,557.80 126,580.50
EPT	Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton 2	-	Wellsprings Park	Top of Park	1.5 322,527.40 126,750.50
EPT	Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton 2	-	Taunton Green	Entrance by play area	1.5 322,769.70 126,839.00
EPT	Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton 2	-	Taunton Green	Bottom	1.5 322,605.90 126,751.10
EPT	Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton 2	-	Taunton Green	Hope Corner Lane entrance	1.5 322,610.60 126,864.20
EPT	Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton 2	-	Taunton Green	Behind School	1.5 322,726.90 126,710.50
EPT	Taunton Pyrland and Rowbarton 2	-	Bircham Road	Alongside School behind flats	1.5 323,761.30 126,782.10
TAUNTON MANOR AND WILTON					
TDBC OS	Taunton Manor and Wilton 1		Longrun Meadow	By bridge from French Weir	2 321997.90 124808.40
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 2	-	Goodlands Gardens	By footbridge to Castle Green	1.5 322,510.30 124,628.20
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 3	-	Goodlands Gardens	On main green	1.5 322,570.30 124,668.50
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 4	-	Parkfield Walk	Behind hospital 100 metres inside walkway	1.5 321,620.50 123,935.70
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 5	-	Wilton Park	Entrance by car park	1.5 322,567.80 123,934.90
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 6	-	Wilton Park	Far end by lake	1.5 322,686.30 124,054.50
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 7	-	Vivary Park	By weir & near bowling club	1.5 322,702.10 124,106.90
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 8	-	Vivary Park	Main entrance to park	1.5 322,739.20 124,147.50
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 9	-	Vivary Park	By toilets	1.5 322,879.90 123,897.00
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 10	-	Vivary Park	Rear entrance to park/by pond	1.5 322,977.80 123,960.50
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 11	-	Gwynne Lane	Entrance in south road	1.5 323,188.60 124,250.60
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 12	-	Churchill Way	Cherry Tree Lane	1.5 322,603.00 123,604.10
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 13	-	Haines Park	Top of park	1.5 321,965.10 123,316.50
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 14	-	Haines Park	Bottom of park	1.5 322,125.70 123,264.90
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 15	-	Wessex Road	On corner near garages	1.5 322,323.50 122,990.10
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 16	-	Wessex Road	Near play area	1.5 322,327.80 122,871.90
EPT	Taunton Manor and Wilton 17	-	Queens Drive	End of road alongside stream	1.5 322,051.60 122,833.80
TRULL					
Parish	Trull 1	Trull CP	Trull Green	Opposite garages	2 321,399.20 122,427.80
Parish	Trull 2	Trull CP	King Geroge's Field	Footpath behind school	2 321,532.80 122,025.50
Parish	Trull 3	Trull CP	King Geroge's Field	Footpath opposite Winchester Arms	2 321,738.30 122,019.20
WELLINGTON EAST					
EPT	Wellington East 1	Wellington CP	Gay Close	In entrance to open space	1.5 314,521.00 120,882.50
EPT	Wellington East 2	Wellington CP	Priory	End of Buckwell by garages	1.5 314252.1 120766.6
EPT	Wellington East 3	Wellington CP	Scotts Lane	Top of industrial estate	1.5 314,182.10 120,649.30
Parish	Wellington East 4	Wellington CP	Jurston Lane	On grass verge by stream	2 314,489.50 120,535.30
EPT	Wellington East 5	Wellington CP	Oakefield Park	Oakfield Park side of playing field	1.5 314,350.30 119,972.40
EPT	Wellington East 6	Wellington CP	Oakefield Park	Webbers Close end	1.5 314,317.80 119,809.90
Parish	Wellington East 7	Wellington CP	Cades Farm	Next to childrens play area	2 314,569.80 121,230.20
WELLINGTON NORTH					
Parish	Wellington North 1	Wellington CP	Weavers Reach	By bridge & childrens play area	2 312,704.20 121,438.10
Parish	Wellington North 2	Wellington CP	Millstream Gardens	Outside Onestop	2 312,996.20 121,424.80
Parish	Wellington North 3	Wellington CP	Bovet Street	In carpark	2 313,463.40 121,088.20
EPT	Wellington North 4	Wellington CP	Longforth Road	Off Howards Lane (Wellington Lane)	1.5 313,693.10 121,086.80
EPT	Wellington North 5	Wellington CP	Roly Poly Green	On corner of Alexandra Road	1.5 313,764.50 120,892.20
EPT	Wellington North 6	Wellington CP	Churchfields	Rear of St Johns church	1.5 314,054.80 120,905.20
WELLINGTON ROCKWELL GREEN AND WEST					
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 1	Wellington CP	Waterpath, Westford	Opposite Westford Close	1.5 312,205.90 120,390.10
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 2	Wellington CP	Oaken Ground	By children's play area	1.5 312,687.50 120,410.90
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 3	Wellington CP	Dobree Park	Footpath beside play area	1.5 312,410.30 120,142.10
Parish	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 4	Wellington CP	Exeter Road	By bungalows	2 312,847.30 120,131.20
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 5	Wellington CP	Basins		1.5 312,918.50 120,788.40
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 6	Wellington CP	Sports Centre	Near entrance	1.5 313,019.20 120,714.50
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 7	Wellington CP	Wellington Park	Entrance top of Beech Grove	1.5 313,370.00 120,731.70
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 8	Wellington CP	Wellington Park	Entrance school side	1.5 313,470.20 120,638.40
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 9	Wellington CP	Beech Grove	Car park entrance	1.5 313,492.40 120,630.50
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 10	Wellington CP	Wellington Park	By War Memorial	1.5 313,413.20 120,553.10
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 11	Wellington CP	Wellington Recreation Ground	Inside entrance	1.5 313,404.00 120,539.40
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 12	Wellington CP	Dark Lane/Eight Acre Lane	At end of lane	1.5 313,917.30 120,126.60
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 13	Wellington CP	Dark Lane/Elworthy Road	End Elworthy Road	1.5 313,970.20 119,808.80
EPT	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 14	Wellington CP	Burrough Way	Off Immedstadt Drive	1.5 313,585.70 119,671.20
Parish	Wellington Rockwell Green and West 15	Wellington CP	Swains Lane	On by-pass	2 313,727.80 119,487.10
TDBC OS	Wellington		Nature Reserve		2
TDBC OS	Wellington		The Paddocks		2
WEST MONKTON					
EPT	West Monkton 1	Cheddon Fitzpaine CP	Stoney Furlong green	Entrance from Bossington Drive	1.5 324,054.40 126,729.90
EPT	West Monkton 2	Cheddon Fitzpaine CP	Summerleaze Crescent	Lane towards play area/Adcombe	1.5 323,975.90 126,531.10
EPT	West Monkton 3	Cheddon Fitzpaine CP	Summerleaze	Far end of Horner Road by playground	1.5 324,000.90 126,287.50
EPT	West Monkton 4	Cheddon Fitzpaine CP	Venture Way	On canal path	1.5 324,358.00 126,137.70
EPT	West Monkton 5	Cheddon Fitzpaine CP	Waterleaze	Barbers Mead	1.5 324,480.70 126,792.30
EPT	West Monkton 6	Cheddon Fitzpaine CP	Waterleaze	Entrance to play area	1.5 324,732.11 126,258.15



Parish	West Monkton 7	West Monkton CP	West Monkton	Yallands Hill on entrance to village	2	324,994.10	126,600.30
EPT	West Monkton 8	West Monkton CP	West Monkton	Mead Way/Greenway Road junction	1.5	325,390.30	127,157.70
Parish	West Monkton 9	West Monkton CP	West Monkton	Heathfield Drive by sub station	2	325,756.45	126,895.37
EPT	West Monkton 10	West Monkton CP	West Monkton	Junction by School	1.5	325,415.60	126,754.00
EPT	West Monkton 11	West Monkton CP	West Monkton	Farriers Green by childrens play area	1.5	325,510.83	126,404.07
EPT	West Monkton 12	West Monkton CP	West Monkton	Open space by no.95	1.5	325,721.90	126,516.23
Parish	West Monkton 13	West Monkton CP	Bathpool	Swingbridge Car Park	2	325,342.30	126,111.90
EPT	West Monkton 14	West Monkton CP	Bathpool	End on Childrens Wood	1.5	324,924.41	125,739.98
Parish	West Monkton	West Monkton CP		Britons Ash Green	2		
Parish	West Monkton	West Monkton CP		Sidbrook Orchard	2		
Parish	West Monkton	West Monkton CP		End of school Road	2		
WIVELISCOMBE AND WEST DEANE							
EPT	Wiveliscombe and West Deane 1	Wiveliscombe CP	South Street	Near secondary school	1.5	308,151.70	127,507.20
EPT	Wiveliscombe and West Deane 2	Wiveliscombe CP	Jews Lane	Half way up lane	1.5	307,911.00	127,871.70
EPT	Wiveliscombe and West Deane 3	Wiveliscombe CP	North Street	In car park	1.5	308,003.80	127,913.00
Parish	Wiveliscombe and West Deane 4	Wiveliscombe CP	Golden Hill/Burges Close		2	308,310.50	128,063.80

# **Taunton Deane Borough Council**

## **Community Scrutiny Committee - 27 April 2017**

### **Proposed Garden Town Plan for Taunton**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Roger Habgood**

**Report Author: Nick Bryant, Planning Policy Manager**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 In early 2017 Taunton was designated by Government as one of only nine Garden Towns nationally. This designation has brought £350,000 of revenue funding for the year 2016/17 with the likelihood of future direct and possibly indirect funding awards to be made on the back of the status. With this status comes an expectation and level of scrutiny on the Council's ambitious plans for the Town.
- 1.2 Since 2012, national planning policy has advocated that local planning authorities prepare a singular development plan document rather than the suite of plans that had previously been promoted through the 'Local Development Framework' approach set out by earlier policy and guidance. In the recent Housing White Paper, the Government has intimated that local planning authorities will be given a freer hand in determining how they wish to prepare local plans for their area and keep them under review.
- 1.3 In Taunton Deane, we currently have a suite of development plans: the Core Strategy (2012), Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008) and Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (2016). Should a new Council be formed comprising Taunton Deane and West Somerset, a local plan should be prepared covering the consolidated Local Planning Authority area building in the constituent parts of the plans listed above as well as the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032 (2016) (it should be noted that the West Somerset LPA area does not include the part of the District lying within the Exmoor National Park).
- 1.4 The Taunton Deane Core Strategy and TTCAAP are due for review. The Taunton Urban Area would be the primary focus of a new planning area in any new authority area and is the primary focus of the existing Core Strategy. Officers recognise that the 'fast-tracking' of a new Garden Town Plan for Taunton can take forward the Council's outline vision set out in our Garden Town Expression of Interest while responding to the very real need to review existing strategic allocations in Taunton.
- 1.5 The Garden Town Plan can progress to an initial public consultation during 2017 with work on the evidence base to support it and the broader local plan carrying on in parallel. A decision on whether to consolidate the Garden Town Plan into the broader local plan or to keep it as a separate, stand-alone document would be made during 2018 once a decision on the new council has been made.
- 1.6 In addition, it is important to demonstrate accountability and transparency in relation to

the Garden Town status. The Report therefore also seeks authority to 'ring-fence' the award of £350,000 to-date (and any subsequent award) to a specific Garden Town Reserve. A further £125,000 for the year 2016/17 has now been awarded by DCLG, this may or may not impact on the Council's award for 2017/18. Future expenditure would be authorised by the Planning Policy and Transportation Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Section 151 Officer.

## 2 Recommendations

2.1 The Community Scrutiny Committee recommends that the relevant Portfolio Holder:

- a) informally support the preparation of the Taunton Garden Town Plan (an item will subsequently be taken to the Council's Community Scrutiny Committee prior to a formal decision being made by the Executive); and
- b) informally support the establishment of a Garden Town Reserve with future expenditure made in line with the Garden Town Expression of Interest document or activities associated with the realisation of the Garden Town for Taunton where agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Transportation (also to be addressed in the same aforementioned Scrutiny and Executive Report); and
- c) note the commitment to review the Local Development Scheme for Taunton Deane as soon as practicable after the decision on the new council has been made.

## 3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
<i>Risk: That the Council does not continue to articulate its plan for Taunton; potentially reducing its ability to leverage in public monies to support the delivery of essential infrastructure and realisation of the Garden Town Vision.</i>	4	4	16
<i>Residual risk after proposed mitigation: Preparation of the Garden Town Plan will provide a very clear, focused way of carrying forward the principles set out in adopted Plans and the Garden Town EoI. This could prove important in ensuring a clear vision is set and the Council can effectively bid for monies.</i>	1	4	4

### Risk Scoring Matrix



<b>Likelihood</b>	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			<b>Impact</b>				

<b>Likelihood of risk occurring</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description (chance of occurrence)</b>
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

## 4 Background and Full details of the Report

### Background to the Garden Town Bid and spending of budget

- 4.1 Taunton was designated as one of only nine Garden Towns nationally in early 2017. This designation was made on the basis of the Taunton Garden Town Expression of Interest (Eol) document submitted in the Summer of 2016 (Appendix A). Revenue funding of £350,000 was secured for the year 2016/17 (a further £125,000 was paid to Taunton Deane on 31 March 2017) and there is an expectation that a future award may be available for the year 2017/18 for which the Council has already made a request for funding.
- 4.2 As one of comparatively few newly designated Garden Towns nationally and, having been awarded a substantial sum of public money, it is important that the Council demonstrates accountability and transparency. The money awarded to-date has not been 'ring-fenced' though Officers recognise the need to ensure it is spent in accord with the Expression of Interest and any other projects associated with the realisation of a Garden Town for Taunton.

### The need for a plan review

- 4.3 Local Planning Authorities are required to keep their Local Plans up-to-date through programmed review. These reviews are generally undertaken periodically, often, every five years.

- 4.4 The TTCAAP and Core Strategy are both in need of review. In the case of the Town Centre Plan, some of the policies are no longer relevant or consistent with national policy, whilst some sites have now been built out or are subject to planning applications. Similarly, some of the policies and allocations in the Core Strategy should be revisited to ensure consistency with national policy and that the Plan remains deliverable.
- 4.5 Nationally, planning policy has recently advocated that local planning authorities prepare a singular development plan document rather than the suite of plans that had previously been promoted through the 'Local Development Framework' approach set out in earlier policy and guidance. In the recent Housing White Paper, the Government has intimated that local planning authorities will be given a freer hand in determining how they wish to prepare local plans for their area and keep them under review.

Proposed response

- 4.6 With a need to review two of the Council's development plan documents and the recent Garden Town designation resulting in a number of queries and questions about: 'what is the vision for Taunton'?, it is considered that a Taunton Garden Town Plan is an appropriate focus for the Council's Planning Policy Team for the short-medium term. This Plan would be more focused than previous development plans with a strong emphasis on project implementation.
- 4.7 Until such time as a decision has been made on the establishment of the 'new council', it could be seen to be premature to commence work on a joint local plan for the combined Taunton Deane and West Somerset planning areas. As much of any new council's focus will be on its largest centre: Taunton, preparing the Garden Town Plan is the logical priority for Taunton Deane Borough Council through 2017 and beyond.
- 4.8 Work on evidence gathering for subsequent planning policy documents has commenced. Members will recall a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published towards the end of 2016 while the Planning Policy Team have made good progress with other key studies including publishing a new Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and towards commissioning and completing a refreshed Green Infrastructure Strategy and Employment, Retail and Leisure Study.
- 4.9 The evidence base referred to above will be used to inform not just the Garden Town Plan but also any subsequent Local Plan produced either independently by Taunton Deane or by a 'new council'. A decision on whether the Garden Town Plan will remain a separate development plan document or will be incorporated as a discrete chapter of a new local plan will need to be made during 2018.
- 4.10 Councils are required to set out a project plan for intended development plan production called a 'Local Development Scheme' (LDS). The LDS is a useful tool for the public, stakeholders and other interested parties insofar as it indicates the timetable for preparation of the local plan(s), critical dependencies, resources and assumptions.
- 4.11 The current LDS for Taunton Deane is now very out-of-date and would benefit from an update. Officers do not consider that there is any real benefit in refreshing this document now, or indeed until a decision on the new council has been made. This is because there can be no certainty about how and in what form local plans will be prepared across Taunton Deane and West Somerset.
- 4.12 Officers would recommend that, subject to a decision being reached on the new council, a new Local Development Scheme is prepared outlining the programme of planning

policy work over the period 2018-2021 early in the New Year. In the intervening period the Planning Policy Team will work to compile the evidence base required to support the emerging Garden Town and Local Plan with a view to undertaking an early consultation on the Taunton Garden Town Plan in the Autumn of 2017.

## **5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

- 5.1 A Garden Town Plan for Taunton will deliver outcomes against three of the four key themes outlined in the Council's Corporate Strategy, namely: 'People', 'Business and Enterprise' and 'Our Place'.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the costs associated with preparing a Garden Town Plan for Taunton can be borne from a combination of committed Garden Town funding secured to-date and existing Planning Policy Reserves.

## **7 Legal Implications (if any)**

- 7.1 None identified.

## **8 Environmental Impact Implications (if any)**

- 8.1 The Garden Town Plan will be underpinned by a Sustainability Appraisal which considers the environmental implications of the proposals set out in the Plan. It will be important that the Garden Town Plan reflects the principles of new Garden communities and aims for high environmental standards.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)**

- 9.1 None identified.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)**

- 10.1 The Taunton Garden Town Plan will be underpinned by an Equalities Impact Assessment.

## **11 Social Value Implications (if any)**

- 11.1 None identified.

## **12 Partnership Implications (if any)**

- 12.1 The Garden Town Plan will be prepared in partnership with a range of key stakeholders and infrastructure providers. Moreover, the successful delivery of the outcomes set by the Plan will be dependent on an on-going partnership-based approach to the delivery of sites and associated infrastructure.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications (if any)**

- 13.1 There are a number of opportunities which preparing a Garden Town Plan for Taunton will open up to make a stronger connection between spatial planning and health and well-being. These include, but are not limited to, the delivery of green infrastructure projects such as improved green and blue corridors through the Town that will promote walking and cycling and recreation.

**14 Asset Management Implications** (if any)

14.1 The existing TTCAAP includes a number of Council-owned sites, which, subject to continued availability, may well be allocated for development through the Garden Town Plan for Taunton, such as Coal Orchard and Firepool.

**15 Consultation Implications** (if any)

15.1 The Plan will need to be subject to a to be agreed programme of public consultation including a formal six week representation period on any future proposed submission document.

**16 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s)** (if any)

16.1 N/A

**Democratic Path:**

- **Community Scrutiny**
- **Portfolio Holder Decision**

**Reporting Frequency :** ☐ **Once only**

**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

Appendix A	Taunton Garden Town Expression of Interest
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**Contact Officer**

Name	Nick Bryant
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# Taunton Garden Town

*Expression of interest*







**Nestled between two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and close to Exmoor National Park, Taunton is the gateway to beautiful scenic landscapes and picturesque coastline of the South West.**





# Taunton in 2028 and beyond

Taunton will have strengthened its position as a first class destination at the heart of the South West, within easy reach of Bristol, Exeter, London and the Midlands.

The regeneration of the town centre will provide a stronger and more vibrant core, with a dynamic and diversified economy. The River Tone will be an attractive green corridor, providing high quality riverside development and enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes into the town centre.

Taunton will retain high levels of self-containment and foster the opportunities arising from the growth agenda to create construction-related apprenticeships. The current reliance on public sector employment will be rebalanced with increased skilled jobs in the green knowledge and digital economy, healthcare and hi-tech industries.



Well-integrated green infrastructure projects will lie at the heart of Taunton. Enhanced pedestrian and cycle links from the town out to the Quantock Hills AONB, a new country park, community orchards and additional green wedges will ensure the surrounding rural setting continues to penetrate the town, blending town and country.

The new garden communities will be a key driver and tool, in the delivery of the transformational growth and vision for Taunton as a Garden Town. They will be unique settings, coordinating landscape, wildlife, and leisure in a person friendly environment. Sustainable public transport links and improved footpaths and cycleways, will reduce car dependence and deliver wider physical and mental health benefits for residents.

The garden communities and publicly owned regeneration sites will provide a wide range of tenure options for new households and an increased diversity of specialist housing, to meet the different levels of care support sought by the increasing older population in Taunton.

Above all, Taunton will remain a place for residents, retaining the highly valued county town 'quality of life'.



# Taunton in context

Taunton is an attractive location, in close proximity to the Quantock and Blackdown Hills AONB and south west coastline. As Somerset's largest settlement, it is centrally located between Exeter and Bristol on the strategic road network, with both the M5 and A358/A303 corridor. Taunton provides excellent rail links to London and the Midlands and planned enhancements to Taunton station, will meet projected passenger increases of over 40% over the next 15-20 years.

Taunton serves a large catchment of approximately 350,000 people extending into much of Somerset and parts of Devon. A number of major employers are based in Taunton, including the Hydrographic Office, Debenhams Financial Office, the local authorities and Musgrove Park Hospital.

Identified as a Principal Growth Area in the LEP's devolution bid, 'A Prospectus for Productivity', Taunton is located within the Hinkley Point C housing impact area. This major infrastructure project will provide significant employment and business growth opportunities for the area.

The town has a high level of self-containment, with approximately 81% of the resident population working in the town. Taunton offers a wide range



of exceptional schools and colleges with half of the top ten Somerset schools (GCSE grade A-C) in the Taunton area (2012). The education offer, with both state and independent schools, make it an attractive location for families. The health facilities and leisure opportunities also provide for the needs of Taunton's increasing older population.

The wide range of sport and leisure attractions (Somerset County Cricket Ground, Taunton Racecourse, Brewhouse Theatre and enhanced swimming and leisure facilities) and the night time economy, provide a high quality offer.







### **Hinkley Point Nuclear New Build**

- 45 minute drive time from site
- Largest construction project in Europe
- £18bn investment in the Somerset economy
- Massive supply chain opportunities for new and existing businesses

### **New Communities**

- 13,000 new homes planned in Taunton with over 2,000 completed to date, delivering a 40% increase in the housing stock.
- Three new garden communities delivering over 8,000 new homes, with one already under construction
- Sustainable communities, including new schools, leisure, transport and business infrastructure



### **New Employment Site at Junction 25, M5**

- A planned new 25 hectare site
- Excellent location
- Up to 4,000 jobs in businesses across all sectors
- Backed by Government

### **Transport Infrastructure - Major investments to further enhance Taunton as Somerset's best connected Town:**

- £9m rail station enhancement
- £18m major scheme to improve Junction 25 of M5 (Taunton)
- New A303/358 'SW Expressway', connecting to Taunton at M5.J25
- New local routes



### **Town Centre Investment**

- A thriving Town Centre with low vacancy rates for shops
- New investment opportunities for retail, leisure, office & residential
- Prime riverside development sites



# Taunton – A Future Garden Town for the South West

Taunton provides a unique opportunity to respond to the Government's Garden Town Prospectus. The Council has sought to put forward a proposal which reflects local priorities and aspirations and delivers real benefits to local communities.

Taunton Deane Borough Council is committed to delivering truly transformational growth. The adopted development plan outlines plans to deliver 17,000 new homes over the period to 2028; a rate of development which exceeds the long-term average of completions and the Government's household projections, by approximately 70%.

The plan identifies the Taunton urban area as the strategic focus for growth within the Borough and wider sub-region. The Heart of the SW LEP identifies Taunton as a Principal Growth Area, with Exeter and Plymouth.

Working closely with key partners, Taunton will accommodate at least 13,000 new homes as

well as 9,500 new jobs, sustainable transport links and a range of other higher order services and facilities, that will strengthen and enhance its role. The planned growth for Taunton will deliver a 40% increase in the existing housing stock and will take the population of Taunton to approximately 85,000. This is the largest proportional increase of any of the major settlements in the South West.

The Taunton town centre regeneration sites offer fantastic opportunities to maximise growth on brownfield sites, with much of the land in public ownership. Many of these sites have been promoted for the Starter Home programme. The Council is working in close partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency, Network Rail, Somerset County Council, the Environment Agency and key development partners, to ensure these brownfield sites come forward. Taunton rail station is identified as one of three major regeneration areas under the Government's 'Rail Hub' programme.



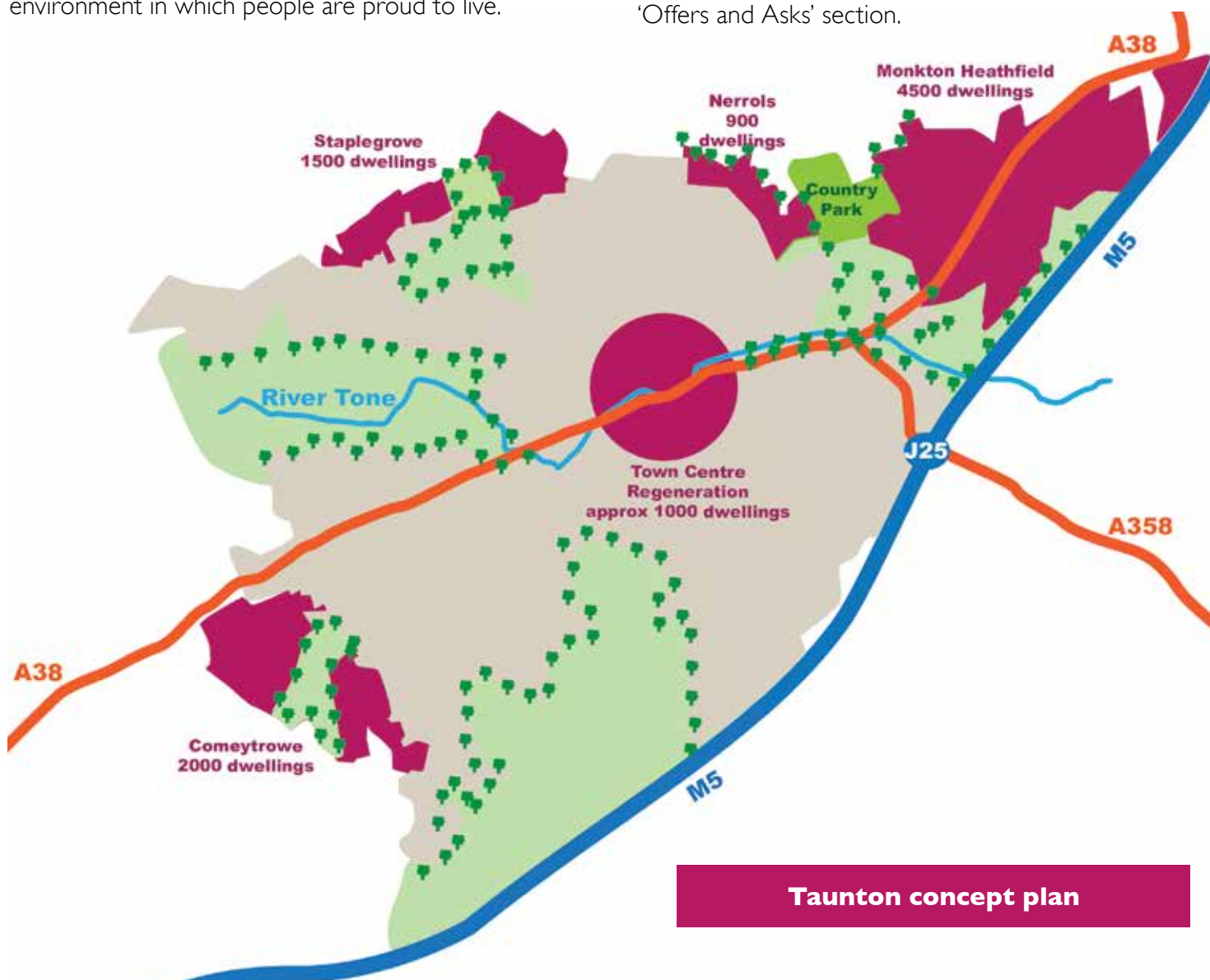


Further substantial growth will be delivered through sustainable, high quality new communities and smaller allocations around the town, delivering enhanced public transport corridors and cycle links.

The new garden communities, will be a key driver and tool in the delivery of transformational growth and the vision for Taunton as a Garden Town. They will be exemplars of quality place making. Although well-connected to Taunton, each community will provide a clear, distinct sense of identity. They will be mixed-use developments where people can meet their daily needs locally, incorporating a range of housing, employment, open space, local facilities and an environment in which people are proud to live.

Together these developments and other smaller allocations in Taunton, will provide over 11,000 new homes by 2028 and can assist in delivering the Government's commitment to increase housing delivery. Beyond 2028 the Core Strategy has identified further potential for 4,000-6,000 dwellings in the south west sector of Taunton, subject to further work to consider the physical infrastructure constraints and solutions.

In order to maintain a significant acceleration in housing delivery, assistance will be required to ensure timely delivery of critical infrastructure, to unlock the development sites. Further detail is provided in the 'Offers and Asks' section.



# Delivering Garden Town principles

The council is working with the Somerset Wildlife Trust and the Local Nature Partnership, to encourage a closer tie between wildlife in our gardens, streets and parks and our daily activities, so that wildlife is no longer seen as separate but as part of our daily lives. To facilitate this, the detailed master planning for the proposed new communities, will seek to link the green spaces within the development and surrounding areas, through establishing country parks, community woodlands and 'green necklaces' of open space. This multi-functional green infrastructure will serve to provide leisure facilities and sustainable water management measures and enhance biodiversity.

TDBC recognises that access to open spaces, leisure and recreational facilities has direct and indirect impacts on people's physical and mental health. We are working closely with partners to ensure that the delivery of green infrastructure projects, maximise the opportunities for improving health outcomes for the existing and new population. This is in line with the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Board's priority, of building stronger communities and reducing loneliness and isolation. Public Health funding was committed through our Borough Health and Wellbeing Programme, to assist with a specific project, to improve cycle links from Taunton to the Quantock Hills, in recognition

of the wider public health benefits that could arise from the project.

The provision of additional informal open space, will seek to integrate children's play and adult recreation, through the co-location of green gyms with children's play and space for informal sports, to be enjoyed by local communities. Early delivery of key green infrastructure projects, will assist in promoting public health and community cohesion.

The future growth in Taunton, has a key role to play in delivering supported housing for the increasing older population and those with long term health needs. The Garden Town proposals have been informed by our membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board and our commitment to promoting the aims of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This proposal offers the opportunity to address some of the current and future challenges facing the health and independent living needs for this population.

Local authorities and partners in Somerset, recognise the wider benefits that Garden Town status could deliver. Our local partners are particularly keen to maximise the development of positive social and mental capital, in the delivery of small scale green infrastructure projects, working closely with relevant mental and physical health related projects and capturing the learning from these projects to share more widely. This work aligns directly with the Joint Strategy for Positive Mental Health in Somerset.







## Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure and access to community facilities, is the critical building block to establishing a strong sense of community identity and cohesion, creating a high quality sense of place.

Central to the Council's growth agenda, is to protect and extend the Town's distinctive Green Wedges and corridors and develop a comprehensive network of green and blue infrastructure, linking the heart of the town with the surrounding countryside and reconnecting with the River Tone.

The urban form of Taunton will remain self-contained, below ridge lines which are sensitive to development and will preserve the setting and character of Quantock Hills and Blackdown Hills AONB. The Green Wedges extending into Taunton town centre, provide notable opportunities for enhancing the landscape character and setting of Taunton, whilst improving areas for recreation, visual amenity and play.

For over 25 years, the protection of Green Wedges has been an important part of the planning policy framework for Taunton Deane.

The key policy objectives of Green Wedges are to:

- *prevent the coalescence of settlements and maintain a sense of place and identity for neighbourhoods;*
- *maintain the open character of a green lung contributing to health and wellbeing for residents;*
- *bring the countryside into the heart of town;*
- *provide accessible formal and informal recreation, sport and play;*
- *provide valuable wildlife corridors and habitat;*
- *protect areas of landscape importance and visual amenity;*
- *provide surface water attenuation; and*
- *provide a positive approach to land use.*

## Wider benefits of Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is an integral part of the Garden Town vision and will serve both the new communities proposed in Taunton and the wider area. A new Country Park and 'Green Necklace' is proposed alongside the Monkton Heathfield new community, with links out towards the Quantocks. This strategic green infrastructure will provide leisure, biodiversity and flood management benefits.

In coordinating landscape, wildlife, leisure, sustainable urban drainage, footpaths and cycleways, this offers the chance for new and existing communities to access local facilities in a person friendly environment, without needing to use the car.

Working in close partnership with the Local Nature Partnership, Sport England, the Local Health and Wellbeing Board and other key partners, the Council is seeking to ensure that a holistic approach to delivering development and green infrastructure, also delivers wider community and public health benefits. Taunton Deane's co-ordinating role working with key partners, seeks to foster social capital and enable existing and new communities to forge greater ownership and involvement in the proposed green infrastructure projects.



# Taunton's Economic Potential

In the Heart of SW LEP area, Taunton, alongside Plymouth and Exeter, is identified as a Principal Growth Area for the sub-region. The town is located within the Hinkley Point Impact Area and is just a 45 minute drive time from the site. The Hinkley Point nuclear project will generate approximately 25,000 jobs during the construction phase of the project and 1,000 apprenticeships. This major infrastructure project will also deliver significant supply chain opportunities for local businesses in the Hinkley Impact Area.

In addition to the Hinkley Point project, Taunton will see the delivery of a Strategic Employment site at Junction 25. This site is currently being progressed through a Local Development Order and will provide approximately 4,000 jobs.

Major growth and infrastructure investment in Taunton over the next 20 years with the rail station improvements, Junction 25 improvements, A303/A358 Expressway, the strategic flood project and major housing and regeneration development, will offer significant employment, training and supply chain opportunities in Taunton.

Taunton Deane is seeking to maximise the training and job opportunities arising from the wide range of construction projects. Taunton Deane works with the Construction Industry Training Board, to deliver employment apprenticeships and training through planning obligations related to major construction projects. In partnership with the Environment Agency, the Council will also explore links with the delivery of the flooding related infrastructure projects and the acknowledged Water Management and Environment skills shortage (CIWEM). The Council will seek to foster links with the water management courses and apprenticeship scheme offered at the University of the West of England.

In partnership with the local schools and colleges, the Garden Town project will seek to raise awareness of skills shortages in construction and water management related careers and promote the employment opportunities this presents for young people in Taunton Deane and the wider sub-region.







## Growth Cluster

### Business and Professional Services

*Growing on Taunton's strong profile in this cluster, creating more highly qualified jobs in sectors such as business administration, law, architects services, insurance, accountancy, consultancy and management.*

### Health and Care Industries

*Reflecting the changing demographic profile and the existing organisations (public and private) already present in this sector, with key employers such as Musgrove Park Hospital, Nuffield Hospital, Exmoor Plastics, Pearsalls and South West Pathology Services. There will be an increase in higher qualified health related jobs, based in new as well as existing facilities.*

### Hi Tech, Scientific and Advanced Industries

*An emerging cluster, based on hi-tech opportunities arising from Hinkley nuclear development and supply chain opportunities, advanced engineering and low carbon technologies, and specialist scientific industries. Also to strengthen links with existing key Taunton employers such as UK Hydrographic Office and GSI Exotec to address their skills, employment and infrastructure requirements.*



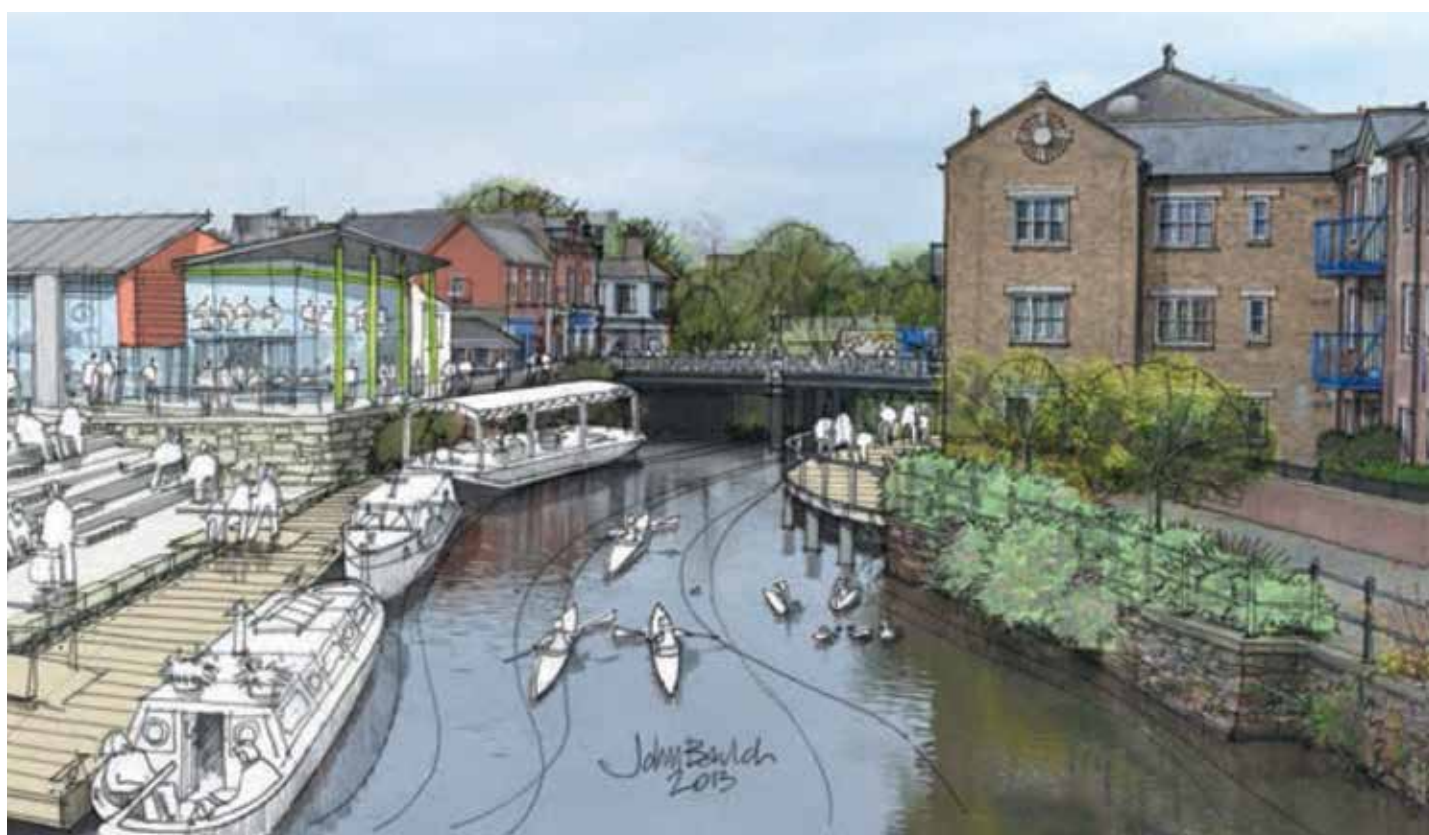
# Major Town Centre Regeneration

Key to the Council's growth agenda and supporting the vision for a Garden Town, is the regeneration of Taunton's town centre, providing a stronger and more vibrant core with a dynamic and diversified economy. Many of the town centre regeneration sites are publicly-owned and the Council is working in close partnership with the HCA, Somerset County, the LEP, Network Rail and the Environment Agency to ensure these sites come forward. The vision seeks to provide a choice of residential accommodation, retail, leisure, sporting and community activities.

Taunton has a compact, flat town centre with access to an attractive riverside and high quality green spaces. It has a good retail offer, with a significant number of high quality independent shops and a farmers market.

Despite these positive features there are issues that need to be addressed – the River Tone is underutilised; vehicles dominate key shopping streets; the cultural and leisure offer must be enhanced to attract more people into the town and support wider investment in Taunton.

The River Tone provides opportunities for enhancing and creating multifunctional green infrastructure corridors, balancing access and ecological enhancements and linking the regeneration sites. The existing green connections into the town from Longrun Meadow, Firepool Lock and Vivary Park need to be joined up, through the creation of pleasant and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes along the River Tone and through the town centre.

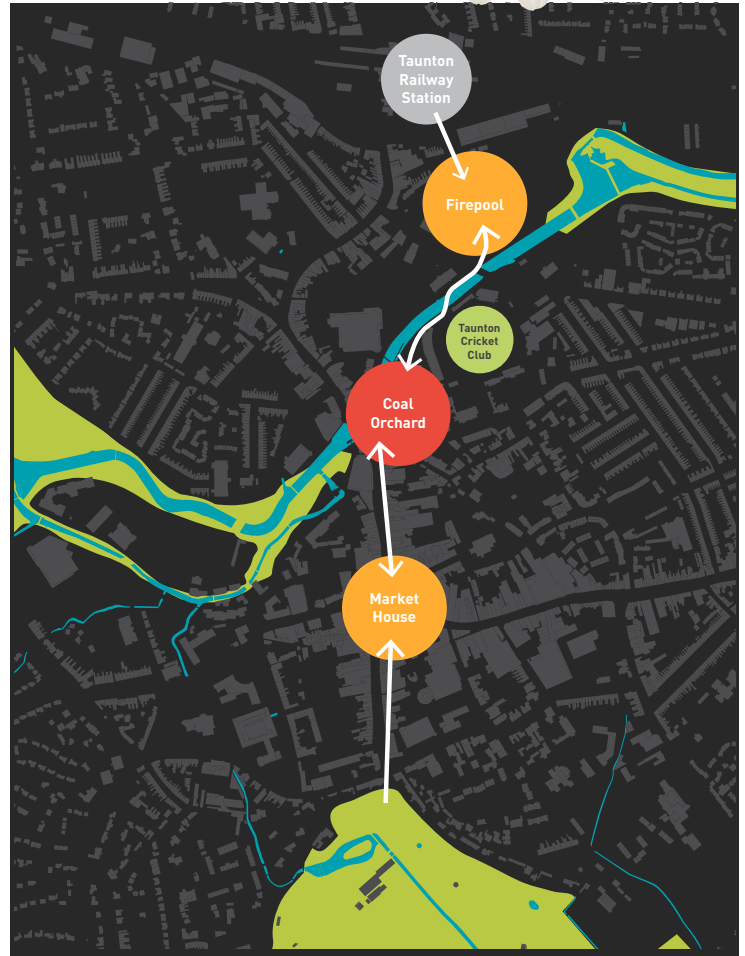






A high-quality, north-south pedestrian route, from the Railway Station to High Street, is proposed to improve pedestrian links with the town centre. High quality waterfront development at Coal Orchard, will deliver a more attractive public space with cultural activities, cafes, restaurants, artist's studios and galleries and active use of the river. An enhanced east-west river corridor, linking key leisure and retail destinations at Longrun Meadow, Firepool and Hankridge, will provide enhanced pedestrian and cycle links.

Redevelopment at Firepool will provide a mixed-use development and provide a new gateway to the town centre from the north. There are a number of other town centre redevelopment sites, that may provide opportunities for mixed-use development to deliver the wider vision. The town centre sites have the capacity to deliver approximately 1,000 residential units, some of which are being considered through the Starter Home initiative. Several of these sites are dependent on the delivery of the upstream flood attenuation scheme.



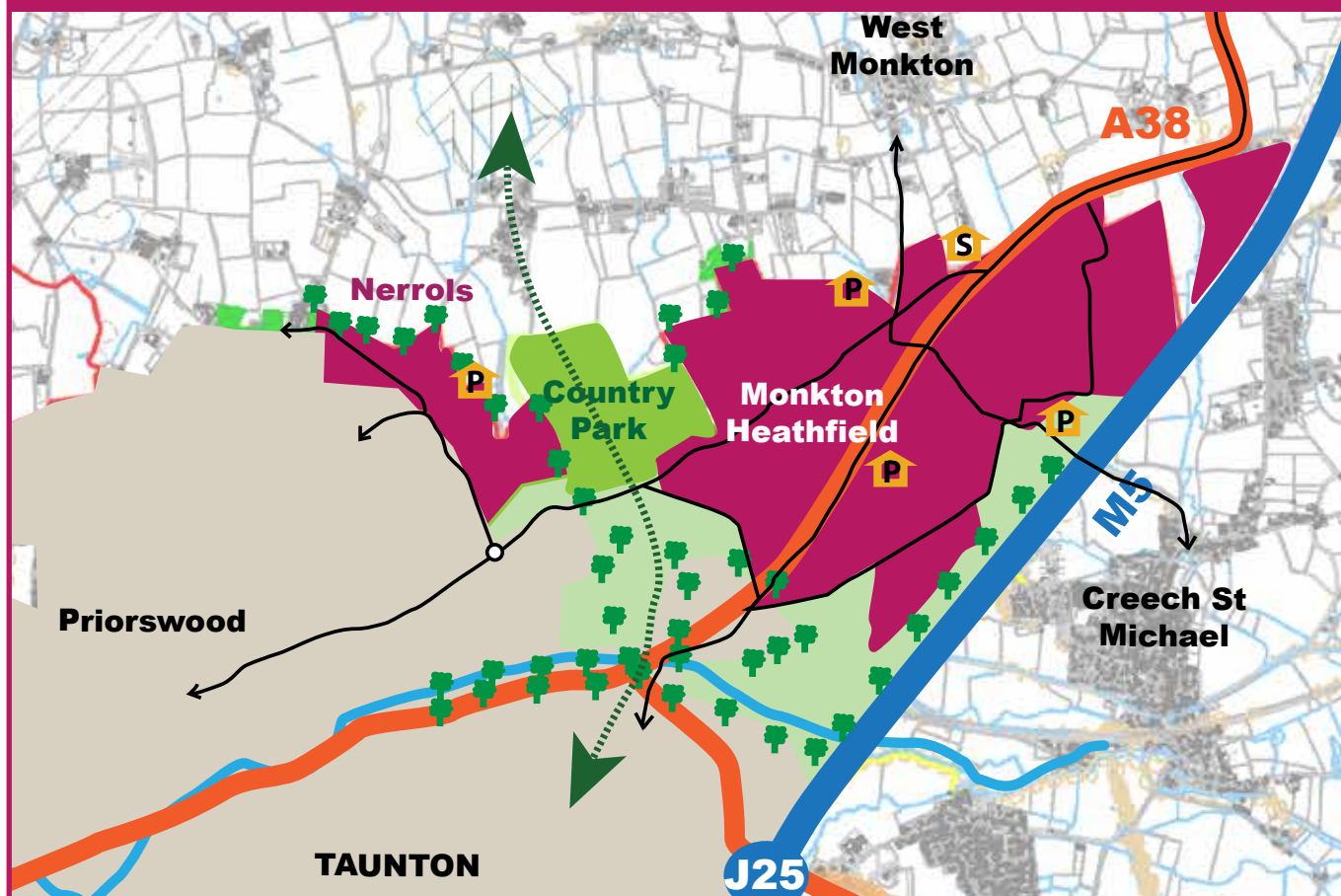
*Taunton Rethink - concept diagram*



# The new Garden Communities

## Monkton Heathfield / Priorswood/Nerrols

Monkton Heathfield and Nerrols concept plan



The largest new garden community will provide a new sustainable neighbourhood in Monkton Heathfield, towards the North East of Taunton. The new community will provide phased delivery of around 5,400 new homes (4,500 at Monkton Heathfield and 900 at Nerrols and 25% affordable housing), a new district centre, 32 ha of employment land, 3 new primary schools, a secondary school and a country park and community woodland within the green wedge, between Monkton Heathfield and Priorswood.

Development of this new community has commenced with around 700 houses, a new

primary school and a network of green and blue infrastructure links, incorporating footpath/cycle links, drainage and a range of play and open spaces.

Sustainable transport improvements seek to enhance pedestrian and cycle links to Taunton town centre. The provision of a rapid bus corridor along the A38 and a park and ride / bus site, will provide improved transport linkages from Bridgwater (to the North East of the town) to the railway station, the town centre and further south to the proposed new community in South West Taunton.







There are a number of constraints and opportunities, that will guide the future development of Monkton Heathfield and Nerrols as sustainable, mixed-use communities. To the north, the land slopes up past Hestercombe House towards the Quantocks AONB. Development will be accompanied by measures to mitigate its effect on the landscape setting and will include new areas of woodland planting to, mitigate the loss of foraging areas for the lesser horseshoe bats from Hestercombe House SAC.

The integrity of the green wedge, separating Monkton Heathfield from Taunton, will be retained. A woodland buffer around the new boundaries to the green wedge and north, will prevent light spilling from the development into the surrounding countryside and will mitigate the effect of development on the Hestercombe House SAC. There is an aspiration for a multi-purpose 'green necklace' of landscape and public open space, to surround the new settlement providing for allotments, outdoor recreation, flood mitigation measures and wildlife habitat.

A strategic green link from Halcon, the most deprived ward in Somerset, running north through the green wedge to the Quantock Hills AONB, will deliver wider social and health related benefits for existing residents. There is also potential for surface water attenuation and SUDS within the green wedge, along both Maidenbrook and Allen's Brook, which will promote and enhance the biodiversity of the local area.

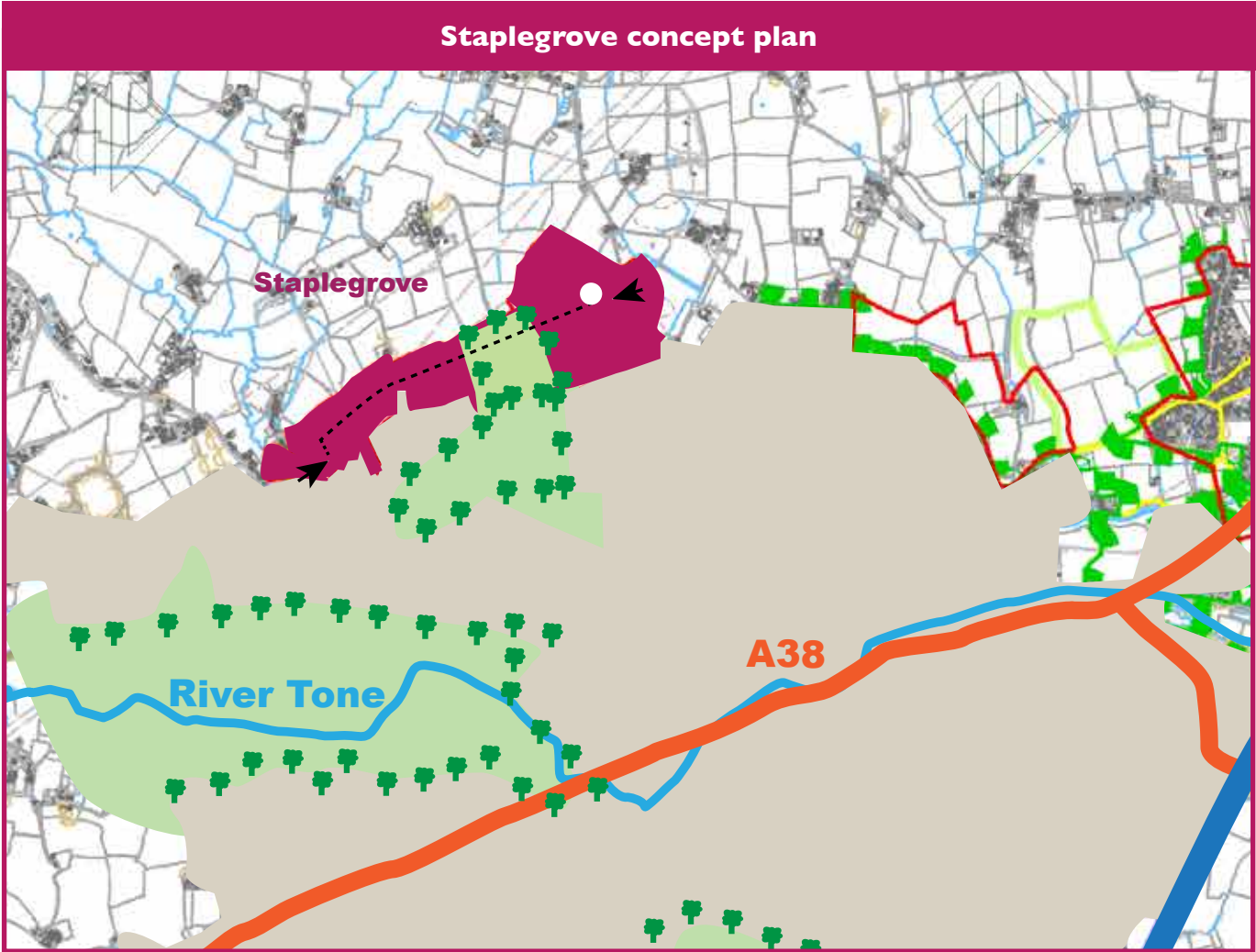
The Bridgwater and Taunton Canal is designated as a Local Wildlife Site and provides informal recreation opportunities, together with off-road footpath and cycleway links to the town centre.

#### Key challenges:

- *Development of a co-ordinated masterplan*
- *Early completion of relief roads to avoid fragmentation of existing community*
- *Early delivery of Rapid Bus link and other sustainable transport measures to encourage modal shift*
- *Early delivery of primary and secondary schools*
- *Delivery of strategic flood mitigation works*
- *The unlocking of the district centre and employment land*
- *Provision and governance of the 'Green Necklace' and green infrastructure links*



Staplegrove





The adopted framework masterplan for the North Taunton new community, will deliver approximately 1,500 dwellings (seeking up to 25% affordable), a new local centre, primary school, an extension to the existing Green Wedge, improvements to cycle and pedestrian links to the town centre and significant open space and recreational opportunities.

The Green Wedge extension into the countryside, will meet a range of functions, including wildlife habitat, recreation, flood alleviation and visual amenity. The wedge provides a green link to the countryside and helps maintain separate identities for the western development area, as an extension to Staplegrove community and the eastern development area, as an extension to Taunton.

The development will seek to improve access to the open countryside, between Staplegrove and the Quantock Hills, through enhancement of the existing green link (West Deane Way), which runs through the western-most part of the site. This will ultimately create links to Taunton Town Centre via the River Tone 'blue link' and the creation of further green links that penetrate the urban area.

The Hestercombe House Appropriate Assessment, identified lesser horseshoe bat foraging on the eastern part of Staplegrove site and the outer boundaries of the development will require a buffer of woodland planting, plus additional off-site woodland planting, to mitigate the loss of bat foraging area.

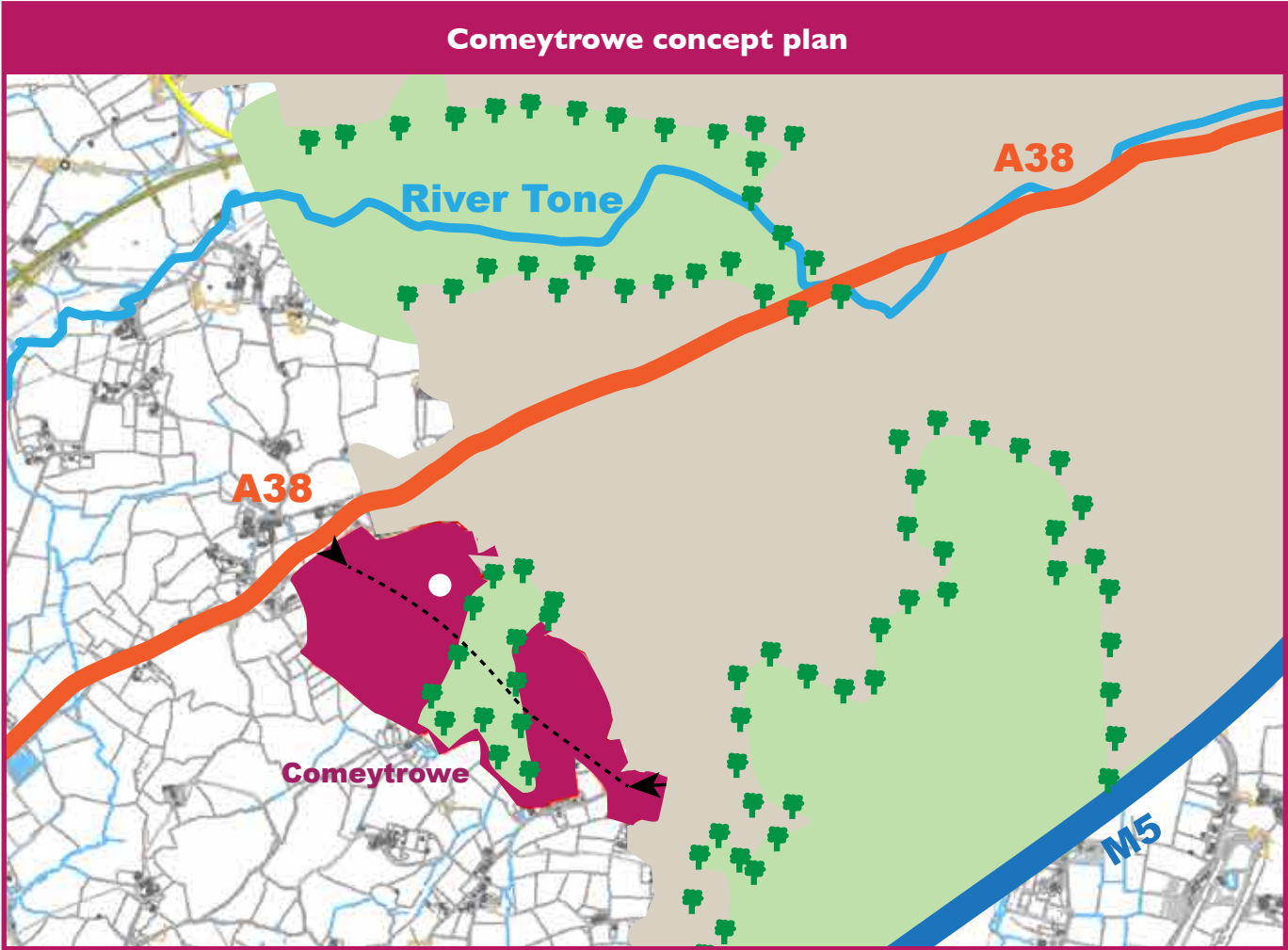
Key challenges include:

- *The Hestercombe House Appropriate Assessment requires off-site woodland planting to be established and sufficiently mature, to provide replacement foraging for the bats, before the eastern area can be developed. A potential area for this new woodland has been identified and agreed with the National Trust, who are one of the landowners in the eastern area part of the site.*
- *Early delivery of the link road through the development, is required to alleviate existing traffic congestion in Staplegrove village and will deliver a key benefit to existing residents.*
- *Early delivery of public transport and essential pedestrian and cycle improvements, linking the development with the town centre, to ensure early take-up of sustainable travel behaviour as a lifestyle choice for new residents.*
- *Early delivery of the primary school.*
- *Diversion of or placing underground, the existing 132kv powerlines.*





South West Taunton/Comeytrowe/Trull New Community





The proposed new community benefits from an outline planning resolution (subject to s106) and will deliver approximately 2,000 dwellings (seeking up to 25% affordable housing), a new local centre, a primary school, a new green wedge, open space and green infrastructure enhancements and wider social and community facilities. The site will also deliver wider public transport improvements, including the provision of a park and bus site, that will link with the proposals for a rapid bus corridor on the A38 and an improved town bus service, linking the new community to Taunton town centre via the hospital.

The outline permission is attached to a Parameters and Principles document that sets the framework for the more detailed master planning required for the two proposed neighbourhoods either side of the new Green Wedge, based on the characteristics of garden cities and suburbs.

A new green wedge will be created along Galmington Stream, which is a designated Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve. The new green wedge will deliver functions including: SUDS, wildlife habitat, recreation and visual amenity and will integrate with a parkland area, forming a central feature for the adjoining communities. The new green wedge has the opportunity to increase footpath and cycleway access to the Taunton town centre and the wider countryside.

#### Challenges:

- *Early delivery of the primary school.*
- *Early delivery of public transport and essential pedestrian and cycle improvements, linking the development with the town centre, to ensure early take up of sustainable travel behaviour as a lifestyle choice for new residents.*





# Major strategic infrastructure projects

A number of sustainable transport projects are being progressed in Taunton that will assist in delivering the wider garden town vision.

These include:

- *improvements to the Taunton railway station, to accommodate increased passenger numbers and provide a high-quality public transport interchange.*
- *proposals for the provision of a rapid bus corridor on the A38, serving the new communities and improving connectivity between Bridgwater, Taunton and Wellington*
- *improved pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre.*
- *plans to re-open Wellington railway station to improve sustainable transport links to Taunton, Bridgwater, Exeter and Bristol.*

There are also a number of wider strategic transport projects with improvements to the A303/A358 corridor, linking with the M5 and the capacity works at Junction 25.

In conjunction with the proposed works for improvements to the M5 Junction 25, the Council is progressing a Local Development Order in order to deliver a new Strategic Employment Site to the east of the M5. This proposal will create up to 4000 new jobs in a range of sectors which will enhance Taunton's identity as a high-quality business destination.

Working in close partnership with the Environment Agency and Somerset Rivers Authority, Taunton Deane is progressing work on a major upstream flood alleviation project, necessary to unlock the town centre regeneration sites and to provide enhanced flood protection, for more than 6,000 households and many businesses in the area.





## Offer and Asks

Taunton is ideally placed to lead the way in responding to the Garden Town prospectus and to offer a learning opportunity for those areas where new Garden Town proposals are less developed.

The town already benefits from many of the characteristics of a garden town. As Somerset's largest and fastest growing town, Taunton strikes a balance in retaining its distinctive character, beautiful environment and great quality of life. The new communities are already allocated in the adopted development plan and all sites are being actively promoted by housing developers. The first phase of the Monkton Heathfield new community, is under construction, with approximately 700 dwellings completed, and master planning work on the second phase is underway. The South West Taunton new community has a planning resolution and a planning application for the Staplegrove new community has been submitted. With appropriate support through the Garden Towns programme, the development plan for Taunton offers significant acceleration in housing delivery and genuine additional housing supply.

The town centre regeneration sites, of which the majority are publicly owned, offer significant opportunities under the Government's Starter Home initiative and have been put forward for consideration under this scheme. Working with Network Rail and the HCA, the Council is seeking to progress master planning work for the underutilised land around the train station to consider the development opportunities.

Green Infrastructure is integral to Taunton's growth and provides notable opportunities to respond to the Government's Garden Town prospectus. Garden Town status will provide Taunton with the assistance required to deliver the necessary critical infrastructure in a timely fashion, to unlock the sites and ensure the Garden

Town vision is realised. The delivery of critical infrastructure for Taunton is essential to:

- 1. deliver the new sustainable lifetime neighbourhoods envisaged**
- 2. enable developers to focus on delivery**
- 3. maintain community support and provide the wider benefits for current and future Taunton residents and the sub-region.**

The ambitious level of growth exceeds current Government household projections for Taunton Deane and the presence of a wide range of developers demonstrates the strength of the Taunton Deane housing market. However, developing at such a scale and sustaining current delivery rates, presents significant challenges, not least in relation to provision of essential infrastructure requirements, to serve the new communities, but also the wider strategic infrastructure projects and regeneration required for Taunton to maintain the valued quality of life.



# Delivery enabling funding and support for 2016/2017

Taunton Deane has a small dedicated delivery team working on the new community at Monkton Heathfield. Additional capacity funding could enable the existing skills in this team to be retained and expanded into a wider implementation team to deliver the wider Garden Town vision. Additional capacity/ expertise may be required to assist with the following areas:

## Consultancy Input/Staff Resource

### Garden Town Delivery Team:

Approximate cost 2016/17

**£75,000-80,000**

#### Further details

*Employ temporary staff resource to free up internal staff time, to progress work on Garden Town programme.*

*Internal programme management training for key members of staff.*

*Appropriate programme management skills will be essential for driving forward the wider Garden Town vision and the key infrastructure projects. This training could be a shared training programme between the allocated Garden Town/ Community locations.*

### Expert advice on and assistance with legal, acquisition and land assembly issues

Approximate cost 2016/17

**£60,000-75,000**

#### Further details

*Commission consultants/expert advice to assist the Council with legal, acquisition and land assembly issues, that arise as part of delivering the wider Garden Town vision and major regeneration sites.*

### Master planning and viability assessment of potential development sites close to Taunton train station

Approximate cost 2016/17

**£40,000-50,000**

#### Further details

*More detailed assessment of the development potential around the train station, is necessary to assess the commercial and residential capacity of these sites, which are owned by TDBC and Network Rail.*

### Master planning input for the new garden communities and town centre regeneration sites

Approximate cost 2016/17

**£90,000-100,000**

#### Further details

*Commission expert support to provide master planning input and develop design codes for the new garden communities.*

*Commission expert support to provide master planning input for the town centre regeneration sites.*





### **River Tone Strategy**

(linking with the Green Infrastructure Strategy)

**Approximate cost 2016/17**

**£30,000-40,000**

#### **Further details**

*The river plays a fundamental role at the heart of the town, linking all the major regeneration sites. The river presents a significant opportunity to offer an enhanced leisure resource, with improved linkages and connections, cultural events, habitat improvement, water management and potential for renewable energy generation.*

### **Revised Green Infrastructure Strategy**

Incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy, Ecological Strategy and Sport and Recreation Strategy

**Approximate cost 2016/17**

**£60,000-80,000**

#### **Further details**

*Commission consultants to undertake a review of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, in partnership with the Local Nature Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board, to inform the wider Taunton Infrastructure Delivery Strategy/Implementation Plan.*

### **Strategic Transport Delivery Strategy**

incorporating a Public Realm Strategy

**Approximate cost 2016/17**

**£80,000-100,000**

#### **Further details**

*Commission consultants to update current transport strategy for Taunton, to inform the wider Taunton Infrastructure Delivery Strategy/Implementation Plan. This needs to consider Taunton's movement systems, streets, spaces and riverscape. The strategy would reinforce linkages both within the town centre and the urban extensions, working in conjunction with master plans and codes and the updated Green Infrastructure Strategy.*

### **Update the economic projections and review employment land requirements**

**Approximate cost 2016/17**

**£40,000-50,000**

#### **Further details**

*Review employment land requirements, in conjunction with updating economic growth projections and need, in line with Taunton Growth Prospectus.*

**Total 2016/2017**

**£475,000-575,000**





# Delivery enabling support for 2017/18 and 2018/19

## Consultancy Input/Staff Resource

**Garden Town Delivery Team** will need to incorporate appropriate project management skills and expertise in the following key areas: transport, urban design, regeneration, green infrastructure, economic development, infrastructure delivery and community engagement.

Approximate cost 2017/18 **£500,000-550,000**

Approximate cost 2018/19 **£500,000-550,000**

**Further details:** Taunton Deane has a small dedicated delivery team, working on the new community at Monkton Heathfield. Additional capacity funding could enable the existing skills in this team to be retained and expanded into a wider implementation team, to deliver the Garden Town programme.

Additional staff resource, to progress key Green Infrastructure projects in partnership with the Local Nature Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Infrastructure planning and implementation, to ensure identified key infrastructure projects are progressed and delivered.

Additional highways and transport planning expertise, to ensure sympathetic and sustainable transport infrastructure design is integrated and delivered, within the proposed new communities.

Community engagement will be critical to maximise opportunities from social capital.

### Infrastructure Delivery Strategy/Implementation Plan

Approximate cost 2017/18 **£60,000-80,000**

**Further details:** Commission consultants to undertake updated and more detailed master planning work, to inform a detailed implementation/delivery plan for the wider Taunton area. The implementation plan will inform the alignment of infrastructure funding streams, for the delivery of required sustainable transport solutions, green infrastructure projects and key strategic infrastructure projects for the Garden Town vision. Work on updating the Green Infrastructure Strategy and Strategic Transport Study would inform this study.

**Assistance:** with integration and delivery of a range of employment opportunities and start up units along with community/retail/leisure facilities to ensure self-containment levels are established in the early stages of development

**Further details:** This could be a shared learning resource between the Garden Towns and Villages and therefore does not identify a specific budget cost.

**Capacity and expertise:** in the integration of renewable energy generation into the new garden communities

**Further details:** This could be a shared learning resource between the Garden Towns and Villages and therefore does not identify a specific budget cost.

**Assistance:** with delivering town centre sites and High Street pedestrianisation

**Further details:** Capacity support and/or shared learning from other Garden town areas to assist with exploring appropriate finance mechanisms and public/private partnership models to assist with the delivery of the town centre regeneration sites and High Street pedestrianisation.

This could be a shared learning resource between the Garden Towns and Villages and therefore does not identify a specific budget cost

## Total 2017/2018

**£560,000-£630,000**

## Total 2018/2019

**£500,000-550,000**





## Brokerage

The Garden Town proposals for Taunton would be seeking further assistance from Government on the following areas:

- *Government's continued funding commitment for the Junction 25 improvements and linkages with the proposed A358/A303 improvements.*
- *Funding for a range of sustainable transport measures, including a bus priority and kerbside infrastructure, re-opening Wellington railway station and cycle infrastructure measures in and around Taunton town centre and links between the town centre, the new garden communities and existing communities.*
- *Commitment of funds from the successful Growth Deal projects being promoted by the Heart of SW LEP for Taunton.*
- *Assistance with accessing DfE Free Schools Programme funding, to ensure the provision of essential educational facilities early in the development of the new garden communities and the longer term requirement for a new secondary school.*
- *Assistance with accessing DoH/NHS England funding to ensure required health facilities/improvements and links with supported housing schemes are delivered in line with the development of new garden communities.*
- *The Heart of SW Devolution deal seeks devolution of five year place based population budgets for health, care and public health. Taunton Deane is working closely with the LEP on the Devolution deal. The Garden Town vision seeks to ensure a greater emphasis on public health and the link between health and housing.*

*It also seeks to address the wider health and social care needs arising from the ageing population. Greater influence of the allocation of health funding streams will assist in realising this ambition.*

## Access to government housing funding streams

- *Taunton Deane has a strong record of affordable housing delivery and continues to be a focus of housing development. The Council's housing association partners are actively developing within the Borough and remain committed to delivering schemes through various Homes and Communities Agency grant funding programmes. Work is underway to submit bids for the 2016-2021 affordable home ownership programme.*
- *The Council has delivered a broad range of tenure options and supported housing schemes in recent years and has also embraced the opportunity of self-financing, developing its own council housing through a dedicated Development team.*
- *Working closely with the HCA, the Council has submitted a number of sites for the current Starter Homes Fund bidding round as part of the Hinkley Housing Impact Zone, many of which are on publicly owned brownfield sites.*

Favourable access to relevant housing funding streams, will ensure the continued delivery of a broad range of affordable housing, to meet current and future housing needs in Taunton.



## Financial Flexibilities

- *Taunton Deane responded to the recent NHB consultation proposals and raised concerns regarding the impact on future infrastructure delivery for Taunton Deane. The Council has committed significant sums of future NHB funds towards delivering critical infrastructure projects. However recent proposals in the NHB consultation, threaten to undermine this commitment. TDBC requests that the Government reconsider the particular proposal to reduce the 6 year payments and instead consider supplementary NHB payments for Taunton Deane, if successful in gaining Garden Town status.*

*Further discussions could explore how this funding may be committed to ensuring growth related staff resource and infrastructure funding, is committed in the future. This financial flexibility would maintain a direct link between funding and performance delivery, between the nominated Garden Town areas. Increasing NHB payment years for Garden Towns, would also demonstrate to the wider Taunton community, the Government's commitment to delivering growth related infrastructure.*

- *Assistance with establishing a Revolving Infrastructure Fund, with upfront funding available to forward fund critical infrastructure projects, that can be recouped against future CIL receipts.*

## Planning Freedoms

When large strategic sites are being progressed, there can be a greater risk of speculative residential applications coming forward. The Council's growth ambitions, coupled with any uncertainty surrounding the delivery of critical infrastructure funding, provides an unfair advantage to speculative residential developers who, on this basis, are able to cast doubt on the Council's land supply position. This risk also threatens to undermine positive community engagement in the growth agenda.

*Given the Council's significant growth ambitions and commitment to delivering sustainable new communities, the Council request greater certainty that speculative residential planning applications can be resisted with Garden Town status. Particularly if transformational levels of growth are being achieved beyond baseline household projections.*

## Delivery Vehicles

The Council's regeneration programme is overseen by the Taunton Economic Advisory Board, involving a number of key partners from both the private and public sector. The Monkton Heathfield new community is also supported by a delivery board, involving key partners such as the HCA, Environment Agency, Somerset County and developers.

The Council is establishing a CIL/Infrastructure Delivery Board to consider the infrastructure priorities and the allocation of CIL funds.

*If Taunton is successful in gaining Garden Town status, discussions to establish appropriate governance arrangements and delivery vehicles, would need to consider the ongoing discussion on the governance arrangements for the LEP Devolution deal. The Heart of SW LEP Devolution bid, outlines a commitment to undertake a Governance Review for the Combined Authority proposals, to identify the most effective structure and processes for the devolution deal. Taunton Deane is a key partner in these ongoing discussions and will seek to ensure clear links between the Combined Authority governance arrangements and the governance structures for the Taunton Garden Town proposal.*



## Sources:

Adopted Taunton Deane Core Strategy

<http://consultldf.tauntondeane.gov.uk/portal/corestrat/adoptedcs?pointId=2248409>

Adopted Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan

<http://consultldf.tauntondeane.gov.uk/portal/spatialplanning/ttcaap/ttcaappo?pointId=211109>

Taunton Site Allocations and Development Management Plan

[http://tauntondeane.objective.co.uk/portal/sadmppld\\_sadmp/draft\\_sadmp\\_consultation?pointId=2874000](http://tauntondeane.objective.co.uk/portal/sadmppld_sadmp/draft_sadmp_consultation?pointId=2874000)

Taunton Deane Infrastructure Delivery Plan

[www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/irj/go/km/docs/CouncilDocuments/TDBC/Documents/Forward%20Planning/SADMP%20Evidence%20Base/IDP%20Review%202014.pdf](http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/irj/go/km/docs/CouncilDocuments/TDBC/Documents/Forward%20Planning/SADMP%20Evidence%20Base/IDP%20Review%202014.pdf)

Adopted Staplegrove Masterplan

<https://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/irj/go/km/docs/CouncilDocuments/TDBC/Documents/Forward%20Planning/SADMP%20Evidence%20Base/CD27%20Staplegrove%20Framework%20Masterplan.pdf>

Taunton Urban Extensions Study

<http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/irj/go/km/docs/CouncilDocuments/TDBC/Documents/Forward%20Planning/Evidence%20Base/Taunton%20Urban%20Extension%20Study%20Terence%20O'Rourke.pdf>

Taunton Sub Area Study

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

Taunton Urban Extensions Masterplan

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

Taunton Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy

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

Taunton Rethink

<http://www.taunton.uk.com/MyFiles/Files/Taunton%20Rethink.pdf>









# **Taunton Deane Borough Council**

## **Community Scrutiny Committee 27 April 2017**

### **Proposed Response to Housing White Paper**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Roger Habgood**

**Report Author: Nick Bryant, Planning Policy Manager**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This Report sets out a summary of the proposed changes to Planning and to a lesser extent Housing policy expressed through the recently published Housing White Paper. It has been put together with contributions drawn from Strategy, Enabling and Planning Officers, all of whom have contributed towards the proposed consultation response included at Appendix B.
- 1.2 The White Paper emphasises the importance of the Plan-led system as the basis against which decisions about where and how much housing can be permitted. Measures are proposed which should help to streamline the process of plan-making to make it quicker (including a standardised methodology to calculating housing requirements) and greater flexibilities are proposed about how plans are prepared.
- 1.3 There is a strong emphasis on delivery with greater sanctions potentially applied to local authorities that fail to meet housing targets (despite the fact that generally it will not be the local authority constructing new houses). There are some measures that may encourage housebuilders to build more quickly and Councils could take into account likely build out rates and phasing as well as a developer's previous 'track record' of delivery in determining whether to grant planning permission or not.
- 1.4 A stronger role for small and medium-sized housebuilders is recognised. The Government is also keen to accelerate the delivery of housing through improved construction techniques. A further key measure is that 10% of affordable housing is proposed for affordable home ownership.
- 1.5 The Council's proposed response will focus upon those areas in which officers perceive the Council will be most affected. This will then be signed off by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation and submitted ahead of the consultation deadline of 2 May.

#### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Community Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of this Report and endorses the proposed consultation response enclosed at Appendix B.

### 3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

#### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
<i>Risk: That the Council's perspective is not put across through the consultation resulting in an opportunity to influence proposals being missed.</i>	3	3	9
<i>Residual risk after proposed mitigation: Of course there remains a chance that the Council's comments will not result in changes being made to the proposals but at least the issues will have been raised.</i>	1	3	3

#### Risk Scoring Matrix

Likelihood	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			Impact				

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

### 4 Background and Full details of the Report

- 4.1 The Government published its Housing White Paper in early February 2017 (Appendix A). The paper sets out a number of key measures which are designed to ensure that housebuilding is boosted significantly nationally. The document is structured into four parts, namely:
- Planning for the right homes in the right places;
  - Building homes faster;
  - Diversifying the market; and
  - Helping people now
- 4.2 This report is in two sections, section one sets out the key proposed measures against the four parts outlined above with some commentary on possible implications for Taunton Deane Borough Council while section two sets out a proposed consultation response to the questions raised in the White Paper itself. Officers from Enabling, Strategy and Planning Policy have helped put together the summary of proposals, officer comments and proposed response (set out in Appendix B)

### **Planning for the right homes in the right places**

#### Getting plans in place (summary of key proposals):

- 4.3 Central to the reforms is a reaffirmation that housing growth should be driven by an up-to-date and 'sufficiently ambitious' local plan. Government was already proposing to legislate through the emerging Neighbourhood Planning Bill making clear the need for Local Plans. The White Paper confirms Government will intervene to ensure plans are put in-place, regulations will clarify a requirement for local plans to be reviewed at least every five years. A standardised approach to dealing with the duty-to-cooperate (the way local planning authorities are expected to engage with one another on cross-border strategic issues like housing) is also proposed.
- 4.4 Recent Government thinking has been that Local Planning Authorities should prepare a singular Local Plan and this is emphasised by the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework). The White Paper, however recognises the importance of flexible and responsive plans, this is more akin to the Labour Government of the early 2000s 'Local Development Framework' approach under which Taunton Deane's development plans have been produced.
- 4.5 A standardised methodology for assessing housing requirements is proposed. This follows an earlier study by a Government-appointed 'Local Plans Expert Group'. A consultation on this methodology is expected shortly. Where plans are considered out-of-date it is proposed this standardised methodology would be used to form the baseline of five year housing land supply requirements.

#### Getting plans in place (officer comments):

- 4.6 Taunton Deane has a very strong track record of development plan delivery. It has adopted three development plans in the last decade as well as introducing the Community Infrastructure Levy. It is important however that development plan preparation continues to be prioritised and this will include a review of strategic policies set out in the Core Strategy which was adopted nearly five years ago (September 2012).
- 4.7 Reference to a more flexible approach to plan preparation is a positive change because it will enable the Council to consider whether it wishes to consolidate all its development plans together (the current Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan, Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Development Management Plan). Officers suggest fast-tracking a Garden Town Plan for Taunton in response to this change of Government direction.
- 4.8 Clearly the Council will wish to reserve judgment on the standardised methodology used to calculate housing requirements until it has seen it. The principle should be welcomed if it leads to a more transparent, consistent and proportionate approach to identifying housing requirements.
- Making enough land available in the right places (summary of key proposals):
- 4.9 Amendments to The Framework are proposed these would include a strong underlying commitment to meeting housing needs in full unless other Framework policies provide strong reasons for doing otherwise. A greater emphasis on the use of brownfield land within settlements is proposed with a presumption that such land is suitable for housing unless there are clear and specific reasons to the contrary.
- 4.10 The Government has previously stated an ambition to see surplus public land released for housing with an estimated capacity of circa 160,000 new homes. Beyond this it is proposed that authorities could dispose of land with planning permission they have granted themselves. Flexibilities to dispose of land at less than best consideration are also proposed. There is also support for estate regeneration with LPAs encouraged to consider the social and economic benefits; using their planning powers to help deliver regeneration to a high standard.
- 4.11 The White Paper seeks to reinforce the provision of small and medium-sized housing sites. This will be achieved through changes to The Framework that will require LPAs to include policies on small windfalls and to attach 'great weight' to using small undeveloped sites within settlements. Other measures related to this aim include providing stronger support for affordable housing for local people, a requirement for at least 10% of sites allocated in local plans to be less than 0.5ha and encourage developers to sub-divide large sites. The use of LDOs to bring forward small sites is also encouraged.
- 4.12 Amendments to Neighbourhood Planning would see Neighbourhood Plan Groups being able to request a housing requirement figure from the LPA while



further funding will be available to NPGs over the period 2018-2020. There is a much stronger commitment to good design with policies in Local and Neighbourhood Plans setting out clear expectations and the use of widely accepted standards such as Building for Life.

- 4.13 Building standards may be simplified and rationalised and Government will consult on higher environmental standards if evidence suggests such standards can be met without making homes less affordable for those who want to buy their own home.
- 4.14 There is a stronger commitment to building at higher densities, particularly around urban locations such as public transport hubs, this will be achieved through changes to The Framework. Minimum space standards will be revisited, it appears the Government is concerned that a blanket approach is too inflexible although reference is made to avoiding a 'race to the bottom'.

Making enough land available in the right places (officer comments):

- 4.15 Taunton Deane has historically sought to operate a brownfield-first approach to new development; it was partly for this reason that it prioritised production of the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (TTCAAP) ahead of its Core Strategy. Notwithstanding the fact that the allocations in the TTCAAP need to be reviewed, irrespective of the White Paper the Council would wish to maximise the contribution these sites can make to meeting the need for development land.
- 4.16 Taunton has also been designated by Government as a 'Station Hub': this designation looks to maximise the scope for new housing in and around the Railway Station on publically owned land. There will of course be some brownfield land that is not suitable for housing and so the exemptions still to be specified by Government will be important to ensure sustainable development and that land which might otherwise go to job-generating uses is not lost.
- 4.17 Historically small sites (less than 10 dwellings) make up a considerable part of the housing land supply in Taunton Deane. Over the period 2005/6 – 2015/16 they accounted for an average of 278 new homes per annum from an overall average of 532 completions. This suggests that such sites in Taunton Deane at least come forward and will continue to come forward without the need for formal allocation through the Local Plan something that will create unnecessary, time-consuming additional work.
- 4.18 The commitment to the importance of good design is to be welcomed, LPAs need to feel empowered in making decisions on planning applications informed by Local Plan policies and the strong hooks in The Framework. The adopted SADMP includes a suite of detailed design policies which on the basis of the White Paper would be accorded significant weight should they be challenged at appeal.

- 4.19 The Taunton Station Hub presents an opportunity to not just improve the Railway Station environs but also increase the massing of buildings in this part of the town and deliver significant amounts of new housing. Masterplanning work on key sites will need to respond to the provisions set out in the White Paper.
- 4.20 The reference to reviewing National Minimum Space Standards is a little unfortunate not least because the Council has only very recently (through the SADMP) adopted the current National Standards as its own. In view of the fact members were previously very supportive of the introduction of standards in Taunton Deane, any move which saw the SADMP policy rendered out-of-date may frustrate the Council's aspirations.

### **Building homes faster**

#### Providing greater certainty (summary of key proposals):

- 4.21 The White Paper includes provisions for fixing the LPA's five year housing land supply on an annual basis with a margin of 10% included. This position would be agreed by the Planning Inspectorate although precisely the extent to which the Inspectorate would probe the 5 year supply remains to be determined.
- 4.22 Planning fees will be increased by 20% nationally from July 2017 where LPAs commit to invest the additional fee income in planning departments. The Government are also minded to allow a further increase of 20% for those authorities who are 'delivering the homes their communities need', this will be consulted upon in due course. Reference is also made to a new £25m fund for helping ambitious authorities in areas of high housing need to plan for new homes and infrastructure. There will also be a consultation on introducing a fee for making planning appeals.

#### Providing greater certainty (officer comments):

- 4.23 While the idea of fixing the five year land supply is appealing; it would after all curtail much of the debate that accompanies speculative planning applications, the proposal would be extremely resource intensive. In effect, something resembling a mini appeal or development plan examination would be held each year. When the work required to inform this process is factored in, it would seem likely that in order to present a credible and coherent case, there would be considerable resource implications for such a change. This may outweigh the benefit of 'fixing' the five year supply.
- 4.24 Taunton Deane Borough Council has already written back to Government indicating it wishes to increase its fees by 20%. The Council will continue to investigate the scope to bid into capacity funding, we have of course been successful in achieving Garden Towns status for Taunton in the recent past.

#### Ensuring infrastructure is provided in the right place at the right time (summary of key proposals):

4.25 The Government will be inviting bids to its new £2.3bn Housing Infrastructure Fund; this will be targeted at the areas of greatest housing need. The fund is capital grant with monies to be spent on delivering infrastructure projects over the next four years.

4.26 There is a strong commitment to digital infrastructure, this will include a forthcoming consultation on requiring LPAs to prepare planning policies setting out how high quality digital infrastructure will be delivered in their area.

Ensuring infrastructure is provided in the right place at the right time (officer comments):

4.27 It is likely that the Housing Infrastructure Fund will present an opportunity for Taunton Deane to bid for funding to ensure the upfront funding of critical infrastructure. In view of viability issues raised at Staplegrove and Comeytrowe, it will be important that the Council uses the IDP and evidence base from the SADMP and Core Strategy as well as other more recent intelligence to inform future submissions. Garden Towns status will mean Taunton has a higher profile in any bidding process than perhaps would otherwise have been the case.

Supporting developers to build more quickly (summary of key proposals):

4.28 Most of the measures under this section are relatively minor. They centre on potential for streamlining the process for imposing and discharging conditions. A new strategic approach to licencing for Great Crested Newts will be rolled out.

4.29 The Government will examine the options for reforming the system of developer contributions, this may replace CIL. A CIL Review Group was established in November 2015 and its findings have now been published. It is unclear whether the Group's key recommendation: that CIL should be replaced with a hybrid system of a broad and low level Local Infrastructure Tariff (LIT) and s.106 for larger developments will be implemented in full. An announcement will be made through the Autumn Statement.

Supporting developers to build more quickly (officer comments):

4.30 It is likely that the Housing Infrastructure Fund will present an opportunity for Taunton Deane to bid for funding to ensure the upfront funding of critical infrastructure. In view of viability issues raised at Staplegrove and Comeytrowe, it will be important that the Council uses the IDP and evidence base from the SADMP and Core Strategy as well as other more recent intelligence to inform future submissions. Garden Towns status will mean Taunton has a higher profile in any bidding process than perhaps would otherwise have been the case.

Holding developers and local authorities to account (summary of key proposals):

4.31 The Government wishes to see greater transparency around the timing and pace of delivery of new housing. Information will be available to LPAs in planning to meet their housing needs. DCLG will publish data on delivery against housing

targets in Local Plans, and subject to further consultation, there is a proposal to require large housebuilders to publish aggregate information on build out rates.

- 4.32 LPAs will be encouraged to consider how realistic it is that a site will be developed when deciding whether to grant planning permission. In addition, Government is consulting on whether an applicant's previous track record of delivery should be taken into account in determining applications. Consideration is also being given to shortening the timescales for implementing planning permission from 3 years to 2 except where doing so could hinder scheme viability or deliverability. New guidance will also be prepared on the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers to support build out of stalled sites.
- 4.33 A new housing delivery test is proposed which will for the first time hold LPAs to account not just for the supply of housing land which they maintain through the granting of planning consents and allocations in Local Plans but also against the number of homes actually built. The assessment period will be a rolling three year average (first period April 2014 – March 2017). From November 2017 if delivery falls below 95% of annual housing requirements local authorities should publish an action plan, if delivery is below 85% a 20% buffer should be added to five year supply requirements. It is envisaged that much like other Government-applied thresholds, these thresholds would increase over time.
- Holding developers and local authorities to account (officer comments):
- 4.34 Greater transparency around delivery is to be welcomed. It will make it easier to understand where and how quickly new homes are being built. It is less clear how empowered LPAs would feel using information about a developer's track record on delivery and planned build out to inform planning decisions. Such a change would require a strong basis in planning policy through The Framework.
- 4.35 For Taunton Deane, the delivery test is unlikely to cause immediate issues in terms of the housing land supply position. Over the 3 years April 2014 to March 2017 the requirement set out by the Core Strategy was 2,300 dwellings. An 85% delivery rate would require 1,955 dwellings to have been completed, however the actual number delivered/projected for delivery is 2,604, a delivery rate of 113%.

### **Diversifying the market**

Expanding the contribution from other parts of the housing market (summary of key proposals):

- 4.36 The Government is clear it wishes to see the housing market diversified. It has already made soundings about encouraging small and medium housebuilders while it continues to promote self and custom build in a variety of ways (not set out in the White Paper itself). There is £3bn available through the Home Building Fund to help finance small and medium-sized house builders. Similarly the Government is keen to encourage new models of housebuilding which centre around accelerated construction.



Accelerated Construction (officer comments):

- 4.37 At Taunton Deane there is an established relationship with the Homes and Communities Agency. Discussions have already taken place to ensure Taunton Deane has a role to play within the Accelerated Construction agenda.

Custom Build (officer comments):

- 4.38 Taunton Deane has held a Register of Interest for Self Build/Custom Build since March 2015 and is in receipt of 'New Burdens' funding to support Custom Build. The Council will need to develop its position in relation to Self/Custom build in view of the stronger emphasis the Government is placing on it, a future Briefing Note will be presented to members in due course.

Institutional Investment (officer comments):

- 4.39 Changes to The Framework could enable authorities to plan proactively for Build to Rent and support developers to offer affordable private rental homes. The rental market is strong in Taunton and there is a track record of Build to Rent developments this includes the recent Acorn Developments scheme of 40 units currently under construction on Station Road

Housing Associations (officer comments):

- 4.40 Housing Associations are urged to develop and have a role to play to build more homes. Their deregulation to reiterate their position that they belong to the private sector is aimed to provide flexibility to development programmes. Taunton Deane has a strong and active affordable housing partnership with eleven housing association members. The partnership has substantially increased affordable housing delivery over the past 5 years and continues to develop a strong pipeline for the future.

Backing Local Authorities to Build (officer comments):

- 4.41 The local authorities' role in delivering new housing is recognised in the White Paper with particular reference to the scope of bespoke housing deals and options to increase supply of affordable housing. Since self-financing in 2012 Taunton Deane has established a development strategy and has built 71 new homes with more in the pipeline. The change in rent policy, restrictions associated with Right to Buy receipts and the borrowing cap block Taunton Deane from achieving its full housing building potential. Opportunities for housing company and partnership working are being explored to support housing delivery.

Boosting productivity and innovation: Modernising the housebuilding sector (summary of key proposals):

- 4.42 The White paper states the house building industry is less productive than the wider economy, partly because it has been slow to modernise and make use of

more efficient and faster ways of building. By increasing innovation and making greater use of modern method of construction it could change this.

Modernising the house building sector (officer comments):

- 4.43 Work is underway to explore local authority housing delivery through modern method of construction and partnership opportunities to realise this ambition. Within Taunton Deane there is a strong link between housing and economic development where companies are seeking to establish their offsite manufacture industries within the South West.

**Helping People Now**

Helping people afford homes (summary of key proposals)

- 4.44 The White paper states homeownership among younger people has declined sharply in recent years. Low interest rates have kept the costs of mortgages down for first time buyers and existing home owners, but rising house prices and high rents mean that many people cannot afford a deposit without help from friends and family.
- 4.45 To support homeowners and stimulate housing supply Government will enable potential purchasers to save for a deposit through the introduction to the Lifetime ISA to complement the existing Help to Buy ISA and extend the Help to Buy Equity Loan scheme until 2021.
- 4.46 Starter Homes and investment through the Affordable Homes Programme are intended to help those households who are priced out of the market to afford a decent home that is right for them.
- 4.47 The pilot to extend Right to Buy discounts to housing association tenants has been expanded within a regional pilot to allow over 3,000 housing association tenants to buy their own home with Right to Buy discounts. This pilot is not within Taunton Deane.
- 4.48 Action is promised within the White Paper to promote fairness and transparency for the growing number of private rented households and leaseholders. Consultation will be launched ahead of bringing forward legislation to ban letting agent fees to tenants and the Government will implement measures introduced in the Housing and Planning Act 2016, which will introduce banning orders to remove the worst landlords or agents from operating, and enable councils to issue fines as well as prosecute.
- 4.49 There are proposals to make the private rented sector more family-friendly by taking steps to promote longer tenancies on newbuild rental homes. Consultation will also be undertaken on a range of measures to tackle all unfair and unreasonable abuses of leasehold.

Starter Homes (officer comments):

- 4.50 Taunton Deane is part of a pilot for Starter Homes partnership with the HCA. It is possible that this tenure may assist with bringing forward stalled brownfield sites.
- 4.51 Starter Homes offer another affordable housing tenure option secured through a planning obligation and whilst it is welcome that there is no mandatory requirement for starter homes, the intention to amend the NPPF to introduce a clear policy expectation that housing sites should deliver a minimum of 10% affordable home ownership units (subject to local agreement between developers and LPAs). Whilst we actively seek a broad choice of affordable housing tenure across our developments there are occasions where it may be appropriate to the housing need that the requirement is for rented on a particular site.

New Homes for Shared Ownership, Affordable Rent and Rent to Buy (officer comments):

- 4.52 It is welcome that the Affordable Homes Funding programme has relaxed its restriction on funding so providers can build a range of affordable homes including for affordable rent. Work is ongoing with the Affordable Housing Development Partners to submit schemes for this funding programme.

A fairer deal for renters and leaseholders (officer comments):

- 4.53 We welcome the proposals to address the issue of agent fees which has acted as a disincentive to people (especially young people) accessing the private rented sector.
- 4.54 However, we would be concerned if agents and landlords reacted by passing on these costs to potential tenants in the form of other charges or increased rents, particularly if this resulted in Landlords requesting higher deposit bonds (which many on low incomes find impossible to pay without assistance from the Council).
- 4.55 If this occurred it could result in an increased expenditure in the provision of deposit bonds or increase the demand on this budget at a time when the Council is looking to make budget savings.
- 4.56 Currently the Council has access to some welcome funding for this purpose from EDFe Hinkley Housing funds (West Somerset – soon to be rolled out to TD). Any additional demand placed on these funds as a result of increased demand from landlords for deposit bonds, in particular for vulnerable low income groups, could be difficult to meet.
- 4.57 It would also be unfortunate if this change has an unintended consequence and led to a disincentive for landlords to rent out property and therefore, resulted in a reduction in supply.

- 4.58 We are encouraged by the Housing Ministers recent comments about this risk at the Housing Event held in Taunton in March where he stated he expected agents to absorb these costs, as his desire is to increase access to private rented accommodation for young people.

Improving neighbourhoods and making best use of existing homes (summary of key proposals)

- 4.59 This section of the White Paper focuses on increasing overall housing supply to make sure best use is made of both new and existing homes, benefitting local communities and supporting growing economies. It seeks to address concerns over rising second homes and empty properties

Community Housing Fund (officer comments):

- 4.60 The Community Housing Fund was allocated to areas particularly affected by second homes. Taunton Deane was not allocated any funding.

Empty Homes (officer comments):

- 4.61 The Government wishes to support local authorities to encourage the efficient use of our existing stock, making best use of homes that are long term empty (LTE).. This is an area where there has been considerable focus at Taunton Deane and West Somerset over the past 18 months. Levels of LTE within Taunton Deane are about average compared to the rest of the Region. Levels within West Somerset are probably the highest within the Region, due to the elderly demographic and issues with probate. We have recently undertaken the following:
- Adopted an Empty Homes Strategy (along with Sedgemoor DC). This has two priorities:
    - To provide encouragement and support to owners of empty homes to bring them back in to use
    - To use appropriate enforcement action to bring empty homes back in to use
  - Appointed an Empty Homes Officer within the Revs and Bens Service. This officer has been successful at bring LTEs in to use, and securing additional New Homes Bonus.
  - Worked with EDF to secure Hinkley related funding to support an empty homes programme. This is operational across West Somerset and will soon be rolled out across Taunton Deane.
- 4.62 A significant issue is enforcement of those owners of LTE who refuse to engage. This can be very costly and time consuming. More resources to assist with this would be extremely welcome.

Housing for our future population (summary of key proposals)

- 4.63 Offering older people a better choice of accommodation can help them live independently for longer and can help reduce costs to social care and health systems. To ensure that there is more consistent delivery of accessible housing, the Government is introducing a new statutory duty through the Neighbourhood



Planning Bill on the Secretary of State to produce guidance for local planning authorities on how their local development documents should meet the needs of older and disabled people.

- 4.64 Helping older people to move at the right time and in the right way could also help their quality of life at the same time as freeing up more homes for other buyers. The Government wants to build on the evidence that already exists to help deliver outcomes that are best for older people.
- 4.65 Supported housing plays an important role in helping vulnerable people live independently or turn their lives around. The Government is committed to developing a sustainable and workable approach to funding supported housing which provides value for money and works for those who use it as well as those who pay for it.
- 4.66 A consultation paper was published for 12 weeks until 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017. The detailed arrangements for implementing the new model and approach to short term accommodation will be set out in a Green Paper which Government intend to publish in the Spring.
- 4.67 There are multiple and complex reasons why people become homeless. The White Paper recognises that the high and increasing costs in the private rented sector can impact upon tenants who struggle to pay, and these households are more likely to be at risk of becoming homeless. The Government's focus is on ensuring that more people get the help they need before they become homeless, with the aim of preventing a crisis from happening in the first place.
- 4.68 The Government is supporting Bob Blackman MP's Homelessness Reduction Bill which will significantly reform England's homelessness legislation, placing a duty on local authorities to take steps to prevent the homelessness of anyone eligible and threatened with homelessness. The Rough Sleeping Fund is being increased to provide an additional £10m for grants to facilitate innovative approaches to preventing and reducing rough sleeping. A network of expert advisors is to be established to work closely with local authorities to help bring them to the standard of the best and explore new models to support those that are hardest to help. Also consideration is being given as to whether social lettings agencies can be an effective tool

Supported Housing (officer comments):

- 4.69 At the Spending Review the Government committed £400 million for a further 8,000 supported housing units. Over £200 million is being invested through the DoH's Care and Supported Specialised Housing Fund to develop 6,000 more supported homes over the next few years. The Gov't wishes to see a sustainable and workable approach to funding supported housing, which is why they have deferred the introduction of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates for

supported housing until 2019/20 at which point a new funding model will be introduced.

- 4.70 The delivery of an effective scheme of Supported Housing requires close and often complex working arrangements between the County Council, the districts and providers. The Government recently consulted on a funding model, and we have provided a detailed response (in addition to a response provided by the Somerset Strategic Housing Officers). We now await the publication of a Green paper, which is due this Spring.

Preventing Homelessness (officer comments):

- 4.71 The Government is supporting Bob Blackman MP's Homelessness Reduction Bill. As a Housing Options service, we are generally supportive of the Bill. The emphasis on prevention is appropriate, but there are potentially significant resource implications, and we naturally have concerns about how we will fund this.
- 4.72 We are currently awaiting the publication of the Act (due later this year). The Somerset Homelessness Strategy was due for review at the end of last year. We have rolled the Strategy forward for another 12 months, to enable us to consider the content of the Act (once published) and explore the resourcing implications. Our proposals will be shared with members in due course.

## **5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

- 5.1 The White Paper raises issues relating to two of the four key themes outlined in the Council's Corporate Strategy: 'People' and 'Our Place'.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

- 6.1 Some of the proposed provisions set out in the Housing White Paper would have implications for workload and resourcing within the Planning Policy Team. This will include additional work associated with monitoring, measuring and defending housing land supply.

## **7 Legal Implications (if any)**

- 7.1 None identified.

## **8 Environmental Impact Implications (if any)**

- 8.1 None identified.

**9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)**

9.1 None identified.

**10 Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)**

10.1 None identified.

**11 Social Value Implications (if any)**

11.1 None identified.

**12 Partnership Implications (if any)**

12.1 None identified.

**13 Health and Wellbeing Implications (if any)**

13.1 There are a number of opportunities which preparing a Garden Town Plan for Taunton will open up to make a stronger connection between spatial planning and health and well-being. These include, but are not limited to, the delivery of green infrastructure projects such as improved green and blue corridors through the Town that will promote walking and cycling and recreation.

**14 Asset Management Implications (if any)**

14.1 The White Paper promotes the reuse of public owned land for housing.

**15 Consultation Implications (if any)**

15.1 The Plan will need to be subject to a to be agreed programme of public consultation including a formal six week representation period on any future proposed submission document.

**16 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s) (if any)**

16.1 NA

**Democratic Path:**

- **Community Scrutiny**
- **Portfolio Holder Decision**

**Reporting Frequency :** ☐ Once only

**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

Appendix A	Housing White Paper
Appendix B	Proposed Consultation Response

**Contact Officer**

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# Fixing our broken housing market

## Question 1

Do you agree with the proposals to:

- a) Make clear in the National Planning Policy Framework that the key strategic policies that each local planning authority should maintain are those set out currently at paragraph 156 of the Framework, with an additional requirement to plan for the allocations needed to deliver the area's housing requirement?

***The Council is supportive of the principle, greater clarity expressed through The Framework will enable Councils to adopt a more proportionate approach to plan-making. It will allow for greater flexibility as to the role and scope of development plan documents making them more fit-for-purpose.***

- b) Use regulations to allow Spatial Development Strategies to allocate strategic sites, where these strategies require unanimous agreement of the members of the combined authority?

***No comments to make.***

- c) Revise the National Planning Policy Framework to tighten the definition of what evidence is required to support a 'sound' plan?

***The Council is supportive of the principle for the same reasons given under question 1 a).***

## Question 2

What changes do you think would support more proportionate consultation and examination procedures for different types of plan and to ensure that different levels of plans work together?

***One such change that would be welcomed would be clarification on the extent of engagement required to support local plans. While the Regulations are clear on the matter what the bear minimum is, some direction as to what the form and extent of pre-publication consultation should be would assist LPAs, stakeholders and communities alike.***

## Question 3

Do you agree with the proposals to:

- a) amend national policy so that local planning authorities are expected to have clear policies for addressing the housing requirements of groups with particular needs, such as older and disabled people?

***The Council is supportive of this proposal.***

- b) from early 2018, use a standardised approach to assessing housing requirements as the baseline for five year housing supply calculations and monitoring housing delivery, in the absence of an up-to-date plan?

***Yes, Taunton Deane already is planning to meet the current local housing targets set by the adopted Core Strategy; any standardised approach would greatly assist transparency and could help to reduce the costs of evidence gathering associated with plan-making. We will of course wish to reserve the right to comment on the specifics of any standardised methodology when this becomes clear in due course.***

## Question 4

Do you agree with the proposals to amend the presumption in favour of sustainable development so that:

- a) authorities are expected to have a clear strategy for maximising the use of suitable land in their areas?;

***Yes, in Taunton Deane we have attempted to do this for some years by putting in-place a development strategy focussed around the regeneration of Taunton Town Centre and the delivery of new sustainable Garden Communities around the Town. Beyond Taunton itself the Core Strategy sets clear objectives and targets for the delivery of sustainable development.***

- b) it makes clear that identified development needs should be accommodated unless there are strong reasons for not doing so set out in the NPPF?;

***Agree, Taunton Deane has planned to meet beyond the Objectively Assessed Need in its currently adopted Core Strategy and is committed to maximising the benefits of growth.***

- c) the list of policies which the Government regards as providing reasons to restrict development is limited to those set out currently in footnote 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (so these are no longer presented as examples), with the addition of Ancient Woodland and aged or veteran trees?

***Yes, no further comment to make.***

- d) its considerations are re-ordered and numbered, the opening text is simplified and specific references to local plans are removed?

***Yes, no further comment to make.***

## Question 5

Do you agree that regulations should be amended so that all local planning authorities are able to dispose of land with the benefit of planning consent which they have granted to themselves?

***Yes as this will facilitate land sales and enable local authorities to dispose of land for the best consideration.***

## Question 6

How could land pooling make a more effective contribution to assembling land, and what additional powers or capacity would allow local authorities to play a more active role in land assembly (such as where 'ransom strips' delay or prevent development)?

***The Council is supportive of a co-ordinated, more simplified approach to land assembly and measures which can enable this. Clear guidance is required to manage landowner expectations. Such powers should be reserved for schemes that will deliver a clear benefit to the local community such as affordable housing. Consideration should be given to how LPAs can acquire ransom strips from developers on larger sites where they have become a barrier to delivery of subsequent phases/sites.***

## Question 7

Do you agree that national policy should be amended to encourage local planning authorities to consider the social and economic benefits of estate regeneration when preparing their plans and in decisions on applications, and use their planning powers to help deliver estate regeneration to a high standard?

***Agree, estate regeneration can play an important role in delivering sustainable communities and maximising the supply of housing to meet local needs, such projects need a comprehensive approach to community engagement. Consideration should be given to further support the Government can give to the viability challenges such schemes may have and the implications of changing property tenures which are required to deliver a sustainable, balanced and deliverable scheme.***

## Question 8

Do you agree with the proposals to amend the National Planning Policy Framework to:

- a) highlight the opportunities that neighbourhood plans present for identifying and allocating small sites that are suitable for housing?;

***Agree but care should be taken to ensure landowner expectations are managed particularly if a Plan is conveying a value on a site which may not have been realised through the LPA's own Local Plan.***

- b) encourage local planning authorities to identify opportunities for villages to thrive, especially where this would support services and help meet the authority's housing needs?;

***Yes, the Council's own adopted Core Strategy attempts to make these links.***

- c) give stronger support for 'rural exception' sites – to make clear that these should be considered positively where they can contribute to meeting

identified local housing needs, even if this relies on an element of general market housing to ensure that homes are genuinely affordable for local people?;

***Agree but please see comments made in relation to Question 8 a) which are just as relevant in response to this question.***

- d) make clear that on top of the allowance made for windfall sites, at least 10% of sites allocated for residential development in local plans should be sites of half a hectare or less?;

***This change is totally unnecessary, in areas like Taunton Deane windfall development on small sites accounts for a significant proportion of supply. Over the period 2005/6-2015/16 they accounted for an average of 278 homes per annum out of a total of 532 without any allocations being made. The proposed change is totally disproportionate and at odds with the helpful references to proportionality elsewhere.***

- e) expect local planning authorities to work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites?; and

***In order for this provision to work there would need to a strong basis set out through policy to ensure it happens. An 'expectation' without the tools to deliver will not achieve the anticipated results.***

- f) encourage greater use of Local Development Orders and area-wide design codes so that small sites may be brought forward for development more quickly?.

***Agree.***

## **Question 9**

How could streamlined planning procedures support innovation and high-quality development in new garden towns and villages?

***As one of the nine Garden Towns currently designated nationally Taunton Deane is interested in pioneering new approaches to delivery and ensuring the Garden Town is an exemplar of sustainable development. With all of the key sites subject to options agreements and in some cases being built out, emphasis should be placed on forward funding of essential infrastructure through the forthcoming Housing Infrastructure Fund. Receipt of funding will help deliver essential infrastructure up front and address any viability issues which should assist in the delivery of some of the softer green infrastructure and community facilities which characterise some of the most desirable places for people to live and work.***



## Question 10

Do you agree with the proposals to amend the National Planning Policy Framework to make clear that:

- a) authorities should amend Green Belt boundaries only when they can demonstrate that they have examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting their identified development requirements?
- b) where land is removed from the Green Belt, local policies should require compensatory improvements to the environmental quality or accessibility of remaining Green Belt land?
- c) appropriate facilities for existing cemeteries should not to be regarded as 'inappropriate development' in the Green Belt?
- d) development brought forward under a Neighbourhood Development Order should not be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, provided it preserves openness and does not conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt?
- e) where a local or strategic plan has demonstrated the need for Green Belt boundaries to be amended, the detailed boundary may be determined through a neighbourhood plan (or plans) for the area in question?
- f) when carrying out a Green Belt review, local planning authorities should look first at using any Green Belt land which has been previously developed and/or which surrounds transport hubs?

***No comments on this question.***

## Question 11

Are there particular options for accommodating development that national policy should expect authorities to have explored fully before Green Belt boundaries are amended, in addition to the ones set out above?

***No comments on this question.***

## Question 12

Do you agree with the proposals to amend the National Planning Policy Framework to:

- a) indicate that local planning authorities should provide neighbourhood planning groups with a housing requirement figure, where this is sought?;

***Support in-principle but question on what basis the LPA could identify such a figure. It seems a rather prescriptive approach and one which the development industry, stakeholders and community may wish to challenge.***

***We are unclear how a standardised approach to calculating OAN will assist on this micro level.***

- b) make clear that local and neighbourhood plans (at the most appropriate level) and more detailed development plan documents (such as action area plans) are expected to set out clear design expectations; and that visual tools such as design codes can help provide a clear basis for making decisions on development proposals?;

***Agree, The Framework needs to provide a strong national policy hook to empower LPAs and NPGs to develop a stronger more coherent approach to good design. In Taunton Deane we have introduced a whole chapter of detailed design policies through the recently adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Plan which flows from our adopted Core Strategy.***

- c) emphasise the importance of early preapplication discussions between applicants, authorities and the local community about design and the types of homes to be provided?;

***Agree.***

- d) makes clear that design should not be used as a valid reason to object to development where it accords with clear design expectations set out in statutory plans?; and

***Agree, LPAs should rely upon a strong basis in their adopted development plan(s).***

- e) recognise the value of using a widely accepted design standard, such as Building for Life, in shaping and assessing basic design principles – and make clear that this should be reflected in plans and given weight in the planning process?

***Agree, the adopted Taunton Deane SADMP already makes this link (policy D7).***

## **Question 13**

Do you agree with the proposals to amend national policy to make clear that plans and individual development proposals should:

- a) make efficient use of land and avoid building homes at low densities where there is a shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs?;

***Agree although we question what measure will be used to define a shortage in identified land to meet housing needs. Also, we would suggest that making efficient use of land is an important consideration irrespective of whether housing land is identified, land is after all, a finite resource.***

- b) address the particular scope for higher density housing in urban locations that are well served by public transport, that provide opportunities to replace low-

density uses in areas of high housing demand, or which offer scope to extend buildings upwards in urban areas?;

***Agree, Taunton is a pilot in the Government's Station Hub programme and the Council is keen to encourage and support higher densities in and around the Railway Station. Maximising densities on other key town centre sites is also an important objective for the wider regeneration of Taunton Town Centre.***

- c) ensure that in doing so the density and form of development reflect the character, accessibility and infrastructure capacity of an area, and the nature of local housing needs?;

***Agree, it may not always be appropriate to promote higher density, similarly, it may be necessary to take a sensitive approach to scheme design to ensure development fits with local context.***

- d) take a flexible approach in adopting and applying policy and guidance that could inhibit these objectives in particular circumstances, such as open space provision in areas with good access to facilities nearby?

***Agree for similar reasons as those outlined above to question 13 c).***

## Question 14

In what types of location would indicative minimum density standards be helpful, and what should those standards be?

***Locations in and around public transport nodes and town centre locations well-served by a range of services and facilities.***

## Question 15

What are your views on the potential for delivering additional homes through more intensive use of existing public sector sites, or in urban locations more generally, and how this can best be supported through planning (using tools such as policy, local development orders, and permitted development rights)?

***Agree in principle but care needs to be given to ensure that public land is put to the most appropriate use. There remains a need to ensure land is brought forward for commercial, employment and other mixed uses, in urban and particularly town centre locations this is particularly important.***

## Question 16

Do you agree that:

- a) where local planning authorities wish to agree their housing land supply for a one year period, national policy should require those authorities to maintain a 10% buffer on their 5 year housing land supply?;

***No, disagree, it is unclear why any more than the current 5% buffer should be applied where there is no persistent track record of under-delivery. Five year***

***supply is by its very nature dynamic and changing but if an Authority can demonstrate a pipeline of housing which extends beyond five years it seems unreasonable and unnecessary to provide a further margin.***

- b) the Planning Inspectorate should consider and agree an authority's assessment of its housing supply for the purpose of this policy?

***Agree although there are potentially quite significant resource implications for LPAs depending on the extent of information required to support PIN's interrogation.***

- c) if so, should the Inspectorate's consideration focus on whether the approach pursued by the authority in establishing the land supply position is robust, or should the Inspectorate make an assessment of the supply figure?

***The Inspectorate should make an assessment of both. Without doing so it seems unlikely the Authority or any other decision-maker would feel sufficiently confident to rebut subsequent challenges on housing land supply made by developers.***

## Question 17

In taking forward the protection for neighbourhood plans as set out in the Written Ministerial Statement of 12 December 2016 into the revised NPPF, do you agree that it should include the following amendments:

- a) a requirement for the neighbourhood plan to meet its share of local housing need?;

***Disagree, it will not always be necessary for a Neighbourhood Plan to meet its share of housing need. This could be because either the Council's own development plan has made a strategic decision over where development occurs through the Neighbourhood Plan Area or where the settlement(s) within the NPA are sufficiently small or unsustainable that they could be only a very limited role if any in meeting future housing requirements.***

- b) that it is subject to the local planning authority being able to demonstrate through the housing delivery test that, from 2020, delivery has been over 65% (25% in 2018; 45% in 2019) for the wider authority area?

***Agree.***

- c) should it remain a requirement to have site allocations in the plan or should the protection apply as long as housing supply policies will meet their share of local housing need?

***Protection should apply as long as housing supply policies meet the NP's share of housing need (where applicable).***



## Question 18

What are your views on the merits of introducing a fee for making a planning appeal?  
We would welcome views on:

- a) how the fee could be designed in such a way that it did not discourage developers, particularly smaller and medium sized firms, from bringing forward legitimate appeals;
- b) the level of the fee and whether it could be refunded in certain circumstances, such as when an appeal is successful; and
- c) whether there could be lower fees for less complex cases.

***The Council does not think that the introduction of a fee will have a material impact in terms of the number or nature of appeals lodged. However, if fees are introduced local planning authorities should receive a proportion of the fee to cover administrative costs. Any fee should only be refunded where the other party has been found to have acted unreasonably. The fee should not be dependent upon the scale of development, but upon the appeal route chosen.***

## Question 19

Do you agree with the proposal to amend national policy so that local planning authorities are expected to have planning policies setting out how high quality digital infrastructure will be delivered in their area, and accessible from a range of providers?

***We would welcome clarity on how this important infrastructure requirement can be addressed through planning policy.***

## Question 20

Do you agree with the proposals to amend national policy so that:

- the status of endorsed recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission is made clear?; and
- authorities are expected to identify the additional development opportunities which strategic infrastructure improvements offer for making additional land available for housing?

**Yes.**

## Question 21

Do you agree that:

- a) the planning application form should be amended to include a request for the estimated start date and build out rate for proposals for housing?
- b) that developers should be required to provide local authorities with basic information (in terms of actual and projected build out) on progress in delivering the permitted number of homes, after planning permission has been granted?
- c) the basic information (above) should be published as part of Authority Monitoring Reports?
- d) that large housebuilders should be required to provide aggregate information on build out rates?

***No, on the basis that the issues are often complex and past performance is not necessarily an indication as to whether a future permission will be implemented or not.***

## Question 22

Do you agree that the realistic prospect that housing will be built on a site should be taken into account in the determination of planning applications for housing on sites where there is evidence of non-implementation of earlier permissions for housing development?

***It will not be possible to treat each case Not all applications are submitted by developers and therefore equally.. The Council does not support this recommendation.***

## Question 23

We would welcome views on whether an applicant's track record of delivering previous, similar housing schemes should be taken into account by local authorities when determining planning applications for housing development.

***Please see response given above.***

## Question 24

If this proposal were taken forward, do you agree that the track record of an applicant should only be taken into account when considering proposals for large scale sites, so as not to deter new entrants to the market?

## Question 25

What are your views on whether local authorities should be encouraged to shorten the timescales for developers to implement a permission for housing development from three years to two years, except where a shorter timescale could hinder the viability or deliverability of a scheme? We would particularly welcome views on what such a change would mean for SME developers.

***The Council is happy to retain the three year period, but with the ability to reduce if there is a compelling reason***

## Question 26

Do you agree with the proposals to amend legislation to simplify and speed up the process of serving a completion notice by removing the requirement for the Secretary of State to confirm a completion notice before it can take effect?

**Yes.**

## Question 27

What are your views on whether we should allow local authorities to serve a completion notice on a site before the commencement deadline has elapsed, but only where works have begun? What impact do you think this will have on lenders' willingness to lend to developers?

***The Council sees little or no benefit arising from this change.***

## Question 28

Do you agree that for the purposes of introducing a housing delivery test, national guidance should make clear that:

- a) The baseline for assessing housing delivery should be a local planning authority's annual housing requirement where this is set out in an up-to-date plan?

***Agree although clarification should be given as to what constitutes an 'up-to-date' plan, it is assumed this means adopted within the last five years.***

- b) The baseline where no local plan is in place should be the published household projections until 2018/19, with the new standard methodology for assessing housing requirements providing the baseline thereafter?

***Clarification is required whether this scenario will also apply where a plan is in-place but was adopted more than five years ago.***

- c) Net annual housing additions should be used to measure housing delivery?

**Agree.**

- d) Delivery will be assessed over a rolling three year period, starting with 2014/15 – 2016/17?

**Agree.**

## Question 29

Do you agree that the consequences for under-delivery should be:

- a) From November 2017, an expectation that local planning authorities prepare an action plan where delivery falls below 95% of the authority's annual housing requirement?;

***The 95% target seems too high given on-going uncertainties and the overall rate of development being achieved nationally. A target of 90% would seem more reasonable as a starting point. Clarity is also required over what such an 'Action Plan' would be expected to contain.***

- b) From November 2017, a 20% buffer on top of the requirement to maintain a five year housing land supply where delivery falls below 85%?;

***Agree, we welcome the apparent clarification that a 20% buffer is only applicable where delivery slips below 85%. This should be made very clear in any amendments to The Framework and para 47 specifically.***

- c) From November 2018, application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development where delivery falls below 25%?;

***Agree.***

- d) From November 2019, application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development where delivery falls below 45%?; and

***Agree.***

- e) From November 2020, application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development where delivery falls below 65%?

***Agree.***

## Question 30

What support would be most helpful to local planning authorities in increasing housing delivery in their areas?

***There is a need for greater flexibility when using grant funding to deliver affordable housing. The use of Right to Buy receipts and lifting of the Local Authority Borrowing Cap to enable them to assist directly in housing delivery. It is unclear what further reform to the planning***

## Question 31

Do you agree with our proposals to:

- a) amend national policy to revise the definition of affordable housing as set out in Box 4?;

**Agree, however although reference is made that eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices, by specifying at least 20% makes the point of negotiation a more difficult process and can often slow down delivery. For example, for discounted market sales we have a range of discounts we negotiate with developers (the average being 30% to ensure affordability and sufficient discount to complement and not compete with other intermediate and open market options and remain affordable to residents).**

- b) introduce an income cap for starter homes?;

**For the past 10 years we have applied a financial criteria formula which works against selling price vs income when determining eligibility for discounted open market housing. The formula works out an income which is high enough to obtain a mortgage but generally insufficient to purchase on the open market. We would wish to apply this criteria to Starter Homes to determine local affordability and provide clear parameters to vet applicants.**

- c) incorporate a definition of affordable private rent housing?;

**Agree but consideration should be given to the comments made in respect of question 31 a).**

- d) allow for a transitional period that aligns with other proposals in the White Paper (April 2018)?

**Agree.**

## Question 32

Do you agree that:

- a) national planning policy should expect local planning authorities to seek a minimum of 10% of all homes on individual sites for affordable home ownership products?

**Disagree, flexibility is required at a local level to enable local decisions regarding the type of tenure appropriate to bring forward a scheme. Whilst we actively seek a broad choice of affordable housing tenure across our developments there are occasions where it may be appropriate to the housing need that the requirement is for rented on a particular site.**

- b) that this policy should only apply to developments of over 10 units or 0.5ha?

**If implemented the threshold should be higher to mitigate the comment above i.e. 25 units or more where a range of tenure would be appropriate.**

## Question 33

Should any particular types of residential development be excluded from this policy?



***Agree with the exemptions outlined: build to rent, supported housing, custom build and rural exception if implemented.***

### Question 34

Do you agree with the proposals to amend national policy to make clear that the reference to the three dimensions of sustainable development, together with the core planning principles and policies at paragraphs 18-219 of the National Planning Policy Framework, together constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development means for the planning system in England?

***Agree, it seems logical to assume that the Government's interpretation of the three dimensions of sustainable development constitute it's view of sustainable development.***

### Question 35

Do you agree with the proposals to amend national policy to:

- a) Amend the list of climate change factors to be considered during plan-making, to include reference to rising temperatures?

***Agree.***

- b) Make clear that local planning policies should support measures for the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change?

***Agree.***

### Question 36

Do you agree with these proposals to clarify flood risk policy in the National Planning Policy Framework?

***Agree.***

### Question 37

Do you agree with the proposal to amend national policy to emphasise that planning policies and decisions should take account of existing businesses when locating new development nearby and, where necessary, to mitigate the impact of noise and other potential nuisances arising from existing development?

***Agree.***

### Question 38

Do you agree that in incorporating the Written Ministerial Statement on wind energy development into paragraph 98 of the National Planning Policy Framework, no transition period should be included?

***Agree.***

**27/04/2017, Report:Report on Dog Bin Provision in the Unparished Area of Taunton**  
Reporting Officers:Richard Burge

**27/04/2017, Report:Housing White Paper – Briefing and Proposed Consultation Response**  
Reporting Officers:Nick Bryant

**27/04/2017, Report:Garden Town Status**  
Reporting Officers:Nick Bryant

**16/05/2017, Report:Response to Highways England's A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme Public Consultation**  
Reporting Officers:Andrew Goodchild

**27/06/2017, Report:Trull and Staplehay Neighbourhood Development Plan**  
Reporting Officers:Ann Rhodes

**27/06/2017, Report:Refresh of the Taunton Growth Prospectus**  
Reporting Officers:Dan Webb

**27/06/2017, Report:Update Report on Crime and Policing in Taunton Deane**  
Reporting Officers:Inspector Shane Carey

**27/06/2017, Report:Taunton Transport Strategy**  
Reporting Officers:Dan Webb

**25/07/2017, Report:Health and Wellbeing Update - Somerset Sustainability and Transformation Plan**  
Reporting Officers:Mark Leeman

**19/09/2017, Report:Housing Repairs/Maintenance Issues Service Area Reporting**  
Reporting Officers:Rich Prewer

**19/09/2017, Report:Local Development Order - Nexus 25**  
Reporting Officers:Tim Burton

**17/10/2017, Report:Adoption of Refreshed Parking Strategy**  
Reporting Officers:Ian Timms

**Report:Update on Social Value**  
Reporting Officers:Paul Fitzgerald

**Report:Somerset Village Agents**  
Reporting Officers:Marcus Prouse

**Report:Broadband Issues in Taunton Town Centre**  
Reporting Officers:Ian Timms

## **Community Scrutiny Committee – 27 April 2017**

Present: Councillor Coles (Chairman)  
Councillor Ms Lisgo (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Mrs Blatchford, Cavill, Davies, Mrs Floyd, Gage, Gunner, R Lees, Mrs Prior-Sankey, Ryan, Townsend and Watson.

Officers: Nick Bryant (Planning Policy Manager) Richard Burge (Open Spaces Manager – Deane DLO), Marcus Prouse (Democratic Services Officer – Scrutiny).

Also present: Councillors Berry, Habgood, Morrell and Mrs Warmington.

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm).

### **15. Apologies/Substitution**

Apologies were received by Councillors Martin-Scott and Mrs Webber.

Substitutions: Councillor Cavill for Councillor Martin-Scott.  
Councillor Gunner for Councillor Mrs Webber.

### **16. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community Scrutiny Committee held on 7 March 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed.

### **17. Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Coles declared personal interests Member of Somerset County Council and Member of Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service. Councillor Ms Lisgo declared personal interests as a Trustee of North Taunton Partnership and as a user of GLL's Feelgood Factory. Councillor Gage declared a personal interest as a Member of the Board for GLL. Councillor Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as a member of St James Church, a Member of Somerset County Council, a member of the 'Home Stop' Scheme at Taunton Association for the Homeless and as her spouse was a user of the CCTV Service. Councillor Townsend declared a personal interest as his business was located in Coal Orchard. Councillor Watson declared a personal interest as a Member of Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council.

### **18. Report on Dog Waste Bins.**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Dog Waste Bins.

A report on Dog Bins was requested be brought to Community Scrutiny with support from Cllr Coles. The information requested included the number of bins in operation and their locations, the costs of purchasing and maintaining them, the frequency and cost of emptying and which organisations fund them.

The DLO's Parks & Open Spaces department was responsible for the installation

and emptying of Dog Bins. The budget for this service is held by the Environmental Health Department who act as the Client.

Some internal departments and external organisations had decided to supplement the provision of Dog Waste Bins in their areas of responsibility and privately fund the purchase, installation and collection of additional bins.

Across the borough a total of 235 Public Use Dog Waste Bins were in operation. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 'Internal' bins emptied on behalf of the Council were scheduled to be emptied three times per fortnight, additional 'External' bins were emptied twice per week.

Owner	Number of Bins	Number of Collections
<b>Internal</b>		
Environmental Health	170	13260
TDBC OS	5	390
HOUSING	3	234
Heritage & Landscape	2	156
Community Development	1	78
<b>External</b>		
Parish	45	4368
Somerset County Council	8	832
National Trust	1	104

The following table set out how many bins are in each area, their locations and ownership. A summary of locations was set out as below:-

Area	TDBC Bins	Additional Bins
BISHOPS HULL	10	11
BISHOPS LYDEARD	2	2
BLACKDOWN	1	2
BRADFORD ON TONE	2	0
CHEDDON FITZPAINE	0	1
COMEYTROWE	7	0
COTFORD ST LUKE	6	3
KINGSTON ST MARY	0	1
LANGFORD BUDVILLE	0	2
MILVERTON	1	3
MONUMENT	1	4
NEROCHE	1	0
NORTH CURRY AND STOKE ST GREGORY	1	3
NORTON FITZWARREN	10	2
RUISHTON AND CREECH	6	4
STAPLEGROVE	7	0
TAUNTON BLACKBROOK AND HOLWAY	12	0



TAUNTON EASTGATE	7	1
TAUNTON FAIRWATER	10	0
TAUNTON HALCON	12	3
TAUNTON KILLAMS AND MOUNTFIELD	5	0
TAUNTON LYNCFORD	10	2
TAUNTON MANOR AND WILTON	16	1
TAUNTON PYRLAND AND ROWBARTON	9	0
TRULL	0	3
WELLINGTON EAST	5	2
WELLINGTON NORTH	3	3
WELLINGTON ROCKWELL GREEN AND WEST	13	4
WEST MONKTON	11	6
WIVELISCOMBE AND WEST DEANE	3	1

The costs were set out in the report as follows:-

TDBC Funded Bins: 171

Supply & Installation of Bin: £345

Emptying of bins: £2.85 per visit

This is a cost only charge based on the time taken by the Open Spaces Team.

Privately Funded Bins: 64

Supply & Installation of Bin: £345

Emptying of bins: £2.85 per visit

The charge had not been increased at a rate to match cost and resulted in an under recovery of £832 per year. This has been corrected and all private customers currently paying for this service have been written to advising them of the increase to £2.85 per visit.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included:-

- The costs of dog bins was established at around £350 per bin with it costing £1000 pounds a year to empty a bin. The needs of areas were based on usage and complaints.
- The lifespan of dog bins was determined on usage, these were maintained until unusable.
- A question was raised over the disparity between external bins and TDBC bins – due to need?
- Complaints were common relating to the introduction of three weekly collections of general waste.
- Comment was made that the waste bins across the district were in bad states of repair. It was recognised that the replacement of bins were needed in the district.

- In relation to dog waste it was considered if there was a policy on writing to known offenders and conducting a leaflet drop in specific areas
- It was requested for mapping Software be used to map the locations on the spreadsheet.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

19. **Proposed Garden Town Plan for Taunton.**

Considered report previously circulated, which set out the proposed Garden Town Plan for Taunton.

In early 2017 Taunton was designated by Government as one of only nine Garden Towns nationally. This designation brought £350,000 of revenue funding for the year 2016/17 with the likelihood of future direct and possibly indirect funding awards to be made on the back of the status.

Since 2012, national planning policy had advocated that local planning authorities prepare a singular development plan document rather than the suite of plans that had previously been promoted through the 'Local Development Framework' approach set out by earlier policy and guidance. In the recent Housing White Paper, the Government has intimated that local planning authorities will be given a freer hand in determining how they wish to prepare local plans for their area and keep them under review.

There were a suite of development plans in Taunton Deane: the Core Strategy (2012), Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008) and Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (2016). Should a new Council be formed comprising Taunton Deane and West Somerset, a local plan should be prepared covering the consolidated Local Planning Authority area building in the constituent parts of the plans listed above as well as the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032 (2016) (the West Somerset LPA area does not include the part of the District lying within the Exmoor National Park).

The Taunton Deane Core Strategy and TTCAAP were due for review. The Taunton Urban Area would be the primary focus of a new planning area in any new authority area and is the primary focus of the existing Core Strategy. Officers recognise that the 'fast-tracking' of a new Garden Town Plan for Taunton could take forward the Council's outline vision set out in our Garden Town Expression of Interest while responding to the very real need to review existing strategic allocations in Taunton.

The Garden Town Plan could progress to an initial public consultation during 2017 with work on the evidence base to support it and the broader local plan carrying on in parallel. A decision on whether to consolidate the Garden Town Plan into the broader local plan or to keep it as a separate, stand-alone document would be made during 2018 once a decision on the new council has been made.

The Report therefore sought authority to 'ring-fence' the award of £350,000 to-date (and any subsequent award) to a specific Garden Town Reserve. A further £125,000 for the year 2016/17 had now been awarded by DCLG, this may or may not impact on the Council's award for 2017/18. Future expenditure would be authorised by the Planning Policy and Transportation Portfolio Holder in consultation

with the Section 151 Officer.

The Garden Town designation was made on the basis of the Taunton Garden Town Expression of Interest (EoI) document submitted in the summer of 2016. Revenue funding of £350,000 was secured for the year 2016/17 (a further £125,000 was paid to Taunton Deane on 31 March 2017) and there was an expectation that a future award may be available for the year 2017/18 for which the Council had already made a request for funding.

As one of few newly designated Garden Towns nationally and, having been awarded a substantial sum of public money, it is important that the Council demonstrates accountability and transparency. The money awarded to-date had not been 'ring-fenced' though Officers recognised the need to ensure it is spent in accord with the Expression of Interest and any other projects associated with the realisation of a Garden Town for Taunton.

The TTCAAP and Core Strategy were both in need of review. In the case of the Town Centre Plan, some of the policies were no longer relevant or consistent with national policy, whilst some sites had now been built out or subject to planning applications. Similarly, some of the policies and allocations in the Core Strategy should be revisited to ensure consistency with national policy and that the Plan remains deliverable.

Nationally, planning policy has recently advocated that local planning authorities prepare a singular development plan document rather than the suite of plans that had previously been promoted through the 'Local Development Framework' approach set out in earlier policy and guidance. In the recent Housing White Paper, the Government has intimated that local planning authorities would be given a freer hand in determining how they wish to prepare local plans for their area and keep them under review.

The proposed response recognised the need to review two of the Council's development plan documents and the recent Garden Town designation.

Until such time as a decision has been made on the establishment of the 'new council', it could be seen to be premature to commence work on a joint local plan for the combined Taunton Deane and West Somerset planning areas. As much of any new council's focus will be on its largest centre: Taunton, preparing the Garden Town Plan was the logical priority for Taunton Deane Borough Council through 2017 and beyond.

Work on evidence gathering for subsequent planning policy documents had commenced. A new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published towards the end of 2016 while the Planning Policy Team had made good progress with other key studies including publishing a new Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and towards commissioning and completing a refreshed Green Infrastructure Strategy and Employment, Retail and Leisure Study.

A decision on whether the Garden Town Plan will remain a separate development plan document or will be incorporated as a discrete chapter of a new local plan would need to be made during 2018.

Councils were required to set out a project plan for intended development plan production called a 'Local Development Scheme' (LDS). The LDS is a useful tool for the public, stakeholders and other interested parties insofar as it indicated the timetable for preparation of the local plan(s), critical dependencies, resources and assumptions.

The current LDS for Taunton Deane is out-of-date and would benefit from an update. Officers did not consider that there was any real benefit in refreshing this document now, or indeed until a decision on the new council had been made. There could be no certainty about how and in what form local plans would be prepared across Taunton Deane and West Somerset.

Officers would recommend that, subject to a decision being reached on the new council, a new Local Development Scheme is prepared outlining the programme of planning policy work over the period 2018-2021 early in the New Year. In the intervening period the Planning Policy Team would work to compile the evidence base required to support the emerging Garden Town and Local Plan with a view to undertaking an early consultation on the Taunton Garden Town Plan in the Autumn of 2017.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included:-

- The basis of the submission was detailed and discussed.
- There had been a change in government policy and Flexibility with how local plans are prepared.
- The plan included further work outside the town.
- Reported that a baseline study was being undertaken alongside a formal public consultation document around Taunton and the Local Development Scheme.
- Delivering the prospectus was recognised as important to achieve funding.
- It was requested that a focus be applied to harder infrastructure in view of the implementation of a new garden town.
- CIL would be subject to less pressure.
- There had been County Council Dialogue in relation to plans.
- The plan was submitted with help from Somerset County Council, there had been a meeting with County Officers and government ministers to set out a long term strategy.
- Members were concerned with the potential of funding not being ring-fenced
- There was no other Garden Town in the South West, the nearest is located in Didcot or Basingstoke.
- A detailed transport Strategy was requested from members.
- Learning from the successes of other garden towns was key, it was recognised that a detailed transport plan would be needed.
- An officer forum for learning from each of the Garden Towns that have been named was suggested.
- A focus would be on delivering high quality green and open spaces. Part of the answer would be the recruitment of a Green Infrastructure officer.

**Resolved that:-**

The Community Scrutiny Committee recommends that the relevant Portfolio Holder:

- a) informally support the preparation of the Taunton Garden Town Plan (an item will subsequently be taken to the Council's Community Scrutiny Committee prior to a formal decision being made by the Executive); and
- b) informally support the establishment of a Garden Town Reserve with future expenditure made in line with the Garden Town Expression of Interest document or activities associated with the realisation of the Garden Town for Taunton where agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Transportation (also to be addressed in the same aforementioned Scrutiny and Executive Report); and
- c) noted the commitment to review the Local Development Scheme for Taunton Deane as soon as practicable after the decision on the new council has been made.

**20. Proposed Response to the Housing White Paper**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Proposed Response to the Housing White Paper

The report set out a summary of the proposed changes to Planning and to a lesser extent Housing policy expressed through the recently published Housing White Paper. It had been put together with contributions drawn from Strategy, Enabling and Planning Officers, all of whom had contributed towards the proposed consultation response.

The White Paper emphasised the importance of the Plan-led system as the basis against which decisions about where and how much housing can be permitted. Measures are proposed which should help to streamline the process of plan-making to make it quicker (including a standardised methodology to calculating housing requirements) and greater flexibilities are proposed about how plans are prepared.

There was a strong emphasis on delivery with greater sanctions potentially applied to local authorities that fail to meet housing targets (despite the fact that generally it will not be the local authority constructing new houses). There are some measures that may encourage housebuilders to build more quickly and Councils could take into account likely build out rates and phasing as well as a developer's previous 'track record' of delivery in determining whether to grant planning permission or not.

A stronger role for small and medium-sized housebuilders was recognised. The Government was also keen to accelerate the delivery of housing through improved construction techniques. A further key measure is that 10% of affordable housing is proposed for affordable home ownership.

The Council's proposed response was to focus upon those areas in which officers perceive the Council would be most affected. This would then be signed off by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation and submitted ahead of the consultation deadline of 2 May.



The Government published its Housing White Paper in early February 2017 set out in Appendix A. The paper set out a number of key measures which were designed to ensure that housebuilding was boosted significantly nationally. The document was structured into four parts, namely:

- Planning for the right homes in the right places;
- Building homes faster;
- Diversifying the market; and
- Helping people now

The report was set out in two sections, section one sets out the key proposed measures against the four parts outlined above with some commentary on possible implications for Taunton Deane Borough Council while section two sets out a proposed consultation response to the questions raised in the White Paper itself. Officers from Enabling, Strategy and Planning Policy have helped put together the summary of proposals, officer comments and proposed response (set out in Appendix B).

The White Paper confirmed the Government will intervene to ensure plans are put in-place, regulations would clarify a requirement for local plans to be reviewed at least every five years. A standardised approach to dealing with the duty-to-cooperate (the way local planning authorities are expected to engage with one another on cross-border strategic issues like housing) is also proposed.

Recent Government thinking had been that Local Planning Authorities should prepare a singular Local Plan and this is emphasised by the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework). The White Paper recognised the importance of flexible and responsive plans.

A standardised methodology for assessing housing requirements was proposed. This followed an earlier study by a Government-appointed 'Local Plans Expert Group'. A consultation on this methodology was expected. Where plans are considered out-of-date it is proposed this standardised methodology would be used to form the baseline of five year housing land supply requirements.

Taunton Deane had a very strong track record of development plan delivery. It had adopted three development plans in the last decade as well as introducing the Community Infrastructure Levy. That development plan preparation continued to be prioritised and this will include a review of strategic policies set out in the Core Strategy which was adopted nearly five years ago (September 2012).

Reference to a more flexible approach to plan preparation is a positive change because it will enable the Council to consider whether it wishes to consolidate all its development plans together (the current Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan, Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Development Management Plan). Officers suggest fast-tracking a Garden Town Plan for Taunton in response to this change of Government direction.

Amendments to The Framework were proposed, these would include a strong underlying commitment to meeting housing needs in full unless other Framework policies provide strong reasons for doing otherwise. A greater emphasis on the use

of brownfield land within settlements is proposed with a presumption that such land is suitable for housing unless there are clear and specific reasons to the contrary.

The Government had previously stated an ambition to see surplus public land released for housing with an estimated capacity of circa 160,000 new homes. Beyond this it is proposed that authorities could dispose of land with planning permission they have granted themselves. Flexibilities to dispose of land at less than best consideration are also proposed. There is also support for estate regeneration with LPAs encouraged to consider the social and economic benefits; using their planning powers to help deliver regeneration to a high standard.

The White Paper sought to reinforce the provision of small and medium-sized housing sites. This would be achieved through changes to The Framework that would require LPAs to include policies on small windfalls and to attach 'great weight' to using small undeveloped sites within settlements. Other measures related to this aim included providing stronger support for affordable housing for local people, a requirement for at least 10% of sites allocated in local plans to be less than 0.5ha and encourage developers to sub-divide large sites. The use of LDOs to bring forward small sites is also encouraged.

Amendments to Neighbourhood Planning would see Neighbourhood Plan Groups being able to request a housing requirement figure from the LPA while further funding will be available to NPGs over the period 2018-2020. There is a much stronger commitment to good design with policies in Local and Neighbourhood Plans setting out clear expectations and the use of widely accepted standards such as Building for Life.

Building standards could be simplified and rationalised and Government would consult on higher environmental standards if evidence suggests such standards can be met without making homes less affordable for those who want to buy their own home.

There is a stronger commitment to building at higher densities, particularly around urban locations such as public transport hubs, this would be achieved through changes to The Framework. Minimum space standards would be revisited.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included:-

- Presentation was given by Nick Bryant, colleagues responses, some from strategy some from enabling housing enabling were set out following the publishing of The Housing White Paper in February
- Reform of the Planning system was welcomed, if there was a strong basis on delivery, the white paper set out that Local Authorities would be held to account on delivery. Taunton Deane Borough Council held a good record of completion
- Some measures tailored toward House Builders and developers such as Land Banking issues and planning the right homes for the right places.
- The Government were reinforcing importance of the planning led system. There was flexibility with local plans

- Proposing a standard in calculating housing regulation was considered in principle a good idea
- Some minimum Space Standards change had been adopted in SADMP.
- An increase in planning fee's, considering the increase in housing development was discussed.
- Addressing building regulations and the Infrastructure needed in view of a potential future garden town developments were considered, along with digital infrastructure.
- The density across the developments were discussed, efficient use of land was a primary factor.
- Understanding the principles of housing need was key in achieving the right development mixes in the right places.
- Trying to create a one size fits all policy would need a set of principles to be agreed. Local Authorities could tailor things to suit individual areas and requirements.
- Travellers sites were addressed in separate Planning Policy as a separate requirement under the Housing Act
- The aim was to encourage house builders in bringing forward planning permission for sites.
- Local Development allowed for certain flexibility, it was not prescriptive.
- Private Sector Housing was discussed along with what could be done to challenge agents fees and rent.
- Members expressed concerns over Developers offering new Houses with leases of which have a large increase in costs once the house is purchased.
- Further concerns were expressed over the height of the Quantock House development.
- It was questioned if there were any plans to encourage self-build.
- Analysis on the rate of affordable housing policy was discussed. A target of 200 units per year had been met.
- The Planning Policy Department were commended as being one of top 3 in Country.

**Resolved** that:-

The Community Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of this Report and endorses the proposed consultation response enclosed at Appendix B.

## **21. Community Scrutiny Forward Plan**

Submitted for information the proposed Forward Plan of the Community Scrutiny Committee.

During the discussion of this item, Members requested that the following be added onto the Forward Plan:-

Requests were made for reports to be considered at future Community Scrutiny Committees relating to housing stock works, a broadband update, along with a report

on the signage on skate parks in the district and an Unparished Area Fund quarterly meeting and spend recommendation against the CIL budget.

**Resolved** that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.)